

Children Out of Detention

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Message to Parliamentarians: Get all children out of detention now! Vote for Petro's Bills!

ChilOut welcomes the Government's release of 3 year old Naomi Leong and the Prime Minister's move to keep newborn Baby Michael Tran outside the razor wire.

However, **there remain 70 children in immigration detention**. There are toddlers and babies in Port Augusta, Christmas Island, Nauru and Villawood detention centres.

There are still 6 other babies who have been imprisoned in high security detention centres - with razor wire, electronic fences and infrared devices - since their births:

Baby Paea – Tongan boy, 2 months
Baby Daniel – Korean boy, 4 and a half months
Baby Lina – Taiwanese girl, 8 months
Baby Tina – Chinese girl, 12 months
Baby Saqlain Abbas – Afghan boy, 33 months
Baby Bonnie – Chinese girl, 38 months

ChilOut spokesperson, Dianne Hiles, appealed today to Minister Vanstone to **release all 70 children immediately, together with their parents**. "It is irrelevant whether the families have arrived by boat or aeroplane. Children must not be detained full stop – that is international law, and Australia has agreed to abide by it. They must never be discriminated against on the grounds of their parents' immigration status. All children are entitled to the same treatment."

One year after the federal Human Rights Commissioner set a deadline for the release of all children from detention, the Government is still ignoring the key recommendations of his National Inquiry into Children in Immigration Detention report, *A Last Resort?*, namely:

1. Children should be released from detention centres and residential housing projects within four weeks of the tabling of the report (i.e. by no later than 10 June 2004);
2. Australia's laws should incorporate a presumption against the detention of children;
3. Australia's laws should require independent assessment of the need to detain children within 72 hours of any initial detention;
4. Australia's laws should be amended so that bridging visas are readily available to families;
5. Australia's laws should contain minimum standards of treatment of children in detention centres;
6. Australia should review the impact of 'Pacific Solution' and 'excision' measures on children.

Ms Hiles said, "Those who share ChilOut's abhorrence of this sickening policy carried out in our name can call upon their parliamentarians to vote for Petro Georgiou's Private Member's Bills to end it."

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