

The Daily Telegraph

Pearson: ABC is a spittoon of racism

By Sharri Markson
Daily Telegraph
November 22, 2016

THE country's top indigenous leader Noel Pearson has eviscerated the ABC as a "miserable racist national broadcaster" needing "blacks to lead short lives of grief and tribulation" in order to produce bleeding-heart news reports.

In remarks that stunned an audience of senior Labor figures gathered to launch a new biography of former prime minister Paul Keating, Mr Pearson denounced the ABC for "soft bigotry" in its coverage of indigenous Australians.

Paying warm tribute to Mr Keating's commitment to reconciliation and his historic Redfern Speech, Mr Pearson said some of his most promising reforms had been "wrecked" by "ignorant ministers and blind bureaucrats" who have been "aided and abetted by the media, not the least the country's miserable racist national broadcaster".

In language as eloquently scathing as some of Mr Keating's most famous insults against political opponents, Mr Pearson (pictured) described the ABC as "a spittoon's worth of perverse people willing the wretched to fail".

"They need blacks to remain alien from mothers' bosoms, carceral in legions, leading short lives of grief and tribulation because if it were not so, against whom could they direct their soft bigotry of low expectations, about whom could they report misery and bleeding tragedy," Mr Pearson said.

"Between the Quadrant's hard bigotry of prejudice from the right and the ABC's soft bigotry of low expectations on the left, lies this common ground of mutual racism." Mr Keating, who co-operated with the biography, *The Big Picture Leader* by The Australian journalist Troy Bramston, warned Australia would never reach its full potential until it had achieved true reconciliation and had cut ties to Great Britain.

"We will never be the place we ought to be without full reconciliation with the First Australians here, and we will never be the place we ought to be while a monarch from another country is the head of state," he said.

Mr Keating also said he always thought Mr Pearson was Australia's answer to Barack Obama and hoped he would play a greater leadership role in the country's future.

The ABC hit back at Mr Pearson's remarks and said it provided more coverage of indigenous issues than any other Australian media outlet.

A spokesman said the ABC had given a platform to Mr Pearson, and other indigenous commentators, to canvass issues of welfare dependency, alcohol abuse and violence against women.

"With its 60 locations across Australia, the ABC covers the everyday experiences of indigenous communities and provides a range of programs to give voices to indigenous Australians and to showcase their achievements.

"The ABC has also been at the forefront in recognising indigenous talent. "ABC Radio, ABC TV and ABC News have set up indigenous units to better reflect indigenous culture in staffing and in storytelling