

Hunt attacks lands policy

The Minister for the Interior, Mr Hunt, yesterday criticised the policy on Aboriginal land rights spelt out by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Whitlam, to Aboriginal protesters on Tuesday.



MR HUNT

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Mr Whitlam told the land rights protesters camped outside Parliament House a Labor Government would reverse the recent Cabinet decision which refused tribal land rights to Aborigines.

Mr Hunt said Mr Whitlam did not indicate how far the Labor Party's proposed policy on land rights was to extend.

Mr Whitlam had not said whether his proposed policy would apply only to land inside Aboriginal reserves, or to other land in the Northern Territory, or whether it would apply throughout Australia.

Mr Hunt said recently a group of Aborigines had laid claim to Darwin by raising a flag in front of the Supreme Court.

"Mr Whitlam did not say whether the Labor Party supported such claims as this in the Northern Territory or in the States", he said.

The Government believed that there should not be one land law for Aborigines and another land law for other Australians.

The Government's policies regarding Aborigines and land would avoid uncertainty and possible challenge to other land titles at present unquestioned and secure, Mr Hunt said.

In the Northern Territory, the area reserved for the 22,000 Aboriginal people had been increased in the past 20 years from 62,000 square miles to 94,000 square miles — a larger area than Victoria, he said.