

Mediaportal Report

10/09/2007

▶ **We'd like to get more staff on education'**

Australian, 10/09/07, General News, Page 14
By: None

At the moment we are sick of **Governments** giving out, handing out I think that **Aboriginal** people can show the **Government** that we can do these things. We can send our kids to school, get a better education, get some of the young people who are unemployed, give them training and find employment whether it's part-time or full-time.

Keywords: Aboriginal(3), ATSI(1), Government(2), Governments(1), Papunya(1), support(1), Yuendumu(3)

Clip Ref: **00030015676**

344 words
Type:
Photo: Yes

▶ **Plenty of talk, but changes slow to come**

Australian, 10/09/07, General News, Page 14
By: Jessica Jeeves

While there has been a flurry of action in Canberra and in the media surrounding the Northern Territory emergency intervention, **community** members in Yuendumu say they have seen limited effects on the ground so far. Last week, however, people became aware of the implications of the new arrangements when information was released about a plan by Yuendumu's newly appointed Government business manager to have truant school children placed in police-supervised garbage collection teams.

Keywords: Aboriginal(2), Brough(2), communities(1), community(6), Howard(1), Indigenous(1), John(1), Mal(1), Minister(1)

Clip Ref: **00030015677**

461 words
Type:
Photo: No

▶ **The laws they're making don't suit us'**

Australian, 10/09/07, General News, Page 14
By: None

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Keywords: Yuendumu(2)

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Sebastian is a young Warlpiri man who has been an Aboriginal Community Potice Officer for the past year. He is also a leader of the football team and tives in **Yuendumu** with his wife and two children.

Keywords: Willowra(2), Yuendumu(4)

Clip Ref: **00030015679**

651 words

Type:

Photo: Yes

▶ **They've taken away our rights'**

Australian, 10/09/07, General News, Page 14

By: None

Kurt is a Warlpiri man who taught at **Yuendumu** School, later moving to the Warlpiri Bi-Lingual Program and the Warlpiri dictionary project. He has five children and five grandchildren. Kurt holds on strongly to his language and culture.

Keywords: Aboriginal(2), Government(2), welfare(1), Yuendumu(1)

Clip Ref: **00030015680**

286 words

Type:

Photo: Yes

▶ **The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the Prime Minister wouldn't budge**

Australian, 10/09/07, General News, Page 14

By: None

I went with the delegation (representing) all the **Aboriginals** living around Central Australia down to Canberra to see **Mal Brough** and, if possible, if we were lucky, to see the Prime **Minister** about the new changes before the legislation was passed. Both Northern and Central Land Council would've sort of asked something of the Opposition to say something, at least along the lines of delaying the passing of the legislation until the whole mailer was explained in detail to the people.

Keywords: Aboriginal(7), Aboriginals(1), Brough(1), communities(1), community(2), indigenous(1), Mal(1), Minister(6)

Clip Ref: **00030015681**

775 words

Type: Feature

Photo: Yes



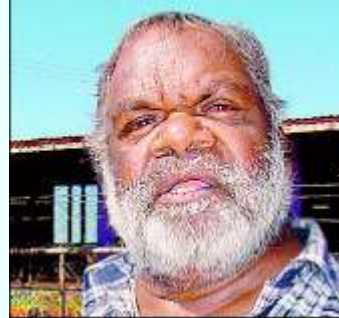
LINDSAY JAMPIJINPA TURNER

‘We’d like to get more staff on education’

Lindsay is a Warlpiri man born at Yuendumu in 1951. Lindsay is a member of the Yuendumu Community Government Council. He was the chairman of the Papunya ATSIC Council in the 1990s, and a member of the NT Education Department’s Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee. He has two children and five grandchildren.

AT the moment we are sick of Governments giving out, handing out. I think that Aboriginal people can show the Government that we can do these things. We can send our kids to school, get a better education, get some of the young people who are unemployed, give them training and find employment whether it’s part-time or full-time. It’s something that we need on this community. There are jobs to be filled in by the local people — yapa people — because there are too many kardiya people here, and we need to step in to take that role. We need these roles to be filled by yapa people - it’s important.

WE’D like to see more young people step in and take the training, and take a step further and do training for the next five or 10 years and you’ll have yapa people — maybe in that period running their own business. Some of these Europeans that we get



Locals needed: Lindsay Turner

working in the community, they last for two years. Some of them are on a contract and then they get transferred to another community, whether they are police, teachers, nurses. We’d like to see them teach yapa people, so once they leave you can have people who just step in a take that role, as assistant CEO or store manager. I think employment at Yuendumu is very important. Some of these jobs can be taken by yapa — not all of them — but we need to be trained. We’d like to get more staff on education, like Aboriginal liaison officers liaising with mothers or fathers — also regarding close relations (about) sending their kids (to school) and offering them good support. We need to work together, white people and Aboriginal people to work together, share ideas.



Plenty of talk, but changes slow to come

Jessica Jeeves

WHILE there has been a flurry of action in Canberra and in the media surrounding the Northern Territory emergency intervention, community members in Yuendumu say they have seen limited effects on the ground so far.

Last week, however, people became aware of the implications of the new arrangements when information was released about a plan by Yuendumu's newly appointed Government business manager to have truant school children placed in police-supervised garbage collection teams.

Since the emergency response was announced by Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal Brough and John Howard on June 21, Yuendumu has been visited by a Norforce survey team in July and health checks were conducted in August.

A government business manager, Noel Mason, was appointed and moved to the community in mid-August; accommodation for him and other visiting taskforce workers is now in place in the community.

Under the new legislation, the Government business manager has powers for five years to terminate or vary commonwealth funding agreements relating to the community, and can place organisations under administration for failures relating to the provision of Government services.

When it was announced that the legislation would be introduced in the first week of the August parliamentary sitting, a delegation of representatives from central Australian communities including Yuendumu, organised by the Central Land Council, travelled to Canberra to try to hold discussions with the Government about the new bill.

The delegates were unable to meet with Mr Brough before the bill passed the House of Representatives. Some members of the Northern and Central Land Councils had a brief appearance before the one-day Senate inquiry before the legislation was passed, unamended and unaltered from its original form, on August 17.

Back in Yuendumu at a public event the community celebrated

the awarding of Order of Australia medals to Peggy Brown, Johnny Miller and Andrew Stojanovski of the renowned Mt Theo Yuendumu Substance Misuse Program.

The trio was recognised with Queen's Birthday honours for long-term commitment to working with young people, including their successful effort to eradicate petrol sniffing many years before the introduction of Opal fuel.

The Yuendumu sports weekend was held in early August, and over two weeks on the ABC's *Message Stick* program a documentary was screened about the famous Yuendumu Magpies and the place of Australian football in contemporary desert culture, made by Yuendumu's Walpiri Media.

Voices from the Heart of the Nation enables readers of *The Australian* to hear directly from people affected by the Northern Territory intervention. This week, the panel responds to the question: What do you think/feel about the Government's intervention into your community?



WARLPIRI LEXICON

Walpiri and Walpiri-English

Yapa: Aboriginal people

Kardiya: non-Aboriginal people

Welfare days: period before welfare payments were paid directly to individuals, when instead of cash, individuals received rations such as flour, tobacco and blankets

HEART LAND



YUENDUMU

- Indigenous people who either don't speak English, or don't speak it well: 19%
- Completed year 12, of those no longer at school:

Indigenous males:	4%
Indigenous females:	3%
Non-indigenous males:	41%
Non-indigenous females:	54%
- Proportion of households with less than \$52,000 in income

Indigenous:	43%
Non-indigenous:	24%

Picture: Renee Nowytagar



Big day out: Cecil Johnson, well known in Yuendumu, at the community's sports weekend



CONNIE NUNGARRAYI WALIT

‘The laws they’re making don’t suit us’

Connie, 53, is a health worker at WYN (Willowra, Yuendumu, Nyirripi) Health. She has been working as a health worker since 1972. Connie has two children and eight grandchildren. She has lived in Yuendumu all her life.

THIS Government law, it’s always changing. Our Aboriginal law stays the same. You heard what happened? They passed that law in Canberra. All these new changes and policies, we need to have someone to just come and talk to us, like one-to-one and tell us exactly what’s happening. Some of the laws they’re making don’t suit us. Like for us health workers, black people, we are left alone in the dark. And these kardiya, you know professionals, nurses and doctors, they know what they’re doing and they know what’s happening but us,



Give us space: Connie Walit

we don’t know what goes on and what is going to happen. We don’t like people coming and trying to force us, coming here and push us to do this thing. They are the things that they want, but the things that we don’t want.

IT’S good that we’ve got these people that are doing kids’ health check-ups, and up-to-dates. They do all that. Can’t they teach us to do that too? We’re here, we can learn and we’re fast learners. Yeah, we can do that on our own, too, instead of getting someone from overseas or someone from other places. We just want to show them that we can do it. That we can prove we can do that.

They’ve just got to learn to give us a chance to do that. We need a time and a space. We want that to happen here, too, at this clinic, the clinic belongs to the community — the people living here. And the workers that are coming in, they’re just guests coming in. Yeah, we just want those people to come and tell us what’s happening with us and for our people’s health — Aboriginal health.



SEBASTIAN JAMPIJINPA WATSON

‘It’s not right to expect kids to pick up rubbish’

Sebastian is a young Warlpiri man who has been an Aboriginal Community Police Officer for the past year. He is also a leader of the football team and lives in Yuendumu with his wife and two children.

THE (Government) needs to come and talk to us, truly explain to us what’s happening so it’s not just revealed in the future .. maybe come out to Yuendumu so that we can listen to them and what they gotta say. Then we might give them a correct answer. But I truly agree the intervention, it’s, you know, it’s a little bit helping us and then there are some other people who slowly don’t like it. There are two peoples. Some people like it and some people don’t like it.

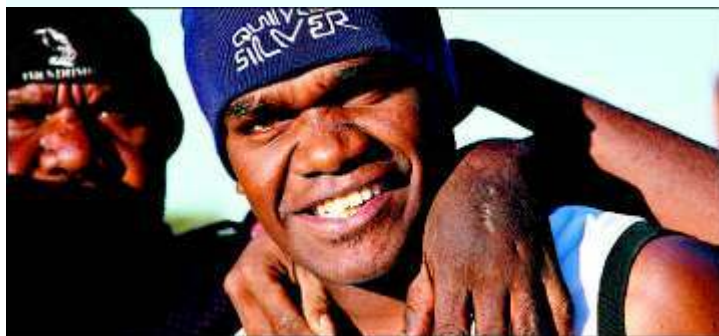
I’ve only seen the Army come over, and they are at the hospital there and new police came in to places like Nyirripi. It’s bad in Nyirripi and Willowra. Willowra is the main big community here in the NT that hasn’t got police. Nyirripi is one hour away from Yuendumu. If someone’s doing the wrong thing down there then they give us a call and it’s us who have to travel one hour on the road and get there, and maybe

catch the offender if he’s drunk. It’s really good to see police down at Nyirripi. I now know them as the sergeants, and they’re really good people down there.

IT’S not right to expect kids to be picking up rubbish from 8 in the morning to 4 or 5 in the afternoon. They’re missing out on an education, they’re supposed to go to school. It’s our chance to respect the little kids. If we’re bullying on them then in the future they’ll bully on us. So those are the things that I don’t like, I don’t like that to happen to these little kids in Yuendumu. What I think should happen to get them to go to school is just to keep on encouraging them. It’s firstly to the parents. Parents should always be encouraging them to go to school instead of them picking up rubbish. We should be slowly asking and talking, not fight it and force the kid to go to school, just talk it. Talking to the parents and encouraging them, in a private conversation like in your house, explain to them what will happen to you if your son or daughter doesn’t go to school and say: “You’re missing out on your payment.”

So you can slowly explain that to your son or daughter, so he or she can realise what’s been happening to you. Parents need help from some other people who are very experienced in some sort of ways, some other things y’know. There are people out there that can help. I think we can only take notes of who’s walking around late at night and give that note to the school, y’know — who’s been running around at night or not going to sleep early — like say “Go to sleep” maybe at 9 o’clock and then be at school (in the morning). We’ll be taking notes and slowly talking to the principal of the school and then they can trace up on them, instead of them picking up rubbish.

When I went to school, I just wanted to be educated and, like, just to be knowing what is right and to defend for myself whenever I’m in trouble or in need of something. It’s good that I’ve been going to school in the past and I’d like to go out and learn more through the police as well, and that’s what I’ll be doing — I’ll be learning more from the police. They’ll be doing lots of courses for us to go to — I’m still learning more and more.

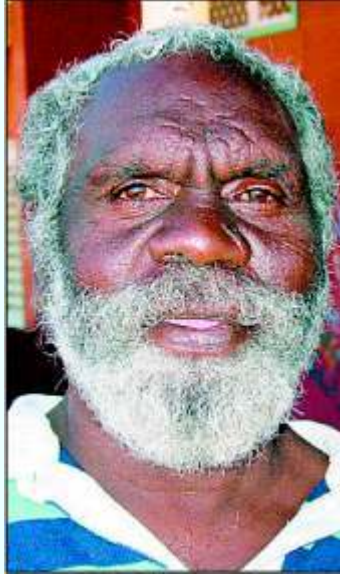


Still learning: Sebastian Watson believes in encouragement



KURT JAPANANGKA GRANITES

‘They’ve taken away our rights’



Critical: Kurt Granites

Kurt is a Warlpiri man who taught at Yuendumu School, later moving to the Warlpiri Bi-Lingual Program and the Warlpiri dictionary project. He has five children and five grandchildren. Kurt holds on strongly to his language and culture.

THE Aboriginal people have fears now. Fears that they’ll be back to the beginning of their contact with the Europeans. It goes back to the old days, doing what the white man says — like in the welfare days. It’s like listening to the big boss man. We had to take orders from the boss — like we’ve got this big brother where someone says to do this, or don’t do that. We have to listen to one person, we’ll be living like robots.

THEY’VE taken away our rights, stripping us, leaving us out in the open — out naked. I’m

talking about the Government. They want to come and operate here and see what makes us tick, what makes us sound different. They’ve taken away everything that we have. I saw the permits are being taken away. The Government people live in cities, they don’t know what they’re talking about because they’ve got their own home and their own yard, whereas in communities there’s big families and tribes and what we own we look after as a family. Taking away the permit is very painful.

Aboriginal people, we were nomads, our ancestors they just walked freely from place to place. It’s like we have to be locked in and be there at certain times and out on certain days. It’s like we’ll be closed in and have to be there in one place without the freedom we had.



HARRY JAKAMARRA NELSON

'The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the Prime Minister wouldn't budge'

Harry Jakamarra Nelson is a respected elder of the Warlpiri community and has a long history of engaging with land rights issues. He is the brother of famous artist Michael Jakamarra Nelson.

I WENT with the delegation (representing) all the Aboriginals living around Central Australia down to Canberra to see Mal Brough and, if possible, if we were lucky, to see the Prime Minister about the new changes before the legislation was passed. Both Northern and Central Land Council would've sort of asked something of the Opposition to say something, at least along the lines of delaying the passing of the legislation until the whole matter was explained in detail to the people. And we went there on good will, to have a bit of a yarn face-to-face — face-to-face with them, because they are dealing with Aboriginal people's lives and our mob out from the bush are representing some of our people who are sort of being knocked about at the moment by the Government.

And I think that trip down to Canberra was a bit of a waste I reckon — knowing right from the start that the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the Prime Minister wouldn't budge from their office just to spend about half an hour talking to all of us delegation people from the Top End and from Central Australia. I was disappointed at the fact that we weren't given the time at least by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to come out and talk to us face-to-face. I thought that was a bit of a piss-weak sort of reaction. Well, when I'd been to Canberra I felt personally I was frustrated knowing right from the start that we wouldn't get any answer from the two bosses.

I can't find anything else spe-

cial happening in Yuendumu since the intervention took place. I always thought straight away after seeing those personnel coming out to Yuendumu ... I would have loved to have seen a lot of changes like foundations being laid, new houses, other improvements, people given jobs, delegated to a number of young people, men and women — that sort of thing I thought would have taken place but as far as I'm concerned that hasn't happened. Personally, what I've seen is a few members of the Army. I haven't yet heard from the nursing staff, really, to find out what their roles are with this intervention. I'm still not quite sure what's happening at the moment.

There have been a lot of announcements but nothing's been taken out following those announcements. I honestly think that people on both sides are left in the dark and the Aboriginal people who the Government is dealing with are being put in the dark, and never being explained what they're going to be trying to do. It's alright them putting it in the newspaper or on the radio or on television — that is what the Government is going to do, but that only just goes on at a particular time and then it's all forgotten as far as I'm concerned. There needs to be more follow-up and that hasn't happened.

WE hope that the permit system is going to be looked at very, very strongly further down the track because that's a very important issue for the Aboriginal people — certainly living out in the large communities. And we have been living with that particular thing all our lives.

The permit system is important because it's part of our protection of our land rights and our sacred sites and our well being, and also

our cultural significant areas — I'm talking about on Aboriginal land. If there's no permit system every Tom, Dick and Harry will come into the community and just do as they please.

From 1967, when the referendum took place, I think that was very good of the Australian people to back, to recognise, us as being Australians. As you know we are bloody Australians — the first Australians. I would have thought that the Government would have sat back and said we had the referendum in '67 and we cannot try and overrule the wishes of all this, take away the rights of the indigenous people of the Northern Territory. That was ignored. We don't understand the fact that the people of Australia had a referendum and about 40 years later the Government changed our permit system — our Land Rights Act.

They took it for granted that since the time of the referendum we've been citizens, even though we were citizens. None of the Government in Australia can recognise that, they don't want to recognise that — they don't want to understand, they don't want to hear about it. They are the superiors.



Unhappy: Harry Nelson