



## **Sovereign Union of First Nations and Peoples in Australia**

*Asserting Australia's First Nations Sovereignty into Governance*

[www.sovereignunion.mobi](http://www.sovereignunion.mobi)

Media Release

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### **Latest Declaration of Independence and the web of controls we need to free ourselves from**

In an Invasion Day/Australia Day message Michael Anderson said from Singleton, NSW, today:

“The latest Declaration of Independence by the Wiradjuri Central West Republic took place at Wellington Council Chambers, NSW, on 22 January 2014. Our valid right to our inherent pre-existing and continuing sovereign independence is the foundation of the Sovereignty Movement, through which our people are finding revived hope and renewed confidence.

[Youtube link: <http://youtu.be/2FquTmKp95A> to **Wiradjuri Central West Republic Flag raising**]

Having just had a meeting with Rosalie Kunoth-Monks, Co-spokesperson of the Sovereign Union, Anderson said that the commitment to the Sovereign Union movement was affirmed and that both spokespersons agree to concentrate our efforts on getting our people to understand the need for national unity, in order to achieve our common purpose and goals.

“We understand the way in which the autocratic and tyrannical leadership of the mainstream politics in Australia is a major treat to the continued Aboriginal identity.

The Sovereignty Movement that is growing rapidly across Australia poses enormous political and legal threats to Australia’s autocracy, who falsely promote, on the international political stage, that they are indeed a world player in international politics. But on this day we call Sovereignty Day and Invasion Day, it is important to identify several key factors that Aboriginal people must acknowledge and the world must learn:

Australia is not a democracy according to its constitution. It is a country that is autocratic in its design, where the leadership has the potential to construct itself as a dictatorship. The constitution belongs to a foreign country, Britain. It is colonial and it permits the passing of racially discriminatory laws.

Prison statistics clearly demonstrate racial profiling and criminalizing of Aboriginality - a most despicable act.

[ <http://thestringer.com.au/australia-the-mother-of-all-jailers-of-aboriginal-people/> ]

This and other tactics are aimed at striking fear into the hearts and minds of our youth, and our people in general, to the degree that some families are forced to reconsider their

support for any Aboriginal movement for fear of persecution and public ridicule by Australia's political elite.

This current strategy resonates with Governor Phillip's 1790 instructions recorded by Watkin Tench:

That we were to cut off and bring in the heads of the slain; for which purpose hatchets and bags would be furnished. ... that against this tribe he [Phillip] was determined to strike a decisive blow, in order at once to convince them of our superiority and to infuse an universal terror, ...

Watkin Tench, Detachment leader, December 1790<sup>1</sup>

The current political mechanisms of government have the ability to, and do, construct a police state bordering on fascism. This fascism is achieved through well coordinated campaigns, which mislead the public into believing the whole community is under threat by the drunken few.

For example, the new anti-association laws, known as the 'bikie laws', have the potential to be applied across the entire population, not only to target bikies, but also mainstream and Aboriginal organisations.

It is now time to examine a few of the economic and legislative controls currently in place, which prevent any hope of self-determination for Aboriginal Peoples.

The way our people are dictated to and controlled prevents self-determination. On one hand we are meant to be equal before the law through equal 'suffrage' – but no way is there equal suffrage for us, because of discrimination and controls through the legislative process. This creates an unequal footing for any chance of economic independence and culturally appropriate development.

When promoting 'close the gap' and 'equality' for Aboriginal people Australian government policies and strategies create a myth and sleight of hand. We must compare statistical improvements to the reality of change on the ground.

[ <http://indymedia.org.au/2013/11/22/wgar-news-close-the-gap-failed-gerry-georgatos-the-stringe> ]

In this respect, we must first examine, the regimes of PM Bob Hawke and Clyde Holding, which were effected and finished off by John Howard.

Governments are shutting down all endeavours by Aboriginal people and their communities to achieve economic self-determination, to the point where almost every Aboriginal owned and controlled Aboriginal organization in this country has now been closed. Instead we see white owned and controlled service provider organisations being funded from the national budget, but are promoted as being good, because they employ Aboriginal to be their front people, e.g. Red Cross, Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul and other church controlled benevolent societies; all former owned Aboriginal housing companies, (aside from the Redfern housing company) are now in the hands of publically owned institutions that the Minister has final say over by law.

The Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) and Indigenous Business Australia (IBA), which

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<sup>1</sup> Tench, Watkin, 1788: *Comprising A Narrative of the Expedition to Botany Bay and A Complete Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson*: Edited and introduced by Tim Flannery, The Text Publishing Company, Melbourne, p. 168.

include the national Aboriginal estate, are controlled and overtly owned by the Commonwealth through legislation. The Minister's consent has to be sought if the institution seeks to transfer administrative control into the hands of the Aboriginal organisation, whose names have been placed on the land deed for the purpose of divestment.

This may be a fine ambition 'to help address dispossession'<sup>2</sup> but the devil is in the detail, since the ILC maintains a caveatable interest over the corporation and its assets. In this way the ILC inhibits, restricts and ultimately controls any possible effort of the people becoming truly economically self-determining and independent.

In respect to the IBA, banks and other institutions are much more lenient in policy than the superimposed criteria and conditions that apply to Aboriginal people and communities. What is painful to accept in relation to the IBA is that the Northern Territory mining royalties collected since 1942 are still controlled by the Commonwealth Minister, even though it is Aboriginal owned money.

Ironically, the Commonwealth government stands up in international fora and displays a map of the massive Aboriginal 'estate', but they do not show the legislative controls, which restrict and restrain the Aboriginal community, under the guise of protectionism - something we as Aboriginal people have become used to.

In other words, the government says: We'll give this to you, but you do it the way we want you to. Any change or alterations to our plan (government plan) will see our support evaporate and we'll review our position and support.

Under the Howard government regime hundreds of Aboriginal organisations were closed down and funds withdrawn. One of Howard's first moves when he came to power in 1996 was to cut the budget to self-determining organisations by \$400 million.

A classic example of this dictatorship is best found in the Murdi Paaki regional authority in western NSW, where in their policies and practices they purport to have community support through community working parties (all voluntary). Yet none of the working parties are incorporated and Murdi Paaki has absolute centralized community control over sixteen Aboriginal communities. Under this regime Murdi Paaki enters communities with proposals for community housing improvements and social reforms but, if the community asks too many questions about outcomes and service delivery, they are quickly rebuked with a response which says: If you don't want it we'll take it somewhere else.

I have seen this type of administrative operation firsthand by being a volunteer participant of the working group in my hometown of Goodooga. It also goes on at Brewarrina, Weilmoringle, Engonnia Wilcannia, Bourke, Conamble, Walgett, Collarenebri, Lightning Ridge, Menindee, Cobar, etc., holding our people to ransom and they have no room to negotiate.

Now there is a new form of tyranny through community control where we see the forced assimilation programs in the Murdi Paaki region, where a centralized giant

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<sup>2</sup> The *Land Fund and Indigenous Land Corporation (ATSIC AMENDMENT) Act 1995* is described as:

An Act, to amend the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989 and certain other Acts so as to establish a Land Fund and an Indigenous Land Corporation to help redress the dispossession of Aboriginal persons and Torres Strait Islanders, and for related purposes.

conglomeration of the Local Government, Land Councils and Murdi Paaki is being developed. The NSW Land Councils are being bludgeoned to use their pitiful little budgets to assist in funding, along with Murdi Paaki, a development package for everyone in their communities. Land Council programs are being assimilated into this conglomerate. Now Aboriginal communities must focus their energy and resources on their own development, because this insidious and evil process of forced assimilation through service delivery is rotten to the core. Assimilated Aboriginal mindsets may not see it this way, because they want to maintain their own personal acceptability within the upper echelons of the non-Aboriginal community and government.

The solutions for us rely on our own right to be self-determining and not under assimilation programs. We must take ownership of our programs without interference through conditional funding.

Our enemy is the government's ambition to maintain collective control over the lives of Aboriginal people by any and all means available. Unfortunately for our people there are too many Aboriginal people in our midst who have other personal ambitions - ideas of personal aggrandisement. On the other hand, many of our people remain defiant, resisting and unassimilated.

The sovereignty movement is showing the way to what self-determination looks like – self government- owning our own land and we will challenge at every turn and take back that which is truly ours. This can only be achieved if we go down the road of asserting our independence and taking back our lands, through our right to be independent and self-determining under international law.

Our right to our own identity is guaranteed and protected by international law.

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