



**January 26<sup>th</sup>  
National Day of Mourning**

**(Invasion Day, Survival Day,  
Australian Natives Association  
Day, and Aboriginal Sovereignty  
Day)**

AUSTRALIAN  
Aborigines Conference

SESQUI-CENTENARY

*Day of Mourning and Protest*

to be held in

THE AUSTRALIAN HALL, SYDNEY

(No. 148 Elizabeth Street — a hundred yards south of Liverpool Street)

on

WEDNESDAY, 26th JANUARY, 1938

(AUSTRALIA DAY)

The Conference will assemble at 10 o'clock in the morning.

ABORIGINES AND PERSONS OF ABORIGINAL  
BLOOD ONLY ARE INVITED TO ATTEND

The following Resolution will be moved:

"WE, representing THE ABORIGINES OF AUSTRALIA, assembled in Conference at the Australian Hall, Sydney, on the 26th day of January, 1938, this being the 150th Anniversary of the whitemen's seizure of our country, HEREBY MAKE PROTEST against the callous treatment of our people by the whitemen during the past 150 years, AND WE APPEAL to the Australian Nation of today to make new laws for the education and care of Aborigines, and we ask for a new policy which will raise our people to FULL CITIZEN STATUS and EQUALITY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY."

The above resolution will be debated and voted upon, as the sole business of the Conference, which will terminate at 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

TO ALL AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINES! PLEASE COME TO THIS  
CONFERENCE IF YOU POSSIBLY CAN! ALSO SEND WORD BY  
LETTER TO NOTIFY US IF YOU CAN ATTEND

Signed, for and on behalf of

THE ABORIGINES PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION,

J. T. PATTEN, President.

W. FERGUSON, Organising Secretary.

Address: c/o. Box 1924KK, General Post Office, Sydney.



A LARGE BLACKBOARD displayed outside the hall proclaims, "Day of Mourning." Leaflets warned that, "Aborigines and persons of Aboriginal blood only are invited to attend." At 5 o'clock in the afternoon resolution of indignation, protest, was moved, passed.






WE, representing THE ABORIGINES OF AUSTRALIA, assembled in conference at the Australian Hall, Sydney, on the 26th day of January, 1938, this being the 150th Anniversary of the Whiteman's seizure of our country, HEREBY MAKE PROTEST against the callous treatment of our people by the Whiteman during the past 150 years, AND WE APPEAL to the Australian nation of today to make new laws for the education and care of Aborigines, we ask for a new policy which will raise our people TO FULL CITIZEN STATUS and EQUALITY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.'

“Jack Patten & Uncle William Ferguson”

*On this day, the white people are rejoicing, but we, as Aborigines, have no reason to rejoice on Australia's 150th birthday. Our purpose in meeting today is to bring home to the white people of Australia the frightful conditions in which the native Aborigines of this continent live. This land belonged to our forefathers 150 years ago, but today we are pushed further and further into the background.*

*“Jack Patten”*





*We have been waiting and waiting all of our lives for the white people of Australia to better our conditions, but we have waited in vain... Surely the time has come at last for us to do something for ourselves, and make ourselves heard. That is why the Aborigines Progressive Association has been formed.*

*“William Ferguson”*

*The public does not realise what our people have suffered for 150 years. Aboriginal girls have been sent to Government Reserves and have not been given any opportunity to improve themselves. Their treatment has been disgusting ...Now is our chance to have things altered. We must fight our very hardest in this cause.*

*“Pastor Doug Nicholls on behalf of the Koori Community”*

*Conditions on all the Aboriginal stations are a disgrace. They are all very much alike. At Brewarrina (in New South Wales) the children are taught by a man who is not a qualified teacher. Two old men on that station...are left by themselves in a half starved state. I spoke to these old men, and when they told me how badly they were treated it made me cry, and pray that this movement will be a success.*

*“Aunty Pearl Gibbs”*

The bottom of the page features a decorative graphic consisting of several horizontal, wavy bands. From top to bottom, the colors are dark blue, a thin red line, a yellow band, another dark blue band, and a final yellow band at the very bottom.

In 150 years, the white men  
have taken away the hunting  
grounds and camping grounds  
of our people and left us with  
nothing. We must have unity  
among ourselves, or we will  
not succeed in the uplifting of  
our race....

“Mr Connelly”







## Re-enactment of Governor Phillips Landing

In this 1938 re-enactment of Governor Phillip's landing, Aboriginal (specially brought in from western NSW for the occasion) are shown running up the beach as the boats of the First Fleet marines land at Farm Cove. A group of white dignitaries sit in comfortable safety watching the invasion (Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW – Home and Away 17955)

### What Actually Occurred

- Aboriginal organisations in Sydney refused to participate in a reenactment of the first landing
- The Government transported Aboriginal people from western communities in NSW- The visitors were locked up at Redfern police Barrack Stables
- After the reenactment, the group of aboriginal people were featured on a float
  - There would be more forced reenactments until 1988

Click the link below to watch the video



<https://youtu.be/G8czHIPYXew>





# References

<https://www.sydneybarani.com.au/sites/significant-aboriginal-events-in-sydney/>

[https://deadlystory.com/page/culture/history/Day\\_of\\_Mourning\\_protests\\_held\\_in\\_Sydney](https://deadlystory.com/page/culture/history/Day_of_Mourning_protests_held_in_Sydney)

<https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/history/australia-day-invasion-day>

<https://www.sydneybarani.com.au/sites/significant-aboriginal-events-in-sydney/>

<https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/day-of-mourning>

<https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/day-of-mourning>

<https://www.abc.net.au/rightwrongs/story/day-of-mourning/>