



PRIME MINISTER

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E & O E - PROOF ONLY

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, what went wrong? I thought we had the numbers.

PM: I thought we did too. I think it's one of these cases that happens in ballots sometimes. But I think people, you know, weren't absolutely exact in what they indicated their voting intentions might be but I don't know with certainty the numbers because they weren't announced but I think that it only required a switch of just a very few votes. So it was quite a close result. But let me say this, we tried our best to get Mr Fraser up because I sincerely believe that we had a case of two good candidates but that Mr Fraser would be better placed to use influence in the non-Commonwealth countries on the issue of South Africa and that was the reason why I strongly supported him. But I've said from the beginning there were two good candidates. When the decision was announced I went straight around and saw Chief Anyaoku and congratulated him, said he would have the complete support of Australia.

JOURNALIST: Mr Palmer, the New Zealand Prime Minister, seems to have taken a particular delight in complaining about Australia's - as he puts it - heavy-handed lobbying and working against us. How much do you blame him for what happened tonight?

PM: I'm not attributing any blame at all to Mr Palmer. It's a free society and he's entitled to his judgement, he's exercised it and do the analysis he wants to. I think as Chief Anyaoku said to me when I went around and congratulated him he said I want to say to you, Mr Prime Minister, you conducted a very, very clean and fair campaign, and we did.

JOURNALIST: Have you spoken to Mr Fraser?

PM: Yes I have and he'll be available to come down and talk to you shortly, I would think. He's naturally disappointed. I believe that he felt - and in my judgement rightly felt - that he could do a good job, he wanted to do that but that's over now, we tried our best to get him up, we couldn't do that and we now have a good new Secretary General-elect and as I've said he'll have Australia's complete support.

JOURNALIST: What sort of a role do you see Mr Fraser undertaking from now on?

PM: Well I don't know. He'll be here in a minute. You can ask him that. I think if you wait he'll come down.

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