

Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Bill 2011 and Two related bills

With all my heart I wish that this undemocratic, unsympathetic and horrendous legislation be withdrawn. I can't believe that in our time such terrible things are being perpetrated on the First people of this country. We were brought up learning about the oppression of Jewish people in Germany and we wondered how could the ordinary German person let it happen – and now what are we doing in Australia to let such things happen and then be perpetuated. The NT intervention is racist and any Legislation aimed at extending it should be withdrawn.

The proposed legislation undermines the demands by Aboriginal peoples in the NT for a return to control over their communities and the right to self-determination and rather than providing support and encouragement, focuses predominantly on punitive regulatory approaches such as cuts to family support payments, for example, when children don't attend school.

Forcing people off their traditional lands to go and live closer to the basic stores and schools is forcing them into situations of homelessness, social turmoil, lack of engagement with the land and all the enrichment that comes from that. The Health Report Card by AIDA showed that caring for Country has positive effects on people's health, yet the Australian Government ignores these things and treats the First Australians in the NT in an incredibly discriminatory way. I am absolutely ashamed to be an Australian these days.

Linda Oke