

Diocesan Office of Justice, Ecology & Peace

MEDIA RELEASE

Talk is cheap; now is the time for action

The Co-ordinator of the Broome Diocesan *Office of Justice, Ecology & Peace* has congratulated the Labor Party on its elevation to Federal Government, but wants to see it make a real difference.

‘Mr Rudd mentioned his willingness and commitment to govern for all Australians and quite properly mentioned the Indigenous Australians first in his acceptance speech. Prior to the election, Labor gave support to the Northern Territory intervention – now admitted by Alexander Downer as a failed attempt to win votes. During the Campaign neither Party was prepared to mention the issue of Reconciliation with Indigenous people or for that matter Australia’s refugee policy,’ Br Wood commented. ‘This can be understood and perhaps forgiven only as some sort of election campaign tactic designed to avoid wedge politics. Many commentators think it is a misguided strategy. If pursued to its ultimate, the voters will in future have little with which to differentiate the major parties from each other, and we will have a change of Government only on the basis of an “it’s time” judgement.’

‘Now we want to see some practical commitment to make changes to the way our Federal Government has dealt with Aboriginal people and their issues in the recent past, as they have clearly not made much of a statistical impression on health, housing or education. I look forward to a new Minister dedicated solely to Indigenous Affairs and being at the Cabinet table. The issues are so great and the needs so enormous that our first peoples deserve no less,’ Br Wood concluded.

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