

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE AUSTRALIAN RANGELAND SOCIETY
BIENNIAL CONFERENCE**

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The Australian Rangeland Society

Plenary address

The Hon. Fred Chaney, AO

Thank you for the invitation to address the conference. Thank you for the welcome to country, a relatively recent innovation marking changes of enormous significance to the rangelands. I'll return to its significance to the matters addressed in this conference a little later.

This conference has all the ingredients to live up to its ambitions as expressed in the conference brochure "...you will engage with the question of how to live sustainably in the Rangelands". Delegates will share their ideas and experience of how to nurture, then develop and share, innovative solutions to the challenges of living successfully in our rangelands environments, where climate extremes, remote urban decision making and small, isolated communities are common. What advances can we build on to ensure the social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing of people, businesses and communities who depend on our natural landscapes?

Both the nature of the land and the people who live here have generated many imaginative and practical solutions to living in the rangelands. This is the opportunity to hear about these solutions and consider what else needs to be done."

The rangelands are out of mind for most people. Australians hug the coast. 85% of us live within 50 km of the coastline including I suspect many of those here today. This conference brings together people with a working interest in the rangelands, the Outback, Desert Australia, Remote Australia call it what you will. Everyone participating has an interest in the 70% of the Australian continent where less than 5% of Australians live.

My hope is that the conference will energise everyone by demonstrating that good things are happening across the rangelands. New ways to work are being found in pastoralism, environmental management, indigenous communities and mining. These point the way to better social, economic, cultural, and environmental outcomes. This conference wants the nation to be aware that the rangelands are important economically, environmentally, and culturally and that there is good stuff out there which is, or should be, of national interest.

We should celebrate every success because by demonstrating that success is possible it encourages us to add to those successes. Success is empowering.

But the conference is not a gathering of Pollyannas. We are realistic about the fact that along with the successes there are social, economic, cultural, and environmental, problems across the Outback. Dealing with these problems is exacerbated by the fact it is politically divided up by state and territory boundaries. The areas we are concerned about are the often forgotten backyards of the capital cities where most Australians live and work. Adding to the complexity are three tiers of government within each segment often overlaid by Aboriginal land council structures. It is not hard to understand how these overlaps impede getting effective action on important issues.

Across the rangelands the residents, black white or brindle, to borrow Gillian Cowlshaw's phrase, whether engaged in mining pastoralism small business or Aboriginal communities make the same complaints about powerlessness in the face of distant governments, a lack of say in decisions which vitally affect their lives, lack of accountability to them, inadequate service provision, and uncertain flows of government money. In a vast region where uncertainty of climate and markets are a given, man-made, government made uncertainties don't help.

So my hope for the conference is that individually you will be encouraged by the interest of others in your own work, energized by the stories of others' achievements, and informed about the structural

issues which need attention if the rangelands are to prosper. I hope that you leave here as champions of reform as well as excellence in your respective fields.

I don't need to remind you of your particular interests and activities reflected in the variety of your presentations. They are central to your working lives. What each of you do by participating here is to help create a learning experience for all of us about best practice and problem-solving.

My intention is to remind you of the significance of structural issues and how structural change can produce new and better opportunities to achieve the conference aims.

At the end of the conference Bruce Walker will challenge you all under the topic "Radicalising the rangelands: disruptive change or progressive policy." It will be disappointing if you don't leave here determined to be part of achieving broad as well as particular change.

I want to draw attention to:

- The extraordinary achievement of native peoples, recognition of their Land Rights and native title which among other things assists new approaches to land management across large neglected areas.
- Some of the important work flowing from recognition of Indigenous rights and the roles including the opportunity for partnerships between environmentalists, Aboriginals, miners, and philanthropists.
- The possibility of gains through opportunistic political intervention exemplified by the Royalties for Regions policy in Western Australia.
- The work of Desert Knowledge Australia led by Bruce Walker in the remoteFOCUS project which identifies that the governance of governments as a critical failure point in remote Australia and what might be done about it.
- The work of the Empowered Communities Group, the eight Aboriginal organisations which, consistent with the views developed in remoteFOCUS calls for Aboriginal people having a real say in the decisions which affect their lives and demand new structural approaches by government making the Aboriginals prime actors in their own cause.

Land Rights and native title

In acknowledging as we did the Central Aranda people on whose lands we meet we are acknowledging a recent positive innovation in the rangelands, an innovation which has great significance for the subject matter of this conference. Post Mabo (1992), Aboriginal people have legally recognized interests in land across much of the rangelands. These interests enable them to be at the table as stakeholders rather than as supplicants.

Acknowledgement of country, like a welcome to country, is not a piece of political correctness. It reflects a shift in the legal position of Aboriginal people with respect to land, the most important shift since 1788. This shift has already encouraged and enabled a partial resurrection of the critical role Aboriginal people played in the shaping and management of the Australian landscape.

That role was recently described brilliantly by Bill Gammage in his book, *The Biggest Estate on Earth*. Like almost everyone I had heard of firestick farming and the important role it played in shaping the landscape. Until reading that book I had no idea of the sophistication of the land management practices used over thousands of years and hence no idea how relevant the cessation of those practices have been to some of the environmental problems we face.

Whatever your particular field of interest, for everyone seeking change there are lessons from Indigenous struggles to get recognition of their land interests.

The huge legal shift that Mabo represents is a reminder of the importance of academics and researchers, which may be a consolation to some of you present today.

Indigenous determination was essential but without the supportive work of historians and anthropologists Mabo would not have happened.

Mabo was initiated by a gardener who worked far from his Murray Island home in a University, where he was also an occasional lecturer. It was his collaboration with the academics of that university that enabled the revolution.

Lawyers of course played an important part, but so did the work of those who gave us a different understanding of our pre and post settlement history and of a very different Indigenous legal system. You cannot read the Mabo judgements without being aware of the significance of the Justices having a different understanding of our history. It underpinned a major change in Australian Common Law when an age of racial discrimination in the law was put behind us. This is a reminder that in unpredictable ways your work will inform future changes and guide the innovations needed for the Rangelands to prosper.

Remote Australia does not have much electoral power. Mabo brings some power back to those who live in remote Australia. What else can be done to achieve that? How do we look after the environment of the vast rangelands properly? How do we ensure that it is a workable living environment those who live here? Over the next few days everyone here will contribute in some way to answering those questions.

Links to recognition, caring for country

As understanding of the Indigenous estate has grown Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) and caring for country programs have been established.

Aboriginal ranger groups, working in Indigenous Protected Areas and parks on aboriginal-owned lands, manage than 50 million hectares of the outback— an area more than twice the size of the state of Victoria –using a combination of modern and traditional methods. The growth of IPAs over the past 10 years, and the beneficial impact on the environment and local communities, has been one of the success stories in the development of remote Australia, particularly for Aboriginal communities.

(The Modern Outback, brief form p27 Pew Charitable trusts).

I am familiar with several examples of this work in the Central Desert and East Pilbara. As a director of Central Desert Native Title Services I am proud of the work we do with native title holders to ensure that there are social economic environmental and cultural benefits flowing from native title. Our near neighbour operating with the Martu native title holders in the east Pilbara, Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa more commonly known as known as KJ does this on a larger scale.

KJ's activities with Martu are built on the Commonwealth Ranger program, under which it employs 35 permanent staff and another 200 casually each year. This engages communities in activities that deliver environmental value while allowing people to fulfil cultural obligations and teach their young about their country.

While commonwealth funded ranger teams provided a foundation for KJ's initial growth, KJ's continued development and future sustainability will be reliant on diversified income streams that are not limited to government programs and initiatives.

KJ's income is now approximately 50% from non-government sources thanks in large part to strategic relationships with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and BHP Billiton. Those two organisations – one, the largest conservation NGO in the world and the other, a leading global resources company -

provide a range of capacity building, program, financial and in-kind support to KJ.

TNC and BHP Billiton partner with KJ on the *Martu Living Deserts Project*.

This is an innovative corporate partnership for Indigenous land management in Australia, which contributes to significant conservation, social, cultural and economic benefits. The project helps enable the Martu traditional owners to manage their country, which is one of the world's largest, most ecologically and culturally significant arid landscapes, by integrating their deep traditional knowledge of country with contemporary natural resource management practices.

Key to this is supporting Martu aspirations which include balancing looking after country for its natural and cultural values, and harnessing economic opportunities.

We will hear in more detail about that project in the Martu Living Deserts Project presentation on Thursday

Despite the time that has passed since Mabo and the establishment of a native title framework, some scientists and governments still seem to struggle with the concept that Indigenous Australia need to be on board with proposals and projects. They also seem to miss the point that cultural values are one of the key motivators for traditional owners.

It is not simply a matter of ticking the box on an application form but genuine partnerships that enable and build capacity for Indigenous groups to manage their own country.

The issue for us is how do we work together with Indigenous people so that there are genuine shared objectives and we are working together?

On a practical level, there is an ever decreasing amount of government funds available for projects and while government agencies may have legislative responsibilities for threatened species, fire and weeds etc., without financial resources they are severely limited in what they can do. Partnering with traditional owners not only increases the potential to access other funds (e.g. private partners) but leverages their commitment, skills and knowledge to manage country in the long term.

Building capacity, guiding and supporting traditional practices with contemporary NRM is a smarter way to go. The work that KJ and Central Desert Native Title services do are good examples of this. Historically there was very little contemporary NRM done on-country before their land management programs commenced.

Social Ventures Australia completed an independent assessment of these programs and measured the social return on investment. I don't wish to trespass on the Thursday presentation by KJ and TNC but the saved years of incarceration, reduced cost of alcohol related crime and improved school attendance are part of the measured \$55m of social benefits from \$18m of Commonwealth, corporate and philanthropic funding over 5 years, exclusive of environmental benefits. It is an impressive story.

No one will claim that these indigenous driven activities are a complete answer to environmental issues on the rangelands. But they are a significant contribution which can be grown. There will be opportunities for discussion about this later in the agenda of the conference. My purpose now is to remind participants of some of the factors which made these innovations possible in Australia as a guide to future action.

The factors are many and include:

- The new intellectual framework for action resulting from many influences including the Civil Rights movement and decolonization affecting both elite and public opinion. This changed the way we thought about things including our own history in Australia.
- The assertiveness of the native peoples themselves, their willingness to fight very publicly for recognition of their rights. The NT has a very honourable role in this with the Yolngu having led the charge in the Milirrpun case in 1971 and with the presentation of the bark petition. They were willing to fight for the recognition of their rights. Fighting matters.
- New understandings of our history the importance of which is illustrated by the counter attack of those opposing a “black armband” view of our history.
- The role of champions Indigenous and non Indigenous, many of them unpaid, in dealing with the community, the courts, the governments and parliaments. The early work people did with Aboriginal people in the 70’s was in the main voluntary. There is no doubt that what you need in the community are champions for what you think is important. I invite you to think of this as part of your own role.
- The partnerships between academics lawyers and civil society agencies, including importantly churches as well as the native peoples themselves.
- The use of the media, civil society, the political system, and the legal system as seems advantageous at any time. A really instructive thing about the struggle for land rights was the way it shifted from courts to politics and back to courts eventually to achieve something of a revolution.

Another lesson is not to expect perfection of the solutions devised and implemented. The imperfections of Land Rights and native title are often discussed and exposed. Every solution will be imperfect and has to be a learning experience, every program needs to be part of a learning system.

Achieving Land Rights since 1976 and native title more recently has not been as successful as supporters would have wished at achieving social economic and cultural gains. But caring for country is an area of progress and hope, restoring people as well as the environment.

Royalties for regions

Royalties for Regions is the second successful innovation mentioned above. This is a piece of political innovation. It addressed one of the standard justified complaints from remote Australia that all the money generated in the regions flows to the coast and the capital cities. In Western Australia legislation and policy mandate that a specific amount of mineral royalties are to be set aside for expenditure in the regions.

This policy is under continuous pressure. The DNA of all governments is directed at treasury control of all funds. The Government of Western Australia is currently under severe financial pressure because of a combination of a huge drop in mining royalties and a large and the costly public works program. The extraordinary thing is that such an innovative change ever occurred. How did this happen and will it continue?

The key starting point was imaginative leadership on the part of the Brendan Grylls led National Party in Western Australia. He took this entirely new policy to an election at a time when the fortunes of the National party were at a low ebb. It worked. The Party was successful in obtaining the balance of power in the Western Australian Parliament and made it a condition of going into coalition that the policy would be put in place.

This is an example of a major innovation put in place within an unusually short timeframe through political leadership of a high order and a fortuitous electoral outcome. It is potentially fragile because the electoral numbers will not always guarantee a political lock in. It is likely to have some long-term impact however with gradual erosion of the value of the financial subventions likely rather than outright repeal.

The lesson to be drawn from its success is that regional voters should look carefully at how they exercise their minority status votes with the aim of leveraging their votes and their representation as much as possible. This could have occurred in the Northern Territory after the last election when newly elected regional CLP members could have insisted on a more adequate provision for those parts of the Northern Territory beyond Darwin as a condition for their support.

If I lived in regional or remote Australia I would vote not on party lines but for those members who are prepared to make it a condition of their entry into parliament that they would insist on a fair deal for the regions as a precondition for support for a government.

RemoteFOCUS

In 2008, Desert Knowledge Australia (the statutory corporation, not to be confused with the CRC of the same name) brought together a group of 28 people with extensive experience in dealing with remote Australia to consider “the looming crisis facing remote Australia and the apparent failure of Australian governments to adequately govern and engage with the country’s vast arid and tropical regions”.

In the resulting Prospectus launching the development of a report on the governance of governments it talked of impending calamity in remote Australia due to inability to provide basic services, lack of any real local authority over decision making, the drift away of population, the stress on Indigenous culture and societal structures, and the risk of collapsing fragile ecosystems in the context of outmoded land management regimes.

The project report, ‘Fixing the Hole in Australia’s Heartland’, analysed the problem and concluded that in remote Australia:

- Governance arrangements are a threshold cause of policy failure, and
- Policy for remote Australia needs to be separately conceived and framed and “custom-built” to meet its specific circumstances and needs.

The challenge in designing new approaches to governing and administering remote Australia is that a paradigm shift in policy is required— one that addresses and changes structurally embedded habits, practices, and approaches – this cannot come from within the present governance framework.

What the report proposes is the establishment of governance models which ensure all levels of government and the community work together within a framework which:

- has a shared vision for a region, (we have long been told that without a vision people perish)
- where the role or mandate of each level of government is clear and is funded accordingly,
- there is a capacity to settle disputes.

This is not what we have today.

As the report notes:

We know that more of the same will produce more of the same therefore a changed approach to how government operates is needed. We accept that:

- *if the three levels of government and the community are working at cross purposes success is impossible because goals are different.*

(I have been lucky enough to spend time with remote aboriginal communities from time to time. My sense from the bottom up, looking from the point of view of those communities is

that government is incoherent, the goals of government change continuously and the goals of federal and state government are often at cross purposes. How do we expect to prosper in those circumstances.)

- *If members of the communities disagree with or do not support what governments are trying to do wicked problems (health education employment) will not be solved.*

(You cannot educate people against their will. You cannot get people to work in a job against their will. You cannot do these things by episodic departmental interventions. They can only be dealt with through localised community solution brokering and this is rare.)

- *in Central Australia government is the main provider of an economy (as against having some industries and particularly mining which do not of themselves ensure an economy as against having an industry).*

(In the areas of greatest production of wealth in Australia, the Pilbara in WA, you couldn't get a haircut, you couldn't get your clothes dry cleaned, you couldn't even get a coffee because the cost structure was so completely out of line with having an economy as opposed to having an industry.)

The conclusion of the report is that *“There is a critical need for an ongoing institution that has the mandate and authority to focus on remote Australia, change the dynamic of underdevelopment that afflicts the region, and sustain a momentum for change and regional coordination that is specific to remote Australia— An Outback Commission by any other name.”*

The critical point is that the solution proposed accepts that a separate body is required which is not part of the political contest, operates beyond the political cycle, is the custodian of the shared vision, and has the authority to keep everyone honest.

As yet no political party has embraced the need for serious changes in the way government itself operates in remote Australia. Instead there are endless examinations of why programs have not worked and no examination of whether the way government goes about its business is the problem.

During our research we discovered that in one department there were more than 200 reports on programs and program failure but not a single report on whether the way government went about its business might be contributing to that failure. This suggests a certain lack of intellectual nous in the way these things are dealt with.

Supporting analysis

Time permits only brief reference to some more recent reports that support the need for institutional change.

Aboriginal people are justifiably sick to death of the system and the only reason I am glad I am not Aboriginal is that I don't think I could be as patient and as tolerant as they are about how they are treated.

The recently released Empowered Communities report, which is principally directed at Indigenous people taking responsibility for their lives and futures, notes that this means all levels of government sharing and in some cases relinquishing certain powers and responsibilities. One part of its detailed proposals is the establishment of an Indigenous Policy Productivity Council (IPPC). This body has a role in Indigenous Affairs similar to the Outback Commission proposed in the remoteFOCUS report in that it has statutory independence and can inter alia keep people accountable and mediate disputes, keep the ring over time as I would describe it.

The already cited Pew report makes the point that the Outback needs to be managed as a coherent entity and *that management planning and governance will be effective and cost efficient only when the Outback is recognized as a coherent entity. There is scope and need for far more substantial collaboration across jurisdictions and tenures.* (p30)

Every day there is a reminder that there is so much to be done, so much needing to be fixed. The size and complexity of the issues can lead to despair. I am grateful for the guidance I received from Hal Wootten QC when he gave the lecture named in his honour at the University of New South Wales Law School, which he founded. Among other things Hal was a President of the Australian Conservation Foundation a fine lawyer, judge, and Royal Commissioner, and a Deputy President of the National Native Title Tribunal. One paragraph explained to me how we never need to allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by the enormity of the challenges we face.

In 1944, when I was still at an impressionable age, Lord Wavell published an anthology of verses entitled "Other Men's Flowers". I too have gained much comfort, insight and help in expressing my thoughts by appropriating other men's flowers. For me one unwitting florist was Lord Diplock, who remarked that a judge seldom has the opportunity to say, like Lord Mansfield, 'The air of England is too free for any slave to breathe, let the black go free', but every now and then there is the opportunity to give a little nudge that sends the law along the direction it ought to go. I believe it is not just judges, but every man and woman who, in everything they do, can give the world little nudges that, in conjunction with all its other little nudges, can affect where the world goes.

Everyone here is in different ways trying to nudge the world of the rangelands into a better place. This is an important task and an honourable role. I wish you and indeed all of us success in our nudging.

Questions

Are you optimistic for change?

If you are not an optimist you give up and that's not appropriate. I am always hopeful of change. The forces against the changes I have discussed in the remote FOCUS context are very considerable because Australia is a democracy. There is a lot of voting for selfish reasons. We all say we are interested in the nation but we are fundamentally interested in ourselves and so the whole weight of the electoral system runs in favour of where the people are. That's what democracy is about. There are ways of dealing with that, including the work that you all do and the work that some of the NGO's here do in really drawing attention of the significance of the rangelands to the whole of Australia.

I nearly started my talk here with a couple of poems I remember from my childhood. *'I love a sunburnt country, a land of sweeping plains.....'* *'breathes there a man with a soul so dead that he never to himself has said that this is my own my native land'*, this is my land and I do love the sunburnt country.

I think we have to be appealing to the understanding of the Australian people that the rangelands matter. It matters environmentally, it matters financially, socially and it matters strategically. We all have to be messengers in this and I think we have to be opportunists. That's why I mentioned the Royalties for Regions. That single bit of opportunism on the part of the National Party in WA was a transformational thing. So opportunities occur.

If you go back to the native title decision, the Milirrpun case was lost here in the NT. That was the pre Mabo case when the Gove people claimed their native title. The court, after a brilliant exposition of Indigenous connection to country by Justice Blackburn, said that the Common Law did not recognise what you have demonstrated before me, a governance of laws and not of men, a subtle and intricate

system. These are the sort of words he used in describing the evidence of what the Common Law could not recognise.

The lawyers turned to politics. The thought was that given the then current composition of the High Court an appeal would not succeed. The Judge, the counsel for the Aboriginals, the counsel for the Commonwealth, all took the view that this had to be fixed politically. The opportunity came with the election of the Whitlam government and the subsequent Woodward reports.

Counsel for the Commonwealth, Bob Ellicott QC, by then was a Liberal Member of Parliament, Chairing the Aboriginal Affairs committee. The Parliament unanimously supported land rights. A fantastic outcome, but very opportunistic.

That's why I think there are so many lessons in this for all of us. The Fraser Government then appointed John Toohey QC to be the first Land Commissioner under the Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act, he bedded in the land rights act, he did all the early cases. The counsel for the Aboriginals in the Woodward enquiry had been Gerry Brennan. By the time the land rights movement ran out of political steam because of the racist campaign of the mining industry of that time and the Liberal Party of that time in the state of WA, when they gave up on the politics they went back into the courts. Toohey and Brennan were by then on the High Court. It is a wonderful story with many lessons for this conference. You use what influence you can, you use the position that you have for the moment whether it's in science, law or politics or as a member of the public, as a citizen. The Aboriginal people demonstrated about land rights endlessly. There are a lot of different things you can do and need to do.

Why am I an optimist. I grew up in a segregated country, legally, socially, de facto, de jure, segregated. And look at the changes. 1962 voting rights, 1967 the referendum, 1975 the racial Discrimination Act, 1976 Land Rights, 1992 Mabo. We are getting better. We have got a long way to go but it can get better if all the people in this room are trying to make it better, not just for themselves but for Australia. That is the story, if we really want to make Australia better we will.

You mentioned Aboriginal organisations that were functioning effectively. Unfortunately there are others that aren't so effective. What can be learned from those that are functioning effectively to improve those who are not?

One of the factors as I understand it in KJ is the devotion of the non Aboriginal people who work for the corporation. I know that that alone is not enough but I admire the personal sacrifice they have made just as I admire the young women who work in some of the remote art centres and do the most demanding work.

The commitment of non Aboriginal people to work with Aboriginal people, not as their bosses but as collaborators, is really important. There is not a simple answer. Let me refer to what I have seen of the Ngaanyatjatjara communities in the eastern side of WA, a group of about 10 communities who have been self managing for many years. They run the stores, they run the roadhouse, they run the medical service, they have a lot of runs on the board. When I think back to how I saw them in 1979, divided, disputatious, in awful circumstances, all gathered together in Warburton before they went out to their separate communities over the ensuing years, I think what they have done is absolutely miraculous but I also think they still face major issues

They have still got kids not getting a good education, there is not enough employment of Aboriginal people, there are lots of jobs held by non Aboriginal people. One of the things that they have done recently is to appoint two independent directors to their board. This is one way people can be empowered and given assistance to develop a vision for their new future, because it has to be a new future, it can't just be like the past. I think that strong governance is not always best totally as Aboriginal governance, sometimes it is, and there is an enormous sense of ownership Aboriginal

people have of their Boards, and I respect that. But there can be different approaches for different times.

There does need to be a very active ORIC, they need to be actively investigating cases of wrong doing whether it's by the servants of corporations or by corporations themselves. There is a lot of moral hazard in the operation of many of these corporations, particularly those which have a lot of money. In those cases it's very easy for the white servants and the Aboriginal directors to have pretty cosy relationships. It's an area of immense difficulty that we need to keep working on including the contribution of non Aboriginal people to this as honest friends and advisers of integrity. Aboriginal people with money attract thieves like a piece of rotten meat attracts flies. Thieves love Aboriginal communities. So there is a moral hazard in that some of our best non Aboriginal people go and work in communities and some of our worst. And when the latter occurs it is a very difficult problem.

Over time one can sometimes give nudges in the right direction. How does one tell what is the right direction?

That involves judgments. Let me give you some of my judgments in terms of the community I have tried to work with. My judgment is that Aboriginal children need to get a full education in the majority society as well as in their own society. I think they take their own responsibility for educating people in their own society and culture but I think for the Aboriginal people and the future I would like to see, that is one of equality recognition and respect, all the evidence of my lifetime is that Aboriginal people who are able to walk confidently in both cultures are going to be fine.

This is a judgment and some people will differ. You have to decide what is right and work towards it and sometimes you get it wrong. It would be nice to be infallible but of course none of us can make any claim to that. I think what you have to do is be honest in looking at the facts and make judgements accordingly.

We are told for example, that Aboriginal communities should be closed because they are not viable. Well, on one view, nor is Darwin. Darwin lives on the GST collected in my state of WA, a very sore point at the moment. It lives on subvention from the Commonwealth tax payer. I think Darwin needs to be there. We need a major city in the north and I think it is a fine city. But to say that it is viable is challengeable if you make decisions on some sort of short hand economic judgment. It is said economists know the price of everything and the value of nothing. You have to make judgments. One of the judgments is that we need a major city on our North coast and we pay for it.

I think we need a web of settlement across this country, it's ours. The people who most want to make up that web of settlement are Aboriginal people. I think we should support that web of settlement just as we support most of our modern economy, not only by doing the sort of things the Minister talked about, but by having nurses, doctors and service industries, that's where most of us work. A web of service industries across these places that the Aboriginal people themselves participate in.

These are judgments I make and they might be wrong, but for as long as I have breath I will keep nudging things in that direction.