

We The People
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We the People 280 Australia Day Reflection



Good Day to you. A little time has now passed since Australia Day when our country's flag flew outside my home. As Dorothea Mackellar said, "*I love a sunburnt country, a land of sweeping plains, of ragged mountain ranges of droughts and flooding rains*". I am proud of Australia's flag as it represents our past our present and our future. However for some, Mackellar's words don't seem to resonate as they do with me. For them it's not acceptable to celebrate Australia Day on January 26 and so in keeping with the current preoccupation of being perpetually unhappy with life the aborigines created their own flag which doesn't appear to represent many of us with its foreboding angry colours. Why on Australia Day are we are **not united**. Why do a few see the need to change as though it will in some way help Australia mature from a thoroughly evil past. However Australia is not maturing while ever we are referred to as 'non indigenous' as though we are lesser Australians and the term offends me. I was born here and I am by any definition, indigenous. How then can the aborigine seek reconciliation or more money or whatever they want, when they tell me I am not truly Australian.

There is a creeping paralysis in Australia where the voices of the few dominate the voices of the many. Politics seems to believe that being a bully champion of the obscure or minority at any cost somehow justifies their politically correct existence but this relies heavily on adopting a national sense of guilt and shame. It represents a debilitating black arm view of history and with aborigines it ignores the friendship and respect of Governor Philip and Bennelong. It's an infantile game of brinkmanship where the near complete lack of leadership in Australia becomes obvious. In 2008 a grandstanding Kevin Rudd issued an apology to the aborigines for the so called stolen generation. We were assured that this would be a turning point as an apology was all that was required. Well it wasn't true as history now clearly shows and as long as some wake each day to once again go over the past to their own detriment then their lives will not be fulfilled and they will never get out of the bog they're in. Now we are told that the 26th of January is no longer acceptable as the national patriotic day because it represents invasion and genocide and it must be changed. The date is important as it was the day the English brought a common language, civilisation and well tested laws of historic value. A day when a better future was on offer and the inevitable day of colonisation. At around 250 years ago international norms were very different and by today's standards seem out of kilter unless you live in Tibet or Crimea.

It is true that post 1770 the aborigine contracted diseases from the Europeans. It is true the first Australians adopted the devil's drink and it's true that many things occurred which again, by today's standards, were not right or fortunate. Let's be clear here that when primitive man met the Europeans he was at peril because there was no means of communication, no technology and no national unification from which to bargain. Boomerangs, nula nulas and woomera's were the best they had and even the lack of the wheel was the result of millennia of isolated occupation. So the great conundrum was set loose because while they were primitive one cannot congratulate modern man on how he gets on with others or indeed how he looks after the planet. However my point is that in life we all have choices each and every day and those who argue daily and complain will never get anywhere. There are many examples of aboriginal men and women who, when they decide to join us in the twenty first century, excel and enjoy good lives but **they had to make that decision**. As a nation we spend about 33 billion dollars a year on the sector and as the Chair of the Prime Minister's Indigenous Advisory Council, Warren Mundine said...'**we need to find out where the funding waste is**'. Thirty three billion dollars is a huge amount of money and hardly the action of a country which doesn't care. It's time the complaining ceased and a positive act of real reconciliation would be to stop trying to change the day on which we celebrate Australia as a nation. January 26 is Australia Day and represents the hopes and dreams of many and those who want a prosperous peaceful united country. I too am indigenous and of equal value in Australia and I do not carry the national guilt some want and I'm ok with January 26.

Until next time this is Kent Bayley