

INQUIRY INTO OVERCOMING INDIGENOUS DISADVANTAGE

Organisation: Ex Independent for Bennelong, 2007

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Europe's military might put Indigenous Australians at a significant disadvantage about 200 years ago.

Various instruments have been used since then to reinforce this disadvantage. The continuing use of some of these instruments has had disastrous consequences for the broader Australian community and should be re-evaluated. Firstly, it may be useful to itemize a few such instruments. Secondly, it may be beneficial to itemize some projects that could enrich Australians in general and Indigenous Australians in particular.

1. Instruments of disadvantage

ID1: Drugs such as alcohol and opiates. These caused massive social instability when Europeans introduced them to Australia 200 years ago. Their effect on young Australians, especially Indigenous Australians in 2007 / 08, has been horrendous and laws that pretend to limit their supply by the super-rich should be enforced.

ID2: Unjust legal system. Potentially this system can be used against the wider community with devastating effect and should be rationalised by the re-introduction of a sound system of ethics. Closing the extra jails that were built during Jubilee-2000 would be a major contribution towards overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage.

ID3: Irresponsible religious practices. Old time religions recognised the importance of caring for the environment and could be re-introduced.

ID4: Environmental destruction. International lobbyists have submitted many proposals that enrich their pockets at the expense of Australia's bounteous environment. It is essential to learn from Australia's extensive Indigenous scientific-knowledge, so we can understand our hydro and ecological systems. Indigenous water management systems represent one of humanity's greatest engineering feats. Indigenous Australians could assist in projects that restore some of the environmental damage that has been done.

ID5: A "Divided and Conquered" political system. A Government of National Unity approach, with guaranteed Indigenous participation at Local, State and Federal levels is essential for Australia to stop sliding down the greasy pole towards economic, environmental and social annihilation. Each metropolitan LGA could establish a sharing arrangement with a remote community, as remote communities tend to supply resources such as food and water that metropolitan Australians need.

ID6: Discrimination. Racial Discrimination legislation was set aside in 2007, reinforcing the impression that several recent elections have been both racist and sexist. The massive trade deficits that Australia has experienced in recent years may well be the result of international pressure that tries to steer us back towards a more humane approach towards our own people. Humane policies are recommended, as such policies make Australia less vulnerable to international wedging.

ID7: Multicultural Land Allocations. Well organized groups from several different countries campaign vigorously for their land rights in Australia, forcing Indigenous and other Australians into marginalized areas. While new arrivals have rights, they should not take precedence over the rights of native born Australians.

2. Projects for Restoration

PR1: Office Health. Offices in Australian cities such as Sydney contain a multitude of carcinogenic machines. Europeans minimize these hazards by using better ventilation than we do and by maintaining a large number of indoor plants in offices and in private homes.

I propose that Australian cities should follow European customs and require that businesses maintain an extensive suite of indoor plants. The proposal is that Indigenous Australians could be

involved in the cultivation of indoor plants for the market that would be created and that they could also be involved in maintaining these plants inside office buildings once they are installed.

PR2: Public Health. Since Europeans recognise that intimate contact with nature is essential for good health, they provide a greater frequency of children's farms and other nature-contact-points than metropolitan Australia does. Indeed, I have seen more Emu parks in cold, wet Holland than I have in Australia.

I propose that Australian cities should establish more children's farms, with the emphasis being on Australian flora and fauna. Some products from these farms such as Emu eggs could be sold to offset expenses. Indigenous Australians could be involved in the management of these farms, which would be free to the public and on much larger areas of land than Taronga Park Zoo. Australian tourism could receive substantial benefits from such a venture.

PR3: Wetlands. Europeans, especially the Dutch, have encouraged the destruction of metropolitan wetlands in Australia in the name of progress and commercial sport for 200 years. "Problem" water is channelled out to sea asap, resulting in the dehydration of both metropolitan and rural land, as rural water is collected for various metropolitan uses.

I propose that wetlands be restored, restoring water self-sufficiency to metropolitan Australia. Indigenous Australians could be involved in the many projects that are required in order to accomplish such a valuable goal.

PR4: Indigenous Culture. Australia has been visited by tourists for many hundreds of years, as people sailed long journeys to experience Australian languages, food and sporting activities. As many modern tourists in Australia are treated to an experience that is fairly similar to that which they could well obtain much closer to home, interest in travelling to Australia is declining. Restoring Australia's traditional culture could have intrinsic benefits for Australia and would almost certainly be beneficial to Australia's tourism industry.

PR5: Education. While Australia spends more on Education than we did in previous decades, recent results for native born Australians, especially those of Indigenous origins, have been catastrophic. The failure to educate young Australians is a national disaster.

I propose that qualified technical people should be allowed to teach in Indigenous communities. A full teacher training qualification should not be required, as people with the requisite University education and industrial experience will often make excellent teachers, as long as some on-the-job training is provided.

PR6: Corruption and destruction of resources. While Australia exports massive amounts of minerals and other resources, our massive trade-debt indicates that the Australian economy is far weaker than that of many nations which have almost no natural resources. A reduction in corruption would result in sufficient funding being available to overcome most aspects of Aboriginal disadvantage, providing a much brighter future for mainstream Australians in the process.

PR7: Sovereignty: Australia always was and always will be Aboriginal land and their Sovereignty should be acknowledged in the Australian constitution, resulting in self-determination for Australia's original inhabitants and long-term benefits for all Australians.

Good Luck Australia
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