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**Prince Philip's 'indigenist'
plot to destroy Australia**



Prince Philip's 'indigenist' plot to destroy Australia

by an EIR Investigative Team

Fierce debate over the "rights," particularly the "land rights," of its 250,000 or so citizens of Aboriginal descent has dominated the political life of Australia for the past several years. In March, the Labor government of Prime Minister Paul Keating threatened a rare "double dissolution" of both houses of Parliament unless its bill to establish a \$1.46 billion Aboriginal Land Fund were passed unaltered.

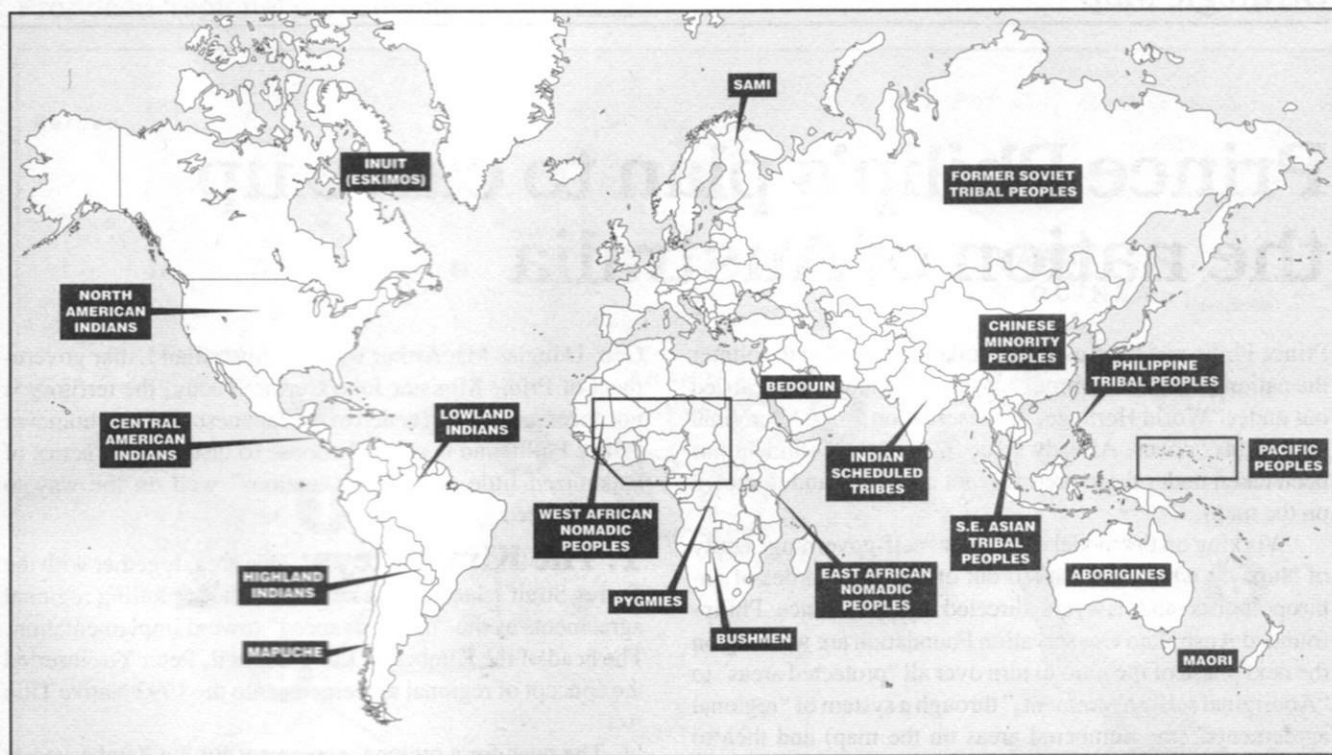
The country continues to be rocked by the High Court's 1992 "Mabo decision," which overturned the doctrine of *terra nullius*, according to which Australia was "empty land" when the first colonists arrived; this threw open much of the country to Aboriginal land claims. Even the shocking neglect of Aboriginal health, which is the subject of two recent government reports, is claimed, by some Aborigines and many of their radical white advisers, to have been caused by breaking the "spiritual link" which the Aborigines allegedly once had to the land.

Before 1967, Aborigines owned virtually no land. In that year, a national referendum, organized by the networks of Britain's Prince Philip in the London-based Anti-Slavery Society, changed the Australian Constitution to allow the federal government to make laws for Aborigines (previously the sole prerogative of Australia's six states, except in the Commonwealth-run Northern Territory). Today, constituting only 1.5% of Australia's population, they hold 15% of the nation's land, have filed claims for another 10%, and will receive additional huge tracts of "conservation," "World Heritage," and national parks land, according to plans now under way.

The issue of "Aboriginal land rights" was created by Prince Philip's World Wildlife Fund in order to splinter the nation of Australia. It is a case study of the WWF's use of radical environmentalism and "indigenism" to crush modern nation-states, as *EIR* demonstrated that *modus operandi* in our Oct. 28, 1994 *Special Report*, "The Coming Fall of the House of Windsor."

The aim of the "indigenists" is to place the Aborigines in the Australian equivalent of South Africa's Bantustans: stinking holes of poverty and backwardness. Those who claim to be fighting for the "rights" of the Aborigines to maintain the

The World Wide Fund for Nature's identification of 'indigenous peoples'



The world's "indigenous rights" movement is run by Prince Philip's World Wide Fund for Nature in order to split up nation-states. This map is taken from the WWF's 1992 "Atlas of the Environment"; its accompanying key identifies these "indigenous peoples," whom the WWF and its spin-offs are organizing, as "threatened by economic development."

primitive culture of their ancestors, are actually denying them the opportunity to participate in Western Judeo-Christian civilization, the highest form of culture to have emerged on this planet. This includes denying them the fruits of modern science, technology, and medical research. As Geoff McDonald, former union representative for the Royal Australia Nursing Federation, discovered during his extensive travels through Aboriginal areas, "one of the disgraceful results of the urging of blacks to move away from modern living and to adopt a different lifestyle, has been an obvious increase of disease and illness, which is not discussed by those who know what is happening because of the fear of being labelled 'racist.'"

Prince Philip has led the campaign to shatter Australia since at least his 1963 royal tour there, when his call for the formation of an Australian wing of the WWF led to the establishment of the Australian Conservation Foundation, the "mother" of all indigenism and radical environmentalism in the country. Philip chaired this nominally Australian organization from 1971-76, during which time he initiated its turn toward "indigenism." He was replaced as ACF president by the former central bank head, H.C. "Nugget" Coombs (whose picture is on the cover of this magazine); the chief architect of the proposed self-governing Aboriginal enclaves all over the country is former longtime ACF Executive Director Philip Toyñe, now a key federal bureaucrat.

The model for the "indigenous" carving up of Australia is another British Crown colony, Canada. There, an agreement negotiated by Queen Elizabeth with 17,500 Inuits (Eskimos) in 1993 declared one-fifth of Canada to be the new "self-governing" territory of Nunavut. Many of those involved in creating Nunavut have deployed to Australia to replicate the process.

The creation of new Aboriginal nations out of Australia is being organized by hordes of anthropologists, deployed by Coombs and the ACF. The anthropologists organize and file all the land claims, and control the Aboriginal organizations which nominally employ them. Anthropologists are creating a radical new "Aboriginal identity" which will lead to a terrorist upsurge, precisely as they created the Shining Path of Peru, or the Zapatista National Liberation Army of Chiapas, Mexico. Indeed, at least one of the veterans of the Chiapas anthropologist project has redeployed to "study" Aborigines in the Australian state of Queensland, while Mabo decision architect Prof. Henry Reynolds, who visited Mexico to study the "indigenous" situation there, predicts a bloody Chiapas-style explosion in Australia.

In addition to *EIR*'s investigations, this report draws extensively upon the researches of Lyndon LaRouche's co-thinkers in the Citizens Electoral Councils of Australia. We also include interviews with some of the key individuals plotting to rip Australia apart.

Prince Philip's plan to carve up the nation of Australia

Prince Philip and his Australian collaborators plan to splinter the nation of Australia through a variety of land grabs carried out under "World Heritage," "conservation," or "Aboriginal land rights" cover. Already some 32% of the continent has been taken under these pretexts (not all of the land is shown on the map).

Working on the model of the new "self-governing" entity of Nunavut which was carved out of Canada, hordes of anthropologists and lawyers directed by the Prince Philip-founded Australian Conservation Foundation are working on the next phase of the plot: to turn over all "protected areas" to "Aboriginal self-government," through a system of "regional agreements" (the numbered areas on the map) and then to expand these regional agreements even beyond the current protected areas. After a few years of de facto sovereignty, the next phase would be bloody Chiapas-style secession from the Commonwealth, as predicted by the architect of the Mabo case, Prof. Henry Reynolds (see interview).

Note the strategic placement of the proposed package of "regional agreements," which includes the Kimberleys, Kakadu National Park, Arnhem Land, the Northern Peninsula Area of Cape York, and the Torres Strait Islands. Together with the "sea claims" now being filed (70% of the Northern Territory coast, for instance, is already controlled by Aborigines), and the proposed Aboriginal "co-management" of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, the whole northern and northeastern part of Australia is potentially sealed off. The crucial shipping lane between Indonesia and Papua New Guinea on the north and Australia on the south, through which several thousand ships pass per year, would be dominated by these new "self-governing" entities on the Australian side, and by the strategically placed "protected areas" of Irian Jaya and Papua New Guinea to the north, flanked in the west by an East Timor declaring its independence of Indonesia, a long-term project of British intelligence.

What Prince Philip et al. are recreating, in effect, is the notorious British strategy for Australia during World War II—the "Brisbane Line." The British argued that everything north of a line drawn across the continent southwesterly from Brisbane to Adelaide should be ceded to the Japanese, a proposition which would have made the continent as a whole indefensible, and which was defeated by the collaboration of

Gen. Douglas MacArthur with the Australian Labor government of Prime Minister John Curtin. Today, the territory is not necessarily being ceded to the Japanese, but to whomever Prince Philip and his crowd choose to install in the series of balkanized little Aboriginal "nations" well on the way to being created.

1. The Kimberleys: This area, together with the Torres Strait Islands, is described by those plotting regional agreements as the "most advanced" toward implementation. The head of the Kimberley Land Council, Peter Yu, inserted the concept of regional agreements into the 1993 Native Title Act.

The push for a regional agreement for the Kimberleys is the result of Nugget Coombs's 1985-91 "Kimberley Project" (see interview with Donna Craig), in which he sent in hordes of Australian National University-financed anthropologists and others to do a "social impact assessment" of proposed mining in the area. Coombs then brought in key figures involved in the creation of Nunavut to start to agitate among Aborigines for a regional agreement for the area.

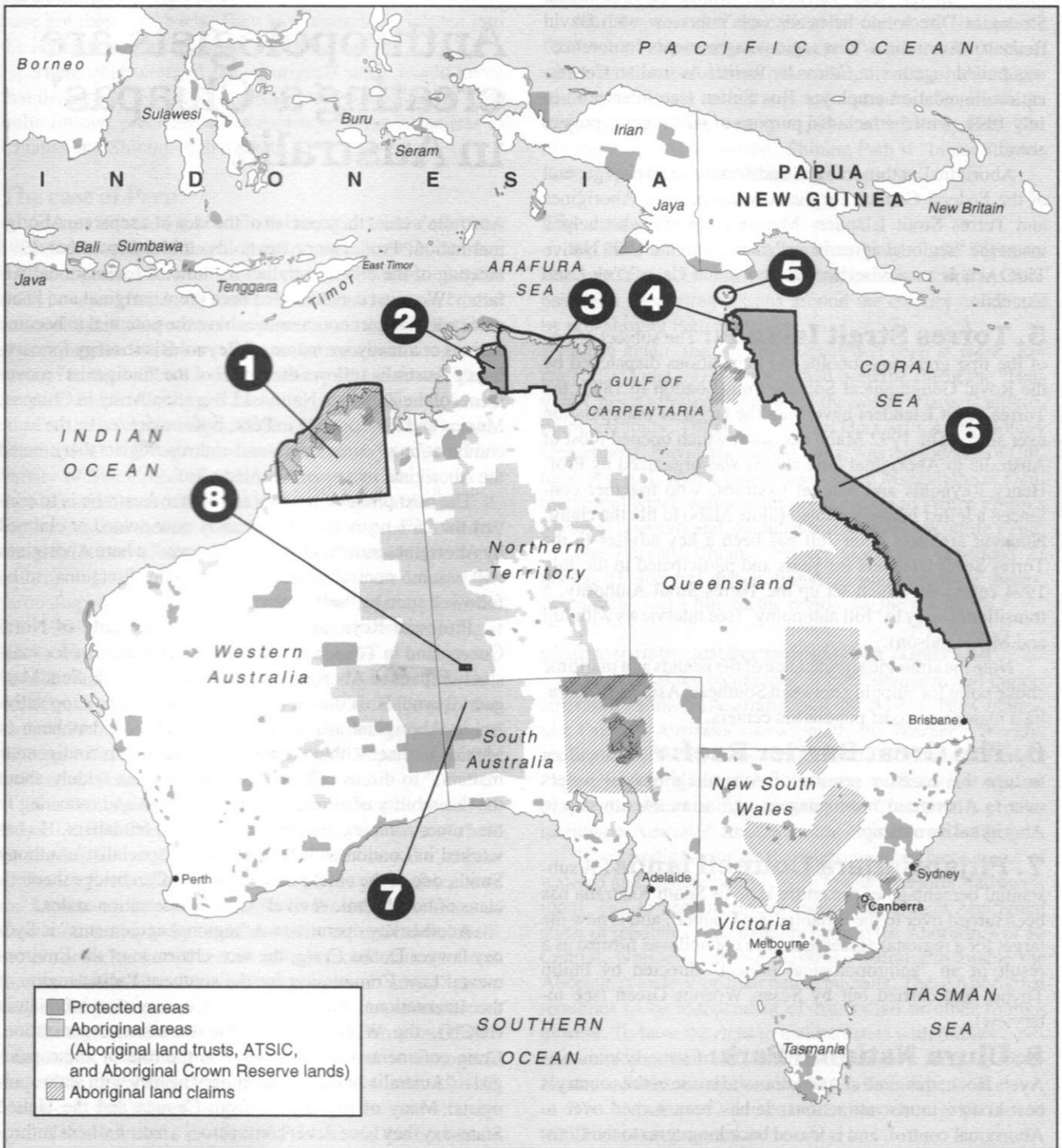
The plot to split the Kimberleys off from Australia is not new: The first justice minister under Lenin's Bolshevik government after 1917, Isaac Steinberg, with backing from circles in London, attempted to set up the Kimberleys as a "Jewish homeland."

2. Kakadu National Park: The plan of Coombs et al. is to establish an Aboriginal "co-management" regional agreement over the park, as a stepping stone to taking the land from the Commonwealth altogether.

3. Arnhem Land: Coombs did so much organizing among the Yirrkala people here, that they adopted him as an "elder." The British head of Australian National University's anthropology department, Dr. Nicolas Peterson, has just written an Aboriginal "sea claim" for the ocean off Arnhem Land in the Arafura Sea, which is designed to set a legal precedent.

4. Northern Peninsula Area (NPA): This 8,000-square-mile area on the tip of Cape York commands the crucial Torres Strait. It is also very close to Australia's space launch site near the top of the peninsula,

Proposed 'regional agreements' in Australia



an important component of the nation's dwindling scientific and technological capability. Given the complex of parks in the area, one of which abuts the launch site, one could

expect to soon see a "land claim" filed for the launch site. The regional agreement for the NPA was designed by longtime Australian Conservation Foundation Executive Di-

rector Philip Toyne, who continues to push it from his new post as deputy secretary of the federal Department of Environment, Sports, and Territories, whose Environmental Strategies Directorate he heads (see interview with David Bennett). Australia's "first regional agreements conference" was pulled together in Cairns by former Australian Conservation Foundation employee Ros Sultan (see interview) in July 1994, with the included purpose of pushing this project ahead.

Aboriginal anthropologist and former secretary general of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders Marcia Langton, who helped insert the "regional agreements" clause into the 1993 Native Title Act, is an adviser to the Aboriginal Cape York Land Council.

5. Torres Strait Islands: The subject of one of the first great anthropological expeditions dispatched by the Royal Geographical Society from London in 1898, the Torres Strait Islanders have been the target of manipulation ever since. The 1992 Mabo decision, which opened most of Australia to Aboriginal land claims was organized by Prof. Henry Reynolds and Nugget Coombs, who together convinced a leftist Islander named Eddie Mabo to file the claim. Nunavut architect Peter Jull has been a key adviser to the Torres Strait Islanders for years and participated in the July 1994 ceremony which set up the Torres Strait Authority, a transitional body to "full autonomy" (see interviews with Jull and Mick Dodson).

Note the strategic significance of the islands as a maritime choke point for shipping between Southeast Asia and Australia's major east coast population centers.

6. The Great Barrier Reef: Plans are afoot to turn this massive portion of Australia's coastal waters over to Aboriginal "co-management," as an interim step to Aboriginal ownership.

7. Pitjantjatjara Council lands: A substantial percentage of the entire state of South Australia has been turned over to the Pitjantjatjara Council, and is now the target for a regional agreement. The council was formed as a result of an "anthropological project" directed by Philip Toyne, and carried out by Susan Woenne-Green (see interview).

8. Uluru National Park: Formerly known as Ayers Rock, this central Australian site is one of the country's best-known tourist attractions. It has been turned over to Aboriginal control, and is leased back long-term to the Commonwealth.

The chief architect of this project was former Australian Conservation Foundation boss Philip Toyne; the key anthropologist involved was Susan Woenne-Green. Uluru is the model for ultimately turning all of Australia's "protected areas" over to Aboriginal control.

Anthropologists are creating a 'Chiapas' in Australia

Australia's chief theoretician of the idea of a separate Aboriginal nation, Prof. Henry Reynolds, told a September 1993 meeting of the elite Australian Institute of International Affairs, "We must conclude that both the Aboriginal and [Torres Strait] Islander communities have the potential to become nations or already are nations." Reynolds's strategy for carving up Australia follows the model of the "indigenist" movements of the Zapatista National Liberation Army in Chiapas, Mexico and Shining Path in Peru, both organized by the same combination of communists and anthropologists that created the Aboriginal movement in Australia.

The next phase of the plot to splinter Australia is to convert the 25% or more of the country now owned or claimed by Aborigines into "regional agreements," where Aborigines will assume control of major government functions, to be followed soon by "self-government."

Professor Reynolds, based at the University of North Queensland in Townsville, was the chief organizer for massively expanded Aboriginal land claims. His wife, Sen. Margaret Reynolds, is one of the Labor government's top activists in Aboriginal affairs. Professor Reynolds has been to Mexico to meet with government specialists on "indigenous matters," to discuss Chiapas. He has written widely about the desirability of eliminating nation-states and returning to the "more complex patterns of power" of feudalism. He has worked in London with British "ethnic specialist" Anthony Smith, one of the chief postwar Oxford-Cambridge theoreticians of how "ethnic revival" will replace nation-states.

Another key operative for "regional agreements" is Sydney lawyer Donna Craig, the vice-chairman of the Environmental Law Commission for the southern Pacific region of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the World Wildlife Fund's sister organization. Craig comments (see interview) on the role of anthropologists: "Australia has an extraordinary history with anthropologists. Many of my friends from Canada and the United States say they have never come across a nation where anthropologists have exerted so much power."

The British head of the Anthropology Department at the Australian National University, Nicolas Peterson, confirmed (see interview) his role and that of his anthropologist colleagues in all of the major land rights developments in the past three decades: "We have played a crucial role in all

this. . . . Anthropologists have participated in government inquiries, they have written most of the land claims, they have done all the basic research by which Aboriginal people have got their land back. They have considerable input into the legislation, various pieces of legislation.”

These controllers of the Aboriginal cause would know that the sort of “indigenous” project now under way in Australia follows precisely in the footsteps of the Zapatistas in Chiapas and Shining Path in Peru.

The case of Peru

From 1980 until it was finally brought under control by Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori in late 1993, Shining Path slaughtered tens of thousands of Peruvians, many of them poor and Indian; destroyed billions of dollars in crucial national infrastructure such as power lines; organized a massive expansion of Peru’s role in the international drug trade; took over large sections of the country where no one dared venture; and finally verged on taking over the capital, Lima.

On one level, the origins of Shining Path are well known. Shining Path was founded at, and deployed out of, the University of San Cristóbal de Huamanga in Ayacucho, in the desolate south-central highlands of Peru. For two decades, its top leaders and theoreticians operated out of the university, under the supervision of numerous Peruvian and international anthropologists who ran the university’s experimental anthropology department. The rector of the university from the late 1960s through the late 1970s was the anthropologist Efraim Morote Best, who was jailed in 1973 as a suspected “intellectual author” of Shining Path; three of his four children became top Shining Path leaders. This leadership also included Abimael Guzmán Reynoso, the now-jailed head of Shining Path, who joined the Philosophy Department at the university soon after it opened in 1958.

But the origins of Shining Path begin decades earlier. In July 1920, the Communist International (“Comintern”) held its famous Congress of Peoples of the East in Baku, capital of Soviet Azerbaijan. In that and a followup conference of the League of Oppressed People in Berlin, the outlines of Comintern policy were established for the “underdeveloped” sector, or for backward sectors of “advanced” nations: Communists should ally with whatever oppressed “ethnic” group they could find, to deploy them for communist revolution.

The founder of the Communist Party of Peru, José Carlos Mariategui, Comintern recruit from a visit to Europe in the 1920s, established an alliance in 1924 with Luis E. Valcarcel, the acknowledged “father of Peruvian ethnology.” Valcarcel was a protégé of Paul Rivet, the Sorbonne-based leader of French anthropology, and Rivet’s trainee, Jacques Soustelle,¹ an admirer of Aztec human sacrifice who

1. Soustelle’s Secret Army Organization (OAS) was involved in numerous assassination attempts against French President Charles de Gaulle in the early 1960s. Soustelle was identified by U.S. intelligence as a key member of the

spent several years during the late 1930s and early 1940s doing anthropological research in southern Mexico and Guatemala.

Mariategui and Valcarcel collaborated in Valcarcel’s 1927 book *Tempestad en los Andes* (*Tempest in the Andes*), which predicted rebellions descending from the Indian highlands upon Peru’s coastal regions. Decades later, the fruits of this collaboration were to explode with bloody fury: The full name of the “indigenist” Shining Path is “In the Shining Path of José Carlos Mariategui.”

The case of Chiapas

On Jan. 1, 1994, “Shining Path North,” the Zapatista National Liberation Army, launched its insurrection in Chiapas, with supporting actions around the country conducted by pro-Shining Path networks.

Once again, the anthropologists had been at work. Between 1957 and 1977, Chiapas had been the site of the “Harvard Chiapas Project,” probably the world’s largest anthropological study. The British head of Harvard’s Anthropology Department, David Maybury-Lewis, was the founder of Cultural Survival, whose patron was Queen Margarethe of Denmark, and which was a sister organization to Prince Philip’s Survival International, founded by the World Wildlife Fund.

The Harvard Chiapas Project alone had produced 27 books, 21 doctoral dissertations, 33 undergraduate theses, two novels, and a film on the region, by the late 1970s.

Communists, anthropologists in Australia

The 1920 Baku conference of the Comintern had important ramifications in Australia, as it did in Peru. The Communist Party of Australia’s newspaper, the *Worker’s Weekly*, on Sept. 24, 1931, in an article titled “Communist Party’s Fight for Aborigines: Draft Program of Struggle Against Slavery,” called for implementing the Comintern’s proclamations in Australia. Its concluding objective called for:

“The handing over to the Aborigines of large tracts of watered and fertile country, with towns, seaports, railways, roads, etc. to become one or more independent Aboriginal states or republics. The handing back to the Aborigines of all Central, Northern and North West Australia to enable the Aborigines to develop their native pursuits. These Aboriginal republics to be independent of Australian or other foreign powers. To have the right to make treaties with foreign powers, including Australia, establish their own army, governments, industries, and in every way to be independent.”

The map on p. 12 demonstrates how extremely close to fulfillment that program is.

In 1944, the Communist Party stepped up its Aboriginal activities. In March of that year, its theoretical journal, the

Soviet “Red Orchestra” espionage ring; he later headed the extreme right-wing OAS. Valcarcel joined the Rivet-Soustelle Society of Americanists, an anthropological association with roots in the late nineteenth century.

Communist Review, called for a transfer of certain powers held by the states to the Commonwealth, particularly as concerns Aboriginal affairs. Communist Party policy, the *Review* argued, "must be framed to prevent and offset the effects of civilization on the tribalized natives, as well as rehabilitating the detribalized full-bloods. Such a policy requires a centralized authority, which can be brought about by giving the required powers to the present federal government."

Through the efforts of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, comprised of communists and fellow-travelers and directed by British oligarchs in the Anti-Slavery Society, those "required powers" were handed over to the federal government as a result of a 1967 referendum.

Once again, the communists were not the only ones beating the drums for the Aborigines. Anthropologist Judith Wright McKinney, whom Council for Aboriginal Affairs founder H.C. "Nugget" Coombs calls "my collaborator of 30 years," has written a history of the Coombs-led Aboriginal Treaty Committee, *We Call for a Treaty*. There McKinney emphasizes the role of her fellow anthropologists: "Not until after World War II when a new scholarly interest was reinforced by the work of anthropologists such as A.P. Elkin and W.E.H. Stanner (the latter himself later a member of the Council for Aboriginal Affairs) . . . did a movement begin to support a new Aboriginal push for land rights and human rights."

Key in all this, McKinney notes, was "the new science of anthropology, which provided the initial impulse towards modification of the former administrative rigidity." and which "gained a footing in Australian universities in 1926, with a Department of Anthropology established in the University of Sydney." Elkin held that chair beginning 1933, and in 1938 published his famous book *The Australian Aborigines*. Reprinted numerous times, "The influence of this book . . . had much to do with the gradual change in the attitudes of some European Australians to the indigenous minority."

The anthropologist Elkin, to judge by the dossier prepared on him by the Australian Security Intelligence Organization (ASIO, Australia's FBI), was the Luis Valcarcel of Australia. ASIO cited his role in various communist activities, including Aboriginal protests, his chairing a meeting of the Friendship with Russia League in February 1945, and his membership in a communist front, the Australian Association of Scientific Workers.

While Elkin's early work raised certain issues, it was W.E.H. Stanner who was "the voice of the Aboriginal people." The London School of Economics-trained Stanner, a veteran of British intelligence activities in Kenya and elsewhere, initiated, with Coombs's backing, the shift from "assimilation" to segregation and enforced backwardness. Stanner's 1965 work, *Aboriginal Territorial Organization*, was the crucial theoretical piece which outlined the alleged mysti-

cal/spiritual place of the land in the Aboriginal psyche. The following year saw the famous walk-off by the Gurindji people from Lord Vestey's Wave Hill estate, an internationally publicized protest against abominable living conditions, which was largely organized by key communist cadre, together with anthropologists, and which is universally recognized to be "the birth of the modern land rights movement."

One of the anthropologists who worked at Wave Hill was Hannah Middleton. Middleton, who was British, was a member of the Australian Communist Party, and a student of the British anthropologist Frederick Rose. Rose, also a member of the Australian Communist Party during the 1950s, had fled Australia in the wake of the "Petrov Affair" involving Soviet espionage, and took up a chair of anthropology in East Berlin. From there, he deployed his student Middleton to Wave Hill.

Australia's university establishment

As Australia has its own "Valcarcel," so it has its own "University of Huamanga": the Canberra-based Australian National University (ANU), which now boasts over 20 professors of anthropology on its staff and an additional 53 doctors of anthropology or archeology on scholarship or doing "research."

The ANU was founded shortly after the war by Coombs, who was its chancellor for many years. In order to run the growing Aboriginal land rights movement, Coombs in 1973 set up an extension of ANU, its North Australian Research Unit, in Darwin in the remote Northern Territory, almost half of which is now owned by Aboriginal Land Councils. NARU not only hosts the Nugget Coombs Forum for Indigenous Studies, but is the key staging post for specialists in "land rights." These include the Canadian Peter Jull and the Aborigines Ros Sultan and Marcia Langton (see interviews).

In just under 30 years, from the time of the 1967 referendum, Aborigines have gone from having no land, to owning at least 15% of Australia, with the near-term prospect of owning or controlling at least double that. There are now vast tracts of remote Australia, where no one may enter without permission from the local Aboriginal Land Council. Many of the still-existent 235 Aboriginal dialects, until recently believed to be within a few years of extinction, are being revived and taught in school.

Summing up the prospects for the region, Prof. Henry Reynolds told an interviewer that there were parallels between the "indigenous" armed uprising in Chiapas, and likely developments in Australia. "I think that sort of combination of regional and ethnic rebellion is potentially possible," he said. "We have had a long period without that sort of overt conflict, but it would be optimistic indeed to assume that it could not happen again! . . . Certainly if you frustrate the ambitions of significant groups, I think that sort of response could be possible down the track. And would be extremely difficult to deal with."

Land rights and the hoax of anthropology

All claims to grant land to Australia's Aborigines have depended upon the "expert" testimony of anthropologists; without this "science" there would be no such thing as the land rights movement. Yet this quack science emphatically denies what is most human about man—his creative powers of mind—in favor of treating him as just another animal species, with a fixed range of behavior.

Australia was the cradle of British anthropology, whose history is sketched by the Sorbonne-trained Sydney lawyer and anthropologist Marc Gumbert, in his 1984 book, *Neither Justice nor Reason: A Legal and Anthropological Analysis of Aboriginal Land Rights*.

British anthropology really gets going, according to Gumbert, with an expedition sent by the Royal Anthropological Society to the Torres Strait Islands, off the northeastern tip of Australia. "In Britain, a scientific expedition in 1898 to islands in the Torres Strait (between Australia and New Guinea) by W.H.R. Rivers and his colleagues A.C. Haddon and C.G. Seligman, may be seen as seminal to the approaches and theory of an incipient British anthropology."

It was from precisely this area that Torres Strait Islander Eddie Mabo launched his famous case to the High Court which overturned all existing Australian law on land rights, and it was here that the Torres Strait Regional Authority was set up on July 1, 1994 to become the model of "autonomous self-government" for all other regional agreements.

The acknowledged "giants of modern anthropology," says Gumbert, are A.R. Radcliffe-Brown and Roman Malinowski. Radcliffe-Brown was the first student of W.H.R. Rivers, of the Torres Strait expedition. While Malinowski held the chair in anthropology at the London School of Economics, Radcliffe-Brown set up the first chair in anthropology in the British Empire, in 1921 in Cape Town, South Africa.

In 1923, an international scientific conference took place in Australia, which called for the establishment of a university department of anthropology. Anthropology from the start was tied up with the management of the Empire, since the school was not only to train anthropologists for Australia and Melanesia, but also to train colonial administrators for Papua and New Guinea.

In 1926, Radcliffe-Brown moved to Sydney to set up the Empire's second chair in anthropology. His influence has

shaped the entire modern land rights debate.

Says Gumbert, "But if it is to Malinowski's field methods that British anthropology came to pay obeisance, it was primarily from Radcliffe-Brown that it acquired its theory. . . . No doubt it was from Rivers that Radcliffe-Brown had obtained his first interest in kinship analysis. This was an area which Radcliffe-Brown made his particular specialization. After him, kinship analysis became the virtual *sine qua non* of British anthropology.

"His students included many persons who in time were destined to become the leaders of the profession."

Nugget Coombs's adviser W.E.H. Stanner was one of them.

'Expert testimony'

Stanner and another prominent Australian anthropologist, R.M. Berndt, offered "expert testimony" in Australia's first famous land rights case, involving the Yirrkala people on the Gove Peninsula in the Northern Territory. The two appeared as witnesses for Aboriginal plaintiffs trying to claim some land; their lawyer was A.E. Woodward, Queen's Counsel. Woodward would soon be appointed by Prime Minister Gough Whitlam to head up the Woodward Royal Commission, which resulted in the passage of the Aboriginal Land Act (Northern Territory) in 1976, and which initiated the process of turning over huge tracts of land to Aborigines.

The question of who, if anyone, would be granted land, depended on what relationship was established by the claimants to the land, as well as the relationship of the claimants to each other. As Gumbert recounted, "It is important to note that Woodward called, as experts, Professors Stanner and Berndt. . . . Basically it can be said that each postulated a structure along the Radcliffe-Brownian clan/horde lines," even though they contradicted each other in key points.

But Justice Blackburn found that "not one of the ten Aboriginal witnesses who were from eight different clans, said anything which indicated that the band normally had a core from one clan. . . . Had the composition of the band for which Mr. Woodward contended been the normal one, I find it difficult to believe that ten Aboriginal witnesses would give no evidence of it."

Indeed, the entire expert anthropological evidence upon which Woodward's claim was based, was found by Justice Blackburn to be nonexistent! This was the same methodology used by Woodward in his 1973-74 Royal Commission, which established the ground rules for all modern land rights cases! As Gumbert notes, "Mr. Justice Woodward was clearly still very much under the influence of those factual arguments which he expounded when counsel for the claimants in the Gove case. Those arguments, it will be recalled; had there been demonstrated as being without substance."

Woodward's director of research was Prof. Nicolas Peterson, the British head of the Anthropology Department at the Australian National University.

Splintered Canada: a model for Australia

An agreement was concluded in 1993 by the Canadian government and the Inuit people of Canada's Northwest Territory, to give the Inuits self-government over a vast tract comprising 20% of all of Canada. Some 17,500 Inuits were given 700,000 square kilometers of land and 800,000 square kilometers of ocean. At the stroke of a pen, a new "nation"—Nunavut—was carved out of Canada. After a transition period, this "new nation" will begin officially governing itself in 1999.

Canada has established the "indigenous" precedent to split up a modern nation-state. This model is now being proposed for Australia, as well as for Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, and the United States—all targets of indigenous organizations such as Prince Philip's "Inuit Circumpolar Conference," a group set up to demand autonomy for Inuits in any nation in which they reside.

As one of the chief architects of "Nunavut," former Canadian civil servant Peter Jull summarized the effects of over

two decades of "indigenous struggles" for Canada in a May 1992 paper: "The collapse in June 1990 of the 1987 Meech Lake constitutional accord agreed by prime minister and premiers precipitated a national crisis in Canada. The crisis still rages and *could lead to the dissolution of the country in the near future*" (emphasis added).

In 1953, one year after Elizabeth II's inauguration as sovereign of Canada as well as Great Britain, Her Majesty's Canadian government began a hideous "experiment" of forced deportation of Inuit (Eskimo) families from Quebec into the High Arctic. In part, the experiment was to secure Canada's claims to the area in the face of an expanding American military presence.

But the truly evil aspect of the relocation was that it set up the Canadian equivalent of Bantustans; in the words of a 1994 Canadian Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples report, the plan was "to restore the Inuit to what was considered their proper state" (see *EIR*, Nov. 11, 1994). No assistance was to be given to the Inuit, since they were "there to rehabilitate themselves . . . to learn how to survive on their own and go back to their old way of living. The project was to see if they could survive in that High Arctic environment where Inuit had lived in earlier times. . . . Temperatures of -55°F were common in winter."

Crown officials responsible for the project, the report documented, were disturbed that the Inuits were becoming "assimilated" into modern society, and losing their "indigenous" character.

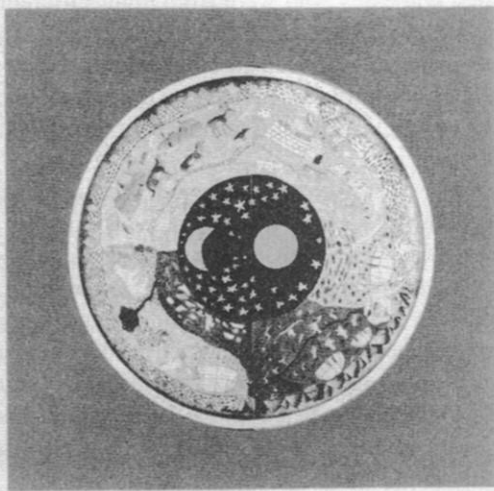
Twenty years later, in the early 1970s, the Inuits were to be guinea pigs in another of Her Majesty's experiments: They were to be used to split Canada into pieces. This followed a Supreme Court of Canada decision in 1973 which overturned all precedent, ruling in the case of the Nisga'a Indians in British Columbia, that any "indigenous peoples" who had not signed a treaty with the Crown could now do so, that they had valid claims to their "traditional lands."

This decision opened vast tracts of the country to claims of "indigenous ownership" by Inuits, Cree, Metis, Dene, and other "first peoples" (see **Figure 2**). The famous "Mabo" decision in Australia in 1992 had the same effect: Australia's High Court rendered a verdict in the case of Eddie Mabo, a radical leftist Aboriginal, which recognized "the entitlements of the indigenous inhabitants, in accordance with their laws and customs, to their traditional lands."

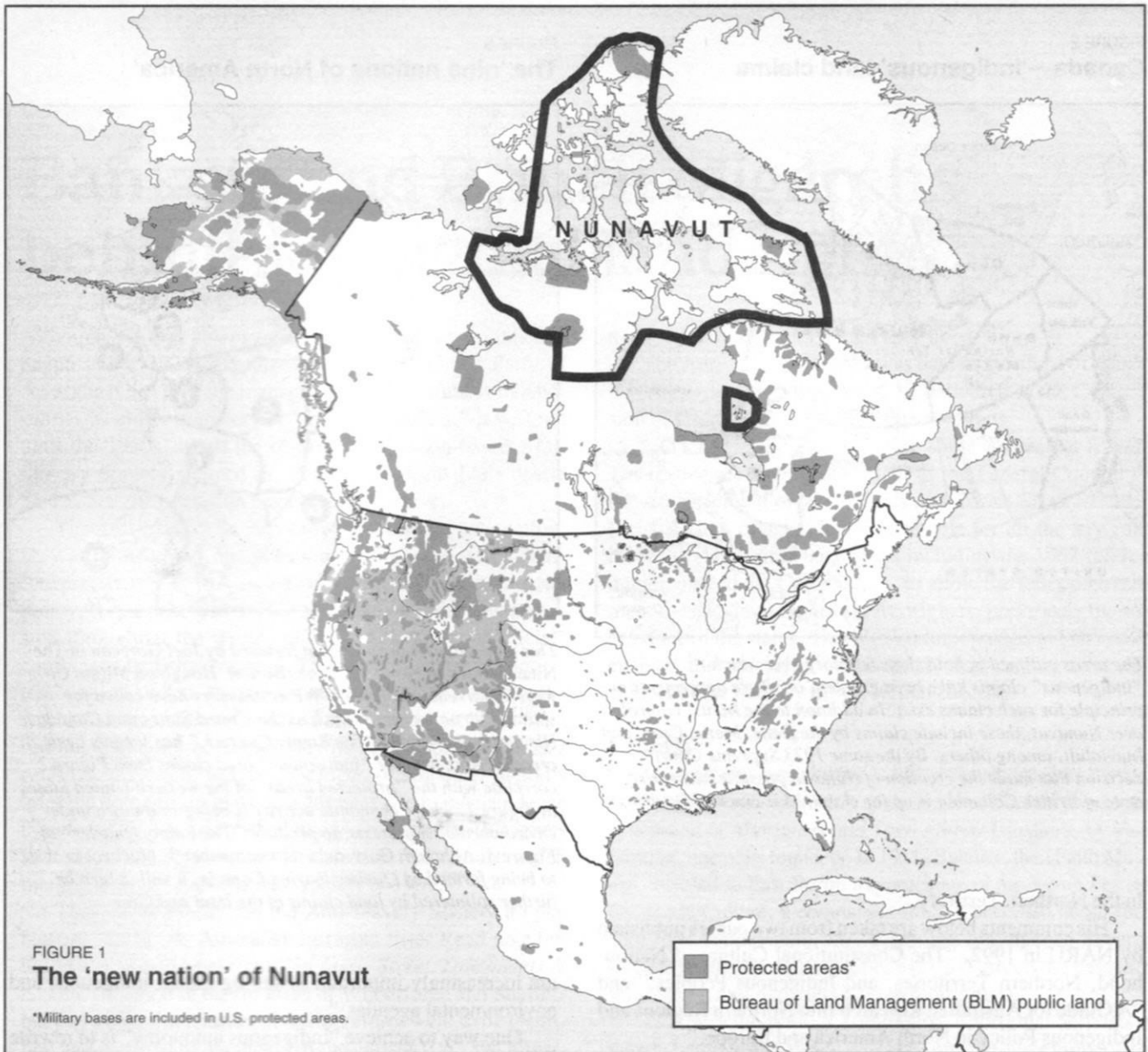
The Canadian government attempted to settle land claims by agreements involving wildlife harvesting, land ownership, and natural resource management, with substantial financial payments and the establishment of various "homelands." In return, the land would be formally owned by the state (i.e., the Crown).

But a new chapter opened in 1982, when Canada's Constitution was amended based on a "Charter of Rights and Freedoms" drafted in Great Britain. Clause 35 of the new Constitution was taken from that Charter: "1) The existing

Agreement Between the
Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and
Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada



The cover of the 282-page treaty between Queen Elizabeth II and the Inuits, which carved the "nation" of Nunavut out of Canada.



The two areas outlined in bold comprise the new "self-governing" entity of Nunavut, as negotiated by the "Agreement Between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada," signed in 1993. One-fifth of all Canada was carved out and handed over to 17,500 "indigenous" Inuits (Eskimos). This is the model for the "regional agreements" for "self-governing" enclaves now being organized all over Australia. The "protected areas" (shaded) show land taken out of use by Prince Philip's WWF and associated organizations.

Aboriginal and treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed." Now, Aboriginal rights, including Aboriginal ownership of land, were to be guaranteed by the Constitution.

As Jull noted, "Section 35 led in 1990 to a major decision, *Sparrow*, in Canada's highest court, providing a strong legal basis for the protection of Aboriginal rights, *even against the government*" (emphasis added).

Nunavut comes to Australia

Jull was the adviser on the Constitution in the Prime Minister's Department in Ottawa, Canada; beginning in 1980, he worked in Aboriginal delegations in Canada's constitutional reform processes and as research director of the Nunavut Constitutional Forum, which carved "Nunavut" out of Canada. He then moved to Australia and took up a post at Nugget Coombs's North Australia Research Unit (NARU)

FIGURE 2
Canada—'indigenous' land claims



The areas outlined in bold show territory over which "indigenous" claims have been granted, or where agreements in principle for such claims exist. In addition to the Inuits' control over Nunavut, these include claims by the Dene, Metis, Cree, and Inuvialuit, among others. By the same 1973 Supreme Court decision that made the creation of Nunavut possible, the entire state of British Columbia is up for claim, as is much of Quebec.

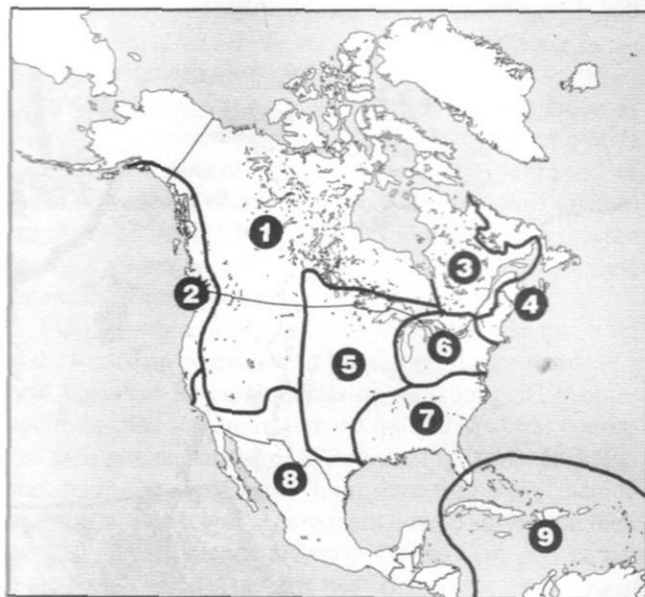
in the Northern Territory.

His comments below are taken from two papers published by NARU in 1992, "The Constitutional Culture of Nationhood, Northern Territories, and Indigenous Peoples," and "A Guide for Australian Research Into Northern Regions and Indigenous Policy in North America and Europe."

Jull argues that Australia is "behind the times" in indigenous rights, but can catch up quickly by linking up with indigenous activists around the world: "The fact that other peoples and other governments have been able to find ways for indigenous peoples to regain control of their lives, communities and territories means that it can be done in Australia."

The world's northern regions all have made bold strides toward "self-government": "The north circumpolar OECD countries discussed here, plus today's more open Soviet/Russian entity, have not only been developing their indigenous and northern region policies longer and working through policy debates which are only now building up in Australia, but they are accelerating the pace through international cooperation and comparative study. It is desirable for Australians to plug themselves into these networks which

FIGURE 3
The 'nine nations of North America'



This map shows a proposal put forward by Joel Garreau in *The Nine Nations of North America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1981). Garreau and other WWF co-thinkers have called for splitting up nation-states such as the United States and Canada. His nation number 1, "The Empty Quarter," has largely been created. Note how the "indigenous" land claims from Figure 2 correlate with the "protected areas" of the western United States in Figure 1, where economic activity is being shut down under environmentalist prettexts, to produce "The Empty Quarter" of Figure 3. Although Garreau's nation number 3, Quebec, is close to being formed by Quebec leaving Canada, it will in turn be further splintered by land claims of the Inuit and Cree.

are increasingly important in setting global indigenous and environmental agendas."

One way to achieve "indigenous autonomy" is to rewrite the Australian Constitution along the Canadian model: "The opportunities which face Australians and their Constitutional Centenary Foundation over the next decade in reviewing and renewing constitutional arrangements have many striking parallels in Canadian work going on since the late 1970s. National and northern territory reforms in Canada provide specific precedents and some warnings for Australian constitutional reform. In both countries the inclusion of the indigenous peoples is a critical test of the efficacy and authenticity of constitutional reform."

There will be consequences if such "reform" is not carried out, Jull threatens: "If such progress is *not* made, growing portions of the Australian public and considerable world opinion will view constitutional reform as inauthentic and incomplete. Platitudes about Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders being here first will not suffice" (emphasis in original).

Bankers and British oligarchs behind Aboriginal land rights

Although the first moves toward Aboriginal land rights had begun in the 1920s organized by the Communist Party of Australia (CPA), which managed to recruit a number of Aborigines as either members or "fellow travellers," it was not until the 1950s, when the oligarchy's London-based Anti-Slavery Society stepped in, through its agent Lady Jessie Street, that the operation began to really move.

The Anti-Slavery Society (now Anti-Slavery International) was founded in London as the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society in 1839 as a covert organ of British imperial policy. Its purpose was to play upon real or imagined oppression throughout the world, in order to exacerbate "racial" conflicts to British advantage. The society, whose headquarters was in London, the capital of the most brutal empire the world had ever known, and whose leading families were running that empire, had a funny habit of finding its *causes célèbres* in French, Belgian, German, or any other nation's imperial domains, or in its own domains where independence threatened. It was established two years after the Aborigines Protection Society, another British imperial venture which merged with the Anti-Slavery Society in 1909.

That the oligarchy ran the Anti-Slavery Society no one had any doubt. As Australian historian Peter Read noted in his article "Aboriginal rights" in *Jessie Street: Documents & Essays*: "It stood in the tradition of Wilberforce and Shaftesbury in a belief that issues of social reform were to be identified and rectified by members of the classes [i.e., the oligarchy] who did not suffer from those injustices."

A dominant family in it from the early days until the present were the Buxtons. Lord Aubrey Buxton was a founder of the World Wildlife Fund in 1961, and is one of Prince Philip's closest associates today.

The Anti-Slavery Society initiated the present drive for Aboriginal land rights in 1956 when it drafted Lady Jessie Street, a member of a wealthy upper class family who was born in India and later moved to Australia, onto its executive committee in London. As Read recorded, "In 1956 Jessie Street was asked to join the executive of the society as its Australian representative because she was Australian, knew something of Aborigines and was familiar with the work of the United Nations. She was asked to act on behalf of people who, it was assumed, could neither speak on their own volition, nor necessarily understand that there were alternatives

to the conditions under which they lived."

The Anti-Slavery Society was then in the midst of preparing a case on the Aborigines to be delivered to the Commission of Human Rights at the United Nations.

Lady Jessie started contacting some Australian friends. The result was the establishment of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (Fcaatsi), the organization responsible for all the key early moves in Aboriginal land rights including the 1967 referendum to amend the Constitution, to allow the federal government to enact laws regarding Aborigines, previously the sole province of the states. This referendum, passed in 1967, soon enabled the federal government to start turning over vast chunks of the country to Aboriginal control.

Fcaatsi

Some of this organization's history is recorded in *Turning the Tide: A Personal History of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders*, by Faith Bandler, one of its founders. In 1951, Bandler, then Faith Mussing, traveled to East Berlin to participate in the Youth Festival for World Culture, a communist front. Concerned about their East bloc connections, the Australian Intelligence Security Organization (the equivalent of the FBI) pulled the passports of Mussing and her friends upon their return.

This was the pool of communist Aboriginal activists in which Lady Jessie fished to carry out the directions of the Anti-Slavery Society. Bandler's circle of communist activists was just what Lady Jessie needed:

"Pearl realized I had valuable contacts within my circle of friends. As a result of her many visits and strong urgings, we formed the Aboriginal-Australian Fellowship (AAF), the forerunner to the Federal Council for Aboriginal Advancement. The AAF was under the patronage of Lady Jessie Street, *who was responsible for drafting the original petition calling for a referendum*" (p. 6, emphasis added).

After returning to Australia and taking a tour through some Aboriginal areas, Lady Jessie rounded up the communist-tied AAF activists, added some assorted social reformers and society names (such as Dame Mary Gilmore, who wrote a weekly column for the Communist Party of Australia's *Tribune* newspaper), and set up the Federal Council of Aboriginal Advancement in 1957, soon to be known as the

Federal Council for the Advancement of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders. Its president was Joe McGuinness, a longtime member of the Communist Party in Queensland. The new organization held its first national conference on Feb. 14-16, 1958 in Adelaide; its main agenda item was to circulate a petition drawn up by Lady Jessie to call for a referendum.

It was that referendum which became law on May 27, 1967. Shortly after Fcaatsi was set up, its "Land Rights Committee" swung into action. As Bandler recorded, "The Land Rights Committee grew in importance, particularly after the formation of the Aboriginal Land Rights Trust of SA [South Australia] in 1966. That state under the leadership of Premier Don Dunstan became the first to grant Aborigines title to land."

The Wave Hill walk-off

In that year, the Gurindji people, sick of abominably low wages, horrible living conditions, and other discrimination, walked off the Wave Hill cattle station north of Alice Springs in the Northern Territory, the largest in the world.

As if by pre-arranged signal, the horrible living conditions of the Gurindji became headline news. As H.C. "Nugget" Coombs later observed, "Perhaps because of this support, the nature of the dispute changed. The Gurindji demanded the return of sufficient of their traditional land to establish an independent, Aboriginal-owned cattle enterprise" (Coombs, *Trial Balance*, p. 281). This incident is universally acknowledged as the first shot in the war for "land rights."

A number of communists and anthropologists had been involved in organizing the Gurindji. Most curious, given the suspicions that the affair had been a provocation, was the identity of the owner of Wave Hill, who had allowed the communists and radical anthropologists onto his property to organize. He was Lord Vestey, head of a 123-company, billion-dollar business empire spread around the globe, anchored on beef production in vast properties in Australia and Argentina.

Lord Vestey was also an intimate of the same British royal family which set up the WWF and its "Primitive Peoples' Fund." There is perhaps no oligarchical family closer to the royals than the Vestey's; they are present in a royal family portrait a few years ago at the time of the christening of Prince Harry, whose godmother was Lady Cecey Vestey, Lord Vestey's wife. And the first land which the Aborigines ever received in Australia was given to them by Lord Vestey, after the Wave Hill strike.

Bankers and Aborigines: enter Nugget Coombs

Though Fcaatsi would continue to play an important role in Aboriginal land rights—and numbers of its activists still hold key positions in the federal Aboriginal bureaucracy today—the years 1967-68 saw a passing of the torch from Fcaatsi to career civil servant and adviser to seven Australian

prime ministers Nugget Coombs. He was to initiate every crucial turn, every ratchet up in radicalization, from 1967 until the present.

At the time of the referendum, Coombs was the chairman of the Reserve Bank. Like other prime ministers before and since, then-Prime Minister Harold Holt turned to Coombs for advice on what to do after the referendum. Coombs recommended the establishment of a Council for Aboriginal Affairs; he then quit his Reserve Bank chairmanship to become its first president.

What happened? Why had a prominent member of what Coombs himself described as the "international freemasonry of central bankers" suddenly, out of the blue, turned Aboriginal activist?

After an education at the elite Perth Modern School, Coombs worked for a while as a schoolteacher, until he picked up a scholarship to attend the London School of Economics, where his idol was John Maynard Keynes, a leader of the British Eugenics Society who had been recruited while at Cambridge at the turn of the century into the notorious Apostles secret society. Composed of the elite of the British Empire, the Apostles believed in what they called "The Higher Sodomy," that the "bourgeois" (middle class) morals of a husband-wife relationship are transcended by buggery. A notorious homosexual, Keynes characterized his own economic theory as fascist, in the first edition of his celebrated economics textbook—Nugget Coombs's bible—*The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, published in

The sayings of Chairman H.C. Coombs

The oligarchy centered around Prince Philip is attempting what they call a "Conservative Revolution," to take mankind back to the feudalism which prevailed before the fifteenth-century European Golden Renaissance. H.C. "Nugget" Coombs is definitely an organizer for this proposition. Here is what he says about the glories of feudalism and hunting-and-gathering societies.

The hierarchy of relationships between persons characteristic of the feudal system seems to have lent a kind of stable functional pattern to the European society of the Middle Ages. (*The Fragile Pattern*, p. 13)

In the age of fable it is more likely that hunters in their leisure time would be competing for territory or other conventional prizes and that success for game would go only or primarily to the winners—and that furthermore

Berlin in 1936.

Keynes was the chief architect of the genocidal "Bretton Woods system" set up in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire in the United States in 1944, composed of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. A third "leg of the stool" was to be the International Trade Organization. *Coombs was slated to become the ITO's first head.*

The 'Freemasonry of central bankers'

Coombs had arrived at the London School of Economics in 1931 to do post-graduate work. By 1933, he had received his doctorate; his thesis was on central banking. During this process he was recruited into an elite secret society of central bankers in which Keynes was a leading member. *Coombs's entire career in Australia has been in service to this London-centered secret society.* In his own words from his autobiography, *Trial Balance*:

"Those who practice [central banking] often feel themselves to be members of an international freemasonry, a kind of 'mystery' in the medieval sense of a group who possess some exclusive knowledge or skill, and indeed there has always been an element of mystery in the contemporary sense of the word about what central bankers do. This mystery was intensified, perhaps deliberately, by the personality of Montagu Norman, who for 21 years was governor of the Bank of England. . . .

"It was Norman who created the international freemasonry of central bankers."

As chairman of, first, the Commonwealth and then the Reserve Bank, Coombs emphasized, "We had a responsibility to the profession of central banking itself, to defend its right to act in accordance with its best understanding of the system." The most effective way to carry this out, since this "system" involves hardship and suffering for the society at large, is for the local central banker to be a native of the country being controlled, said Coombs. "It has always been my conviction that central banks, despite their membership of the international freemasonry, should have an essentially indigenous character."

Perhaps that is what Coombs really means by "indigenism"!

As documented by the American historian Anton Chaitkin (see *George Bush: The Unauthorized Biography*), Montagu Norman, as the head of a cabal of British and American financiers, was the individual most responsible for installing Adolf Hitler in power. He also, according to Coombs's own account, had arranged for the Bank of England to act as financial agents for the young Soviet government beginning almost immediately after the 1917 Bolshevik revolution.

Coombs in power: crippling Australia

Coombs returned to Australia during the Depression and then became head of the Wartime Rationing Board. He set up and headed the Postwar Ministry of Reconstruction; became head of the Commonwealth Bank in 1949, and later the Reserve Bank; founded and became the first deputy chancellor

partners in the joys of procreation would go also to the winners, leaving the least successful not merely hungry but wife-less and without posterity. In this way balance between the numbers of hunters and of game was preserved through the ages. It was only when the hunter became a breeder of animals as well as of children, when he stocked his table with home-grown grain and other vegetables, as well as with roasts, that a dissonance crept into the harmony of this little idyll. These developments were the beginning of the technology which has grown exponentially towards its modern explosion.

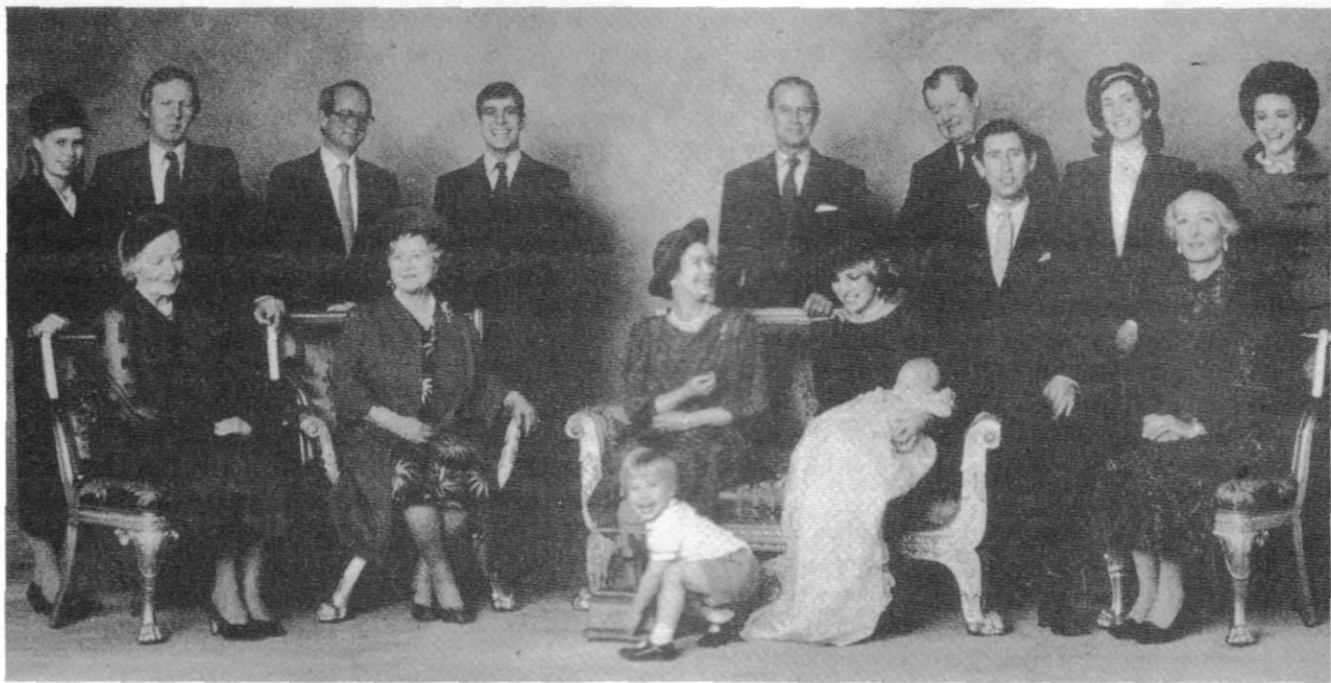
Particularly in this century, man has increased in numbers to an extent which now threatens to run beyond the capacity of the earth to feed, house, clothe and equip the bodies concerned. . . . (*The Fragile Pattern*, pp. 27-28)

Traditionally, in interpersonal disputes, a "spear through the thigh" was a common form of resolution and in extreme and rare instances of offences of a sacrilegious nature, sometimes death was the penalty. The elders state that these forms of punishment have gone into disuse and that they do not seek authority to impose them. It is possible, of course, that the "spear through the thigh"

could remain as an unofficial component in the settlement of interpersonal disputes. Our unwillingness to tolerate such punishment, it seems to me, is ethnocentric. (*Aboriginal Autonomy*, p. 118)

Mankind would be unwise to assume that, because technology has enabled him to cross so many rivers of threatened scarcity to reach survival, he will be able to deal with the oceanic problem of numbers which bring him into absolute conflict with the total environment of which he is a part.

Indeed were it possible to take a God-like view of the human species in his environment—physical and social—one could readily conclude that the whole species had become itself a disease. Even if the God-like viewer were one with a special covenant with mankind and did not view all his creatures with equal tenderness and concern, *he could properly conclude that the human species was like a cancerous growth reproducing itself beyond control and living parasitically on, rather than symbiotically with, the rest of creation and threatening to destroy not merely the environment but itself also.*" (*The Fragile Pattern, The Boyer Lectures*, 1970, p. 34, emphasis added)



The British Royal Family. Lady Cece Vestey, third from right, is the godmother to Prince Harry and wife of Lord Vestey. The "Wave Hill walk-off" of Aboriginal stockmen which launched the Aboriginal land rights movement was organized by communists and anthropologists working on Lord Vestey's estate.

and later the chancellor of Australian National University; founded the national Arts Council; and became the "father of Aboriginal land rights" through setting up and chairing, first, the Council for Aboriginal Affairs, and then the Aboriginal Treaty Committee.

The Regional Planning section of Coombs's Postwar Ministry of Reconstruction had compiled an extraordinary series of possible economic development projects for the country which included, according to Coombs's own account, "a program of national works; resources surveys of the Murray Valley and the Hunter River Valley; a report on alternative uses of the Snowy River; a comprehensive water supply for the gold fields and agricultural areas in Western Australia; the development potential of the Inverell and Narrabri districts in New South Wales; the development of Northern Australia; the development of Papua-New Guinea; Land Settlement projects for returned servicemen; development of a Canberra region linking the capital with Jervis Bay; for the development of Darwin and its hinterland; proposals for a Clarence River Gorge Hydro-Electric Scheme; and a development plan for the beef industry in north Australia."

But there was to be no grand postwar development of Australia. With the exception of the Snowy River scheme, virtually all of these were sacrificed on the altar of central banking and its ritual chants of "fighting inflation."

As Coombs records in his autobiography, "fighting inflation" was his only concern: "I argued that to prevent Australian prices [from] rising dangerously it would be necessary

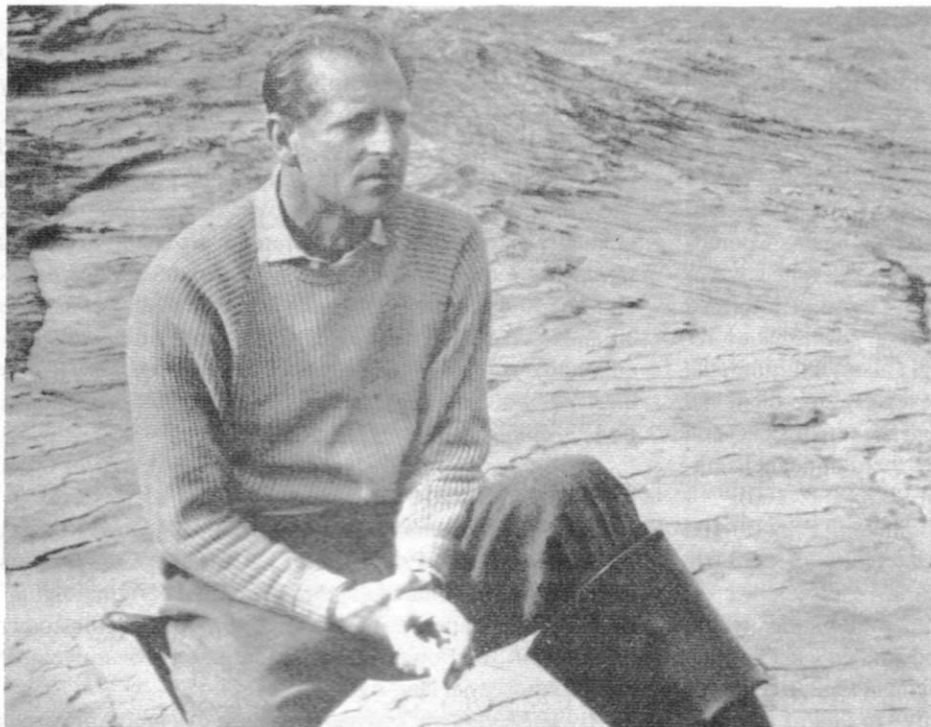
to limit development works, to budget for a substantial surplus, to free interest rates and to tighten the supply of bank loans, and to increase the flow of imported goods by reductions in the protective tariff, by dollar borrowing and by an appreciation of the Australian pound." Under these strictures, the Australian economy was crippled.

Not content with merely "fighting inflation," Coombs set out to cripple the rural sector. In his 1973 report, he urged that most government supports to rural industries and country-dwellers be cut, including the withdrawal of the subsidy for use of phosphate fertilizers.

What Coombs has been doing since 1967, as the "father of Aboriginal land rights" and as the head of the Australian Conservation Foundation, replacing Prince Philip in that post, is, under the guise of "indigenism-environmentalism," what he has always been doing: attacking the sovereignty and economic development of the nation of Australia.

The 'Great White Father' of Aboriginal land rights

In April 1968, Coombs, as head of the newly formed Council for Aboriginal Affairs, addressed the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. "In his address," said Faith Bandler, "he indicated that CAA would assume some of the responsibilities and issues on which Fcaatsi had been working, thus freeing up some of our members from the load they'd been carrying for so long" (*Turning the Tide*, p. 116).



Prince Philip founded the Australian Conservation Foundation, the "mother" of both the radical environmentalist and Aboriginal land rights movements in Australia, and chaired the ACF from 1971 to 1976.



Lady Jessie Street. Deployed by the British Crown's Anti-Slavery Society, she wrote the change in the Australian Constitution that opened the door for "Aboriginal land rights."

Banker Coombs took up the baton from the communists and oligarchs in Fcaatsi.

The CAA was comprised of Coombs, Australian career diplomat Barrie Dexter, and anthropologist W.E.H. "Bill" Stanner, who recruited Aborigines into "paramilitary, coast watch and construction and . . . special 'irregular' units" during World War II (Coombs, *Aboriginal Autonomy*, p. 101). While in Kenya in the late 1930s, Stanner had been recruited into the circles of British intelligence's famous anthropologist and guerrilla-warfare specialist L.S.B. Leakey.

Leakey and other British intelligence operatives were working on a phony form of postwar "liberation" for African nations, which was reflected in Prime Minister Harold Macmillan's "Winds of Change" speech in Cape Town in 1960. Africans were to be given independence, but in name only: control over raw material prices, access to credit and technology, etc., were still to be determined in London, a sort of early test run of the "indigenist" principle.

As a result of his stay in Kenya, Stanner reported that he was won over to the new "native rights" outlook. Returning to Australia, he became the chief theoretician of Aboriginal culture and "interpreter" of Aboriginal demands, on whom Coombs depended implicitly. According to Stanner, the sacred bond between Aborigines and their land had been established during the primordial "Dreaming" (a term he coined to replace the earlier "Dreamtime"). Control of that land was the all-important issue for Aborigines, said Stanner, and

Aborigines had desired a treaty for this ever since 1788.

With Stanner providing the theoretical justification, the first move of Coombs and his collaborators in the CAA toward carving a separate Aboriginal nation out of Australia was to redefine government policy away from "assimilation," which had been adopted as official policy at a meeting of the federal and state ministers in 1965, toward "self-determination." As Coombs expressed it in a report commissioned by the London-based Minority Rights Group, whose leadership, in particular the Cadbury family, overlapped that of Prince Philip's WWF:

"Essentially the struggle in the early years after the referendum was about the appropriateness of the established doctrine of assimilation. The Council of Aboriginal Affairs became convinced from its contacts with Aborigines that they did not wish to become assimilated, indeed that one of the few things Aborigines had in common was a determination to maintain a distinctive racial and social existence within the Australian community" ("*Australia's Policy toward Aborigines, 1967-77*," p. 6).

Coombs et al. set about creating the institutions for such "self-determination," first among which was to establish corporate forms which could receive and disburse money, and thus a logistical basis from which to organize. Coombs argued that these incorporated communities would be "under the control of the residents being assisted by professionally trained managers and community development workers. . . .

[Happily], in some circumstances, Aborigines seem able to accept decisions originating from external sources more readily than they can those proposed from within their own society" (*Aboriginal Autonomy*, p. 17).

The next step was to encourage the Aborigines to move back to their "traditional communities," which became known as the "homeland" or outstation movement, which of course justified claiming more land. Once again, Coombs himself was a chief organizer of "the return," despite government opposition: "On my next visit to Yirrkala I informed [the local Aborigines] of this [negative government] response, but said that if they felt strongly about returning, the government administration could not legally stop them and in my opinion would have to accept and adapt to the decision if they 'just went.' That, I believe, was the significant beginning of the return to country in that area" (*ibid*, p. 160).

By 1987, over 588 "homeland communities" of 20-100 people each had been established in the Northern Territory alone.

Of course, people in these isolated communities would have no way to survive, so Coombs cooked up what became the Community Development Employment Plan, the idea of paying a lump sum to the "community" in lieu of any dole payments which might go to individuals in that community. Today such payments consume the largest single portion of the annual budget of the government's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee's \$2 billion or so per year.

The next major phase change was ushered in by the Whitlam government, which came to power in December 1972. Whitlam's point man on Aboriginal affairs was the Member of Parliament for Wills, Gordon Bryant, the longtime vice president of Lady Jessie Street's Fcaatsi. Bryant became Whitlam's first minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

As Bryant said of himself, "I became what you might call a runner for the show" (*Turning the Tide*, p. 11).

Whitlam, who had also been associated with Fcaatsi in the early 1960s, announced that Aboriginal rights to land would be restored, and appointed Justice Woodward, a former lawyer for the same Yirrkala people for whom Coombs had served as consultant, to head a new royal commission.

Coombs lauded the Woodward report as "a landmark in Aboriginal affairs." Though the Whitlam government fell in 1975, the legislation prepared as a result of the Woodward Commission was passed almost unchanged by the Fraser government, as the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1976 (NT) which gave large parts of the Northern Territory to Aboriginal ownership. The Land Councils, which had originally been established by Woodward to "aid the enquiry," became permanent bodies, controlling vast sections of Australia.

The same year, the Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976 formally allowed Aboriginal groups and communities to incorporate. This created a huge organizing and logistical base from which hordes of "white advisers" and Aboriginal radicals could organize for the next phase of "land rights."

As Coombs put it:

"However, those in white society whose expertise was so desperately needed were not always motivated by exclusively commercial considerations. . . . Thus, in urban centers there developed legal, health-care and welfare services designed by Aboriginal people and with sympathetic professional men and women willing to accept employee status. These services gradually extended to rural and remote areas and *became a significant focus for Aboriginal activism* and service delivery. The Aboriginal men and women given authority in these organizations found them a source of administrative experience and *a valuable base from which to conduct more widely directed political campaigns.*" (*Aboriginal Autonomy*, p. 172, emphasis added).

Coombs: 'Divide sovereignty'

In 1977, Coombs became the head of Australia's peak conservation body, Prince Philip's Australian Conservation Foundation. He initiated the turn toward "Aboriginal rights" by the ACF, renamed its newsletter *Tjurkulp*, and took other steps to put the power of the environmentalist movement behind Aboriginal land rights.

By 1979, enough land had been turned over to Aborigines that Coombs could start to agitate in ads in the national press for a "treaty" between a presumably autonomous "Aboriginal nation" and the nation-state of Australia. In April of that year, Coombs founded and chaired the Aboriginal Treaty Committee, comprised entirely of white influentials, including his anthropologist friend Bill Stanner.

In June 1987, the Anti-Slavery Society weighed in again with a report by Dr. Julian Burger, then research director for the ASS, and now the coordinator for the United Nations "Indigenous Peoples' Decade" being run out of the U.N. Human Rights Center in Geneva. The report "Land and Justice: Aborigines Today," helped beat the drums for the establishment in October 1987 of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

This in turn led to the establishment by Parliament in 1991 of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, which is now carrying out a mass propaganda campaign for a "charter of Aboriginal Reconciliation" by the year 2001—an amendment of the Australian Constitution to guarantee "indigenous rights." In his 1994 book *Aboriginal Autonomy*, Coombs calls for Australia and the Aborigines to "divide sovereignty" (p. 208).

And finally, in the 1992 Mabo decision, the most momentous change of all, the hand of Nugget Coombs was once again pulling the strings. According to Coombs's friend Peter Jull, whom Coombs later appointed as the acting director of his North Australian Research Unit at Darwin, Coombs "helped get the whole Mabo thing going" (see interview with Jull).

Fittingly enough, one of the High Court justices who delivered the bombshell decision was Sir Laurance Street, grandson of the Anti-Slavery Society's Lady Jessie Street.

Ritual torture in Aboriginal culture

Aboriginal culture, which the anthropologists are so keen to revive, is so brutal that Aboriginal youth have deserted the old ways in droves. It can best be compared to the ritual torture and cannibalism of the Aztecs, as suggested by the following selections from writings on the "Aboriginal tradition" by well-known anthropologists.

White Man's Dreaming: Killalpaninna Mission 1866-1915, by Christine Stevens.

On the penalty for betraying "secrets":

"Death was the penalty for betrayal of such [tribal] secrets. . . . Anyone attempting to disclose such information was seized and a sharp pointing-stick, previously soaked in fluids from a human corpse, was forced into the anal sphincter to produce blood-poisoning without an external wound."

On the initiation of young boys:

"As the novice youth passed into the ritual state of death, blood was collected in a wooden bowl from the arm veins of initiated men and passed around for all, including the initiants, to sip. Blood was also smeared on the bodies of the boys, symbolic of both death and revival, before the nasal

septum was pierced and tooth evulsion (knocking teeth out) took place. . . .

"Scalps [were] opened by a sharp stick and bitten by the old men until blood flowed profusely. Blood was again spurted over the youths before they were taken back to the main camp and 'sung-in' by the men and women."

The World of the First Australians, by R.M. and C. Berndt, 1985.

"A boy's foreskin was sometimes handed to the parents of his betrothed, who would pass it to the man who cut the daughter's hymen to be briefly placed in her vulva to establish a sympathetic union between them."

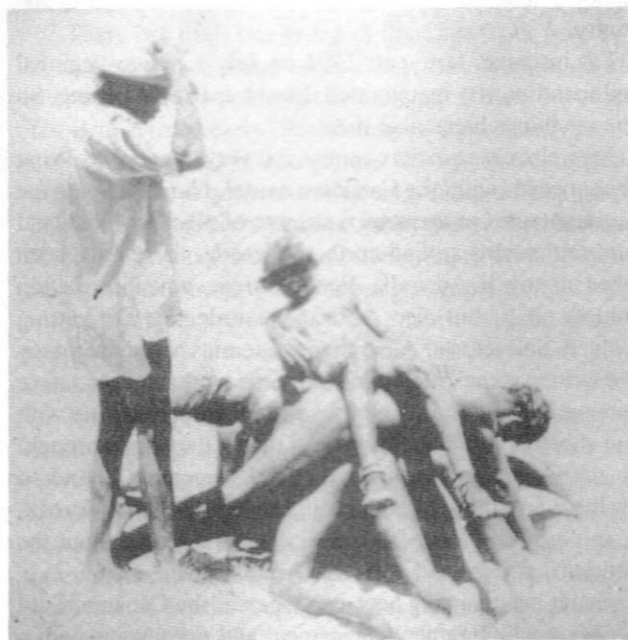
Australian Aboriginal Religion, by R.M. Berndt, 1974.

"At this important second ceremony all youths underwent subincision (an incision made to the urethra from underneath the penis which was allowed to heal but whose scab was regularly knocked off for blood-letting in prescribed rituals and ceremonies). . . .

"Full initiants spurted blood from their penis incisures over the youths to the accompaniment of ritual singing and dancing."

The Destruction of Aboriginal Society, by C.D. Rowley.

"The reports of addiction to cannibalism had in fact come from at least one credible witness in Tom Petrie: this is a good example of a cause of cultural aversion. Yet the Aboriginal cannibal, on evidence now known, was a ritual one . . . and



Not-so-noble savages: A ritual "subincision" ceremony is performed on a young Aboriginal man. Young people are fleeing the barbarism of Aboriginal culture.

consumption of the body, or parts of the body, of a man whom Elkin would describe as one of 'high degree,' appears to have been a way of conserving his greatness within the group."

The Australian Aborigines, by A.P. Elkin.

In times of conflict, when the attacking party does not want to fight with the home party, it will "send a number of its women over to the former. If these are willing to settle the matter in dispute without fighting, they have sexual intercourse with the women; if not they send them back untouched."

Elkins also gives an example where wife lending is permissible: "being a mark of friendship or hospitality and in being [sic] practiced between individuals. This is the lending of a wife to a visitor. In such cases kinship rules governing marriage apply." Elkin also describes, of a man's secondary wife, that when a certain ritual action "is received in the affirmative, some of the local group may have intercourse with her."

After describing the initiation of a child, he says, "This is followed by a feast which in Southern Queensland used to be cannibalistic in nature; the body of a person killed in the ceremonial combat was disposed of in this way. In this region cannibalism was a regular feature of burial ritual."

Red over Black, by Geoff McDonald.

"The facts are that the overwhelming majority of Aborigines do not want to keep their 'laws' at all, because they are horrible and are the cause of murder and death by bone pointing and create a constant obligation for spearing each other. If not for the purpose of causing death, then injury to various parts of the body for the most unimportant breaches of custom. . . . The investigator should talk to the young full-blood Aboriginal men and women in the Northern Territory about what they think about being dragged back to the old ways."

Account by T.G.H. Strehlow in *The Weekly News*, Sept. 27, 1978, reprinted in John Grover, *The Struggle for Power*. Strehlow, who died in the 1970s, was a well known, very pro-Aboriginal anthropologist, who was raised with the Aranda people, in whose language he was fluent.

"As far as many young black people were concerned, the prospect of escaping from the harsher provisions of tribal law proved virtually irresistible. In Central Australia, at any rate, Aboriginal society was destroyed largely because the young people deliberately deserted their own people.

"This point can be illustrated by what happened to the Pitjantjatjara communities of the Petermann Ranges, whose lands I found almost completely deserted on my two visits of 1936 and 1939, despite the fact that their homeland had not been invaded by white settlers nor ravaged by police parties. They had merely 'drifted out' into the areas of adjacent tribes, where white people had set up stations or settlements. . . . None of these drifters ever returned to their old homelands."

Interview: Peter Jull

Giving Australia the Canada treatment

For over a decade, Peter Jull was the Adviser on the Constitution in the Prime Minister's Department in Ottawa, Canada. He was the research director of the Nunavut Constitutional Forum, which negotiated the establishment of "Nunavut," a new self-governing Aboriginal territory comprising one-fifth of Canada. All emphases are his own.

Q: I had come across one of your papers on the comparison of the Nunavut region in Canada and some sort of Aboriginal autonomy. First of all, as an overview, you had emphasized the question of autonomy as the Inuits have achieved it. How close would you say the Aboriginals of Australia are to that kind of position?

Jull: In Torres Strait, it is interesting, it seems that because they are islands and also because Melanesians have less negative racial stereotypes in Australia than Aborigines, both the government and the opposition in Canberra in recent years have been prepared to recognize a sort of special status, if you will, and be more prepared to move toward regional autonomy and self-government than for other parts of the country.

For instance, last year, 1994 on July 1, a new regional administration was inaugurated. I went up to the opening. So there are things happening there.

Now elsewhere in the country, it is very interesting. What has happened [with] the Canadian model, Nunavut being the paramount one but there are a number of other regional land claim settlements around northern Canada, these have been picked up now in Australia. Partly I wrote some information booklets on it, but also Australian academics are getting involved. So a team of Australian academics based in Sydney have written some articles and led some workshops and have a monograph forthcoming and I am doing another one with them shortly. And what happened is that they have brought into the language this term "regional agreement." And so now these are suddenly being sought around outback Australia, in northern parts of Western Australia, throughout the Northern Territory and in North Queensland.

And it is interesting because, whereas the Canadians did their regional agreements piecemeal and not always with a clear big picture, the Australians have just picked up all the Canadian experience, immediately conceptualized it and are using it as a kind of model, and seem to understand its value

and scope better than many of the Canadians themselves. It is really interesting.

I was asked yesterday to go and do a workshop with the main groups in Central Australia in March, so these things are very much alive and what's happened in Australia the last couple years has been so dramatic. that one can only say that now that these regional agreements are becoming a thing here, things could move *very quickly*.

Q: Now these regional agreement discussions in Australia, where are they happening and what has precisely happened so far?

Jull: At this point they are conceptual only. In the northern part, the people who are really leading the charge are the Kimberley Land Council which is an Aboriginal body in the far north of Western Australia which takes in quite a large area. They are really leading the charge, but also in the Northern Territory then, you have got two land councils, the Northern Land Council for the northern half and the Central for the southern half. They are both very interested, and are actively pursuing the idea.

Then in far north Queensland, the Cape York Land Council, and Torres Strait of course does its own thing. I do a lot of work with them. So those areas are very active. There are some other ones. Oh, yes, the Pitjantjatjara who are the northwest corner of South Australia, is a huge Aboriginal reserve, the Pitjantjatjara land; they are interested. They are looking at a variety of things. They are looking at land ownership, taking over service delivery, governing their own lands. They are looking at direct funding from Canberra, bypassing the states.

There is a trial, one group of the Cape York people, the Wik, have a case going on and they have brought *all kinds of documentation* that's just fascinating. British documents. The British in the early 19th century did have a fairly progressive attitude. And of course that is why Canada ended up with the federal government having Indian affairs powers. The imperial government had held that power because it didn't trust the colonials who were trying to develop land, so they gave the power to the central government, figuring that would be at least some safeguard against the land hunger of the provinces. It is an interesting principle, but it was ignored here. . . .

It is funny, the Aboriginal groups here and the Torres Strait Islanders have kind of discovered me and in a sense taken my background and refocused me, as it were, because I have been doing all this stuff implicitly for years, but now I am really thinking very much in terms of regional agreements, which is an Australian term. The Canadians don't use it at all. Regional agreements is the Australian conceptualization of Canadian land claims experience, basically.

Q: How would you evaluate the work of Dr. H.C. Coombs?

Jull: Well, Nugget is virtually 90 years old. I have just done a review for a Canadian journal on his latest book. I will send you that. Nugget, I am trying to think of an American equivalent. There are some. There aren't any Canadian equivalents. Nugget is sort of the Benjamin Franklin of this country or something (laughs). He was a country school teacher who worked hard and did a correspondence course and eventually won scholarships to LSE [London School of Economics], got a Ph.D., worked with Keynes. Keynes is one of the few people in the world that he really worships.

He came back, he was economic adviser at the Reserve Bank here and he became the head of it. And he was also economics adviser to seven successive prime ministers. He was in charge of wartime controls, because of course the state took over the entire Australian wartime economy because it wasn't like Canada and the U.S., it was really serious. The Japanese were bombing Australia. Then he headed up and set up this huge wartime reconstruction, and, boy, was it reconstruction. It was kind of a whole social economy for Australia vision.

So Nugget got all that going. It was Nugget's idea to create the Australian National University and he virtually wrote the legislation. It was his idea to create the North Australia Research Unit. He spends a great deal of his time, and I mean months every year, hanging round in outback Aboriginal communities where he has got all kinds of friends and they think he's great and he thinks they are great. He is a remarkable man. He helped get the whole Mabo thing going.

Q: How did he do that?

Jull: Well, he and a couple of other people were at a conference and Eddie Mabo was upset and they said, "Hey, why don't we bring a court case?" And he has also encouraged a common law case in the Kimberley. I don't know exactly where it stands at the moment. It may have been overtaken by the (Native Title) Tribunal. . . .

The Mabo case *shattered* not only the legal thinking and the policy premise of Australian governments, but it was, "*terra nullius*" (empty land) had become a moral certainty. It became the moral blinker that they had to say that they didn't owe the Aborigines anything. So when that was suddenly stripped away in June 1992, suddenly the society was *stunned!*

And it was very interesting, because governments did not react quickly because they were so stunned. So they shut up. Which was very useful, because that meant that the media had to find people to talk, and so they found me because I was one of the few people they could lay their hands on who actually knew how these things worked elsewhere. So I did a lot of interviews and you know, very nice, said "Look, this isn't the end of the world. This is an opportunity to do things properly, blah, blah, blah." Nicey-nicey stuff.

And people like Henry Reynolds and various other people were doing the same. So, for about nine months, there was this, it was like Churchill's phony war. Nothing much happened except a few of us spreading the word, "This isn't the end of the world, guys. Life can go on."

And so, finally, when the government indicated that it was indeed going to bring down a policy and possible legislation, when that triggered the debate and that happened as soon as Keating was re-elected in March 1993, when that happened, suddenly the public realized, and the mining companies and states went "Oh, my God, the commonwealth is *serious* about this stuff."

That's when the angry stuff started, *but* in that nine-month hiatus there had been enough time to reflect, and, of course, the High Court had enough prestige and there was enough positive or at least open thinking around that had come out in those nine months, that the country, instead of immediately going into a spasm of racist overstatement, which is what a lot of us feared, many key opinion people who would previously have simply dismissed Aboriginal stuff with a one-liner were prepared to say, "Gosh, this must be important, I mean the High Court thinks so, we better look into it some more."

Q: So you had quite an impact on that whole shaping of the public opinion?

Jull: Oh yes. I was very active in that.

I must admit, I do look at the First World experience. I don't say that it is universal. I don't know, maybe it is. I haven't wanted to look at the Third World, because I felt if we could consolidate a few things, in Nunavut, in Australia, and Alaska, and so on, if we can get some places that work, some models that work, where indigenous peoples have actually *done* it, then we have something to show the world, some standards we can set for other people with less fortunate situations.

Have we ever seen it happen here! When I came here a few years ago, this country was so dug in, the Aborigines and their enemies, you know, if somebody had come up with a solution, they would have shot them. They just would not have recognized it. People were so dug in and gradually, over a few years, hearing about other people, having Inuit leaders come and talk to them and so on, has *really* turned that around. "Hey, look, it *is* possible to do things. These other guys had these problems that we have now, and they worked through them."

What was amazing to me in Canada is, really and truly, when you look at how much was accomplished, it happened *very* quickly. We're not talking about multi generations. We are talking about ten years. That is really, in a society where this is not the most compelling issue, that is pretty remarkable.

Q: Dr. Coombs wrote this book *Aboriginal Autonomy*, and

he has done a lot of work on the treaty question. Does that imply sovereignty? I thought I saw some discussion of dual sovereignty and that sort of thing. What is he thinking?

Jull: I reviewed Nugget's book. . . . I am one of the people who feels that the word "sovereignty" should be avoided simply because it means to people, I mean it is not like the U.S. In the U.S., sovereignty is a good word. . . . In Canada, we decided—we meaning those of us involved with the Aboriginal movement—that sovereignty was a negative, that we had just better not talk about it.

And so we decided, okay, "self-government" is the term. Let's go for self-government. That is a more modest term. That's interesting, because over here some people see "self-government" as threatening. But they also see sovereignty as very threatening.

And so some of us have felt, "Let's avoid the term, let's not talk about it. It raises more questions than it answers, and just doesn't win us any support." However, Nugget—and I was a bit annoyed that he did it—wrote an article, in which one of our colleagues, who is keen on throwing sovereignty around and trying to expand the meaning, was talking it up. So Nugget wrote an apology for it, basically saying, "Oh, yes, we have to look at that," and trying to rationalize it. I just felt that was counterproductive. I really think it would be better to just keep quiet about it and not raise fears and anxieties. . . .

So the basic thing here, and I think it maybe goes back to your fundamental question, the thing that I found *the most interesting* single development or vignette I have seen here was that in June 1993 at the constitutional conference in Canberra at that conference there was a consensus; it really had two parts. One part was that Australia, the settlers of Australia have never consulted or come to an understanding with the Aborigines about the place of the Aborigines, rather the relationship of the Aborigines with this country, with the government and the settler institutions, and to do that now is urgent.

I was just *staggered!* I was just absolutely staggered that a roomful of people, I would say that out of all that roomful of people there were only one or two who really wouldn't have subscribed to any of that.

Q: On the overall indigenous question, how much impact, or connections or whatever, does this U.N. Centre for Human Rights, Indigenous Decade, the planned Indigenous Declaration of Human Rights, have in Australia? How much are Australian Aborigines involved in that?

Jull: The key body there, now, is Mick Dodson, the Aboriginal Social Justice Commissioner. Dodson's group, they focus on international law, and international rights and translating them into Australia and translating them into Australian standards. They are the *key* group in this country on that. It is a very special role. Essentially the rights stuff is starting to be known.

Ethnic rebellion is on the horizon

Professor Reynolds is in the Department of History and Politics at the University of North Queensland, Townsville, Queensland. He is probably Australia's best-known author on Aboriginal history, and a founding Sponsor and Advisory Committee member of the Nugget Coombs Forum for Indigenous Studies.

Q: Perhaps I could ask you about your Roy Milne lecture at the Australian Institute of International Affairs in 1993, in which you expressed the idea that the nation and the state are two different concepts, rather than the unified notion of the nation-state. Where does this idea arise in the current period? I noticed you cited a number of Oxford and related theoreticians.

Reynolds: As a British colony, we inherited the idea of a single all-powerful sovereign, and therefore, as with the United States, we decided this could be divided in a federation. But nevertheless the idea that there could be other sovereign authorities was quite anathema to British constitutional thinking.

At the same time, the reality was that in the colonial period, many, many Aboriginal communities had no contact whatsoever with the Europeans. They were de facto sovereign. They continued to exist independently, and did so right up until the 1960s. Even now, there are parts of Australia where Aboriginal law still runs, in effect.

There is a de facto sovereignty, because they really have never really been totally absorbed. So you have the theory which, from the European side, is for the single sovereign, but the reality was that I think you had numerous sovereigns. And I think in a sense the very interesting Queensland inquiry, run by a group of indigenous people to look at the question of self-government, was strongly influenced by Canadian and North American ideas. They began touring the remote communities, talking about self-government, and of course the old people said, "What's new about that? We have always believed that we have had our own autonomy, our own sovereignty."

Q: How did these ideas come in? It is a long way from Canada and North America to Queensland. What was the transmission belt?

Reynolds: A number of ways. Someone like Peter Jull, and quite a number of Canadian academics have been in Australia in the last ten years, visiting. The normal academic exchange of ideas, but of course, the indigenous communities in the last ten years have begun to build up these Fourth World networks. I think they have been just as important, in that Australian Aborigines have been to North America and North American people have come to Australia.

Q: Would this have been under the auspices of the U.N. Working Group on Indigenous Peoples?

Reynolds: That has been one of the critical meeting places for North Americans, New Zealand, Australian, Inuit, and Sami peoples. I think those gatherings have been very important, because people have realized that their own problems and situations are not unique, that they have that immediate sense of brotherhood across the world.

Q: I see some of the citations you refer to in your Milne lecture, about the "more complex patterns of political power typical of the late medieval and early modern periods." We would be presumably talking about models from the pre-Renaissance period, is that accurate?

Reynolds: In terms of having sovereignty broken up into smaller parts?

Q: Yes.

Reynolds: Yes.

Q: One thing you also referred to was the question of international pressure. You have a conservative group there, the Liberal-National Coalition; you talk about the fact that even they would have trouble, foot-dragging on some sort of a charter of rights of indigenous people. What sort of pressure do you see building up now toward getting some sort of breakthrough?

Reynolds: As I see it, there is a logic in the whole idea of the self-determination of peoples which is working through. But the question is, how far can that logic be allowed to be run? This seems to be one of the fundamental problems. At the moment, of course, the states represented in the United Nations are going to be extremely careful about allowing rights which could possibly lead to secession. That is the great fear. And the question arises, "Is it conceivable that we have gone now to almost 200 nations, 200 states? Can you conceivably have 1,000? What sort of world would this be?"

So consequently, the big hope is for reconceptualizing the state and sovereignty. So you *can* include groups within the state that have a significant degree of internal self-government. . . .

Q: Looking at your Milne lecture, you say that "similar moves for regional autonomy will emerge in the next few

I was probably the first one to make [Eddie Mabo] aware that he didn't own his land, that it was Crown land, and talked to him about the possibility of trying a court case. . . . I probably told him about the great American cases of the 1820s and the 1830s, which defined the idea of native title.

years in various parts of Australia." And then you list Cape York, Arnhem Land, the Kimberleys, etc. What indications are there of that? How far advanced is that process?

Reynolds: Quite strong.

The local leadership in those places realizes that this is important in practical ways. The Torres Strait leadership, for instance, points out that in the situation that existed up until recently, they had to deal with 35 separate government departments and agencies, both state and federal government.

And there is also, of course, the awareness of the regional agreements in North America, and there is also an appreciation that in Australia's external territories, particularly the island territories, you have a situation which they find attractive. Norfolk Island and the Cocos Islands have a high degree of autonomy, so for those reasons, the leadership in those areas is very, very strongly pushing for a significant degree of internal self-government.

I think that this is seen as the objective for the next ten years.

Q: How far does this go? Would this at some point lead to complete independence?

Reynolds: That, of course, is the very difficult question. I would have thought that this is the grave weakness. Does autonomy, in a sense, head off demands for independence, or does autonomy *hasten* the situation?

I suppose I take the optimistic, reforming view, that if you reform ahead of demand, then you will have a situation that is manageable, that you can contain in autonomous regions within the state; but of course, the pessimistic one is that this is simply preparing the way for further demands. In Australian circumstances, I suppose such regions, if they were to demand anything, might demand it internationally. Given the current international view of secession, I imagine they wouldn't get much support, but of course, the possibility always exists in the future of getting external support for this sort of demand.

I just don't know. As I say, one has to take a leap in the dark, I suppose, and assume that careful, progressive reform will provide a way of having an overarching state under which various groups can have significant degrees of autonomy, cultural and political autonomy. That's the

optimistic view, which I currently have. But whether that is overly optimistic, only the future will tell.

Q: Is there anyone who has done some serious work in the field who has been more pessimistic?

Reynolds: The pessimists are more inclined to be the conservatives who have said this all along, who have said, "Look, you are just going to create a black state and this is going to lead to secession." There hasn't been a great deal of theoretical work about it, but there are people who have taken this view all along, and they have taken it *way back*. They say this about native title and land rights; they say that this is creating a black state, that this will fracture the nation.

Just as with immigration, there are those who say that Australia is now becoming a land of many tribes and it has lost its cohesion. But I don't think there is anyone yet at a high level who has said, "This move toward greater autonomy to self-government, will *inevitably* lead on because every small nation ultimately wants to become a state." That there is a logic moving in that direction. That is clearly an arguable and a worrying proposition, if secession means, as it does in the modern world, prolonged periods of extremely protracted and bloody conflict.

Q: Would you draw any comparisons to the issue of Chiapas? As serious scholars would be aware, this did not pop up out of nowhere. But would you draw any comparisons there, where there is certainly a very significant move toward autonomy or even independence?

Reynolds: Yes, I was in Mexico last year and I talked to the government people about the situation, and they are clearly worried about precisely these questions. They were very interested in hearing what Australia thought about these issues.

But yes, I think that sort of combination of regional and ethnic rebellion is potentially possible, as I say in the article. We have had a long period without that sort of overt conflict, but it would be optimistic indeed to assume that it could not happen again. I don't see it happening soon. But certainly if you *frustrate* the ambitions of significant groups, I think that sort of response could be possible down the track, and would be extremely difficult to deal with. It is so much

more than a military and police problem; it is an enormous political problem, as Mexico finds. It becomes the center of world media attention.

My wife is a parliamentarian, a member of the Australian Senate, and I went with her on an Australian parliamentary delegation to Mexico. We spent a day, the embassy arranged a day's contact with various people involved in indigenous affairs.

They have a new commission, and they have finally come to the conclusion that simply saying that everyone has been a citizen and has been since 1823 is not enough. There has to be an acceptance of diversity and autonomy, which obviously they saw as a big step in Mexican grappling with these problems.

Q: You are referring to the Mexican government?

Reynolds: Yes, these were government officials who now were thinking through the implications of having so many indigenous communities within the nation's borders.

The previous President had just set up a commission for indigenous peoples, and the new commissioner and his staff came and met us and had a long conversation when we dealt with this very problem, exactly the things I am talking to you about: the realization that there had to be change and reform and acceptance of the existence of indigenous peoples, but the worry about the unity of the state.

Q: So this was President Salinas who set up this commission?

Reynolds: Right. The official government commission on indigenous peoples.

Q: And from the Zapatista end, did you get a chance to talk to anyone there?

Reynolds: No. I would have been most intrigued, but we were only there briefly and we were depending on what the embassy could organize: it would have been extremely interesting to talk to those sorts of people.

Q: Peter Jull mentioned that he thought you had a hand in the Mabo case [see article, p. 18].

Reynolds: Yes, that's right.

You see [Eddie Mabo] was a friend of mine, and we spent a lot of time together. I was probably the first one to make him aware that he didn't own his land, that it was Crown land, and then talked to him about the possibility of trying a court case. At that stage, I vaguely knew about the American cases, and I probably told him about the great American cases of the 1820s and the 1830s, which defined the idea of native title.

So, yes, I was certainly very involved in the early days. Once the case began, of course, it was very much in the hands of the experts.

Interview: Donna Craig

Regional agreements a 'bargaining wedge'

Donna Craig is a Sydney-based specialist in environmental law and regional vice-chairman for the Environmental Law Commission of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. She was the ELC's representative on the IUCN's committee on "indigenous" matters. A collaborator of Nugget Coombs, she is a linchpin in international indigenous networks.

Q: Peter Jull called you the "mother superior of regional agreements" and said I should speak to you. Perhaps you could give me a general overview. I know the Nunavut agreement has been an important precedent.

Craig: I think the part of regional agreements that is not generally understood, is that it is a very powerful political process in terms of the ten years or however long they take to negotiate the agreement: the negotiating skills developed and the coalitions that are formed and then of course the expertise that is gained in running the corporations. If that is seen as an historic and economic and political process, standing back from the years of fighting or whatever in Canada, I think that has been enormously important. It is very painful. But I think the tremendous gain that can be got out of that bargaining wedge is to increase indigenous involvement in a whole range of land use decisions, planning decisions, management decisions, particularly managing fisheries, wildlife, natural resources.

Q: Have you had an opportunity to travel to Canada or New Zealand to see how things have worked there?

Craig: Yes. I've had some close contact with those communities. And I studied in Canada. I did my environmental law masters [there] and I worked with Paul Lehman, and he was involved in the preliminary negotiations for the Yukon agreement. A lot of my work has been in the social impact assessment area with indigenous groups and looking at cross-cultural processes in the environmental law area. That, in Canada, is actually leading to the regional agreements.

In Australia, probably our strongest models are things like joint management of national parks, indigenous peoples' control of river catchments. We have got some *very good*

examples of indigenous involvement in the sort of land use/environment/parks issues. But it is far more at that conservation end of the spectrum.

Q: Is there any likelihood of a constitutional amendment, or should much effort be put in that direction?

Craig: I think we have got to try. There are people who will work very hard on that in Australia. And we may just have a chance, because we are getting the Olympics in the year 2000 and there is a growing international embarrassment over our human rights record with Aboriginal people. And certainly native title recognition was a *huge* consciousness-raising in Australia, so it could be that by the year 2000, that could be tenable, whereas it wasn't a few years ago. . . .

You have to have something to bring people to the bargaining table. So if you don't have the constitutional amendment, you have to have some other legal rights base.

The other strategic thing about regional agreements: In Canada they negotiated the two things in parallel, where they negotiated the regional agreements, which is basically land- and resource-based agreements and then the self-government process in parallel or afterwards in the case of the Western Arctic.

But what happened in Australia is that there is a big move for direct funding of Aboriginal services from the federal government, to Aboriginal organizations. And just a *huge* looming international crisis over failure to deliver basic services, particularly health services, to Aboriginal communities. And the only way that will be addressed is through regional self-government processes. So I suspect that Australian regional agreements will incorporate elements of the self-government process that we have seen separately negotiated in Canada. They tried to run the two processes in tandem. I don't think that is going to be possible in Australia.

Q: I know there is a big crisis building around Aboriginal health. So health may well give the impetus to push forward the regional agreements?

Craig: Yes. But regional agreements that will go beyond dealing with the land resources question.

Q: Meaning this question of political self-determination, to some degree?

Craig: Yes. The difference between regional agreements in Australia will be how comprehensive they are in particular regions. And we certainly won't get them in all regions.

For example, the Kimberley regional agreement or the Torres Strait regional agreement could be *very* comprehensive, bringing in many of these self-government issues. You might find some of the urban regional agreements largely deal with issues like health and education. There will be vast differences in the models, so what I have been trying to do is develop flexible options, depending on the particular history

and the aspirations of a particular community, because the model of regional agreements developed in Australia will be quite different.

Q: You worked in the East Kimberleys. What happened there?

Craig: A very famous character in Australia, very like Tom Berger in Canada, a guy called Nugget Coombs—he is the grandfather of all sorts of things in Australia, about 89; if you want to find an icon, you find Nugget. And he is an adopted father of the Yirrkala community in the Northern Territory, and he was approached by the Kimberley Aboriginal community. They were putting in the biggest diamond mine in the world, on traditional land. No land rights, disastrous situation. Major desecration of sites. And they asked, that they basically prepare the research ammunition that they were going to need to deal with developments in the region, and they asked for basically an environment-economic-social impact assessment. Which we did, a great big thing from about '85 through to '91. We did it by stitching together research grants and people doing *pro bono* work all over Australia. It was an organizational nightmare, but it did produce some very, very interesting work. It was the first really strong attempt to develop an SIA methodology, Social Impact Assessment, using very much applied anthropology approaches and using the story-telling in the community. An interesting model of that.

The Kimberley region got the idea of regional agreements in the late '80s, when we were presenting these reports, and actively started organizing the Kimberley Coordinating Council and arguing for regional agreements in Australia. So up until the last two years, it was virtually the only group arguing for regional agreements. What came out of that research was a baseline which they just *didn't have*, and they don't have in most regions. And a community with much more of a political will to take this regional approach.

Q: In other words, all the crucial research that had been done in the mid- to late-1980s, with Coombs, set the basis for their understanding this regional agreement concept?

Craig: Yes. And toward the end of this project, drawing on the Canadian experience, we brought out Tom Berger; Brad Moss was also out here. Brad Moss is a lawyer who acts for the Assembly of First Nations. So Brad and Tom came out and the concept of regional agreements was floated. It was also floated in the report, *Land of Promises*. There wasn't a really strong immediate response. But then a couple of *major* leaders in the Kimberleys—the head of the Kimberley Land Council, quite an extraordinary man called Peter Yu, who is Chinese-Aboriginal from West Kimberley—he took up the idea, and he is quite charismatic. A brilliant man.

Then, in the early 1990s, they formed the Kimberley Coalition, with the explicit idea of trying to develop a region-

al agreement, with the first step being to develop a coalition of organizations in the Kimberleys. They have virtually been the lone voices in arguing that the only way of dealing with these issues is in a coordinated way which delivers to Aboriginal people a true regional agreement. . . .

So if regional agreements were going to get off the ground in Australia, I don't think there would be anything like uniform regional agreements throughout Australia; there would be places like the Kimberleys, Pitjantjatjara land, around Kakadu National Park, Arnhem Land, probably Cape York, Torres Strait.

And then you might get regional conservation agreements in places like Jarvis Bay, where there is a major commonwealth national park and a big Aboriginal population down in Sydney. There is a very strong push for that. You may get regional agreements dealing with coastal areas. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park covers 2,000 kilometers of the Queensland coastline, and you have a very strong commonwealth-state authority, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, and a lot of Aboriginal people and a lot of Aboriginal interest. There could very well be a push for a marine regional agreement there.

Q: Would that give the Aboriginal people there co-management over the Great Barrier Reef National Park?

Craig: I think that is quite possible within the next ten years. They already have councils of elders set up, and they have tried to co-opt Aboriginal members to the board of managers, so they can see the writing on the wall.

Q: The Kimberley Project was so extensive over so many years, who did wind up providing a fair bit of the money?

Craig: The Australian National University bankrolled the Secretariat and a number of the studies and they also provided Nugget and Helen [Ross, Coombs's assistant].

Q: Now who in the government is particularly sympathetic to regional agreements?

Craig: Mick's [Mick Dodson, social justice commissioner] report, I am pretty sure, will very strongly support it and will support a trial project on regional agreements. I also think Tim Moore, who is the head of the Aboriginal Reconciliation Council, the director; and Mick's brother, Pat Dodson, is the president of the Aboriginal Reconciliation Council. I think they are genuinely supportive of the idea of regional agreements.

The meeting we held last year was with the various land councils and communities in northern Australia, and out of that, Cape York Land Council, Central Land Council, Northern Land Council, Kimberley Land Council were very interested in regional agreements, and I think will actually move on it.

I think Torres Strait is pushing the self-government at the

moment, but I think that will eventually blend into a regional agreement strategy.

Q: It is moving along very quickly.

Craig: Oh, it is! Things have happened very, very quickly within the last 12 months which, you know, is exciting! We had just about given up hope in Australia. And it has been driven by just a few people.

Q: Are there any anthropologists who have done important work, either in the Kimberleys or elsewhere, whose works are a benchmark in terms of Aboriginal issues?

Craig: Australia has an extraordinary history with anthropologists. Many of my friends from Canada and the United States say they have never come across a nation in the world where anthropologists have exerted so much power, as the gatekeepers.

There has been some very fine work done. Helen's background is very interdisciplinarian. It is psychology and applied anthropology policy studies. And, effectively, her Aboriginal work is applied anthropological work, which is what she was doing in the Kimberleys. So she has quite an unusual background, though she wouldn't be formally identified as a card-carrying anthropologist.

Q: Where was she trained?

Craig: She did her doctorate at the University of London. . . . And there is another woman who has done some very, very good applied work in Central Australia. . . . They did a study on co-management of national parks in Australia. And there's a chapter in there, a legal chapter, which looks at how native title affects co-management. That is probably the best study on co-management that has ever been done. It was coordinated by an Aboriginal woman called Ros Fulton.

Susan Woenne-Green is the name of the anthropologist on that. Ros is now working with the Northern Land Council, and we work very closely. She was also on this IUCN committee. She's great. She works with the Aboriginal Project of the Australian Conservation Foundation.

Q: What has the role of the ACF been?

Craig: It is the premier national conservation organization. It has had a very broad role. Philip Toyne, along with Susan Woenne-Green, was very much involved in setting up the Pitjantjatjara Council and the co-management of Uluru (Ayers Rock), which up until recently was a very, very powerful legal and administrative model of co-management. It was a real icon in the early '80s. And they followed a wonderful process. Philip had a long association with that community; when Philip became president of the ACF, he brought Ros in, and again expanded ACF's role in arid lands and Aboriginal issues.

Handing national parks to Aborigines

A collaborator of former Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) head Philip Toyne, Woenne-Green is the key individual conducting the studies and pilot projects (such as turning Ayers Rock/Uluru over to Aboriginal control) to justify ultimately turning over the vast areas of Australia under "conservation," "World Heritage," or "wilderness" designations to Aboriginal control, thus cutting these areas out of the nation of Australia forever. An American by birth, she moved to Australia in 1967.

Q: Donna Craig mentioned an interesting report that you had done on the co-management of national parks by Aboriginal people, in conjunction with the state or federal governments. I would like to get a quick idea of what the study was, what it showed, how it came about.

Woenne-Green: The volume that was produced was called "Competing Interests." You could get a copy from the Australian Conservation Foundation in Victoria. Several things caused it to happen. One is that I have had a lot of experience working with Aboriginal organizations and in the attempts with government to gain some position of equity with respect to management of nature reserves, national parks.

Even under the Northern Territory Land Rights Act, which is Commonwealth, the issue of national parks was a matter of dispute—well, not dispute, but it was a matter that the Act could not in fact deal with the on-the-ground lands reserved to the state or Commonwealth national park service which were not available for claim.

So, with quite a lot of work under my belt, and also one of the other authors whose name is Russ Johnston, he and I both, coincidentally, have had a lot to do with Ayers Rock, Uluru National Park. Then, through some other contacts at that time, the Australian Conservation Foundation had just developed a policy, a pro-active policy, which supported joint management arrangements between state and Commonwealth bodies and Aboriginal "traditional owners." (Although Aboriginal people use that term, only in very few places is that backed up by legislation.)

And so the ACF hired us, with funding from the Commonwealth, to do basically a national survey of how Aboriginal people were getting on in attempting to deal, with governments in various jurisdictions, with land which Aboriginal people considered their own, but which had been

reserved by the state for their own conservation or tourist uses in the name of the Australian people.

Q: This co-management idea, to the extent it is successful, could it lead to increasing Aboriginal claims or rights to areas which are now dedicated to conservation as a state or national park? Is that one possible outcome over time? Most of these parks are land that Aborigines do not own now, right?

Woenne-Green: Absolutely.

Q: So, to the extent they establish a precedent in handling these places well, would that give some legitimacy to them over time, reasserting their traditional land rights?

Woenne-Green: That is a good question. Absolutely.

Regional agreements will lead to autonomy

Michael (Mick) Dodson is the Federal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner. He is an associate of Nugget Coombs, and wrote the foreword to Coombs's 1994 book, Aboriginal Autonomy. Dodson is also a collaborator of Nobel Prize-winning terrorist spokeswoman Rigoberto Menchú of Guatemala.

Q: I am doing a study on Aboriginal rights, particularly the question of regional agreements and moves toward autonomy. Maybe you could give me an overview.

Dodson: We are going far too slowly. I work for the Human Rights Commission in Australia. My primary task is to monitor and report on the exercise and enjoyment of human rights by indigenous Australians.

Now things have not improved. And in some quarters the indicators are that we are going backwards, particularly in relation to health. We just had two significant reports released nationally, one is an assessment of what was known as the National Aboriginal Health Strategy, which was agreed upon between the Commonwealth and the members of Federation, states and territories, and Aboriginal leaderships, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC), and Aboriginal Medical Services, back in 1990. The assessment of that strategy is that it by and large has failed, primarily due to lack of commitment by government, particularly in terms of financial resources put in.

The government said that it would respond in three ways.

One of the things they did was to enact the Native Title Act. The next response, the second tier, was a national land fund. The government had dedicated Aus \$1.4 billion to that over a ten-year period. They have already put aside \$200 million the first year. . . .

The third response is where the regional agreements idea comes in. The government requested ATSIC to put proposals to the government about this so-called Social Justice Package. They also requested the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation to put proposals to the government. They are due perhaps early next month, to catch this year's budget cycle.

What I have been proposing is that we not necessarily look at a new round of welfare projects. What we really need to do, is to look at some fundamental restructuring on the way we do things at present, and a redirection in policy. And primarily having an agenda that will underpin regional and local empowerment and autonomy.

My suggestion is the way to do this is through regional agreements, similar to things that have happened in Canada.

In my report to the government, which is forthcoming, I will be scheduling to the report about 300 examples in Australia where there are, already, regional agreements, between state, territory, and Aboriginal people, and Commonwealth and Aboriginal people. A lot of them are not full, comprehensive agreements, but nevertheless they are regional arrangements that have been put into place between governments and people in the Aboriginal communities and organizations. And by and large, the regional arrangements that have been put into place have been highly successful.

A lot of them relate to the protocols that govern community policing, the way the police behave, the way the community behaves, how they conduct the policing of the communities in that region. Others relate to health, housing, community infrastructure, roads, airports, barge landings, things like that, telecommunications. . . .

Q: How far along would you say, or are there any particular areas of the country—I know you have land councils there—is there anyone who is in advance of the thinking along this line and really trying to fight now for some of these regional agreements? Has this idea caught on?

Dodson: Oh, yeah. I am not the inventor of this idea. It has, I think, fairly wide support amongst the indigenous leadership.

We already have the new Torres Strait Authority, which is the Torres Strait Islands. The Torres Strait Islanders are a different cultural group to the Aboriginal people; we're on the mainland. But they've negotiated a new regional authority which is the Torres Strait Authority, which has got a long-term plan of full autonomy, real self-government in the Torres Straits. Now that might come in 10 or 20 years. They are aiming for the turn of the century, the anniversary of Federation. . . .

I could go through numerous examples where arrange-

ments have been put into place. I think that the Torres Strait Islands and the Kimberley Land Council probably, in modern times, are the two examples of the most comprehensive proposals for regional agreements. . . .

Q: What sort of backup are you getting internationally, from the U.N. Center for Human Rights, the Decade for Indigenous People now under way, the Minority Rights Group, the Anti-Slavery Society?

Dodson: For example, I have been going for the last five years to the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations. Many indigenous North Americans get there. I've met lots of indigenous North Americans through going to Geneva each year for the Working Group.

We swap notes there, and lend each other support. I have just got a request today to send a letter to the Mexican Human Rights Commission in support of Chiapas.

Q: Will you be doing that? That is quite important.

Dodson: Well, I actually have one of my staff at an indigenous meeting in Paris at the moment, the Indigenous Initiative for Peace, which I was a foundation member of, which was founded in Guatemala in 1993. There are North Americans who are foundation members of that.

Q: Rigoberto Menchú played an active role in that.

Dodson: Yeah, well she is still involved in it now. Because of commitments I couldn't get there, but I sent a member of my staff there.

There are a lot of ties throughout the indigenous world. For example, our High Court decision here is being used, it has been used in a couple of Canadian cases. It has been used in Scandinavia, it has been used in Greenland. A lot of the knowledge about that has come from us, talking to indigenous people in international forums.

The Land Council newspaper runs a regular international feature; it talks about indigenous struggles all over the globe. We do a lot in South America. A lot in Asia where the indigenous struggle is just getting off the ground. The indigenous Asians are getting very organized. They have been colonized for a lot longer than the Americas and Australia.

Q: This raises the question of the amendment of the constitution. You do have your centenary coming up. Would you be looking to get an amendment to your constitution like the Canadians, to secure indigenous peoples' rights?

Dodson: I think that has to be considered as part of the package of things that we need to do. Certainly, I have been a little cautious publicly talking about it, but many other indigenous leaders have been urging it. There is a Centenary Constitutional Foundation that the government set up, which has been going around the country. It put out a report late last year which was urging constitutional recognition of indigenous rights.

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Anthropologists run Aboriginal affairs

Dr. Peterson is the chairman of the Anthropology Department at the Australian National University. He was the research officer for the 1973-74 Aboriginal Land Rights (Woodward) Commission, which resulted in the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976, which turned over 15% of the continent to Aboriginal control, with another 10-15% under claims.

Q: You were mentioned to me as someone particularly knowledgeable on benchmark studies vis-à-vis Aboriginal land rights questions.

Peterson: Yes, I might be able to help you. The history goes way back. Initially there was the understanding that Australia was *terra nullius* land, then there was a large amount of anthropological work which sort of built up the understanding of Aboriginal patterns of land tenure and what the debates are around that field.

Q: That was when?

Peterson: That really went from the 1930s until the 1970s. That was sort of getting the field data, if you like. Moving to the conceptualization that the kind of rights and interests that Aboriginal people have in land really constitute ownership and that this is really no different than the sense of ownership we have in our own society.

And then the sort of more recent things, which are the legal things, various court judgments and subsequent acts that have flowed from that, acts of government. . . .

There are the key judgments like the Gove Land Rights Case in 1971 which is the *Milirrpum and others vs. Nabalco and the Commonwealth of Australia*. That was the first piece of legislation, the first court judgment which indicated that Aboriginal people had no rights in land which were recognizable under Australian law.

And then of course there is the June 1992 [Mabo] judgment which overturned all that. Those are the two judgments which are absolutely crucial.

Then in terms of legislation, the most crucial piece would be the Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976. That was the

benchmark legislation by the Australian government conferring rights on Aboriginal people, statutory rights. This followed an inquiry by Mr. Justice Woodward. Now that was for the Northern Territory only. He was the barrister for the Gove Land Rights Case. He was the barrister for the Aboriginal people. He was approached by the Methodist Church, I think. . . . I was actually his research officer into his commission of inquiry into the Aboriginal Land Rights Commission, I worked with him for a year doing that.

That is the benchmark piece of legislation. Another piece which followed the Mabo decision is the Native Title Act 1993, which just tried to clarify some of the uncertainties which were raised in the judgment, because the judgment leaves an enormous amount of things hanging.

Q: Has there been much written on regional agreements?

Peterson: There is not much done on regional agreements. People are working on regional agreements in a big way now. There is a lot of work being done but nothing has been published. Regional agreements are foreshadowed in the Native Title Act 1993, that allows the possibility of regional agreements.

Q: Various people have pointed out that anthropologists have played an important role there.

Peterson: Oh, we have. We have played a crucial role in all this. Aboriginal people now own in freehold over 11% of the continent. And in 1966 they didn't own any land as Aboriginal people. Individuals may have owned it, but not as Aboriginal people. But now in 1995 there is over 11% of the continent.

And in the Northern Territory, I forget the exact figures but it is more than 33% of the surface area of the NT has been transferred since 1976 into Aboriginal hands. The population of Aboriginal people is about 40,000 in the Northern Territory. About 300,000 in the continent as a whole.

Q: Now when you say that we, meaning the anthropologists, have played a crucial role in this, could you maybe just give me a brief characterization of that?

Peterson: Anthropologists have participated in government inquiries, they have written most of the land claims, they have done all the basic research by which Aboriginal people have got their land back. They have considerable input into the legislation, various pieces of legislation. And of course for a long time anthropologists were the advocates for Aboriginal people.

Q: W.E.H. Stanner seems to have been quite crucial.

Peterson: Stanner really emerged during the 1960s and he became very influential. He was very well connected as a result of the war and had a lot of friends in the public service in high places. And he was a professor here at the ANU,

which is in Canberra, right beside the government. He became sort of Coombs's resource and authoritative voice. Coombs set the political agenda in the Office of Aboriginal Affairs. Stanner was "the voice of the Aboriginal people." At that stage, there was relatively little direct involvement of Aboriginal people. There wasn't a very high-profile Aboriginal leadership.

And there was another person, Dexter, who was the head of the Office, the three of them. And they were the ones who pioneered a lot of these policies. And they were the ones who were pushing the Liberal government toward recognition of land rights. They wouldn't go that far, but made various concessions and in 1971 Coombs and Stanner wrote the famous speech for the prime minister then, McMahon, in which he said Aboriginal people have the right to choose the way they live and the rate at which they change their way of life.

So it was the Liberals, a conservative party, which formally announced the death of the assimilation policy, which had in fact died in practice a long time before. on Jan. 26, Australia Day, 1971, in a very important speech, landmark speech. They were the architects behind the scene of the push to land rights. Not in a political thing, but within the bureaucracy.

Q: And what was Stanner's training?

Peterson: He was an anthropologist.

Q: Where was he trained?

Peterson: He was trained at the London School of Economics. Because Australia didn't grant Ph.D.s before the war. So that all of the people would do an M.A. in Australia and then they would hop on the boat and go to London and sit at Malinowski's feet at the London School of Economics. Malinowski is the grandfather of anthropology.

Q: So a number of the early Australian anthropologists were trained in London?

Peterson: All of them. . . . Even when they had Radcliffe-Brown, when they founded the chair, in 1926, the professors still sent them off to London to get a Ph.D. Stanner went, Elkin went.

Q: Obviously you have a very good faculty at ANU now. Does any of the old training in London still continue?

Peterson: Oh, no. That was why the Australian National University was founded. It was also set up to give advice about Asia and the Pacific to the government. And to attract people back from abroad and to start graduate programs. We now have 53 Ph.D.s in our department alone in anthropology and archeology.

Q: Someone mentioned that each land council had anthro-

pologists working on the staff, advising on questions of land claims, and helping in court, etc.

Peterson: That is right. The Central Land Council employs five. The CLC in Alice Springs employs at least five. The Northern Land Council employs at least five. The Pitjantjatjara Land Council employs a couple, a man and a woman. And of course there are a lot of us who work on contracts for them. I do a lot of contract work. I have just written a sea claim, a test case sea claim for the Northern Land Council. So they are hiring a lot of anthropologists to write the claims as well. Because a lot of the work that the anthropologists employed by the councils do has to do with mining, signing agreements, distributing royalties, all that sort of thing, and they often don't have enough time to focus on a single project.

Q: The sea claim, that is interesting. What is the Northern Land Council claiming?

Peterson: They are claiming ownership of the sea, and the sea bed.

Q: How far offshore would that go?

Peterson: Well, we are not going particularly far offshore. They are doing two different claims at the same time. We are going very much on the usage we can prove, which would be, it is only two kilometers north of the northernmost island that we are going for, but this is in an area which sticks right out into the Arafura Sea and it is a large island which has a whole lot of little islands in an arc off to the east and so it kind of has an enclosed inland sea where people were crossing about 20 km of open water.

So it is a big area of sea we are claiming, but it is not going particularly far offshore from the last piece of land. Other Aboriginal groups are claiming to the horizon.

Q: What does that mean, to the horizon?

Peterson: Horizon, I think, I stand open to the correction, but I think the horizon is thought to be 13 nautical miles away or something, that order. Some of them are claiming all the way to Indonesia. And that sort of doesn't work because it goes across to international boundaries. But of course some of this is ambit play to try and force the government to include them in any discussions which involve the sea when they are talking to Indonesia.

Q: When they make this claim, what are they arguing they should have, precisely?

Peterson: We are going to argue it, whether we get it, for full beneficial ownership of the sea. Everything. Of course full beneficial ownership of the sea by private citizens is not something, I don't know about American law, but certainly not in British common law, I don't speak as a lawyer, I speak as an anthropologist, but as far as I know, it is not common.

Because the sea is common property owned by the state on behalf of the people. But we are actually claiming the seabed is the private property of these people. And all the things in and the right to exclusive control of the waters we are claiming, so that anyone who comes on it has to seek their permission.

Q: When does that come up in court?

Peterson: It is before the Native Title Tribunal at the moment. That means it is bound to be disputed by the Fishermen's Association, the recreational people, the government probably, so it will probably end up in the federal court.

Q: If you can make any sort of rough estimate, of the total coastline of Australia, which of course is an island-continent, what percentage of offshore sea ringing Australia would actually be claimed at this point?

Peterson: We're not claiming for the whole of Australia, we're only claiming for one little bit. But in the Northern Territory, Aboriginal people own more than 70% of the shoreline. Right now.

So 70% of the shoreline you can't set foot on, if you are not an Aboriginal person, without permission from Aboriginal people.

Q: Do you need a visa?

Peterson: You need a permit from the Aboriginal community in the area.

Q: So you would be trying to apply for everything off this 70% of the shoreline?

Peterson: In the case I am involved in, we are not doing it for the whole 70%. We are just working with one community and the water that is off their bit of the shoreline. But of course it would set a precedent and the other communities would lob in there pretty quickly.

Q: This is striking, even from an international standpoint. Is there any precedent for what you are doing, or are you setting a precedent?

Peterson: I can't speak authoritatively on that, but honestly I would be very, very surprised if we actually got ownership of the seabed and things. I think the European common law practice will override that.

But I do think, that I would be enormously disappointed and think it most unjust if we didn't end up with a very influential part to play in the administration of coastal waters in the Northern Territory. Obviously meaning, very substantial Aboriginal representation on all the boards which issue licenses and whatever else.

Q: It is intriguing. It brings up all sorts of defense questions as well.

Peterson: It does.

Interview: David Bennett

Plenty of jobs for the anthropologists

Bennett is in the Strategic Policy Unit of the federal Department of Environment, Sports, and Territories (DEST), which handles several agencies in charge of "protected areas" such as the Australian Heritage Commission and the Australian Nature Conservation Agency. He and his superior at DEST, Philip Toyne, are the two key federal bureaucrats involved in trying to establish Australia's first "regional agreement" in the Cape York Peninsula. Bennett moved to his current position from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission. He emigrated to Australia after several years in the U.S. Army.

Q: What is the latest on the regional agreements? Have any been struck. are they on the horizon, or what?

Bennett: First of all, under the Native Title Act, Section 21, none have been struck. However, there is a region in the far northern tip of the Cape York Peninsula, which, geographically, because it is isolated—about like having the Everglades designated—the groups up there want to go together, saying, "Look, we have a very strong case for claims. We can do it one claim at a time, or, we will put in, under Section 21, a regional agreement claim. Let's sit down and let's talk about it, and see what we can work out."

Now the whole idea of regional agreements is in part very similar to the Canadian agreements. The idea we have been working on is very close to the Nunavut model in Canada. The closest one is this far northern tip of the Cape, 8,000 square miles of the Cape York Peninsula. Now, there are a couple of other regions considering such things. We have an area called the Kimberleys in Western Australia; they are looking at the possibility of one, because they have an area out there where they think they can make a better deal through claiming all the rights and settling all the issues, including issues of how the area will be governed—self-government per se is not on in this country, but we can have a modified form of it.

The other place that is thinking very strongly about it, is the Torres Strait Islands, because they have won the first and in one way most successful, of the Native Title claims. But now they want to expand it over the sea.

So they are thinking about a regional agreement which would take in the sea, because for the Torres Strait Islanders, it is the sea between, that is more important than the islands,

which sort of mark the parameters.

Q: What sort of time period are we looking at for any of these agreements actually being struck?

Bennett: Perhaps the most reasonable one, on the far tip of Cape York, I would say another two years, before we have all the people at the table. And then on a guess, because we have never had one of these, but using the Canadian experience, about seven years to completion. That is just a guess.

Q: How does it actually work? How has the Canadian experience been transmitted down there? Have you guys been up to Nunavut, have Nunavut people been down there?

Bennett: Both. We had a couple of Inuits down here for a regional agreements conference which was held in late July of last year. Ros [Sultan] was one of the major organizers of that conference, and we invited a couple of people over to talk to us about their experiences.

Q: Have there been any particular written works you have used?

Bennett: One of the things which we have used partially as a guide is the Canadian publication called *Comprehensive Regional Agreements*.

Q: You mentioned this Native Title Act. A person mentioned as playing a big role in that was Marcia Langton, who I think is up there in that northern area you mentioned.

Bennett: She is the deputy director of the Cape York Land Council, but she is also, I believe, the chairperson of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies [Iatsis], located here in Canberra.

Q: So she played a role in that Native Title Act?

Bennett: Yes, to give you the old Mark Twain story here: There was a group called the A Team and there was a group called the B Team. The A Team was made up of the head of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, Lois O'Donohue; the head of Iatsis, Marcia Langton; the director of the Cape York Land Council, Noel Pearson; the director of the Northern Lands Council, Darryl Pearce; and a fifth member . . . David Ross from the Central Land Council. That was the full runners on the A Team. It was only called the A Team after the B Team was formed. . . .

The story, as it is told around the traps, is that the A Team, the prime minister of Australia, Paul Keating, and several members of his Cabinet went into his Executive Suite in Parliament House and they locked themselves up from Friday evening until Monday morning. The A Team would put forward a proposal to Keating, Keating would listen to it, go over and talk to members of the Cabinet in another room, then he'd walk back and report what the Cabinet said, and it went on like this for something like 48 hours.

There were 13 positions on which the A Team would not pull back, the absolute bottom line, but they had a number of other proposals that they wanted. One of those happened to be the regional agreements. It was suggested by a man named Peter Yu, who is the chairman of the Kimberley Land Council. Yu was familiar with, and, as I remember, had been to Canada, and had seen these sorts of things happen. He was also facing already the idea of trying to strike some sort of deal with a large area which included more than one language group. A language group in the United States would be called a tribe. A tribe doesn't apply here. More than one language group, but everyone had a similar set of goals which could be tied back together, and they could demonstrate a tie to the land.

Now he wanted to try and settle it in the quickest and cheapest way possible. And regional agreements struck him as a good way to do that, so he got that inserted into the bill. Then, when it was picked up and debated in the second reading speeches, which are extremely important here, due to the way we interpret acts, it was made clear that regional agreements were to cover things like keeping it out of either the federal court system or the Native Tribunal System, and simply striking a deal with the relevant state or Commonwealth government officials. Once it was struck, that deal could then be registered as a claim.

Q: Are there any leading anthropologists there whose names come to mind?

Bennett: Yes, there are some. Anthropologists and Native Title, it is a sunrise industry here, and in fact we may have an anthropologist-led economic recovery down here.

Q: There are that many of them?

Bennett: They, plus the lawyers. Let me first of all tell you a bit more about the act, so you know how anthropologists fit in.

The act requires that for anyone to make a claim, they must establish two things: 1) They must establish a traditional link to the country they are claiming, and 2) they must show that there has been no act of the British government in the early days, the Commonwealth and state governments, etc., which would extinguish native title.

So if they can show that they have had this continuous traditional connection to a piece of land and no other act has extinguished it, they are in a position to claim it. That is when the anthropologists come in.

Now a lot of this work had already been done, because in 1976 we had passed the Northern Territory Land Act, which started a whole series of land claims already. The anthropologists had been going out staking claims over these areas showing the information.

I am not absolutely sure what has been published by the anthropologists, because a lot of the information is confidential.

'We are looking for people who deliver'

Ros Sultan is currently employed at the Northern Lands Council, and is a close associate and former employee of Philip Toyne, longtime head of the Australian Conservation Foundation. She is an Aborigine.

Q: Donna Craig brought up the very important work you had done on the co-management of one or more national parks by Aborigines in Australia.

Sultan: I helped administer the putting together of a 400-page report on Aboriginal interests in parks and protected areas. Have you heard of something called the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Deaths in Custody? Well, that was a response to Recommendation 315 of that report.

I did that when I worked for the Australian Conservation Foundation [ACF]. I have since left them and am working for an Aboriginal organization, a statutory authority set up under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act, known as the Northern Lands Council, in Darwin. The name of our report is *Competing Interests*.

The other thing which I can send on to you when we have finished it, is I organized Australia's first workshop on regional agreements, and I am in the process of having that edited.

Q: When did the workshop take place?

Sultan: We ran it last year in July in Cairns. One of our principal speakers was Les Carpenter, an Inuvialuit person; he is an Inuit and he works with the Circumpolar Conference.

Q: Who were some of the other prominent speakers?

Sultan: I limited the numbers and I basically drew on people from the Cape York region, because it was specifically to do with Cape York, and I also invited Commonwealth government bureaucrats, people who could deliver! I didn't want any state bureaucrats, because they generally intimidate Aboriginal people and they never, ever deliver on anything anyway. So we had about 60 people, mainly Aboriginal people from the Cape. The organization which represents those people is the Cape York Land Council; you could speak to Noel Pearson there, the executive director. He is quite an

extraordinary young man. He is one of the main people who saw through and took carriage of the Native Title Legislation, passed in this country a couple of years ago.

What they are doing is perhaps running with Australia's first regional agreement. They are working very hard on that, and there are two people they brought in to do that work. One of them is Philip Toyne, the deputy secretary of the Department of Environment, Sports, and Territories [DEST]. That is the Commonwealth body that looks after environment in this country. And he is two down from the minister. I can give you the name of a person who is also very closely involved with this, and he could talk to you a lot about Aboriginal interests in relation to environment and all sorts of things. His name is David Bennett, and he is in the Policy Analysis Unit of DEST.

Q: So you were actually working at the ACF when you did that report?

Sultan: Yes. I was the second indigenous person they had employed in that organization.

Q: Wasn't Philip Toyne also involved with the ACF?

Sultan: Yes. he was the executive director and then he left and became a Research Fellow at ANU [Australian National University]. He is very *well placed*, from my perspective anyway, and he is also a friend of mine, which helps.

Q: The original study you did with the ACF, which led to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, how did that come about?

Sultan: It was an idea that Philip had, as a response to that recommendation which talked about Aboriginal peoples' very real involvement in parks and protected areas. I am just pulling this off the top of my head, it was so long ago. I will give you the name of the principal author, Susan Woenne-Green. She can give you the details.

Q: What is her background?

Sultan: She is from Sacramento. She is an expatriate, an Australian citizen now. She immigrated here in 1967, and spent a lot of time working in Western Australia, where she first went. She is an anthropologist, and she spent a lot of time working on our communities, particularly in the Northern Territory and South Australia. And she is a bit of an—I hate the word "expert," but she has a lot of knowledge about national parks and protected areas and traditional peoples.

Q: Are there any other prominent anthropologists I might talk to?

Sultan: A prominent anthropologist in this country—and she is also an indigenous person—is Marcia Langton, the senior policy adviser to the Cape York Land Council. She and Noel Pearson basically carried, along with other people, the Native Title stuff with the federal government.

Communists, fascists supported land rights

Marcia Langton is based at Nugget Coombs's North Australian Research Unit, and was the last general secretary of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders. She is an anthropologist, and received her degree under Prof. Nicolas Peterson. She is an Aborigine.

Q: I understand there is a move now to get a regional agreement in the northern part of Cape York, is that right?

Langton: Yes. Have you heard of Philip Toyne? He was formerly with the Australian Conservation Foundation, and now he is the deputy secretary of the federal Department of Environment, Sports, and Territories. He is the head of the Environmental Strategies Directorate. Before he took up that position he worked for the Cape York Land Council; he actually donated his time, he was then a professor at the Environmental Law Institute in the Law School at the ANU [Australian National University]. With one of our staff members, Christine Zorzi, they worked in the Northern Peninsula Area (NPA) for a number of weeks, taking instruction. They also did a lot of research.

The regional agreements that are referred to in the Native Title Act in Australia were sort of a last-minute addition to the Native Title Act, during the negotiations. The Kimberley Land Council is also working on a regional agreement.

I think the reason why Aboriginal groups wanted regional agreements, was to get governments to agree to hand back land, without a costly court process. That is part of the reason, particularly in places like the NPA, where there are only two small areas of land that are not either under an Aboriginal regime—they're all Aboriginal reserves, for instance—or deeds of grant in trust, or a conservation regime. So you can either have a case of native title claim in court for years, with all the appeals, litigation that goes on, which would cost millions of dollars. Or you could negotiate it. In the NPA, this is possible.

Q: How big an area of land are we talking about?

Langton: Find Cape York on the map: The Northern Peninsula Area is the top of that cape, from the Jardine River north. There is a river above Weipa, that is the Jardine. The only

people who live there are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and there are a few white staff stationed there by departments: teachers, nursing sisters, some contractors sometimes. There are a couple white families on the two areas which I suggested the traditional owners would buy. One of them already wants to sell to Aboriginal people. So it is very straightforward.

Q: Do you know how the Wave Hill walk-off got going [see article, p. 21]? I know there was a support network among churches, anthropologists, and unions, but it is unclear to me how that actually got started. The working conditions were horrible, that is totally clear.

Langton: They went on strike. You had a strike against the Vestey's for equal wages. It was [then-Prime Minister] Gough Whitlam who took executive action and must have negotiated this with Vestey. He obtained somehow a very large lease in Vestey's property and handed the lease over to the Gurindji. Part of the reason why I think that happened, was that this very large network throughout Australia supported the Gurindji, and it would have made the Australian government look like animals if indeed Vestey hadn't given it to the Gurindji.

You had some very famous people supporting the Gurindji, one of them being Frank Hardy, the novelist, who had been a Communist back in the early days of Australia. So Frank being the great novelist, he attracted all sorts of people, because he went up there and stayed with them, and I think it was just an accident that he was there.

Q: You mean he was there when it broke out?

Langton: Yes. He wrote a book then about it called *The Unlucky Australians*. And he got the press involved and he brought in all his union mates. Everybody just contacted everybody they knew, and before you knew it, you just had this huge network throughout Australia with actors, Lady This and Lady That, socialites and so on, all donating money to the Gurindji to keep them going, and then flying them down south to meetings. The Gurindjis became the sort of traditional rebel heroes in Australia. Everybody adored these old men.

Q: On this question of the Communist Party support of Aboriginal issues in the early period: Are there any good histories or highlights you could point me to? I know from the '20s on, they were talking about a separate Aboriginal nation, so they seemed to be very deeply involved.

Langton: I don't think so. What you always had was Aboriginal people going to whomever would help. You are talking about people who are in really dire circumstances. One of the main demands back in the '30s was for food, because people were starving. Aboriginal people didn't know who was who. One of the great supporters of the Aboriginal movement was actually a fascist! And he was interned, in the Melongwa internment camp.