

ELECTION 2001: SUMMARY OF THE INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS RECORD AND POLICY PRIORITIES OF THE MAJOR PARTIES*

ISSUE	RECORD / POLICY OF MAJOR PARTIES			
	LIBERAL/NATIONAL	LABOR	DEMOCRATS	GREENS
RECONCILIATION				
-Stated commitment to Reconciliation	-yes	-yes	-yes	-yes
-Formal Govt. response to Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (CAR) Final Recommendations, Dec 2000	-no	-n/a	-n/a	-n/a
-Commitment to CAR Final Recommendations:				
(a) Declaration Towards Reconciliation	-PM Howard opposed reference to an apology and to 'selfdetermination'	-yes	-yes	-yes
(b) Roadmap for Reconciliation (Sustaining the reconciliation process strategy; Recognising A & TSI rights strategy; Overcoming Disadvantage strategy; Economic independence strategy).	-Supports 'practical' measures, but not symbolic or rights-based measures	-yes, broadly	-yes	-yes
(c) Commitments sought from The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) (Rec. 1)	-yes	-yes	-yes	-yes
(d) Referendum for constitutional change to recognise A & TSI peoples in the Preamble; and removal of s25 (Rec. 3)	-no	?	-yes	-yes
(e) Measures for continuing and sustaining the Reconciliation process (Rec. 4)	-general support	-yes	-yes	-yes
(f) An agreement or treaty process to deal with unfinished business (Recs 5 & 6)	-no	-Support contingent on ATSIC Indigenous consultative process ¹	-yes	-yes
(g) Enact framework legislation to give effect to strategies, including for a Treaty process	-no	-as above	-yes	-yes
-Government funding for post-CAR Reconciliation process	-Significantly reduced overall; Seed funding provided for Reconciliation Australia (body replacing CAR)	-n/a	-n/a	-n/a
TREATY				
-Support for an agreements or treaty process (CAR Recs 5 & 6)	-no	-Support contingent on ATSIC Indigenous consultative process	-yes	-yes
-Support for national debate about an agreements or treaty process	-no	-yes	-yes	-yes
-Will support outcome of a future Indigenous plebiscite on the issue of a treaty	?	-yes	-yes	-yes
NATIVE TITLE				
-Supported discriminatory 1998 Native Title Act Amendments (10-Point Plan)	-yes	-no	-no	-no
-Support review of amended NTA to remove discriminatory elements	-no	-yes	-yes	-yes
-Policy of negotiating Native Title legislation with Indigenous stakeholders on the basis of 'informed consent'	-no	-yes	-yes	-yes
-Support for Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs)	-yes	-yes	-yes	-yes
-Ensure 'right to negotiate' provisions equivalent to original 1992 <i>Native Title Act</i>	-no	-yes	-yes	-yes
-Ensure adequate resources for Indigenous Native Title Representative Bodies (NTRBs) to prevent 'back door' extinguishment of native title.	-Govt's 1998 Amendments increased burden on NTRB resources, but no plans to increase NTRB funding to adequate levels.	-yes	-yes	-yes

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STOLEN GENERATIONS				
-General response to the <i>Bringing Them Home Report</i>	-Qualified support (see below)	-Broad support	-Broad support	-Broad support
-Formal apology on behalf of the nation	-no	-yes	-yes	-yes
-Family reunion and counselling	-yes	-yes	-yes	-yes
-Reparations Tribunal	-no	-Possibly. Propose a national conference to determine response.	-yes	-yes
-Test cases for compensation by members of the stolen generations (Gunner-Cubillo; Williams)	-Govt spent \$12m opposing the cases	-Govt should have provided alternative mechanism (see above)	-Support tribunal (see above)	-Support tribunal (see above)
-Senate Committee Inquiry in 2000 into effectiveness of Govt response to the <i>Bringing Them Home Report</i>	-Govt submission questions numbers of children affected and validity of the term 'stolen generations'	-	-	-
INDIGENOUS DISADVANTAGE				
-Recognition of connection between disadvantage and rights issues	-Supports 'practical' measures, but not symbolic or rights-based measures	-yes	-yes	-yes
-Spending required to address Indigenous disadvantage	-Cut Indigenous affairs funding by \$400 million in 1996	-Increase required	-Increase required	-Increase required
-Support for Indigenous self-determination	-no	-yes	-yes	-yes
-Recognise the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) as peak Indigenous advisory body	-Govt scaled back funding levels and role of ATSIC; bypassed ATSIC's advisory role.	-yes	-yes	-yes
-Commonwealth Grants Commission's 2001 report criticises levels of Indigenous access to mainstream services and recommends increased Indigenous control over funding	-Govt criticised draft report and delayed release of the final report until forced by a Freedom of Information (FOI) application	-Supports Commission's findings	-Supports Commission's findings	-Supports Commission's findings
HERITAGE PROTECTION				
-Access to Commonwealth Act as a 'last resort' option in all cases	-no	-yes	-yes	-yes
-Include strong minimum standards for state/territory regimes (as recommended by Evatt Report)	-no	-yes	-yes	-yes
-Provision for Indigenous involvement in decision-making at all levels	-no	-yes	-yes	-yes
-Provision for an independent Indigenous-controlled heritage body at the Commonwealth level	-no	-maybe	-yes	-yes
MANDATORY SENTENCING				
-Oppose all mandatory sentencing policies	-no	no	yes	yes
-Oppose mandatory sentencing of juveniles	?	yes	yes	yes
-Support Commonwealth legislation to override state/territory mandatory sentencing laws	-no	yes, in relation to juveniles	yes	yes

* Compiled by Australians for Native Title & Reconciliation (ANTaR) based on available information from public sources and provided to assist ANTaR members and supporters in considering Indigenous affairs issues during the 2001 Federal Election.

¹ ATSIC is currently coordinating a consultation and education process within the Indigenous community on the issue of a treaty process. An Indigenous plebiscite on the issue is planned for 2002.