



PRIME MINISTER

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E. & O E - PROOF ONLY

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, I was wondering *could I* ask you - yesterday the ALP decided to put off the whole Hartley saga for another ten days. Does that damage the ALP in the interim?

PM: No, not at all. YOU have got to realise that that Executive is composed of very busy people with important commitments. For instance, the President, Neville Wran, the Premier of New South Wales. And he just can't ... day after day, and they have got to ensure that the situation is handled fairly. And that adjournment is quite appropriate.

JOURNALIST: Ten days, that is a lot of time?

PM: Let me assure you, in moving around Australia, I know what the feeling is on this matter. It is not doing the ALP any harm at all. If you are worrying about factionalism don't look at the ALP. Look at the other mob.

JOURNALIST: Sir, that is the point. ... there is factionalism in the Liberal Party. But it would appear that you could make a great deal of mileage out of this one if you wanted to be a critic of the ALP.

PM: I wouldn't have thought so. What we are about is dealing with a situation of a person who has made statements which are seen not to be in the interests of the Party - And so regarded. Now a judgement is in the process of being made as to whether continued membership of the Party is appropriate. It is reasonable in those circumstances that the Party not rush the judgement, that they should treat it fairly. And far from this being a negative course for the Party and for the Government - the opposite is true. It is seen to be dealing with this issue seriously and fairly and giving all opportunities that need to be given to the person concerned. That is the way it should be done.

JOURNALIST: It is a case of copping the damage in the short term ...

PM: NO damage. The contrary is the case - that an important issue should be dealt with fairly. All opportunity should be given. That is being done. NOW, this is not stopping

us from getting on with the business of not just policy formulation, but policy implementation. We are governing the country, we know what we are about. We know our purposes, we know our policies. If you look at the Liberals, well of course, I suppose from mirth really, they haven't got a policy about anything on which they are not wracked with division. Doesn't matter whether you look at tax or wages or privatisation, if I can mention that dreadful word. They don't know where they are.

JOURNALIST: But the Liberals would have chopped Hartley *quickly*.

PM: NO. The Liberals are different the way they handle things. Of course they do expel people. YOU ask Mr Francis in Victoria. They get rid of people. But there they isolate them. Mr Howard doesn't like a particular group. Well then he dumps them from the front bench. And now in that situation they go off and form their little groups to undermine Mr Howard. It is a very interesting little kettle of fish the Liberal Party in Australia at the moment. No wonder they haven't won an election in mainland Australia since 1980.

PM: Why wouldn't the Labor Party chop a person like Hartley as quickly?

PM: When you are going to say we are considering whether a person is not going to be any longer a member of a party, a person who has been there for a period of time. It is fair and it is proper that the processes are taken through so that the person in question can have all the opportunity. If he has got witnesses he says he wants to present, okay, they should be presented, should be listened to. And that is what is happening.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, on another important issue - cricket. Greg Chappell has criticised the planned appointment of Clive Lloyd - he says it is a political stunt.

PM: Of course, Mr Chappell is known to have no involvement or interest in politics. Like hell. You talk about politics - he is a political figure. And that is good, I am glad ex-cricketers get involved in politics. But don't let Mr Chappell stand up and let it be said that he is a non-political person making a simply sporting statement. That is not true. And I say to Greg, good on you, get into politics. But don't try and delude people that you are not in politics as well. Now on the issue itself. This is a matter for decision by the Institute of Sport. We fund the Institute. We have an interest in promoting sport in Australia. But I am not going to be saying what their decision is - if their decision is to appoint Clive Lloyd, and I make it quite clear that there have been discussions in which my opinion has been sought. Not in terms of saying that this is what happens. But I have respect for Clive Lloyd as do 99.999 per cent of Australians. If it is the case that they appoint Mr Lloyd, then I am sure he will do a brilliant job. And certainly the cricketers and the young cricketers of Australia would be very well served. But I repeat the main point is the decision on this matter is not mine, it is not the Government's, it is the Institute's.

JOURNALIST: But wouldn't you personally prefer a great Australian cricketer to take up the post?

PM: I am a person who, I guess there is no-one in Australia who has greater pride in his country than I have. I talk consistently and with conviction about Australia's achievements and I do that in this country and outside. But I am not only an Australian. I am a person who, I hope, has a capacity to look beyond our own borders and - I am not punning there when I am talking about cricket - but we must do as Australians, whether it is in sport or in other fields of endeavour, is to draw upon the best resources that are available. This is not an isolated world in which you put a barrier up around you. And say here we are, we have got the best of everything. If there are others who can help us whether it is in cricket or in art, industry, commerce, if we can draw on other resources we should do it.

JOURNALIST: Have you made any personal representations in favour of Lloyd.

PM: I have been engaged in some discussions not really in a sense as Prime Minister, although that is part of it, but as a passionate cricket follower. I have had the opportunity of talking with Mr Bennett. And this issue has been canvassed. NOT just the name of Clive Lloyd, others. But what I believe is that Australia needs to develop its resources in cricket perhaps in a more ... criticism of what has happened to them. But I think we can do more. And so you draw upon whatever resources are available to do that ... great deal of confidence in the future of Australian cricket. We went through a trough. I think we have hit the bottom and we are very much on the way up. We have got some very, very talented young Australians emerging now that are in the team or on the edge of the team. And I think what we have got to do now is plan for the future to make sure that we keep those young people coming up.

JOURNALIST: ... won't win the current one day series?

PM: Well, there is always a chance in sport that you won't win but you have got to be confident and you have also got to study form. And on disclosed form we deserve to be, as we are, favourites.