



# WA Libs boycott apology ceremony

**NICK BUTTERLY and RHIANNA KING  
CANBERRA**

A third of WA Liberal MHRs snubbed yesterday's apology to the Stolen Generation, refusing to attend the official parliamentary ceremony — despite the "sorry" motion being supported unconditionally by their party.

Wilson Tuckey, Don Randall, Dennis Jensen and new member Luke Simpkins all refused to take part in the moving apology motion yesterday, while in the Senate Liberal Mathias Cormann attended the reading of the sorry text but later made a speech saying he did not agree with it.

Six coalition MPs in the Lower House and two in the Senate did not attend the reading of the apology, with WA Liberals the biggest group of dissenters.

Mr Tuckey made his opposition to the sorry motion clear by entering the House of Representatives for the recital of the Lord's Prayer only to leave

moments later when Kevin Rudd rose to say sorry on behalf of the Parliament.

He deliberately recited the prayer at great volume to make his presence known before leaving.

"I wanted to be sure the message got through," Mr Tuckey said, when asked why he had recited the prayer so loudly. "I thought the best contribution I could make on this whole smoke and mirrors approach to serious issues was to say a prayer. I have no intention in participating in spin."

Dr Jensen revealed that the Liberal Party whip had lobbied him against abstaining from the motion.

"It was pretty clear to me that my constituents by and large did not support an apology," he said.

Dr Jensen, whose electorate is in the southern Perth suburbs, argued that the Federal Government should not have to apologise for a practice that was carried out under State laws.

Mr Simpkins warned that now the Federal Government had officially

said sorry, many indigenous people would use that as an excuse whenever they failed at something. "The people of WA are more interested in action than symbolism," Mr Simpkins said.

Senator Cormann said he was concerned about the use of the term "stolen generation" and objected to a process he said was passing judgment on previous generations of Australians.

"I'm concerned about us, representing this generation of Australians, sitting in judgment over the actions and motivations of past generations of Australians," Senator Cormann told the Senate.

The only other two Liberals to opt out of attending the sorry reading in the lower house were NSW MP Alby Schultz and Victorian MP Sophie Mirabella.

Reconciliation Australia co-chairman and former Fraser government Aboriginal affairs minister Fred Chaney said he was disappointed in the reaction from the WA MPs.

## THE LIBERAL RECALCITRANTS



WILSON TUCKEY

**I have no intention in participating in spin.**



DENNIS JENSEN

**It was pretty clear to me that my constituents by and large did not support an apology.**



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	<p>DON RANDALL <b>I am on the record enough on this matter.</b></p>
	<p>LUKE SIMPKINS <b>People in WA are more interested in action than symbolism.</b></p>