

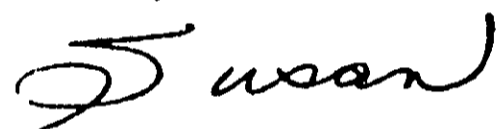
CUB OF MISSOURI
Susan Foglesong - State Representative
7000 Jackson
Kansas City, MO 64132

September 1982

CUB

Things have been moving right along and a lot of action has been going on. Personally I have started a new job that is very demanding, I have gotten notification that an article I wrote will be published...with the possibilities of a radio talk show and TV talk show locally. I have been doing a lot of housecleaning both emotionally and literally. I have lots of plans for new activities in the next few months and hopefully we can have a local meeting soon. If you're interested in that please let me know. At first I am sure we will have to meet in a home or if we are lucky we can find a centrally located place where we can meet. I hope that some of the things in the newsletter will be of interest or help. If there is any area you would like to see some information printed on PLEASE let me know and I will obtain any information available on that. I am very anxious to hear from the members and know where you would like more follow up.

Yours in search,



THE SUPREME SACRIFICE

God -

Something occurred to me recently as I was thinking about the child I had to surrender years ago.

I recall that You, too, gave up Your child. I've studied in Your Word how painful that was and what a great sacrifice - to give up Your only Son. Apparently there was no other way or You would have found it.¹

You know, God, I too gave up my only child. There was no other way either. But I am comforted in knowing that You have walked in my footsteps and understand my heartache.

God, You were reconciled with Your Son, but they tell me I have no right to be reconciled with mine. Since Your Son was brought into the world for the express purpose of reconciliation² - could it be that my child might accomplish that same end - bringing together two sets of parents, siblings and other extended family members who love him?

Wasn't that Your ultimate goal, God, when You made the decision to make the supreme sacrifice³ - to reconcile us to one another, to teach us how to love and thereby draw us closer to You?

God, if those of us who are intimately involved in adoption can accomplish that goal, then the supreme sacrifice will not have been in vain - neither Yours nor mine.

An Aching Birthmother

¹ Isaiah 53

² 22 Corinthians 5:19

³ John 1:29

For additional copies
Adoption Triangle Ministry
Box 156, Oaklyn, N.J. 08107

"Hold onto your visions. Cherish your ideals. Do not be afraid of the music and poetry that stirs within your heart or the beauty that forms in your mind, for--if you nurture them, care for them, and remain true to their original concepts--out of them will grow heavenly environments. Remember that if we come from God, so do all our dreams and actions, even those actions and thoughts that shame us in the sunlight. Think about it; it should not be difficult to think good thoughts and dream only those dreams that, put into action, make life better not just for yourself but for all of God's Children."

(Rod Mc Kuen - 'An Outstretched Hand')

We all have the vision of reuniting with our child... and many of the children have a vision of finding their birthparent. Together we can make those visions a reality and future generations will not have to suffer the same anguish we have.

All things are difficult before they are easy.

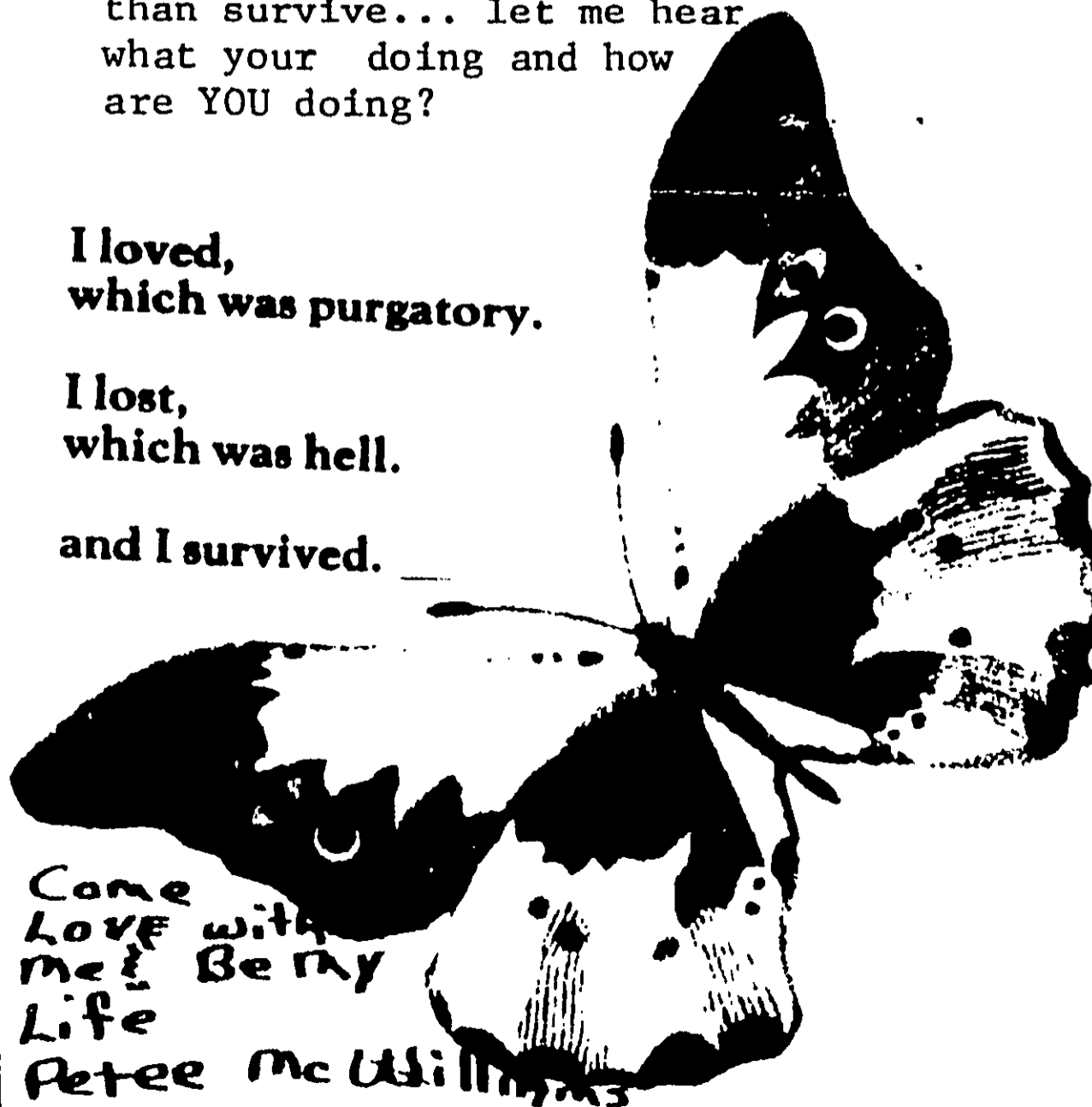
(Anonymous)

We should be able to do more than survive... let me hear what your doing and how are YOU doing?

I loved,
which was purgatory.

I lost,
which was hell.

and I survived.



Come
Love with
me Be my
Life
Petee McWilliams

- Misunderstandings
- Conflicts
- Yelling
- Looking for flaws & mistakes
- Judging
- Arguments
- Too much advice
- Criticizing
- Preaching
- Put-downs

When what you have to say is more important than the feelings of others.

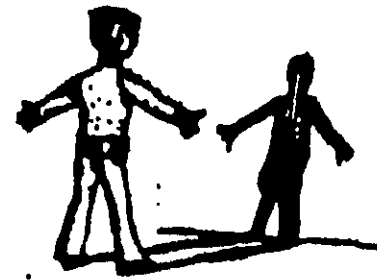
Sometimes it hurts to hear



- "Not now"
- "I'm too busy"
- "Come back later"

PLEASE MAKE TIME!

"I Care"



- COMMUNICATION IS:**
- ...Listening as well as talking
 - ...Exploring not dominating
 - ...You and me - not you or me
 - ...A quest - not a conquest
 - ...Cooperation not competition

(From Concern Counts @1978)

The following is from the American Adoption Congress Newsletter July 1982.

Please participate and try adding your own definition for BIRTHPARENT....we're in no ones dictionary.

DICTIONARIES

This is an excellent way to get society thinking.

At the Banquet at the 1982 conference we were informed that the word "Adoptee" could not be found in any dictionary. So the campaign to mail dictionaries back to the publisher to protest their actions was conceived. The idea went over fantastically and everyone left the conference vowing to mail their dictionary.

Subsequent to this, some indicated their dictionary contained "adoptee", so Warren submitted a list of 30 dictionaries currently on the shelves of Barnes and Noble in N.Y. which do not have the word "Adoptee" and has offered this challenge:

"Let's not just complain that adoptee is not in the dictionary. Let's fight for an official AAC definition with which we are satisfied. \$100.00 to any member who writes the best definition of Adoptee in a 100 words or less which passes AAC Board acceptance. Entrance Fee: Send me your dictionary (NO C.O.D.'s). If you win, I'll send you \$100.00.

What are you waiting for? You may contact Warren Siegmond at 382 Central Park West, New York, NY 10025.

The next newsletter will be printed in November. If you have any ideas or contributions....,please write. This newsletter is for your information....so use it.

Remember.....we all need you...so let me hear from you.



Why not consider joining the American Adoption Congress. Birthparents can learn a lot from this organization, after all they have birthparents.

Section 504. The Model Act - particularly Title V - embodies the recognition that persons involved in the adoption process need information and that the agency has a responsibility to make that information accessible.

PLEASE NOTE::::::::::
Copies of this have been submitted to the legislators in Missouri as well as numerous other states.

Why not photocopy this and submit a copy to your senators and representatives.....if we make them aware enough that we care maybe they'll decide to do something. Attached is a copy of addresses for Missouri and Kansas. It would be \$1.80 in postage well spent.

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Missouri
Senators
Jack Danforth: 400 Russell Building, Washington D.C. 20510. (202) 224-1400.
Tom Eagleton: 1200 Dirksen Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6721.
Representatives
4th District. Sen. Sticker: 1404 Longworth Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2079.
5th District. Sen. Building: 2005 Rayburn Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-4000.
6th District. Tom Coleman: 1527 Longworth Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-7041.

Kansas
Senators
Bob Dole: 2001 Dirksen Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521. Russell
Nancy Landon Kassebaum: 374 Russell Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774.
Representatives
2nd District. Jim Judd: 404 Cannon Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-0801.
3rd District. Larry Wilton Jr.: 2200 Rayburn Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-

Model Adoption Legislation and Procedures Advisory Panel

Albert Burstein, Panel Chairman, Majority Leader, New Jersey General Assembly, Fort Lee, New Jersey

Mary Lee Campbell Allen, Program Specialist-Child Welfare, Children's Defense Fund, Washington, D.C.

Lee H. Campbell, President, Concerned United Birthparents, Dover, New Hampshire

Elizabeth Cole, Director, North American Center on Adoption, Inc., Child Welfare League of America, New York, New York

Marie W. Copher, Chief, State Placement Unit, Georgia Division of Family and Children's Services, Atlanta, Georgia

Joanne W. Small, Adoptees in Search, Bethesda, Maryland

Willie V. Small, Director of Social Work, Children's Services, Inc., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Sydney C. Duncan, Executive Director, Homes for Black Children, Detroit, Michigan

Laurie M. Flynn, Executive Director, North American Council on Adoptable Children, Washington, D.C.

Linda Hanten, Staff Attorney, Mexican American Legal Defense & Educational Fund, Inc., San Francisco, California

Donald Lewis, Chairman, American Academy of Pediatrics Adoption & Dependent Care Committee, Seattle, Washington

Helen Ramirez, Director, Los Angeles County Department of Adoption, Los Angeles, California

Margaret A. Sullivan, Director, Placement Division, Catholic Charitable Bureau of Boston, Boston Massachusetts

Kenneth W. Watson, Assistant Director, Chicago Child Care Society, Chicago, Illinois

John P. Steketee, Judge, Kent County Juvenile Court, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Thelma J. Stiffarm, Native American Rights Fund Boulder, Colorado

Sproesser Wynn, Chairman, American Bar Association Committee on Adoption, Fort Worth, Texas

The ORIGINAL Model State Adoption Act

Section 502. Birth Records. The original certificate remains sealed to the adoptee until he attains majority, at which time he may inspect the original record which contains the names of his birthparents.

BY COURTESY OF
American Adoption Congress
P.O. Box 23641
L'Enfant Plaza Station
Washington, D.C. 20024

Section 505. All contacts the agency has with the parties to an adoption after the case is closed should be recorded. Recording of these contacts may later be useful if a birthparent wishes to contact or seek information about his birth child after the child reaches majority; an agency is required to make a reasonable effort to contact the child in order to transmit the birthparent's request. In this context, a "reasonable" effort might include mailing a letter to the child's last known address or attempt to locate the child through relatives of his foster or adoptive family.

Section 507. Retroactivity. This section applies the records access provisions of Title V retroactively, thereby extending the rights of access under Title V to judicial and agency records compiled prior to the effective date of the Model Act. This provision supersedes any prior law requiring confidentiality and is not in any way limited by other assurances of confidentiality and is not in any way limited by other assurances of confidentiality given in the past.

Subsection [d]. This subsection provides that the original birth certificate will be opened to the adoptee who has attained majority upon the adoptee's simple request; no court order or intervention is required. Hence the adult adoptee may by right obtain information identifying his birthparents. This rule runs counter to the laws of a large majority of the states, but is most consistent, philosophically and practically, with the principles which underlie the Model Act.

Adoption, as a positive process designed to provide children with loving and stable homes, does not inherently require secrecy. Indeed, with older children, secrecy regarding their origins is largely impossible to impose, and isolation from the birthparents is apparently not of great concern to persons who have adopted older children. A. Kadushin, *Adopting Older Children* 202 [1970]. Foreign countries and states which allow adult adoptees access to their original birth certificates have not found that this access leads to widespread efforts at reunion with birthparents, or to disrupted adoptive families. A. Sorosky, A. Baran, and R. Pannor, "The Effects of the Sealed Record in Adoption," 133 *Am. J. Psychiatry* 900, 902 [August 1976].

It should be noted that it was not until the second quarter of this century that most states passed laws requiring the sealing of adoption records.

Historically, a number of reasons were offered to justify denying adoptees access to their original birth records and the records of adoption which contain identifying information concerning the adoptee's origins: protection of the privacy of birthparents, who may not have wanted the fact of their parentage of the adoptee to be divulged; protection of the adoptee from the stigma of illegitimacy; protection of the adoptive parents from being deserted by the children they have reared, in favor of the newly-found birthparent. See, e.g., *People v. Doe*, 138 N.Y.S. 2d 307, 309 (Erie Cty. Ct. 1955). The attitudes underlying these arguments have been changing, however, and the reasons for sealed adoption records have been undergoing examination.

Whether or not a constitutional right to their birth records is eventually established for adoptees, the Model Act bases adoptee access to the birth certificate on the court records of adoption on a three-pronged rationale. First of all, as the Supreme Court has observed, it is a basic concept of our legal system "that legal burdens should bear some relationship to individual responsibility." *Frontiero v. Richardson*, 411 U.S. 677, 686 (1973). Of all the persons involved in the adoption process, the child being adopted has the least control over the decisions made and procedures agreed upon. Hence it is unjust that in the inevitable balancing of rights and interests which must occur in every record-access dispute, the adoptee is deprived of a right, while the rights of the more "responsible" parties are protected.

Moreover, the policy that adoption is a service to adoptees, and the preamble's guiding principle that when irreconcilable conflicts arise, the adoptee's rights should prevail, lead to the approach taken in its provision. Underlying the provision is a presumption that the adult adoptee is most capable of defining what is in his own welfare, including whether or not inspection of his original birth certificate would serve his interests. Unless the Model Act accorded all parties' interests equal stature and required courts to balance those interests on a case-by-case basis, the adoptee's right to information regarding his origins must prevail over the birth parent's presumed interest in anonymity. *In re Adoption of Female Infant*, 107 Wash. L. Rep. 337 (D.C. Super. Ct., Jan. 31, 1979), 5 *Fam. L. Rep.* 2311 (BNA) (Feb. 20, 1979).

Finally, the interests of adoptive parents, birthparents, and the state in keeping records sealed from the adoptee are of less stature than the adoptee's interest in the personal growth and identity which can result from his encounter with the physical source of his being, a reunion which will be facilitated by the adoptee's inspection of his original birth certificate. There is ample evidence to show that the adoptive parent-child relationship will not be supplanted if the adoptee, raised for years by one set of "psychological parents" (See J. Goldstein, A. Fried, and A. Solnit, *Beyond the best interests of the child*, 17-20 (1973), establishes an acquaintance in adulthood with the birthparent. See generally A. Sorosky, A. Baran and R. Pannor, *The Adoption Triangle: The Effects of the Sealed Record on Adoptees, Birthparents, and Adoptive Parents* (1978); J. Triseliotis, *In Search of Origins: The Experiences of Adopted People* 95-96 (1973).

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