



People Coming Together by Pat Ansell Dodds

STATEMENT FROM THE STANDUP 2017 CONFERENCE MPARNTWE-ALICE SPRINGS

Rosalie Kunoth-Monks: *"You better believe it, when the Intervention first hit in 2007 community councils were decimated."*

Matthew Ryan: *"Trying to get the government to listen to us, is like a brick wall."*

Elaine Peckham: *"When the Intervention came they took away services from homelands. No health services. I had to move back to town. I didn't want to."*

Yarrentye Arltere (Larapinta Valley) Town Camp: *"Ten years too long. Ten years of hardship, neglect and broken promises. We want Aboriginal control for Aboriginal people by Aboriginal people. Apmereke Tweye and Kwertengwerle: Traditional owners and custodians: our Law, our Way."*

We need to keep our culture strong. We need to be in control of decision making.

We want self-determination. After ten years the Intervention has met none of its objectives. There are more people in jail, more children being taken away, there is more unemployment.

This StandUp2017 conference makes the following comments and call outs

REPEAL RACIST INTERVENTION LAWS

Racist laws introduced through the Intervention have created apartheid and are still with us. Repeal the Stronger Futures laws. Repeal changes to social security law that allow for control over our money. End the ban on consideration of customary law in bail and sentencing. Bring back the permit system.

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE

Ngarla Kunoth Monks: *"We have our own structures, our voices have been put down and oppressed."*

The conference calls for restoring community councils and transferring assets back to the communities from the shires. This is what will improve peoples' lives.

Town camps want more houses, more parks, childcare at the community centres, and control of their own money. There needs to be compensation for town camps. It's time to pay the rent.

HOMELANDS

Veronica and Pamela Lynch: *“Cultural and land management is real work.”*

Sharon Anderson: *“Give us back ownership of our lands, so we can benefit our own people through our law and culture.”*

We need to create job opportunities on our homelands. We want to manage our own affairs through our own governance.

HOUSING

Barbara Shaw: *“They took over community living areas and Aboriginal community housing rights.”*

We can't be healthy without proper housing as our foundation. We want to make decisions about our own housing. We want to have community control over our housing. We desperately need more houses on all communities and homelands.

EDUCATION

Valerie Paterson: *“We believe that our children learning in their first language are more confident in themselves and learn more efficiently. We have seen this with our own eyes. We know how to teach our children both ways too.”*

Sylvia Neale: *“1 hour a day to teach their language, it's not enough.”*

The government must promote bilingual education, and schooling in first languages. Stop punishing parents with fines and Centrelink breaches.

PRISON

Rosalie Kunoth Monks: *“What I call for is action line, they are our children.”*

Dylan Voller: *“If the government wants to help us they should come down to our communities and elders and see what they have to say.”*

There are many alternatives and improvements that could be made to the prison system. Communities can be supported to have more contact in prison and instead of prison, we need more healing spaces, Bush Mob is good.

The conference believes that children should not be transferred away from Alice Springs to Darwin. We also believe that youth prisons are not helpful, and that Don Dale needs to be closed.

We call for the closure of youth prisons, and a national day of action when the Royal Commission into protection and detention of children in the Northern Territory releases their final report.

JOBS

People used to have jobs in their communities – we need a new jobs program to bring this back. Now on CDP people are starving and being evicted from their houses. We need community control and ownership of community assets. Everyone who works needs at least the minimum wage. Real jobs must receive real wages and real conditions. We need a national movement. No more CDP. We support the First Nations Workers Alliance started by the Australian Council of Trade Unions.

INCOME MANAGEMENT

There is no evidence that compulsory income management works.

Vanessa Poulson: *"I have learnt to live with basics card now but really would like to have control of my own money."*

Scrap compulsory income management

STOLEN GENERATIONS

It keeps going, and getting worse. With the money it takes to look after a stolen kid, communities could fix their problems themselves. Stop stealing our kids. Urgently bring back the many hundreds of children taken through the Intervention. We are going to set up a GMAR group here. (Grandmothers against Removals). Yingiya Mark Guyula MLA can be contacted with names of stolen children and has pledged to fight to bring them home.

TREATY

Rev Dr Djiniyini Gondarra OAM: *"Australia is the only Commonwealth country in the world that has never entered into negotiations to establish a treaty. There needs to be diplomatic dialogue between the Australian governments and the First Nations. No more kissing the government's shoes."*

There must be recognition of our sovereignty which has never been ceded, and which has been undermined by the Intervention. Our law must be recognised by the Westminster system. The governments must stop creating more policy and measures for Aboriginal people without consultation.

Lift the ban on customary law.

We are ready for Makarrata.

Treaty now!

WE STAND TOGETHER

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