

SUBMISSION 25

Sara Edson  
Secretary  
Joint Standing Committee on the National  
Capital and External Territories  
Department of House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600



Dear Sara Edson,

Once again I read in our local paper (THE NORFOLK ISLANDER) that another federal government inquiry is to be held on Norfolk Island. One of the aims of the inquiry is to ensure that Norfolk Island residents are provided with the same opportunities and responsibilities as other Australians enjoy in comparable communities.

I ask what communities you are comparing us with. Could you please name some.

There have been many enquiries held about Norfolk Island; very few if any have their findings implemented. And everyone knows before any enquiry is ever started that the Australian residents living on Norfolk Island do not have the same opportunities, nor do we have the same responsibilities. As you will be well aware your government gave Norfolk Island certain powers in 1979, powers that we should never have been given. Because of this we will never be on a level playing field with the rest of Australia. As you may know, or should know, the majority of people living on Norfolk Island would be better off if the federal government rescinded the 1979 Norfolk Island Act. Unfortunately this would affect the wealthy minority, and it is they who control things everywhere.

Unless you are prepared to make sure that we are all on a level playing field, then once again this enquiry is just another waste of Australian tax payer's money, a free holiday for your committee, and a political stunt.

For 14 years the Norfolk Island Government has been talking about introducing compulsory third party vehicle insurance. For 10 years about bankruptcy laws. And where are we at today? Exactly where we started 14 years ago. Like your government all ours does is talk, talk, talk.

Four years ago H.R.E.O.C. had a enquiry into immigration on Norfolk island, and in March 1999 gave their findings. Your government chose to do nothing about these findings. So much for the same opportunities and responsibilities. I have written to your committees about these matters and others on many occasions but unfortunately always get the same standard politicians reply. **TALK TO YOUR NORFOLK ISLAND GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.** Hard to talk to them and make them listen when they don't want to hear.

Pensions are another matter that your government and ours on Norfolk Island don't want to talk about. Australian citizens living on Norfolk Island don't qualify for an Australian pension yet if they are in receipt of a Norfolk Island pension and then for what ever reason have to move to the mainland the Norfolk Island pension automatically ceases and

they do not qualify for a Australian pension. There fore they are left high and dry with nothing. Senator Ian McDonald wrote to me and suggested that the reason was because we don't pay mainland tax and don't have an association with Australia. I won't tell you what my reply was. It is know wonder that politicians are so disliked.

Still if I don't try I can't complain

Yours sincerely

Graeme Woolley.



31/1/03

P.O. BOX 163  
NORFOLK ISLAND 2889