

## **13 years of failed NT Intervention: First Nations people demand their solutions, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

Zoom Forum 19/6/2020

Transcription : **Amelia Pangarte Kunoth-Monks, Eastern Arrernte woman from Arlparra, Utopia, Northern Territory, youth leader.**

Facilitator Larissa Behrendt AO.

### **1:07:23 Larissa**

It is my great pleasure to now introduce Amelia Pangarte Kunoth-Monks who at the time when the Intervention rolled out was a very young Arrernte woman from Utopia, a youth leader still but she was supporting her grandmother phenomenal Rosalie Kunoth-Monks, she was also a very strong voice but Amelia emerged at the time as a very strong voice in her own right and has been incredibly strong on highlighting what has happened with the Intervention particularly around the compulsory income management and mental health impact of the Intervention. She flew across the country and spoke in Sydney and Melbourne and has continued to be a strong voice in the Northern Territory. So, I am incredibly proud to be able to introduce Amelia to you tonight. Lovely to see you Amelia.

### **1:08:29 Amelia**

Thank you for having me. First, I want to acknowledge the past, present and future generations of our First Nations People on the land I sit on which is the (Eastern Arrernte: Mparntwe) Alice Springs. We're now 13 years in the Northern Territory Emergency Response and I haven't seen anything change, not, not to my knowledge. I haven't seen to where our languages are being taught in schools, to where we're allowed to practice our cultural essence. We had our 10-year anniversary of the Northern Territory Emergency Response back in 2017 and here we are in 2020 three years under the Stronger Futures. We've got another two years and then we'll have a review of where the "policy" for us will take us.

### **1:09:29**

It's very hard to see where our youth is at the moment. I feel heartache because our youth get into trouble because there is nothing. There's no programs for them, or leaders who are there. They don't have good role models because they're forever watching YouTube about how to be a gangster and all that garbage. It's very disconcerting about where our youth is heading. You just have to look at our suicide rates, you know, it's very hard.

### **1:10:09**

I was speaking to my grandmother last night on the drive back home and I asked her the question "How do you see our youth? Where do you think they're going?" and she said to me that there are no role models for them. They're in this predicament of where they want to have their culture and be who they want to be and be themselves but they are also told to just stay down there, don't move, we'll do everything for you so you can be run amok and just, you know, not, not have a future, we'll just take that future for you.

### **1:10:55**

As, you know, the stuff of my homeland out at Utopia, it's, Arlparra itself has become the hub town. There is no funding for the 16 homelands to get new houses. There is, what they're trying to do is push us into that hub town still to this day so that they can do mining. There is this whole gap between our First Nations People and our non-First Nations People but that's not our non-First Nations People's fault. I don't blame them at all. What I blame is their government and their policy. We still are, here

we are in 2020 and we're still classified as flora and fauna. We're still counted in the census. We're not, we're not even in the constitution, as human beings we're still animals and flowers. Yeah, that's all I have to say.

**1:12:18 Larissa**

Thank you, Amelia. I just wonder though if you could share with us what your hopes are going forward, what's on your agenda for change, do you believe in the treaty, what sorts of things do you believe would make a difference from the ground, from where you are, what you've seen and what you believe in.

**1:12:40 Amelia**

I do believe in the treaty; I do believe that we need to have this treaty. I've said constantly to my grandmother, I've said that where we are now is not, is not a good place between First Nations People and non-First Nations People. And until Australia grows up, we're not going to get very far with our government because time for talk is over, it really is. There is no communication with our government who can come to the table and sit with us. You just have to look at what Vincent Lingiari went to, look at that walk-off. And where are we today? We're still there. Not much has changed since my elders.... (last word inaudible)

**1:13:36 Larissa**

Well thank you very much for sharing that with us, it's lovely to hear your voice again, with you speaking out as well.

Closing Comments

**1:39:39 Larissa**

Amelia, did you want to make any other comments?

**1:39:42 Amelia**

I think one comment I'd like to make is I think the future can be very bright if we have the right leadership and the way that we, as a country, to grow.

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