

To the Senate Community Affairs Committee Regarding the Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Bill 2011;

I wish to make a submission to the Committee to express my opposition to the proposed Stronger Futures legislation.

The Federal Government Northern Territory Intervention Policy is the re-invention of the “White Australian Policy” a policy which humiliated, denigrated & denied Aboriginal people basic human rights.

The NT Intervention Policy is simply unworkable because it disempowered rather than empower Aboriginal people to achieve self management and self determination.

Prior to the 1967 Referendum Aboriginal people were not recognised as human beings within their own country and were paid half wages for a full day’s work, more so in tea, sugar & flower rations compared to white Australian people whom were paid a full day monetary wage.

- After 44 years Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory are being manipulated to once again become reliant on government handouts by being forced to work 8 days per fortnight within a Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) - working for the dole program.
- For Aboriginal participants to receive basic centre-link payments such as the New Start Allowance (NSA) without any top up wages is purely another exercise in exploitation and victimisation of Aboriginal people by the dominant culture.

The NT intervention and any other government intervention across Australia remains fundamentally flawed unless immediate action is taken to stop the continuing blaming of each and every Aboriginal man & woman for the failure of past and present bureaucratic policies - the time has now come for all governments to stop using Aboriginal people as a political football for their own political and personal gains.

For the survival of our 40,000 year old Aboriginal culture in Australian there is but one hope and that’s for all governments to work together in a transparent partnership alongside Aboriginal & Islander communities to develop policies that meets the needs of each and every individual Aboriginal & Islander communities across Australia.

Historically dominant culture whom blames failed government policies on their Indigenous people (minority group) create an internal oppressed race of people whom sadly believe that drug and alcohol addiction and suicide is a preferred option - I ask Is this perpetrated racism, genocide or both – if not - why not?

I concur with the concerns expressed by community groups and national organisations, that the legislation does not reflect the views expressed by communities during the Stronger Futures consultations, and that it will further embed the disempowerment and discrimination that was begun under the Northern Territory Intervention.

I ask that the legislation be withdrawn and that an alternative policy is developed, based on genuine consultation, community empowerment, the respect of Aboriginal culture, lands and languages, and the fundamental right of Aboriginal people to be able to control their own lives.

Kind regards;

R John Buckskin