

SUBMISSION.....

40



Norfolk Inquiry

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TO:- Mr Quinton Clements
 Inquiry Secretary
 Joint Standing Committee on Governance of Norfolk Island.
 Fax 02-6277 8478

Thankyou for accepting my late submission.

I was born on Norfolk Island on 11th November 1930, the youngest child of Amy Ruth Adams (nee Christian) and Ephraim Henry Adams, both of direct Pitcairn descent. I was educated on Norfolk Island and worked as a nurse at the Norfolk Island Hospital, but later went to Sydney for career advancement. After working on the mainland for over 40 years, my husband and I returned to Norfolk Island and have our own home at Steeles Point on land which was granted to my ancestors by Queen Victoria. However more recently, I have had to stay in Brisbane because of the inadequacy and high cost of medical facilities on Norfolk Island.

My main concerns I would like to put to the Committee are:-

1. The Norfolk Island health facilities.
2. Discrimination on absentee land rates.
3. State of public roads.
4. The Legislative Assembly
5. The cost of freight and the lack of harbour facilities.
6. The cost of leaving the Island on referral for specialist medical care and the cost of pharmaceuticals.
7. The voting system.

1. THE NORFOLK ISLAND HEALTH FACILITIES

The Island's health services and public hospital need urgent attention, and should be taken over by the Commonwealth Government, and a new hospital built as soon as possible, with up-to-date equipment, to save patients being sent to the mainland so often for medical treatment.

2. LAND RATES

Land rates for absentee landowners were last year increased most unreasonably by about 900% (in our case from \$145 to \$1,350 p.a.) while landowners living on the Island and using all the facilities are not being charged any land rates. This is unacceptable discrimination. All landowners should pay a reasonable level of land rates, except that pensioners should be exempt.

3. PUBLIC ROADS

The present state of the public roads is a disgrace, indicating the present system of government of the Island is not satisfactory. A petrol levy is collected for the upkeep of roads, but obviously is spent elsewhere.

4. LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

A certain amount of self interest has been evident in past Assemblies. I feel a local elected council of 5 councillors would be ideally suited to our small population and responsible for local work such as roads, etc. The Commonwealth should be responsible for major infrastructure such as airport and seaport facilities.

5. FREIGHT COSTS AND SHIPPING

The cost of living is unacceptably high due to the high cost of freight, shipping often having to wait for days for the weather to make unloading possible. With safe anchorage the turn-around of cargo ships would be quicker and cheaper, also extra revenue for the Island with cruise ships able to call. The obvious need is a breakwater protecting the mouth of Ball Bay.

6. MEDIVACS AND PHARMACEUTICALS

The cost of urgent medical referrals off the Island is quite beyond the ordinary family, hence the urgency of improved public health facilities. Medicare and the PBS scheme should cover Norfolk Island the same as it does for the rest of Australia.

7. VOTING SYSTEM

The present voting system (allowing 4 votes for a candidate) does not give the representation that the general voters wish. Voting should be changed to 1 vote per candidate.

K. Adams-Friend