

From: Wacka Payne

Sent: Thursday, 26 May 2005 9:32 AM

To: Committee, Mental Health (SEN)

Subject: to the senate

Senate Hearing Committee

Ladies and Gentlemen

I sent Senator Jo Dower and yourselves a flyer by post yesterday of my latest book that you will receive in a day or so. I feel I should elaborate a little more while the opportunity presents itself.

As you will see by the tone of my flyer, the matter of Mental Health Care is very close to the bone where I am concerned as it is to many of my peers who sat back and witnessed the destruction of a system that we had finally perfected in the early 70's.

Closing down mental institutions [or at least trying to] was the results from fodder fed to politicians by the likes of Professor Maddison, Wolf Wolfenbutz and Richmond following the Richmond enquiry.

The illogical rhetoric of these men was swallowed by fiscally conscious members of Parliament who wanted to save money but who have in fact blown out the M.H.C. budget many, many times. Believe me, it will blow out many more times.

The damage done to much of the Morisset hospital alone, borders on a Political crime for which no one is required to answer for.

Our once well-run hospitals staffed by Registered and competent staff and live-in medical officers has been replaced by a smorgasbord of departmental "do it yourselves" who are answerable and it seems, responsible to no one.

The once well-functional system of the 70's that we finally got right with the implementation of disability pensions to patients etc., [see Peter Kocan's comments in the flyer] was deliberately allowed to unravel by gross incompetence. Only a few of the 'old school' senior psychiatric nurses still alive could ever put the wheels back on the old system again.

The disgrace of our present day out of control M.H.C. system will never be fixed nor rectified until Politicians realize that mentally ill and dangerous people need a proper facility as a means of regaining their health. In short, that means that Politicians and the public in general need to overcome obsessions with such dirty words as mental hospitals, though I am sure with the many people I have spoken to over the past three decades, the public at large no longer have any problems in that area. Quite to the contrary.

Turfing mentally ill persons out of mental hospitals in the 70's was a crime, it was a blight on our community, and the experiment has dismally failed and we need to face up to the fact and put it right.

Though alas, there are none so deaf as those who refuse to hear.

Mental illness and its consequences upon the community at large I predict, will become so bad and so financially crippling to the Government, even the deafest of ears will finally be forced open, but at what final cost?

Best of luck with your difficult challenge.

Ken Payne.

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Independent candidate for the State seat of Dromana, Victoria.

Independent candidate for the Federal seat of Flinders won by Peter Reith.

Retired Chaplain of the Frankston Baptist Centre and the Full Blessing Church.