

Submission
No 15

**INQUIRY INTO CRIMES (APPEAL AND REVIEW)
AMENDMENT (DOUBLE JEOPARDY) BILL 2019**

Name: Ms Mavis Jean Symonds

Date Received: 30 June 2019

29/6/2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I am writing to support Green Senator David Shoebridge's submission to have a Crimes (Appeal and Review) Amendment (Double Jeopardy) Bill 2019 so as to allow for a second re-trial to be allowed so that new evidence in the case concerning the three children who were murdered in Bowraville 30 years ago.

It is known as the Crimes (Appeal and Review) Amendment (Double Jeopardy) Bill 2019 and would allow for a retrial to occur in relation to the murder of three children in Bowraville on the Mid North Coast of NSW 30 years ago.

Through the families continued efforts over the last 30 years to see Justice done and the ongoing support they have from within the Aboriginal and Non Aboriginal Community, I ask that you seriously consider the mentioned bill that was already tabled by Greens Senator David Shoebridge in the NSW Parliament in May 2019.

I believe that Senator David Shoebridge is eager to elaborate on the definition of fresh evidence that would allow a second retrial application to be made because of the exceptional content of the fresh evidence to be submitted.

I believe that this submission is now with the Standing Committee on Law and Justice for inquiry and report and with this in mind I have decided to write my submission as to why I believe that this Crimes Appeal and Review - Amendment (Double Jeopardy) Bill should be accepted and acted upon in the appropriate manner

To start with my name is Mavis Jean Symonds, I moved to Kempsey on the Mid North Coast of NSW in October 2000 a few months after my husband passed away. In 2001 I went to TAFE in Kempsey to learn ceramics, I came out of the enrolment office, registered to commence study in Community Services and Welfare having no idea of the change of plan in relation to my course happened.

On completing the first year of my Diploma in November 2001 I was surprised to receive a letter to say I was successful in obtaining a position I had applied for whilst at TAFE as a Community Worker within the predominately Aboriginal Social Housing Communities of West Kempsey and later South Kempsey.

Additionally I was in contact with other Aboriginal Communities through my ongoing Community Consultation and Engagement, I knew most people from

Greenhill, South Kempsey, West Kempsey, Burnt Bridge, Crescent Head and some from South West Rocks.

I retired from my position with Kempsey Shire Council in 2018, so I had spent a number of years developing and implementing projects and sourcing funding and working closely with community at a grass roots level.

As most of the community members I came into contact with were related there were activities and events that connected families from different communities attended.

It was through this connection that I heard the stories about the Bowraville Children and witnessed the sorrow and pain that the deceased children's family, friends and many of the Non Aboriginal Community of the Macleay Valley felt, whenever there was a discussion or newspaper report, even those people like myself that did not live in the Macleay Valley at the time of the murders were affected by what had happened to these children.

What I noticed was that for at least 17 years after I moved to Kempsey, I heard these stories many time and there was never any difference that I noticed in the stories told.

I have no hesitation in stating that I truly believe that this Appeal and Review Amendment Double Jeopardy Bill should go ahead, I have no idea what the fresh information is that is being brought forward for scrutiny but I do believe that the families concerned deserve every chance to set their minds at rest that Justice has been done.

Thank you for taking the time to read this submission

Yours truly

Mavis Jean Symonds