



Norfolk Island People for Democracy

“IF HISTORY TELLS US ANYTHING, IT IS THAT PERSECUTION AND PEACE ARE INCOMPATIBLE”

On February 1, 2016, AAP, the Australian independent news provider announced that the Australian government wants to ‘smooth over’ the integration of Norfolk Island after ending the island's limited self governance in May 2015.

In 2014 the Commonwealth Government initiated a demonstrably inadequate consultation process which ultimately led to the abolition of Self-Government on Norfolk Island in June 2015. Left without democratic representation the Norfolk Island People formed an Association, the Norfolk Island People for Democracy (NIPD), to fight for the rights of the Norfolk Island People. NIPD membership initially included the Chief Ministers of the previous 15 years of Self-Government on Norfolk Island and has now ballooned to include the overwhelming majority of the Island’s resident adult population.

The NIPD management team noted *“the flawed consultation process; Commonwealth Government sponsored press censorship; a refusal to enter into meaningful dialogue on an alternative model that could potentially save many tens of millions of dollars; the loss of voting rights of the Norfolk Island People, and the underhanded attempts by the Commonwealth Government to deny to the Norfolk Island People their fundamental human rights have conspired to raise the anxiety and anger levels on the Island to beyond boiling point. The best opportunity to ‘smooth’ things over with the Norfolk Island People appears to have been squandered by the Commonwealth Minister Paul Fletcher during his visit to the Island last week”*.

Whilst NIPD recognises the important role it can play in attempting to keep the peace on Norfolk Island it is being frustrated by the Commonwealth’s continued propensity to add fuel to the fire.

Chris Magri, NIPD President, during discussions with the management team on the volatile situation on Norfolk Island and the Commonwealth Government's most recent decision to embargo NIPD from the Island's Community radio station, said:

“If history tells us anything, it is that persecution and peace are incompatible. If the Prime Minister is serious about ‘smoothing over’ the Norfolk Island People, NIPD can assist. In fact, the task is decidedly simple:

1. Draw a line under the current irreconcilable process until such time as a mutually acceptable resolution can be found;
2. Commit to giving the Norfolk Island People the right to vote and participate in the making of all of laws that affect them;
3. Respect freedom of speech on Norfolk Island; and
4. Have Australia’s obligations to the Norfolk Island People under the Charter of the United Nations tested by the proper independent authorities.”

4 February 2016

All correspondence to: The Secretary, PO Box 367, Norfolk Island, South Pacific 2899
email: pdsupport@ninet.nf Phone: + 6723 51856