



## PRIME MINISTER

TRANSCRIPT OF NEWS CONFERENCE, PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL HOTEL,  
CAIRO, 17 FEBRUARY 1990

E & O E - PROOF ONLY

JOURNALIST: ... Sunday Age poll. How does that gel with your sort of research? What's your assessment of the state of play? Are there a lot of people that you still have to convince?

PM: Taking ... part of your question first Mike, I think there are a number of people, a considerable number of people we still have to convince. Under our preferential system of course, if people are going to cast a valid vote, and they want to cast a vote for some candidate outside the major parties, if the vote is going to be valid they then have to make a decision as to who their preference goes to. And I'm confident Mike that by the end of the campaign, in regards to that sector - and I think it probably is a larger sector this time than in previous elections - I think a clear majority of those people, and particularly those who are going to cast their vote on environmental grounds, will give their second preference to Labor. I mean, after all if someone, number one concern is the environment and they are going to vote for an environmental candidate, number one. Then if they begin to be serious, if they begin to be serious in their concern about the environment they must give their deciding preference to Labor. Because I remind you of the record of the conservatives in this area, would have damned the Franklin, are still in a position where they would be mining in Kakadu, every major environmental protection decision that was made, they have vehemently opposed and so in that area I'm confident that we will do very, very much better than the conservatives.

JOURNALIST: Do you find it frustrating, despite your record on the environment, there are still people who think you haven't done enough and how important do you see that is? What sort of ...

PM: I don't know whether frustrating is the right word. If people have a purely environmental prism in their eyes, then I suppose for them there is always going to be something else that they would like done. Now I've said already in

this campaign, I said yesterday, that one of the quite fundamental tasks of government these days, not only in Australia but around the world, is to get that balance right, between the need for development and the obligation you have to protect the environment because development is foundational. Without economic growth there aren't jobs, there isn't a capacity for sustaining and gradually developing and improving living standards and so you have got to have development and it is the basis also for discharging your obligation, for looking after the most needy in the community. When specific decisions arrive Mike, you can never - or rarely let me put it - be dogmatic and say I've got that absolutely right. I mean on the Franklin, no doubt at all about that one, I mean never had the slightest doubt, that had to be done. Kakadu. But in other areas there can be valid arguments both ways and the task of getting the balance right is difficult. All I can say to the Australian people, and particularly those who are concerned with matters environmental, is that we have done the best we can and I think the record isn't bad. As I've said, when you look at it this way, economic growth twice as fast as it was. And employment growth twice as fast as the rest of the industrialised world in our period of office. At the same time the World Heritage Bureau saying that no country has done more to advance world heritage values than Australia. So we've done a fairly good job in getting the balance right. What the people in the environmental movement know is that in my Government they have a Government which is always prepared to listen to their argument. We may not on every single issue be able to go to every point they want. But it's not bad to have Australia in a position where it is said of it that no country has done more to advance world heritage values than we have.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, I've been around the markets this morning in Cairns just talking to the grass roots people of North Queensland. There are two questions that really come to mind here. The first one is that with Cape York space base. There is a lot of hard feeling. The Aboriginal people it seems that they are ... because of the development up there. And have you decided to definitely go ahead with the space base?

PM: No. What we have said is that that's something that is worthy of consideration, but we have talked with the Queensland Government and what we have agreed is that we will prepare a joint land use study ... plan of the Cape York. In that joint study between the two Governments - and ... is being the situation now where you have got a government that you can deal with on realities of issues rather than just being rejected on the basis of prejudice. With the Goss Government you can sit down and talk with them. We've agreed that we will have this joint land use study in preparation of a plan. That will not be something

that will be rushed. It could take up to three years. There may be some interim reports come through but it is not something that will be done lightly. In that study we will be looking at both environmental matters and the needs and concerns of the Aboriginal people as well as developmental proposals.

JOURNALIST: There seems to be a lot of pressure on the ...

PM: I've been used to pressure. I can stand it as distinct from the Opposition. Look at the pilots dispute. I can stand pressure. The others can't.

JOURNALIST: OK. If you could just consider another question that came up earlier this morning ... Why can't this Government lead the way to be the first country in the world to ban all herbicides and pesticides? A man I spoke to at the markets this morning, who was selling his organic bread, which was made from all natural grains and everything, said that ...

PM: ... That's great.

JOURNALIST: inaudible

PM: This is the sort of food I thrive on.

JOURNALIST: inaudible

PM: Let me come to this point. Of course the question of all controls of herbicides and pesticides is not just a matter for the Commonwealth Government. We don't have the select constitutional powers in these areas. But I can - we have I think a very good record in being prepared, in consultation with the States, to look at these issues and make decisions. I think our record will stand up ... and if there was some particular proposals in regard to any particular herbicide or pesticide, we would be prepared to look at it. And please thank the gentleman for the bread. I shall have some later on today.

JOURNALIST: With the question of road funding in Australia.

PM: The question of road funding. Yes, the question of road funding.

JOURNALIST: Have you got any commitments to give us?

PM: I might be able to tell you something during the election. Just let me say something about roads. Get it into perspective. As far as Queensland is concerned you have this situation, if you want to look at our period in office we've committed \$1.8M to Queensland road funding in our period in office and that is a 17% increase in real

terms in funding as compared with our conservative opponents. And that's a pretty substantial increase - a 17% increase in road funding. Now we know it's an issue and we might have something further to say about it during the election.

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