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Australia: The ‘Good’ Genocide Perpetrator?

Colin Tatz

In 1949, federal parliamentarians were indignant when asked to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (hereafter, UNGC). We could not in any way be associated with ‘the unthinkable’ crime, senior members claimed, because we are ‘a moral people’ with a ‘clean record’. This essay assesses the ‘decent’ Australian democrats who, as the indelible records show, set out to kill the Aboriginal people they deemed ‘vermin’ and then later, decided to engage in a eugenicist fantasy to rid Australia of Aborigines by intermarriage or, failing that, forcibly removing their children in large numbers. The colonial frontier killings were justified as ‘dispersing kangaroos’. Child removals were done ‘in their best interests’. This essay attempts to gain an insight into the mindset of those who did commit ‘the unthinkable’ crime of genocide: killing, removal of children, and ‘causing serious bodily and mental harm’. Subsequent policies infantalised the Aboriginal and Islander population and denied them basic human rights.

Keywords: Australia, genocide, medicine, Aboriginal population

Scholars insist on their right to debate and contest views and ideas. But in some domains disputation is pointless—and genocide is one of them. It really matters not what dozens of stellar minds have proffered as better definitions of the crime; the reality is that the only actionable and judiciable definition is the one laid down as international law in the UNGC and reaffirmed, verbatim, in the Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2002. Flawed as it is, we are bound to it for a long time to come. And so in analysing some aspects of the Australian case, the only logical and sustainable formulation that can be applied is that of the UNGC and ICC.

Most symposia and written works on genocide tend to focus on causes of the phenomenon and the details of the actions against
targeted groups. Less attention is given to the nature of the perpetrators of the crime. We know much about Nazi doctors and the ‘work’ of their Turkish medical predecessors during World War I. More is being uncovered about the role of other professions in the genocidal process, and all that is known indicates malice, malevolence, bad intent, and ideological imperatives to find biological solutions to social or political ‘problem’ people like Armenians, Assyrians, Greeks, Jews, Romani, Bosniaks, Cham, Chechens, [Stalin’s] ‘enemies of the people’, Tutsi, Cambodians who wore glasses, and so on.

In the context of that pantheon, can one ever come to discuss the ‘good’ perpetrator of genocide?

Let me try to assess the mentality of Australian democrats who, variously, set out to eradicate the ‘sub-human’ Aboriginal ‘pestilence’ and later, engaged in a eugenicist fantasy to rid the continent of Aborigines by intermarriage or, failing that, forcibly removing and assimilating their children in large numbers, possibly between 35,000 and 50,000, over a long period. The known colonial frontier massacres which number around seventy—indeterminate but incremental and episodic from 1804 to 1928, with probably some 30,000 dead all told—were officially styled ‘dispersing kangaroos’ as a form of self-defence. In the case of the stolen children, from the late 1830s to the late 1980s that was done, according to the naysayers and denialists, with good intent, ‘in their best interests’.

Genocide studies—albeit a discipline only some three decades old—tends to look more at what perpetrators did rather than at why they did it. Without resorting to ‘psycho-politics’—the domain that offers psychological explanations for individual choices in political life—I address the psyches not of individuals but of groups of colonists who claimed they found the continent empty—a terra nullius—even in the presence of some 300,000 Aboriginal people, and then sought biological solutions to the ‘problem’ that they were deemed to present. Then, in a more enlightened era, they infantilised the people as wards of the state, seemingly in perpetuity, and certainly ongoing (in some instances) to this very day.

With reluctance and a fair degree of hostility, the Australian federal parliament ratified the Genocide Convention in June 1949. The reaction was less a concern about Australia being impaled on any of the five acts of genocide defined in the Convention but rather the very absurdity that Australia should in any way be connected with the odium attached to the word ‘genocide’. Senior figures in both major political parties were appalled at having to sign the document.
Liberal Party MP Archie Cameron was indignant: ‘No one in his right senses believes that the Commonwealth of Australia will be called before the bar of public opinion ... and asked to answer for any of the things which are enumerated in this convention’. Labor’s Leslie Haylen complained: ‘... the horrible crime of genocide is unthinkable in Australia ... That we detest all forms of genocide arises from the fact that we are a moral people’.5

In September 2015, Australia’s (Liberal Party) foreign minister Julie Bishop made a formal bid for Australia to be seated on the UN Human Rights Council6 for the 2018–2020 term because we have ‘a long and proud record on human rights’. (The bid was made while that very Council was reporting adversely on Australia’s treatment of asylum seekers and Aboriginal peoples.7) In several instances over the last quarter century, parliamentarians have proclaimed that Australia couldn’t possibly breach international conventions on, for example, childrens’ rights or refugees, ‘because we are Australians’. Every nation-state wants to believe that it has noble origins, that there are no blots on the national escutcheon, and that ‘decency’ is somehow an inborn rather than a hard-fought-for characteristic of the civic foundations of the state. Moral character is important, even among the worst of the genocidaires. Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler, addressing senior SS officers in Poznan in Poland on 4 October 1943, discussed the difficult task of ‘exterminating the Jewish people’.8 He claimed that what was done was done ‘in a spirit of love for our people’ and throughout ‘we have stayed decent’. That burning moral grail also underlies most of the aggressive Turkish denial of the Armenian, Assyrian, and Greek genocides: moral people don’t do such things because, ipso facto, they can’t do such things.

Any number of scholars have written about human nature and its capacity for both good and evil.9 In the genocide literature we have analyses by men like American psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton who, when assessing the Nazi doctors, presented us with ‘doubling’, that is, the side-by-side ‘Auschwitz self’ and the ‘normal self’ of the medical killer who worked hard during the day and then appreciated Mozart, roast duck, Bulgarian red wine, and Croatian plum brandy at dinner that night.10 We have to go deeper than this: in so many professions and occupations there is inevitably a ‘business self’ and a ‘personal self’ within one and the same person.

Whether it is ‘doubling’—the split personality of a Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, a capacity to embrace good and evil intent in one and the
same breath and not see the dissonances, or not wanting to see them in a conscious and wilful collective amnesia—Australia, like other nations, has a dark side. It is replete with violence and malevolence, much of it, as criminal law calls it, ‘with malice aforethought’. If it isn’t all of that, then it amounts to what American criminal law calls ‘reckless and depraved indifference’. Australian history is not what so many historians have asserted, namely, mistaken ignorance or ignorant mistakenness, haphazard encounters gone wrong, cultural misunderstandings, mere ‘human error’.

The Killing

Two aspects of genocide need more attention: how the targeted victims are perceived and how they are portrayed. We know a great deal about German visions and depictions of Jews as cholera, destructive germ plasms, bacilli, and viruses that corrupt Aryan ‘racial purity’ and the ‘natural’ racial hierarchy. Decades earlier, Turks considered Armenians an abscess amid their newly-sought Pan-Turkic, Pan-Turanean linguistic empire, as ‘microbes’ eating away at their body politic. We have before us the history of the treatment of Romani people in Europe for centuries: calumnies, accusations, exclusions as ‘a-socials’. Almost a century before the arrival of the British First Fleet in 1788, the English navigator William Dampier set the tone for what was to be the mindset of colonial Australia when he described the inhabitants of New Holland [Australia] as ‘the miserablest people in the World’. The First Fleeters saw Aborigines as stateless societies, seemingly with no organs of governance in any western sense, and therefore simply part of the natural fauna and flora. Echoing the values of philosopher John Locke, settlers perceived Aborigines as not understanding the value of labour, of failing to till the soil or herd animals, and as showing no comprehension of ownership of property and its value. Settler society regarded them as a separate species of human, sub-human, often other than human. They were ‘troublesome wild animals’ to be hunted down and shot; ‘vermin’, ‘ferae natura’, ‘hideous scandals to humanity’, ‘loathsome’, and ‘a nuisance’. Hence they were, as genocide scholar Helen Fein would phrase it, outside the universe of obligation of the powers that be. In a word, they were unworthy people.

More than a few missionaries described their potential Christians as children of darkness. In the 1870s, a Queensland clergyman wrote that ‘if our instincts are true we must loathe the Aborigines as they
are now because they are less estimable than the mongrels that prowl like them in the offal of a [cattle] station'. A Lutheran missionary defended locking youth in dormitories: it was their ‘utter rottenness in things sexual’, he declared. ‘No white man has any conception ... what depths of infamy these blacks are steeped in.’ As recently as 1979, Father Eugene Perez, an influential Catholic missionary, published his thoughts on the people of Kalumburu Mission in Western Australia. They ‘correspond to the Palaeolithic Age’, he wrote; ‘primitives’ who ‘remained dwarfed to the bare essentials of human existence’; ‘undeniably immature’, of ‘unsound ambitions’ and members of ‘a decomposed society’.

These passionate perceptions could hardly augur well for the native Australians who had been in the harsh landscape, successfully, for at least 60,000 years. Sixteen years after first settlement, around 300 Aborigines were believed massacred at Risdon Cove in Tasmania. In April 1816, a regimental officer, Captain Wallis, said of a massacre at the Appin-Cow Pasture south of Sydney that ‘twas a melancholy but necessary duty’ to kill fourteen Aboriginal men by shooting or having them run in despair over a precipice. His principal efforts, however, were to save the women and children. Thereafter such displays of regret and apology were to be rare. Levity and boasting would become the norm.

In 1832, a succinct comment appeared in a Tasmanian newspaper: settlers and their servants considered ‘men as wild beasts whom it was praiseworthy to hunt down and destroy and the women as only fit to be used for the worst of purposes’. In 1835, Henry Melville, a respected author and editor, observed that ‘the poor bewildered creatures have been treated worse than were any of the American tribes by the Spaniards’. No less a personage than Major Thomas Mitchell, surveyor-general of the colony of New South Wales, led a surveying party to the Darling and Murray Rivers in 1836: ‘Numbers were shot in swimming across the Murray, and some even after they had reached the opposite shore’. Recording his feelings some years later, Mitchell, an esteemed figure in Australian history, wrote: ‘I still look back upon that eventful day with entire satisfaction’. His ‘satisfaction’ was enhanced by naming a nearby hill as Mt Dispersion.

The flavour of the mindsets is clear enough. But it needed an ‘official’ touch. Arthur Hamilton Gordon, a former governor of several British colonies, wrote to his friend William Gladstone, the British prime minister in 1883:
The habit of regarding the natives as vermin, to be cleared off the face of the earth, has given the average Queenslander a tone of brutality and cruelty in dealing with ‘blacks’ which it is very difficult to anyone who does not know it, as I do, to realise. I have heard men of culture and refinement, of the greatest humanity and kindness to their fellow whites ... talk not only of the wholesale butchery ... but of the individual murder of natives, exactly as they would talk of a day’s sport, or having to kill some troublesome animal.  

The colony of Queensland was possibly the worst domain for genocidal massacres. So abysmal was the situation that in 1896 a special commissioner, Archibald Meston, a Scottish journalist, was appointed to investigate the Aboriginal condition.

By Meston’s time, several colonies had instituted the Native Police forces: white officers in charge of Aboriginal troops (usually not members of the clans to be ‘dealt with’) to act as a buffer between settlers and Aboriginal clans. The former feared for their livestock and, on occasion, their lives, but they were ruthless in their attitudes to ‘Blacks’. The Native Police were hardly neutral referees between the two parties: they championed the settlers in every instance of dispute.

Meston’s findings were devastating. ‘Men and women [were] hunted like wild beasts’, he wrote; ‘kidnapping of women and nameless outrages were reported’; in twenty-five years, one tribe of 3,000 ‘was down to 100 survivors’ as a result of ‘the old style of ‘dispersal’; ‘boys and girls were frequently taken from their parents ... with no chance of returning’; and ‘the Mossman [district] blacks had been exterminated’. All of which, he wrote, was ‘a reproach to our common humanity’. 

Meston’s conclusion, which was to become Australia-wide policy for the next seventy-five years, was that the ‘only way to arrest their destruction’, to ‘save any part of the race from extinction’, was to abolish the Native Police force (with no member ever again to be employed in a policing role), ban opium (‘this detestable drug’) and ensure the ‘absolute isolation’ from the whites who—‘coloured by prejudice, distorted by ignorance’—committed ‘shameful deeds’.

**Enlightened Imprisonment: ‘Causing Serious Bodily or Mental Harm’**

The widespread massacres stopped—more or less—with the enactment of the world’s first statute to protect a human group from
genocide: the *Aboriginals Protection and Prohibition of the Sale of Opium Act* of Queensland in 1897. Notwithstanding, there were several bad episodes into the late 1920s. Generally, the killings ceased, not so much because of protective legislation but with the realisation that law alone was insufficient and so it was necessary for Aboriginal reserves to be established in improbable places to make it nigh-impossible for predators to get to the people. The era of protection-segregation had begun and was legislated for in what were now Australian states after federation of the six colonies in 1901. Between 1897 and 1912, all jurisdictions had special statutes regulating Aboriginal life.\(^{24}\)

The Meston messages were enshrined in laws that were meant to protect an endangered people, but soon enough the draconian laws became instruments not to ward off genocidal predators but to protect the Aborigines ‘from themselves’. How so?

State and territory statutes effectively made all Aborigines wards of the state, placing officials as legal guardians of the entire native populations. The state took control of *all* children. Aborigines couldn’t drink alcohol or have access to it; they couldn’t marry non-Aborigines without official permission (almost never granted); they couldn’t have sex across the colour line; they couldn’t vote or join labour unions; they couldn’t sell their labour on the open market; inevitably, they worked on the reserves or on cattle stations for rations only; they couldn’t leave a reserve without permission; they couldn’t withdraw any meager monies from bank books without official permission (usually to be given by local policemen, all designated as Protectors). They couldn’t own property, make wills, or give testimony on oath in a court hearing.

In some domains, most notably Queensland,\(^{25}\) Aborigines could be imprisoned by local officials for ‘crimes’ only they could commit, such as being cheeky, refusing to work, committing adultery, leaving a reservation, absconding from a dormitory, and playing cards. ‘Troublesome’ people could be banished to places one thousand kilometers or more away, without family, often ‘during the Director’s pleasure’, which could mean for life. Uniquely in the colonial administration of conquered peoples, Christian missionaries were given the same legal powers as government officials. They too imprisoned, cajoled, bullied, abolished cultural practices, punished ‘heathenism’, withdrew rations, withheld monies earned and used them for church purposes. In sum, Aborigines in most of Australia had not one right in the panoply of what we call human rights.\(^{26}\) Life
was but bare life. They were, in reality, inmates of what Canadian sociologist Erving Goffman called ‘asylums’—places of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life’. Prisons, he wrote, serve as a clear example, provided we ‘appreciate that what is prison-like about prisons is found in institutions whose members have broken no laws’. The surprise, perhaps, is not that this was happening but was happening well into the twentieth century, nominally coming to an end with the Gough Whitlam Labor government in 1972.

What were the attitudes of those whom I consider to have caused ‘serious bodily or mental harm to members of a group’—an under-researched element of the Genocide Convention, namely Article II(b)? Benevolence, malevolence, well-intended kindness, harshness, over-zealousness? A mix of them all as I have found in some fifty-five years of field research in this domain. The very detail of the attitudes and the ensuing regulations give the lie to the notion, common enough among historians and journalists here, that these legislators and administrators were simply misguided in their goal of imposing? achieving? civility, civilisation, and Christendom for these ‘Palaeolithic creatures’.

Having worked for many years among them, do I feel that these officials and missionaries detested Aborigines in the same veil of racism and hatred that pervaded and suffused the society in which I grew up all those years ago back in South Africa? No—but there is an apt enough maxim from Lord Frederick Lugard, a noted British colonial administrator in the early twentieth century: in order to successfully administer native peoples, you must love them, and if you can’t do that, then at least like them, and if not that then, at worst, you must respect them. Australians in general lacked all three of those values.

Intent and Destruction of a People

Because the Genocide Convention was born out of the vortex of World War II, we always assume that the crucial words in the definition of the crime, ‘with intent to destroy’, both conveys and imputes malevolent intent. Can there ever be ‘good intent’? ‘Yes’, claim Australian defenders of their handling of Aboriginal affairs.

Matthew Storey, an Australian legal scholar, has argued that in the absence of specific wording that qualifies ‘with intent’, and without
any court interpretation of intent in this sense, one cannot assume that intent must be evil intent.\textsuperscript{29} There is a strong case to be made that ‘good intent’ can and does lead to Article II(e) of the Convention, namely, the forcible transfer of children from one group to another, as in the case of Australia and the residential school systems imposed on native people in Canada and the United States.

Missionaries in colony Victoria began removing Aboriginal children as early as 1839. By the turn of the twentieth century the practice was rife. Much of it was by way of saving the embarrassment of cattle and sheepmen who took Aboriginal women and wouldn’t be burdened by ‘yellafella’ children. Removals had little to do with child protection from bad parenting or sexual molestation; they were based largely on the mindset of educated officials at the time of the protection statutes. C.F. Gale, the chief protector in Western Australia, quoted one of his inspectors in his annual report:

\begin{quote}
The half-caste is intellectually above the aborigine, and it is the duty of the State that they be given a chance to lead a better and purer life than their mothers. I would not hesitate for one moment to separate any half-caste from its Aboriginal mother, no matter how frantic her momentary grief might be at the time. They soon forget their offspring.\textsuperscript{30}
\end{quote}

It was but ‘maudlin sentiment’ to leave children with their Aboriginal mothers, he added: ‘They forget their children in twenty-four hours and as a rule [were] glad to be rid of them’.\textsuperscript{31}

In the shadows of the Holocaust, one has to ponder the attitudes of such men. Is it learned behaviour or an instinctual disregard and disdain for those considered different? So different, so ‘Other’ as to be beyond the human universe of sensitivity and emotion?

Removals became standard, with so-called ‘assimilation homes’ purpose-built across the nation. There is no accurate figure of the number of what are now commonly known as the Stolen Generations. Historian Peter Read who first used that terminology, published a revelatory essay in 1981,\textsuperscript{32} producing evidence of the forms used when children were institutionalised. In the column headed Reason for Removal, the regular wording was ‘For being Aboriginal’. This brings to mind a theme of genocide in history: victims are victims not because of what they do, or believe, or practise, but simply because they are. With that mindset, there is no need of Lifton’s ‘doubling’ to explain, or explain away, the perpetrators’ actions.

Eugenics had well and truly reached Australia’s shores. Several of
the key state bureaucrats—Charles Gale and Dr Walter Roth early in the century and later, in the 1930s, Auber Octavius Neville in Western Australia, John William Bleakley in Queensland, Dr Cecil Cook in the Northern Territory, and William Penhall in South Australia—were educated men and were doubtless aware of the eugenicist principles prevalent and prominent in Europe and the United States.\textsuperscript{33}

Ultimately, their ideas were consummated at a national summit in Canberra in 1937: ‘The destiny of the natives of Aboriginal origin, but not of full blood, lies in their ultimate absorption by the people of the Commonwealth and it is therefore recommended that all efforts shall be directed to this end’.\textsuperscript{34}

These men never defined absorption, but the kernel of their ideas was physical distance from tribal kin and, hopefully, disappearance of colour and ethnicity. These bureaucrats were part of a long western tradition which had contended that some lives were more valuable, more worthy, than others. They were hardly the pioneers of what came to be called ‘racial hygiene’ in the early twentieth century, but their ideas go to the heart of genocidal thought and action, namely, resorting to biological solutions to social (and racial) problems.\textsuperscript{35}

Neville presented a three-point biological plan. First, keep ‘full-bloods’ in inviolable reserves where they were destined to die out. Second, take all ‘half-castes’ away from their mothers. Third, control marriages so that ‘pleasant, placid, complacent, strikingly attractive, auburn-haired and rosy-freckled’ quarter- and half-blood Aboriginal maidens would marry into the white community.\textsuperscript{36} In doing so, it would be possible to ‘eventually forget that there were ever any Aborigines in Australia’.\textsuperscript{37}

Here, indeed, was the quintessence of Australian genocidal intent: the erasure of the Aboriginal presence, one way or another. Dr Cecil Bryan told the 1934–1935 Moseley Royal Commission into the condition and treatment of Western Australian Aborigines: ‘I am come to the Commission to ask that steps be taken to breed out the half-caste, not in a moment, but in a few generations, and not by force but by science. I mean the application of the principle of the Mendelian law.’\textsuperscript{38}

What is clear is that there was premeditation, aforethought, about these ‘solutions’. Nothing in either the physical killing era, or the protection-segregation regime, or the child removal period—which ended, effectively, with the closure of the last assimilation home at Bomaderry in New South Wales in 1988—could be construed then, or now, as innocence or ignorance, let alone fortuitous and
unforeseeable happenstance.

A number of conclusions emerge when one looks at the perpetration of genocidal acts in an unlikely domain as this one Down Under. First, the very genocidal idea of ‘erasing’ forever a particularly ‘problematic’ minority by resort to biological solutions is not confined to despotic, homicidal regimes as in Turkey between 1915 and 1923 and Germany between 1933 and 1945. It occurred in a constitutional democracy, wedded to the rule of law, a leader in social welfare policies at the start of the twentieth century, the home of mateship and of what is commonly called ‘the land of the fair go’. Second, such ‘solutions’ don’t have to be in short timeframes but can operate over decades—in this case from roughly 1804 to 1928. Third, these events occurred not only during the nation’s formative years—a common enough gestation period when genocide occurs—but during the solid enough colonial era and following federation in 1901. Fourth, it is the intent and the physical implementation that constitute the essence of the crime of genocide, not the motivation. Good intent, as in the case of stolen children, is not an exculpation or a defense. Being ‘a moral people’ does not equate with the actions of a people being cruel even if only to be kind.

The Australian perpetrators were hardly akin to Lifton’s Auschwitz ‘doublers’. But they certainly were exhibitors of what George Orwell—in his 1949 dystopian novel Nineteen Eighty-Four—called ‘double-think’, that is, the capacity to hold two contradictory ideas or attitudes simultaneously and not feel or see the dissonance between them. How else can a moral, Christian, decent people feel noble while wielding guns, whips, bottles of poison?

It took until 1992 for an Australian leader to admit as much. Labor’s prime minister Paul Keating gave what is known as the ‘Redfern address’, in an inner Sydney suburb of that name: he admitted the taking of their traditional lands, the murders, disposessions, the alcohol, diseases, the taking of children from their mothers, the smashing of traditional life and their exclusion from society and its benefits. It took another sixteen years before another Labor prime minister, Kevin Rudd, made a dramatic national apology in federal parliament for the removal of children. While the nation virtually stood still for those dramatic televised hours, there was to be a serious enough rider to this piece of theatre: apologies, yes; regrets or remorse, perhaps; reparations, no. The money, the government intoned, could be ‘better spent elsewhere’.
Between those two declarations, the conservative Liberal Party leadership deplored a Labor-instigated official enquiry into the forcible removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, refused initially to make any submissions to the hearings, then did so with ungracious reluctance, to the effect that removing children in that way was no different to sending kids to boarding school. Apart from which, they claimed it was ‘in their best interests’.

Denialism has been a relatively quiet affair, largely in the hands of a small coterie of newspaper and radio journalists and a handful of academics. Triumphant when several civil suits brought by removed children failed, albeit on technicalities rather than the substantive issue of removal, this group fell silent when in 2007 the South Australian Supreme Court ruled that (the late) Bruce Trevorrow be awarded the sum of A$775,000 for his unlawful removal.

Probing the psyches of this group is of little profit. What they have said and written is, however, consistent with the earlier parliamentary statements of 1949: that a noble nation with not a blemish on the escutcheon must fight to keep its moral and human rights record intact. The odd killing, dispossession, and land grab may be conceded but the story that resonated across the nation, the one about stealing children, simply cannot be countenanced because it is simply unthinkable.

Today the Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander population has reached close to 700,000 people, about 2.9 percent of the nation. They have survived the conscious efforts to ‘erase their presence’ from the landscape. Some 72 percent now live in urban domains. Restrictive legislation has been abolished, the old reserves on which government settlements and Christian missions operated are no more. They are now said to be in a policy era of ‘autonomy’. Certainly there is now a realm in which great artistic, cultural, literary, and sporting achievement is evident. Federal and state governments push strongly for ‘closing-the-gap’ programs, mostly to little avail, especially when it comes to health, housing, and education. Ill-health is widespread; life expectancy rates are among the lowest of any first-world country; juvenile suicide rates are amongst the highest in the world, a phenomenon that began in the 1960s; incarceration rates, especially for juveniles, are probably the highest on the planet and now, in 2016, the subject of a royal commission into the (filmed) mistreatment of inmates. This is, advertently or inadvertently, child removal by another process, on a very large scale.

In many remote and rural population centers, Aborigines
are subject to the federal government’s ‘intervention’ strategy, inaugurated in 2007. This involves, *inter alia*, control of all Aboriginal finances (almost entirely from social service benefits), prohibition of liquor purchases, credit cards that bar purchase of alcohol and other specified goods, control of movement on Aboriginal-held lands, ‘mutual responsibility’ agreements that, for example, bargain access to certain facilities in exchange for school attendance, and toothbrushing regimens in order to obtain a petrol bowser. In 1896 Archibald Meston insisted on placing Aborigines in quarantine to protect them from predators. Some 120 years later, we, the ‘guardians’, persist with that mentality and with that kind of policy—to protect them from themselves, ‘in their best interests’.


2 Colin Tatz, “Seldom Asked, Seldom Answered: II(b) or Not II(b)?”, *Genocide Studies International*, forthcoming.


4 To paraphrase Article 2 of the Convention, genocide is committed through any of the following acts: (a) Physical killing; (b) causing serious bodily or mental harm; (c) creating conditions of life likely to cause destruction of a people; (d) coerced sterilisation; (e) forcible child removal.


6 A Council which includes such nations as Argentine, Bangladesh, China, Congo, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Paraguay, the Philippines, Qatar, Russia, and Saudi Arabia.

7 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 November 2015.


14 Catherine deMayo, “Splendidly Secluded: The Location of Aboriginal Mission Sites in Australia” (Master of Arts thesis, Politics Department, Macquarie University, Sydney, 1990), 97.
17 Colonial Times and Tasmanian, June 1832, cited in Tatz, Genocide in Australia, 61.
18 Bruce Elder, Blood on the Wattle, 29.
19 Robert Reece, Aborigines and Colonists: Aborigines and Colonial Society in New South Wales in the 1830s and 1840s (Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1974), 120.
21 Raymond Evans, et al., Race Relations in Colonial Queensland, 78.
23 Ibid.
26 Discussed in detail in Colin Tatz, Genocide in Australia.
28 Tatz, “Seldom Asked”.
29 Storey.
31 Haebich, 233.
36 This was a variation of the ‘normal’ eugenics dictate that mixed-race marriages lead to human degeneration and must be avoided at all costs.
38 Haebich, 320.
41 Kevin Rudd, House of Representatives, Apology to Australia’s Indigenous People, 13 February 2008: 167–73.
43 Senator John Herron, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, federal government submission to Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee, Inquiry into the Stolen Generation, March 2000.