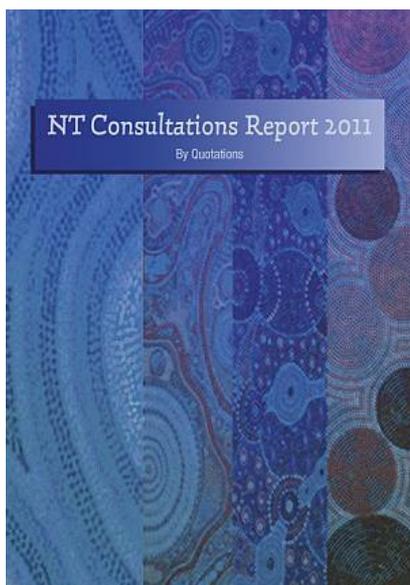


Review of the book

NT Consultations Report 2011: By Quotations



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“NT Consultations Report 2011: By Quotations”, published in February 2012, is an important sequel to the highly regarded *“This Is What We Said”* (February 2010) and *“Walk With Us”* (August 2011).

Between June and August 2011 the Australian Government conducted Stronger Futures Consultations in Northern Territory communities with the stated purpose of finding out what worked and what didn't work under the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER) - commonly called the Intervention - which started in 2007. This book is presented with beautiful illustrations and contains quotations taken from ten consultations which were independently recorded.

Mainstream media has given much commentary to the controversial laws under which Aboriginal Peoples in the Northern Territory now live. In this book we hear the true voices of Aboriginal people calling out to be heard. Each page speaks volumes about their frustration and despair at the failure of Government to listen.

Every quotation contains a clear expression of the participants' thoughtful responses to the issues faced by their communities. The reader cannot fail to be moved by the deep commitment of the community members who gave their time yet again to engage in consultations with the government. This commitment was given despite the betrayal of having their voices ignored in previous consultations such as were documented in *“This Is What We Said”*.

Though these quotations are short they provide insights into the cumulative impact of the NTER laws from 2007. The responses are presented under various topics such as feelings about the consultations, requests for the return of control over communities, support for homelands and the importance of education, including the restoration of bilingual programmes. Also addressed are job losses, confusion about the constant change of government policies, lack of promised housing, the unaffordability of healthy fresh food and as well, the fact that 80% of Homelands were 'dry' before the Intervention started. Within these quotations are carefully considered, locally-based solutions which should be genuinely considered by Government.

What makes this book so unique is that it is based on the only recordings of the 2011 consultations. These voices deserve to be heard and respected.

Full transcripts of the quotations can be found on the 'concerned Australians' website: www.concernedaustralians.com.au.

By Cathy Gill and Sabine Kacha