

# Aboriginal claims Melbourne

An Aboriginal, Mr Harry Penrith, has claimed the Melbourne area on behalf of his tribe and is seeking \$20,000 million compensation. Mr Penrith, the leader of the Wurumtjier or Yarra Yarra tribe, which he says owns the land on which Melbourne stands and the surrounding area including Geelong and Frankston, was speaking at a press conference in Canberra yesterday.

He said his tribe, which had four living full-blood members, could document its claim.

The first step they would take was to have the fact that they were the owners of the land recognised and to do this they would follow protocol and take their claim to the Victorian Government.

"We hope that we will not be treated as trouble-makers or stirrers and we hope that our claim will be treated as serious", he said.

"While my claims may be seen as frivolous and while they may be thrown out of the courts, it is terribly important that non-Aboriginal people understand what it is like to be dispossessed . . . .

"Because there are so many non-Aboriginal people in Melbourne, I actually feel like a total stranger in my own land when I walk down Swanston Street and Little Collins Street . . . .

"Land rights are basic to the existence of every Aboriginal person in Australia, whether they live in the city or the country . . . .

"What they [the system] have to come to grips with is the reality that we Aboriginal people are in a conflict, war-like situation with the white people in Australia", he said. It was a war in the mind.