

## Some Statistics – Then and Now:

### The Secret Country

**OLD STATISTIC:** In Aboriginal cemeteries, the number of children's graves is always disproportionally high (Aboriginal vs Non-Aboriginal)

**NEW STATISTIC:** Still unacceptable gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous infant mortality rate. For example in the NT Aboriginal children are three times more likely to die before their first birthday than non-Indigenous.

**OLD STATISTIC:** In NSW a report found that almost a quarter of Aboriginal males who had survived to age 20 were dead by 40 – these are third world statistics

**NEW STATISTIC:** In 2007 the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare estimated that Indigenous people born in the period 1996-2001 are estimated to have a life expectancy of 59 years for males and 65 years for females. This is approximately 16-17 years less than the non-Indigenous population born in the same period. These are the worst figures in the world for countries with Indigenous minorities.

**OLD STATISTIC:** A third world disease, Trachoma is widespread in black Australia

**NEW STATISTIC:** A recent study by Professor Hugh Taylor from the University of Melbourne found that trachoma is still endemic in many remote Indigenous communities, with half of the children in some communities having trachoma. In contrast the developing nations of Morocco, Oman and Iran have assessed themselves to be trachoma free and are undergoing WHO certification. Rates of other "third world" preventable health conditions including rheumatic heart disease and Otitis Media (glue ear) also remain endemic problems.

**OLD STATISTIC:** Black Australians may well have the highest prison population in the world conviction related to homelessness, alcoholism and unemployment have meant in effect to be black is a crime.

**NEW STATISTIC:** There has been an explosion in the numbers of Aboriginal people in prison over the past two decades. The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody said in 1991 that the main reason for deaths in custody was that "too many Aboriginal people are in custody, too often". In that year, an average 2140 Aboriginal people were in prison. In the March quarter of 2012 however, an average 7873 Aboriginal people were incarcerated. The fastest increase in incarceration rates has happened under the NT Intervention - more than 80% increase over 5 and a half years.

Despite being only 2.5 percent of the general population, 26 per cent of inmates are Aboriginal. Their rate of incarceration is 18 times that of the non-Indigenous population. African American male adults are incarcerated at a rate of 6.6 per cent. In comparison, 4.2 per cent of Aboriginal male adults are locked up. But in WA, the situation for black males is actually worse than the US. An outrageous 7.2 per cent of Aboriginal men are in prison. In the US, black youth are about four times as likely to be in juvenile detention. But Aboriginal Australians are placed in detention at 31 times the rate of non-Aboriginal youth. A staggering 59 per cent of youth locked in Australia's juvenile detention system are Aboriginal.

**OLD FACT** education Aboriginal children taught not long ago that their society was pagan and now taught to question it while all the time being rejected by the alternative white society

**NEW FACT** "bilingual education" programs were prohibited in NT schools in 2008, with a rule stipulating that the first 4 hours of instruction every day must be in English.

**OLD FACT:** too many Aboriginal people live in tin shelters which boil in summer and freeze in winter, with ablution blocks if they're lucky with taps that seldom run

**THIS IS STILL THE CASE**

*From Paddy Gibson 7 April 2013*

**21 June 2012**

## **5 years of NT Intervention by statistics**

### **Child welfare:**

69% increase in children getting taken into out of home care since 2007. Most are cases of "neglect", which is occurring at a rate far higher than other jurisdictions ([Closing the Gap monitoring report part 2](#)), and can in many cases be attributed to extreme poverty.

The NT has lowest rate of "out of home care" placement with Aboriginal families in Australia, less than 20% ([Productivity Commission annual report on government services](#)).

There is no evidence of substantial improvements in the welfare of children in the NT. Indeed, the Closing the Gap monitoring report part 2 details some worrying statistics which indicate a break with long-term trends towards improvement that have been evident since 2000, including:

Children admitted to hospital for malnutrition  
10.9 per 1000 in 2006-07  
11.1 per 1000 in 2009-10

Children under 5 who are underweight  
7.1 per 100 in 2007  
8.2 per per 100 in 2010

Children under 5 who are wasting  
4.4 per 100 in 2007  
4.8 per 100 in 2010

### **Attempted Suicide and self-harm:**

Reported incidents have increased by almost 500%. In 2007 there were 57 incidents. In 2010 there were 183. In 2011 there were 261 (Closing the Gap monitoring report part 2).

### **School attendance:**

Rates are down in preschool, primary and secondary schools. Overall, attendance rates have dropped from 62.3% just before the Intervention ([NTER monitoring report 2009](#)) to 57.5% in 2011 (Closing the Gap monitoring report part 2).

### **Incarceration:**

As of March 2011 there had been a 40% increase in Indigenous incarceration since the Intervention ([NT Justice Department quarterly report](#)). Recent news reports suggest this number is now greater than 50% - with particularly large increases in the last 12 months.

The NT prison officers association says prisoners are currently being held in 3rd world prison conditions, 12-14 in a cell in Alice Springs - mattresses on the floor and one hand basin and toilet between inmates.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-04-23/nt-prisons-described-as-third-world/3967114>

See <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-04-05/nt-prisoners-held-at-police-stations/3936132>

Aboriginal people are one of the most incarcerated on the planet. If the NT was a country, it would have the second highest rate of incarceration after the USA.

### **Unemployment:**

There has been a consistent increase in Aboriginal people receiving unemployment benefits (NewStart allowance) since 2007, including a 14% increase from 2009 - 2011.

New positions created through the Intervention are far below levels of waged employment that existed under CDEP.

In 2007 there were more than 7500 waged CDEP positions. In April 2012 this number was only 1,667. These positions are disappearing fast, with the government refusing to employ new people on the waged scheme if existing workers break their relationship with their employer.

The government claims 2,241 positions were created to replace lost CDEP positions under the NT Jobs Package. Also that 865 Aboriginal people are employed through NTER programs (Closing the Gap Monitoring Report part 2) - though there is overlap between a number of these positions such as Night Patrol.

### **Housing:**

Before the Intervention the rate of overcrowding was 9.4 people per home. The government's 'target' following SIHIP works is 9.3 ([NTER evaluation 2011](#)).

### **Domestic Violence:**

Police reported incidents in "prescribed areas" have dramatically increased since the Intervention and continue to increase - from 939 in 2010 to 1109 in 2011 (Closing the Gap Monitoring Report part 2).

### **Alcohol:**

Number of police incidents involving alcohol has consistently increased. Number of domestic violence incidents involving alcohol has consistently increased (Closing the Gap Monitoring Report part 2). The government has no hard evidence that less alcohol is being consumed in "prescribed areas".

### **Links to referenced reports:**

*Closing the Gap in the NT Monitoring Report July - December 2011*

<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/indigenous-australians/publications-articles/closing-the-gap/measuring-progress-of-nter-activities/closing-the-gap-in-the-northern-territory-monitoring-report-july-to-december-2011>

*Previous Closing the Gap in the NT and NTER Monitoring reports*

<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/indigenous-australians/publications-articles/closing-the-gap-in-the-northern-territory-including-northern-territory-emergency-response>

*Northern Territory Emergency Response Evaluation Report 2011*

<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/indigenous-australians/publications-articles/northern-territory-emergency-response-evaluation-report-2011>

*Northern Territory Department of Justice Quarterly Report March 2011*

<http://www.nt.gov.au/justice/policycoord/researchstats/Issue%2035%20Ebook.pdf>