

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Publication of racist cartoon in The Australian a hurtful act

National advocacy organisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights, ANTaR, today expressed outrage at the publication of a racist cartoon in the Australian newspaper.

Bill Leak's cartoon relates to the Royal Commission into the shocking treatment of children in the Northern Territory juvenile justice system, and depicts an Aboriginal father drinking alcohol who doesn't know the name of his son who is being held by a police officer.

ANTaR National Director Andrew Meehan said that the cartoon demeans Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and will cause enormous hurt after what has been a traumatic time for many First Peoples following the frightening footage of mistreatment of young Aboriginal people shown on Four Corners last week.

"It reminds me of the cartoons published in newspapers early last century and even in the 1800s. The public expect more from a national news outlet," Mr Meehan said.

"The negative health and wellbeing impacts of racism on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is well known and should have been considered before publishing the cartoon," he said.

Mr Meehan also noted that today was National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day which encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to be proud in their culture.

"I can't imagine what message this image sends to a young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person (and their parents) on this of all days," he said.

Mr Meehan said that he would be making a complaint to the Australian Newspaper and the Press Council.

About

ANTaR is the only incorporated non-Indigenous organisation dedicated solely to supporting the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and working to educate the wider community, shape public opinion and speak up for justice, rights and respect for Australia's First Peoples. ANTaR is a member of the Change the Record campaign, people can take the Change the Record pledge to show their support for addressing the incarceration crisis of First Peoples - <https://antar.org.au/webform/change-record-pledge>