ON RACE AND RECOGNITION, A MORE COMPLEX COMPLETE COMMONWEALTH

Ideas at the House
Sydney Opera House

Noel Pearson
11 September 2014

Good evening and thank you very much, Rhoda, for your kind introduction and thank you to Louise and the Opera House for affording me this privilege.

I want to acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. I want to say greetings to indigenous people from Sydney. I bring greetings from Cape York Peninsula.

I want to say to Mori and Anna, thank you for your forbearance and patience with me in writing this essay, and Chris Feik for affording me all of the support that you always do.

I want to read from chapters in my essay, but I also just want to talk about some of the background politics leading up to this question of constitutional reform. I read that very excellent essay by Galarrwuy Yunupingu in *The Monthly* five or so years ago. And he goes through the whole history of his political and leadership career, and the prime ministers stretching back to Billy McMahon right up to Kevin Rudd. And I realised then that, like him, I am putting together a collection of prime ministers. But I swear this one is my last one.

I first became involved in public life in 1993 with the campaign for the Native Title Act in the wake of the Mabo decision under the prime ministership of Paul Keating. And it was during that process that I obviously learnt about the whole business of 51% politics. How do you get the good guys to support you, to defend and advocate positions that you want defended? How do you get their support in the Parliament? You need 51% to preserve a decision like Mabo against a likelihood that a Native Title might be extinguished and a victory in the High Court might be set aside.

So, I was a graduate of the University of Sydney Law School when I joined my more esteemed colleagues from the other land councils across Australia, when we got involved in the whole business of left to right 51% politics. And I became a pinup boy for the progressives. It was an easy business then. It is an easy road being a hero to the left and I certainly had my share of hero worship. Then in 1998, the Howard Government proposed the 10 Point Plan in response to the Wik decision that we'd been responsible for with the Cape York Land Council. You'll recall that the Wik case was in Cape York Peninsula. It related to a large swath of land on Western Cape York including Aboriginal reserve lands, pastoral leases and national parks and mining leases. And eventually, the Wik People succeeded in the High Court, but the Howard Government proposed a plan to curtail the rights outlined by the High Court in that decision.

So, we were involved in a very bitter and long campaign with Indigenous leaders and organisations from around the country, where we sought to mobilise public support once again to defend the rights that had just so recently been won in that case. So, it was another kind of exercise in 51% politics, but of course, the bad guys were in this time. We were on the 49% side. And thanks to the late Senator Harradine, we remained on the 49% side of that argument. And the 10-point plan prevailed and the Wik decision was quite substantially trimmed back from the position that the High Court had articulated.

It was during that process and was over a two-year period, and I was going to say, I've never been so maddened by politics as during that period, but that's not true. But it was an extremely torrid time for all of us that were involved in that campaign because it was such an unjust thing that the then federal government was doing. But it was during that process when there was a long stalemate and lots of argument that the late Ron Castan QC, the original barrister who took the Mabo case up in the 1980's on behalf of the people of Murray Island. And Ron had become for me, a great mentor, a great lawyer, and a great humanitarian. And I had come into his fellowship in the Melbourne Jewish Community. He was, you know, I can still remember his phone number, 96087001. It was like every time I called that he answered, whatever kind of problems I had, Ron would be at the other end of that phone.

Anyway, Ron convened a process that was later dubbed the Bennelong Group. And the idea was that, and Ron's thinking was, that we needed to get together a host of conservative leaders from the farming sector, form the national party, from mining, some of the hardest right-winged characters in politics and business at that time. This was in 1998. And Ron's idea along with a former chief minister of the Northern Territory called Ian Tuxworth, their view was that we could possibly identify some common ground with the far right. And I was sceptical about this idea, but I participated in the process with fellow Indigenous leaders and we had a series of meetings trying to find some consensus that would preserve the Wik decision whilst at the same time, addressing the concerns of pastoralists and farmers and so on. So, I won't say who those figures were that were involved in that process, but they were quite egregious in their orientation.

And the interesting thing I learnt during that process was that these guys were more decent than the public and we gave them credit for, and it should have been of little surprise to us that people who were probably more acquainted with Aboriginal people than say people from Sydney. These were people from out in the sticks in the regions, in the country towns who'd known black fellas all their lives. And when we sat in the room with them and talked to them about a possible way forward, they were unstintingly gracious.
And of course, their graciousness increased the more we didn't derive with a bunch of lefties. It's like they kind of retreated to a certain kind of position when we came at them from the left. Of course, if you're going to turn up with a leftie lawyer, they're going to immediately get defensive.

So, I learnt during that 1998 process, that in fact, the things that they were prepared to support, you would not believe. And I realised that these two tribes in the white fella world that were at each other's throats, and to the extent that we kind of were identified with one of the tribes, we got squashed in between them. And in fact, if we found a way of transcending that polarity, we could discover more support across the spectrum then we had previously ever experienced. That's when I understood about 90% strategies. And so, if we plot to the whole political and cultural spectrum around the clock, the conviction that I arrived at in 1998-99 was that we needed to pursue a politics of kind of this side of one nation. You needed to plant a flag with the most decent end of the conservative movement. And if you found common ground with the decent end of the conservative movement, presumably everybody to the left of them should be easier.

So, I'm into anticlockwise political strategies. Because if you go clockwise on the 51% thing, the kind of gear jams that the 51% mark, then you're in trouble when you're only 49%.

Of course, the price I've had to pay for pursuing 90% anticlockwise strategies is that you are no longer a hero to your old friends. They take your pinup posters off the wall and I understood that, that was the price to pay. I guess I was unnecessarily a bit churlish with them as well. And a bit gratuitous in my criticisms, but they weren't entirely unjustified. I came to really dislike the moral vanity of progressives. And as much as there might have been victimisation by conservatives in the right of Indigenous people, I think more pernicious than victimisation is the people who encourage victimhood. And of course, the progressives were responsible for inculcating a mentality of victimhood. And it was more about assuaging their own view of themselves rather than their perspective on suffering and so on. It's not a debate that I particularly had success with in my tussles with progressives because moral vanity I have very little patience for. I really don't care how people feel about themselves, especially when we turn a blind eye to the suffering of the victimised.

I'll make another point, and I've made these points in earlier writings, that my other problem was the inculcation of this victimhood. It's easy to recognise victimisation, when the right victimise and vulnerable people, it's easy to recognise. What's hard to recognise is when people nurture a sense of victimhood, because they're on your side. They don't seem to be malign. And at least you get defensive when you hear offence. But when you don't hear offence and it seems to by sympathy, you have no guard against that. And the end result of all of that is that we lose the one power we have in the teeth of discrimination and victimisation. When you encourage victimhood in victims, you deprive them of the one power they have to prevail. And that's why I don't like it.

Anyway, 1998 was the time when I completely changed my political thinking. I realised that on some issues we're going to fight 51% battles and on other issues, we’ve got to pursue 90% strategies. And I became determined that as easy as it was to talk to the town halls in Glebe and my university days were spent in Balmain, but as easy as all of that stuff is, that is not where the work needs to be done. If we're going to talk about the things that we're talking about tonight, we need an approach that sees support across the political spectrum and to be realistic about the dynamics of how this all works. If we hit this from a 51% clockwise angle, we will end up with 51% and our referendum plans will fail. We have the hardest constitution in the world to change, majority of voters in a majority of the states, only eight times have there been successful amendments to the Australian Constitution. Once there was a 65% vote in favour of change and it didn't get up. 65% of Australians voted in favour of change, but it didn't get up because of the magic formula, majority of voters in a majority of the states wasn't achieved. So not only do we have to pursue 90% strategies, we’ve got to make sure that we've got a majority of voters in a majority of the states. It's got to work in Western Australia and we’ve got to try and win in Tasmania, two of the hardest states.

And from that moment on, I've been pursuing the long road to China because the 90% rule tells us that we need Nixon to go to China. On Indigenous reconciliation and constitution reform, you need Nixon to propose the reform. It can't be a proposal from the left. Now this doesn't mean that once a consensus is reached from both sides of politics in relation to the reform proposals, that then they can have it out as much as they like if we have bipartisan commitment to the reform proposal. But the initiation of the proposal must come from someone like Richard Nixon. That's, to me, just a plain political rule.

I'm very hopeful that the two major parties and the minor parties, but particularly the two great warring tribes of Australian politics, will reach a bipartisan position in relation to reform proposals and then they can knock them down, drag them out in relation to their own contests all they like. But what we want from them is a bipartisan commitment to the constitutional referendum.

I now want to read from the essay.

So, my second chapter in the essay is about history and how we come to terms with it. It's called *War of the Worlds*. And I start with a quotation from the forward to *The War of the Worlds* which read:

> The inspiration for *The War of the Worlds* came one day when Wells and his brother Frank were strolling through the peaceful countryside in Surrey, south of London. They were discussing the invasion of the Australian island of Tasmania in the early 1800s by European settlers, who hunted down and killed most of the primitive people who lived there. To emphasise the reaction of these people, Frank said, 'Suppose some beings from another planet were to drop out of the sky suddenly and begin taking over Surrey and then all of England!'
>
> – Malvina G. Vogel, 'Foreword' (2005) to H.G. Wells, *The War of the Worlds*

I came upon this foreword some years ago when sharing an enthusiasm of my youth for H.G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds* with my young son. Even as he makes his way through his own all-consuming passions of boyhood – Thomas, the Crocodile Hunter, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Lord of the Rings*, Minecraft and now Harry Potter – I indulge my own nostalgia by sharing those things that possessed me when I was a boy. We've done *Richard III*, to which we will doubtless return. We've read Charles Portis's masterpiece *True Grit*, and watched the original John Wayne film and the Coen brothers' remake a hundred times. We've acted out the shoot-out scenes; he's always Rooster. We are yet to get to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. His younger sister and I have started *Great Expectations*.

First turned on by Jeff Wayne's musical version of *The War of the Worlds* in early high school, aware of Orson Welles' radio hoax and having read the Wells book, I was stunned to have been unaware of the inspiration for the idea of a Martian invasion of England – its origin in what was called the 'extirpation' of the original Tasmanians. I was disquieted that the source of this extraordinary production in world culture was unknown to me. I knew it was likely unknown to everyone around me, and to almost all of my fellow Australians. How come?

H.G. Wells knew of the original Tasmanians, but that did not mean he felt empathy for the fate of this ‘inferior race’ at the hands of the British. Instead he subscribed to the scientific racism of his era, believing them ‘Palaeolithic,’ and writing, ‘The Tasmanians, in spite of their human likeness, were entirely swept out of existence in a war of extermination waged by European immigrants.’

In *The Last Man: A British Genocide in Tasmania* (2014), the English historian Tom Lawson shows how the destruction of the Tasmanians played out in British culture. We will return to Lawson’s contribution to the debate on genocide in Tasmania soon, after we lift the scales from our eyes concerning some of the most revered figures of that culture in the nineteenth century.

The novelist Anthony Trollope, in his emigration guide *Australia and New Zealand*, demanded his British readers squarely face the fact that colonisation involved the theft of land and the destruction of its original owners – which fact was not morally wrong but an advancement of civilisation. Lawson writes that Trollope cannot be taken as other than calling for genocide when he wrote: ‘of the Australian black man we may say certainly that he has to go. That he should perish without unnecessary suffering should be the aim of all who are concerned in this matter.’

Charles Darwin, the century’s greatest scientist (whom Lawson calls ‘a self-conscious liberal humanitarian’), while opposing polygenist theories that various races were distinct species, nevertheless proposed culture as the basis of inferiority and superiority (Lawson: ‘indigenous Tasmanians in Darwin’s formulation had been swept aside by a more culturally developed, more civilised people’). Lawson writes: ‘*The Descent of Man* was Darwin’s answer to that new political context, in which he asserted that while biologically the human race *was* singular there were in effect cultural differences that allowed for some form of racial hierarchy. The Tasmanians appeared at the bottom of this hierarchy.’

> Darwin wrote:
>
> *when civilised nations come into contact with barbarians the struggle is short . . . Of the causes which lead to the victory of civilised nations, some are plain and simple, others complex and obscure. We can see that the cultivation of the land be fatal in many ways to savages, for they cannot, or will not, change their habits.*

I expected Charles Darwin. But I didn’t expect Charles Dickens.

Of the century’s greatest English novelist, the author of *Great Expectations* and an immortal canon, Lawson writes, ‘Dickens famously attacked . . . the humanitarian idealisation of the ‘noble savage’ in June 1853, in a furious denunciation that amounts, to use modern-day language, to a call for genocide.’

> Dickens wrote:
>
> *I call him a savage, and I call a savage something highly desirable to be civilised off the face of the earth … my position is that if we have anything to learn from the Noble Savage, it is what to avoid. His virtues are a fable; his happiness is a delusion; his nobility nonsense. We have no greater justification for being cruel to the miserable object, than for being cruel to a William Shakespeare or an Isaac Newton; but he passes away before an immeasurably better and higher power than ever ran wild in any earthly woods, and the world will be all the better when his place knows him no more.*

I am yet to work out whether, how and when to tell my girl that the creator of Pip, Pumblechook and that convict wretch Magwitch may have wished her namesake great-great-grandmother off the face of the earth.

Ironically, when one’s identification with the magnificent literary treasures of England turns out so, there is a Dickensian pathos to the crestfallen scene. One is acutely conscious of what Robert Hughes called ‘anachronistic moralising,’ but the bridge between our contemporary values and those of Dickens’ time should surely be a universal and timeless humanity – alas not.

I don’t know whether it is hard for all Aborigines, but it certainly is for me, to read this history with a historian’s dispassionate objectivity and without the emotional convulsions of identification and memory.

As a child, I loved my mother’s mother most in the world; her humour, generosity and ill-temper I often detect in myself and in the various countenances of my children. An irascible, pipe-smoking, bush-born lady, she bustled with her portmanteau on perambulations to her numerous grandchildren growing up in the Daintree and Bloomfield missions, and the Hope Vale Mission of my childhood. She could have been Truganini, but less travelled and from a smaller rainforest world than the nineteenth-century Tasmanian whose passing in 1876 was a world-historical event, marking the assumed extinction of a race. It was a reverberation I would feel when I learnt her name in primary school and the awful meaning of her distinction.

How many Australians born in the 138 years since Truganini’s death learnt her legend and scarcely thought deeper about the enormity of the loss she represented, and the history that led to it? Her spirit casts a long shadow over Australian history, but we have nearly all of us found a way to avert our eyes from its meaning.

> That small item in the primary-school curriculum of my childhood would have been learnt by all my generation. Maybe it wasn't a formal part of any syllabus, but it was one of those salient facts of Australian society that every child absorbed, like Don Bradman's batting average and Phar Lap's outsized heart. It would have been learnt by John Howard and Paul Keating. By Gough Whitlam and Robert Menzies. I don't know if they teach kids about Truganini today.
>
> As a student of history but not a historian, I am as well read as many, but I too have skirted this history. Learning later in life of the descendants of the original Tasmanians, and the offence of the assumption of extinction, seemed to lessen the imperative to face the question of Truganini's moral legacy. Maybe the scale of the horror diminished as the country accepted the fact of the continued survival of Tasmania's Aboriginal community. But surely the fact of the descendants' survival does not in any way alter or diminish the profundity of what happened to their ancestors.
>
> In his 1968 Boyer Lecture, W.E.H. Stanner spoke of the 'Great Australian Silence':
>
> > *inattention on such a scale cannot possibly be explained by absent-mindedness. It is a structural matter, a view from a window which has been carefully placed to exclude a whole quadrant of the landscape. What may have begun as a simple forgetting of other possible views turned under habit and over time into something like a cult of forgetfulness practised on a national scale. We have been able for so long to disremember the Aborigines that we are now hard put to keep them in mind even when we most want to do so.*
>
> This excluded quadrant of the landscape was not just a national phenomenon: it was personal. Forgetfulness was not just a cult: it was resorted to by individual Australians, descendants of both the invading Europeans and the Aborigines. Australians who, like me, struggle to work out how we might deal with the past.

I want to read a piece in relation to layered identities and my thoughts about fundamentalism and orthodoxy. So, my idea of layered identities is an idea I put forward years ago that the idea of the melting pot or the patchwork quilt are inadequate metaphors for explaining the layers of identity we all have. I'm an Australian, but I'm a Queenslander and I'm a North Queenslander and I'm a Cape Yorker and I'm a Lutheran, and I'm a Guugu Yimithirr person, but I'm from Bagaarrmugu. I'm part of the great rugby nation.

We all have these layers of identification and Amartya Sen said that the great problem is that when we essentialize and we reduce ourselves down to a singular identity of either religion or culture and so on. And we don't realise that nurturing all of the layers of our identity produces a warp and a weave to the national fabric that is very good for coexistence and unity.

So, I propose the idea of layered identities as crucial to successful commonwealths. But, identity fundamentalism is the enemy of commonwealths. When individuals and groups elevate one layer of the identity to the exclusion of all others, then we have a problem. Such chauvinism can arise at the level of subgroups and at the national level. While fundamentalism is a problem, orthodoxy is not. Nations such as Australia have orthodox Christian, Jewish, and Islamic communities, without this being inconsistent with multicultural harmony. Political and cultural conservatives play the role of upholding the country's Anglo culture and inheritance. Like their non-Anglo counterparts, the conservatives of Quadrant and the Samuel Griffith Society are a minority, but they uphold traditions that serve society as a whole. Without a core of orthodox conservatives, modern societies would descend into a soulless cosmopolitanism. Conservatism respects memory, tradition, ritual, and values that we have inherited over and above an enthusiasm for the future and an indulgence in the present.

T.S. Eliot's essay *Tradition and the Individual Talent* in 1921 captured the vital presences of tradition in the contemporary productions of European artists. He wrote,

> "He must be aware that the mind of Europe, the mind of his own country, a mind which he learns in time to be much more important than his own private mind, is a mind with changes, and that this change is a development which abandons nothing en route, which does not superannuate Shakespeare, or Homer, or the rock drawing of the Magdalenian draughtsman. Someone said that dead writers are remote from us because we know so much more than they did. Precisely, and they are that which we know."

But orthodoxy that reduces to fundamentalism is not conservatism. True conservatism equips societies and peoples to contend with the modern world and change. It is not obscurant to the changing world. Conservatism understands that fundamentalism is antipathetic to the commonwealth. Galarrwuy Yunupingu is an Australian conservative, and he desires to hold onto things older than Homer and the Bible. "Where would we be without Homer and the Old Testament?" Don Watson asked in a February 2014 essay in *The Monthly*. I think this is what Yunupingu means when he says of the song cycles of his culture,

> "My inner life is that of the Yolngu song cycles, the ceremonies, the knowledge, the law, and the land. This is Yothu Yindi; balance, wholeness, completeness."

Yunupingu's question equivalent to Watson's is where would my people be without the Yolngu song cycles? This question sits within a larger question: where would Aboriginal Australians be without the song cycles of Aboriginal Australia? And this question in turn sits within the largest question, in turn, sits within the largest question, where would Australia and Australians be without the song cycles of Aboriginal Australia?

I also want to talk about my metaphor for the commonwealth and what I call our triune nation. It's an extract from a speech I gave at the 50th anniversary of *The Australian* newspaper. I say in the essay that it was for me a signal event. I tell this story to give a full context to my remarks to that audience in which I set out how constitutional recognition of indigenous Australians would allow the nation to reveal our true nature and the great hidden architecture of our commonwealth. I said, "Our nation is in three parts. There is our ancient heritage, written in the continent and the original culture painted on its land and seascapes. There is its British inheritance, the structures of government and society transported from the United Kingdom, fixing its foundations in the ancient soil. There is its multicultural achievement, a triumph of immigration that brought together the gifts of peoples and cultures from all over the globe, forming one indissoluble commonwealth. We stand on the cusp of bringing these three parts of our national story together - our ancient heritage, our British inheritance, and our multicultural triumph - with constitutional recognition of indigenous Australians. This reconciliation will make a more complete commonwealth.

The colonial history which I have revisited in this essay is the reason why the relationship between our indigenous heritage and the country's British heritage has eluded us. As troubled as this history is, and as troubling as it will be for the foreseeable future, these two things are the heritage of Australia. There is no denying it. It is the reality, and it is the truth, no matter how much white Australians might want to ignore it or Black Australians might want to reject it. Whatever the mutual denial of the past, the future must be one of mutual recognition."

And finally, I just want to riff about oikophilia, and it's Roger Scruton's fascinating idea in his recent book "*Green Philosophy, How to Think Seriously About the Planet."*
And I open with a quote from his book where he says that,

> "Edmund Burke developed three ideas that it seemed to me were then and ought to be now the core of conservative thinking, respect for the dead, the little platoon, and the voice of tradition. Burke was one of the first major political thinkers to place future generations at the heart of politics. Burke's view of society as an association of the dead, the living and the unborn, carries a precious hint as to how the responsibility for future generations arises. It arises from love, and love directed toward what is unknown must arise from what is known. But the future is not known, nor are the people who will inhabit it. But the past is known, and the dead, our dead, are still the objects of love and veneration. It is by expending on them some part of our care, Burke believed, that we care also for the unborn, for we plant in our hearts the transgenerational view of society that is the best guarantee that we will moderate our present appetites in the interest of those who are yet to be."

So, love of home, Oikophilia, is the intriguing idea put forward by the English philosopher Roger Scruton. It is, I think, a most important contribution to how the pressing environmental problems facing human societies might be thought about and responded to. Scruton's book brings together the conservation latent in political conservatism and the conservatism latent in environmental conservation.

Love of the oikos, or household, is the common motivation in the stewardship and protection of environment and society. This common motive is for Scruton natural, the shared love of place. He writes,

> "That, it seems to me, is the goal toward which serious environmentalism and serious conservatism both point. Namely home, the place where we are and that we share, the place that defines us, that we hold in trust for our descendants, and that we don't want to spoil. It is time to take a more open-minded and imaginative vision of what conservatism and environmentalism have to offer each other, for nobody seems to have identified a motive more likely to serve the environmental cause than this one of the shared love of our home. It is a motive in ordinary people. It can provide a foundation both for a

> conservative approach to institutions and a conservationist approach to the land. It is a motive that might permit us to reconcile the demand for democratic participation with the respect for future generations and the duty of trusteeship. It is, in my view, the only serious resource that we have in our fight to maintain local order in the face of globally-stimulated decay."

I write, “environmentalist staring at the stark and impenetrable wall of liberal self-interest frustrating their schemes to turn around environmental decay should read Scruton and pause to reflect on where the mobilising of imposed large-scale bureaucratic strategies against the self-interest of homo economicus has ended up. Put aside your fantasies of eco-revolution and the great green uber-internationally.
Scruton proposes another motive, potentially as compelling as self-interest, the natural love of home.

I go on to talk about the relevance of Scruton's ideas for the indigenous concept of homeland in the following manner. I want to now discuss one aspect of Scruton's idea of conservatism: respect for and connexion with the dead. As part of a consideration of what it means to be indigenous. In this passage from the International Court of Justice's 1975 Western Sahara case, Judge Ammoun captured what lies at the core of the idea of peoples being indigenous to a territory. He said,

> "Mr. Bayona-Ba-Meya goes on to dismiss the materialistic concept of terra nullius, which led to this dismemberment of Africa following the Berlin Conference of 1895. He substitutes for this a spiritual notion, the ancestral tie between the land or Mother Nature and the man who is born therefrom remains attached thereto and must one day return thither to be united with his ancestors. This link is the basis of ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty."

I write: I am not now concerned with the legal question. I'm concerned with the metaphysical question, the spiritual notion. The ancestral tie between the land and the man who was born therefrom, who remains attached thereto, and who must one day return thither to be united with his ancestors.

This is it. This is the nub. This is the essence. This is the source. Because before we have the abstractions of law, we have things that are real. The law is not the origin. It is the ancestral bones in the land that is the source. It is the dust of the ancestors mixed with the dust of the land. It is from that land and dust that the people of the present came, and it is to that same dust and land that they remain attached. And it is to the same land that they will one day return to be united with their ancestors. At the core of all Aboriginal customary law you find these elements, the ancestral tie to the land, the person born from that land who remains attached to the land and whose spirits will one day return to that land.

I would venture to say that these ideas are universal to all indigenous conceptions of relationship to their country the world over. My point is that it is not the law that is the wellspring of indigeneity, it is a reality concerning the dead, the living, and the people to come, and the country to which they are tied. It is a similar reality of which Scruton writes when he refers to Burke's view of society as an association of the dead, the living, and the unborn. If Burke's association is real, then it is real in the sense captured in Judge Ammoun's most apposite definition.

On this interpretation, it is theoretically possible to take Andrew Bolt seriously when he protests that he, too, is indigenous to this country. The bones and dust of his ancestors, and all settler and immigrant

Australians who made this continent their home have been accumulating and mixing with the ancient soil for 226 years. Aboriginal laws and customs recognise the connexions that arise from places of birth and burial. In a real sense, the Bolts are becoming indigenous to Australia. Perhaps he could recognise in turn that the bones of Galarrwuy Yunupingu's ancestors have been returning for millennia to the lands from which they arose.

Thank you.