

"STOLEN GENERATIONS"

Between 1910 and 1970 in Australia one in 3 children were removed from Aboriginal families and placed in institutions and foster homes. These children, in most cases, were never to see their family again. The removal of children was a deliberate government policy and forms part of the history of dispossession of the country's original inhabitants. Every Aboriginal family in Australia has directly or indirectly been affected and the effects have lasted over generations. Many have called this genocide.

The film tells 3 stories of Aboriginal people who were removed:

Bobby Randall - a singer/songwriter, recalls the traumatic experience of being placed in a mission dormitory at the age of 4. He describes the experience of 'shrinking' emotionally. Bobby spent 9 years searching for his mother and eventually found out she had died soon after he was taken.

Daisy Howard - a Kimberley woman, has been forever estranged from her half-sister who grew up in the bush while Daisy was removed to a cattle station where she worked as a domestic. It was a form of slave labour. The two sisters re-unite in the film recalling and comparing their experiences.

Cleonie Quayle - a mother of four, remembers at the age of 5 being enticed into the back seat of a big black car. She thought she was off for a holiday, waved to her mother but all she could see were tears in her eyes. Cleonie spent the next 12 years in foster families where she was sexually abused. Her story is one of courage and survival.

The stories are combined with interviews with two well-known Australian historians **Marcia Langton** and **Henry Reynolds** who describe the racist assumptions behind these policies. Removing children was a deliberate government policy and the end aimed for was the eventual disappearance of Aborigines as a people.

The stories are illustrated with striking archive footage and a first-person narration by Aboriginal director Darlene Johnson.

The film ends with the contemporary debate in Australia - how the current Prime Minister John Howard, while recognising past wrongs and expressing his 'regret', refuses to make an official apology and say 'sorry' on behalf of the Aboriginal nation.

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