



PM GLYNN
INSTITUTE

Discussing
policy with

Indigenous
Australians



ACU

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

Discussing policy with Indigenous Australians

The PM Glynn Institute is committed to helping foster discussion about policy options with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This builds on Australian Catholic University's (ACU) larger commitment to strengthen the university's partnerships, collaborations and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, as embodied in its Reconciliation Action Plan.

POLICY UNIT

In 2018, the Institute collaborated with Uphold & Recognise, Cape York Institute and the University of New South Wales to establish a policy unit for constitutional recognition of Indigenous peoples with support from Allens, Westpac, Commonwealth Bank, Cape York Land Council, Reconciliation Australia, Kimberley Land Council and Arranday Foundation.

LEGAL SYMPOSIUM

In 2019, the Institute collaborated with Gilbert & Tobin, From the Heart, and Uphold & Recognise to present a seminar at which the former Chief Justice of Australia, Murray Gleeson, delivered a paper, *Recognition in keeping with the Constitution: a worthwhile project*.

SHORT PAPERS

In 2020, Visiting Fellow Kerry Pinkstone published *Anchoring our commitment in the Constitution: Finding common ground* in the Uphold & Recognise Monograph Series. In 2021, she published *Finishing up business: What we can learn from Australia's First Peoples about dying and death* in the PM Glynn Occasional Papers series under the guidance of an advisory committee including Jane Ceolin, Anthony Dillon, and Michael Reynolds.

BOOK

In 2021, with generous support from Sam and Joanne Hallinan, the Institute was able to support Senator Andrew Bragg's work on national reconciliation as a Visiting Fellow at the Institute. This work has drawn support from a range of political figures and community leaders including Scott Morrison, Rachel Perkins, Steven Marshall, Gladys Berejiklian, Ken Wyatt, Josh Frydenberg and Stan Grant.

VIDEO

To mark the 50th anniversary of the swearing-in of Senator Neville Bonner as the first Aboriginal parliamentarian on 17 August 1971, the Institute commissioned a video with generous support from Greg O'Neill and La Trobe Financial. This project was a collaboration with Uphold & Recognise, and included contributions from a range of current and former federal parliamentarians reflecting on his political career and his legacy for Australia.

Remembering Neville Bonner's legacy



In 1971, Neville Bonner made history as the first Aboriginal parliamentarian anywhere in Australia. He served as a Liberal Senator for Queensland for 12 years until 1983.

POLITICAL LEGACY

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of Neville Bonner's election to the Senate, the Institute and Uphold & Recognise produced a short video exploring some aspects of his political career. It drew on both archival footage, and new interviews with key political figures who served with him or reflect on his legacy.

HUMBLE ORIGINS AND HIGH ASPIRATIONS

Neville Bonner was a Jagera man, born on the banks of the Tweed River on Bundjalung Country. He spent time growing up in Woorabinda and around 15 years living and working on Palm Island. As a way of contributing to change on Palm Island, he became proficient in writing letters to the government to represent the concerns of the community. Drawing on his Jagera values and these early life experiences, he learnt to negotiate with the authorities and advocated for the rights of Aboriginal peoples, and eventually all Australians.

JOINING THE LIBERAL PARTY

Neville Bonner was inspired by what Robert Menzies had written in one of the party's pamphlets about Liberal values, as they appealed to his personal values. He joined the One Mile branch of the Liberal Party out of Brisbane in 1967. This was a period of great advancement for Aboriginal people, commencing with the success of the 1967 referendum led by Liberal Prime Minister Harold Holt, through to the creation of Land Rights in the Northern Territory by Liberal Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser in 1976.

INFLUENCE AS A SENATOR

The interviews reflect on Neville Bonner's time in Parliament, and his close working relationship with Malcolm Fraser. The interviews also discuss the respect he had across the Parliament, and his reputation as a likeable, warm and committed Senator and proud Aboriginal man. He rose to represent Queensland despite the discrimination he faced right throughout his life, including as an elected member of Parliament.

A RIFT HEALED

Neville Bonner eventually lost his place at the top of the Senate ticket during his preselection, and unsuccessfully ran as an Independent in 1983. Despite this, he was later presented by Prime Minister John Howard with Life Membership of the Liberal Party in Queensland, who said it was one of the more emotional moments of his life. It showed the rift had healed and was a testament to Neville Bonner's character, his Jagera heritage, and his commitment to Liberal values.

Fostering discussion

THE FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

In 2017, the Institute co-sponsored a panel discussion between Christian Porter, Ben Wyatt, Andrew Forrest, and Nolan Hunter about *The forgotten people: Liberal and conservative approaches to recognising Indigenous peoples*.

UPHOLDING THE BIG IDEAS

Michael Kirby, Rachel Perkins, Noel Pearson, and Greg Craven spoke at Parliament House, Sydney, in June 2018 at the launch of *Upholding the big ideas* – four discussion papers produced by the Institute's public policy unit on constitutional recognition of Indigenous peoples:

- *Journey from the heart*
- *Hearing Indigenous voices*
- *Makarrata*
- *A fuller declaration of Australia's nationhood*

RECOGNITION IN KEEPING WITH THE CONSTITUTION

Murray Gleeson, former Chief Justice of Australia, delivered a paper entitled, *Recognition in keeping with the Constitution: A worthwhile project* at a seminar co-hosted by the Institute at Gilbert & Tobin in Sydney in July 2019.



Developing the arguments



Kerry Pinkstone was appointed as a Visiting Fellow in Indigenous Public Policy in 2020, having previously served as Senior Adviser on Social Policy in the Office of the Prime Minister.

She has particularly focused on the issue of constitutional recognition of Indigenous peoples.

ANCHORING OUR COMMITMENT IN THE CONSTITUTION

Pinkstone's paper *Anchoring our commitment in the Constitution: Finding common ground*, seeks to begin a discussion to find a common ground proposal that would substantively recognise Indigenous peoples in the Constitution.

This would enable Indigenous peoples to have a greater say on laws and policies affecting them and form the basis of the new settlement John Howard advocated for in 2007.

The paper aims at identifying common ground between the position in the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the Australian Government's response to the recommendations of the Referendum Council.

FOR ALL OF US

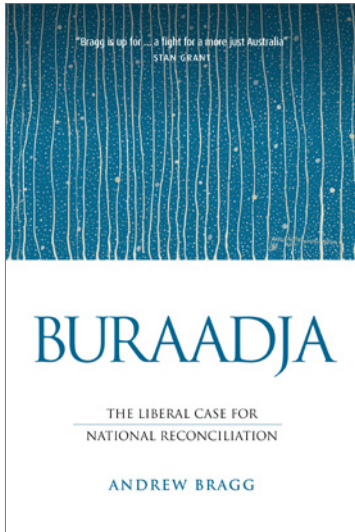
For all of us is a background paper that provides a brief overview of the need for Indigenous peoples to be heard when decisions are made about them, and for their unique status to be recognised.

LOVE OF COUNTRY AND A FAIR GO

Love of country and a fair go is a background paper that discusses the policy approaches of the Howard, Rudd, Gillard, Abbott, Turnbull, and Morrison governments to constitutional recognition of Indigenous peoples. This paper confirms the possibility that Indigenous leaders and constitutional conservatives could agree on a proposal for substantive change.

Copies of the publications listed in this brochure are available at pmglynn.acu.edu.au or by emailing pmg@acu.edu.au.

Making the case for national reconciliation



Andrew Bragg's *Buraadja: the Liberal case for national reconciliation* provides a powerful account of the Liberal Party's approach to Indigenous affairs. The Party's record of successes and failures is frankly evaluated as an important basis for developing effective approaches to persistent problems.

The problems faced by Indigenous people are considered through two contrasting lenses: the extremist lens of the Black Lives Matter movement, and the moderate lens of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. The Uluru Statement is shown to offer a modest approach to addressing problems by recognising Indigenous peoples in the Constitution.

Andrew Bragg draws on liberal values to make a compelling case for national reconciliation in Australia. He offers some practical suggestions for remembering our history, listening to Indigenous people, and planning for the future.

Buraadja is published with a foreword by the Prime Minister Scott Morrison.



“... at last, a pathway to complete the unfinished business ...”

Rachel Perkins

“... an insightful look at the past and the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead ...”

Ken Wyatt

“Bragg is up for a fight for a more just Australia ...”

Stan Grant

Finishing up business

In 2021, Kerry Pinkstone examined how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge remains undervalued when approaching issues in our contemporary society.

Finishing up business: What we can learn from Australia's First Peoples about dying and death seeks to better inform the debate our nation is continuing to have about end-of-life care, including voluntary assisted dying.

HEARING INDIGENOUS VOICES

Culturally, Indigenous people are hesitant to talk about dying and death. There is a risk their views are not considered, and that the broader discourse on end-of-life issues continues without understanding what we could learn from Indigenous peoples.

CULTURALLY UNACCEPTABLE

The period before death is an important time for passing on cultural knowledge through ceremonies, healing relationships, and coming together, and is seen as preparation for the next stage of a person's spiritual journey. Euthanasia is therefore culturally unacceptable given the importance of this time for the individual, their family and community.

BURDEN OF PREMATURE DEATHS

The burden of disease and premature death weighs heavily on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. When life is taken away prematurely, it becomes more precious.



MISUNDERSTANDING VALUES

When Indigenous views are considered in debates about legalising euthanasia, they are typically reduced to a problem of misinformation leading to a fear of doctors and making people fearful of accessing care, rather than as a deep cultural opposition that is values-based.

INDIGENOUS INTERDEPENDENCE

Humans are relational beings whose sense of identity and interests are shaped by our connections to others. Our connectedness as a society means we are called to honour our fellow human being and respect life.

The PM Glynn Institute was established by Australian Catholic University (ACU) in 2016 as a public policy think tank to analyse issues of concern to the Catholic Church and the wider Australian community. Its focus is public policy for the common good.

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Cover image: Patrick Chapman, *Dhuyu Baganbagan*; 2017 (detail). Ink on paper.
Australian Catholic University Art Collection.

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