



PO Box 257
Thirroul NSW 2515
20 July 2004

The Secretary
Senate Select Committee on the Administration of Indigenous Affairs
Parliament House
Canberra 2600

Dear Sir,

SUBMISSION

It is my submission to your Committee that, given the proven record of failure by the Australian Parliament over the last hundred years to protect and promote the interests and well-being of Australia's surviving First Peoples:

1. It is the human right of Australia's First Peoples - captive as they are within a European style modern nation-state - to determine for themselves what form of culturally appropriate representation they shall, or shall not, have to ensure their ongoing survival as First Peoples.
2. This right includes the right to decide the future directions and modifications (if any) of the Westminster style experiment (the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission) which was imposed upon them.
3. *The Australian Parliament should not proceed to consider the provisions of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Amendment Bill 2004 until an adequate, properly resourced and culturally appropriate consultation process is implemented (during the life of the next Parliament if necessary) to determine the views of Australia's surviving First Peoples in relation to the terms of reference of this Committee (including related matters).*
4. Full consideration should also be given to a major reform of the Australian Parliament and associated forms of representation to:
 - (a) move from the controlling and dominating practices of past centuries towards recognising and respectfully relating with this country's First Peoples as First Peoples in the 21st Century.
 - (b) enable and empower First Peoples to participate as cultural partners in the governance of Australian life.
 - (c) prevent for all time a repeat of the abuses to First Peoples well-being which have been possible under the present, and past, Australian, State, Territory and colonial governments.

Yours truly

Bruce Reayburn