

To the Senate Inquiry into the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Amendment (Economic Empowerment) Bill 2021

My name is Dr Bentley James, I'm a long term non-Indigenous resident of North East Arnhem Land and have worked and lived there since 1990 (31 years). The Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Amendment (Economic Empowerment) Bill 2021 undermines the founding principles of land rights and undermines self determination.

The 'International Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination' requires Australia to ensure that people of all races are protected from discrimination and equally enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms. In the case of Indigenous people in the Northern Territory, there are significant social and economic barriers impeding their access to health, development, education, property, social security and cultural futures. The Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Amendment (Economic Empowerment) Bill 2021 will further remove their rights and freedoms. People are still living 15-20 people in a house for no other reason than the fact that there are still not enough houses. The facinorous N.T.E.R intervention later stronger futures, for whom one is forced to ask, has made no increase the well-being of N.T Aboriginal children. The Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Amendment (Economic Empowerment) Bill 2021 will further disempower them, additionally undermine the ALRA 1972, and economically empower the bureaucracy and outside entrepreneurs. (Why does it cost nearly a million dollars to build a house in a remote Aboriginal community?). Giving further power to corrupt the ALRA will only embolden perfidious centralised governments already dishonestly stealing billions from Indigenous children's futures.

(<https://theaimn.com/media-silence-nt-govt-caught-stealing-2-billion-from-indigenous-budget/The> report revealed that successive governments under-spent on allocated Indigenous and remote disadvantage GST funding. The total of under-spending has now reached around \$2.2 billion dollars. In 2014, we saw outrage when Tony Abbott and Warren Mundine announced nationwide Indigenous budget cuts of over \$500 million. Now it has been revealed that \$2 billion was stripped secretly from some of the most disadvantaged Aboriginal communities and there is nothing but silence.)

Attempting to rush through the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Amendment (Economic Empowerment) Bill 2021 fails to meet the Responsibility to Protect. The RTP doctrine is the enabling principle that first obligates states and then the international community to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. (These crimes (assimilation) continue to be perpetrated on Australian Indigenous people and misrepresented by the Settler State including the underhanded perfidy of their land rights.

The Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Amendment (Economic Empowerment) Bill 2021 fails to look after the rights and futures of people on the homelands. The plight of the homelands is another festering blister on the future of all Australians as their populations are discriminated against, denied citizen's rights, adequate health care, housing, and education while the value of an intact indigenous estate is neglected, obfuscated and misrepresented.

Where is the consultation? Despite living and working in these communities for years (30 yrs), and wide investigation, not one indigenous, and almost no non-Indigenous people who live in these communities are even aware of the existence of the Bill, let alone its perverse contents and purpose.

Dr Bentley James.

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