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From: Frank Brennan <f.brennan@mackillop.acu.edu.au>
Date: 13 May 2008 12:16:54 PM
To: Rob Messenger <robmessenger@bigpond.com>
Subject: Cl 25 - support from previous statements by church leaders

Clause 25 is where you should take a stand in my opinion. You might like to recall the statements of principle issued by the church leaders in 1982 and 1983. On 30 March 1982, Archbishops Francis Rush and John Grindrod and the Uniting Church Moderator Douglas Brandon asked "that secure title be given in such a way that it might never be varied of terminated except by Act of Parliament". They expressed the hope "that whatever legislation is passed will give our reserve residents stability on their lands of historical significance." Over the next twelve months, they then repeated their plea: "If Deeds of Grant in Trust are appropriate legal devices for the transfer of title (and that is for others expert in the law to determine), they should surely be created so that they might never be varied or terminated except by Act of Parliament." That plea was heeded by the National Party Government in 1983, with the support of all major political parties in the Queensland Parliament. When introducing the land rights legislation on 16 December 1983, the Minister Mr Bob Katter MLA told Parliament that the new laws "would give to the Aboriginal and Islander residents right of occupation and land management for themselves and their children that are complete and beyond interference except by special Act of the Parliament." Unless Aboriginal land is required for a public purpose for the benefit of the local Aboriginal community, it should remain in Aboriginal hands unless the local community agrees to surrender title or to dedicate the land to an alternative public use.

Cheers

Frank Brennan

Professor Frank Brennan SJ, AO
Institute of Legal Studies
Australian Catholic University
MacKillop Campus
Level 4, 23 Berry St, North Sydney 2060
PO Box 968, North Sydney 2059
Telephone: 612 9739 2450
Fax: 612 9739 2455
Email: frank.brennan@acu.edu.au
ABN 15 050 192 660
CRICOS Registration: 00004G, 00112C, 00873F, 00885B