

By Mark Kenny

Never in world history, has a settler state founded by imperial force and systematised racial negation, been offered such a direct and painless avenue to moral renewal.

A chance, in short, at national redemption.

The referendum to enshrine a Voice to Parliament power in the Constitution as outlined in 2017 Uluru Statement from the Heart is a once-in-a-lifetime deal which offers to pair modern Australia with the First Nations Peoples its founding did so much to eliminate.

Over the two and a half centuries since invasion, Australia has been lying to itself. Parading its egalitarianism and good intentions. Proclaiming its self-ascribed national virtues of decency and the fair go. Pretending that pernicious past practices had no modern sequelae, even as we knew it was nonsense.

Official denial has only multiplied the harm, magnified the insult.

The Uluru Statement lights a path out of this paralysing moral funk. This dishonourable, disreputable smallness.

It is an invitation to walk together on the path to a model future state. One that is proudly immigrant-derived and yet uniquely lays claim to the most ancient lands and lineages of any country in the world.

It envisions an accountable inclusive nation which owns its origin stories, good and bad, so as to better construct its future.

It is in its most important conception, nation-enlarging. Even nation-rescuing.