



PRIME MINISTER

TRANSCRIPT OF PRIME MINISTER ON 2WS - WITH STEVE RAYMOND - 19 JAN
1987

E & O E PROOF ONLY

SR: ...and if I press the right buttons here I should be able to talk to the PM of Australia.

PM: G'day Steve sorry to keep you waiting.


SR: No dramas. Happy New Year.

PM: Thank you v. much Steve and the same to you and all your listeners...have a happy and prosperous 1987.

SR: Four years on, is the job getting any easier or is it more hard work?

PM: Well it is a mixture Steve. ^{More}hard work in the sense that you know and appreciate the v. tough economic year last year and that required enormous amount of extra decision making and that was hard work. It is easier in the other sense Steve, that I guess whatever, work you're in, yours, mine or whatever, the longer you are in it and if you are intelligent you learn the ropes and things come easier. Its a mixture. I think the actual doing of the job has become easier....but there are a few more things on the plate.

SR: Any time for an introspection.

PM: I do try to take the odd time off  just to think how things are going. What things have happened over the recent past, how we

have handled them. What's the sort of way we should be doing things now and for the rest of the year....so I do think about my performance and the performance of the government in that way.

SR: Do we have you (inaudible) to ridicule any speculation that Paul Keating will be moved from Treasury?

PM: Yes.

SR: While we are in that Yes/No mode....is it possible to lock in a promise - No election in 1987?

PM: Not early '87. I mean I have said that the Parliament will go full term - and that means Steve, that at the end of '87 or in the early part of 88.

SR: Ok. For somebody who really believes in the benefits of consensus you must have taken heart from progress made in the past couple of days by Simon Crean and Charles Copeman - an unlikely double, but they seem to have actually thrashed out some advances in the Pilbara dispute and I guess that is the essence of consensus as you see it?

PM: That's exactly right Steve - that is what I have lived on all my life from the time I was president of the ACTU, I never took the attitude that we were always right. Or any industrial dispute right(?) was always on the side of the trade unions. I think it is like life...whether domestic arguments or disputes in football clubs or in any groups. Its v. rarely that absolute right is on one side and so I have always taken the view that the sensible thing to get the best out of the situation is to get people to sit down and talk and then see whether you can work something out together. And that is the principle I have had to try to apply in Govt since I have been PM. And yes you are right I am pleased to see that Simon Crean sat down and talked to Charlie Copeman and that they seemed to have worked something out because that is important, not only for the workers and the company up there....but it is important to the iron ore industry...but it is also v. important for all Australians because that is a significant part of our export income. And that has an impact on the standard of living

of all of us.

SR: PM, I know you plan no intervention in the Rupert Murdoch takeover of the HWT but would you comment on the public perception that the reason both Labor and the Coalition are so quiet on this subject is because that you are all scared of offending R. Murdoch who will soon control unparalleled political clout.

PM: Oh, no. I can personally comment on that. Let me say these things....As far as I am concerned generally, the same thing applies when the question of Holmes a Court raid on BHP was concerned. I took the view that it was best left to the market and that was interpreted then as Hawke and the govt. acting in favour of H a Court. Now I find exactly the same rule on this occasion and said..it should apply to the market....well that was deemed to be acting for Murdoch and against H a Court with the same principle - but different players. If we are going to be a free enterprise economy which is based on the operation of market forces then I think that that has to work its way through. But it is not absolute and we have done 2 things....the trade practices commission and the requirements there with regard to monopolisation and Mr Murdoch will have to meet the requirements as he has indicated that he will of that legislation. And also we have brought in and proposed and we will be bringing through the Parliament, legislation to stop cross-media monopolisation in areas. In other words, the same person not going to be able to, in a particular area, have tv, newspapers and radio. And I think that is a v. forward and progressive step so that will require Mr Murdoch to divest himself of certain parts of what he is acquiring...and in this way I think the legitimate interests of the Aust. community will be protected.

SR: ne other thought on that subject. What happens some time in the future if Rupert Murdoch decides once again to turn his editorial armoury against the ALP. Will you stand accused of helping him load the gun?

PM: I suppose people might do that. What you have got to say basically if you look back over the history of this country and the attitude of the owners of the Press to Labor...they haven't

historically, any of them, been our friends. So if Mr Murdoch were to shoot the gun at us - what would be new? It is not as though the Herald, if I might say so, has been a friend of Labor. If there has been a violent, virulent anti-labor journal in this country in the last few years, its been the Melb. Herald. It has been viciously anti-Labor. So if Mr Murdoch were to fire a few salves at us it couldn't be anything worse than what we have been enduring.

SR: Still he will have some pretty impressive weapons to fire from. Alright PM thank you for your time this morning. Before departing on your Middle East tour later this week, like to tip the outcome of the America's Cup?

PM: Australia to Win. And it looks as though we will be fighting the Yanks and I think that is the sort of outcome that most Australian's want to see. We will be fighting Connors and I think he is going to be a v.v. worthy opponent. He is a tough tough relentless fighter. A man who brings enormous experience to 12m sailing. I think it will be a v worthy final and with Australia emerging the winner.

SR: I think he has been sledging too....!!!

PM: I think they all do a bit of that Steve.

SR: Do we get the public holiday this time if we win?

PM: I will leave that one open.

SR: Thank you for your time.

cnds