Black Inquiry – A Whitewash

The resignation of Mick Palmer from the inquiry into child sex abuse has exposed the level commitment that the Martin Government has to avoiding Aboriginal issues in the Territory.

“When the Federal Minister announced a summit the Chief Minister dismissed his efforts,” Jodeen Carney said today.

“After howls of protests from every quarter for her poor handling of this matter, including her own back bench, the Chief Minister then announced that there would be an inquiry as a matter of urgency. The inquiry was to report by the end of the year.

“After six weeks of waiting for the inquiry to start, the Chief Minister yesterday admitted that the secretariat had not yet been established and that there would be limited public hearings.

“Now the head of the inquiry has resigned leaving the Chief Minister no further down the track than she was six weeks ago.

“Under her management this whole issue has lurched from one disaster to another and sadly the people who are paying the price for her incompetent handling of this affair are the women and children who are being raped and assaulted every day in our communities.

“I would not be in the least bit surprised that a person with the high reputation of Mick Palmer was reluctant to put his name to something that is clearly designed to be a political exercise to give the Chief Minister credibility to an issue she has no commitment to.

“The Federal Minister was keen not to criticise the inquiry when it was announced as long as it wasn’t going to be used as an excuse for inaction. Sadly, there has been six weeks of no action at all other than the loss of the inquiry head.

“Bonson’s comments that Ms Martin was causing hatred because of her handing of this issue have turned out to be prophetic indeed.”