

SERIES TWO

THE GAMES

EPISODE

03

RECONCILIATION

BROADCAST DATE
03/07/00



John walks into the Games office. He appears unsatisfied by life and somewhat stressed.

JOHN Where the hell is everybody?

He sees Bryan working at his desk

JOHN Oh, Bryan's here, how lovely. Good morning.

BRYAN Morning.

JOHN Morning, Bryan. Are you aware that we had a transport meeting this morning?

BRYAN Yes, it was cancelled.

JOHN Yes, good. Thanks, I worked that out, Bryan. There's nothing like sitting in someone's empty office for 40 minutes to focus the mind, is there?

BRYAN Did you go to it?

JOHN Of course I went to it, Bryan. We called the meeting. It's about transport. Transport would be one of the biggest problems we've currently got.

BRYAN How many people turned up?

JOHN Including me?

BRYAN Yes.

JOHN Including me, Bryan, there was one.

BRYAN Yes, well, the traffic was terrible, John. People couldn't get to it obviously.

JOHN Bryan, how can you argue that you don't go to a traffic meeting about the fact that the traffic's terrible because the traffic's terrible?

BRYAN John, you can't hold a meeting if people can't get to it.

JOHN Well, I got to it, for goodness sake.

BRYAN John, you live around the corner from where the meeting was being held.

JOHN What, some of them were coming from other planets, were they, Bryan?

BRYAN John, I did call.

JOHN Did you? I suppose you used a telephone, did you?

BRYAN Yes, I left a message.

JOHN Oh good. I look forward to getting the message, Bryan, when I get into my office. It's a bit hard for me to be in my office when I'm in a meeting in another building.

BRYAN John, your other phone was turned off.

JOHN For goodness sake! Look, Bryan, just for future reference, sitting there and leaving a message for me in there (Points to his office) is not as helpful as you apparently think it is.

John leaves Bryan's office. Gina walks past.

GINA Bryan, this media agreement for the Chinese Mandarin shooters – how's that going to work?

JOHN Morning, Gina.

GINA Where have you been?

JOHN How are you? I've been to a transport meeting.

GINA Didn't you get my message?

JOHN No, I didn't get any message.

GINA Well, the meeting was cancelled. No-one could get to it. Traffic too bad.

JOHN Where did you leave a message?

GINA On your message machine. Why don't you leave your mobile on?

JOHN There's something wrong with my mobile.

GINA What's the matter with it?

JOHN I don't know, but as soon as I find it, I'm going to get somebody to have a look at it. (Looks at his crossword) How do you spell phonics?

GINA The way it sounds.

JOHN Doesn't fit.

GINA Incongruous.

JOHN No, I mean 'phonics' doesn't fit. It won't go into the little squares. There are only a certain number of little...

Gina leaves John for Bryan's office. In the background, John sorts his mail, dropping each missive individually into a rubbish bin.

GINA Bryan, have we got a translator?

BRYAN Not officially, no.

GINA Unofficially then?

BRYAN Try Togbor upstairs.

GINA Togbor?

BRYAN Tall guy.

GINA Blond?

BRYAN Yes.

GINA Is that what he does? Can we get him to have a look at this?

BRYAN No, he's in Melbourne. Why don't you see him when he comes back?

GINA We can ring him, surely? Can't we ring him and read this to him and ask him what the hell this all means?

BRYAN Well, what language is it in?

GINA Some kind of Mandarin Chinese dialect, I think.

BRYAN What, this is Mandarin Chinese?

GINA Yes. He understands Mandarin Chinese though, doesn't he? I mean, isn't that why he's a translator?

BRYAN Well, he's not the official translator.

GINA Why is he the unofficial translator, Bryan?

BRYAN Apparently he's a really good linguist.

GINA Well, that'll do. Can we ring him, please?

BRYAN Who's going to read it to him, Gina?

GINA Have you got his number?

BRYAN Yes, there.

Bryan gives Gina the number. She dials.

GINA God, you've got to do everything yourself around here.

Hi, Togbor. Yes it's Gina. Yes, listen. If I read you some Mandarin Chinese can you tell me what it means? Thanks. (Looks at the fax and realises she cannot read Mandarin.) Bryan, can you just read that to Togbor? (Hands phone to Bryan.)

Bryan silently takes the phone as Gina leaves and goes into her office.

BRYAN Togbor. Listen, do you have a fax number? Yes, yes, OK, thank you very much. Bye.

Outside at the receptionist's desk, John flings the last of his mail into the bin.

BRYAN Ah, John? Any for me in there?

JOHN No, Bryan.

BRYAN How do you know? You've just chucked it all out.

JOHN Most of it was from the public.

Nicholas enters the office with a man John doesn't recognise.

JOHN What's Nicholas doing here?

BRYAN He's going out to the track with some Special American Ambassador.

JOHN Oh yes. Do we know who he is?

BRYAN He used to be a Congressman.

JOHN Is that Bill Clinton?

BRYAN I forget his name.

JOHN Oh, Congressman.

BRYAN Yes.

JOHN Congressman, one word? Sorry, yes, my mistake.

BRYAN He did tell me who he was.

JOHN Oh no, my mistake.

Gina reappears.

GINA You'd think the media would be interested in the torch relay wouldn't you?

JOHN They are. They're fascinated by it. Have a look at the paper. It's bigger than the Olympics, the torch relay.

GINA Nope. Can't get them interested in covering the Olympic flame going down the west coast.

JOHN Oh really, where's it going?

GINA It goes to about six hundred towns before it gets here.

JOHN They'd be in that in a minute wouldn't they, the media? Planeload of dedicated Australian journalists. A few photographers. A couple of drug and alcohol counsellors.

GINA You'd need a decent-sized plane to do that and a plane that big couldn't land in some of these towns.

JOHN You'll think of something.

GINA Bryan, why don't we have an interpretation service?

BRYAN Sorry?

JOHN We do, don't we?

GINA We can't function properly without an interpretation service.

BRYAN I don't understand.

JOHN What happened to the idea that we were going to set up a service that would provide interpretation skills to people?

BRYAN Interpretation skills?

JOHN Yes? It's in the services budget.

BRYAN What was?

JOHN An interpretation service, Bryan. It's a line item in the services budget.

BRYAN I do not know what you're talking about.

JOHN AND GINA Yes, you do.

JOHN We had a meeting with Nicholas about it.

BRYAN I wasn't there.

GINA Yes, you were. We all had lunch together.

BRYAN Where were we?

GINA We were flying in the face of one of the basic rules of food consumption.

BRYAN Which one?

GINA 'Never eat in a Scottish restaurant'.

John looks towards the reception, where the US Special Ambassador has arrived.

JOHN Where the hell is Nicholas? Who's this bloke?

Meanwhile, Nicholas is in a meeting with a man we have never seen before.

SYD You can't call them that.

NICHOLAS But it's not up to us. That's what they're called. The Sydney Olympic Games.

SYD But you can't call them that.

NICHOLAS But they are the Olympic Games and they are in Sydney. I mean, it does seem like an awfully good catch-all title. We like it a good deal here. It seems to work awfully well for us.

SYD Well, you can't do it.

NICHOLAS Well, I'm afraid that's the way it's always been done. The Helsinki Olympic Games, the Melbourne Olympic Games, the Moscow Olympic Games, the Los Angeles Olympics Games... you see the pattern? Even if we wanted to change it we probably couldn't. In fact, look, here's a good example. Just look at this.

Nicholas shows Syd some letterhead paper clearly marked 'Sydney Olympic Games'.

- SYD** This could quite easily be changed, of course.
- NICHOLAS** No, you're missing my point. Just read the name on the letterhead for me Mr...
- SYD** Games.
- NICHOLAS** Just read it out loud in your best... I beg your pardon?
- SYD** Games.
- NICHOLAS** No, the whole thing, read the whole thing.
- SYD** No, that's my name.
- NICHOLAS** What is?
- SYD** Games.
- NICHOLAS** Your name is Games?
- SYD** Yes.
- NICHOLAS** Mr Games?
- SYD** Yes.
- NICHOLAS** All right. Well, just read the whole thing, Mr Games.
- SYD** Mr Sydney Olympic Games.
- NICHOLAS** I'm sorry, I haven't got a clue what you're talking about.
- Mr Games holds up some official-looking documents.*
- SYD** That's my name. And registered trademark.
- Meanwhile, John has been listening to the Special American Ambassador.*
- JOHN** \$172 dollars? This is just from The Rocks to the Town Hall? That's a very expensive cab. It was just a normal cab was it? To be honest...
- Nicholas walks out of his meeting room to speak to John.*
- NICHOLAS** John, can you get us a couple of coffees, please? Black for me, white with one for Syd.
- JOHN** Nicholas, this is ambassador Berger. This is Nicholas Bell. The ambassador's actually here to see you, Nicholas.
- AMBASSADOR** Good morning.
- NICHOLAS** I'll be minute here.
- JOHN** Well, Nicholas, I've got someone coming in from ATSIC at ten.
- NICHOLAS** Can you brief the ambassador on that issue for a couple of minutes? Something rather serious has cropped up here. I won't be long. I'm terribly sorry.
- JOHN** Well Nicholas, I'll... do that then. Righto Nicholas, yes.
- John shows Ambassador Berger into his office*
- AMBASSADOR** You've got someone coming in from ATSIC?
- JOHN** Yes. ATSIC is the...
- AMBASSADOR** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Commission.

- JOHN** Yes.
- AMBASSADOR** Now that is exactly the issue I want to talk to you about.
- JOHN** Is that right, really?
- AMBASSADOR** Yes.
- JOHN** Would you like a cup of coffee?
- AMBASSADOR** Ah, no, no, no thanks.
- Gina is on the phone in her office.*
- GINA** Hi, Gina Riley here. From the Games. Good, thanks. How are you? Listen, how would Channel Seven like exclusive media coverage of one entire leg of the Olympic torch relay? Great. Out west. No, it goes to about 600 towns before it gets here.
- Back in John's office.*
- JOHN** Have you seen the Aquatic Centre?
- AMBASSADOR** Yes, it's great, isn't it?
- JOHN** Fantastic, isn't it?
- AMBASSADOR** The seating's a long way away, isn't it? Will anyone be able to see the events?
- JOHN** Oh yes. You're not going to miss much if you're in lane four or lane five.
- Back in Gina's office.*
- GINA** Michael? Gina.
- Riley.
- The Games. Yes, listen, how would the paper like exclusive coverage of one entire leg of the Olympic torch relay? Great! Yes, out west. Oh, you know, a lot of different towns – Wokalup, Yarloop, Waroona, Coolup, Mullaloo, Kallaroo...
- In John's office.*
- AMBASSADOR** I'll be brief if I may, John. May I call you John?
- JOHN** Yes, certainly. By all means.
- AMBASSADOR** There's some difficulty among the international community in reconciling Australia's position as an advanced and enlightened nation in the twenty-first century with certain of the facts relating to the treatment of your own indigenous population.
- JOHN** In what areas does there seem to be a problem?
- AMBASSADOR** Everywhere, right across the country.
- JOHN** No, no. I mean in what departments of life are these concerns principally focused?
- AMBASSADOR** The greatest concerns are for land rights, health and education.
- JOHN** In what sense?
- AMBASSADOR** Well, the state of health, for example, among Australian Aboriginals is the worst in the world.
- JOHN** Some of the healthiest people in this country are Aborigines. Have you ever heard of Cathy Freeman?
- AMBASSADOR** And incidents of glaucoma, tuberculosis and alcoholism in Aboriginal communities are all above epidemic levels.

- JOHN** Where are you getting these figures from?
- AMBASSADOR** The World Health Organisation
- JOHN** And who might they be?
- AMBASSADOR** Are you familiar with the United Nations?
- JOHN** Yes.
- AMBASSADOR** They're the health arm of the United Nations.
- JOHN** Listen, Australia is a member of the United Nations.
- AMBASSADOR** A very valued and respected member.
- JOHN** I should think they would be. I mean, our record would have to be pretty good, frankly, wouldn't it? Every time there's a flood in Guatemala, there we all are, out there stuffing food packages in the back of the Hercules. Our airforce is hardly ever in this country. It spends most of its life dropping medical supplies into clearings all over the bloody subcontinent. It's on the news every night. We're bloody marvellous people.
- AMBASSADOR** And you wouldn't want to jeopardise that reputation through a failure to address important questions of human rights at home.
- JOHN** Look, is there any actual information behind what's being said on these issues?
- AMBASSADOR** Well, for example, among Australian Aboriginals, the statistics for infant mortality, childhood disease and adult life-expectancy are about the worst ever recorded.
- JOHN** And how long have records been kept?
- AMBASSADOR** Well, the United Nations was formed in 1945.
- JOHN** Yes, yes. A fair while
- John looks slightly concerned*
Meanwhile Gina is still trying to drum up coverage for the torch event.
- GINA** Hello. How would your radio show like exclusive coverage of one entire leg of the Olympic torch relay? No, there would be no fee involved. No. Because we haven't got any money.
- Back in John's office.*
- JOHN** So there may have been some other people who were treated worse?
- AMBASSADOR** Well, there may have been, but...
- JOHN** But statistically it's possible.
- AMBASSADOR** There may have been a people who were more grotesquely disadvantaged before official records were kept, yes.
- JOHN** Because from the point of view of Australia's national pride and self-respect it's important to recognise that Australia's indigenous people may not have been the most disadvantaged people in the history of the entire world.
- AMBASSADOR** Statistically, there may have been an indigenous people, certainly, somewhere on the planet, whose country was invaded and taken away from them and who suffered a more appalling catastrophe and privation than the Australian Aborigines, yes.
- JOHN** Yes. Because in some places obviously the indigenous population must have been wiped out altogether.
- AMBASSADOR** Take Tasmania.

JOHN No, no. I mean in the rest of the world.

AMBASSADOR Right now, the main concern is with Australia.

JOHN Yes. I hear what you're saying, obviously...

AMBASSADOR I personally hope the Games go ahead.

JOHN Oh, the Games will go ahead. I don't think there is any question about that...

AMBASSADOR I hope the government will see an opportunity to ensure that they do go ahead. And much could be made in achieving this end if the government were to address the deep wrongs inflicted on the indigenous population and attempt to achieve true reconciliation with the Aboriginal peoples.

JOHN Yes. When?

AMBASSADOR I hope the Games go ahead as planned.

JOHN Yes. Pretty soon. What sort of form would a gesture of the right kind sort of take?

AMBASSADOR I think the process could begin with an apology.

JOHN I don't know about an apology.

AMBASSADOR Nothing less than an apology.

JOHN No, an apology. That's fine. I am happy to apologise.

AMBASSADOR With great respect, John, I think it would be better if the apology came from a prominent figure of government.

JOHN How prominent?

AMBASSADOR Well, in terms of Australia's international standing, this is perhaps the most important issue that you face.

JOHN Yes. So, pretty high up?

John continues to look concerned at the tone of these events

Back in Gina's office.

GINA Westy! How are they hanging? Yes, listen: how would Sixty Minutes like exclusive media coverage of one entire leg of the Olympic torch relay? Where? Tuart Hill. Westy? Westy? Westy? Westy?

In the meantime, Bryan and Adriano Cortese, C.E.O. of Bruce Mining (WA) are meeting in Bryan's office.

CORTESE Like I said on the phone, it's a business opportunity.

BRYAN Well, what sort of business opportunity?

CORTESE Bit of background?

BRYAN Yes. Go.

CORTESE Our problem as a gold company is that the cost of getting gold to the surface of our main mine is \$315 an ounce.

BRYAN Yes. It's a very expensive business.

CORTESE And the world price of gold is \$296 an ounce.

BRYAN So this would cause you some difficulty.



CORTESE It does. You've picked the essential flaw in the gold-mining business. Which is why a third of all Australia's junior mining companies have turned themselves into Internet service providers.

BRYAN Really? How do they do that?

CORTESE You buy a couple of computers, hire some people with glasses, often called Adam, and you're away.

BRYAN So do you make any money out of it?

CORTESE That's the point. You make a fortune. The minute it leaks out that small mining company in Western Australia is thinking of becoming an Internet service provider, bang, the price of your stock doubles.

What we propose is that we change the name of the company to Games.com and we become a provider of online entertainment.

BRYAN What's that?

CORTESE Well, are you familiar with the Internet?

BRYAN Yes, but I've never been entertained.

CORTESE We become a provider of online services in the entertainment area. We deal a package of 20 million shares to you and we relaunch the company.

BRYAN So, what are these shares going to cost us?

CORTESE They're not going to cost you anything. What you give us is a results service during the Games and you put Games.com on all your material: your point of sale, your venues, you've got it from arsehole to breakfast. (He hands Bryan the research) These are the figures we've done. We reckon you're going to make \$50 million.

John pops into Gina's office.

JOHN I think we've got a real problem here.

GINA Who was that guy?

JOHN A Special US Ambassador. They're concerned that Australia's treatment of its Aboriginal people is... you know.

GINA A disgrace?

JOHN Well, he didn't actually say that.

GINA Well, he wouldn't. He's a diplomat. This has been coming for a while, hasn't it?

JOHN Have we directly ourselves got any Aboriginal issues?

GINA There's a land claim.

JOHN Well, let's give them the land quickly.

GINA Yes?

JOHN Yes.

GINA It's the shooting range.

JOHN Shit, they're not having the shooting range! The Olympic shooting range?

Nicholas enters.

NICHOLAS I need to see you. We've got a problem.

JOHN Well...

Ningali Josie Lawford and David Ngoombujarra are sitting at table in a café with John. They have a map of a small region of New South Wales, on the table.

JOHN Perhaps you could just outline the substance of the claim.

DAVID (Points to bits of the map) Well, this, all this, is our people's land.

John looks at the sites David has indicated, perplexed.

JOHN Well, I don't understand why this hasn't been dealt with before. When did the claim first go in?

DAVID About five years ago.

JOHN Five years! I don't know why it hasn't been dealt with.

DAVID Well, it wasn't a shooting range before.

JOHN What was it?

DAVID It was just a bit of country – Crown land. Our people's land.

JOHN Your people live there?

NINGALI Yes.

JOHN For how long?

NINGLAI About forty thousand years.

JOHN We didn't see anyone when we were up there.

DAVID This is our people's land. We've been on that land for donkey's years.

JOHN Well, we didn't see anyone.

DAVID Terra nullius.

JOHN Trevor Nullius? Who's Trevor Nullius? Who's he?

NINGALI Terra nullius – that's what they call it.

JOHN What does that mean?

NINGALI It means that the land is empty.

JOHN Well, that's right.

NINGALI Empty land

JOHN That's right. There's nothing up there.

NINGALI Were there any animals up there?

JOHN I don't know. I didn't see any.

NINGALI Any trees?

JOHN Yes, a few trees.

DAVID What about birds and stuff?

JOHN Yes, what's the point there?

NINGALI You said that the land was empty.

JOHN Well, there were no people up there.

DAVID Who says?

JOHN Well, we were up there. If there had been anyone up there we would have seen them.

DAVID We saw you.

JOHN Yes, well alright, maybe there were a few people up there. There was nobody living there.

NINGALI There are people living there.

JOHN Where?

NINGALI On that area.

JOHN Where?

NINGALI All over that land.

JOHN Are they living in houses?

NINGALI No, not in houses.

JOHN Do they have roads up there? Where are the shops? What are they doing up there?

DAVID The people live along the river but there's good water up there (showing John on the map) so they have to come back here (showing John on the map) because there's good tucker there.

JOHN Yes, it's just a bit difficult to argue that if you're not using that area, that we shouldn't use it.

NINGALI Can we use your place, then, when you're not using it?

JOHN But you haven't even put a house on here.

NINGALI They don't need a house. They live on the land.

JOHN How many of you are there up there?

DAVID About 80 people up there.

JOHN Eighty people and no house?

NINGALI You're not going to put a house on it.

JOHN We're not going to live there. You see, the difficulty for me is that I've got a land claim on an area that I've got to have ready as an Olympic venue in a couple of months.

NINGALI You didn't stick in any claim when you wanted the land for yourself. We just had to get used to it.

JOHN Well, we don't have to stick a claim in.

DAVID We know that. That's what we're trying to say to you.

JOHN I know. I know what you're trying to say. I just don't understand why we both can't use it. Surely we can sort something out about this.

Back at the Games office, Bryan is explaining the intricacies of Games.com to Nicholas.

BRYAN What they're proposing is that we become a part of Games.com with them. We provide a results service and possibly vision-stream some of the events live on the Net.

NICHOLAS How much are they saying we're going to make out of this?

BRYAN Fifty million dollars.

NICHOLAS That sounds like a lot of money, Bryan.

BRYAN That is a lot of money, Nicholas.

NICHOLAS Have these friends of yours got the name Games.com registered?

BRYAN I don't know. I suppose.
Something comes together in Nicholas's mind.

NICHOLAS Yes!

BRYAN What?

NICHOLAS Come with me, Bryan.
Leads Bryan into the meeting room where Mr Syd Games is. Mr Games has not seen Bryan before.

SYD Are you the lawyer?

BRYAN Pardon?

NICHOLAS Ah no. Syd, this is Bryan, Bryan, this is Syd. Sit please. We've got an offer for you. When you registered everything that wasn't nailed down, did you register the name Games.com?

SYD No, what's that?

NICHOLAS Tell him, Bryan.

BRYAN It's the Internet, Syd. Nicholas...

NICHOLAS Thank you, Bryan. Syd, Bryan's got a friend who's going to make you a great deal of money.

SYD How much?

NICHOLAS Twenty million dollars. We want you to share in the Internet windfall of a planned float, Syd. You're going to make your money all in one day. Now, are you in or out?
Syd is impressed. Bryan gives every indication of not understanding Nicholas's game plan.

SYD Sounds good.

NICHOLAS You're going to have to sign a withdrawal of any claim on the Games themselves.

SYD Twenty million dollars?

NICHOLAS You have a think.

BRYAN (wanting to know more about these matters) Nicholas.

SYD Yes.
Nicholas and Bryan walk out of meeting room and find John somewhat agitated.

BRYAN Nicholas, Nicholas.

JOHN Nicholas, Nicholas can I see you for a moment?

NICHOLAS Hang on, John. Bryan, get someone up from legal with a waiver document quick, OK?

BRYAN Nicholas, what is going on?
John steers Nicholas go into his office.

JOHN Nicholas.

NICHOLAS OK, John, I'm coming, I'm coming. You'll have to be quick, John.

JOHN Nicholas, I think we've got what I would describe as a government problem. I don't know if you're aware of this, but we have an Aboriginal land claim on the shooting venue.

NICHOLAS A land claim? Please. That is ridiculous. We are two months out.

JOHN Plus, Nicholas, the US ambassador, Berger, he wants a full apology from the government.

NICHOLAS All right, what's behind it? What are the issues?

JOHN The issues, Nicholas, are many and varied. I mean, for example Aboriginal health isn't going so apparently well.

NICHOLAS Is there any hard evidence about this? I mean, I haven't seen anything myself.

JOHN I think the figures are pretty disturbing.

NICHOLAS You give me an example.

JOHN Well, for example, Aboriginal life expectancy is the lowest on earth.

NICHOLAS Technically.

JOHN Nicholas, we're going to be on show. This is an international event. We can't expect the entire world to approve of everything we do in this country. And if they don't, Nicholas, we could have a problem getting the bloody thing on.

NICHOLAS All right, all right, look. What you need is a big show of Australia's multicultural heritage with particular emphasis on the Aboriginal.

JOHN A big show?

NICHOLAS Yes. What's the name of that group that had that string of hits?

JOHN String of hits? Beatles?

NICHOLAS No, no, they were an Aboriginal group

JOHN Yothu Yindi.

NICHOLAS Yes. Get them.

JOHN Well, get them to do what?

NICHOLAS Get them to do whatever they do. Get them to do it loud and on camera. Have they got witchetydoodles?

JOHN Didgeridoos?

NICHOLAS Long thing. You blow through it.

JOHN Didgeridoos, Nicholas.

NICHOLAS Bloody marvellous. There you are, then.

JOHN Nicholas, they're probably in Europe.

NICHOLAS Well, get them back

JOHN We haven't got any money to get them back.

NICHOLAS We'll get the money.

JOHN Nicholas, I assure you we haven't got enough money. You yourself told me that we haven't got enough money to put a bloody roof on the equestrian venue.

NICHOLAS John, John, John ,John. There is always money for Aboriginal health.

John sitting on couch in his office looking out of the window. He is pensive. Gina enters.

GINA Hello

JOHN Oh, hi.

- GINA** How was your meeting with the Aboriginal people?
- JOHN** Well, you know. What can you say? 'I totally agree with you, but what can I do?'
- GINA** That's what the Germans said, isn't it?
- JOHN** Yes, yes it is, pretty much. Under the circumstances it's a little bit difficult to get enthusiastic about running a whole lot of running races out here, isn't it?
- GINA** I've got an answer.
- JOHN** I'm delighted to hear it, Gina. Kofi Annan can't work it out, the international court at The Hague reckon it's beyond their jurisdiction. I can't tell you how pleased I am that you've bowled it over.
- GINA** Look at this.

Hands John a videotape.

- JOHN** What is it?
- GINA** We send this overseas.
- JOHN** Yes, yes. What is it?
- GINA** The rest of the world wants John Howard to apologise.
- JOHN** Yes, correct.
- GINA** Sit down.

John sits down. Gina puts in the tape and presses 'play'. John Howard, the actor who plays Bob Jelly in Seachange, appears on television. During the address, Nicholas and Bryan both also get near screens and see the following:

- JOHN HOWARD** Good evening. My name is John Howard and I'm speaking to you from Sydney, Australia, host-city of the year 2000 Olympic Games. At this important time and in an atmosphere of international goodwill and national pride, we here in Australia, all of us, would like to make a statement before all nations.

Australia, like many countries in the New World, is intensely proud of what it has achieved in the past 200 years. We have a vibrant and resourceful people. We share a freedom born in the abundance of nature, the richness of the earth, the bounty of the sea. We are the world's biggest island. We have the world's longest coastline. We have more animal species than any other country. Two-thirds of the world's birds species are native to Australia. We are one of the few countries on earth with our own sky. We are a fabric woven of many colours and it's this that gives us our strength.

However, these achievements have come at great cost.

We have been here for 200 years, but before that there was a people living here. For over 40,000 years they lived in perfect balance with the land. There were many Aboriginal nations, just as there were many Indian nations in North America and across Canada, as there were many Maori tribes in New Zealand, and Incan and Mayan peoples in South America. These indigenous Australians lived in areas as different from one another as Scotland is from Ethiopia. They lived in an area the size of Western Europe. They didn't even share a common language. Yet, they had their own laws, their own beliefs, their own ways of understanding.

We destroyed this world.

We often didn't mean to do it. Our forebears, fighting to establish themselves in what they saw as a harsh environment, were creating a national economy. But the Aboriginal world was decimated. A pattern of disease and dispossession was established. Alcohol was introduced. Social and racial differences were allowed to become fault-lines. Aboriginal families were broken up. Sadly, Aboriginal health and education are responsibilities we have yet to address successfully.

I speak for all Australians in expressing a profound sorrow to the Aboriginal people. I am sorry. We are sorry.

Let the world know and understand that it is with this sorrow, that we as a nation will grow and seek a better, a fairer and a wiser future. Thank you.

GINA What do you think?

JOHN It's not the Prime Minister.

GINA He didn't say he was. He said he was John Howard speaking to you from Sydney, Australia.

JOHN That's John Howard the actor.

GINA That's John Howard.

JOHN Everybody knows that's not the Prime Minister, don't they?

GINA Everybody in Australia knows that's not the Prime Minister. This is going overseas. No-one overseas knows what the Australian Prime Minister looks like.

JOHN Do you think?

Cheers are heard. Gina, Nicholas and John walk out of John's office and into the foyer where Bryan and some other workers are standing.

GINA The building next door has closed circuit television. I pumped the tape through there too.

Gina parts the curtains and we see the office building opposite. People in offices are clapping and cheering.

JOHN Oh yes, oh good.

GINA I rest my case.

Syd runs in, very excited.

SYD Did you see that John Howard on television? It was terrific. He apologised.

GINA He did.

NICHOLAS Sign there, Syd.

Syd signs the waiver document, surrendering his claim.

JOHN (To Gina) Congratulations.

GINA Thank you very much.

JOHN You've done a wonderful thing.

NICHOLAS That's it.

John has never seen Syd before and wonders who he is.

JOHN Who's Syd?

NICHOLAS Sorry, Syd Games.

SYD How are you?

JOHN Syd who?

SYD Syd Games.

Ningali, John and David are in John's office.

JOHN OK, So this is what we put in the shooting program: 'This shooting competition takes place on land which the traditional owners, the Daruk people, have a land claim. All of the people connected with the Games support that land claim and we thank the Daruk people for letting us use their country.'

NINGALI Won't there be trouble?

JOHN I wouldn't think so. They probably won't even know we've put this in.

DAVID They'll find out, won't they?.

JOHN Well, they'll find out eventually, but we'll all be gone by then.

NINGALI No-one will be here?

JOHN Yes, that's right.

DAVID Terra nullius.

JOHN Yes, that's right.