Reflection for Wednesday 3rd June.

Today is the last day of the Week for Prayer for Reconciliation. This statement was produced on behalf of the Indigenous nations of Australia as an act of reconciliation and given to our government. There has, in the last 3 years, been no positive governmental response to this gracious offer of reconciliation.

THE ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART

We, gathered at the 2017 National Constitutional Convention, coming from all points of the southern sky, make this statement from the heart:

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs. This our ancestors did, according to the reckoning of our culture, from the Creation, according to the common law from ‘time immemorial’, and according to science more than 60,000 years ago.

This sovereignty is a spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or ‘mother nature’, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors. This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty. It has never been ceded or extinguished and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown.

How could it be otherwise? That peoples possessed a land for sixty millennia and this sacred link disappears from world history in merely the last two hundred years?

With substantive constitutional change and structural reform, we believe this ancient sovereignty can shine through as a fuller expression of Australia’s nationhood.

Proportionally, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are aliened from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future.

These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our
problem. *This is the torment of our powerlessness.*

We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a *rightful place* in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution.

Makarrata is the culmination of our agenda: the *coming together after a struggle*. It captures our aspirations for a fair and truthful relationship with the people of Australia and a better future for our children based on justice and self-determination.

We seek a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making between governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history.

In 1967 we were counted, in 2017 we seek to be heard. We leave base camp and start our trek across this vast country. We invite you to walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.

[https://youtu.be/NrcUKgP_sks](https://youtu.be/NrcUKgP_sks)

**Prayer: The Dawn is at Hand**

Dark brothers, first Australian race,  
Soon you will take your rightful place  
In the brotherhood long waited for,  
Fringe-dwellers no more.  
Sore, sore the tears you shed  
When hope seemed folly and justice dead.  
Was the long night weary? Look up, dark band,  
The dawn is at hand.

Go forward proudly and unafraid  
To your birthright all too long delayed,  
For soon now the shame of the past  
Will be over at last.

You will be welcomed mateship-wise  
In industry and in enterprise;
No profession will bar the door,  
Fringe-dwellers no more.

Dark and white upon common ground  
In club and office and social round,  
Yours the feel of a friendly land,  
The grip of the hand.

Sharing the same equality  
In college and university,  
All ambitions of hand or brain.  
Yours to attain.

For ban and bias will soon be gone,  
The future beckons you bravely on  
To art and letters and nation lore,  
Fringe-dwellers no more.  
_Oodgeroo of the Noonucal Tribe_

Charlene Carrington. _Pentecost._  
https://youtu.be/BgESWOwJo08