



NETWORK MESSAGE

Tuesday, January 8, 2013

Dear LALCs,

In response to an email sent to many LALC addresses yesterday (below) regarding a proposed 'protest' at the NSWALC Parramatta offices on January 25 2013.

Firstly, I'd like to acknowledge Mr. Moran's obvious passion for his people, their culture and homelands. He, like every Aboriginal person involved in Aboriginal Affairs in this country is involved and engaged for one reason - to advance the station of Aboriginal people in NSW and across this country.

That's why we're all here. That's the sole aim of the NSW Aboriginal Land Council.

NSWALC and the broader land rights network is far from a 'gubba organisation' as Mr. Moran suggests. Neither NSWALC nor the LALCs conduct business that way and we never have. To suggest that those within the land rights network have spent their working lives to the detriment of their own people is outrageous, provocative and highly offensive.

Indeed the email in question is confusing, misleading, factually incorrect and defamatory. It requires a response.

In terms of consultation, we can agree on a couple of things.

The way LALC's and the broader network became informed about NSWALC intentions wasn't ideal. I must and have conceded that. We have kept the network informed but simply, at this stage we have nothing else to say, the processes for engagement in this sector are slow and highly regulated, we have no deals or inside knowledge - Government

has explicitly told us that that we will not get any favours or be treated differently from any other applicant.

NSWALC has since done everything in its power to inform the network with facts at every available opportunity. We've done that. But what we all need to remember is, we've yet to be granted any right to do anything in the sector, so it difficult to sit down and discuss something that might not even take place.

We've not 'sold out' Aboriginal culture in this state either. That's absolute nonsense. The preservation and promotion of our culture is still the highest priority of NSWALC.

People in this organisation fight tooth and nail every day for the better protection of our heritage. And we grapple with government every second of every day to preserve and protect our unique cultures. That will never change and its highly offensive to those people who dedicate their lives to this work.

The hypocrisy of 'pursuing mining royalties' from non-Aboriginal miners, mining Aboriginal land is breathtaking. By that logic it's seemingly moral to benefit from non-Aboriginal mining on Aboriginal land but its 'rape' when Aboriginal people decide to benefit directly themselves?

Land rights are not 'under threat from within' and never will be. NSWALC's core business has and always will be land rights. Our land is sacred, but not to Australia. To Australians, our lands equate to wealth. Wealth we should be investing in our own grandchildren and their children.

To suggest NSWALC 'don't value culture' is also garbage. By investigating the possibilities of mining, we potentially will have the resources to strengthen and bolster our culture so it can never be denied to those that come after us, like it was denied to so many of my own generation.

As you'd all be aware, land rights in this state has returned just 0.1 percent of the NSW land mass back to its original custodians and its taken a staggering 30 years to get to this point.

Despite what the mainstream media report in the papers, Aboriginal people in NSW have not taken back massive tracts of their forefathers land. We've managed to wrestle back a microscopic percentage of what was always ours. And it's not enough.

Put simply, the needs and aspiration of our young people are hugely expensive. We're marching double time trying to mend 200 years of government neglect simply to be competitive in mainstream Australia.

We must and we will keep our focus on land rights, but we have to be smart enough to think outside the box.

Its time to think big, instead of kowtowing to government, cap in hand, begging for what-ever is deemed "appropriate".

It's time we take the whole cake and share it amongst black hands without any shame. It is time we stepped up and took our destiny our future into our own hands,.

The wealth of this country is built upon the theft of Aboriginal land. It was taken from them by force and it's made this country rich. And it's the mainstream mining industry that's benefitted substantially from this criminal act.

These miners won't stop. Governments won't stop them, jumping up and down and protesting won't stop them and at 2% percent of the Australian population, it's very safe to say Aboriginal people won't stop mining on Aboriginal land. There's too much money at stake.

This isn't about NSWALC's so-called 'greed'. It isn't about a so-called 'Dookin mob' of Councillors. This is about Aboriginal leaders having the courage to stand tall and look after their people for generations to come.

And it's not at the expense of our lands either. Whether our old people like it or not, mining, in all its shapes and forms is a reality – it has been for many generations.

We're all proof that Aboriginal people are survivors. We've watched on for the last 200 years as our country was stolen, our various cultures and languages smashed and our human rights striped back to almost nothing.

We can't afford to sit back for another 200 years, because nothing will change unless we make it change. We'll continue to be walked on and over if we let it happen.

I can tell you, I'm sick of going to Aboriginal funerals.

I'm sick of reading report after report about our children's poor health and education outcomes.

I'm sick of being the butt of 'Aussie' jokes about Aboriginal poverty.

I'm sick of holding out for government promises only to see them dashed and left unaddressed.

I'm sick of seeing the horrendous living conditions in many of our own missions and reserves.

Mining is potentially a viable option for Aboriginal people to reverse all of the above and to finally take back our place as the first peoples of this land...our land. We must have our eyes open to this potential.

The foundation of land rights is to empower and liberate the Aboriginal peoples of NSW, so its time we started to take care of our own business.

We've protested before, we've screamed and we shouted, but if we choose to wait for government to invest in our communities and in our children, we'll be waiting another 200 years. Of that I am certain.

The two gentleman who are advocating this call for a "protest, Mr. Moran has not attempted to discuss these matters at all, and Mr. Kennedy has repeatedly refused to meet, just for the record.

In closing I would encourage all to engage in this debate, we need to have the conversation, we have the right to discuss and investigate these opportunities, others have the right to have their say, but that right does not extend to preventing the conversation.

Chairman, Stephen Ryan
CEO, Geoff Scott

*Subject: Fwd: Protest NSWALC abandoning Culture & Heritage for Mining
25/1/13*

Dear LALC's,

Have attached flyer have done up to forward on and call mob together to protest 10am 25/1/13 at NSW ALC 33 Argyle Street Parramatta as support to Uncle Dootch Kennedy in Yuin country & Illawarra in addressing NSWALC move into Mining exposed by Media in 2012.

The flyer is being circulated through Media outlets from today and would appreciate if could pass it on to as far and wide as possible, given NSW Land Rights becoming mining operator affects us all and we have had no consultation or respect shown to date to local Aboriginal people, communities and 1st Nations ITS TIME TO STAND UP FOR OUR RIGHTS.

As a Biripai T(D)hungutti Goori whose elders fought for establishment of our NSW Land rights and former Regional Rep and CEO, I truly believe my old people would/will punish me if don't try to stop this Dookin mob from ruining our Land Rights & turning it into a cultureless Gubba organisation, When our NSWALC CEO uses Commercial reasons as excuse for not consulting Locals or Communities about using our Land Rights resources to commence mining exploration when questioned why, I believe its time we must stand up and not allow no cultureless conservative leadership be it Aboriginal or Non

Aboriginal to sell out our culture.

For NSWALC to move into mining operations rather than pursuing mining royalties or advocating for LALC's whom are affected by Mining, has really highlighted time to deal with reality that Land Rights is under great threat from within, our mob who don't value our Culture or Country and have no leadership vision or strategy to address the ongoing denial of our Human Rights other than to rape Mother Earth to gain \$\$\$ like Gubba's have at the expense of our identity and future- Lets face its up to us to ensure that we never get NSWALC to advise once our land rivers been poisoned how are we goign to live anymore ?and where?

I personally belive that given current NSWALC councillors are elected by less than couple of hundred people in total to get on and voting across the entire state at last elections was/is less than 50% of our population can w afford to sit back and let such people claim a mandate to use our Land Rights resources to start mining and undermine foundation of Land Rights?

I know for a fact my old people never ever sort, wanted or approved Mining on their country, let alone do deals on activities involving someone else's county the very basis of our Culture.

Look forward to seeing all mob stand up and be counted for our Culture and Country before its to late to stop it, and showing NSWALC Culture and Country still is valued by Aboriginal people, communities and Nations in NSW in 2013.

*Yours In Unity
Nathan Moran*