

129. Yolngu Statement in the Gupapunyngu Language, presented in Canberra to William McMahon, Prime Minister, 6 May 1971

Translation

The people of Yirrkala have asked us to speak to you on their behalf. They are deeply shocked at the result of the recent Court case. We cannot be satisfied with anything less than ownership of the land. The land and law, the sacred places, songs, dances and language were given to our ancestors by spirits Djangkawu and Barama. We are worried that without the land future generations could not maintain our culture. We have the right to say to anybody not to come to our country. We gave permission for one mining company but we did not give away the land. The Australian law has said that the land is not ours. This is not so. It might be right legally but morally it's wrong. The law must be changed. The place does not belong to white man. They only want it for the money they can make. They will destroy plants, animal life and the culture of the people.

The people of Yirrkala want:

- 1 Title to our land.
- 2 A direct share of all royalties paid by Nabalco.
3. Royalties from all other businesses on the Aboriginal Reserves.
4. No other industries to be started without consent of the Yirrkala Council.
5. Land to be included in our title after mining is finished.

Signed R. Marika, Daymbalipu Mununggurr, W. Wunungmurra