

CAPACITY BUILDING INQUIRY
Submission No. 1

## Summary of Questions Asked.

### Question One.

What do you think makes a well run Community?

One in which Individuals feel part of the activity and well-being of the whole community irrespective of colour.

### Question Two

How important is it for Communities to have good Leaders, what makes a good Community Leader?

Aboriginals have a "Tribal Consciousness".

Where "one" succeeds, the Community put an unbearable load on that person to share.

It would be unfortunate for them to look to a "Leader" to make decisions for them.

A better concept would be a "Team", consisting of equal representation, women as well as men, otherwise areas which effect women and children are at risk, and covered in secrecy.

I refer to Sexual Assault, violence and drinking, a glaring problem at present.

"The Team" should keep reports on progress which can be forwarded to the relevant Government Department.

This would keep communication alive and well between parties concerned, indeed the Government Representative should at least attend some of these meetings, not in the capacity of leader, but advisor when asked, or to suggest.

### Question Three

How can Communities make themselves stronger, (in Cities, Towns and the Bush)?

(A) Cities are different from those in Bush and Rural Areas.

Aboriginals should be able to access Hospital, Ambulance, Education, Retail Stores, Financial Institutions, Transport, Housing, as easily as the rest of the Population, be it Aboriginal, Greek, Chinese or Australian, which we all are.

This concept has to be realized, that, we are all responsible for ourselves, and accountable to society in general.

Nobody has ever succeeded on "pity" alone.

Education on this point, or counselling would benefit them. Living in past history damages their success.

(B) Bush and Rural Areas.

These are the poorest and most impoverished.

It would help immensely, if the Team chosen, could talk to Community members, who would participate in Apprenticeship (Male or Female) in Nursing, Carpentry, with a view to building houses and communal projects, like storage of water - Landcare - Education - Policing - Sewerage - Road making.

Once taught these things, they can maintain them and associated infrastructure.

This would mean Employment, more beneficial than supplying money which is easily misappropriated.

Question Four.

What can Governments do to help more Community Councils and Organizations run better.

Community Councils and Organizations should be encouraged to be more "open-ended" to allow input from the larger Community.

Therefore more diverse ideas are likely to be circulated. In whatever areas specified, Government help and education should be there to freely assist.

Not to control procedures, but to sit among them "cross-legged" if need be, to show empathy and help, instead of a benevolent attitude which is always resented.

Question Five

What skills do people and organizations need for a good community?

We need people (black or white) who are genuinely interested in Aboriginal needs, to visit them often, correlate wisely, then return to Government sources with their reports and recommendations.

Happily this will not be "pidgeon-holed" as in the past, but used to further improve relationships, and quality of life generally.

It is no good if Government assists with Housing, Water, Roads, if the Tribe moves on.

They need to be encouraged, how to establish an area of permanency, which would use the skills previously referred to. Education by wireless (i.e.) "School of the Air" for "out-back" children, with supervision by a responsible member or members of the Community.

Flying Doctor Services, used so successfully in the past, could operate very well for Health checks, and assistance needed every three to four months.

They need facilities Health, Midwifery and Education, but built by themselves to develop skills, (employment) and appreciation, instead of vandalism.

Generators for Power (the housing of) maintainance of Power supply, to far out communities.

This is ambitious, but not out of sight with the completion of the Northern Railway.

We have Rail systems in every State we could utilize obsolete Rail Coaches could be refurbished to deliver Health checks, Dentistry, XRay etc.

Driven onto side rails, or Spurs, to remain there for a specified time, on a regular basis at Country Towns.

### Question Six

How well do Government Departments work with Communities, what more do they need to do?

I do not know the extent of Government input at this time, as there is a cloak of silence over whatever is being done for Aborigines, thereby making it difficult to answer the questions posed.

How well the Government Departments work?

I have no idea. What more needs to be done is then problematic.

We should do as much as possible to improve the lives of the first Australians.

By this, I mean "services", not money, which is rapidly dissipated, leaving no record.

Education in Social Responsibility is a must, especially for the children, who are our best hope for the future.

However, to attain the necessary required range of assistance, will be extremely difficult, unless, some form of employment is brought about by both Community and/or Federal Government initiatives.  
Education means self-motivation.

Mrs. Bera Sessions.