
From: Mapoon CJG
Sent: Wednesday, 2 April 2008 1:08 PM
To: Legal and Constitutional, Committee (SEN)
Cc:
Subject: Compensation Bill, Stolen Generations - Sen Andrew Bartlett

Dear People,

Thank you for this opportunity.

There are three matters which I think should be urgently flagged, given that many of my indigenous elders who have been removed are fast going to their graves, and what semblance of information that they retain dies with them.

Firstly, that a portion of funds for such Stolen Generations be assigned for the accessing and/or printing of all relevant materials surrounding their removals in the first instance, namely and primarily the Protectorate Reports for each State, to be made freely available for all indigenous organisations in each State. I understand that many have disparaging remarks attached thereto, but in my opinion this pales in significance to the worthiness of the record itself, and merely stands as testimony to the act of removal committed and the perpetrators mindset in so doing. The copies I have attained have proven to be of immense worth to those elders left remaining in my life and I have managed to confirm the identities of numerous persons whom otherwise would have remained unidentified had certain elders passed on at the time, this due to name changes and nicknames etc.

Such records should be lodged with every Council and Library also in the State relative thereto.

Secondly, that a portion of funds be assigned to those persons removed and/or their descendants or companions who are wishing to revisit their place of removal to help jog old memories and find lost relatives. Many of us have a knowledge of the country and surrounds from which our parents or grandparents were removed, but have never had the opportunity of seeing the place. For instance, my grandmother was removed (in a stolen fashion) from Lawn Hills Waanyi Country in the Gulf of Carpentaria and we remain resident in Old Mapoon in Cape York, often aching to be able to visit the country there near Doomadgee. Elders in Doomadgee who are aware of us are also fast dying off.

Thirdly, that funds be apportioned to assist with the social and emotional grief experienced by persons removed (and where appropriate, their descendants) by way of access to counseling, psychologists and/or psychiatric clinicians as required as a consequence of their removal.

I hope my humble submission can stir a flicker of hopeful justice within the hearts of those who are assessing same, with a view to counting such comments as worthy of the consideration that it should deserve, to help overcome the underlying grief many of us feel at having kin and country which we have never seen. Please treat this with the merit it deserves and contact me further should you require any additional information.

Yours faithfully,

Ricky Guivarra