

**The Secretary
Senate Community Affairs References Committee
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600**

Inquiry into petrol sniffing in remote Aboriginal communities

Submission by Anthony Bernard Kelly,

Particularly in relation to Term of Reference: 2a - the effectiveness of existing laws and policing with respect to petrol sniffing in affected Indigenous communities;

PETROL SNIFFING – 10 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q1: Why do young Aborigines sniff petrol? They never used to. What changed?

A: They sniff petrol because they live a meaningless existence. What changed were Government Policies towards Aborigines. These were changed in the 1960's.

Q2. Did young Aborigines sniff petrol prior to the changes in Government Policies?

A. No. Petrol was readily available but there was no petrol sniffing until some time after the policy changes.

Q3. Why the delay between the change in policy and the advent of petrol sniffing?

A. One of the policy changes was the removal of the prohibition on Aborigines drinking Alcoholic liquor. The spread of drinking liquor was initially slow. Another change was the extension of Award wages to Aborigines. This had the predictable effect of the break-up of Aboriginal camps on Cattle Stations, and the consequential drift of Aborigines to towns where liquor was readily available.

Q4. What is the connection between Aborigines drinking and Petrol sniffing?

A. As one young Aboriginal witness said to a recent Coroner's Inquest, "If my father did not drink I would not sniff petrol." Petrol sniffing is a direct result of Aborigines having access to Alcohol.

Q5. How is this so?

A. There is a vast difference between the Aboriginal Culture and the ordinary Australian Culture. The Australian Culture is supported and maintained by numerous Institutions, both formal and informal. These include all the functions of Governments, Universities and Libraries, all the mechanisms of production, distribution and exchange, Sport, the Media, Churches and voluntary organizations. The Aboriginal Culture has only one Institution – the Tribal Elder. Destroy his capacity to function in his role and the effect is more immediate and effective than a Nuclear attack would be on the Australian culture. Alcohol destroys the ability of the Elders to function.

Q6. But cannot the Aborigines just adopt our culture?

A. No they cannot. One of the fundamental mistakes behind all the changes to Aboriginal Policy since the 1950's is that they are just like us, only a different color. They are vastly different from the way we are.

This difference was recognized by the Australians who introduced and maintained the successful policy of Protection before the 1960's "Reforms".

The policy of Protection was formed by people who had direct contact with Aborigines. They knew that Aborigines were different, even though they did not know why they were different. They knew what would work. The policy of Protection was based on the reality of Aboriginal difference. The 1960's Policies were based on Politically Correct Ideology. That is why they have been such a disaster.

Q7. What can be done?

A. The only program that can possibly work is the restoration of the previously successful policy of Protection, with its associated Laws and Institutions. This will not be popular or comfortable, but it will be far better for Aborigines than the present Genocidal policies.

Q8. What were those Laws and Institutions?

A. The most effective Law was the prohibition of the supply of Alcoholic liquor to Aborigines. For Genetic or Cultural reasons Aborigines cannot cope with Alcohol. Removal of sniffable Petrol without prohibiting Alcohol will simply result in the petrol-sniffers turning to Alcohol or to other drugs.

The Institutions were Reserves, Settlements and Missions, and Camps on remote Cattle Stations. All these enabled Aborigines to maintain their culture, and its ceremonies, and the adults to pass on their knowledge to the young.

The Aboriginal culture is essentially a knowledge-based culture. Destruction of this cultural heritage renders their lives meaningless. It is not replaceable by an alternative culture. This is not to say that it may not be modified over time, to some degree, but it has to function to be modified.

Q9. You said in answer to Question 6 that the policy of Protection was formed by people who had direct contact with Aborigines and knew they were different, even though they did not know why. How are they different?

A. I lived and worked with Aborigines in the 1950's. I saw them live long healthy and happy lives. I recognized the existence of a cognitive difference between Aborigines and Europeans. I could not relate their contentment to their apparent material poverty. I eventually entered University as a mature age student and did a PhD that focused in part on human cognitive development over time.

Most human cognitive and cultural development has occurred within the last 3,000 years. The Aboriginal Culture is a Palaeolithic survival from 60,000 years ago. Individually, Aborigines cannot bridge the cultural gap of 57,000 years. They need and deserve our protection.

Q10. Can you support your assertions?

A. I attach two recent papers:

THE PRESERVATION OF THE CULTURE AND THE LIVES OF AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINES, 6th June 2005, **and**
STOPPING THE ABORIGINAL GENOCIDE September 26, 2005
(There will be some overlap between these submissions)

I would be happy to discuss these matters with the Inquiry.

THE PRESERVATION OF THE CULTURE AND THE LIVES OF AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINES.

Dr. A.B. Kelly, 6th June 2005.

In the 1950's I was OIC Finke Police District, an area from just South of Alice Springs to the South Australian Border and from Queensland to the West Australian Border. The vast majority of the District's population was Aboriginal.

At that time Aborigines lived long and healthy lives. I liaised with the Flying Doctor and maintained the Flying Doctor Medical Kit. I supplied Rations to Aged and Infirm Aborigines. I also attended their secret ceremonies, at their invitation. Despite my close contacts I found them, and their culture, difficult to understand.

In 1998 I was awarded a PhD for a Thesis: "The Process of the Cosmos". This Thesis was initially inspired by my contacts with Aborigines. It focused on the overall development of mankind since the evolution of Homo sapiens, and on the role of culture in human development.

Cultures are potentially processes of human self-creation. Humans make cultures and cultures, to a significant extent, make the humans of the culture. While other cultures, particularly our Western culture, have changed radically over time, Aboriginal culture has remained static for some 60,000 years, since the Aborigines first entered this continent.

There are two distinct cultures in Australia, the Australian culture and the Aboriginal culture. They are significantly different. The vast majority of part-Aborigines are members of the Australian culture. They are not Aborigines in any real sense, either culturally or genetically.

The Aboriginal policy that was introduced in the 1960's is based on two fundamental mistakes. It assumes that Aborigines are not significantly different from other Australians, and that Aborigines and part-Aborigines should not be distinguished. These assumptions are simply based on politically correct ideologies that conflict with the evidence.

Aborigines are a Palaeolithic people with their own Palaeolithic culture. Their difference from other Australians was recognized in the era of Protection. That is why they were protected.

The 1960's changes in policy were imposed by people who had no direct knowledge of Aborigines, and no understanding of their cultural differences. The present policies are killing the Aborigines, who lack the capacity to adapt to another, significantly different, culture. Prior to the 1960's Aborigines were able to preserve their familiar culture, and thus to preserve their lives. They were happy and healthy because their culture told them who they were, what they were, and what the world was all about.

The present policies make the preservation of the Aboriginal culture impossible. The 1960's policy may be considered by some to be enlightened, but it kills Aborigines. Pretending that Aborigines are not significantly different from other Australians has prevented the restoration of an appropriate policy.

A radical approach is needed if the health and happiness of Aborigines is to be restored. Any successful approach has to recognize the stage occupied by Aborigines in the story of human cultural development.

THE PROCESS OF HUMAN CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Homo sapiens first evolved as a new species of animal, not as humans, some 160,000 years ago. The species then began the long process of self-development towards becoming human. Homo sapiens and other Hominid species did not become locked into an instinctive pattern of behavior as had other animals. Hominids developed cultural patterns instead, initially involving various forms of hunter-gathering.

There is no evidence of any change in Homo sapiens' approach to the world until some 40,000 years ago, in what is known as the upper Palaeolithic revolution. This revolution was characterized by the

development of new tool-making technology, the use of new materials for tools, and the use of tools to make tools. These changes did not occur in Australia, where Aborigines were isolated from these developments.

The changes that took place in the Palaeolithic revolution are taken to reflect a development in the cognitive faculties of those hominids who participated in the revolution. Beyond Australia there were a series of further cognitive revolutions, the most significant of which were the beginning of the development of critical thinking and the beginning of the development of moral perceptions.

Both these developments occurred as recently as within the last 3,000 years, initially within the Greek and Hebrew cultures. These developments are still far from complete. Their progress varies from culture to culture, and also within cultures. The Aborigines did not participate in any of these developments due to their isolation.

THE COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT OF ABORIGINES

Everyone who has had contact with real Aborigines, particularly in those areas of Australia where there was no contact with other races prior to the arrival of Europeans, has described the cognitive ability of Aborigines as childlike. Subsequent research supports this view.

Objective support for this anecdotal view has been provided by a series of tests, based on the work of Piaget, carried out in Hermannsburg, a Central Australian Aboriginal Mission, in the 1960's. Piaget is an educational psychologist who describes three distinct stages of cognitive development of children in the Western world.

The first stage lasts until about age 2, the second to about age 11. The third stage then begins. In this stage children begin to reason realistically about the future and begin to deal comfortably with abstractions. The capacity to deal with abstractions is considered the mark of mental maturity.

A paper by M.M. de Lemos, who carried out the Hermannsburg tests, is republished in "The Psychology of Aboriginal Australians" (1973) Kearney & Os. In the group of 80 children tested by de Lemos in the 1960's, half the children were Aborigines and the other half were seven-eighths Aboriginal. The environment of both groups was identical. The part-Aboriginal children had white great-grandfathers. These children, with a trace of European ancestry, showed markedly better performance in the tests.

De Lemos found the general standard of the full-blood Aborigines implied: "an inability to form logical concepts or to apply logical operations to the organization and systematisation of concrete data . . . affecting the level of logical thinking in all areas."

A Masters Thesis by Margaret S. Bain, published as "The Aboriginal-White Encounter" (1992) is based on her research in the Finke district.

It concluded that Aborigines are only capable of first-degree abstractions, those that retain a direct link with empirical reality. Bain also finds that while social processes in Western cultures are both interactional and transactional, making use of both first degree and second-degree abstractions, Aboriginal social actions are purely interactional, making use only of first-degree abstractions. These are all one-way actions, as prescribed by tribal law.

As long ago as 1910 Mathew had concluded in "The Psychology of Aboriginal Australians", that Aborigines: "were unreflective and averse to both abstract reasoning and sustained mental effort". The explanations put forward at that time were all evolutionist, the assumption being that social development could be understood on the biological model. It can not.

The absence of significant Aboriginal cognitive development is essentially a cultural phenomenon. It is better understood as a function of the absence of alternative world-views either within, or impinging upon, a culture. The Aborigines had a culture that provided a complete explanation of the world. Knowledge of the Dreamtime stories and of the tasks of practical living was passed on, but there was never any challenge to the Dreamtime explanations of the world, and no motive to increase the sum of

practical knowledge. The Aborigines already had a complete explanation of the world and of their part in it.

Aboriginal Australians were locked into a static world-view which was remarkably uniform throughout the continent. This complete world-view limited the possibility of further cognitive and cultural self-development. The fact that a small admixture of European genes has a significant effect on cognitive development, as De Lemos found, seems to indicate a Lamarckian form of cognitive development in societies that have had to cope with a series of challenges to existing world-views. Evidence of the "Flynn Effect", which shows a regular generational increase in IQ in problem-solving societies, supports this view.

The differences between Aborigines and part-Aborigines have to be taken seriously if Aboriginal policy is to be effective. Most Aboriginal policy is premised on the assumption that there is no difference between Aborigines and part-Aborigines, or between Aborigines and Europeans. This is clearly not the case. Aborigines think, understand and act differently from Westerners and part-Aborigines.

The occurrence of children in a tribal situation with white great-grandparents, such as occurred in Hermannsburg was rare. In the case of the Hermannsburg children it appears that the part-Aboriginal children born after the initial contact with whites were understood by Aborigines to be children of their tribal Aboriginal parents. They were therefore able to be initiated and incorporated into the marriage rules of the tribe. At that time the Aborigines did not realize that these children did not have an Aboriginal 'skin' and so could not fit into the marriage structure of the tribe.

An individual Aborigine's "skin" is usually a function of the different "skins" of the two Aboriginal parents. Without a "skin" a child cannot be initiated or marry. Once Aborigines recognized this problem, the survival of these children after reaching puberty was frequently in doubt.

This was the reason behind the removal of part-Aboriginal children from the tribal situation. As a Police Officer I had the responsibility to remove such children if their survival in the tribal situation was in doubt. No full-blood Aborigine was ever removed from a tribe. The survival of Aborigines in the tribal situation was not an issue.

Aborigines find any contact with the white man's law confusing. In their culture, punishment is immediate, physical and mandatory. There is no room for a plea in mitigation. The rituals of our law are largely meaningless charades to them. The approach our law takes to offenders is constantly changing. Law enforcement in 2005 is different from what it was in 1950. It is even more different from what it was in the 1890's. It is vastly different from what it was in 1788. Is it reasonable to apply the latest fashion of such variable standards to people whose idea of law was set in stone tens of thousands of years ago?

The present day situation of Aborigines is worse than it has ever been in the past. Most of the damage that has been inflicted on Aborigines since the 1960's has been based on the best of motives, but in total ignorance of the reality.

The activities of good-hearted but ignorant do-gooders have hastened the passing of the Aborigines more rapidly in the last half Century than in the previous 150 years. It is time for a rethink.

The primary causes of the present mistaken policies towards Aborigines are the failure to recognize how different they are, particularly in their cognitive development, and the consequent projection of Western attitudes and concepts onto them.

Aboriginal cognitive development and mind-set is fundamentally different from ours. Aborigines think, understand and act differently from other Australians. Western thought is essentially abstract. Clear thinking can be impeded by faulty basic assumptions, lack of knowledge or by the "thought control" of political correctness. All of these factors are affecting and have affected Aboriginal policy. Aborigines have suffered and still suffer from the consequent policies.

Aborigines have never lived in settled communities. Our remote ancestors took hundreds, if not thousands, of years to make the transition from hunter gatherers to inhabitants of settled communities.

This transition depended on the gradual invention and spread of Agriculture, and the domestication of animals. We have expected Aborigines to make this radical transition within a generation.

THE STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN COGNITION

The Philosopher Bernard Lonergan is noted for his work on human cognitive development. He analysed the developmental stages that can operate in human cognition. There are four such stages in the full process of human knowing. He labels these stages as Experience, Understanding, Judgement and Evaluation.

Humans initially move from simply experiencing the world to developing an explanation of that experience, originally in terms of Myth. This is the stage labeled Understanding, the second stage of the cognitive process. This is the stage that was reached by Australian Aborigines. The understanding reached at this stage is not likely to be correct.

The next stage of human cognitive development is Judgement. In this stage the initial understanding of the world is subjected to critical examination, involving reflection, doubt and the weighing of evidence. This stage was never reached by Aborigines. The Dreamtime stories were never questioned. As Bruno Snell has shown in "The Discovery of Mind", the Jews and the Greeks were the first people to reach this stage. The transition to this third cognitive stage only began during the first millennium BC.

The fourth stage, Evaluation, began to be reached by Western cultures in the Scientific Revolution. This stage began within the last 500 years. It is the pattern of thinking that was developed within this stage that we seek to impose on Aborigines, despite the fact that Aborigines have not yet reached the cultural stage of the Palaeolithic Revolution.

It took 120,000 years for the first detectable cognitive change to occur within the species Homo sapiens. This change, the Palaeolithic Revolution, was still only a change within the stage of Understanding, the second of Lonergan's four stages, rather than a move to the next cognitive stage. It was a further 37,000 years before the third cognitive stage of Judgement began to be achieved in any culture.

A policy distinction has to be made between Aborigines and part-Aborigines. This distinction is based on the distinctiveness of Aboriginal thought patterns, which does not apply to part-Aborigines. Real Aborigines are in need of specifically tailored policies, which take account of their cultural and cognitive situation. Their cultural base is essentially Paleolithic in both material and cognitive terms. Any successful policy for Aborigines must take into account the real differences that exist between Aborigines and all other Australians, including part-Aborigines.

That is not to say that there should not be appropriate policies for disadvantaged part-Aborigines, but because the circumstances and cognitive abilities of Aborigines and part-Aborigines are quite different, the policies that apply to them should be different. There does not appear to be any good reason for any distinction between the policies that should be applied to disadvantaged part-Aborigines and those applied to any other disadvantaged Australians.

STOPPING THE ABORIGINAL GENOCIDE

Dr. A.B. Kelly, September 26, 2005

Prior to the changes to Aboriginal Policy in the 1960's most Northern Territory Aborigines were able to preserve their familiar culture, and thus were able to preserve their lives. They were generally both happy and healthy because their culture made their lives meaningful. It told them who they were, what they were, and what the world was all about. No culture can do more than that.

In the 1960's the prohibition of the supply of alcohol to Aborigines was removed, and Aboriginal workers on Cattle Stations were made eligible for Award wages. The consequential disbandment of the Cattle Station camps, which had made it possible for the Aboriginal culture in the bush to be preserved, forced the Aborigines into Towns where alcohol was readily available and "sit-down" money was also available. These changes could only undermine the Aboriginal culture.

If the purpose of the changes to Aboriginal Policy had been overtly Genocidal they could not have been more effective. But the Genocidal effects of these policies were concealed by the failure to distinguish part-Aborigines from full-blood Aborigines. This strategy enables Governments to claim that the Aboriginal population is increasing while the population of full-blood Aborigines is decreasing as a direct result of the attack on their culture. One can only hope that this was not the real purpose behind the 1960's policy changes.

There is perhaps little doubt that the changes made to Aboriginal policy in the 1960's were made from the best of motives but it appears that they were made by people who had no direct knowledge of Aborigines, and no adequate understanding of the Aborigines' particular cultural and cognitive context.

This lack of knowledge is clear from the underlying assumption in the policies that were adopted in the 1960's. The policies all assumed that Aborigines were not significantly different from other Australians. The people responsible for the changes probably did not realise that their reforms were effectively Genocidal. If the present policies are maintained they will inevitably lead to the extinction of full-blood Aborigines.

The previous protectionist policies were made by people who enjoyed direct knowledge of Aborigines. Those people were clearly aware that Aborigines were different from other Australians. They recognised that this difference warranted the protection of Aborigines, even though they did not understand why the Aborigines were so different.

I was struck by the significant differences between Aborigines and other Australians when I worked closely with Aborigines in the 1950's. I subsequently addressed the origin of this difference in my Doctoral Thesis, which traced the cognitive development of humans since the evolution of Homo sapiens.

My research made it clear that humans do not continue to evolve. They develop their cognitive ability within and through their cultures. Individually, humans develop themselves cognitively by coping with the challenges that they meet, particularly by having to cope with intellectual challenges. One of the most significant intellectual challenges that humans face appears to be the challenge to an existing belief-system. Individual human cognitive development is a response to intellectual challenges. This cognitive development is ultimately able to be reflected in cultural development.

Cultures are potentially the most effective processes of human development, as humans make cultures and cultures, to a significant extent, make the humans of those cultures.

HUMAN CULTURAL AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Homo sapiens evolved as a new species some 160,000 years ago. Our species has not changed physically in any significant way since that time, but it has changed cognitively, to various degrees in different cultures. Cognitive developments are not reflected in human morphology. Ancient cognitive changes can only be indicated by physical evidence of changes in culture, including changes in behaviour and activities.

The first physical evidence of such a cognitive development is the Palaeolithic Revolution of some 40,000 years ago. This revolution was characterized by the development of new tool-making technology, the use of new materials for tools, and the use of tools to make tools. These changes did not occur in Australia, where Aborigines were isolated from these and other developments. Most other human cultures continued to advance cognitively, as evidenced by the eventual development of various civilisations. The first recorded development of a specifically cognitive change in the ancient world is to be found in the emergence of the Pre-Socratic Philosophers around the Sixth Century BC.

The Pre-Socratics initially sought to provide rational explanations of the world, when belief in the myths of the Olympian Pantheon was failing. The development of modern Science, reflecting a further cognitive development in the West, followed closely on the challenge to existing beliefs posed by the Reformation.

People in Europe and Asia have had to cope with many challenges, including foreign invasions and changing technologies. These events forced them to develop both technically and cognitively. The isolation of Australia sheltered Aborigines from such events.

If I could suggest an analogy between humans and computers, we could envisage two identical modern computers, with one running the original Microsoft Word Programme and the other running the latest, more sophisticated version of the Programme. The possible outputs from the two computers would necessarily vary. Even though the hardware would be identical, the different software would make a significant difference.

While new software has to be inserted into computers, humans appear to make their own more sophisticated programmes and transmit them genetically. This is an inference to be drawn from a paper by M.M. de Lemos, republished in "The Psychology of Aboriginal Australians" (1973) Kearney & Os.

A series of tests, based on the work of Piaget, was carried out by de Lemos in the 1960's at Hermannsburg, a Central Australian Aboriginal Mission. In the group of 80 children tested half were Aborigines and the other half were seven-eighths Aboriginal, each having one white great-grandfather. The tribal and Mission environment of both groups was identical.

The children with a trace of European ancestry showed markedly better performance in the tests. De Lemos found the general standard of the full-blood Aboriginal children implied: "an inability to form logical concepts or to apply logical operations to the organization and systematisation of concrete data affecting the level of logical thinking in all areas."

A Masters Thesis by Margaret S. Bain, published as "The Aboriginal-White Encounter" (1992) is based on her research in the Finke district. It concluded that Aborigines are only capable of first-degree abstractions, those that retain a direct link with empirical reality. Bain also finds that while social processes in Western cultures are both interactional and transactional, making use of both first degree and second-degree abstractions, Aboriginal social actions are purely interactional, making use only of first-degree abstractions. These are all one-way actions, as prescribed by tribal law.

As long ago as 1910 Mathew had concluded in "The Psychology of Aboriginal Australians", that Aborigines: "were unreflective and averse to both abstract reasoning and sustained mental effort". The explanations put forward at that time were all evolutionist, the assumption being that social development could be understood on the biological model. It can not.

It is clear that the cognitive development of Aborigines is less than that of part-Aborigines and other Australians. It appears reasonable to attribute this deficiency to the absence of alternative world-views either within, or impinging upon, the Aboriginal culture. The absence of significant Aboriginal cognitive development is essentially a cultural phenomenon. The Aborigines had a culture that provided a complete explanation of the world. Knowledge of the Dreamtime stories and of the tasks of practical living was passed on, but there was never any challenge to the Dreamtime explanations of the world, and no motive to increase the sum of practical knowledge.

Aborigines have no history of being confronted with the type of intellectual challenges that stimulate cognitive development. When they were confronted with the advanced Western Scientific culture of

1788 A.D. the challenge to their belief-system, and to their world-view, was too great to be comprehended by them. It still is.

The Aboriginal belief-system appears not to have changed since they first entered Australia. This is suggested by the uniformity of their belief in the creative activities of the Dreamtime Ancestors. This belief is remarkably uniform throughout the Continent, despite the fact that their language had broken up into hundreds of different dialects.

The Aborigines appear to have entered Australia with a complete explanation of the world and of their part in it. Aboriginal Australians were locked into a static world-view which was remarkably uniform throughout the continent. This complete world-view limited the possibility of further cognitive and cultural self-development.

The fact that a small admixture of European genes has a significant effect on cognitive development, as De Lemos found, seems to indicate a Lamarckian form of cognitive development in societies that had to cope with a series of challenges to existing world-views. The evidence of the "Flynn Effect", which shows a regular generational increase in I.Q. in problem-solving societies, particularly in the problem-solving aspect of the I.Q. Tests, supports the view that cognitive development is passed on genetically. There appears to be no other explanation of De Lemos' finding that children with a trace of European ancestry showed markedly better performance in the tests of cognitive development.

The cognitive differences between Aborigines and part-Aborigines have to be taken seriously if Aboriginal policy is to be effective. Present Aboriginal policy is premised on the assumption that there is no difference between Aborigines and part-Aborigines, or between Aborigines and Europeans. This is clearly not the case. Aborigines think, understand and act differently from Westerners and part-Aborigines.

As a result of their isolation Aborigines are still a Palaeolithic people with Palaeolithic minds. Through no fault of their own they are not capable of adapting to our Twenty-first Century environment. Exposing them directly to that environment without adequate protection condemns them to death. The cultural, cognitive and intellectual deficit of some 60,000 years cannot be made up in any one lifetime. The present policies are fundamentally Genocidal.

In a recent address to the Bennelong Society, Warren Mundine maintained that Aboriginal people must adapt to the modern capitalist environment, or find themselves like a species that is unable to compete in a harsh world. (The Australian, September 10-11 2005).

Mr Mundine's address illustrates the failure to appreciate the genesis of the Aboriginal problem. It embodies the clear assumption that Aborigines are no different from other Australians, except for the colour of their skins.

This assumption underlies all the changes that have been made to Aboriginal Policy since the 1960's, with disastrous results. The social situation of Aborigines has constantly deteriorated during the last 40 years, with the epidemic of petrol sniffing by Aboriginal children simply being the most recent symptom of this deterioration.

There are two distinct cultures in Australia, the Australian culture and the Aboriginal culture. They are significantly different. The vast majority of part-Aborigines are members of the Australian culture, not of the Aboriginal culture. As a general rule part Aborigines are not Aborigines in any real sense, either culturally or genetically.

My views are not just academic waffle. In the 1950's I was OIC Finke Police District, an area from just South of Alice Springs to the South Australian Border and from Queensland to the West Australian Border. The vast majority of the District's population was Aboriginal.

At that time Aborigines lived long and healthy lives. I liaised with the Flying Doctor and maintained the Flying Doctor Medical Kit. I supplied Rations to Aged and Infirm Aborigines. I attended Aboriginal secret ceremonies, at their invitation. I saw no other white people, nor any part-Aborigines, at these ceremonies. Despite my close contacts I found the Aborigines, and their culture, very difficult to understand.

In 1985 I entered Flinders University as a Mature Age Student. In 1998 I was awarded a Doctorate in Philosophy. My Thesis was initially inspired by my contacts with Aborigines. I researched the overall development of mankind since the evolution of Homo sapiens, the causes of cognitive development and the role of culture in human development.

The Aboriginal policy that was introduced in the 1960's is based on the fundamental mistake that Aborigines are not significantly different from other Australians. This fundamental mistake has given rise to the consequential mistake that Aborigines and part-Aborigines should not be distinguished. Both these assumptions are based on ideologies that conflict with the evidence. Aborigines are a Palaeolithic people with their own Palaeolithic culture. Part-Aborigines are generally members of the Australian culture. They are not members of the distinct Aboriginal culture. The present policies are killing Aborigines, who lack the cognitive capacity to adapt to another, significantly different, culture.

Ultimately, as T.S. Elliot pointed out, every culture is the incarnation of a belief system. The Aboriginal Culture is the incarnation of the belief-system of the Dreamtime. Every culture finds its expression in the institutions of the society that the culture informs.

The Australian culture is expressed in both its formal institutions, Parliaments, Courts, Churches etc. and in its less formal institutions, shops, newspapers, libraries, sporting teams etc. It would be a major exercise to list all the institutions of the Australian culture. The complex of institutions of a sophisticated culture can enable that culture to withstand attacks on its underlying belief-system for some time. But the Aboriginal culture has no such complex of institutions.

There is only one institution in the Aboriginal Culture, the Tribal Elder. The Elders are the repository of all Aboriginal knowledge. An Aborigine did not become an Elder by becoming old, but by the acquisition of cultural and relevant practical knowledge. Destroy the capacity of the Elders to function properly and you destroy the Aboriginal Culture. Alcohol efficiently destroys the capacity of Elders to carry out their institutional role.

Destroy the effectiveness of the only institution of a culture and you destroy the culture. Destroy the culture of a Palaeolithic people, who cannot adapt to sophisticated culture, and you destroy those people. The cultural, cognitive and intellectual deficit of some 60,000 years cannot be made up in any one lifetime. Because of the institutional fragility of the Aboriginal culture, the present Aboriginal policies are essentially Genocidal.

Previous generations of young Aborigines lived a meaningful existence because of their culture, which was passed on by their elders. Aboriginal Elders are now frequently disabled by alcohol. They become incapable of exercising their institutional role. Young Aborigines are left to lead a meaningless existence. They turn to petrol sniffing just as other young Australians who find themselves in a similar situation, turn to drugs. If we are to halt the present Aboriginal Genocide the most urgent necessity is the restoration of the complete prohibition of the supply of Alcohol to Aborigines. If the status and sobriety of the Elders can be restored, the problem of petrol-sniffing will disappear.

Prior to the 1960's the adverse effect of alcohol on Aborigines had been recognised throughout Australia, resulting in a universal prohibition on the supply of alcohol to Aborigines, with severe penalties suffered by the suppliers. The immediate restoration of this prohibition is the only way that Aboriginal culture may be saved and young Aborigines may again live meaningful lives. It is almost too late.

A radical approach is needed if the health and happiness of Aborigines is to be restored. Any successful approach has to recognize the stage occupied by Aborigines in the story of human cultural development.

Prohibition of the supply of all alcohol to Aborigines is essential if the present Aboriginal Genocide is to be halted. Each Aboriginal Elder who dies or is rendered incapable by alcohol hastens the passing of the Aborigines. We are all guilty of Genocide if we do not act.