



TERROR IN THE SKY

EgyptAir evidence of blast aboard MS804 {WORLD P9}

BRAIN BENDER

How screens are rewiring our children's minds {INQUIRER P11}



PAUL KELLY {P12}

Labor's policies are the sign of a stupid country

Janet Albrechtsen: Europe's Trump moment



ABORIGINAL CHILDREN'S KILLINGS RETURN TO COURT AFTER GENERATION-LONG CAMPAIGN

Justice over Bowraville murders

DAN BOX
NATIONAL CRIME REPORTER

The generation-long campaign for justice over the unsolved murders of three children from the town of Bowraville in northern NSW has resulted in the suspected serial killers being sent directly back to court.

In a dramatic resolution to the controversy surrounding the murders, NSW Attorney-General Gabrielle Upton yesterday decided to forgo a further review of the evidence and instead refer the case straight to the state's Court of Criminal Appeal.

Overturning the repeated refusals of previous attorneys-

general to allow such a move, Ms Upton broke the news to the murdered children's families in person during an emotional conference call yesterday afternoon. Her decision comes after a long and dogged campaign by the murdered children's families, as well as a 20-year reinvestigation of the case by the NSW Police. It also follows a detailed investigation of the case by *The Australian* in recent weeks.

Should the appeal court decide to review the Bowraville deaths, the man previously acquitted of two of the killings could see that judgment overturned. If that happened, he could then face a retrial in which evidence about all three deaths is heard together in court for the first time.



Colleen Walker

The mother of one of the murdered children, Muriel Craig, yesterday broke down in tears when informed by *The Australian* of Ms Upton's decision.



Clinton Speedy-Duroux

"That's so good, I can't believe it. I'm so happy," said Ms Craig, whose 16-year-old daughter Colleen Walker was the first to go missing, in September 1990.



Evelyn Greenup

Two other children, four-year-old Evelyn Greenup and 16-year-old Clinton Speedy-Duroux, disappeared from the town over the next five months. Evelyn's and

"To their enduring shame, previous NSW governments refused to act when the victims' families urged them to do so over the past decade ... Mike Baird has ensured that however belatedly, justice can now be done

EDITORIAL P13

Clinton's bodies were found dumped beside a dirt road outside the town. Colleen's clothes were recovered from a nearby river but her body has not been found.

"I'm still in shock. The thought that now I might at least be able to find out something about what happened to Colleen," Ms Craig said yesterday.

Evelyn's aunt, Michelle Jarrett, said: "I'm ecstatic. I'm so happy, I never thought we'd get to this stage. It's really fantastic news."

Ms Jarrett, who was among the relatives who heard the decision directly from Ms Upton, said that during the call "I started crying. I think we all did."

Leonie Duroux, whose late partner was Clinton's brother and who also took part in the conference call, said: "I wanted to scream, really excited. We just wanted that chance to argue about the three cases together."

Bowraville resident Jay Hart has previously been charged with killing Evelyn and Clinton but was found not guilty of each after a judge ordered the cases be heard in separate trials. NSW Police have long argued this meant evidence of similarities between the three killings, and of Mr Hart's alleged links to each, were never heard in court.

Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione this week personally signed off on a formal application to Ms Upton, calling for the cases to be sent to the appeal court.

Over the past decade, previous NSW attorneys-general and at least one director of public

Continued on Page 2

COMMENT P2

Business united in push for PM's economic agenda



Stevens casts doubt on Coalition's surplus timeline

ADAM CREIGHTON
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

Reserve Bank governor Glenn Stevens has added his voice to the chorus of concerns that the budget will not return to surplus as planned in 2021, foreseeing "quite some years of hard repair work ahead" as optimistic forecasts are nudged by reality. Speaking off the cuff at a forum of business leaders in Sydney yesterday, Mr Stevens said the Treasury and Finance department chiefs were right to highlight risks to the government's forecasts in their pre-election fiscal outlook, released last week.

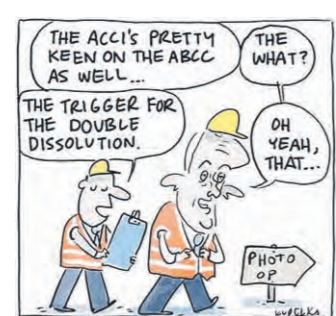
"The budgetary situation will be OK if nothing else goes wrong, but you can't really assume in life that nothing will go wrong over an extended period," Mr Stevens said. "That's the reality and it is good the two secretaries made that clear."

In some of his last public remarks as governor before he retires in September, Mr Stevens pointedly dismissed calls to lower the RBA's 2-3 per cent inflation target to reflect the trend towards ultra-low inflation here and abroad.

"I think it is the best monetary framework we've ever had and we've tried most of them," he said. "For a while now, technically, inflation has

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BUSINESS P19



turn on the spend-o-meter by billion-dollar Bill.

Challenged on whether he had an answer on economic growth, Mr Shorten said: "Labor's plan for economic growth is jobs, education, Medicare, renewable energy, fair taxation, access for first-home buyers into the housing market. Our economic plan is all about fairness."

While the mention of Medicare as an economic growth plan raised

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MORE REPORTS P6-8
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Xenophon, his donor and the Timor tie-up



THE DONATIONS
"If you give someone \$1000, you support them. If you give them \$100,000, you own them."

Nick Xenophon, left, on corporate donations in 2010

Donations from Ian Melrose, right, his companies and associates:

2014-15: \$15,000 from Ian Melrose, chief executive of the Optical Superstore chain

2014-15: Two separate donations of \$65,000 and \$35,000 from Golden Lineage Pty Ltd a company of which Melrose is sole director and shareholder

2015-16: Golden Lineage has donated \$60,000 this financial year

THE BUSINESS LINK

ACTARA PTY LTD 064 663 154	
ASIC - Current & Historical Extract - ACTARA PTY LTD ACN: 064 663 154	
CURRENT COMPANY OFFICERS	
Role: Director	Role: Director
Name: COLLAERY, BERNARD JOSEPH E	Name: MELROSE, IAN NOEL

Ian Melrose is a director of a company with Bernard Collaery, a lawyer and East Timor advocate

THE EAST TIMOR CONNECTION

IAN MELROSE: Spent millions of dollars on an advertising campaign in 2005 against the Australian government in an effort to embarrass it into negotiating a better deal with the East Timorese over oil and gas revenue from the Timor Sea. Melrose has spent years campaigning on behalf of East Timor



BERNARD COLLAERY: Alleged in 2013 that two ASIO agents raided his office and seized files, eventually returned. Collaery, left, was representing a witness in a case brought by East Timor against the Australian government over the bugging of the East Timor cabinet offices during the negotiations for a petroleum and gas treaty in 2004

NICK XENOPHON: In November 2015 called for a royal commission on East Timor spying. "This is the biggest intelligence scandal in this country in the past generation. It warrants a royal commission, it warrants a judicial inquiry, a forensic examination of what occurred here because this has damaged Australia's reputation"

KELLY BARNES

EXCLUSIVE

MEREDITH BOOTH
CHRISTINE LACY
STEPHEN FITZPATRICK

The relationship between Nick Xenophon and his biggest financial backer has been called into question, with a request to the Australian Electoral Commission to investigate donations to the South Australian independent senator as details emerge of a business link between the donor and a lawyer who was raided by ASIO.

All three have a link in a history of support for East Timor.

Wealthy spectacles retailer Ian Melrose, who has a business partnership with human rights lawyer Bernard Collaery QC, has donated \$175,000 to the Nick Xenophon Team, including paying fees for a consultant to help in the party's launch in December 2014.

ALP national secretary George Wright this week formally asked the Australian Electoral Commission to examine whether donations from Mr Melrose to Senator Xenophon were in fact loans, and therefore in breach of the electoral act. This followed a March report in *The Australian* that Senator Xenophon had described several contributions from Mr Melrose as

INSIDE

Nick Xenophon has been caught between his rhetoric and his need to take sizeable donations.

PETER VAN ONSELEN P8

being in the nature of a loan and that "my ambition is to hand a cheque back to (Melrose) once we get up and running".



Amid intensifying scrutiny on the payments, Senator Xenophon and Mr Melrose said yesterday they viewed the businessman's contributions as donations without any expectation of reimbursement being made. "It would be great not to have to rely on these donations but I'd be making a rod for my own back not to accept them," Senator Xenophon said.

A fierce advocate of transparency with political donations, Senator Xenophon said in 2010: "If you give someone \$1000, you support them; if you give them \$100,000, you own them."

Asked yesterday whether he "owned" Senator Xenophon

through donations, Mr Melrose said: "I cannot own somebody with morals like Nick. It's not possible."

Some of the contributions were being spent at about the same time Senator Xenophon appeared with Mr Collaery and former NSW director of public prosecutions Nicholas Cowdery QC last November to call for a royal commission into the 2004 bugging of East Timor's cabinet offices.

The accusation — by a former Australian Secret Intelligence Service employee who has legal representation by Mr Collaery — is that the Australian government, under John Howard, sought to

Continued on Page 8

Peris's race run after just one term

SARAH MARTIN
JOE KELLY

Nova Peris's political career has ended as controversially as it started, after the Olympic champion shocked the Labor Party by quitting her safe Northern Territory Senate position in the middle of the election campaign.

Less than three years after Julia Gillard made a controversial "captain's pick" to install her into parliament, Senator Peris has left Labor scrambling for a replacement candidate.

The shock announcement that she was "moving on" from politics, which she did not convey to her



Nova Peris

staff before making the public announcement, comes amid fervent speculation about whether the former athlete will move into a high-profile AFL position.

It emerged on Monday night that Senator Peris had approached

senior AFL executives about the position as the organisation's head of diversity. However, *The Australian* understands she is not the presumptive candidate for the hotly contested role, which is expected to be filled within weeks.

It is understood the AFL position would pay more than a senator's salary of \$199,040. Industry sources suggested the diversity role would pay about \$250,000.

Ms Gillard tweeted last night that she had no doubt Senator Peris would "continue to make her mark". While Bill Shorten praised Australia's first indigenous female

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COMMENT P8

Palaszczuk warned on fund raid

EXCLUSIVE

SARAH ELKS
GEOFF CHAMBERS

The Palaszczuk government has been warned against stripping too much cash from Queensland's \$30 billion defined benefits superannuation scheme as part of its anti-privatisation agenda.

Queensland Treasurer Curtis Pitt yesterday confirmed he was considering using the fully funded scheme's multi-billion-dollar surplus to chip away at the state's nation-leading debt and to build infrastructure. Union bosses cautiously backed the move but

former NSW Liberal premier Nick Greiner, who ran Infrastructure NSW, said "at first blush it sounds like first-class lunacy". "It's a confusion between roles (of politicians and the defined benefits scheme) and I certainly think it's going to have a higher risk; you're spending this money on things that will have a higher risk than you would otherwise do," Mr Greiner said.

Former QSuper chief executive Rosemary Vilgan, who ran the fund for 18 years, said it would be unprecedented but acceptable for the Palaszczuk government to take money from the fund.

FULLREPORT P2
EDITORIAL P13

Turnbull 'arrogant' but voters like him

NEWSPOLL

HOW THE LEADERS RATE

	Feb 2016	May 2016
DECISIVE AND STRONG		
TURNBULL	66	63
SHORTEN	43	52
ARROGANT		
TURNBULL	55	60
SHORTEN	49	47
TRUSTWORTHY		
TURNBULL	59	56
SHORTEN	44	49

FULL TABLES P6

EXCLUSIVE

PHILLIP HUDSON
CANNBERA BUROAU CHIEF

Voters have rated Malcolm Turnbull as a highly likeable and experienced leader with a vision for Australia but have marked him down as becoming more arrogant.

Bill Shorten is considered to be in touch with voters and more caring for people but judged to be less trustworthy than the Prime Minister.

A special Newspoll, taken for *The Australian*, finds the Labor leader has improved his standing across the board on a range of character traits over the past three months while Mr Turnbull's rating has deteriorated on eight of the nine measures.

The poll found just 51 per cent of those surveyed said Mr Turnbull was in touch with voters, a fall of three points since the question was last asked in mid-February.

This was the measure where Mr Shorten posted his largest rise in support, leaping 12 points to 60 per cent.

But in a sign voters are feeling a greater disconnect with their leaders, both men fell short of the levels achieved on this question by the three former prime ministers who were dumped in office by their parties — Julia Gillard, Kevin Rudd and Tony Abbott.

Similarly, the past prime ministers rated higher than the two incumbents on the question of whether they cared for people.

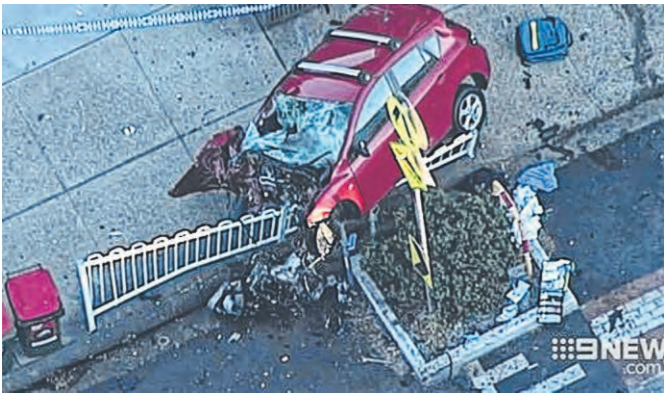
Mr Shorten fared better, with 65 per cent agreeing the Labor Leader cared for people, a rise of five points, while Mr Turnbull's support on this measure fell from 60 to 57 per cent.

Mr Shorten also improved markedly on the question of being decisive and strong, rising nine points from a very weak base to 52 per cent and halving the 23-point margin enjoyed by his rival

Continued on Page 6



YOUR NATION



A woman died in a car crash at Carlton in Sydney's south

Woman dies in crash, pedestrian injured

NSW: A 50-year-old woman has died after she was thrown from her car in a crash in Sydney's south. A pedestrian, a man believed to be in his 30s, was also seriously injured when he was hit by the car while crossing a street in suburban Carlton, police say. He was taken to St George Hospital suffering facial and internal injuries.

perished. "I disagree, sir," Khan repeatedly told the prosecutor during a day of intense cross-examination at his NSW Supreme Court trial yesterday. The trial continues.

MP calls for inquiry on child sexualisation

SOUTH AUSTRALIA: The Liberal opposition has called for a parliamentary inquiry into the sexualisation of children.

Opposition spokesman Duncan McFetridge says parents have reported concerns about sexting, the exposure of young people to pornography and televised sexual violence. "I have had reports of children acting out disturbing behaviour at school, kindergartens and play groups amongst their peers and in normal social situations where this type of behaviour is clearly unacceptable, and we have to ask why this is a growing trend," he said yesterday.

Magistrate mystified by celebrity egging

NSW: A Sydney magistrate says she is baffled as to why a woman would throw eggs at Kendall and Kylie Jenner, even if she hated the Kardashians stars. Clancy Florence Leach pleaded guilty yesterday to a charge of offensive behaviour for throwing at least one egg during a fan meet-and-greet attended by the celebrity siblings at Westfield Parramatta in Sydney's west on November 17. "She may hate the Kardashians and Jenners, but what possessed her to go to a place... and from a height throw eggs?" Magistrate Margaret McLynn told the Parramatta Local Court. "I have evidence that one landed on a child and made her cry." About 3000 people attended the event. Leach, 25, from Punchbowl, also had two charges of assaulting police dismissed yesterday. She will be sentenced on June 6.

Pedophile released on strict supervision

QUEENSLAND: A pedophile with an "entrenched history of sexual offending" against young girls has been granted release from prison. A Supreme Court judge yesterday ordered Brett Joseph Falls, 49, be subject to a strict supervision order for the next decade to protect the community. Falls was first convicted of a sexual offence in 1980 and was last jailed in 2014 for grooming and procuring to engage in a sexual act with a 13-year-old girl via Facebook.

Tattoo on dumped arm identifies victim

VICTORIA: Three "ice" users accused of murder allegedly were brought undone by a distinctive devil tattoo identified on their victim's dismembered arm after it was pulled from a Melbourne river. Con George Spaliaris, Matthew David Brennan and Edward Lionel Hill, all of North Melbourne, have all pleaded not guilty to the murder of Brendan David Bernard, 32, whose body parts were found in February last year. Prosecutor Gavin Silbert QC told the Victorian Supreme Court that the three dumped Bernard's remains in the river — except for his head, hands and feet — so he would not be identified, but failed to account for the tattoo that led to his identification. The trial continues today.

Rozelle trader denies starting fatal fire

NSW: Sydney man Adeel Ahmad Khan has denied under oath that he deliberately set his Rozelle shop on fire in a desperate bid to escape lease obligations that backfired when three people died. The 46-year-old has repeatedly denied accusations from crown prosecutor Mark Tedeschi QC that he started the September 2014 blaze and then concocted a story about robbers after learning Bianka O'Brien and her baby son Jude and their neighbour Chris Noble had

Would-be bank robber settles for till cash

TASMANIA: A bearded man who attempted to rob a bank in Hobart has escaped with all the money from a nearby department store. The man entered the Westpac branch at Moonah just before 1.30pm yesterday and unsuccessfully demanded cash before dashing to a nearby Harris Scarfe store. Police say the man, aged about 40 and with a beard and of slim build, stole all the money from the shop's cash register. They said he appeared to be unarmed.

Caution urged on mining super

EXCLUSIVE

SARAH ELKS GEOFF CHAMBERS

The Palaszczuk government has been warned against stripping too much cash from Queensland's \$30 billion public service defined benefits superannuation scheme as part of its anti-privatisation agenda.

Queensland Treasurer Curtis Pitt yesterday confirmed he was considering using the fully funded scheme's multi-billion-dollar surplus to chip away at the state's nation-leading debt and to build infrastructure.

Union bosses yesterday cautiously backed the move but former NSW Liberal premier Nick Greiner, who ran Infrastructure NSW, said "at first blush it sounds like first-class lunacy".

"It's a confusion between roles (of politicians and the defined

benefits scheme) and I certainly think it's going to have a higher risk; you're spending this money on things that will have a higher risk than you would otherwise do," Mr Greiner said.

Former QSuper chief executive Rosemary Vilgan, who ran the super fund for 18 years, told *The Australian* it would be unprecedented but acceptable for the Palaszczuk government to take money from the fund.

"Fundamentally, these are voluntary reserves kept by the state — they don't have to have them, they've been sensible to have them," Ms Vilgan said.

"I support the government giving proper consideration of how to fund debts and infrastructure.

"The moneys sit outside the super fund. They're in a government reserve. They're entirely the property of the government."

However, Ms Vilgan said it was unlikely the fund had a usable surplus of \$11bn. As at June 30, 2015,

Defined benefit schemes across Australia

Queensland: Fully funded with a surplus of \$11bn

NSW: Unfunded liability of \$52bn

Victoria: Unfunded liability of \$26bn

South Australia: Unfunded liability of almost \$13bn

Western Australia: Unfunded liability of almost \$8bn

Source: Queensland Treasury

the state actuary said the accrued surplus (using a projected 7 per cent rate of return on investment) was \$11.6bn. However, on the more conservative accounting basis, which assumes no investment risk is taken, the surplus was estimated to be \$3.8bn.

"The actual realisation on future investment returns has got to be taken fairly carefully," Ms Vilgan told *The Australian*.

Mr Pitt said Queensland was the only Australian jurisdiction to fully fund its defined benefit superannuation liabilities. He said if all of the 49,000 members of the

scheme collected their super entitlements at once, the scheme would still be in surplus.

"The government is considering a range of options including repatriating a portion of the large surplus in the QSuper Defined Benefit Scheme, in accordance with advice from the State Actuary, allowing us to invest in the infrastructure our growing state needs," he said.

Mr Pitt said the government would not cut public-sector jobs and would not sell assets.

Opposition Leader Tim Nicholls said Labor "never saw some-

one else's money they couldn't get their hands on and waste".

Former Labor Brisbane lord mayor Jim Soorley backed the use of the surplus to pay down debt.

But he warned the surplus should not be totally consumed because if there was an economic downturn, the state might be forced to top up the fund.

"Interest rates are so low, everyone should be borrowing to build infrastructure," Mr Soorley said.

Former state Labor treasurer David Hamill backed Mr Pitt's strategy and said it was "perfectly reasonable" as long as it was in line with the State Actuary's advice.

Mr Pitt's office refused to release the advice yesterday, saying it would be published at the June 14 budget.

Together Union secretary Alex Scott, who represents the state's public servants, cautiously supported the proposal, but warned if the government did not fulfil its

promise to protect entitlements it would take legal action.

The entitlements are protected under state and federal legislation.

South Australia's Labor treasurer Tom Koutsantonis said Queensland's decision was fine as the scheme was "fully funded".

West Australian Treasurer Mike Nahan said his state's unfunded superannuation liability was estimated to be \$8bn at June 30 this year, declining to a forecast \$7.4bn by 2019-20.

"With all unfunded super schemes now closed to new members, this liability will continue to decline over time," Mr Nahan said.

"The state government has no plans to change this."

The Victorian government declined to comment.

EDITORIAL P13

Journos hold to media critic

DARREN DAVIDSON MEDIA EDITOR

The journalists' union will stick with the divisive appointment of Matthew Ricketson despite the prospect of more resignations as membership declines.

Last night, members of the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance's national media section subcommittee voted to keep the academic as the union's representative on the Australian Press Council even though Professor Ricketson refused to disavow controversial views.

After Professor Ricketson defended his position on a proposal to create a watchdog to oversee the press, a decision was put to a vote.

Members cast their vote by saying "aye" or "no", sources saying there were a number of dissenting voices opposed to his position on the Press Council.

A statement issued by the MEAA to *The Australian* confirmed the decision, and said Professor Ricketson had agreed to represent the union's position on press regulation even though it was at odds with his own views.

"Today the NMS (subcommittee) has received a report about the complaints received from a number of members about that appointment," the statement said. "We have carefully considered the complaints and understand the concerns raised."

"We oppose any government media regulator. As stated in our submissions to the Convergence Review, and many times since, there should be a single independent industry funded complaints body. This should be on the existing model of the Press Council and take over the complaints function currently performed by ACMA (Australian Communications and Media Authority). As a precondition to his appointment, Matthew Ricketson agreed he would represent that position and all other MEAA policy positions on the Press Council."

Four years ago, Professor Ricketson helped former judge Ray Finkelstein produce a report calling for a government-funded statutory regulator of newspaper content with extraordinary powers to enforce decisions through court orders that would result in journalists receiving huge fines and prison sentences.

By repeatedly citing the Finkelstein report in a personal submission to a recent Senate inquiry, critics say, Professor Ricketson has shown he still believes the ideas in the Finkelstein report are valuable.

The MEAA invited Professor Ricketson to represent it on the Press Council despite its opposition to Mr Finkelstein's so-called News Media Council.

The editor of the *Geelong Advertiser*, Liam Houlihan, resigned from the MEAA in protest. Critics of the appointment have argued the MEAA has lost credibility by forcing Professor Ricketson to embrace the union's policies while sitting on the Press Council.

The Ricketson decision comes as the MEAA grapples with issues including press freedom, metadata retention laws and a contracting membership base.

Justice over Bowraville children's murders

Continued from Page 1

prosecutions have refused to allow this to happen.

Ms Upton had been widely expected to refer the new retrial application to an independent assessor but, in a written statement, said yesterday: "After careful consideration, I have decided that there should be no further delay in bringing this matter to court. I have met their families and understand the pain and suffering they experience every day more than 25 years after the death of the children."

Ms Upton has engaged a former South Australia director of public prosecutions, Wendy Abraham QC, to appear on her behalf in the appeal hearing.

The appeal court will now hear evidence about the deaths of both Clinton and Evelyn before deciding whether to overturn the previous acquittals of Mr Hart. Should that happen, the court can then order he face trial over all three killings.

"The court must be satisfied that the evidence is fresh, compelling and that a retrial is in the interests of justice," Ms Upton said. "While there can be no certainty whatsoever about the outcome, this is the course of action that promises a sense of closure for all involved."

The case itself continues to divide Bowraville today.

The three children were all Aboriginal while Mr Hart is white. The initial police investigation into the children's disappearance has since been criticised for a series of decisions that might have meant vital evidence was lost. Among these was the fact that each of the victim's families was told their child might have gone "walkabout" by police, who spent months treating them as missing children rather than potential murder victims.

Mr Hart, who could not be contacted last night, denies playing any role in the children's deaths.

He is expected to be charged with the murders of Clinton and



Michelle Jarrett, in Bowraville yesterday, with a picture of her niece Evelyn when she was three years old

SPECIAL PODCAST SERIES DAN BOY'S BOWRAVILLE MURDERS Episodes 1-5 available now Listen to the full investigation NOW ON TABLET, PHONE AND AT theaustralian.com.au/bowraville

Evelyn in order to allow the cases to go to the appeal court.

Detective Chief Inspector Gary Jubelin, who has spent 20 years reinvestigating the killings, said yesterday: "I gave a commitment to the families to do everything humanly possible" to pursue the case. He delivered the 18-volume brief of evidence to the Attorney-General's offices yesterday, later saying it represented

an "opportunity to get justice and it's a hope that justice will come".

State MP David Clarke, who chaired a 2014 NSW parliamentary inquiry into the killings, said its members were "united ... in wanting to see justice for the victims and also for the relatives and the Bowraville community". "We wait in anticipation to see what happens from here. But we all want to see justice," he said.

Scheme safeguards heritage and future

STEPHEN FITZPATRICK INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS EDITOR



Jaimee Moran

For Jaimee Moran, winning a scholarship to a prestigious boarding school immersed her more deeply in her indigenous heritage than she could ever have imagined.

Jaimee, now 17 and a first-year nursing student at Griffith University in Brisbane, spent six years at The Cathedral School of St Anne and St James in Townsville, thanks to the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation.

The foundation, which has grown in seven years to have more than 500 students in exclusive boarding schools nationwide, has raised about \$100 million to advance its cause. Since 2008 it has produced 31 Year 12 graduates and 19 university graduates.

At tonight's Sydney launch of AIEF's annual report, Indigenous Affairs Minister Nigel Scullion is expected to announce further federal funding for the scheme, which began with \$20m from then prime minister Kevin Rudd and has received a total \$38m government support.

AIEF director Andrew Penfold believes the scheme has the capacity to double. "It would cost around \$20m a year to be putting 1000 students through," he said yesterday. Critical to identifying extra schools that might join the present 35 participants, Mr Penfold said, were institutions that "have a critical mass of indigen-

ous kids, that have indigenous-specific programs, that celebrate indigenous culture and heritage".

That is one of the reasons the experience was so significant for Jaimee, and her younger sister Orana, in year 11 at the same school. With the indigenous side of their extended family in Wollongong, south of Sydney, where they spent their early years, the girls were living with their non-indigenous mother in central Queensland — so that "critical mass" at the heart of AIEF policy became a cultural lifesaver.

"Moving away from NSW there was a sense of leaving that (identity) behind," she said.

Wrong path to the right destination

CHRIS MERRITT COMMENT



You don't see this too often, so take note: NSW Attorney-General Gabrielle Upton has used the wrong procedure to reach the right outcome.

Normally, the principle of finality is enough to preclude retrials of serious criminal offences. But the inept manner in which the Bowraville murders were handled in the past means

that principle, on this occasion, needs to be set aside.

It would have been preferable, however, if Upton had followed the procedure that was outlined in an extensive report in 2014 by the law and justice committee of the state's upper house.

That committee had recommended "that the merits of any new application for a retrial of the Bowraville murders be considered by an independent assessor, such as a retired senior judge, or senior prosecutor from another jurisdiction".

If Upton had followed that procedure, the outcome would probably have been the same. But by ignoring it, and making the initial assessment herself, she has adopted a procedure that seems heavy on politics and light on principle.

If anyone doubts that, read her press release of yesterday. It shows that on the same day she received a major brief of evidence on this case from the police she had made a decision "after careful consideration".

Really? Yesterday's move is only the first step. The affair now moves to the Supreme Court.

But it is already clear that responsibility for this breakthrough rests not with Upton and the NSW justice system, but with Dan Box, this newspaper's national crime reporter.

His extraordinary coverage of this scandal — in print and in a series of podcasts — has been the driving force that has given new hope for the bereaved families of Bowraville.

Cape York needs more women's leadership: Pearson

SARAH ELKS QUEENSLAND POLITICAL REPORTER

Cape York leader Noel Pearson is calling for an overhaul of leadership in indigenous communities, pointing to the Aurukun crisis as proof local government alone is not the best model.

Mr Pearson, chairman of the

Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy, said women's groups, traditional owners and elders needed more formal responsibility to work alongside councils.

"We need to revisit the whole question about the appropriateness of leadership structures in communities," he said yesterday.

"Roads, rates and rubbish are just one aspect of the service provision needed in communities;

social leadership is required as well. I really think the women have got to be empowered to take more leadership in the community." Aurukun mayor Derek Walpo did not return calls, but at the weekend said parents needed to step up and take responsibility for their wayward children.

Aurukun, on the western coast of Cape York Peninsula in far north Queensland, has been beset

by outbreaks of youth violence in recent months. The CYAAA campus principal was allegedly carjacked by teenagers with machetes twice in two weeks. For now, teachers are determined to stay and keep the school running.

Mr Pearson said school facilities — including the teaching buildings and the staff housing — were "among the worst" on Cape York. He said if violence and

unrest continued the school would need to be temporarily shut and the teachers removed until infrastructure was upgraded.

Mr Pearson suggested teachers should live in a secure precinct, as nurses and police in the community did now. "The minute these teachers feel that they cannot continue to provide a public service and be safe, I'm the first person to say they should leave."

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