



MEDIA STATEMENT

Hon Dr Carmen Lawrence MP
Federal Member for Fremantle

Attn: News Editors/Chiefs of Staff
Tuesday, 5 December 2006

This Parrot is Dead, Prime Minister

The Minister for Environment and Heritage received a heritage assessment on the Burrup Peninsula from the Australian Heritage Council on 23 August 2006. The Burrup was nominated for the National Heritage List on 20 May 2004. Many regard it as the most important cultural heritage site in Australia.

The heritage assessment was unequivocal:

- “[the area] has been described as the richest and most exciting region of rock engravings in Australia”
- “The overall density of stone arrangements on the Burrup Peninsula, and the wide range of types of stone features found in the Dampier Archipelago, are exceptional by Australian standards.”

In September, the Minister issued his usual waffle on the subject of balancing economic and heritage interests in relation to the Burrup. But what did he do? Nothing. In fact he has been exploring options that would allow him to *not make a decision*.

Woodside and the state government of Western Australia are now cooperating in pursuit of an arrangement that would protect the Burrup, and I support that process.

The Minister for the Environment is trying, woefully, to play politics. After years of incompetence, the Dead Parrot of the Howard Ministry is doing all he can to avoid the forthcoming ministerial reshuffle.

Dr Carmen Lawrence says, **“The Minister for the Environment has been in possession of a Heritage Assessment on the Burrup for months and he has done nothing. He knows there is reshuffle coming. What we have here is an incompetent Minister fighting for his position when he should be fighting to protect the most significant heritage site in Australia. Someone needs to tell the Prime Minister that this parrot is dead.”**

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