



27 September 2006.

Submission to the Legal and Constitutional References (Senate) Committee: Inquiry into Indigenous Workers whose Paid Labour was Controlled by Government (Stolen Wages)

I worked in the Department of the Chief Protector of Aborigines on William Street, Brisbane from 1935 to 1936/37 when Mr. J. Bleakley was Chief Protector and Mr. Con O'Keary was his Deputy.

I remember seeing extensive lists of stockmen employed in the pastoral industry, showing the amount of pocket money received and the bulks of their wages paid into an account which was managed by the Department.

I also remember seeing young half-caste women (as they were then called) who were employed as domestic servants coming to the Department when they needed clothes.

As they were not treated with their own money and only received a small amount of pocket money, they had to ask for a voucher to purchase any article of clothing. These vouchers were issued on three stores - Barry & Roberts on Edwards, Lamb in Queen Street, or Mc Donnell's East in George Street.

The aborigines had no record of money banked on their behalf, and depended on the Government for its safe-keeping. The Government has had the use of this money over many years, and I expect the Government to make a realistic assessment of the amount which is held on behalf of indigenous people and return this money to them.

V. Raymer

(MRS. V. RAYMER)