

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Question Without Notice

Thursday, 15 June 2017

C232. Hon Robin Chappie to the Minister for Environment representing the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

I refer to the Minister's 1967 Referendum 50th Anniversary address to Unions WA on 30 May 2017, where he acknowledged that the stolen generation:

"...was a deliberate attempt to ensure that the Aboriginal practice of country, the heritage and the significance of the long connection to country was removed."

And ask:

1. Does the Minister also acknowledge that forcibly closing a remote Aboriginal community, or cutting off services to that community to a point where living on country becomes untenable, amounts to the same removal of connection to country and heritage?
2. Will the Minister commit to ensuring that no Aboriginal person living on country will have to move against their wishes, either directly or as a result of Government ending the provision of services to that community?
3. Will the Minister move quickly to address the uncertainty felt by Aboriginal people living in remote communities about their future capacity (and rights) to do so?
4. Does the Minister stand by the commitments made in this speech?

Answer

(1)– (4) As Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, I am committed to ensuring Aboriginal people maintain a connection to their country while also having access to the same opportunities as non-Aboriginal people. The McGowan Government supports the Regional Services Reform and is committed to improving the lives of Aboriginal people in regional and remote communities. The Reform is not intended to close Aboriginal communities, and Aboriginal leaders and communities are involved in the consultation and implementation processes.

