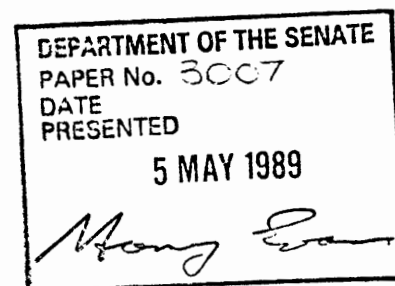
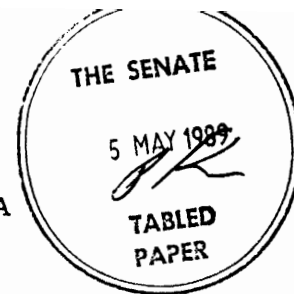


THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA



THE SENATE

COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES

PERSON REFERRED TO IN THE SENATE

(MR C. WYATT)

(16TH REPORT)

MAY 1989

## MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Senator Patricia Giles (Western Australia), Chair

Senator John Black (Queensland)

Senator Bruce Childs (New South Wales)

Senator John Coates (Tasmania)

Senator the Honourable Peter Durack, Q.C. (Western Australia)

Senator Janet Powell (Victoria)

Senator Baden Teague (South Australia)

The Senate  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

## REPORT

1. On 10 April 1989, Mr C. Wyatt wrote to the President of the Senate, Senator the Honourable Kerry Sibraa, referring to remarks made by Senator Noel Crichton-Browne during the debate in the Senate on 9 March 1989 on the Special Audit Report on the Aboriginal Development Commission and Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Mr Wyatt requested that the matter be referred to the Committee of Privileges. The President, having accepted Mr Wyatt's letter as a submission for the purposes of the Resolution of the Senate of 25 February 1988 relating to the protection of persons referred to in the Senate, referred the letter to the Committee of Privileges (see Appendix 1).
2. The Committee, pursuant to Privileges Resolution 5(3), decided to consider the submission from Mr Wyatt, and met in private session on 3 May 1989. In considering the submission, the Committee did not find it necessary to confer with either Mr Wyatt or Senator Crichton-Browne. After deciding to recommend to the Senate that an agreed statement be incorporated in Hansard, the Committee contacted Mr Wyatt and the statement at paragraph 3 below has been agreed to by Mr Wyatt and the Committee in accordance with Resolution 5(7)(b).
3. The Committee recommends:

That a response by Mr C. Wyatt, in the terms specified below and agreed to by Mr Wyatt and the Committee, be incorporated in Hansard.

RESPONSE BY MR C. WYATT  
AGREED TO BY MR WYATT AND THE COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES  
PURSUANT TO RESOLUTION 5(7)(b) OF THE SENATE OF  
25 FEBRUARY 1988

On Thursday, 9 March 1989, Senator Crichton-Browne addressed the Senate on the Special Audit Report on the Aboriginal Development Commission and Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

The Senator said:

... the [Aboriginal Affairs] Department did not have in place a program, policy or system which allowed it to assess whether or not the funds were being used for the purpose for which they were intended. It is not without significance to note that in Western Australia, when we had this absolute imbroglio, confusion, chaos, incompetence and, in some cases, corruption, the departmental head was Cedric Wyatt, who for his sins was promoted by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Gerry Hand, to the position of General Manager of the Aboriginal Development Commission (ADC). At a time of apparent crisis in the ADC, when new, competent and efficient management was needed, it got a personally hand-picked appointment who had reigned over the Department in Western Australia, which the Auditor-General referred to in the report in a most scathing way. I put it down as nothing higher than gross inefficiency and incompetence. (Hansard pp. 788-89)

The Senator used the words 'incompetence' and 'corruption' and I do most vehemently object to my name and reputation being abused in that context. I take great pride in having served the Government of Australia faithfully and

enthusiastically in the Public and Armed Services for over 25 years. My present field of employment as a private consultant in government and Aboriginal Affairs depends very much on a sound administrative reputation and moral integrity beyond reproach. I totally reject criticisms of incompetence and, as to allegations of corruption, I am most distressed that an ordinary citizen as myself, and I do unequivocally reject such accusation, should be slandered in this way in such an honourable institution as the Senate.

Aboriginal leaders, myself included, cannot be expected to right the wrongs of colonial maladministration of Aboriginal people in a short period of time. Aboriginal communities, some of them still very tribal, cannot be expected to become proficient in commercial operations overnight. As a senior public servant I could see and clearly understand these difficulties, and exercises in liberality on my part should not be slandered as 'incompetence' and 'corruption' in the Senate.

CEDRIC WYATT



Patricia Giles  
Chair

5-5-89.



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

APPENDIX 1

PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
CANBERRA

11 April 1989

Senator P.J. Giles,  
Chair,  
Committee of Privileges,  
The Senate,  
Parliament House,  
CANBERRA ACT 2600.

Dear Senator Giles,

**PERSON REFERRED TO IN THE SENATE**

Pursuant to the resolution of the Senate of 25 February 1988 relating to persons referred to in the Senate, I refer to the Committee of Privileges the attached submission dated 10 April 1989 from Mr Cedric Wyatt.

Yours sincerely,

(Kerry W. Sibraa)

