

# OPINION

## SUNDAY Territorian GREEN LIGHT FOR TAVERN MAKES PLENTY OF SENSE

**T**HE NT Liquor Commission's decision to give Darwin developers Justin Coleman and Steve Dugan the go-ahead to build their new Breezes tavern in Muirhead represents a victory for common sense.

Despite receiving a record 188 written objections from 256 residents, business owners and community organisations, the commissioners kept their heads and ruled on the application based on its merits.

The easy thing to do would have been to appease the many naysayers by rejecting the application on the basis that it would put too many noses out of joint but, as is often the case, the decision proves the easy way is not always the right way.

The hysterical complaints that the yet-to-be-built tavern would lead to the "destruction" of the local "serenity" and "degrade the social fabric" of the community through increased crime and "a very high element of anti-social behaviour" were always overblown and, in the end, not borne out by the facts before the commission.

All too often the noisy, not-in-my-back-yard crowd manage to drown out all other voices and the squeaky wheel ends up getting the grease, but fortunately on this occasion the best outcome for the community as a whole has emerged from the din.

The developers provided repeated assurances as to the "family friendly" nature of the proposal, and the commissioners went so far as to stipulate that any future divergence from that concept would require the express approval of the Director of Liquor Licensing.

And if any nearby residents have lingering doubts, even the dress code has been baked into the ruling granting approval for the licence.

"Patrons must at all times be dressed in clean, neat and tidy apparel, in keeping with the concept of a family friendly tavern," it reads.

On top of that, shots are banned, along with loud music and even a dedicated dancefloor, all safeguards which should satisfy even the most hard-boiled of NIMBYs.

## Attitudes more vital than date



### MALARNDIRRI MCCARTHY

JANUARY 26 is one day out of 365. But no other date conjures up so much passionate debate amid a cacophony of divided views. Each year there is the predictable commentary about Australia Day.

Crickets Australia's decision to not mention Australia Day for its Big Bash League clash, and instead use only the words January 26, is a googy (making us all curious). No, it's not the GOAT Nathan Lyon, it's a brand new spinner called "taking-a-stand".

The crowd is irritated at first by this new type of bowler. "What's this going to achieve?" they groan. But hey! Hitting the stumps is what cricket is all about, right?

So, let's take a drinks break and try to unpack this innings to see what strategy is being used.

CA, with their National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cricket Advisory Committee, is showing substantial leadership in the field of cricket.

This decision is about acknowledging the past and present-day injustices that still impact First Nations' families.

Given Australia's first cricket team to travel overseas - to England in 1868 - was an all-Aboriginal team, it is commendable that CA is following its Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

"Our RAP vision of Cricket Connecting Country comes with accountability for cricket to be a leader, and use our influence to have a positive social impact on our community," it says.

It irritates and annoys Prime Minister Scott Morrison. Yet, despite pressure from the PM to alter its decision, Cricket

Australia stands firm. After all, why waste time on establishing a RAP and not follow through?

Or worse, like Rio Tinto, ignore it, and go ahead and blow up rock sites more than 60,000 years old.

Condemnation from the PM over that disastrous failure by Rio Tinto was totally absent. Reconciliation Australia rejected Rio Tinto outright and revoked its endorsement.

CA's decision, with its First Nations committee, shows leadership.

Meanwhile, the PM and his team are sitting in the grandstand still at tea and haven't even got their whites on yet. They're simply not serious players.

Many in the PM's team still support the insurrection on the US Capital in recent weeks, now flirting with dark intentions to destabilise democracy more broadly in Australia.

What a breath of much-needed global fresh air - and hope - is President Joe Biden. With 400,000 Americans dead from COVID-19, more casualties than in the Second World War, President Biden has made it his priority to make sure all Americans survive.

On January 26, Indigenous designs will be on the clothes of each BBL team, and Welcome to Country ceremonies held. CA's Mel Jones, a retired women's Test and ODI player, said: "There was no politics in regards to changing the date or anything along those lines. The conversation was purely about, 'How do we help this day be as safe and respectful for everyone involved in cricket?'"

Organisations like CA are trying to

make progress, to fill the void in leadership left by the PM. Australia has the highest rate of Indigenous incarceration. The Northern Territory rate of Indigenous juvenile incarceration is the worst. The high rates of removal of First Nations' children from their families signifies serious structural and community dislocation, trauma, and violence.

We can, as a country, change this. COVID-19 has showed us we know how to work together when all our lives depend on it. We know how to survive. We want to continue to survive.

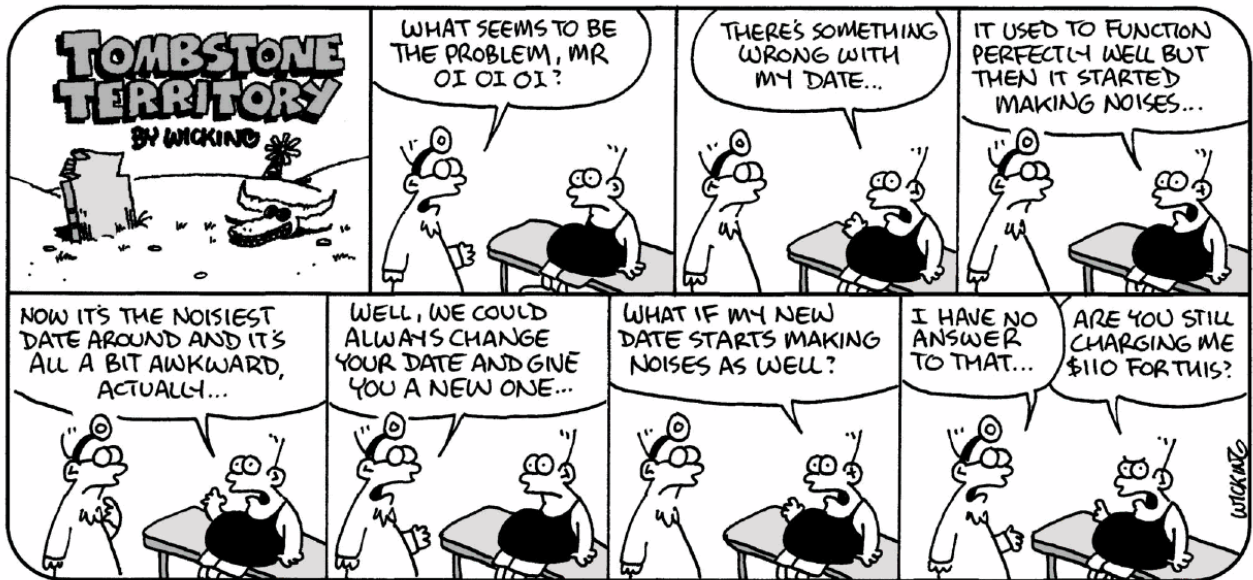
A constitutionally enshrined First Nations' voice to the Australian Parliament is imperative to enabling positive change in our country.

So, on January 26, or Australia Day, or Survival Day or Invasion Day, or just another day - whatever you call it - remember we are a democracy, and we have our individual views. But to survive takes a collective mindset and determination to work together in overcoming our differences.

Please take the time to reflect and respect the views of others and stay COVID-safe. It's not about changing the date - it's about changing attitudes.

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