

# Speech - Aboriginal Cultural Movement

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At: Intervention Forum, Adelaide, SA 5 May 2010

I have often heard the old people say if country is sick people are sick.

When we take time to reflect upon the state of the living water ways throughout the entirety of this country they tell the story of our people, it is a story of the time many of our Grandfathers and Grandmothers ceased to live and begun the struggle to survive.

Brothers and Sisters the state of the Coorong and the Murray living water ways is a direct portrayal of the cultural erosion of Aboriginal People. The water- ways also expresses our physical and spiritual state of health and well being, they convey very much the story of colonization. They also speak to the very real decay of any clear thought from politicians in relation to Aboriginal Peoples and our Mother Earth.

As human beings we are not divided or separate from earth or sky, what touches the earth touches each of us.

Brothers and Sisters what we see today, what is often written about and incorrectly referred to simply as community dysfunction is actually the collective expression or a group response to oppression. The so-called intervention goes no where near addressing the root causations of what is actually affecting Aboriginal Peoples, I am sure, both Murray George and our guest speaker Richard Downs will go along way to sharing with us just why it doesn't.

In 2007 Murray George and myself sent out a national call to Aboriginal People it went:

*Brothers and Sister enough is enough people must stop and leave our country alone*

*We are the first Peoples of this country colonially referred to as Australia, our People have many languages but we all share the one sun, the one moon, we sleep under the one roof and are sustained by the one Mother Earth, our stories run right throughout our country and we are Brothers and Sisters walking together in the shadow of our Ancestors.*

*We are a strong People with our own Law, our own Languages, our own Way of Life and Social Organisation and it is time now that this be respected, embraced and supported or it will be gone from our sight and our young will be lost to us for all time and one of the oldest continuous living culture on the face of the planet will cease to be.*

*We are sending out a message to our Aboriginal Brothers and Sisters all over to come and sit down with us in country, join with us so that we may come together to speak clearly with a united voice on behalf of our ancestors and our coming generations.*

*It is time that the voice and guidance of our Grandfathers and Grandmothers who are our cultural authorities be listened to and acted upon in accordance with our customs and traditions*

*It is time now that the continued desecration of our culture and way of life through successive and assimilative Government policies end*

*It is time now that we the First Peoples of this country say ENOUGH IS ENOUGH*

Brothers and Sisters I will share with you outcomes of discussions between Richard Downs, Murray George and myself and I present this as a discussion paper for our Brothers and Sisters so you may consider further.

The Aboriginal Law and Culture Movement is an advocating collective our purpose being to maintain, continue and regenerate Aboriginal life-ways consistent with Aboriginal values, beliefs and practices. The Aboriginal Law and Culture Movement state clearly that Aboriginal Law and Culture is central to the future of all Aboriginal Peoples that it is of value and enhances the health and wellbeing of all within the Australian nation.

We acknowledge that we are Brothers and Sisters of the global Indigenous Family and that we are all related through Earth and Sky and share much in common.

We further acknowledge the four colors of the Earths Peoples as the inter-woven network of humanity to which we are all connected.

All members of the Aboriginal Law and Culture Movement (ALACM)

Proclaim:

- Aboriginal culture is a living culture and that our Lands, Languages, Ceremonies and Family relationships are all inter-woven and inter-connected.

The Aboriginal Law and Culture Movement advocates cultural empowerment and identity as a means to attain and maintain physical, spiritual, mental and emotional health and well being for all Aboriginal Peoples and communities

The Aboriginal Law and Culture Movement advocacy is inclusive of the,

- Establishment of inter-Tribal Treaties.
- Maintaining, promoting, educating and advocating for the equal recognition implementation and application of Aboriginal Customary Law and Culture
- Promoting and advocating for the establishment of fully funded Bi-lingual/two-way learning centers and total immersion cultural and language schools.
- The International Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples be acknowledged and implemented as a minimum benchmark for engagement.
- All consultations and negotiations by governments or other vested interest are to be directly with Aboriginal People and their nominated representatives in their communities as a minimum requirement for working together.
- Maintaining, promoting and re-generating connection and protection of land, sea and water Country
- Maintaining, promoting and re-generating Aboriginal languages
- Maintaining, promoting and re-generating ceremonies

To this end; the Aboriginal Law and Culture movement call upon all federal, state and territory Australian governments to enter into negotiations with representatives of the Aboriginal Law and Culture movement (ALACM) to establish the mechanisms for the equal recognition, acceptance, implementation and application of Aboriginal Customary Law.

### Brothers and Sisters

When the first enslaved and dispossessed European refugee Peoples came to our country the state of our country was pristine, the air was so sweet you could pretty much live off it. Our social organisation and way of life was highly evolved yet they called our Ancestors savages primitive heathens in need of civilising.

Some two hundred plus years on the coherency of my Peoples way of life has been reduced to managing the insanity of others and we are barely surviving it. The air is hardly fit to breathe and I'm left wondering, who the real savages are and if indeed they can be civilised at all?

What can we do? Do not lie to the coming generations tell them the truth do not sanitize, rationalize, or justify it, tell it, speak it as it is, if you give nothing else, if you do nothing else, tell the coming generations the truth of the reality as we are living it. Provide them with the tools that allow them to think otherwise they will continue to blindly repeat the same old colonised conditioned behavioral patterns.

Teach them to question authority, all of it, even our own, do not quell it, do not mainline them and sedate them with hope or with some vague dream, some unknowing belief. Allow them to see exactly the reality of what is happening under the guise of democracy give them the tools to break the colonised pattern of behavior we are fixed in now and not just emotionally and predictably react to it because dare I say, for Aboriginal Peoples across the globe democracy is doing exactly as intended as it has always done.

As Aboriginal Peoples our response must be a cultural one we cannot continue to simply mimic the colonizing power structures. As Aboriginal People we must never forget our relationship to earth and sky. When we look over our Children's country let us look through our Grandfathers and Grandmothers eyes, it will give us clarity and the vitality of spirit to continue, when we walk in our Children's country let us remember we walk in the shadow of our Ancestors and allow that to be our guide let that be our protection.

Bothers and Sisters in closing, I would like with your patience to share a poem entitled *Innocent Until Colonised*

## INNOCENT UNTIL COLONISED

Born into resistance Oppressed and confined to boxes neatly lined  
Force-fed hope; values and beliefs not of our choosing  
The; you will be me at all cost equality mentality  
In the name of Gods and Kings with assumed authority  
A plan an ideology reducing land to commodity they steal control of a way of life  
Leaving us exiled to the fringes of well-intentioned thought.  
Living in the out of sight; out of mind; the not quite like; the almost died  
The backward; the unholy; the un-civilized paradigm

Force of arms need not be a constant friend once the mind is colonized  
When our thoughts are programmed to react within the colonizing construct  
Then the need for overt enforcement becomes less so  
But the threat the fear is no less diminished nor the murders  
As special measures; patriotism; them and us partitions Evidence based hypothesis and  
doomsday prophets - immobilize. Seduced into believing we dare not speak we dare not think; we  
dare not look too long.

As long as the colonizing powers deceitfully and forcefully maintain their perceptions of assumed  
authority; as long as we continue to allow the colonizing authorities To frame their lies and  
rationalizations within the construct of the colonizing values and beliefs; so to will the subjugation  
of Earth people continue So too will our Ancestor country be eaten away under the guise of private  
ownership and vested interest neatly packaged hidden in the ambiguity of national interest -  
Democracy; security; real economies and doctrines of discovery

The invasion story is not Columbus - Cook - The British - The Dutch - The French - the Spanish –  
not even a coalition of the willing; they are but the puppeteers pulling strings of fear - invasion is a  
choice a mindset a quickly spread disease a value system set to maximize and terrorize tried and  
tested on the already colonized; the already brutalized Acting with erased memories how can they  
see a people?

Invasion is today Remember friend the first casualty is always memory  
So how is your uncivilized; civilized friend and why do you wash the blood soaked hands of those  
who sing aloud the songs of death celebrating the theft of ancient memory

Earthpeople did not create the ladder of success We did not begin the march of progress We do  
not determine the scale of humanity

Do not call us the primitive - the nomadic - the traditional - the urbanite contemporary, the backward  
- the heathen - the uneducated savage - the aborigine

Earthculture is a way of life we are a people with a way of life Before and after all we are  
Humanbeings; we have our ways, our yes and no

Catching breath; clutching hold; treading water we stay afloat Resistance is a conscious choice my  
friend You - I - we are the alter-native power.

Care for your people Care for your country Do not forget, just don't forget, our ancient Mother cries  
Black Red Yellow White – Innocent until colonized