

To,
Committee Secretary,
Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA:ACT.2600.

To the Senate Committee, having work for the former Aborigines Welfare Board {AWB} who had taken over from the Aborigines Protection Board {APB}, as manager of NSW Aboriginal reserves from April,1961 to June,1969 when they ceased operations. We managers were responsible in the issuing of Child Endowment payments by way of government vouchers, we also supervised our Aboriginal working staff, and paid their wages.

Many women in receipt of child endowment had not received their full endowment payments, unfortunately most {APB & AWB} records were destroyed this included much information of Aborigines money records.

On my retirement from a public service career in mid 1990`so I provided the former NSW State government treasurer Mr Michael Egan MP, with a four page document of Aboriginal women who were in receipt of child endowment payments, plus the amounts owed to each. My mother Amy Ridgeway was one of those who at the time received child endowment vouchers paid by those managers, my mother was also placed out to work by the former {APB} who were then in charge of Aborigines prior to the {AWB} taking over.

Prior to his departure the former Premier Mr. Bob. Carr MP had apologized on behalf of his government for what had happened in the past, he promised his government would make amends by repaying those folk who were owed wages and other money. A repayment scheme was established but those controlling this scheme kept Aboriginals waiting, to`day many are still waiting after many promises, also many had not completed a application form with the scheme handlers due to the early cut off date.

So many Aboriginals will not be in a position to claim their mothers or fathers money because of the cut off date.

As a former manager of my people I am constantly telephoned and asked when are we going to get our mothers money. I get so annoyed because I cannot provide these folk with the answer they require, besides its a matter for those controlling the payment scheme.

Because Pensions and Child Endowment payments were provided by the Commonwealth Government, I believe its a matter for that government to rectify this whole mess-up caused by each state government.

It would be appreciated if the senate Committee could pass a bill to deal with this whole matter, so that a just settlement is made soon and that all monies are paid to those who are still alive, also to the descendants of those folk who have died.

I note that both Queensland and Tasmania governments have offered small sums to those of their state who had made claims, these amounts do not appear to cover the correct amounts lost by those folk who were taken from their families and put work as cheap labour, in the case of young girls play things for their employers.

I look forward to a report from your senate committee meeting in the future.

Yours sincerely

Les.A.Ridgeway JP.