



6

PRIME MINISTER

13 October 1996

**TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRIME MINISTER
THE HON. JOHN HOWARD MP
FAMILY DAY IN THE ELECTORATE OF LINDSAY WITH JACKIE KELLY
REGENTVILLE, WESTERN SYDNEY**

E & OE.....

Thank you very much Bob Woods, to Jackie Kelly, to my other parliamentary colleagues of which there are quite a number here today, to Mr and Mrs Mead who made their home available, very specially, to my parliamentary colleague Jackie Kelly, ladies and gentlemen.

We shouldn't be having another vote. There's something odd about it isn't it? You win something fair and square, you take out the prize, you win the grand final and they want a re-run. It does strike most Australians as rather odd that somebody who joined the Royal Australian Air Force, who rose to the rank of Squadron Leader in that air force, is regarded in some technical way as owing an allegiance to a foreign power. But such are the vagaries of the profession in which I once practised and far be it from me to cast any critical aspersions on decisions of the courts, but simply let me say that it's a very odd sort of situation and I think it strikes Australians and it strikes the people of Lindsay as being rather odd. I think it also smacks of that old sort of Australian no-no and that is bad sportsmanship to grizzle when the verdict has been given and the referee has blown the whistle.

Anyway it's happened, and we have got, can I tell you, one hell of a fight on our hands. You all know that this area has traditionally, historically been a Labor Party stronghold. It's called Labor Party heartland, and of all those magnificently warming results that we received on the second of March few of them matched Jackie's victory here - to get a swing of eleven and a half per cent. It was a remarkable achievement and it's a remarkable tribute to her and it's a remarkable tribute to you because so many of the people who made that victory possible are here today. But despite having sort of conquered all those enormous odds, despite having imagined that she could look forward, at least, to three years of representing the people of Lindsay and doing good things for the people of Lindsay she now faces a by-election. She faces a by-election which has been made more

difficult for her to win by the fact that the Labor Party, despite its noisy protestations about its commitment to all sorts of things in terms of racial equality, a Labor Party that has done a deal with the Australians Against Further Immigration Party, they've done a deal with other organisations. I mean there's a real danger that Free will sneak over the line by courtesy of the preference of the Australians Against Further Immigration and the Shooters. Now there's no point in me as your political leader, as your Prime Minister and as Jackie's parliamentary colleague mincing words on something like that. If it's a fair and square fight she ought to win. But you've got a situation where they've entered into these arrangements while at the other hand putting their hand on their heart and saying 'oh, you know, isn't this terrible that organisations and people should say anything at all about immigration'; I mean what sort of hypocrisy is that? On the one hand you're saying you shouldn't talk about it and the next hand you go behind the shed and say 'look will you give us your preferences' I mean that is basically what is happening. And I think that is just monumental hypocrisy and Australians can pick phoneyism, but they can only pick phoneyism when it's brought to their attention. So we have got a fight on our hands, a real fight. There's a real risk that a bloke who, after 13 years, you threw out because he hadn't done enough for the area can sneak back through the back door by courtesy of this preference deal.

Let me say something about Jackie. She's a bundle of energy, she's new, she's fresh, she's different and she's the wave of the future as far as this area is concerned. She's asked more questions in the Parliament than any other member on our side. They're all getting a bit envious, but she has and she gives me a hard time if she doesn't get the right answers and that's what a local member ought to be about. And she's prepared to do that. I mean, I just think it is terrific that the Liberal Party was able to extend its support into areas like Lindsay. I mean the Liberal Party of all the political parties in Australia's history is the one party that is owned by nobody. Nobody owns us. We're not owned by the Trade Union Movement, we're not owned by big business, we're not owned by any pressure groups, we're really not. We're made up of people from all walks of life. And one of the reasons why Jackie won on the second of March was that the Australian people were fed up with having a Government in power that bended its knees to the noisiest interest group in the community. Run by a Government that was too beholden to noise and not concerned enough about the mainstream of the Australian community. We are a great community. Australia is now composed of people drawn from all parts of the world, but they're united behind a common commitment to the ideals that make up this country. So many people over the years have made a contribution. Instead of, sort of, focusing on some of the things that divide us and push us apart, one of the things the Liberal Party and I've certainly tried to do is to focus on those things that bind us together as Australians. And that was one of the promises that I made on election night and is one of the promises that I have carried forward. We brought down a budget, we were left with an appalling financial mess, we were left with a much bigger deficit than we were told, we were left with much higher debt than we were told and we had to make some difficult decisions. But they were done in a fair way.

I met a business man in Adelaide the other day and he said, 'look, I had a look at your budget, and he said you know, you did this and I didn't like that, it affected me, you did that and I didn't like that and you did a whole lot of things that affected me but', he said, 'I've written you a letter congratulating you on the budget'. I said, 'why?' He said, 'Because it was fair'. And I'm very proud of that. There are a few things about being an Australian and the Australian spirit that endure from one generation to the next. One of those things is our great tradition of mateship and another things, of course, is our sense of a fair go. And we did try to have a fair go. There were some things in that that hit a few people that could afford it and there's also a few things that a lot of people didn't like. But overall it did the right thing for Australia and that is why it has been well received, not only here, but it's also been respected overseas. When I went to Japan and Indonesia a few weeks ago the business community in both of those countries were very appreciative of the fact that we had inherited difficulty and we had done something very material about it.

So ladies and gentlemen, can I do two final things. First of all I want to thank you for all that you did to get this wonderful lady elected on the second of March. I want to thank you very warmly. You have sent to Canberra a person of real vigour. She is new, she's different, she does represent the future. She replaced somebody who was part of the problem and now he's trying to sneak back by courtesy of a sleazy preference deal with some Independents. Ladies and gentlemen, it's going to be tough, I thank you for what you've done so far, but could I ask you to re-double, treble, quadruple those efforts over the next week. Because if we can defy those forces in the community here in Lindsay that would, sort of, reverse the freely given verdict of the people on the second of March. If we can demonstrate that that kind of political cynicism is unacceptable, and it will be a very tough fight to do so, we will have not only done a very good thing for the people of Lindsay, we will have confirmed in office an outstandingly energetic local representative in Jackie Kelly, but we will also have said to the people of Australia that we want something new and different and better - and that is really what Jackie represents and that above everything else is why she ought to be returned on Saturday. Thank you.