

Barkindji people, local landholders and NSW and SA governments which will result in the development of a management plan for Lake Victoria. The agreement recognises the cultural affiliation of the Barkindji people to Lake Victoria and commits the parties to the longterm protection of significant sites with the optimum use of the lake as a water source. (*Aus, 3 Dec, p4*)

Go back to [Contents](#)

De Rose Hill [NNTT Ref# SC94/2]

The Yankunytjatjara claim over parts of De Rose Hill Station, will be heard before the Federal Court in February following a breakdown in mediation before the NNTT. (*Ad, 23 Jan, p6*)

Go back to [Contents](#)

NATIVE TITLE ACT AMENDMENTS

In response to the Larrakia native title claim PM John Howard criticised what he regards as 'capricious' and 'extravagant' Aboriginal land claims; Mr Howard believes proposed amendments to the native Title Act would make it harder for such claims to proceed. (*Age, 3 Dec, A6*)* he said that claims such as the Larrakia claim had potential to undermine the reconciliation and native title process; in response Justice French said that problems could be solved in the mediation or negotiation process. (*CT, 3 Dec, p3*)*

Senator Eric Abetz, Chair of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Native Title and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Fund, tabled the Committee's seventh report which recommended the Parliament should proceed in adopting the proposed amendments to the Native Title Act; stating that 'this report refutes any suggestion that the proposed amendments to the Native Title Act are inconsistent with the Racial Discrimination Act.' (*Press release, 12 Dec*)

The ALP is developing a strategy on changes to the Native Title Act designed to counter expected government accusations that it is obstructionist and split on the issue however it would not accept changes to the principles enshrined in the legislation and rejected claims that legislative action was needed in response to the Wik decision. (*Aus, 2 Jan, p2*)

Frank Brennan believes the major challenge in 1997 for PM Howard is the amendment of the native title legislation whilst fulfilling a promise that it would be done 'in a manner that completely respects the provisions of the Racial Discrimination Act.' There will need to be more trust between the government and the Aboriginal representative bodies to negotiate a workable Native Title Act. (*SMH, 4 Jan, p21*)

Senior Liberal Party official, Mr Tony Nutt has been appointed chief adviser to Attorney General Daryl Williams to help oversee expected changes to native title laws. (*SMH, 5 Jan, p5*)

The Australian's political correspondent, John Short, analyses the problems for the ALP in opposing changes to the Native Title Act, and how the Government will exploit any divisions within the ALP on the issue. (*Aus, 6 Jan, p9*)

Go back to [Contents](#)