

Stolen Generation and the NT Intervention “Stop the Intervention, Human rights for all.”

Ngaiyi Niwili. Ngaiyi wur Ngangiwumerri ngi. Dede ngaiyi Malfyin; my name is Niwili My language groups are Ngangikurrungurr and Ngangiwumerri and my country is Malfyin, in the Northern Territory. My mother, Pilawuk White was forcibly removed from her biological family when she was three years old; she was a child of the Stolen Generation. Throughout her adolescent life my mother was moved from school to school, state to state, even given a western name to stop her from finding her family. When mum was sixteen, thirteen years after being forcibly taken away from her family, she finally met her biological mother. The Stolen Generation was a shameful part of Australia's history but even before the federal government said sorry, they introduce the Northern Territory Intervention; an equally racist legislation that completely degrades our heritage, culture and our rights as Aboriginal People. Today I will demonstrate the various ways that the NT Intervention reflects the Stolen Generation and how it humiliates our people.

The Intervention is a confiscation of Aboriginal People's rights; our communities are completely controlled just like the Stolen Generation, where children were forced to follow white laws and even religion. In the Northern Territory special laws apply to Aboriginal communities where money is quarantined and can only be used in major outlets not only making it harder to purchase specific goods but this also slows down small business income. These laws are separating us from society; these laws are racist because they only target Aboriginal people.

In the period that the Assimilation Policy was enforced, Aboriginal People were stereotyped as unintelligent and white people were believed to be superior. Today Aboriginal People, especially men are again stereotyped as alcoholics, pedophiles and abusive towards women and children. Personally, I know several responsible Aboriginal men, definitely not abusive, nor alcoholics or pedophiles.

When the Assimilation Policy was passed, although it directly affected them, it was not presented to the Aboriginal People of Australia so they had no say in their own and their children's future. Again, the NT intervention was rushed through parliament in a single night without Aboriginal consent. I find it very hard to believe that our own government, in a democratic country like Australia, can do such things and not even ask permission from the people it will affect.

My mother often tells me of how hard it was being removed from her family and the anxiety she experienced in those thirteen years of separation. Up home, in Peppimenarti, mum asks our family how things are and they just cry, our Elders are in so much pain from the loss of independence in the community, the loss of culture, language and country.

History is repeating itself; the Government shouldn't abuse us in the same way they abused us in the past we are being denied our basic human rights, our people stereotyped and demonized, we are not being consulted on our own laws and the anxiety is returning.
Yibaetye mindadetyengi mumba tyityipi ngambikat nime ngini.
Walking together all of us in solidarity for what we hope to achieve for the future.