

## “Racism and Injustice Drives Australian Aborigine Family Out Of Their Country”

Letty Scott Nupanunga, wife of Australian Aboriginal Douglas Scott who was tortured and killed in Australia while in unlawful detention for 60 days for the use of ‘indecent language’ in the presence of police officers, has now applied for Asylum in the United States of America. Fearing for her life, Mrs. Scott has been forced to leave the country with her family after being continuously harassed for trying to bring the people responsible for her husband’s death to justice.

Her fight for justice, is supported by a plethora of evidence and eyewitness testimonies documenting that Douglas Scott was unlawfully detained, tortured to death and finally hung in his cell at the Darwin Prison of the Northern Territory of Australia, in the early hours of the 5<sup>th</sup> of June 1985.

Shortly after Douglas death, The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody in Australia suggested that Douglas committed suicide. Their poor investigation however and their attempt to cover up Douglas’ murder was revealed this year, when the experienced Forensic Investigative Committee that investigated JFK’s and Martin Luther King’s death published a Reconstruction Report into the Death of Douglas Scott, questioning both the integrity of the Australian authorities’ conduct into the case and the conclusions of the Royal Commission. In particular, according to the Reconstruction Report, “[Douglas] internal injuries are more consistent with manual neck compression than with hanging mechanisms” (Reconstruction Report 29/6/2000, p. 15,14). Concluding the report, the Forensic Investigative Committee strongly recommended further investigation into Douglas’ Scott death.

Letty Scott has been vigorously trying to re-open Douglas’ murder case. In one of her attempts however, she was faced with Royal Commissioner Elliot Johnson QC who warned her, “Listen here girlie, don’t you try to fight this case...leave this case alone... He was only a black man anyway....”

Unable to accept, the racist ‘suicide’ rationale behind the death of more than 300 aborigines in custody since the 1980s, Letty Scott Nupanunga continues to fight for justice. She has endured fifteen years of intimidation, and serious physical and physiological abuse both as an Aborigine Australian citizen who is seeking justice for her husband’s torture and murder and as a human rights activist fighting racism and discrimination in her country. Fearing for her life Mrs. Scott has now applied for political asylum in the United States. In her last cry for justice, she states, “Aboriginal people are fourth class citizens in a supposedly democratic society...We are not white but colored people. For this, we are still looking for the lady of Justice..” and continues, “There is no justice in Australia...Australia has two laws, one for the white people and another for the colored...Colored, ethnic minorities and refugees are treated in an evil way...I want to know why we are treated as inferior beings in Australia...”

In the eve of the *World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance*, which will be taking place next year in South Africa, Letty Scott’s words call for the attention of political leaders and human rights activist around the world as they prepare their contributions to the World Conference and the future of racism in the new millennium.

Elina Stamou, **Sikh Human Rights Group**  
Tel. 020 8 840 3222, 020 8 579 8898.  
Fax. 020 8 579 7439  
Letty Scott Nupanunga  
Tel. ++61 415 269 376

The Sikh Human Rights Group works towards the protection of human rights of individuals, minorities and displaced people, around the world, regardless of race, religion or political opinion.