

Hicks case becomes Quicksand for Oz Government

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When things are a bit slow we can always rely on the Australian conservative government to entertain us -- their now very desperate (divorced from reality) attempts to come out of the Hicks "saga" smelling roses are entertaining if nothing else. The impossibility of the Howard government looking good over any issue relating to Hicks hasn't dampened the enthusiasm of the Federal Treasurer, Peter Costello. The Treasurer has very unwisely waded into the debate with characteristic arrogance and miscalculated comments directed at Hicks. Try as Costello might to incriminate Hicks and brand him a murderer, the facts defy his every attempt.



Federal Treasurer Peter Costello

Unlike the Primer Minister, John Howard, who is directly responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians in Iraq, Hicks hasn't murdered anyone. However, Costello vainly attempts to link 9/11 and the Bali bombings to Hicks, *"I must say for those people who say 'poor David Hicks', I say the poor dead and their families who died in the World Trade Centre and in the Bali bombings."* The news is, Mr Costello, Hicks has never harmed a soul - it's a shame the same can't be said for your leader, Mr. Howard!

We are all familiar with the tired methods of political inversion, murderers screaming victim in order to confuse and deceive is a very popular strategy of lacklustre, inept and visionless conservative politicians. Costello is known for his lack of understanding regarding the public consciousness. Nevertheless, he retains his front bench position based on his ability as a parliamentary performer - Costello would be well advised not to venture outside his area of expertise; the public is quite able to detect grating contradictions and screaming hypocrisies!

Howard's constant use of the word "justice" in relation to the Hicks case is probably the most ludicrous attempt at deception and subterfuge to date. Whatever is said about Guantanamo Bay and the illegal military commission, the word "justice" could never be applied. If you are so confident that 'justice' has been served, Mr. Howard, why then did you arrange with the US military to have a gag order placed on Hicks - surely YOU don't have anything to hide?

For years Howard's Attorney General, Philip Ruddock, hid behind the excuse of "TESTING" the Hicks case in a bona fide legal arena. However, the lack of real evidence proved problematic for the US military. Rumsfeld to the rescue, the US military was given license in 2002 to utilise torture methods to force detainees to incriminate themselves and anybody who the military deemed to be a

threat to them or their masters - in flagrant contravention of the Geneva Convention torture would now be utilised to manufacture 'evidence'! Is this the "TESTING" you had in mind Mr. 'comic book' Attorney General?

Hicks resisted five long torturous years prior to his 'confession' - we draw your attention to the British marines currently spilling their guts to the mass media after only a few weeks in Iranian custody. After five years enduring physical and psychological TORTURE, the veracity of any 'extracted' information or "confession" would obviously be in question. Howard's constant reference to a "CONFESSION" may be perceived by the public as a desperate 'stutter' from a known war criminal.

A previous article stated the Hicks case had the potential to bring down the government. Anyone familiar with the Australian psyche and the treatment the conservative Howard government displayed toward Hicks would have understood the negative consequences.

We can hardly wait for the next instalment of gaffes, fumbling and desperate innuendos from a government thrashing in quicksand!

[The opposition leader, Kevin Dudd, is conspicuous by his LACK OF COMMITMENT on this very important issue.]

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