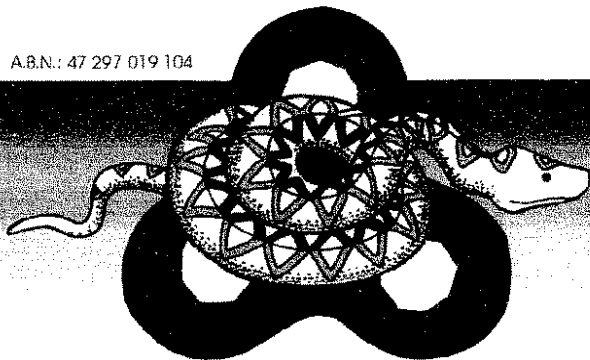


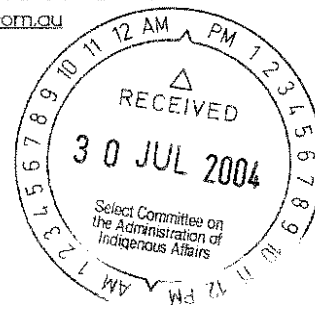


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The President
The Senate
Parliament House
CANBERRA 2600



Dear Mr President,

REGARDING: ATSIC Mainstreaming

I acknowledge that ATSIC has had some problems however those issues were substantially fixed through changes implemented when ATSIIS was established. What ever the shape of this mainstreaming there must be a layer of Indigenous representation advising government.

The new arrangements through the "Whole of Government approach" have the potential to achieve gains in the key socio-economic indicators for Aboriginal people but only if the underlying issues are dealt with.

Now for either a Labor or Liberal Government to succeed in this approach there are some substantial steps to take that are intrinsic to potential success.

1. Structural reform will enable the Whole of Government approach to succeed.

The foundation of negotiated FRAMEWORK AGREEMENTS should in fact be a foundation of TREATY.

Aboriginal Australia should not accept these FRAMEWORK AGREEMENTS as they are a mechanism to divide and concur. Under the new whole-of-government mainstreaming, Framework Agreements are to be negotiated on a regional level. They should be negotiated on a national level and could form a Treaty.

This TREATY should be set in the Australian Constitution and should be installed through a pleb aside.

The forming of a Republic of Australia is where this could happen and would be the perfect opportunity to set Indigenous relations in Australia on a firm footing.

Put these foundations in place and the whole of government (WOG) approach will be a resounding success. Fail to face the underlying issues and the WOG approach will not result in an improvement in key indicators for aboriginal people as the WOG will still be skirting the issue.

2. Motivation to collect good figures/indicators

The annual reporting on programmes against a range of socio-economic indicators designed to test the effectiveness with which practical reconciliation is being delivered will trigger performance pay for Public Service departmental secretaries. (Management Advisory Committee Report No 4 Dr Peter Shergold, Secretary Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet 20 April 2004.) This is flawed in that it skews the recording of the degree of success.

Indicators may seem to improve but the underlying issues not have been fixed.

3. The fabric of Aboriginal Australia needs taken into account:

Programs must be delivered by Aboriginal people with decisions being made by people with understandings of the issues. To do less is to crush a culture further.

- The fabric that is Aboriginal peoples reality today and by extension the reality of Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal Australia will not fit the new shape that is being forced upon it.
- With no time to show resistance to the application of this new shape all aboriginals are being forced to conform or get punished through being cut out of funding or loss of benefits.
- Welfare and the well understood poverty traps that are inherent in the Social Security and taxation system are tenfold felt by aboriginal families. It is very difficult to encourage an Aboriginal man receiving benefits for a wife and kids that he will be better off joining the "club" of working Australia.

4. An Aboriginal voice must be part of the picture.

There must be a layer in between the indigenous organizations and the government. Without this layer the system will not take into account the needs of Aboriginal People.

5. The Senate need to comprehend the needs forced by Aboriginal Reality:

It should be explained that even you, as a committee, will not be in a position to understand the reality for an Indigenous Australian.

If you were to spend some time in Aboriginal communities in need you would start to get a picture of the depth of the issues, however this is still not enough. It is like someone telling you how it is to walk on the moon and you imagining it. You can imagine parts of what you think it might be like but you can not imagine the reality of what it is really like. Hence the problem for mainstreaming of services without an representative indigenous level advising government.

6. Aboriginal service providers are a necessity

People in a position to direct services must comprehend an aboriginals reality.

Or maybe it is better to say that ***only*** Aboriginals are in a position to understand the needs of Aboriginal people.

7. The Goodwill

There is a vast amount of effort and commitment put into building up Aboriginal organizations all over the country. Aboriginal people such as myself have been pouring our heart and soul into making our organizations accountable and able to survive in changing circumstances. We are the new role models that enable our people to see a future. Our mark on our communities and the good that is being done should not be squandered by throwing out these indigenous run organizations.

Any future funding decisions and program delivery vehicle should utilise this deep pool of dedicated individuals. To do less will be a huge kick in the guts for men and women who have been doing the right thing all along and a statement that even with honest hard work and dedication you will still get cut down by government.

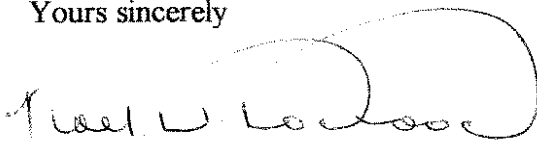
8. The main game:

1. Treaty
2. Australian Constitution
3. Republic of Australia
4. Then go to the Whole of Government approach and we will all win.

As a committee, the advice given to the Senate must not just look at the bean counting mentality of weighing this up, you must look at the deep questions about:

- how this country is to relate to Indigenous folk.

Yours sincerely



Noel Lockwood

CEO Guri Wa Ngundagar Aboriginal Corporation CDEP.