

Submission of Maurice Alexander to Joint Select Committee Inquiry into Constitutional Recognition Relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Introduction:

As Melbourne University Law Graduate (1964) and active participant in Republican Movement including attending 2001 Corowa People's Conference, I make this submission in the hope that this Committee enquiry will put before the Australian Parliament positive recommendations to not only light to way First Nations recognition but also towards constitutional change in the terms suggested;

Substance:

I support the Uluru Statement from the Heart and submit ideas for the implementation of its three calls for action.

- **On the Call for a First Nations Voice:**

Suggestion – that this could be achieved by the Parliament along the lines of the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011 with “the First Nations' Voice” being the equivalent of the Human Rights Committee.

- **On Constitutional Change:**

Here my submission is based on the principle that what Australia needs is a reworded Constitution that, for the most part, fits our actual political practices as they have evolved since 1901, as well as establishing as its first clause that our constitution is an act of the Australian people now inclusive of Australians with ancestral connections to Indigenous nations in Australia before white settlement.

So Proposed Opening Clause:

We, the Australian People, inclusive of Australians with Ancestral connections to Indigenous Nations in Australia before white settlement, make this our Constitution.

Other related changes:

Section 51:

Delete (xxvi) Substitute: *(Laws with regard to) Recognition of Prior occupation by First Nations Peoples before 1788. Ensuring equal rights to Australians of Indigenous Heritage and otherwise for the benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.*

- **On Makarrata:**

This idea should be used to work on a Treaty-like agreement between the Joint Committee as people's Representative and “Voice” representatives of Indigenous to agree on Constitutional Changes to be put to the people.

Date of Submission 2nd May 2018