

Dan gets down with *Play School* mob



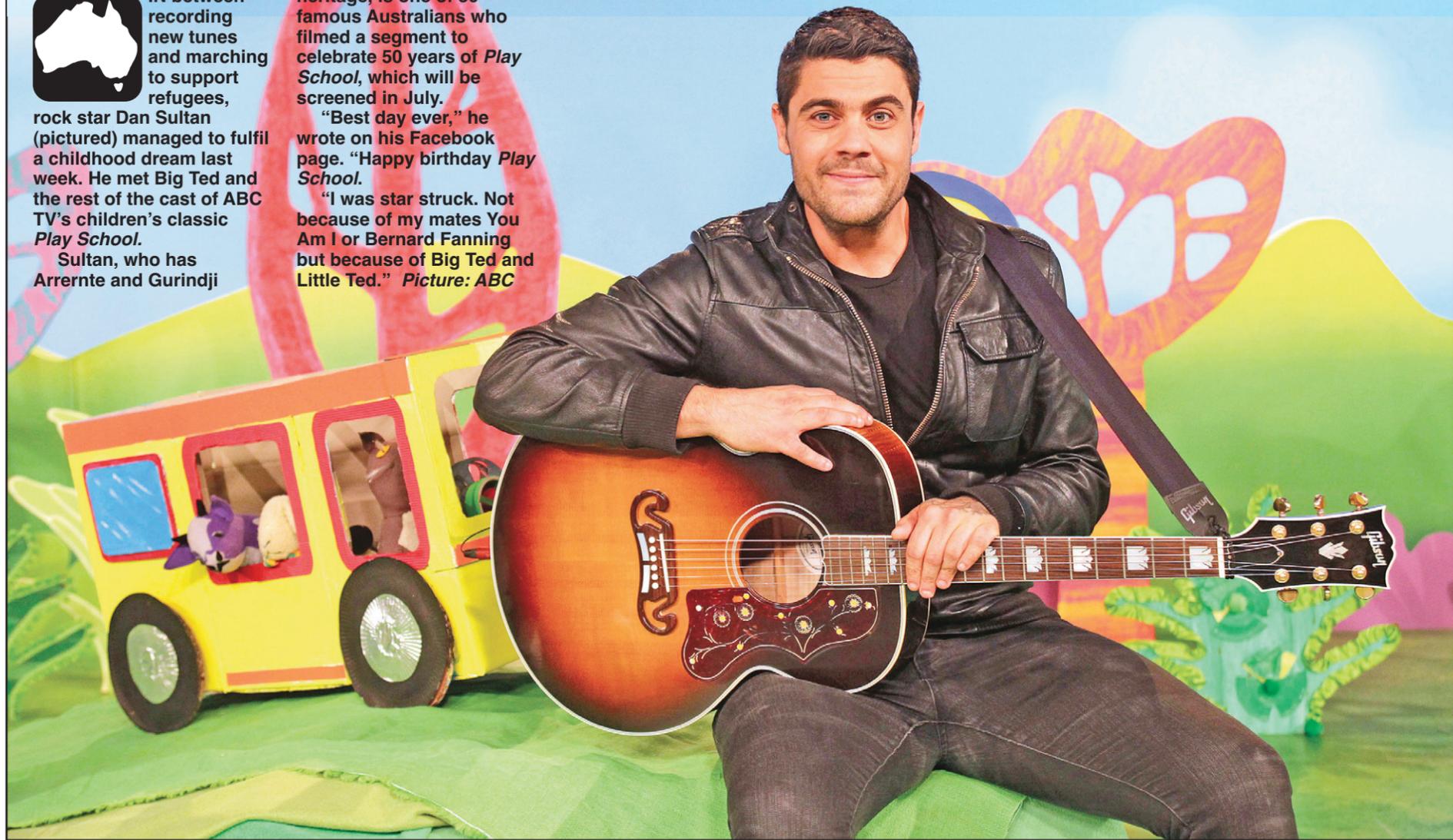
IN between recording new tunes and marching to support refugees, rock star Dan Sultan (pictured) managed to fulfil a childhood dream last week. He met Big Ted and the rest of the cast of ABC TV's children's classic *Play School*.

Sultan, who has Arrernte and Gurindji

heritage, is one of 30 famous Australians who filmed a segment to celebrate 50 years of *Play School*, which will be screened in July.

"Best day ever," he wrote on his Facebook page. "Happy birthday *Play School*."

"I was star struck. Not because of my mates You Am I or Bernard Fanning but because of Big Ted and Little Ted." *Picture: ABC*



Cloud over tough laws

By RUDI MAXWELL



A MULTI-PARTY parliamentary committee has recommended winding back many of the harsh conditions of the Stronger Futures legislation, including compulsory income management.

But the Coalition Federal Government has refused to say whether it will follow the recommendations, despite the committee being chaired by Liberal elder statesman Philip Ruddock.

Last month the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights, chaired by Mr Ruddock and including members of the Liberal, National, Labor and Greens parties, handed down its report into the *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act 2012*, widely regarded as an extension of the Northern Territory Intervention.

The committee made a series of recommendations including scrapping blanket compulsory income management, a review of the alcohol restrictions on Aboriginal land, and redesigning the School Enrolment and Attendance through Welfare Reform Measure (SEAM), in

which parents had their Centrelink payments reduced if their children didn't attend school.

The timing of the damning report is somewhat embarrassing for the Government, which just three days beforehand had launched the first trial of the 'Healthy Welfare' card, which is based on the same income management principle as the Stronger Futures' Basics card.

A spokesperson for Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion told the *Koori Mail* that the Government "remained committed to activities that support more children attending school, more adults into work and promote community safety".

"The Government is carefully considering the Joint Committee on Human Rights' Review of Stronger Futures Measures and will respond to the recommendations in due course," the spokesperson said.

The committee gave a tick to the aspects of the Stronger Futures legislation regarding food security and land reform but was scathing in its assessment of the sections on measures to address alcohol abuse, income management and SEAM.

"The income management measures engage and limit the right to equality and non-

discrimination, the right to social security and the right to privacy and family," the report found.

"Although the committee considers that under certain conditions income management is a legitimate and effective mechanism, evidence indicates that compulsory income management is not effective in achieving its stated objective of supporting vulnerable individuals and families.

"The committee considers that SEAM is not proportional to the objective of improving school enrolment and attendance. A human rights-compliant approach to this problem requires that any measures must be effective, flexible to take into account individual circumstances, calibrated carefully to protect vulnerable groups and targeted at dealing with the causes of unauthorised absences rather than punishing the symptoms."

Georgina Gartland of Concerned Australians, a group that opposes Stronger Futures, said the review didn't go far enough and was disappointing.

"The legislation should have been repealed and on food security there was no mention of freight subsidies for the delivery of food to remote communities, which would help make food more affordable," she said.



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