



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATEMENTS ON INDULGENCE

Yirrkala Bark Petitions

SPEECH

Wednesday, 26 June 2013

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Wednesday, 26 June 2013
Page 7130
Questioner
Speaker Abbott, Tony, MP

Source House
Proof No
Responder
Question No.

Mr ABBOTT (Warringah—Leader of the Opposition) (14:05): I support the words of the Prime Minister. The Yirrkala bark petition was the first traditional Indigenous petition ever to be received in this parliament. The petition was acknowledged but not actually acted upon. As the Prime Minister has noted, that which the Yolngu were complaining about went ahead. Nevertheless, it was the beginning of this parliament's consciousness that there were and are in this country Indigenous cultures and Indigenous peoples whose traditions should be respected. Since then we have seen the 1967 referendum, land rights legislation, native title legislation and the national apology. And who knows? If we are our best selves we may soon see Indigenous recognition in the Constitution. This event which we remember today was a small step but it was a first step in a long journey which I hope our nation can soon complete.