

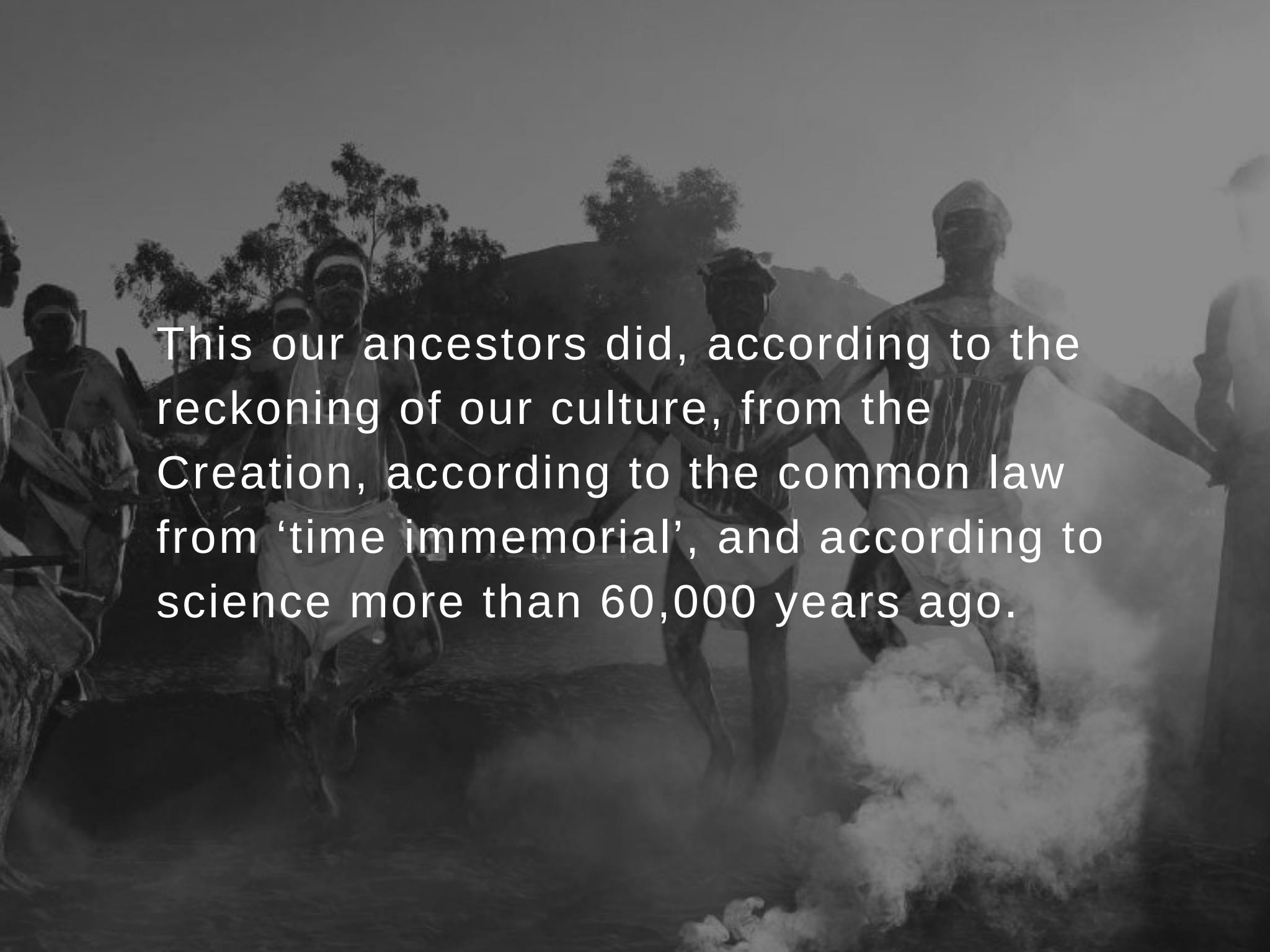
ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART

A wide-angle photograph of a large conference room. Numerous people are seated around numerous round tables, all covered with white tablecloths. The room has high ceilings with recessed lighting and large windows in the background. The people are clapping and smiling, suggesting a group photo or a celebratory moment.

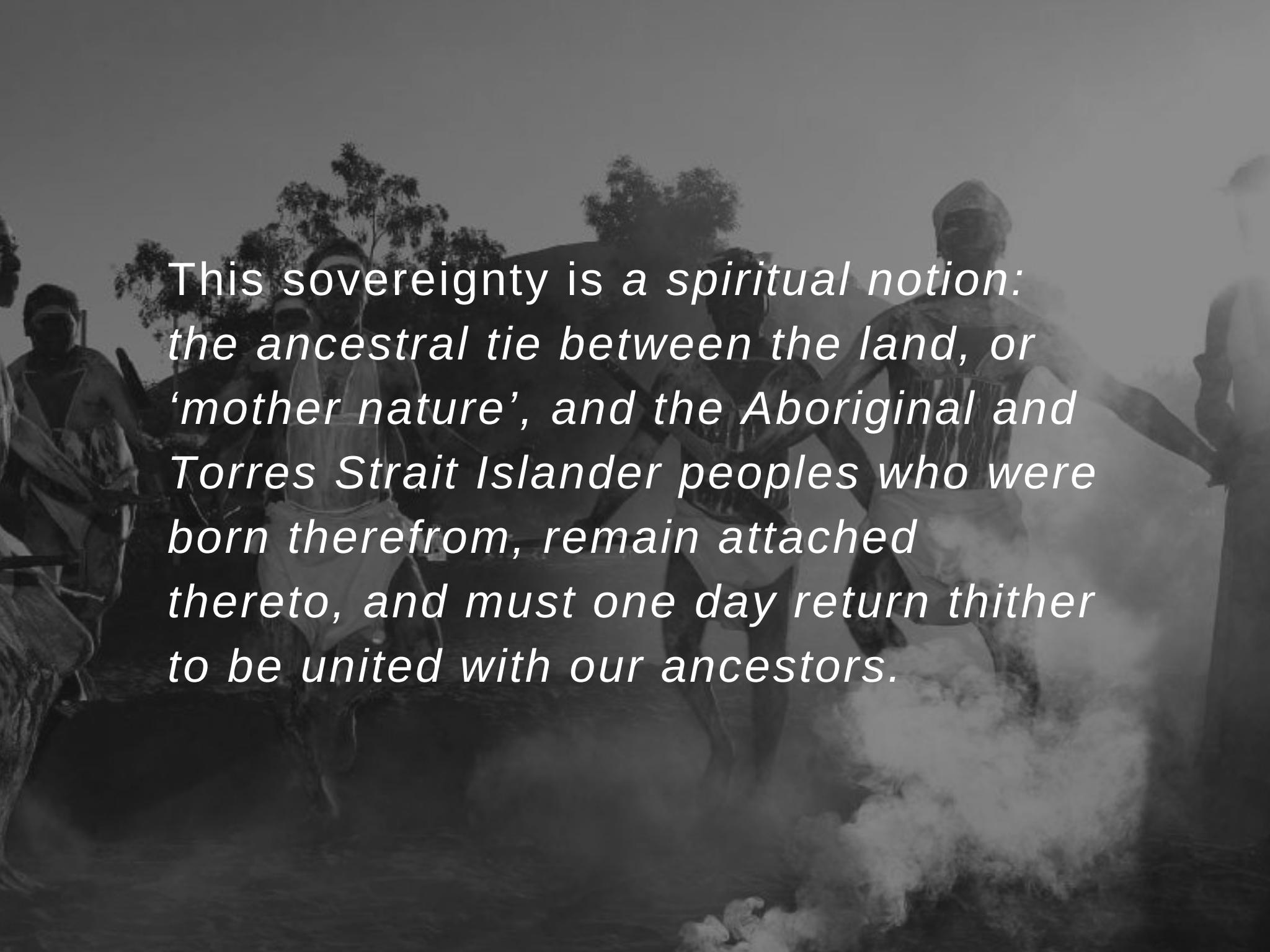
We, gathered at the 2017 National Constitutional Convention, coming from all points of the southern sky, make this statement from the heart:



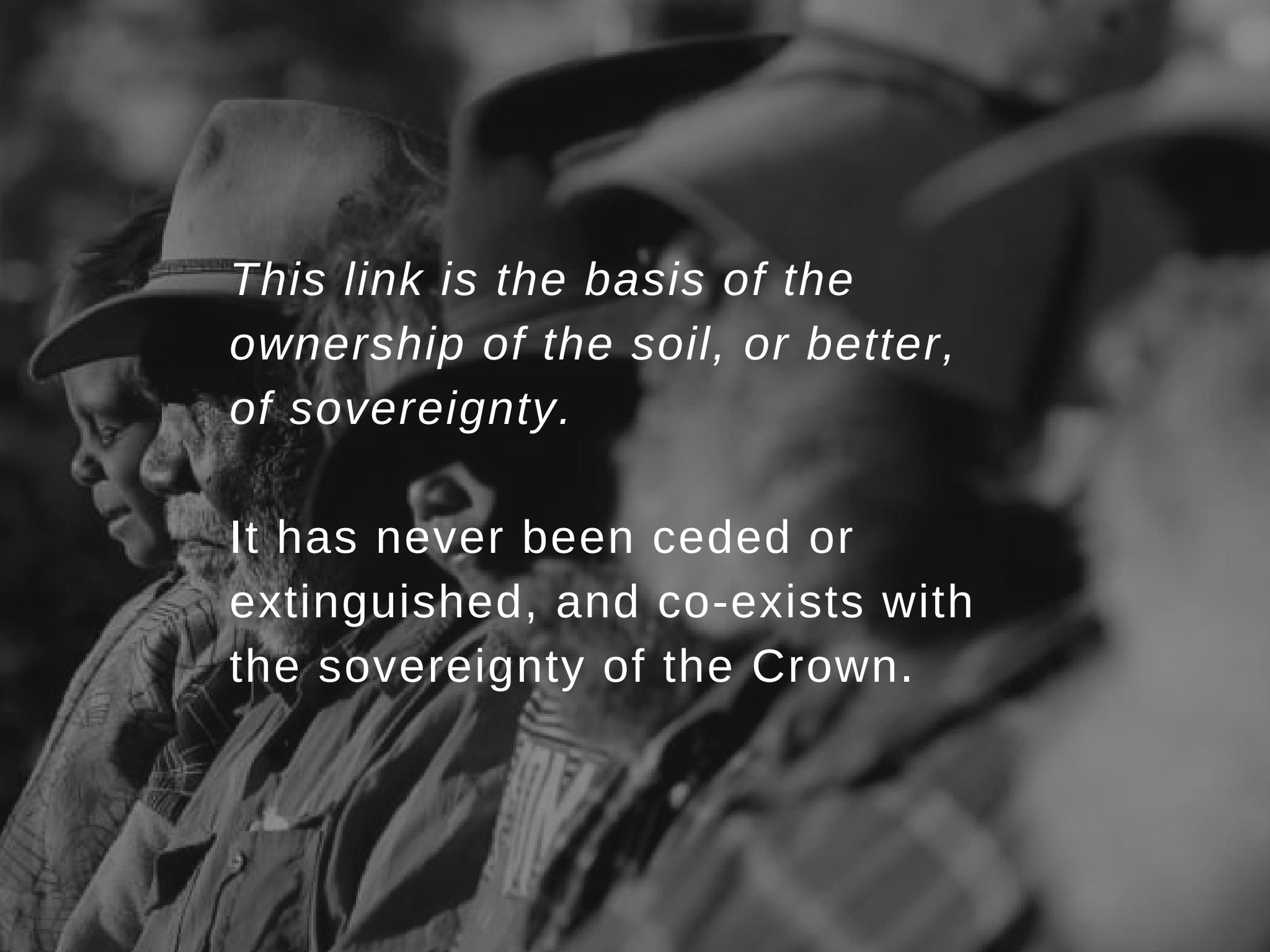
Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs.



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.

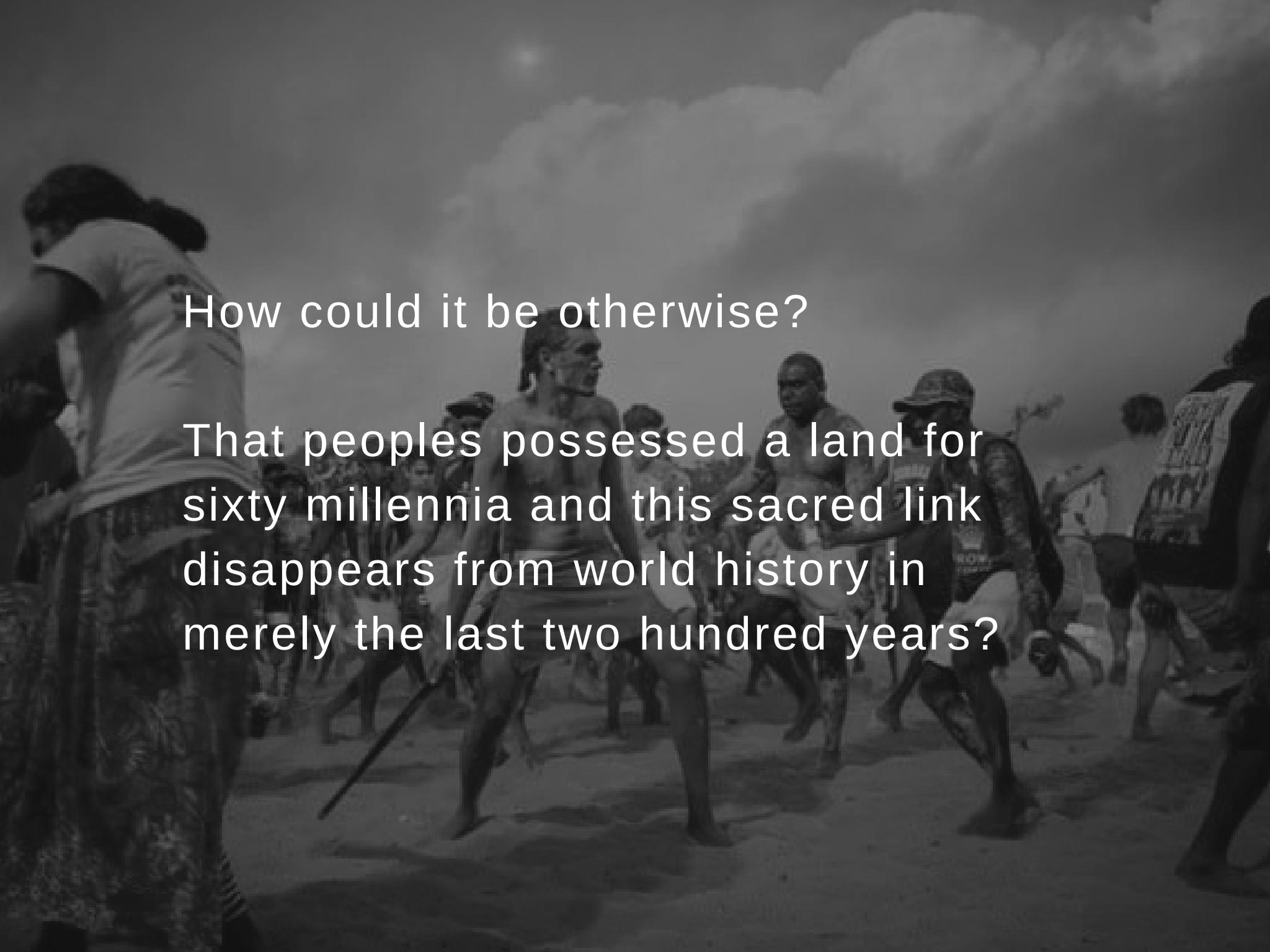


*This sovereignty is a spiritual notion:
the ancestral tie between the land, or
'mother nature', and the Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander peoples who were
born therefrom, remain attached
thereto, and must one day return thither
to be united with our ancestors.*



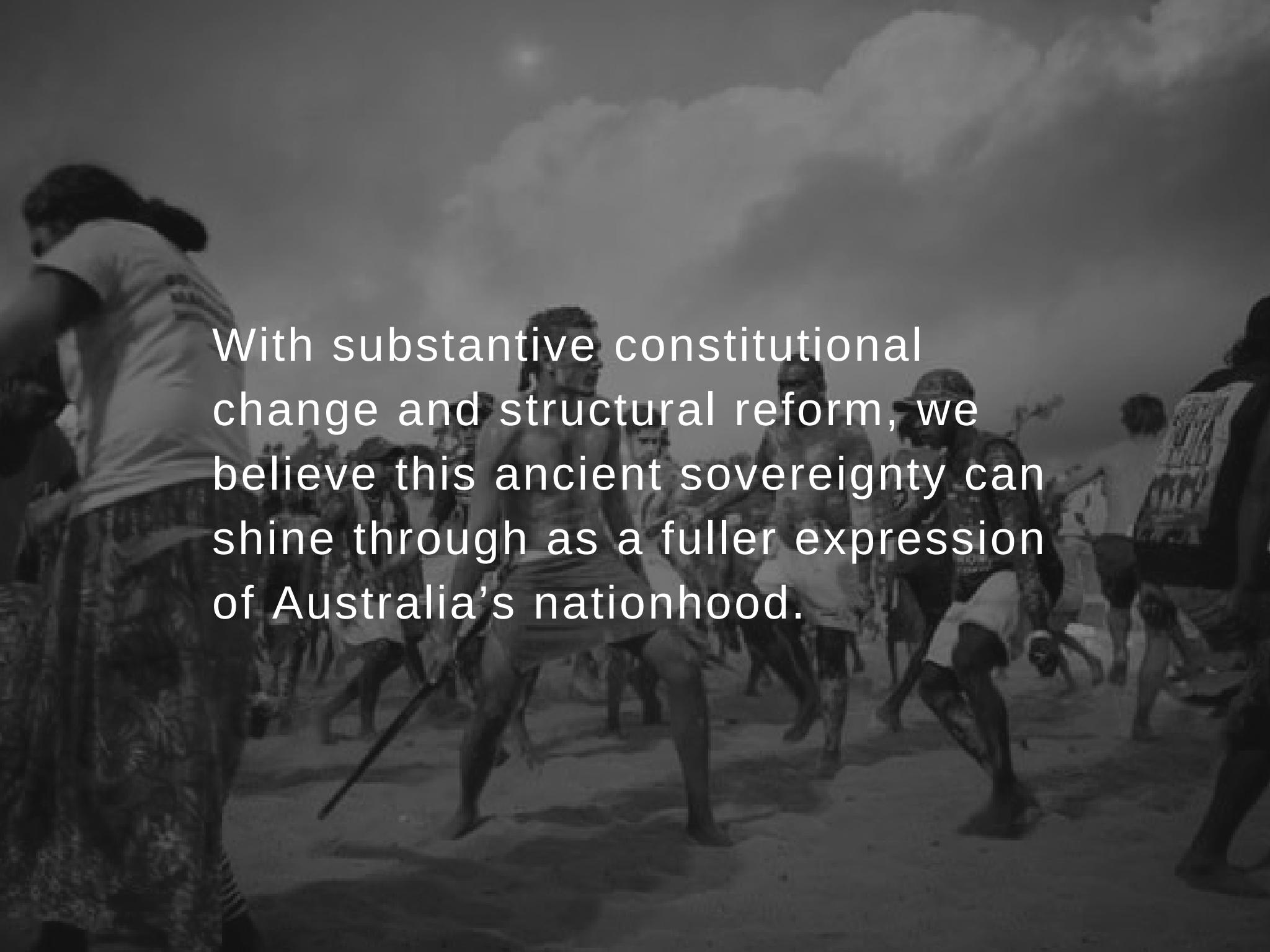
This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty.

It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown.

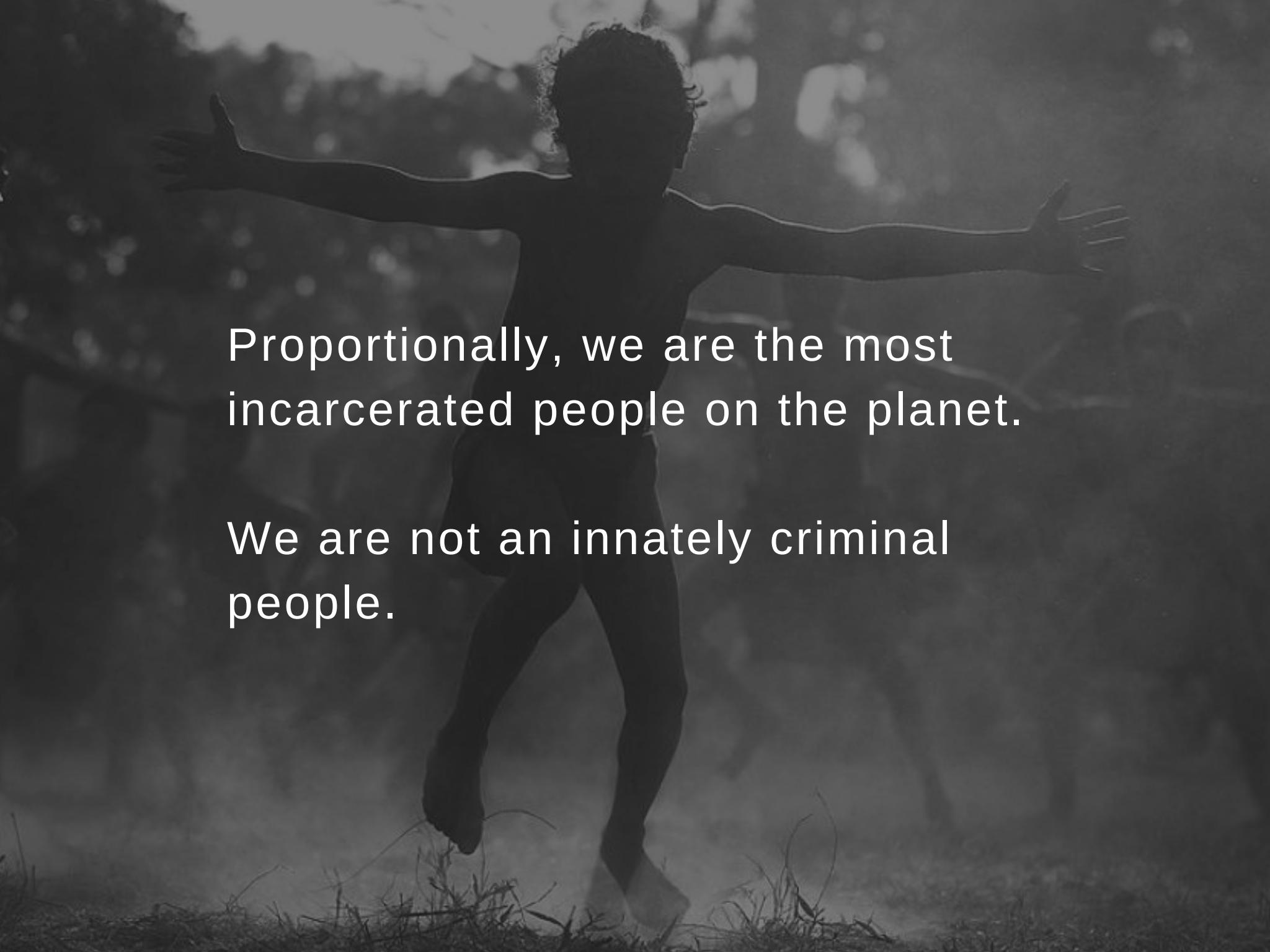


How could it be otherwise?

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.

A black and white photograph showing a person from behind, standing in a field of tall grass. The person has their arms raised straight up towards the sky. The background is a soft-focus view of more grass and possibly some trees or bushes under a cloudy sky.

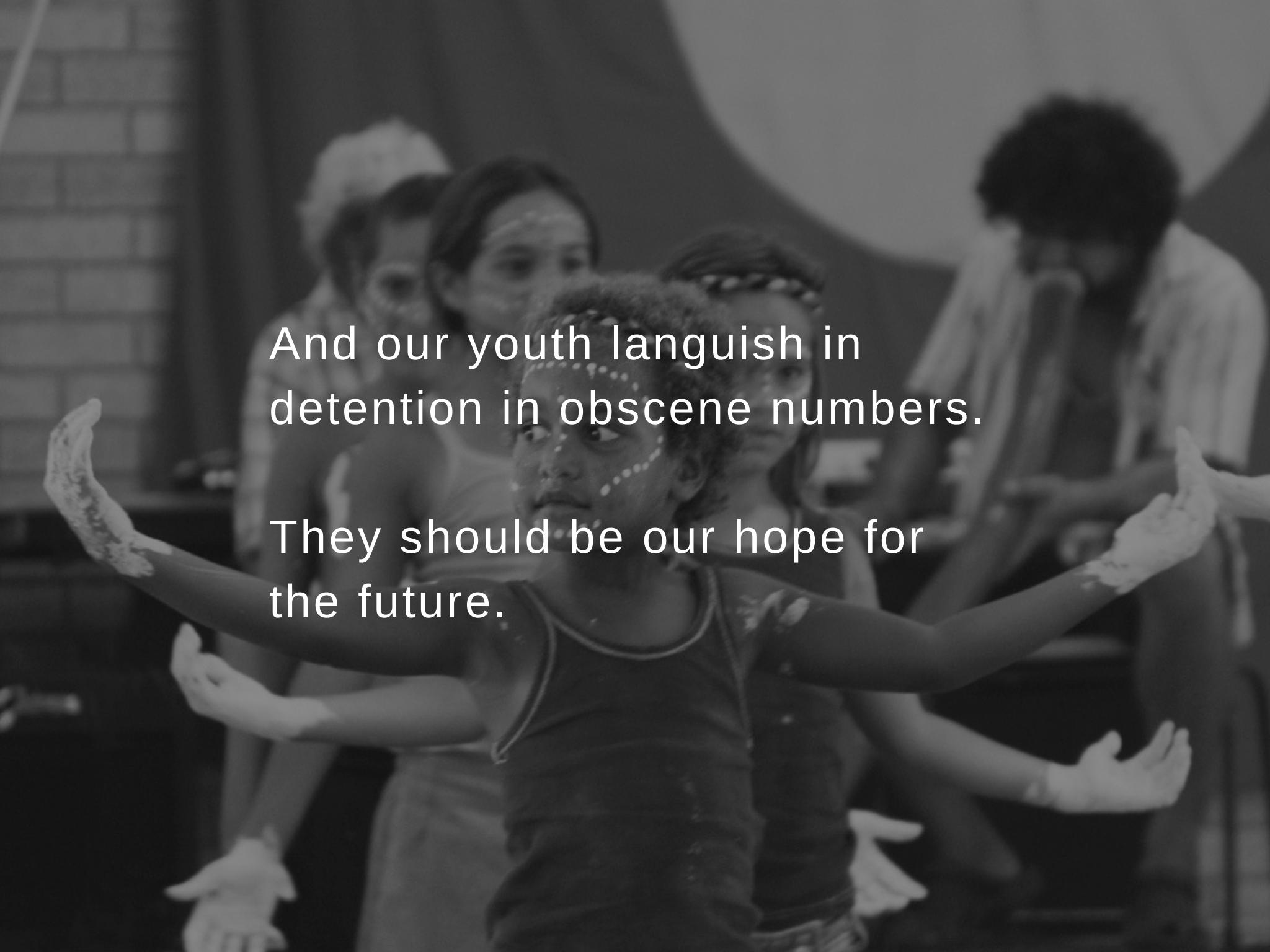
Proportionally, we are the most
incarcerated people on the planet.

We are not an innately criminal
people.



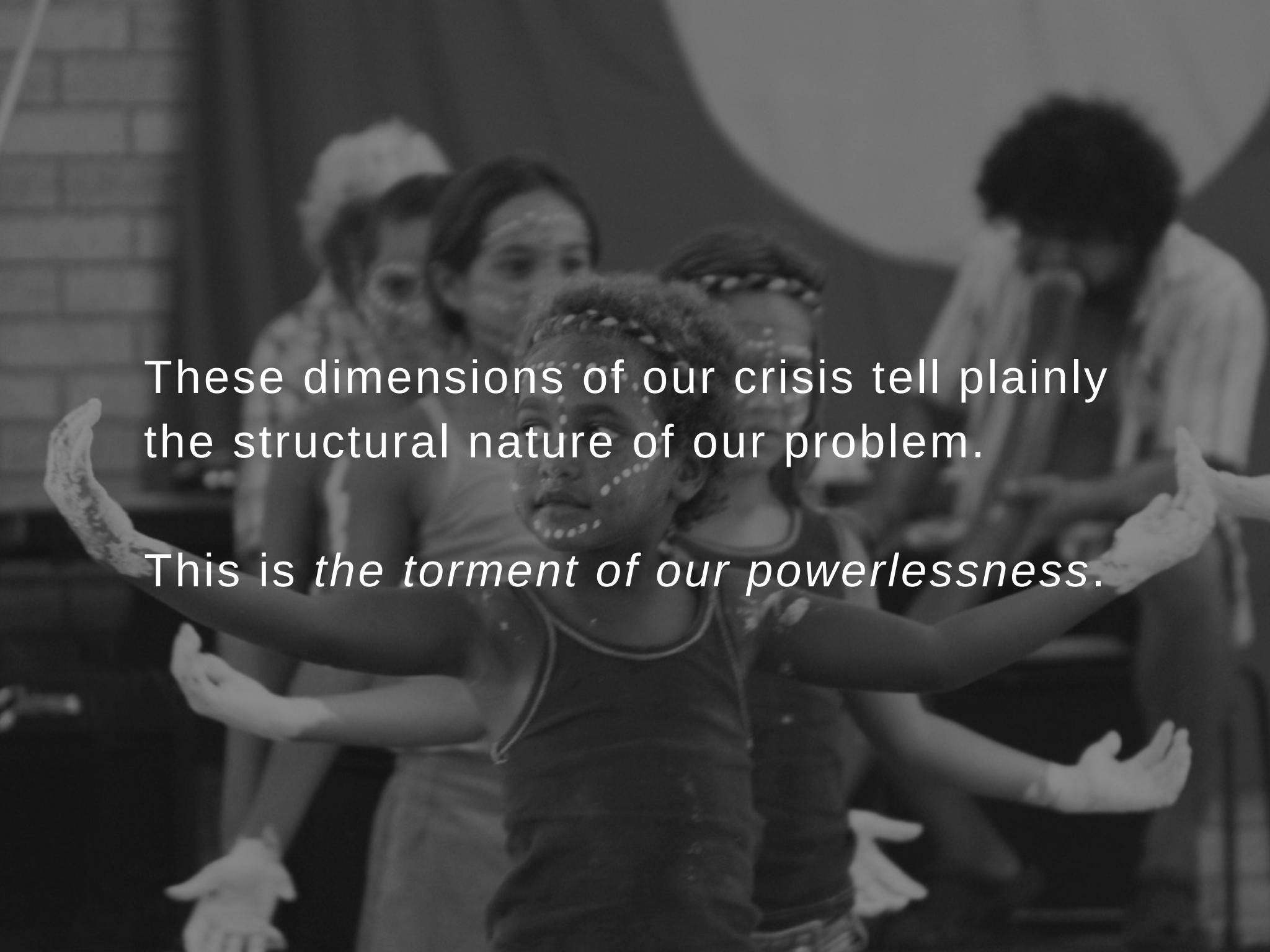
Our children are aliened from their families at unprecedented rates.

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.

A black and white photograph showing several people, mostly older women, sitting on the ground outdoors and painting large-scale Indigenous artworks on long, narrow panels. The panels feature intricate, geometric patterns. The scene is set in a sunlit, open area with trees and parked cars in the background.

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.

BANK OF NEW YORK

In 1967 we were counted, in
2017 we seek to be heard.

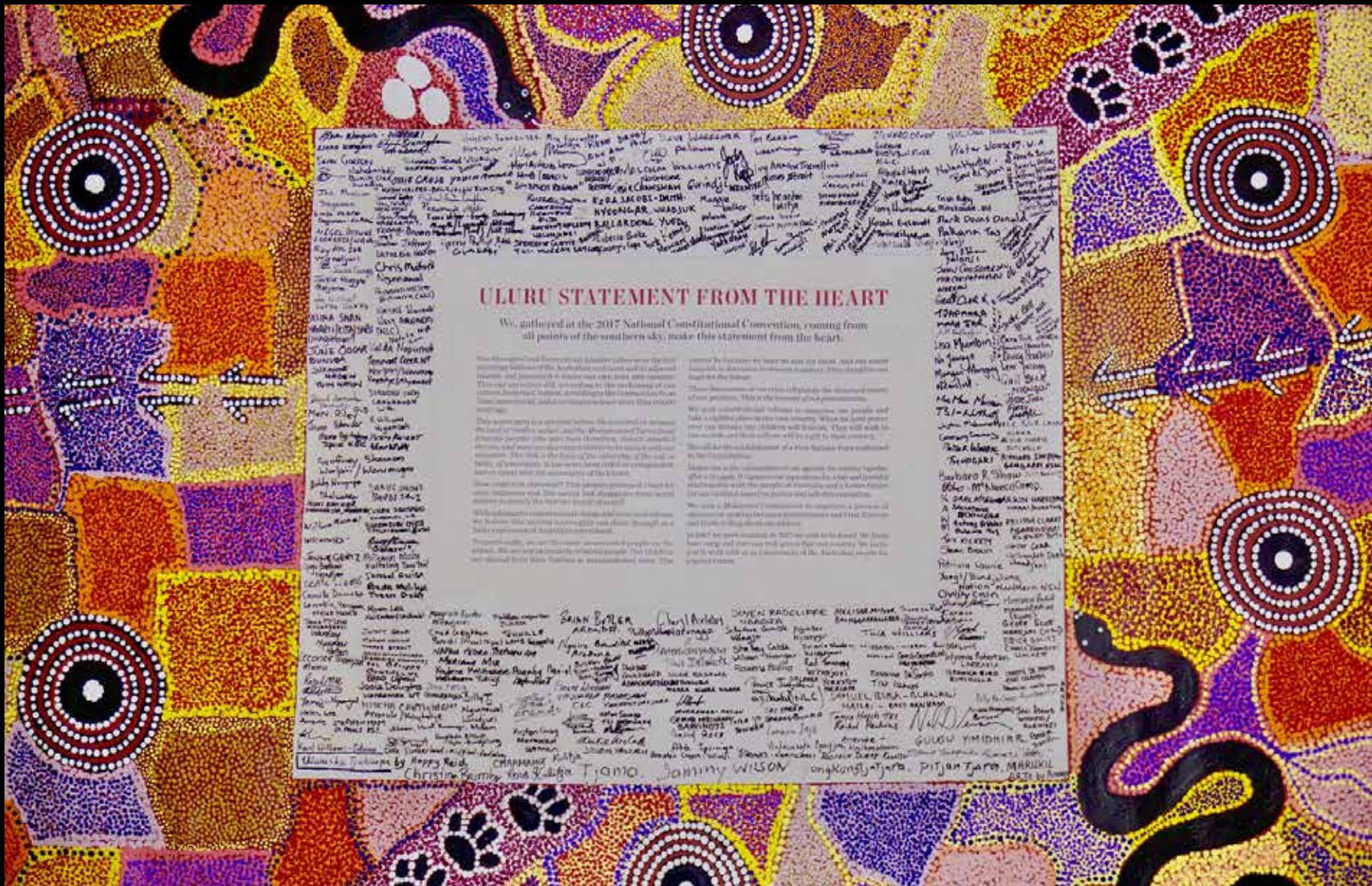
NO APARTHEID
for our
ABORIGINALS
Give them full
CITIZENSHIP
& EDUCATION



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.



A dark blue-toned aerial photograph of Australia during sunset or sunrise. The coastline is visible against the darker ocean, and the interior landmass shows various shades of brown and green. The sky above is a deep, dark blue.

DECLARATION OF AUSTRALIA AND THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE

*Whereas three stories
make Australia:*



the Ancient
Indigenous
Heritage
which is its
foundation,



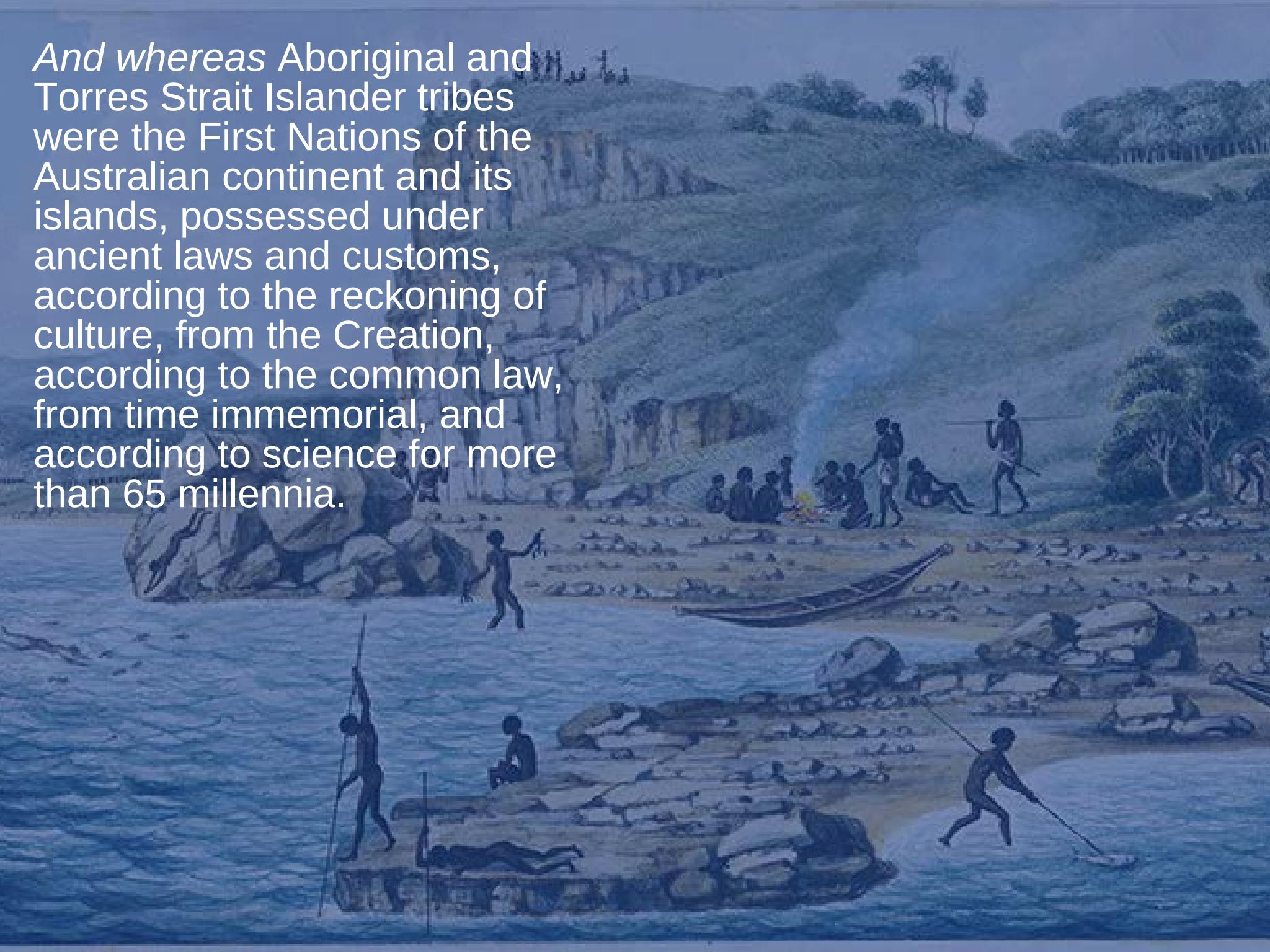
the British
Institutions
built upon it

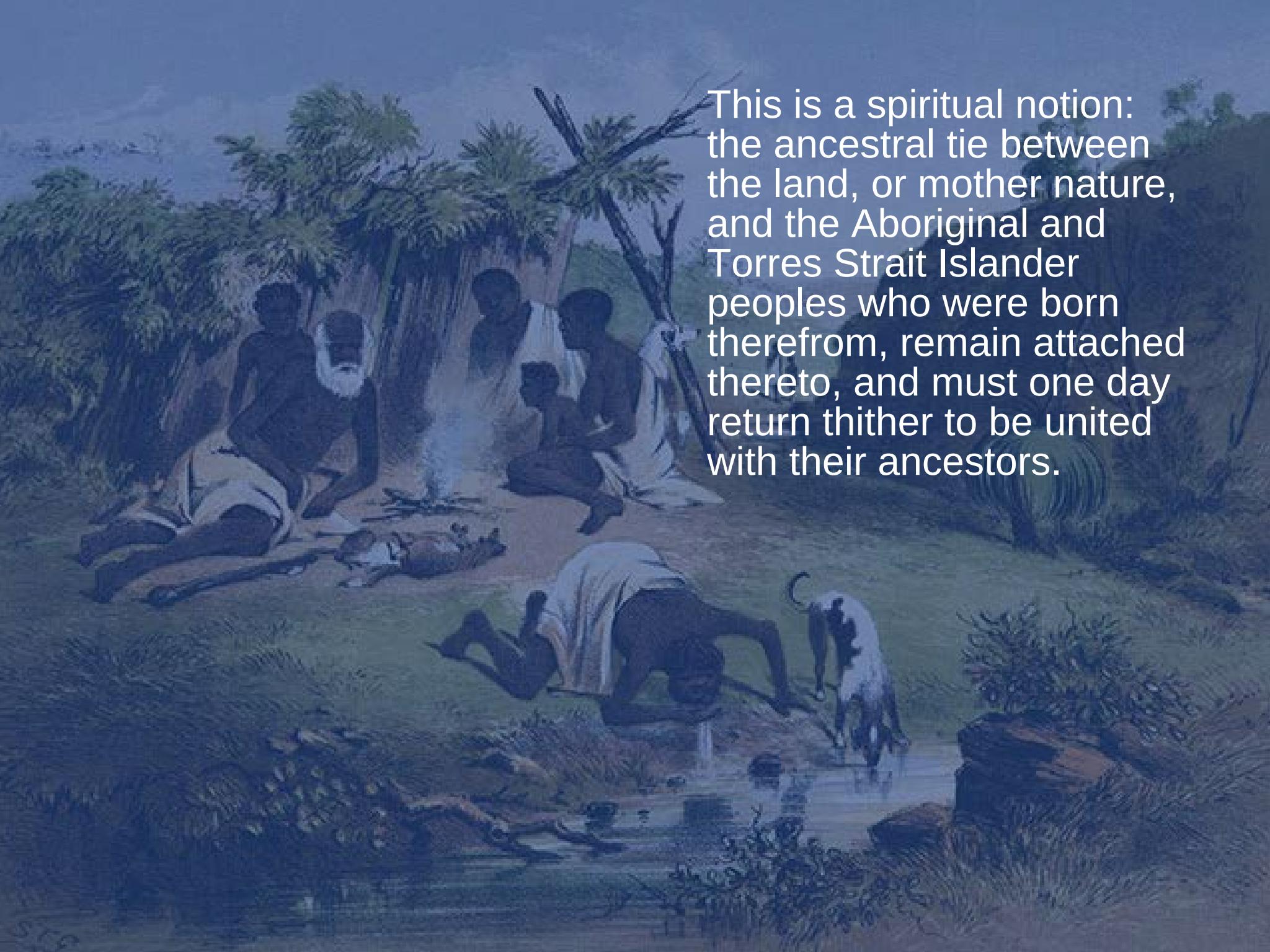


and the
adorning Gift of
Multicultural
Migration

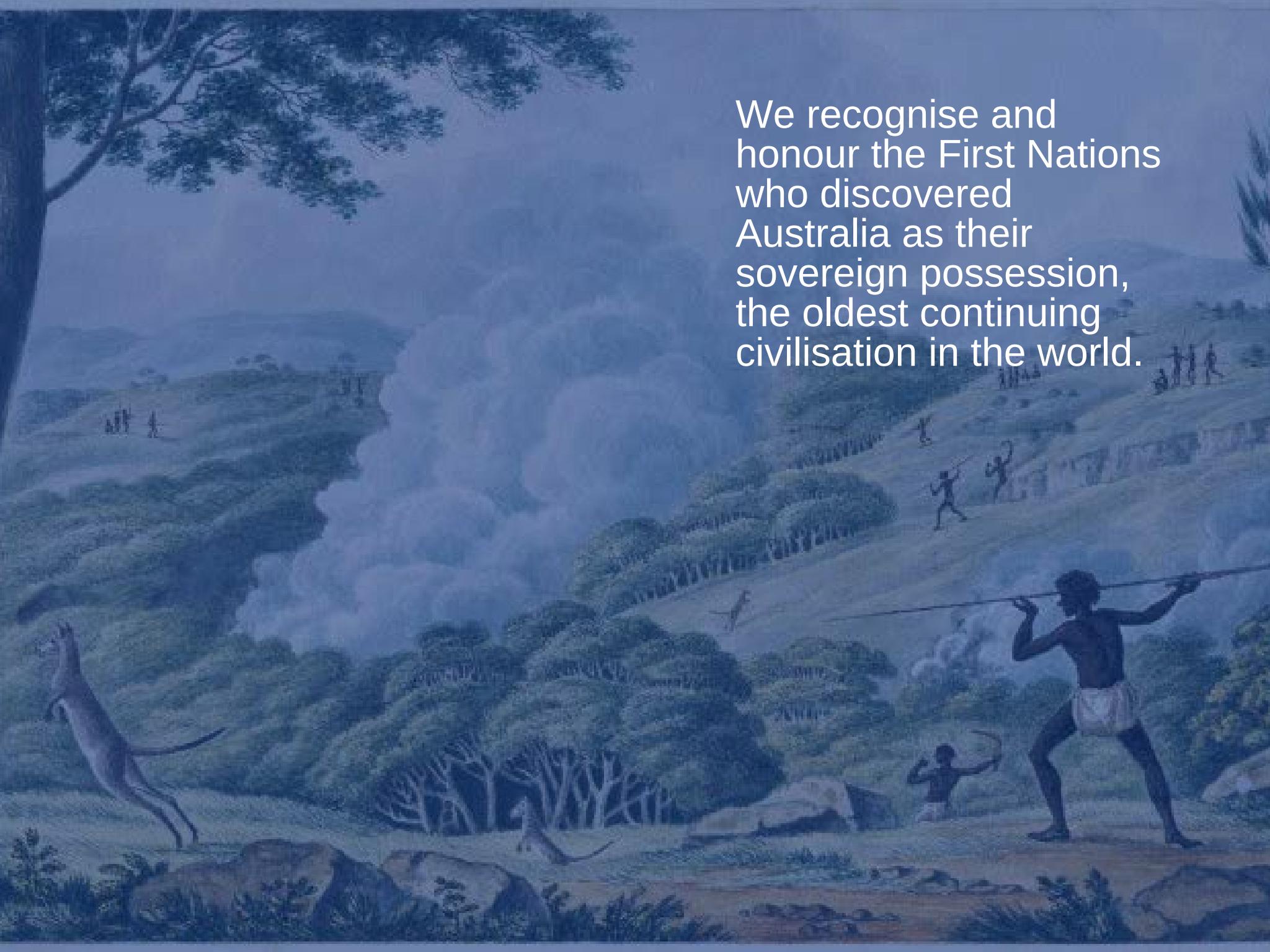


And whereas Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the First Nations of the Australian continent and its islands, possessed under ancient laws and customs, according to the reckoning of culture, from the Creation, according to the common law, from time immemorial, and according to science for more than 65 millennia.



A painting depicting a group of Aboriginal people in a natural, outdoor setting. In the foreground, a man lies on the ground, leaning against a large rock. Behind him, several other figures are seated or standing near a campfire. The scene is set among dense vegetation, including palm trees and other tropical plants. The overall atmosphere is one of a traditional gathering or ceremony.

This 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 their ancestors.

A historical painting depicting a scene of Indigenous Australian life. In the foreground, a man stands on the right, holding a long spear and looking towards a kangaroo he has just killed. Another man is crouching nearby, also with a spear. In the background, several other figures are scattered across a hillside, some appearing to be hunting. A large plume of smoke rises from a fire in the center-left of the scene, obscuring part of the landscape. The painting uses a chiaroscuro technique with a strong blue-grey wash over the entire composition.

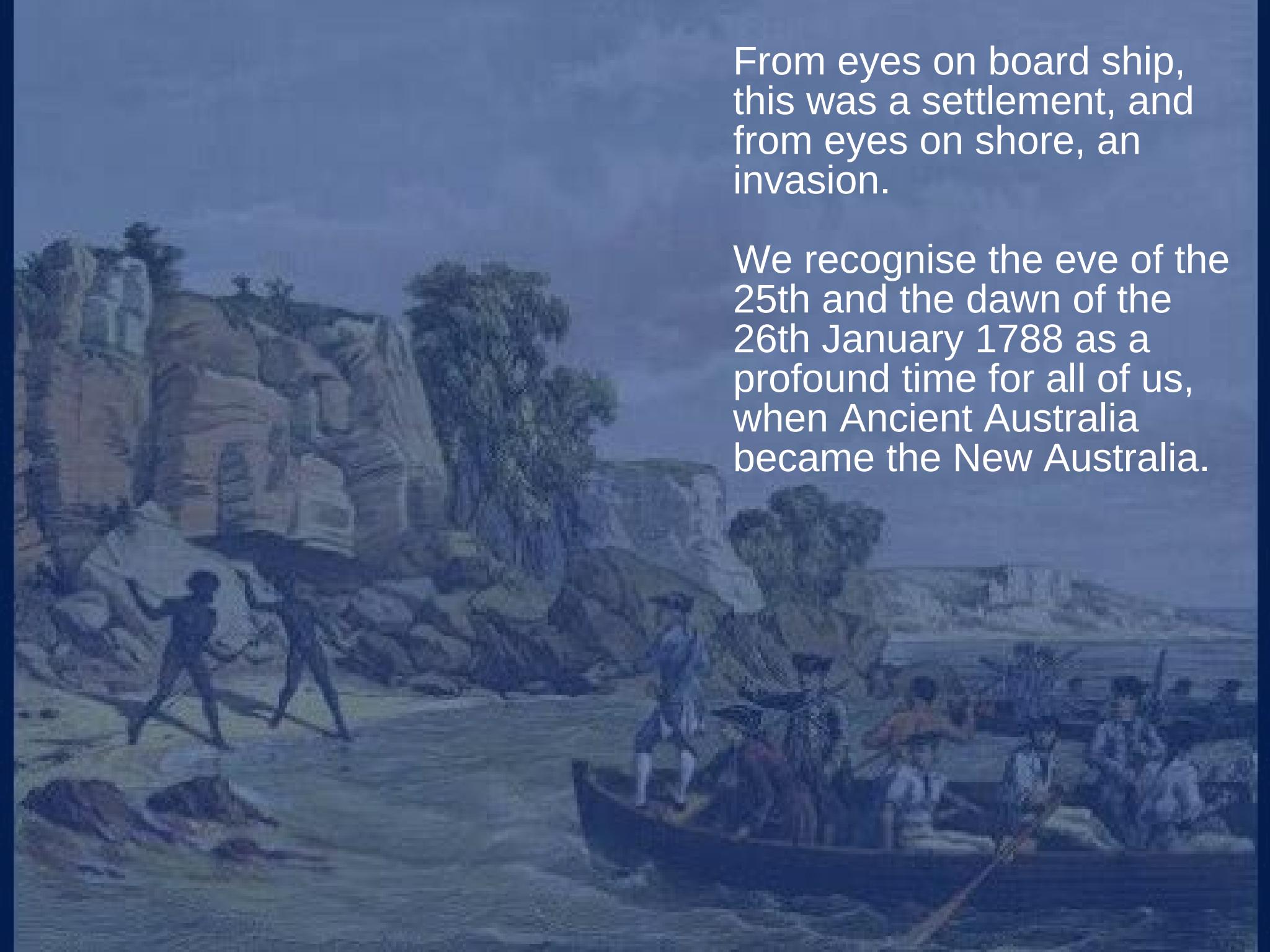
We recognise and
honour the First Nations
who discovered
Australia as their
sovereign possession,
the oldest continuing
civilisation in the world.

And whereas those who sailed the First Fleet landing at Sydney Cove carried upon their shoulders the common law of England, when the sovereignty of the British Crown was proclaimed.



A painting depicting a historical flag-raising ceremony. In the center, a group of men in 18th-century military uniforms stand on a grassy bank. One man holds a tall pole with a British flag. Another man next to him salutes. To the right, two more men in uniform stand near a small boat on the water. The background shows a wide river with several small boats and a distant shoreline with trees and buildings under a cloudy sky.

The rule of law,
parliamentary
government and the
Australian English
language have their
provenance in
Britain.

A painting showing a group of Indigenous Australians in a landscape. In the foreground, two men are standing on a rocky shore, one holding a spear. A small wooden boat with several people is pulled up onto the shore. The background features large, craggy rock formations and a hazy sky.

From eyes on board ship,
this was a settlement, and
from eyes on shore, an
invasion.

We recognise the eve of the
25th and the dawn of the
26th January 1788 as a
profound time for all of us,
when Ancient Australia
became the New Australia.

We recognise and honour
the Britons and Irish –
convict and free – who
founded our institutional
heritage, making our
Commonwealth from
1901, a great democracy
of the globe.



*And whereas
peoples the earth
over brought their
multitude of cultural
gifts to Australia.*



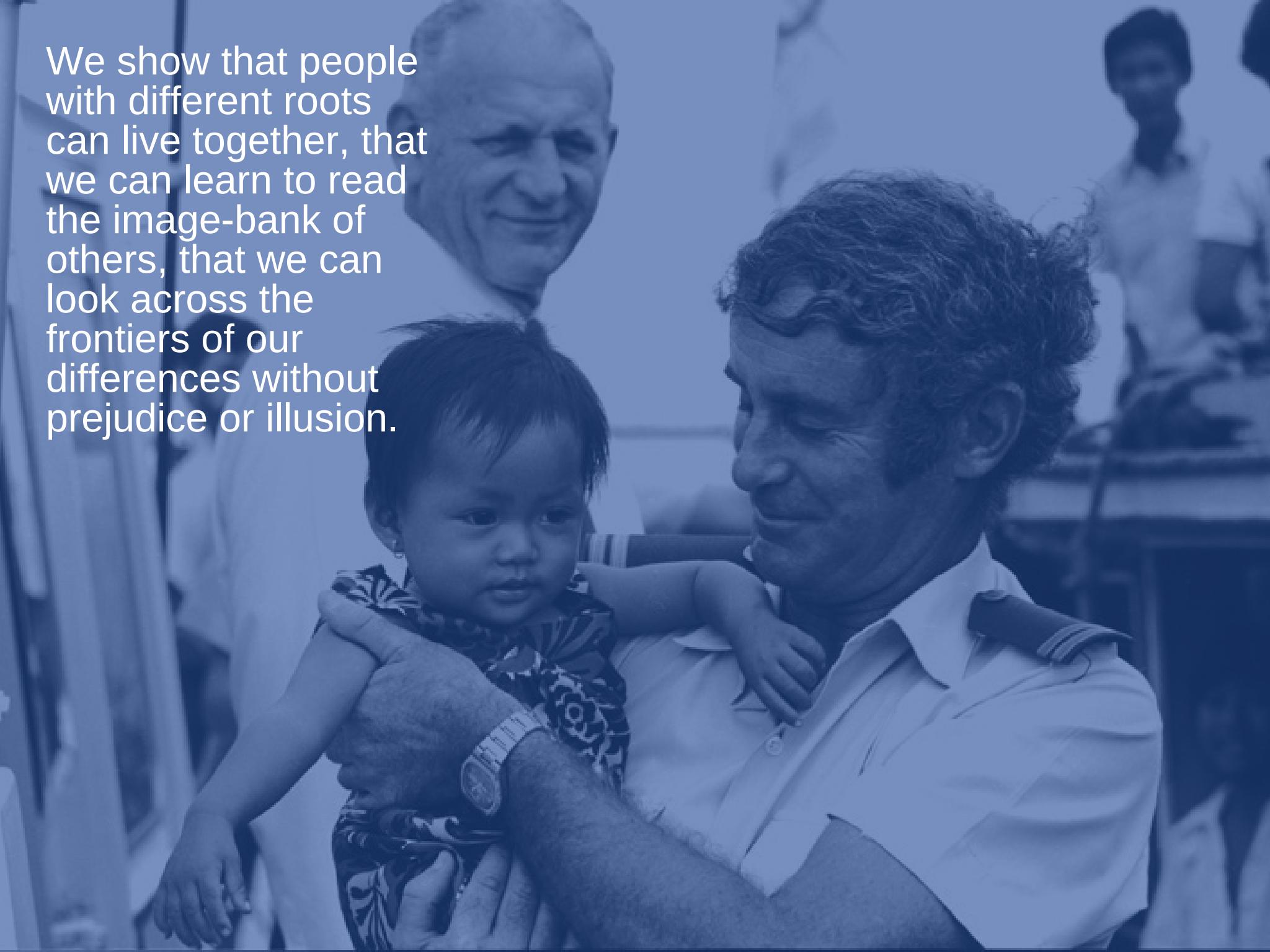
A black and white photograph capturing a group of approximately ten people, mostly adults, gathered around a dining table. They are engaged in conversation and appear to be sharing a meal. The setting is indoors, with a large window visible in the background. On the wall behind them hangs a round mirror and a framed picture. The table is covered with a patterned cloth and holds various items, including a bottle of wine, glasses, and plates.

That we celebrate
diversity in unity makes us
a beacon unto the world.

We recognise and honour
our New Australians.



When we renounced
the White Australia
policy, we made a
better Commonwealth.

A photograph showing a man with dark hair and a light beard holding a baby. The baby has dark hair and is wearing a patterned onesie. In the background, another man with a shaved head and a slight smile is visible. The scene is set outdoors with trees and a building in the distance.

We show that people
with different roots
can live together, that
we can learn to read
the image-bank of
others, that we can
look across the
frontiers of our
differences without
prejudice or illusion.

Now therefore, with earnest and open hearts and strong desire to fill the lacuna, after more than two centuries, we make this *Declaration of Australia and the Australian People*, to see our reflections in each other, and recognise one and all:

Our history is replete with shame and pride, failure and achievement, fear and love, cruelty and kindness, conflict and comity, mistake and brilliance, folly and glory. We will not shy from its truth.

Our storylines entwine further each generation.

We will ever strive to leave our country better for our children.

We will honour the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* and make good upon it. Whilst English is the shared language of our Commonwealth, mother tongues name the country and sing its song-lines – and we do not want for them to pass from this land.

They are part of the cultural and natural wonder of our country that is the campfire of our national soul, and the pledge of care and custody we owe our ancestral dead and unborn descendants.

After the battles of our frontier wars
fell silent, diggers from the First
Nations joined their Settler and New
Australian comrades in the crucibles
of Gallipoli and Kokoda, and there
distilled the essence of our values:

That our mateship is and will
always be our enduring bond.

That freedom and the fair
go are our abiding ethic.

That our virtues of equality and
irreverence give us courage to have a
go.

That we know we can and
always will count on each other.

THREE STORIES MAKE US ONE:
AUSTRALIANS