

Indigenous Australian Senator heckles King Charles



Indigenous Australian senator Lidia Thorpe (L) shouts anti-colonial slogans in front of King Charles and Queen Camilla at the Great Hall of Australian Parliament in Canberra on Monday. (By Shutterstock)

Canberra, October 21 (RHC)-- An Indigenous Australian senator has shouted at Britain's King Charles III during his first visit since taking the throne, saying: "You are not my king" and noting that the British colonizers committed "genocide" against the First Nations peoples.

"You committed genocide against our people. Give us our land back! Give us what you stole from us!" Senator Lidia Thorpe shouted to the British monarch at a reception for him at Parliament House in Canberra on Monday.

"Our bones, our skulls, our babies, our people. You destroyed our land. You are a genocidalist." she added, calling for a treaty between the Australian government and Australia's Indigenous peoples. "This is not your land. You are not my king," Thorpe continued as she was escorted out of the room by security.

Thorpe, a vocal advocate for Indigenous Australian rights, is the first Indigenous person to represent the state of Victoria in the Senate.

Charles was seated on a podium during Thorpe's protest, and spoke quietly with Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, who also told the monarch it was time for his role to end.

"You have shown great respect for Australians, even during times when we have debated the future of our own constitutional arrangements and the nature of our relationship with the Crown," Albanese said. However, he said, "nothing stands still."

Albanese has expressed his preference for his country to become a republic with an Australian head of state. The British settlement of Australia began in the late 18th century, resulting in the mass displacement of indigenous communities and numerous deaths because of disease and frontier massacres.

Australia has gained de facto independence from Britain since 1901, but the British king remains its head of state.

The visit marks the first to Australia by a reigning monarch in more than a decade.

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