



On 17 January 2006, forty-three West Papuans asylum seekers beached their double-outrigger canoe 'Exodus' at Mapoon on the west coast of Cape York Peninsula. PAUL ZANETTI's Prime Minister Howard welcomes them in biblical style **[3. Forty-three asylum seekers land]**. Stretched across their *prahru* was a banner SAVE WEST PAPUA FROM GENOCIDE. They'd left Jayapura early in December, circumnavigated their huge homeland, then pointed their canoe to the 'neck of australia' and crossed the treacherous currents of Torres Strait. Two Torres New journalists found them within minutes of Customs, Quarantine, and Police turning up. The journalists heard on the Aboriginal grapevine that the Papuans might be lost, and convinced Murdoch's Cairns Post to hire a helicopter. They soon breached Customs 32km no-fly-zone around the refugees, and immediately uploaded their photos to the internet.

Indonesia has occupied West Papua since 1962, but still tortures, incarcerates, and assassinates Melanesian political activists and their families. The land, the people's source of spirituality and sustainability, is ravaged by miners and loggers. Waters that were pristine in 1962 are heavily polluted. Sydney University reported in 2010 on a Melanesian population of 47%, down from 99% in 1962, with an annual growth rate of 1.84% (compared to the non-Papuan rate of 10.82%). *Slow motion genocide* was blamed for 546,126 missing—assassinated, poisoned, bombed, exiled, born dead or not at all.

These twenty-eight cartoons lampoon the war-of-words over West Papua waged by Canberra and Jakarta in 2006. President Yudhoyono fired first, demanding Australia return the asylum seekers to Indonesia. Immigration Minister Amanda Vanstone was determined to uphold Australia's legal obligations to refugees and grant them protection visas. Indonesia—not a signatory to the UN Convention on Refugees—insisted these visas undermined its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Cartoonist FONDA LAPOD even had Australia mounting a take-over, his dingo, in the guise of Prime Minister Howard telling Foreign Affairs Minister Downer 'I want Papua Alex, make it happen' **[8. The adventure of two dingo]**. By the time of Bill Leak's equally controversial rejoinder **[9. No offence intended]** President Yudhoyono had recalled his ambassador and was reviewing his cooperation with Australia in terms of people-smuggling and counter-terrorism.

Amanda Vanstone will always be remembered for her fair treatment of the forty-three West Papuans. She employed David Manne, the best and most litigious refugee lawyer, to fly to Christmas Island and interview them. She ingeniously protected their claims from interference by the Prime Minister and Department of Foreign Affairs. She ensured co-operation between the numerous agencies in settling them, importantly with public housing and education, but also with gifts of soccer balls and shoes. Yet within days of their landing in Melbourne on 4 April 2006, cartoonist DAVID POPE, apparently, knew Howard would sack his veteran minister, for he has her leaning against an Indonesian pinball machine smoking a cigarette rifling through an air-travel magazine **[15. Refugee Pinball]**.

In the same cartoon POPE's work-a-man Prime Minister tells Ms Vanstone he's 'disabled the tilt'. Meaning he'd brought the Indonesian-Australian relationship back into balance with a Migration Amendment Bill designed to immunize Australia from any more West Papuan asylum seekers. The Bill blocked access to Australia for all boat people, warehousing them in another country out of reach of the Australian media and Australian legal system. The legislation was brutal and three parliamentarians—Petro Georgiou, Russell Broadbent and Judi Moylan—crossed the floor. PETER NICHOLSON's cartoon picks up Broadbent's impassioned plea in the House of Representatives: "If I am to die politically because of my stance on this bill, it is better to die on my feet than to live on my knees." **[22. Rebel liberals may cross floor]**.

The Bill was rejected by a Parliamentary Committee chaired by Marise Payne, which noted the scandalous legislation breached Australia's legal obligations and "represents deficient foreign policy in terms of a perceived attempt to appease Indonesia over the situation in West Papua". MARK KNIGHT penned its demise after Senators Judith Troethe, Barnaby Joyce and Steve Fielding told the Prime Minister they were joining Labor and The Greens to vote against it in the Senate **[25. PM overboard]**.

There were politics of a different hue in September when Channel 9 and Channel 7 television crews went to West Papua looking for cannibals. *Sixty Minutes* found Wawa, a ten-year-old boy allegedly under threat of being eaten by his tribe. *Today Tonight* was less lucky, PETER NICHOLSON depicting host Naomi Robson being boiled in a pot rather than being arrested, as she was, by the Indonesian authorities for trying to enter West Papua on a tourist visa [27. **Naomi Robson with cannibal tribes**].

Meantime Indonesia was waiting to be recompensed for the non-refoulement of its 43 Melanesian citizens. Drafts of a security treaty—Indonesia tore up the previous agreement after Australia led a 22-nation peace-keeping force into East Timor in 1999—were revived and signed as the Lombok Treaty in November 2006. The treaty included an outlandish clause which outlawed discussion and display of West Papuan identity in both countries! [28. **The things you see by a green light**].

1. POSTER *Let them stay* January 2006
2. PAT CAMPBELL *West Papua, Welcome to Democracy* The Canberra Times, January 2006 (National Museum of Australia)
3. PAUL ZANETTI *43 asylum seekers land* January 2006
4. JON KUDELKA *Cry West Papua* The Australian, 2 May 2006
5. IAN SHARPE The Canberra Times, 22 January 2006
6. PETER NICHOLSON *We'll welcome them back with open arms* First published by The Australian on 25 March 2006
7. PETER NICHOLSON *Excision-beaches-refugees-zone* First published by The Australian on 13 April 2006
8. FONDA LAPOD *The adventure of two Dingo Rakyat* Merdeka Online, 27 March 2006
9. BILL LEAK *Don't take this the wrong way, No offence intended as Indonesia fornicates with Australia* The Australian 1 Apr 2006
10. NIKSCOTT *Now that's going too far* 29 March 2006
11. JON SPOONER *The Foreign Affairs Department prepares a traditional refugee welcome* The Age, 8 April 2006
12. JON SPOONER *The Foreign Affairs Department adopts a pragmatic and principled position* The Age, 11 April 2006
13. PETER NICHOLSON *SBY recalls ambassador on West Papuans* First published by The Australian on 4 April 2006
14. PETER NICHOLSON *We will decide who comes to Australia* First published by The Australian on 8 April 2006
15. DAVID POPE *Refugee pinball* The Sun-Herald, 23 April 2006
16. MATT DAVIDSON *Can Howard find refuge* The Age, 14 May 2006
17. JON SPOONER *The New Prime Minister of Australnesia* First published in The Age on 15 June 2006
18. GEOFF PRYOR *Karaoke night* 19 June 2006
19. JOHN DITCHBURN *Australia's political coastline* Ballarat Courier
20. MARK KNIGHT *Nothing shall pass the Australian Keeper* The Herald Sun, 21 June 2006
21. PETER NICHOLSON *Reality shows on Border Protection* First published by The Australian on 10 August 2006
22. PETER NICHOLSON *Rebel Liberals may cross floor* First published by The Australian on 10 August 2006
23. BILL LEAK *Asylum Seeker, The Migration Amendment Bill 2006* First published in The Australian on 10 August 2006
24. BILL LEAK *President Yudhoyono and Australian Prime Minister Howard* First published in The Australian, 11 August 2006
25. MARK KNIGHT *PM overboard, Migration Bill* The Herald Sun, 15 August 2006
26. PETER NICHOLSON *Naomi Robson arrested in West Papua* First published by The Australian on 15 September 2006
27. PETER NICHOLSON *Naomi Robson with cannibal tribes* First published by The Australian on 16 September 2006
28. JOHN SPOONER *The things you see by a greenlight* First published in The Age on 9 November 2006
29. BILL LEAK *The Neighbour from Hell* First published in The Australian
30. ANDREW DYSON *Avoiding the real West Papua* The Age, 15 May 2006

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**FRWP Womens Office sincerely thanks UNITED IMAGE PHOTOGRAPHY and TAKING OFF TOURS TRAVEL AGENCY**