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Media release

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Environment Minister Misleads Parliament

The Federal Minister for Environment and Heritage, Senator Ian Campbell, appears to have misled Parliament and failed to answer key questions concerning his administration of the federal heritage regime.

The Minister has claimed that The Australia Institute report, *Playing Politics with the Federal Heritage Regime*, has been discredited because he actually received the assessment of the nomination to include Bradman's birthplace on the National Heritage List (NHL) from the Australian Heritage Council (AHC) on 5 October 2004, which would mean that he met his statutory obligations. This is contradicted by the document stating his reasons for the decision not to include Bradman's birthplace on the NHL that states that the date of the assessment was 5 September 2004. It is also inconsistent with the Minister's claims in Parliament yesterday that the assessment was not issued by the AHC until 29 October 2004.

The Australia Institute report raised four major issues.

- Why did the Minister delay making a decision on the nomination of Bradman's birthplace for inclusion on the NHL until after the federal election?
- Why did the Minister provide \$50,000 to the Don Bradman Heritage Trail project under the *Sharing Australia's Stories* program when the application for the project was not lodged until at least seven and a half months after the application period for the program had closed?
- Why did the Minister provide \$50,000 to the Cootamundra Shire Council for the Australian Cricket Captains' Walk project when the Council did not lodge an application and the evidence suggests the funding was, to use the Council's words, 'arranged by' the Nationals Member for Riverina, Mrs Kay Hull?
- How was the Prime Minister's office involved in the events surrounding the rejection of the nomination of Bradman's birthplace and the decisions to provide the grants to the Don Bradman Heritage Trail and Australian Cricket Captains' Walk projects?

The Minister has failed to provide adequate answers to any of these questions.

A more detailed response to the Minister's media release and a copy of the report are available on under *What's New* on the Australia Institute's website, www.tai.org.au.