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An item of importance which was intended for the April issue of Adoption News and Views was inadvertently not included. It relates to a petition to New Zealand Parliament for an Inquiry Into Past Adoption Practices and the item is set out below.

Robert Ludbrook- Co-Editor

Petition for NZ Inquiry into Past Adoption Practices

Following the recent Australian inquiries into past adoption practices and apologies given by the Australian Prime Minister and several State Premiers to the many people who suffered from these unethical and sometimes illegal practices, there has been a renewed interest and push for reform in this country, and especially a move to establish a similar inquiry in New Zealand. To date, successive governments have taken no action in reforming adoption laws which are 58 years old and reflect attitudes and values of a long-gone era.

In 1996 a New Zealand Parliamentary Select Committee reported to Parliament:

"We would like to draw to the attention of [Parliament] one issue in particular. During the our consideration of the [Adoption Amendment Bill], the issue of the impact of adoption was raised in a large number of submissions we received....

A number of submissions commented that there should be no amendment to the Adoption Act without a full review of the Act and an inquiry into past adoption practices in New Zealand.

Recommendations

We therefore strongly recommend to the Government that an urgent inquiry be undertaken into adoption practices in New Zealand over the past 50 years. Further, we recommend that when the inquiry is completed an immediate review of the Adoption Act 1955 taking into account the results of the inquiry."

No such inquiry has ever been established, despite the Committee's emphasis on the need for urgency. No attempt has been made to repeal or modify the provisions of the Adoption Act that enabled such practices to flourish. New South Wales held a major inquiry in 2000 and the Australian Commonwealth government completed an even more comprehensive inquiry in 2010 and published its findings in a 280 page report. These reports make chilling reading.

The government believes, wrongly, that only a few people were affected by these cruel and discriminatory practices. Despite promises, successive governments have not taken steps to implement more than 100 proposals for reform recommended by the Law Commission in 2000.

A petition is now being developed through Change.org to press the New Zealand government to establish an independent inquiry similar to those in Australia, and to look into those provisions of the Adoption Act 1955 that must be changed to ensure such things can never occur in future.

The petition message states:

"The New Zealand Adoption Act 1955 is an outdated piece of legislation that no longer reflects the needs of children requiring care outside their family. To date the New Zealand government through its Minister for Justice has consistently ignored requests and cries for it to reform this archaic legislation. There have been various parties lobbying for change, dating back to 1979; and in recent times, the request for an Inquiry to look into the way this legislation has impacted the families of those it was directed at, and how it still impacts the lives of those involved.

We, the undersigned, call upon the government of New Zealand to immediately call an Inquiry similar to that which was enacted in Australia and use this Inquiry to overhaul and reform this outdated law."

To place your name on this petition, follow the link [here](#) and sign it. If you know anyone who has been affected by this Act or knows of people who have please forward details of the petition to them.

This petition seeks to show there is a decent amount of community interest and it is a matter that needs to be addressed.

Thank you for signing and your support!

If hyperlink is not working, please visit:

<https://www.change.org/en-AU/petitions/new-zealand-government-inquiry-into-policies-and-practises-of-adoption-act-1955> **to sign this petition**