

First Australians

Australian Aboriginal people are undeniably our First Australians. These people have struggled under colonisation. There is no doubt that the socio-economic circumstances of modern Aboriginal people in Australia reflects poorly on their treatment and consideration by past and present governments.

KAP is mindful of many appalling injustices that have been inflicted on the Aboriginal people and while there is awareness of these issues, the strong and determined focus is on how we can improve the circumstances and opportunities for them.

It is clear that the welfare system and the subsequent culture that has become entrenched in many communities has reinforced the decline of Aboriginal communities. It is apparent that in pastoral areas, the 1964 wage decision that resolved equal pay for Aboriginal stockmen resulted in general unemployment for many stockmen and Aboriginal communities being displaced. Subsequently these people have lost their purpose and connection to the land. The injustice of unequal pay and subsequent employment discrimination has had a massive unintended consequence that will likely take generations to resolve.

KAP is committed to addressing the serious socio-economic issues facing many Aboriginal communities across Australia by working with the Elders and traditional leaders of these communities. KAP does not support the federal intervention because the program is discriminatory and exacerbates the alienation of people who desperately need to regain a sense of self-worth and basic human dignity. It is undeniable that the government has an obligation to protect those who are most vulnerable in our society, but this protection must be provided respectfully and genuinely.

KAP is concerned that Aboriginal people apparently “own” over twenty percent of Australian lands, but still do not enjoy the same title of this land as other Australians. It is essential that all Aboriginal lands are able to be held under individual or collective title deeds. It is essential that Aboriginal people have the opportunity and incentive to operate their land profitably and with purpose.

KAP is committed to programs of support that engage Aboriginal people constructively in the broader Australian community and economy with equality.

KAP will pursue policies that:

- provide inalienable title over Aboriginal lands either collectively or individually to Aboriginal people;
- end compulsory draconian and discriminatory “intervention and prohibition” laws and provide authority to community leaders to establish their own governance; and
- maintain and extend the Community Development Employment Program and engage Aboriginal people in civil construction projects including building and maintenance of housing for their own communities.