

**Changing
Government policies
towards Aboriginal
people over time.**



Focus Questions

- What were changing government policies towards Aboriginal peoples over time, including:
 - protection
 - assimilation
 - Integration
 - self-determination

In the beginning....

The first British Government policies towards Indigenous Australians were based on

- ideas of racial stereotypes(inferior races)
- the economic need for land
- pressure from settlers who demanded land and protection.

GOVERNOR PHILLIPS INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING THE NATIVE INHABITANTS APRIL 25TH 1787

You are to endeavour by every possible means to open an Intercourse with the (Savages - deleted) Natives and to conciliate their affections, enjoining all Our Subjects to live in amity and kindness with them. And if any of Our Subjects shall wantonly destroy them, or give them any unnecessary Interruption in the exercise of their several occupations. It is our Will and Pleasure that you do cause such offenders to be brought to punishment according to the degree of the Offence. You will endeavour to procure an account of the Numbers inhabiting the Neighbourhood of the intended settlement and report your opinion to one of our Secretaries of State in what manner Our Intercourse with these people may be turned to the advantage of this country.

LEGAL TRICKERY

- 'Terra Nullius' - land belonging to no one
- Aboriginal people were British citizens - therefore no treaties, as you can't make a treaty with yourself
- As citizens they were subject to British law - but they could not give evidence as they were not Christian and could not swear on the Bible



WE'RE HERE TO
SHOW YOU HOW
TO FIX THINGS...

GEEZ, 40,000 YEARS
AND I NEVER REALISED
ANYTHING WAS BROKEN...



DISPOSSESSION

1816 Governor Macquarie's proclamation NSW

Indigenous Australians, with 'passes' had the 'protection' of white law. This same proclamation declares Martial law against other Indigenous Australians who could be shot on sight if armed with spears, or even unarmed, if they were within a certain distance of houses or settlements

1824 In Tasmania,

settlers are authorised to shoot Indigenous Australians and a bounty is placed on their heads



FRONTIER WARS

- The **Australian frontier wars** were a series of conflicts fought between Indigenous Australians and European settlers that spanned a total of 151 years. The first fighting took place in May 1788 and the last clashes occurred as late as 1939. Most scholars accept historian Henry Reynolds' overall minimum estimate of 20,000 Aboriginal deaths
- A recent study calculates indigenous fatalities caused by the Queensland Native Police Force alone to be no less than 24,000.
- The violent frontier deaths of Europeans and associates, have been estimated as between 2,000 and 2,500,



Mounted police engaging Indigenous Australians during the Slaughterhouse Creek Massacre of 1838



- A far more devastating impact on the Aboriginal population was the effect of disease, followed by infertility, loss of hunting ground, starvation and general despair, loss of pride, and the alcoholic 'remedy' for this devastation.

- **The Premiers met at the Federation Conference IN 1897.**
- **At that time the Bulletin reported,**
"No nigger, chinese, no lasko, no purveyor of cheap coloured labour is an Australian."

The Australian desert is truly in a primitive state in its loneliness and lifelessness—but under federation every dry creek bed and parched billabong should be filled with water and thousands of miles of productive territory added to our possession'-The Bulletin 1895.

- white settlers gradually moved the Aboriginal people off their land and into reserves and church run missions
- The indigenous people were forced to experience dispossession and **paternalism.**
- as each colony passed laws most Aboriginals became wards of the state.

State Acts

- Victoria 1886
- Queensland 1897
- Western Australia 1905
- New South Wales 1909
- South Australia 1911

Protection

- This was government policy during the second half of the 1800s and into the early 1900s.
- Aboriginal people were removed from their traditional lands and placed on reserves (government-run) or missions (church-run).
- It also allowed land previously occupied by Aborigines to become pastoral land.
- Aborigines had to seek permission to marry, to work or to move somewhere else to live.
- 'Mixed blood' or 'mixed race' children were removed from their families and brought up with white families and taught 'useful' skills such as domestic work and simple trades.

Protection Boards

- **1911 Australia**
- **By this time all states and territories** with the exception of Tasmania had passed some form of 'protection' legislation with an emphasis on segregation and restriction.
- Colonies passed laws, usually called “Aboriginal Protection Acts” to establish authority and jurisdiction. Protection laws reduced the status of the Indigenous to wards of the State.
- The responsibilities of the Protection Boards was to manage reserves. Some were run by the state and some were run by Church groups who felt the need to christianise the heathens

- In 1886 the Victorian Aborigines Protection Board was set up. Its aim, taken here from a parliamentary report, was

- *“A: to civilise, Christianise and above all train Aborigines on stations established for the purpose;*

- B: to remove as many children as possible from their 'bad' environment and parental 'influence' to training homes and thence to 'situations' [work] with white families; “*

CHARACTERISTICS OF PROTECTIONISM

- Doomed Race theory – social darwinism – ‘soothe the pillow of a dying race’
- Paternalism – the attitude that Aboriginalianl people were like children
- Removal to reserves and missions
- Removal of mixed blood children from their families

Dog Tags

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT
ABORIGINES PROTECTION ACT, 1909-1943, SECTION 18c
[REGULATION 56]

CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION
From Provisions of the Act and Regulations

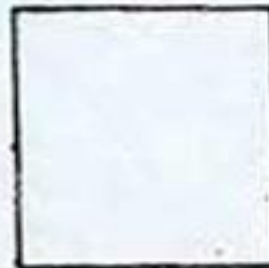
THIS IS TO CERTIFY that
..... Aborigine, aged years, residing at

is a person who in the opinion of the Aborigines Welfare Board, ought no longer be subject to the provisions/following provisions of the Aborigines Protection Act and Regulations, or any of such provisions, and he/she is accordingly exempted from such provisions:—

.....
Photograph of

Issued in compliance with the Resolution of the
Aborigines Welfare Board and dated the
..... day of
..... Chairman.
..... Member.
of the Aborigines Welfare Board.

Countersigned by
The Secretary,
.....



The
United Aborigines' Messenger

The Official Organ of the United Aborigines' Mission
Incorporating the Australian Aborigines Advocate & the Aborigines Interpreter

A Monthly Record of Work amongst Australian Aborigines

Gal. -
IV. 2.

LIFT UP THY
THY HANDS
PRAYER FOR THE
REMNANT THAT IS LEFT
ISAIAH 57. 4

THAT—
THEY ALL
MAY BE
—ONE
—ROM—
17-21

LOVEST THOU ME

ALL ONE
IN CHRIST
JESUS
—GAL 3. 28—

THE FIELD: AUSTRALIA: 70000 ABORIGINES
FEED MY SHEEP

Wallaga Lake Reserve NSW

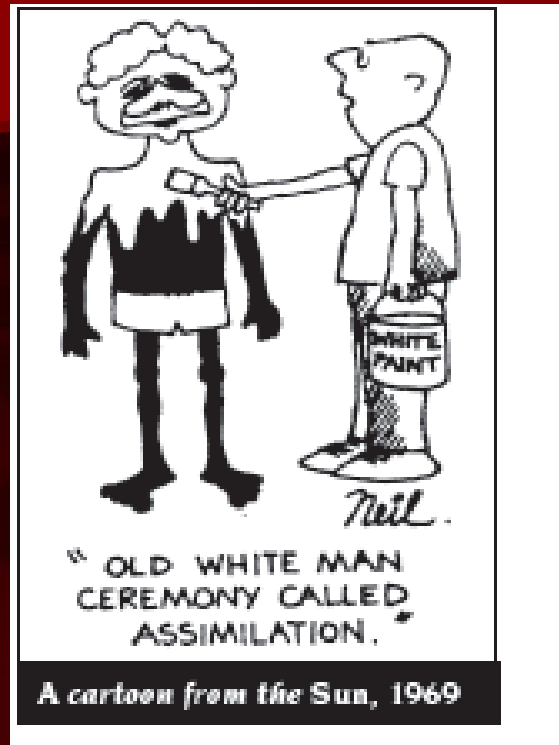


- It was not long before more land was needed for farming and these reserves were taken back by the government. By the late 1920s nearly all were in the hands of lease holders

Day of Mourning 1938



ASSIMILATION



Although Protection Boards were replaced by Welfare Boards in most states between 1938-1951, with the idea of Aboriginals being able to retain some of their culture, officially the policy was not legislated till 1951

- This was a change in policy but not necessarily a change in reality.
- This government policy was introduced in 1951 by Paul Hasluck, Federal Minister for Territories.
- Aborigines were encouraged to 'think white, act white, be white' with the intent that they would eventually live like white Australians.

- It forced Aborigines to totally abandon their traditional way of life if they wanted to gain access to what was offered such as a degree of freedom from the intrusions of the government in their lives on the reserves and missions.
- However, discrimination continued in all areas including housing, education, health and employment.
- Racism and intolerance continued, and many Aborigines were forced to live on the fringes of towns and were prevented from using public facilities such as town baths.
- Even returned Aboriginal soldiers were denied the same rights as their fellow, white, soldiers.

- In 1962 all Aborigines were given the right to vote in federal elections, which consolidated their voting rights in the states which had been given to them at various times between 1949 and 1961 and had made them citizens of Australia.
- They were still not counted as Australians in the census.

Training to be white

Kinchela Boys and Cootamundra Girls Homes





Cootamundra Aboriginal Girls Training Home

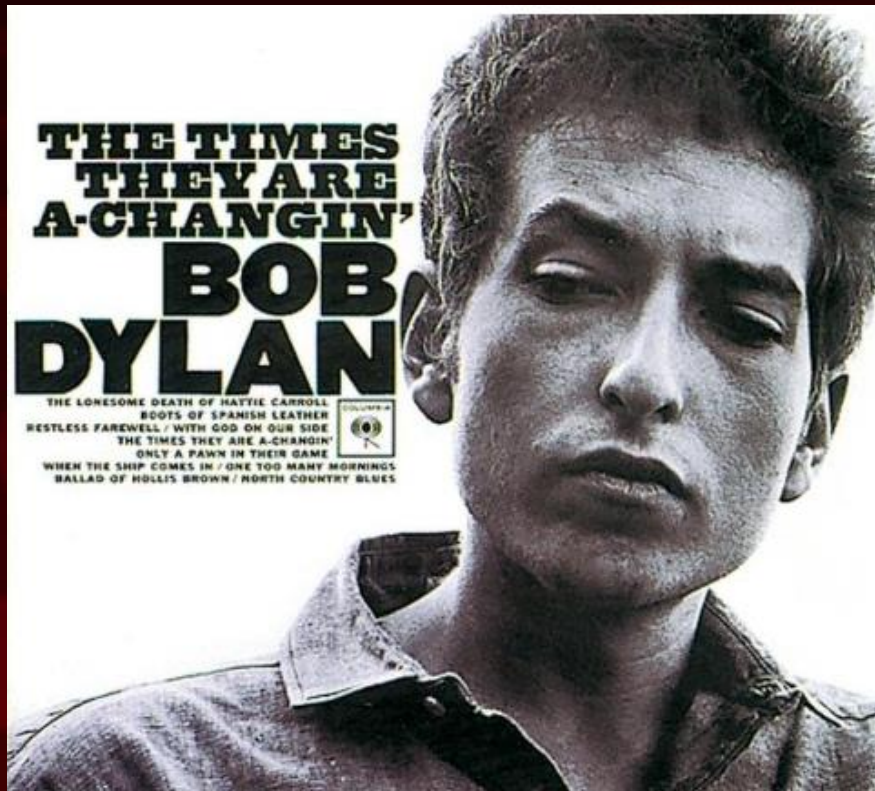
Some stereotypes remained despite changing policies



**'You can't come in here, you're unhygienic':
a cartoon from the
Bulletin, 1965**

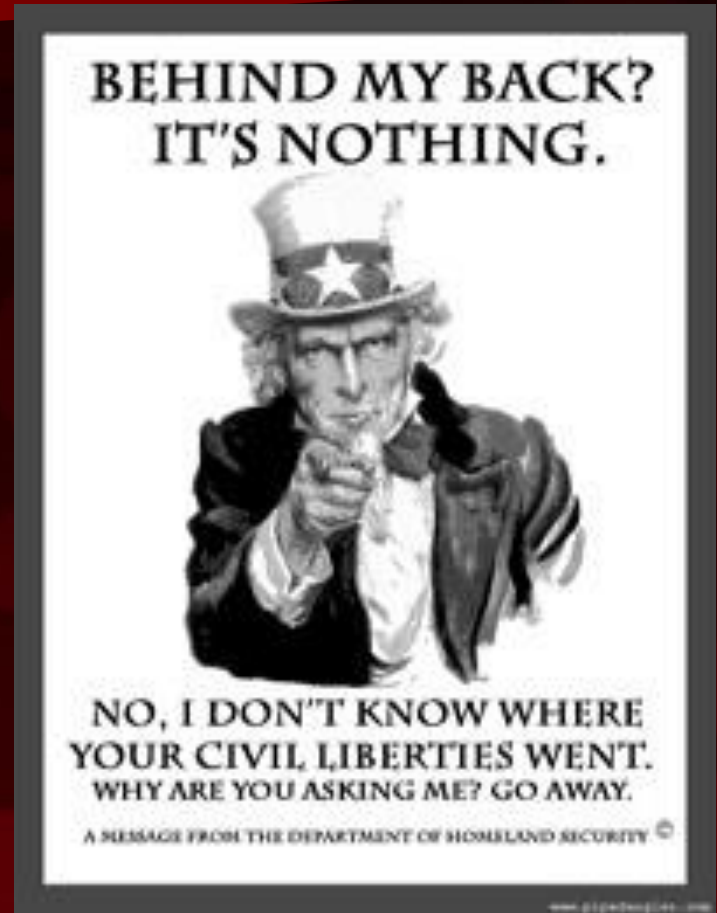
BUT.....

- The times they were a changing.....



WHY DID THEY CHANGE?

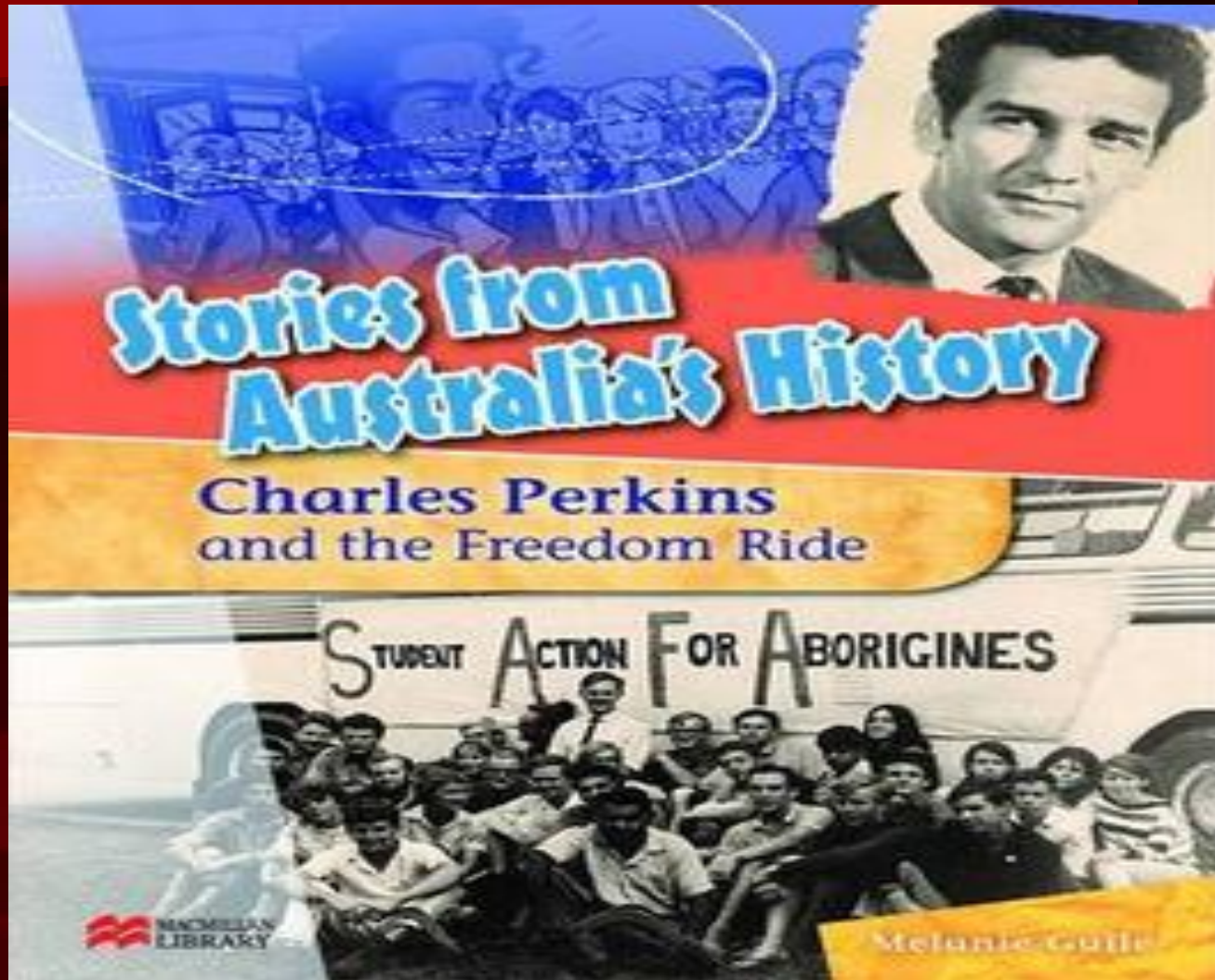
- social activism by Indigenous Australians
- pressure of changing social attitudes i.e. human rights and civil liberties



American Civil Rights Movement 1950s and 60s



Australian Freedom Rides 1967



VIOLENCE EXPLODES IN RACIST TOWN

Moree battles students

From GERRY STONE

MOREE, Saturday. - Mob violence exploded here today as student freedom riders were attacked by a crowd crazed with race hate. White women spat on girl students and screamed filthy words as the students tried to win Aboriginal children admission to the town baths. Several people were arrested and the town's mayor, Alderman William Lloyd, pitched into the battle, grabbing students by the scruff of their necks and hurling them out of the way. Throughout the fighting a barrage of eggs and rotten fruit rained on the students. Mr Jim Spigelman, a 19-year-old student from Maroubra, was smacked to the ground while the 500 strong crowd roared its approval.

Sunday Mirror, 21 February, 1965

Integration 1962 and 1967

- This was a change in wording and a relaxing of the harsher aspects of the government's policies but most of the controlling aspects of assimilation remained.
- The words defining 'assimilation' were changed in 1965 which seemed to allow Aborigines to retain some of their cultural ideas, beliefs and customs, and implied a greater acceptance of their culture and relationship with the land. The granting of the vote in 1962 to all Aborigines embraced this idea
- This change was soon called 'integration'.
- It was not a very long-lasting policy.

- The 1967 referendum, which gave the federal government power over Aboriginal affairs (instead of the states), was passed with a massive majority.
- The referendum also contained a question asking that the constitution be changed to allow all Aborigines to be counted in the census. This, too, was passed with a massive majority.

Seeking a Double Majority

*RIGHT WRONGS
WRITE*

YES



for

ABORIGINES!

On May 27

Produced by J. McManus. © 1992. All Rights Reserved. Funded by Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

Self Determination

- This was a major change of policy and a major change in reality.
- It was introduced during the first Whitlam government in 1972.
- Racial Discrimination Act had wider implications for all future Aboriginal policy makers
- Aborigines were to have full control over all aspects of their lives.
- They were no longer seen as a dying race.
- They no longer had to be protected.
- They were no longer expected to assimilate or integrate.
- They were now full and equal citizens in the eyes of the law.
- Land rights and native title to traditional lands now became the major issues.

Gough Whitlam and Vincent Lingiari



- 1975 Racial Discrimination Act
- In 1976 the Fraser government passed the Aboriginal Land Rights Act. Aboriginals were allowed to claim 'crown land' that was not being used by other people. The Aboriginal Lands Council was set up to control this land. Several state governments passed their own Land Rights Acts which recognised Aboriginal claims to land.

- 1986 Eddie Mabo begins his case for Native title. In 1992 the High Court determines that the Meriam people hold native title to their land.
- Native Title Act of 1993 was passed and National Native Title Tribunal was established.
- 1996 Wik Decision found that pastoral leases did not grant exclusive use and did not necessarily extinguish Native Title.
- Many people feared Native Title and it was incorrectly believed that Aboriginals would be able to claim peoples “backyards” under the act. This led to legislation changes in some states.

RECONCILIATION

- In 1997 The Native Title Amendment Act was introduced making it more difficult to register a claim and limiting the areas that can be claimed under Native Title.
- In 1998 the first "National Sorry Day" was held, and reconciliation events were held nationally, and attended by millions people.
- In May 2000, a "Walk for Reconciliation" was staged in Sydney, with up to 400,000 people marching across the Sydney Harbour Bridge as a gesture of apology. A similar walk was staged in Melbourne later that year.



The Sea of Hands has become a symbol of the people's movement for reconciliation.

The **Northern Territory National Emergency Response**

(also referred to as "the intervention") is a package of changes to welfare provision, law enforcement, land tenure and other measures, introduced by the Australian federal government under John Howard in 2007, nominally to address claims of rampant child sexual abuse and neglect in Northern Territory Aboriginal communities. Operation Outreach, the intervention's main logistical operation conducted by a force of 600 soldiers and detachments from the ADF concluded on 21 October 2008



DEBATE

John Howards Intervention Policy in Northern Territory

"You know, the whole aim here is not to condemn people for their problems. The whole aim is to support them, to get back on their feet again and to take charge of their own families again" Noel Pearson – 7.30 Report 19.06.07

Fred Chaney, in his 2007 Vincent Lingiari Lecture (2007). Indigenous people will be subject to a level of micromanagement that is unprecedented elsewhere in Australian society. Chaney highlights the suspension of the provisions of the *1975 Racial Discrimination Act* and the interference in Indigenous property rights as being of particular concern. He highlights how the lack of meaningful consultation has almost guaranteed that there will be resistance (both passive and active) to the implementation of the policy.

STOP THE NT INTERVENTION

artwork by mitch

sorry means you won't do it again

SATURDAY FEB 13 2010

walk against racism

9am la perouse point, bunnerong road

rally

1pm the block, redfern

self-determination not assimilation
stop the welfare quarantine, no expansion
services, housing and jobs for all communities
land rights, not leases
immediately reinstate the
racial discrimination act

speakers include:

- ★ irene fisher, sunrise health, nt
- ★ angeline penrith ★ ma! tulloch, cfmeu
- ★ pastor ray minniecon ★ jeff mcmullen

performers:

- ★ the black turtles ★ michael donovan
- ★ nadeena dixon ★ more tba

organised by stics (stop the intervention collective sydney) www.stoptheintervention.org
contact jean 0449646593 or mon 0415410558



other supporters include: Mudgin-Gal, Babana, Reconciliation for Western Sydney, Guriwal Aboriginal

2008 The Apology

"We apologise for the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians.

We apologise especially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country.

For the pain, suffering and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry."

UN's intervention report finds racial discrimination

Updated Wed Feb 24, 2010 1:33pm AEDT

Australia will face the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva in September accused of racially discriminating against Indigenous communities during the Northern Territory intervention.

The final report of the UN's special rapporteur on Indigenous rights, Professor James Anaya, found the intervention limits the rights and freedoms of Indigenous people in breach of Australia's international obligations.

It follows similar preliminary findings during a visit to Australia last year.

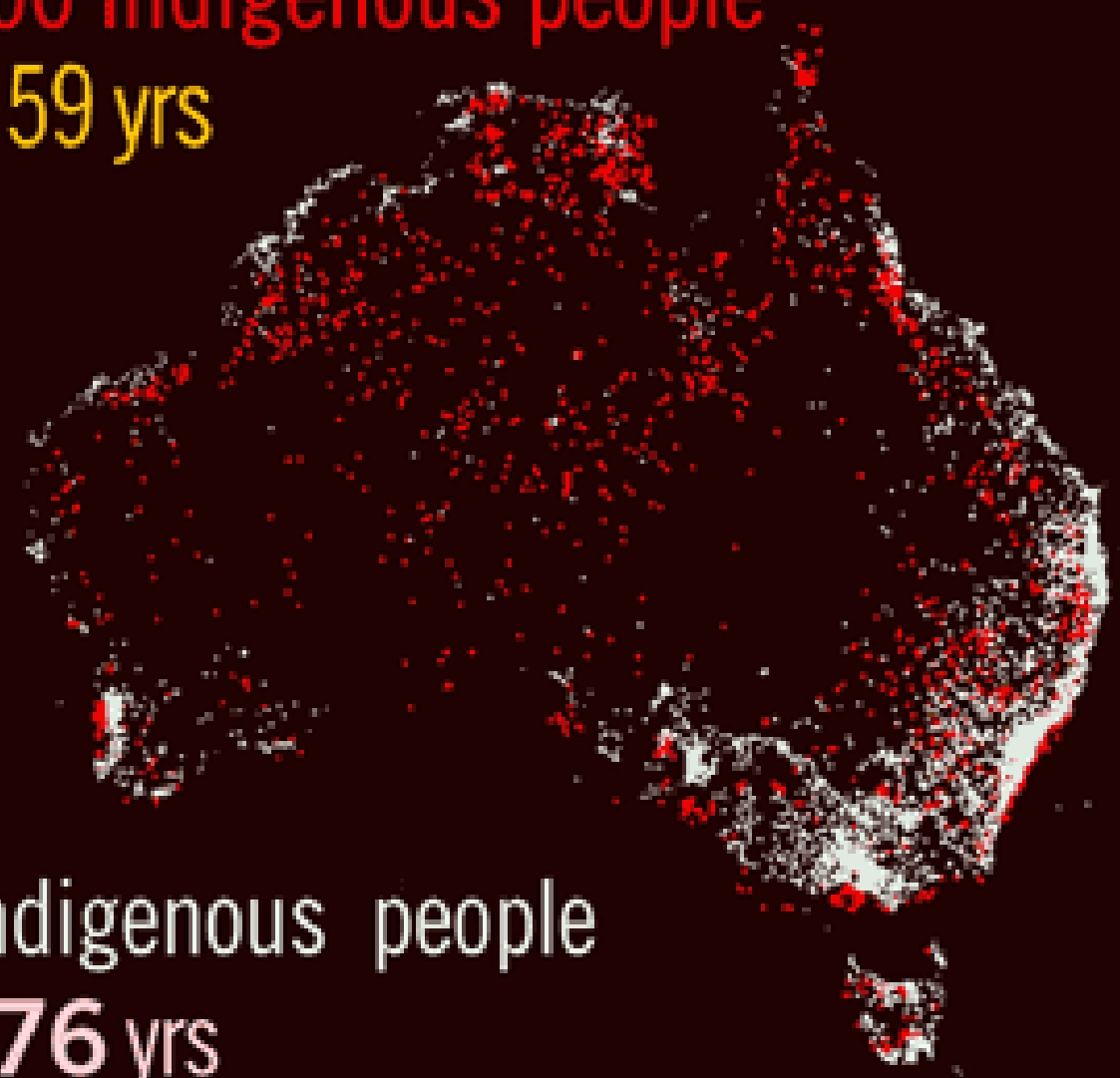
The report does not discuss the Federal Government's planned changes to the intervention because they are not yet complete.

Professor Anaya says there is little evidence that measures such as welfare quarantining actually work, and he welcomes planned changes.





Red dot = 100 Indigenous people
Ave. lifespan: 59 yrs



White dot =
1000 non-Indigenous people
Ave. lifespan: **76 yrs**