

The Society of Pitcairn Descendants

C/O

The Chairman,

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Canberra.

The “Norfolk Island Act 1979” is the closest thing to a constitution that the people of Norfolk Island have had since the 39 Laws of Norfolk Island were unilaterally removed by Governor Hampden in 1896-7. The Australian constitution also started out as legislation passed by their colonial overlord, Great Britain. The only way the Australian constitution can be changed is by request of all the States or a referendum of the people of the Australian Commonwealth.

A referendum by the people of Norfolk Island should be the only way the Act could be altered.

Make no mistake about it. What the “Territories Law Reform Bill” does is to effectively remove self-government in Norfolk Island. Giving the Commonwealth Minister the power to make laws for the territory of Norfolk Island, without consulting the people of Norfolk Island, must surely make Norfolk Island eligible to go on the United Nations’ list of Non-self-governing Territories, where it should have been when the United Nations Association of Australia did their report on “Norfolk Island, Australia & the U.N.” in February 1978. Given that Commonwealth law overrides any Territory law then that should be more than enough “safety net” for the Commonwealth’s purposes.

Why is it that every “new boy” Minister we get stuck with wants to make a name for himself by stripping Norfolk Island of more autonomy? Whilst we applauded the efforts of the Minister to have the actions of our elected members more transparent and accountable, he could not resist inserting clauses that take away more of our autonomy. This cannot be allowed to happen.

In the past 10 years we have had six Federal Ministers, most of whom wanted to reduce our Schedule 2 powers. They do this, not in the best interests of Norfolk Island, but to create more control over us by of Canberra bureaucrats and politicians.

We fully support those submissions made to the Committee by our ELECTED representatives and Dr.Candice Snell.

Yours Sincerely,

Ric Robinson,

President.