

Dear Senate Members,

I am writing to add my voice to the chorus asking that the Northern Territory Intervention be terminated.

I am not an expert nor am I particularly knowledgeable about the Intervention itself but I do have a background of studying colonial history and the principles associated with colonizing a people.

As colonizers it is important, for our own egos, to see ourselves as being completely in the right. We have their best interests at heart. Coming from a church background I know how important it is to see ourselves as 'saints' and the others as either 'sinners' - drunks, abusers, pedophiles, or unfortunates whom we need to help.

When colonizing a people it is important not to treat them as equal human beings i.e. people who have a wisdom and a culture which has enabled them to survive, and possibly thrive, on the land on which we find them. We need instead to treat them as children who need educating, cajoling, and punishing if they do not behave as we wish.

When colonizing a people it is important too to keep one eye out on the resources which might be of use to us. The minerals, flora and fauna, the land and even the culture of the people themselves as aspects such as indigenous art are also very valuable. Within this context it is important to ignore the meaning a people give to places, symbols and custom. We may talk about the hallowed turf of the MCG. We may search on line for our ancestors or look up old classmates who went to the same school, or soldiers who we remember with respect. It is important not to acknowledge that our sense of connection to people and place could ever be as important to them as it is to us.

We are not saints though. We, the dominant culture in Australia, are interested in making money and the indigenous people in the Northern Territory are sitting on land we want to dig up or 'develop'. We have been stealing their land for two hundred years and we are still stealing it. For god's sake stop imposing this thing on the indigenous peoples. If you are really concerned about their welfare then sit down with them and listen. Then have the guts to share the power to put things right.

Thank you for listening to me.

Yours sincerely
Chris Daly