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Indigenous Internationalism Today

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Introduction

Many people say that Australia and Canada have little to teach other. Surely January temperatures of Minus 40 and Plus 40 in Central and Northern Australia and Western and Northern Canada are more similar than dissimilar. That is, both extremes confronted European settlers who came from more temperate lands and who found buffalo or bilby, kangaroo or caribou, strange and exotic creatures which should be replaced by herds of European cattle.[1]

I hope I can show that the two countries, and others, have much to share. Also, I will use the Australia-Canada experience to illustrate wider points about indigenous internationalism.

Background

Some Australians try to defend an isolationist and exceptionalist view of indigenous history and policy by saying that Canada has old and unique legal frameworks while Australia has none. This view overlooks the fact that until very recently the Canadian courts and governments ignored or forgot much of that legal and constitutional framework, such as common law rights, Crown fiduciary responsibilities, Treaties, and even the Royal Proclamation of 1763. In other words, both Canada and Australia have developed their separate national approaches in light of shared factors in the post-World War II era. These are:

Renewed confidence of indigenous peoples in relations with whites through war service,[1] urbanisation, better indigenous education, and the reach of mass media;

Changing social attitudes among European peoples, including Canadians and Australians, towards social and racial equality in the wake of the Depression and the wars with Hitler and Japan;

Images and press reports of de-colonisation of countries and islands large and small around the world, by Britain in particular, but also the Dutch, Portuguese, French, and others in the post-war period;

The TV impact of the American civil rights and black power movements; and

The impact of post-war United Nations ideals and instruments opposing racism.

One may wonder how much other factors have impacted in each of our situations. Canada has had the successful indigenous self-government and claims movements in Alaska and Greenland on its borders, as well as the example of tribal government in the USA's Lower 48. Australia has the experience of its own three populated island territories, each with a tailor-made regional constitution,[1] the case of New Zealand whose social and political relations with Maori are far in advance of our own, and the home rule island territories of New Zealand, Niue and the Cook Islands, as well as de-colonisation of many parts of Melanesia and Polynesia. It seems that Canadians may have been more open to such influences than Australians.

All these factors have assisted the rewriting of indigenous-white relations. With both Australia and Canada having British-derived political culture; a federal structure with states or provinces; and federal territories in which white settlers and indigenous peoples have been struggling for autonomy, it should be obvious that each has much to share with the other.

The big difference between them is that in Canada, the highest level of government is responsible for indigenous affairs, however minimal the exercise of such power at various times. In Australia, the states had exclusive power in indigenous affairs until a national referendum in 1967 gave the federal government a paramount role if it chose to exercise it. Aborigines and many other Australians since then have been disappointed by federal timidity in a field where the states have failed utterly – or succeeded too well, depending on your viewpoint.[1] They have displaced and dispossessed Aborigines in many areas, and left them marginalised, sick, and poor. There has been much soul-searching among concerned publics in Australia in recent years at the failure of Australian health and social services to turn around the grim statistics concerning indigenous peoples, a problem heightened by awareness of the greater relative success in Canada, New Zealand, USA, and especially Scandinavia. For five years a federal ombudsman, the Aboriginal Social Justice Commissioner, hammered away at such problems in his annual reports, but now the government has followed up its usual failure to act on his recommendations with quiet abolition of his position.[1]

Moving Forward or Moving Back?

It had seemed as if Australia was at last joining the First World of indigenous policy progress. Prime Minister Keating spoke movingly about the wrongs of the past and needs of the present in Sydney's urban Aboriginal district of Redfern in a speech of late 1992 to launch the international UN indigenous year. The speech electrified Australia. The following year Prime Minister Keating personally led the complex negotiations resulting in the Native Title Act which set up machinery and guidelines for resolving land disputes

But Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders have been dealt a major shock in recent years. Having

finally achieved recognition of 'native title' rights in principle in the High Court's Mabo (1992) and Wik (1996) decisions, our national politics have been dominated for the past two years by the determination of federal and state governments simply to roll back or extinguish in all but name any rights we have. This is being done through federal and complementary state legislation. As the coordinator of the National Indigenous Working Group (NIWG) on Native Title, I have been in the thick of this battle and will be happy to answer questions or talk to interested delegates about it in detail.

The biggest impact of Mabo had been the end of a sort of moral terra nullius in which many Australians and their governments took the denial of rights as an imperative for social policy, too. Now we have seen this view returning to quasi-respectability in some circles.

However, public debate has also had encouraging aspects. After some years in which indigenous policy was a dialogue between indigenous organisations and governments, with the usual rednecks (notably grazing and mining industry associations) chipping in, the battle over native title brought many other Australians from both sides of politics into the fray.[1] These people, including many Liberals who do not support the Prime Minister's archaic social and cultural views, have swung national opinion behind a more cooperative and harmonious approach. One may hope that some positive developments will occur in time to make Australia's centenary of federation in January 2001 a less divisive time than the bicentenary of white settlement in 1988.

After years of playing a constructive role in international UN work on indigenous rights, Australia has served notice that it will back-pedal there, too.[1] What may be most disturbing is that this decision to water down further the UN Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples follows the vehement demands of the populist politician, Pauline Hanson, on June 2 in Parliament for just such an approach. The speech caused a national furore, and Prime Minister Howard said the next day it 'verges on the deranged' and was 'fanning racist sentiment'. Now her views are good enough to become national policy, it seems.

A particular issue has been the Stolen Children. This refers to the generations of indigenous children taken from their families for permanent removal to the non-indigenous world. The purpose according to official documents was to hasten the assimilation or extinction of the Aboriginal race into the European Australian gene pool. The formal inquiry generated much painful news coverage and more painful memories for indigenous peoples. It even prompted indigenous suicides. At length the report, *Bringing Them Home*, appeared at the end of May 1997.[1] With the country's attention focused at the time on the Australian Reconciliation Convention in Melbourne, the Prime Minister had an opportunity to say something. However, he and his government publicly challenged the human issues involved, even arguing that Aborigines removed had benefited – a view demolished by the detailed studies undertaken by the inquiry. Needless to say Aborigines and many other Australians were interested and impressed by the Canadian government's apology and healing package announced earlier this year.

The Australian government has waged a war on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) since the 1996 election campaign. ATSIC, the former federal Aboriginal Affairs department, has an elected indigenous Commission at its head and elected regional councils across the country. In other words, unlike Canadian indigenous self-government where funds and decision-making are moving to local First Nations, Australia has advisory bodies elected to

influence or direct the spending of a central agency.[1] The movement for genuine self-government sometimes runs up against opposition from ATSIC regions no less than from senior governments.[1] Meanwhile, by calling constantly for special audits and feeding the redneck view that blacks should have no money or are unfit to manage it – so-called 'wedge politics', usually hidden behind a veneer of national unity bombast – the government plays to public fears and prejudice. ATSIC's principled resistance on many issues in recent years has won it admiration and respect within the Aboriginal community and erased many doubts about its credibility as an authentic indigenous body.

Wedge politics are an old tradition in parts of Australia, especially the north, as I will show in a moment. However, at national level they had been repudiated in matters of race, whether Aboriginal or South Sea Islander or Asian, by both sides of politics since the 1960s. Long gone was the day when a national immigration minister could say that 'two Wongs don't make a white' and expect a positive audience reaction. Wedge politics have proven a dangerous strategy since used by the Coalition to win the 1996 election. Pauline Hanson's One Nation now lurks in the Coalition's shadow and any number of extreme Right fringe groups in turn in One Nation's shadow.[1] One Nation's indigenous policy appears to be derived from one such group which affects to believe that Prince Philip has been using the late great Australian, Dr HC Coombs, plus a Canadian who worked with Inuit, to break up the country. They say this has already happened in Canada thanks to Nunavut, and that self-government and land claims are a device for the Royal Family can siphon off resources revenue from gullible indigenous people![1]

Meanwhile the Prime Minister has repeatedly said that the policy balance had swung too far towards Aborigines under Labor and that he is now bringing it back to centre. In fact Aborigines had a fractious relationship with Labor during its 13 years in power, but as in Canada with the 15-year Trudeau government, over time it became possible to make various advances.

Most worrying may be the Prime Minister's view that recognition, rights, and indigenous leadership are politically correct nonsense, a passing Labor fad. His view is that basic services in health, education, and employment are the only answer. Of course, we Aborigines would love to have the quality of services available to other citizens of all modern countries, including Australia. However, the return to paternalism and the pretense that this is somehow a new approach which deserves respect is hard to fathom. Canada and other countries abandoned that approach precisely because it did not work and moved to a rights and self-government based policy which has transformed the relations between indigenous peoples and government.

Such an approach – rights and recognition – was proposed by the extraordinary Indigenous Social Justice exercise of 1994-95.[1] In this effort the national Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, ATSIC, and the Aboriginal Social Justice Commission combined to hold two national rounds of community hearings and expert workshops as well as intense multi-day discussion groups to arrive at a consensus for policy directions. The social justice package had been promised by the Prime Minister as an accompaniment to native title clarification. It was an amazing indigenous-run effort to write a national policy and may prove a starting-point for resumed work when the political climate is more promising.[1]

Meanwhile the Sydney Olympics, centenary of Federation, and turn of the millennium are occurring in a one-year period. This convergence has made many Australians wish for symbolic and actual

renewal and the shaking off of brutal colonial history, as well as assertion of proud new nationhood in the world. The end of monarchy and an Australian head of state are an item on this agenda for many people. Even at the largely hand-picked and conservative national Constitutional Convention in 1998, it was evident that Aboriginal voices had moral standing if they could get into the room. The final report of the Constitutional Convention in Canberra, 1998, made proposals for Aboriginal content in future constitutional reform.[1]

In other words, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders are engaged in many political issues on rights and other strivings which are familiar to Canada's indigenous peoples.

Trees and Tories

Canadians I know tend to refer to the Northwest Territories, while Australians talk about the Northern Territory. There are other differences between the NT and NWT.

Like Canada's Northwest Territories, Australia's Northern Territory is seen in the national capital as a piece of the country 'left over' from the early colony-building period.[1] Like Northern Canada, what whites see as a frontier, indigenous peoples see as their homeland. The NT is a patchwork of traditional regions and peoples, and of town camps, as well as urbanised indigenous communities. The white administrative and resource towns owe much more to the Aboriginal economy than they admit, and like many hinterlands, the whole NT is heavily underwritten by national subsidies.[1] The population proportions are about one quarter Aboriginal, and three quarters non-Aboriginal in a total population of c. 180,000. Anyone who wants to get a sense of the background to contemporary black-white relations can read Xavier Herbert's *Capricornia*, one of Australia's classic novels.

The NT has two main population centres: Darwin, the capital, on the Timor Sea, and Alice Springs at the heart of the continent. The NT's non-Aboriginal population is highly transient. Many or most people are not around long enough to be counted in the 5-yearly national census. Aboriginal communities have been dated to 50,000 years, on the other hand, and the rock art galleries all over the NT tell us much about the pre-occupations, beliefs, and extinct species of the distant past. Australia has not been ice-covered like Canada in times of human settlement. However, the global Ice Ages made for extreme changes of climate and sea level and forced tremendous adaptation on Aborigines. In Australia today one can see pockets of landscape left over from earlier eras, the more important to protect because genuinely irreplaceable, e.g., the huge ancient Antarctic beech trees.

The early history of white incursion into the NT was extremely brutal.[1] Massacres of Aborigines were all too common. In many areas a sort of *modus vivendi* was achieved, however, and as in the rest of the hinterland, cheap or unpaid Aboriginal labour was the key to the success of the cattle industry.[1] Today the NT and adjacent parts of several states are like Northern Canada: a few largely white towns with a visible Aboriginal underclass as well as other successfully urbanised Aborigines, and a largely Aboriginal hinterland of seasonal or more permanent camps and villages. Thanks to the Land Rights Act conceived by Whitlam Labor and enacted by Fraser Coalition governments in the 1970s, almost half of the NT is now Aboriginal-owned land.

Since the NT gained self-government and virtual statehood in many respects in 1978, one party, the Country Liberal Party, a Right-wing populist strongly pro-development grouping, has held power strongly without interruption. The CLP are masters at wedge politics, using white fears of Aborigines to launch every federal and territory election campaign. While redneck hinterland groupings in other countries are kept in their place by national authorities or party machines, in Australia we have seen the reverse. National and state politicians have made pilgrimages to Darwin to find out how the CLP deals with blacks. The Coalition government drew on this background for its 1996 election campaign.[1]

Since 1985 there has been a persistent NT statehood push centred on an NT Legislative Assembly committee. The trouble is that this approach is based on the late 19th century approach to state and national constitutions of Australia, a system which not only excluded Aborigines but saw them decimated. However, whatever the deficiencies of that process, it was too progressive for the NT chief minister (premier) who pushed it aside and insisted on his own more aggressive approach over the past two years. He and his hand-picked delegates swept aside Aboriginal claims and culture, of course. In a joint pre-election press conference (August 11/98) with the Chief Minister (11-8-98), the Prime Minister said that statehood would commence on January 1, 2001, to celebrate the centenary of Federation and unwisely added that this move 'will be applauded by all but the mean in spirit and narrow of vision'. Polls showed NT support running at 80% for statehood so the referendum to be held on federal election day, October 3, seemed a foregone conclusion. But the Chief Minister's manner of bulldozing this issue through, and a strong campaign of principle led by Aborigines against statehood on such terms, saw the statehood option defeated. This has given the NT another chance.

The NT statehood push, like that of white élites in Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Alaska in the recent past, is all about facilitating access to Aboriginal lands and resources, of course. The NT government has a fantasy that if only they could take over our lands they would be wealthy, they could make the desert bloom, and Darwin would quickly have a million people. The indigenous nations who now occupy much of the land have rather different aspirations.

Soon after the NT's Legislative Assembly statehood push began in 1985, national discussion of a 21st century constitution which would take a whole new approach, e.g., to Aborigines through recognition of rights and inclusion, began. That new viewpoint has developed steadily, but has had little impact in the NT. The Australian Constitution requires (Section 121) that federal Parliament set the terms and conditions for any new state, a clause which negates the view of the NT government that it should simply be identical in all respects to the existing states.

In August 1998 a constitutional conference was held at Kalkaringi of Central Australian Aborigines, with a statement of constitutional principle resulting.[1] The key item is the second general principle:

That we will withhold our consent until there are good faith negotiations between the Northern Territory Government and the freely chosen representatives of the Aboriginal peoples of the Northern Territory leading to a Constitution based upon equality, co-existence and mutual respect.

As we are meeting here in Edmonton, delegates are arriving at Batchelor south of Darwin for a 5-day full NT Aboriginal constitutional convention which will begin with the Kalkaringi statement. Many materials will be provided as resources including information drawing on the transformation of Canada's northern territories by indigenous political movements.

In the NT we are trying to start a negotiation with federal and NT governments, neither of which has seemed open to recognition of our claims for participation. Australia would be self-righteous and critical about another countries which attempted to transfer lands and peoples from one government to another against their will, of course.

The issue of the future of the Northern Territory is a fundamental one for Australians and for the world. If the rights and status of indigenous peoples are going to be unilaterally dismissed by Thatcherite governments at whim, then international law and world opinion are meaningless. The Northern Territory is a test for us all.

International Connections

The present Australian Prime Minister has attacked international visits and speaking tours by Aborigines as 'stunts'. Of course his friends in the mining industry busily share their secrets of how to deal with local indigenous peoples and indigenous land and water rights. What is more, his own government collects information on indigenous issues and has done so for many years, especially here in Canada, but in other countries, too. Australian federal and state ministers and senior officials have been visiting Canada for decades to speak with indigenous and non-indigenous people here about politics and experience in self-government; land, sea, and resource rights, and many other indigenous-related issues from alcohol to zinc mining.

Indeed, some Australians have become positively neurotic about all the Canadian information reaching us. The populist politician Pauline Hanson has used speeches to rail against the Inuit Nunavut project which she claims is the source of Australia's Aboriginal land rights movement. This is a strange assertion for an ultra-nationalist politician. Doesn't she know that land and sea rights are old news? Captain Cook was taken to task for taking turtles in Aboriginal wasters off North Queensland, an event fully recorded and useful in a recent court case. Since the 1960s Australia has had a strong minority of non-Aboriginal people across the country and across the political spectrum supporting Aboriginal rights. Many more take a sort of national pride and interest in Aboriginal culture. Whatever we may say about Australian racism, the fact is that many aged pensioners drive across the continent to view ancient Aboriginal rock art galleries in Northern and Central Australia, and to walk with Aboriginal guides in heat often in the 35-45-degree Celsius range to learn about traditional resource use, oral culture, and ceremonies.

Nevertheless, the Australian political system has only engaged briefly with indigenous rights and other world currents applicable to indigenous needs – under both Labor and Coalition governments in the second half of the 1970s and under Labor prime ministers in the 1990s. It is a widespread Australian perception that membership in the world is optional and selective. A premier may be a clever diversity-embracing fellow on visits to Asian capitals and then return to brutish obscurantism towards blacks at home. We may campaign in the world to sell mangoes or university student

places, but pull down the shutters when our more embarrassing prejudices are exposed.

A mistake we have often made in Australia is to think of indigenous internationalism too narrowly in terms of the annual trek to Geneva. Our literature on practical international work is limited.[1] However, there has been growing contact between Australian and overseas indigenous rights lawyers, and valuable comparative social science studies.[1]

What is needed is much more interaction of indigenous political practitioners and organisations. For instance, there has been great interest in Australia in recent years in Canada's northern land claims settlements. In Australia we call these 'regional agreements'. [1] However, much of the work done by academics has focused on narrow reading of documents without a proper understanding that each of those documents is merely one item in a long-running ethno-political self-determination movement's history. Context and dynamics are lost. Canadian indigenous visitors have come out of meetings with Australian officials amazed that those people seem to imagine one can simply fit a pre-determined document over a problem and all will be well. The sense of evolution and renewal in political relations is missing.

We need to get together from different continents to discuss many key issues: sea rights and coastal management; management regimes for resources and environment; local and regional self-government; territory constitutions; national constitutions; and permanent networks for indigenous information exchange.

Final Remarks

Indigenous peoples in all countries have no greater weakness than their lack of political information and resources. Governments have great strength in these matters. If we are to even up the odds a little we must take some of that oral knowledge and experience from different indigenous groups negotiating claims or establishing self-government and find ways to share it with other peoples.

Along the way we must also lose one unfortunate habit. Often when representatives of one or other people travel abroad they use speeches to heap scorn or ridicule on other indigenous groups at home. We don't need to know about old squabbles and one-upmanship. All of us in all countries are seeking very similar goals. People in Australia do not need to hear putdowns of others in need; what we need are options, hope, precedents. All of us can learn from each other if we will only listen to each other.

This intangible world of indigenous 'political science' needs to be made more concrete, useable, and accessible. In the long run it will prove every bit as important as the search for formal international standards in human rights.

Meanwhile, we in Australia – indigenous peoples, governments, media, academics, and general public – have much to learn from Canada and other countries. What Australia's national political class needs to learn most urgently is that the rights and recognition of indigenous peoples are a

world-wide current of civilised progress, not an expendable item to be trivialised by blaming it on a single former political leader or party.

We believe Canada and other countries have things to learn from us, too. And we may especially hope that some of your Canadian experience is transferrable. For instance: if a Premier of British Columbia in 1998 can centre his re-election campaign on the social justice of the Nisga'a self-government and land claims settlement – despite that Province's difficult history of indigenous-white relations[1] – then surely there is hope for Queensland, Western Australia, and the Northern Territory.

Thank you.

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[1] A good contemporary survey of Australian history focuses on Aboriginal-European relations, D, 1997: *Claiming a Continent: a new history of Australia*, Angus & Robertson (HarperCollins), Sydney. For Northern Territory see Downing J, 1988: *Ngurra Walytia: Country of My Spirit*, Australian National University North Australia Research Unit, Darwin. For black-white relations on the expanding frontier see the books of historian Henry Reynolds, books which have transformed Australians' sense of themselves and their history, but also provoked some persons including the Prime Minister to denounce such a 'black armband view of history'. For such people history is supposed to be a litany of triumphs.

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See Ball D (ed), 1991: *Aborigines in the Defence of Australia*, Australian National University Press, Sydney.

[1] Fletcher C, 1992: 'The Australian Territories: Diversity in Governing', *Australian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 27, 1992, 159-176. Also, House of Representatives, 1991: *Islands in the Sun: The Legal Regimes of Australia's External Territories and the Jervis Bay Territory*, Report of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, AGPS, March 1991.

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A recent breakthrough history of state indigenous policy in Queensland reveals the full horrors of public policy and outcomes, Kidd R, 1997: *The Way We Civilise: Aboriginal Affairs – the untold story*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane. See also Brennan F, 1992: *Land Rights Queensland Style: The Struggle for Aboriginal Self-Management*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane.

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First Report, 1993, to Fifth Report, 1997, are available in libraries or from the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Sydney. The former ombudsman, Mick Dodson, will be familiar to many in Canada from his speaking tours and annual attendance at UN meetings.

[1] Australian national politics is a struggle between two 'sides', the Australian Labor Party on the one hand, and the Coalition (of Liberal and National parties) on the other. However, the elected federal Senate sees the Democrats and Greens also making a showing and playing helpful roles on

indigenous issues. The new party, Pauline Hanson's One Nation, however, is largely centred on anti-Aboriginal rhetoric (see Canada's Maclean's magazine, Sept. 14/98 issue). The small parties also play a role in the states' elected upper houses, only Queensland and the Northern Territory being single-chamber legislatures.

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Dodson M & Pritchard S, 1998: 'Recent Developments in Indigenous Policy: The Abandonment of Self-Determination?', *Indigenous Law Bulletin*, Vol. 4, No. 15 (October 1998), 4-6.

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Wilson R et al., 1997: *Bringing them home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families*, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Commonwealth of Australia, Sydney. A more affordable and available abridgement with other useful material is Bird C (ed.), 1998: *The stolen children; their stories*, Random House, Melbourne.

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A full discussion of ATSIC in theory and practice is Sullivan P, 1996: *Shooting the Banker: Essays on ATSIC and Self-Determination*, Australian National University North Australia Research Unit, Darwin. See especially the editor's useful final essay, 'All Things to All People: ATSIC and Australia's international obligation to uphold indigenous self-determination', pp 105-129. ATSIC is also on-line: [HYPERLINK http://www.atsic.gov.au/](http://www.atsic.gov.au/) <http://www.atsic.gov.au/>

[1] Work proceeding does include reference to Canadian and other experience, however, e.g., Crough G, 1997: *Indigenous Organisations, Funding and Accountability: Comparative Reforms in Canada and Australia*, Report Series No. 2, Australian National University North Australia Research Unit (NARU), Darwin; and Jull P, 1997. 'The political future of Torres Strait', *Indigenous Law Bulletin*, Vol 4, No 7 (November 1997), 4-9.

[1] In the 1998 federal election the Coalition's vote fell 8% and Pauline Hanson's new party's share was 8.5%.

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See Pauline Hanson's speeches in federal Parliament October 1/97 and June 2/98, and her campaign speech in Longreach, September 11/98, all on-line at her party site. The conspiracy theory is found in various texts, notably *The New Citizen*, Vol 3, No 11, February-March 1995, Melbourne, an organ of the Lyndon Larouche movement.

[1] See Dodson M, 1995: *Indigenous Social Justice*, Vol. 1, *Strategies and Recommendations*, Submission to the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia on the Social Justice Package by Michael Dodson, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Canberra, for a readable essay advancing this approach and drawing on Canadian and other experience. The other two reports in this exercise are *Recognition, Rights and Reform: A Report to Government on Native Title Social Justice Measures*, Native Title Social Justice Advisory Committee, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), Canberra, 1995, and *Going Forward: Social Justice for the First Australians*, A Submission to the Commonwealth Government from the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, Canberra.

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See 'Australia' sections of *The Indigenous World*, 1994-95, and, 1995-96, published by International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, Copenhagen.

[1] The Communique notes that the Constitutional Convention of February 2-13 resolved that a Preamble should include among other things 'Acknowledgement of the original occupancy and custodianship of Australia by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders' and 'Affirmation of respect for our unique land and the environment'. It adds that it was resolved that 'The following

matters be considered for inclusion in the preamble: [two items with the third and last being] Recognition that Aboriginal people and Torres Strait islanders have continuing rights by virtue of their status as Australia's indigenous peoples.' Finally the Convention called for 'a further Constitutional Convention' some years after institution of a republic on whose agenda various items would be, including 'constitutional aspects of indigenous reconciliation'.

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The standard and rather Euro-centric history is Powell A, 1982. *Far Country: A Short History of the Northern Territory*, Melbourne University Press.

[1] Crough G et al., 1989: *Aboriginal Economic Development in Central Australia*, Report for the Combined Aboriginal Organisations of Alice Springs, NT; and Crough G, 1993: *Visible and Invisible: Aboriginal people in the economy of Northern Australia*, Australian National University North Australia Research Unit, Darwin.

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[1] Peterson N, 1985. "Capitalism, culture and land rights", *Social Analysis*, 18, December, 85-101.

[1] Williams P, 1997. *The Victory: The Inside Story of the Takeover of Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

[1] Pritchard S, 1998. 'Constitutional Developments in the Northern Territory: The Kalkaringi Convention', *Indigenous Law Bulletin*, Vol. 4, No. 15 (October 1998), 12-13, followed by 'The Kalkaringi Statement', *Constitutional Convention of the Combined Aboriginal Nations of Central Australia*, 14-15.

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See Richardson BJ, Craig D & Boer B, 1995: *Regional agreements for indigenous lands and cultures in Canada*, Australian National University North Australia Research Unit, Darwin; Jull P & Craig D, 1997. 'Reflections on Regional Agreements: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow', *Australian Indigenous Law Reporter*, Vol. 2, No 4, 475-493; and Edmunds M (ed), 1998. *Regional Agreements: Key Issues in Australia*, Volume 1, Summaries, Native Title Research Unit, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra.

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