



37

PRIME MINISTER

TRANSCRIPT - MELBOURNE, 10 AUGUST 1985

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JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, are you confident that the Labor Party will stop this factional problem that has been going on in Canberra?

PM: Yes. I believe that they realise that the Opposition hasn't put a glove on us this year. And we have been very much tied up with our own problems of tax and so on, and a bit too much factionalism. There is a very good feeling now in the Party. And the problems in the Liberal Party are enormous. We will now get the benefit of the economic runs which are increasingly showing on the board. 410,000 new jobs, record housing starts, about 40 percent higher housing starts than the in last year of the Liberal government, inflation down, and retail sales up. We have got our third year of 5 percent growth. It is the best economic performance in the world. There is no other country to match it in economic growth or jobs.

JOURNALIST: Why isn't that message getting through?

PM: Well it was partly our own fault. But partly because we have been tied down in Canberra since the election. Two things, the tax issue and the May economic statement where we had to effect a lot of savings and that meant that I and my senior ministers were tied down there. But we have broken out of that. And all the good runs are on the board. We are going to have a marvellous package for young people which is going to offer hope to the young people of Australia. I will be announcing that in the very, very near future. And we have turned Australia around. And I think all Australians are going to start to be proud of the fact that the world is recognising that we have got the fastest growing economy. We have got jobs growing at a faster rate than any other country in the world. And we are doing that at low levels of inflation. Now, the troubles are behind us. The good things have been there, they are going to be more obvious. And particularly for our young people. I want to emphasise that what we will be offering in the package in the very near future is going to give hope to all the young people of Australia.

JOURNALIST: If that factionalism broke out again Prime Minister would you be prepared to suffer ...

PM: Well I have written to Ministers and said that they have got to operate within their portfolios. If they operated outside that either in a factional or a non-factional way, yes they would go.

JOURNALIST: Has that factionalism caused your Party much damage?

PM: I think it has. There has been a feeling that we have been, particularly around the tax issue. That was the thing where people felt strongly about that. And they were making their points publicly, and that didn't help. But that is behind us. And they understand it is behind us. It won't be tolerated, any public disputation. It is legitimate in a party like ours, if you are trying to improve and change for the better Australia. It is natural that different groups are going to have feelings about the way they want to go, the emphasis they want to give to different points. But they have got to do that within the Party.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, could you find a portfolio for Mr Valder?

PM: Could I find a portfolio for Mr Valder? Minister for Communications.

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