

Submission in Support of the Commonwealth Commissioner for Children and Young People Bill 2010

It is my belief that a Commissioner for Children will help prevent systemic injustices to children, and as such it is fundamental to the values that all Australians share in their desire to nurture and protect the children of this country.

That systemic injustice towards children is possible in Australia is evidenced by the histories of the Stolen Generation, the Child Migrants and the Forgotten Australians. These sometimes related histories happened while good people everywhere believed incorrectly that children were being protected and nurtured.

Australia has not yet learned this lesson. Our appalling support for the mandatory detention of traumatised asylum seekers is irrefutable evidence for this. We are repeating the same mistakes but this time we do not have an excuse because we know that institutions destroy the health and well being of the people in them. Many of these are children. They are not being protected and nurtured. They need someone to take responsibility for them.

If we do not take action now history will judge us very badly.

I urge and implore all parliamentarians to heed the lessons of history.

Respectfully,

Rod Selden