

# Howard Claims 60,000 Years of Back Rent

*Reporter: Darren Griffin*

*Canberra:* Prime Minister Mr John Howard took a short break from the election campaign today to announce that the Federal Government was planning to sue the Indigenous communities now under his control for 60,000 years of unpaid rent. He stated that the Commonwealth was growing weary of covering the rent for the Crown Land properties where Indigenous people had been unlawfully living for thousands of years.

Following the passing of the Federal Government's Northern Territory Indigenous intervention legislation in parliament, giving the Commonwealth absolute power to seize control of the Indigenous community's land and assets, scrap the permit system, and brush aside the Land Rights and Racial Discrimination Acts, Mr Howard hoped that further Commonwealth assistance, such as the forced signing of 99 year leases; the implementation of the 'mild dictatorship' over Indigenous issues including health; the 'income-management' of Indigenous payments by seizing all Indigenous owned businesses and leasing them back at a profit; the exemption of all white people from the NT alcohol ban; the refusal to sign the UN Indigenous rights declaration; and the popular 'land-for-the-dole' program would be adopted without the fuss that was generated over the intervention legislation. Mr Howard was reportedly annoyed that the Senate took more than one whole day to read, digest, debate and pass the 500 page piece of legislation.

"The next piece of legislation will not take nearly as long to be passed, once we are returned to office," Mr Howard declared earlier today, "I'm sure the Australian taxpayers are sick and tired of politicians wasting time with the democratic process. They want action!"

Mr Howard was referring to his proposed legislation repealing the 1993 MABO decision, which he expects will be passed through parliament once the coalition win this weekend's election. Once this bill has been ratified, the previous legislation will come back in to effect.

“Under the Terra Nullius law that this great nation was founded on, the first brave Anglican English settlers to these shores could find no evidence of any previous meaningful occupation of this wide brown land, or in fact any real people here at all and so rightfully proclaimed this continent as empty,” Mr Howard told the press outside parliament house. He turned and added tersely to one waiting ABC reporter, “Therefore anymore annoying talk about massacres that may or may not have taken place will once again be null and void. My parliamentary staff will be updating Wikipedia with the proper information accordingly.”

The Federal Government pointed out in a press release that current archaeological evidence suggests that bands of Indigenous peoples had been living right across this country as long as 60,000 years ago. As these people were not the rightful owners of the land under the concept of Terra Nullius, they must have been the tenants. They therefore owe the rightful owner (being the Commonwealth Government of Australia, representing Her Majesty the Queen of Australia) at least 60,000 years in back rent (interest compounded annually).

The exact amount of rent owed is still being decided by the Federal Government. “Well, they left the place in a bit of a mess. There were trees and animals everywhere, bits of broken stone and other rubbish littered the floor, piles of used and discarded shells dotted the shoreline, and there was even graffiti all over the walls! It took the first settlers ages to clean it up. So, the market value of the place was reduced considerably. Apparently the Dutch passed it in without even putting in a bid! And that was when the interest rates were lower than a kid overboard!!” Mr Howard sniggered.

It is expected that the rent will be charged at a reduced rate, although Mr Howard did not rule out charging the Indigenous population for the cleaning bill. “We are not bullies,” chuckled Mr Howard, “It wouldn’t be fair to charge them for all the improvements we have made to the place and all the wonderful shiny, clean buildings we have constructed. But, we are seriously considering getting a contractor in to sand blast all those scribbles off the rocks that even today seem to be everywhere - and some of those costs will have to be passed on.”

Mr Howard added that he was extremely upset at the tone and content of some of the rock paintings, “Some of the pictures blatantly display male and female genitalia, and in areas that are sometimes frequented by children.”

In addition to the unpaid rent, Mr Howard hinted that the Federal Government may be seeking compensation from the Indigenous people of Australia for damages caused to the country while they were living here. Mr Howard stated that part of the Coalition's 'go for growth' plan was to pass laws to allow the Commonwealth to pry control of the Murray-Darling river system from the ineffectual state governments, along with all their ports, hospitals, schools, pulp mills and the entire state of Queensland. Following these important actions that will ensure the fragile economy does not falter, Mr Howard plans to personally inspect all the newly acquired Commonwealth properties.

“The helpful scientists from the totally independent Government funded University think tank, RightisRight, have informed me that 60,000 years ago the Murray-Darling river system was full of water with beautiful flood plains overflowing with a large variety of life, but now look at them. There is hardly any water in there at all – all the trees are dead!” Mr Howard exclaimed angrily. He went on to chastise the Indigenous people for leaving it in such a mess, and stated that the Federal Government could not possibly do anything to help the desperate and once magnificent Murray-Darling without compensation monies from the Indigenous people who misused the rivers for so long.

“We know who you are – you left your stuff everywhere!” rebuked Mr Howard.

RightisRight released a press statement to coincide with Mr Howard's comments. They claim that all the scientists across the whole country who want to ever get any government funding ever again agree with them that careless Indigenous land use practices in the past are most likely responsible for the loss of this country's extremely rare and diverse bioregions. They suggest that our unique flora and fauna suffered from a large number of arson attacks by Indigenous peoples over thousands of years.

Federal Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, Mr Malcolm Turnbull is quoted as saying that the Commonwealth also intends to seek full recompense for all the unpaid water bills. He added, “Poor Mr Howard has been through a lot recently, and this hooligan-type behaviour over such a long period of time displays a blatant disrespect for the Australian people, and especially for the kindly nature and helpful demeanor of our wonderful Prime Minister. It has actually left him feeling pretty low – he feels like he has been taken advantage of. As a result, he intends to seek a full, unconditional apology from the Indigenous people.”

Mr Howard reiterated that despite legal advice from his humane and community minded Attorney-General, Mr Philip Ruddock, and as a show of goodwill, the Federal Government would not be pursuing all the unpaid accommodation and school fees incurred during the 'mission' and 'stolen generations' years.

However an indignant Mr Howard stated that a building inspector would be sent out shortly after the election to identify areas of the country where suspicious activity may have taken place in the past. "I'm not inferring that any Indigenous person or persons are or have been involved in any criminal or terrorist related activities, however, the fact remains that we could not find any infrastructure of any type anywhere across the whole country when we first got here, and yet the gas bill was through the roof!"

"I think the Australian public has a right to know what was really going on." Mr Howard then moved to calm fears that private and religious places would be seized and inspected by the Commonwealth, as they had been recently in the Northern Territory, "The Coalition has the utmost respect for all religious beliefs that unfortunately happen not to be Anglican, however in this current global climate of imminent terrorist attack, the claim that an area is a sacred site does not outweigh the need for us to put our minds at ease."

Mr Howard went on to mention that the RightisRight scientists have only recently informed him that there were once large glaziers that covered the continent of Australia. "You don't have to be an expert to see that there is no evidence of any such glaziers around today, so the question you have to ask is what happened to all that ice?" Mr Howard stated that he had been in contact with the Australian Federal Police to pass on this information, and they were now conducting a full investigation in to the Indigenous community's connection to the Ice epidemic that is currently tearing apart battling families across the nation.

At one stage during the impromptu press conference Mr Howard angrily rebuffed one reporter's question by waving his finger pointedly, "Let me make this clear; the Liberal Party, and all its multi-national big business backers are not in to the costly, but extremely effective, process of creating scapegoats. Neither are we in to quick fix solutions and fear campaigns! We realise that these are complex issues and the solutions to these problems require a multi leveled and well funded approach from all corners of society over a very long period of time. And the Liberal Party intends to be here for that very long period of time...."

Mr Howard scoffed at another reporter's question regarding paternalism, before moving on to declare that his office would be forwarding the bill for the back rent as soon as the election was over and the compensation claim would be submitted

not long after that. When questioned on how the already impoverished Indigenous communities now under direct Commonwealth control could pay off such a debt, Mr Howard suggested that when the paperwork to bin the 1967 referendum, which gave Indigenous Australians' citizenship rights, was finally completed, he would be talking to their 'new Dad', Mal Brough about docking their allowance. "This will probably be the fairest way to ensure the Indigenous children can re-pay what they owe the Australian people and still leave them with some spare pocket money."

Mr Howard laughed off further questions by saying, "Oh, I really don't care what they spend their money on, as long as it's not tobacco, alcohol, drugs, petrol, porn, karva or too many sweets. We will be providing them with blankets, flour, sugar and bibles free of charge of course." Mr Howard smiled before stepping back inside Parliament House to see how the drafting of his other massive legislative changes to be passed after the election were proceeding.

A Liberal Party spokesman added later that although Mr Howard did not understand exactly what it was the Indigenous peoples of Australia actually got up to for 60,000 years before the Howard family ancestors arrived and told them what to do, the PM wanted it to be made clear that he had great respect for Indigenous Australian history and culture. And as a sign of respect Mr Howard said his government planned to construct more pit toilets over that history and culture, so he could personally look down on it while he was doing his number two's. The Liberal Party spokesman concluded by stating that through his recent tireless efforts, Mr Howard hoped to bring the reconciliation debate to an end.

No Northern Territory Indigenous individuals or organizations have commented on these recent statements by the Australian Liberal Party as the Army stated their permission slips were not handed in on time.