

From the Press Office

SUMMARY OF ABC'S "A.M."

Predictably, Bob Hawke won ALP pre-selection for Wills yesterday. The State's electors may have ended the promising career of woman Senator Jean Mel zer. She has been placed third on the Senate ticket, which going by previous elections, gives her only a slight chance of winning. Naturally, there have been cries of 'sexism'. But according to the Senator, there may have been another motive.

Senator Mel zer:

I don't know why I have been moved. So far as I am aware I have promoted ALP policy. I have worked as hard as I can in the electorate and in the Parliament. It appears that there is a group of about 20 people in the ALP in Victoria who for their own reasons wanted me moved and they achieved it.

Question

One story that I was told was that it was a political pay-back because you failed to support Simon Crean for pre-selection in 1977.

Senator Mel zer

Well, I can't say that. But Simon Crean is in the group, and when that ballot came up I, after a lot of agonising over two very good candidates gave my vote to Clyde Holdin~~g~~

Question

Could you be reaping the pay-back?

Senator Mel zer

Well you would hope not. You would hope that people in the ALP would be more adult, more attune to the sort of decisions that people have to make. I didn't make the decision lightly. It wasn't an easy decision to make, but I had to choose one of the two.

Question

In the light of what's happened, could it be said that the ALP is unsympathetic towards women, even a sexist party now?

Senator Mel zer

I suppose the ALP has always in a sense been a sexist party; but I thought we had come to the point where we had faced up to the fact that we may have been sexist in the past, we understood that women being more than 50 per cent of the population deserve to have at least some representation

Senator Mel zer (cont)

We've got a report awaiting discussion at the next State Conference which talks about positive discrimination for women, which hardly makes sense when you remove the only woman Federal politician you've got.

Question

How many women actually supported you being moved to the number three position?

Senator Mel zer

So far as I know, no women supported me being moved.

Question

So could it be said that as far as this decision is concerned it was a positive discrimination against women?

Senator Mel zer

Yes.

Question

How do you feel about what's happened. Do you feel bitter?

Senator Mel zer

No. I don't feel bitter, because in politics all sorts of things can happen. I feel a bit shocked. I feel disappointed. But I am not dead. Not by a long shot.

Firmly backing Senator Mel zer are members of the Women's Electoral Lobby. Interview with Victorian Secretary, Priscilla Todd. Said they will be advising people all over to support her as number one of the ticket, regardless of their political persuasions.

The right of the Japanese to fish within our 200-mile limit could be the cause of a diplomatic incident. A group of people in Cairns claim that the Japanese will wipe out the Marlin breeding grounds and consequently North Queensland's multi-million dollar big game fishing industry. They intend to shoot across the bows of any Japanese boat fishing in North Queensland waters.

There has been an enormous, but peaceful, anti-nuclear demonstration in West Germany with about 100,000 people converging on Bonn.

President Castro has returned to Cuba today after making another move in New York towards official relations with the United States. The Cuban leader has met many Third World diplomats in New York to seek backing for his international plan; to persuade rich countries to cancel the debts of developing nations and to start a new era of economic co-operation with a 10 year fund of at least \$300,000 million for low interest loans and grants to the needy countries. He also talked with some American Congressmen to strengthen his links with America's black community.

President Castro did make a case before leaving the US for improved relations with the US which was supported by the few Congressmen he talked with and by Governor Gerry Brown, California.

Australian actor Leonard Teale returned from Kampuchea yesterday with disturbing descriptions of the suffering there. As Chairman of the Kampuchea Relief Appeal he called for all donations to be made tax deductible; donations that are needed immediately. Mr. Teale interviewed.

On the Thai-Kampuchean border 100,000 Khmer Rouge supporters are gathered. Until last night about 28,000 had crossed over into Thailand and if the Vietnamese offensive intensifies many more could follow.

Hundreds of shareholders in the Bank of Adelaide are expected to cram Adelaide's Town Hall this morning for a meeting that will decide the Company's future. They have to vote on the proposed merger with the ANZ. It appears that behind-the-scenes moves have been going on right up until the last minute.

A German businessman has become the first foreign national to be killed in Iran since the revolution.

British Leyland has landed itself with another problem. Opposition Labor politicians and trade unionist are hopping mad at the company's decision to sponsor Captain Mark Phillips and a team of show jumpers for \$36,000 in an effort to promote their Range Rover cars - report from London.

The French Government of Giscard d'Estaing is under attack for the way in behaved in the recent coup in the Central African Empire which resulted in the deposing of Emperor Bokassa. It has been claimed that documents incriminating the French Government, including details of an alleged gift to d'Estaing were removed from the Emperor's Palace and taken to the French Embassy as soon as the coup took place.

Plans to mark the second anniversary of President Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November 1977 have been called off.