

# Libs play down leadership talk

**CANBERRA:** Prime Minister John Howard's coalition colleagues rallied in support of their embattled leader as speculation intensified that he could stand down before the election.

The latest ACNielsen poll, published yesterday - showed Labor leads the coalition by 14 points on a two-party preferred basis.

But while Labor played down the polls, coalition ministers and backbenchers have hit the airwaves to show their support for Mr Howard.

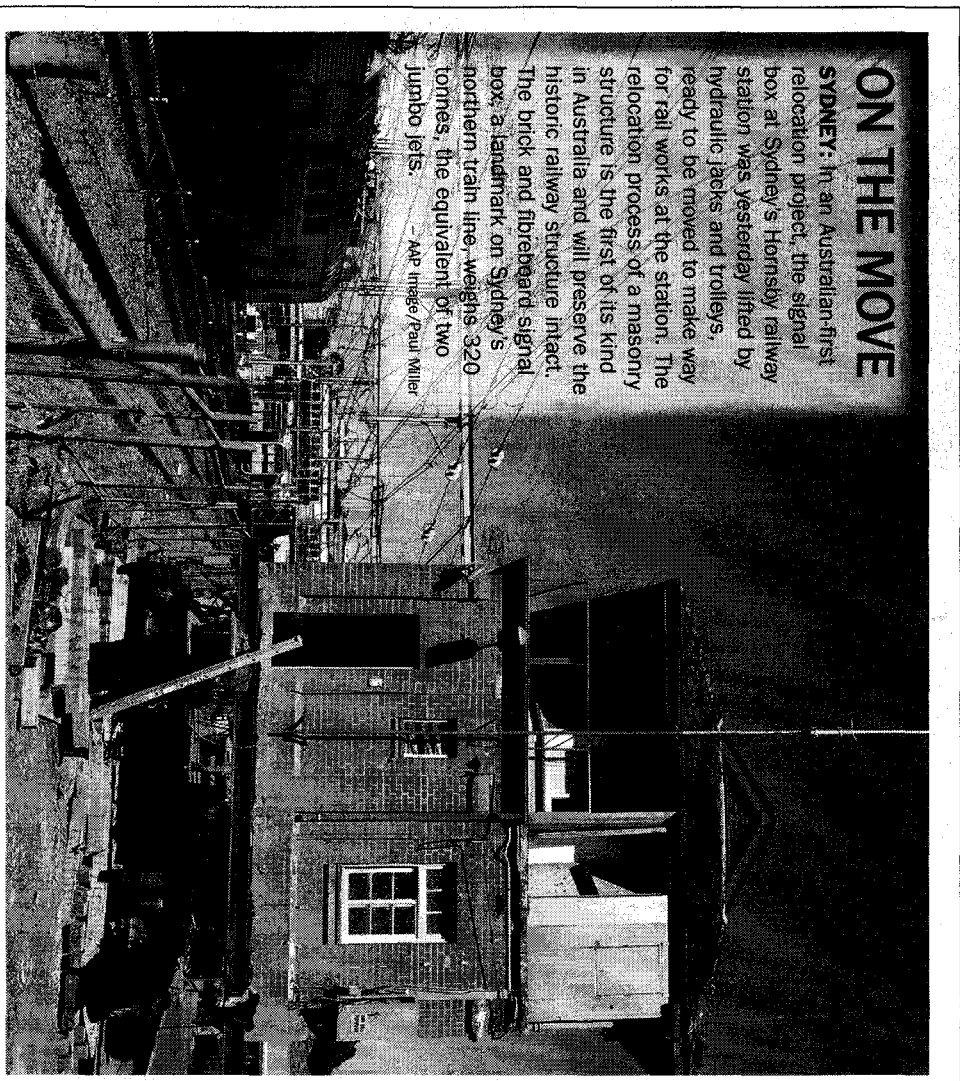
Health Minister Tony Abbott said a change of leadership at this time would be seen as panic, treachery and betrayal. Mr Abbott says it would be foolish of the Liberals to do anything that could make a bad situation significantly worse.

## Call election now: Rudd to PM

**CANBERRA:** Opposition Leader Kevin Rudd yesterday challenged Prime Minister John Howard to get on and call the election now. APEC is over.

Mr Rudd also challenged the prime minister to stay for his full three-year term if he is re-elected.

He said that this time three years ago Australia was already two weeks into campaigning and it was now time to get over the phoney election campaign.



### ON THE MOVE

**SYDNEY:** In an Australian-first relocation project, the signal box at Sydney's Hornsby railway station was yesterday lifted by hydraulic jacks and trolleys, ready to be moved to make way for rail works at the station. The relocation process of a masonry structure is the first of its kind in Australia and will preserve the historic railway structure intact. The brick and fibreboard signal box, a landmark on Sydney's northern train line, weighs 320 tonnes, the equivalent of two jumbo jets.

—AAP Image/Paul Miller

## PM praises APEC security effort

Sydney court yesterday over the incident.

reputations have been greatly injured by the reports.

**SYDNEY:** Prime Minister John Howard yesterday backed heavy security

**Corbys to sue Seven Network**

**Breeders not happy with ABC**

## AUSSIE WATCH

■ **PERTH:** The death of a woman whose body was found with two black eyes and facial bruising in a North Perth unit is being treated as suspicious.

■ **MELBOURNE:** The parents of a peanut-allergic four-year-old boy say they are disgusted by a Victorian coroner's inability to name their son's cause of death, which they believe was a result of anaphylaxis, a condition brought on by his allergy.

■ **CANBERRA:** Kevin Rudd announced yesterday that a federal Labor Government would spend \$7.5 million to improve a key road linking the ACT and NSW in the Liberal held marginal seat of Eden Monaro.

■ **CANBERRA:** The Government yesterday resisted three groups as terror organisations, including one with alleged links to a number of Australians including David Hicks.

■ **BRISBANE:** The Federal Government has approved a \$100 million refurbishment and expansion of the Gold Coast Airport's main terminal.

■ **SYDNEY:** A front-end loader was rammed into a video store in Sydney's west early yesterday by thieves targeting an ATM.

■ **HOBART:** The Federal Opposition is promising to cut the cost of transporting cars across Bass Strait on the two Spirit of Tasmania ships.

■ **MELBOURNE:** The Victorian Government has launched an inquiry into a state high school counsellor who supported a paedophile in court.