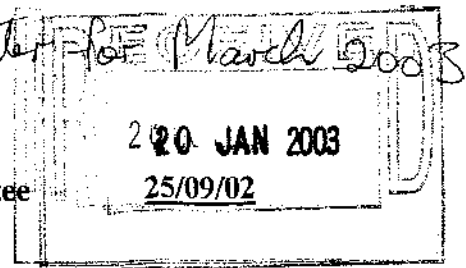


↓ Now for Inquiry into this matter



To the Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee

Re: Inquiry into the Federal government Response to the Reconciliation process.

A Kurna (Adelaide plains people) friend of mine once said several years ago, many non indigenous Australians are really keen to have Reconciliation, but they don't want to give over control or power; or give compensation to show they are sorry for the genocide and invasion of the indigenous people themselves.

The physical condition of aboriginal people and their ability to become educated, and able to have adequate economic sustainability, will depend on whether their native title Rights are honoured; and their traditional land is handed back so that their spiritual and psychological health is improved. The people whose land has already been settled on by us 'boat people' in cities and towns etc., should be given crown land or compensation in the way of scholarships, free health programs, and good education in dual language schools and subsidised employment programs. Also good quality water and living conditions.

While the original owners of this land continue to suffer the poverty and grief from losing control of their homelands, the conscience of the rest of Australians does not deserve to be free from guilt.

The Australian Government is so busy trying to look after other countries mistakes for example, Iraq (i.e. the splinters in others eyes) they can not see the 'beam' in their own eye (quote from Bible).

The original Native Title legislation in 1993 gave hope to Indigenous and non-indigenous Australians that at last social justice might commence to be done at last. Then the amendments in 1998 by opportunist Howard and his men, have led to confusion, uncertainty, and indigenous people being refused land rights claims for example recently the High Court decision on the Miriwung Gajerrong claim was a huge disappointment to the people, as they gained little land.

Many indigenous people are growing frustrated and angry and are thinking about returning to common law actions, or immediate return of all vacant crown land and reserves. The process since 1998 has become very expensive and difficult for the claimants, who are often not funded; while the non-indigenous parties receive federal or state funding:- quote ATSI choir:- Geoff Clark 5/9/2002 National Treaty conference.

To conclude, I Reiterate it is a complete waste of time and money to sit around talking about Reconciliation before the basic injustice of Land Rights being stolen is addressed, i.e. Native Title Legislation needs. Rewriting and Legislation passed to ensure our indigenous people have where ever possible, their traditional land returned, or free 'shared'

access on pastoral land and mining leases, or compensation where land has already been built on. Otherwise all the handouts and humanitarian aid, will be disappearing down a bottomless-pit, because people need to have something to be proud of, to hope for, and their land is usually ^{this} their spiritual connection.

Yours Sincerely,

Penella Horner

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