



**PRIME MINISTER**

TRANSCRIPT OF JOINT NEWS CONFERENCE WITH WAYNE GOSS, MOUNT ISA CIVIC CENTRE, 8 NOVEMBER 1989

E & O E - PROOF ONLY

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, were you embarrassed by the actions of the Mount Isa TLC?

PM: No.

JOURNALIST: - for supporting the pilots?

PM: If I'd thought that the Mount Isa TLC had come out in support of the pilots I would be embarrassed to some extent, but as the Mount Isa TLC hasn't come out in such support then I'm not embarrassed. What has happened is that you've had a mass meeting of six people and that decision has been repudiated by everyone that's spoken to me as being totally unrepresentative of the view of the unions and workers here in Mount Isa and I so regard it.

JOURNALIST: The President says there were 13 people at the meeting, are you saying that the President of the TLC has got it incorrect?

PM: I'm saying the Secretary told me last night there were six.

JOURNALIST: So you believe the Secretary but not the President.

PM: I haven't spoken to the President.

JOURNALIST: Would you expect him to go after that?

PM: Beg your pardon?

JOURNALIST: Would you expect him to -

PM: Well, that's a matter for the TLC. I didn't, Wayne and I didn't come here to tell the TLC how to run their internal affairs. That's for them.

JOURNALIST: Mr Goss, do you agree with the Prime Minister's industrial relations action on the pilots?

GOSS: Well, I mean, let's face the facts. The pilots' strike put the Prime Minister and the Federal Government in a no win situation. I think people would have been ripping the Government apart and the economy would have been falling apart if we'd had a 30 percent wage jump for the pilots, it would have been followed right around the country. I can't see that that could have been good for the country.

JOURNALIST: Have the TLC embarrassed you by that action?

GOSS: No, not at all. The comments that I've had from people in Mount Isa since I got here is exactly the same as what people have said to Bob. That is that at a meeting of half a dozen, or at the most 13, people and from what I understand Mr Byrne is right out of step with his own Union, the Metal Workers Union. I understand that the Metal Workers Union put up the original proposition to the ACTU and they have stated their position. Mr Byrne is a metal worker and he is way out of step with his own Union. I think he's pretty much out on his own.

JOURNALIST: There's a split in the TLC though and that doesn't augur well for the Labor Party in this -

GOSS: Anybody wants to put money on McGrady, money against McGrady rather, I'll see them after .... Look as I understand it, if there's half a dozen or, at most, a dozen people at a meeting it's not representative. The person who put it up is out of step with his own Union. It's not a matter of concern or embarrassment to me in the slightest.

JOURNALIST: Would you endorse him being rolled by the TLC tomorrow?

GOSS: I have no interest in the matter. It's up to the TLC however they resolve it privately.

JOURNALIST: Are you disappointed at all that on this trip to Mount Isa where you're campaigning .... the focus remains on State issues, that a Federal issue like this dominated your visit?

GOSS: No, not at all. The State campaign is going very well, this tour is going very well. We had a tremendous response in North Queensland yesterday, the response today so far has been great and I think we're right on track and we'll stay on track.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, will you be doing any campaigning for Mr Goss in Queensland during the election campaign?

PM: That's what I've been doing in the last 24 hours and as far as I can see, it's been pretty effective. If there's another chance of getting up here I will. We've got a tight program, I've got to travel all around Australia and there's Federal Parliament, but if there's a chance of getting up again I will.

JOURNALIST: (inaudible)

PM: Well, I didn't say .... at the time he was down there and I had breakfast at the Lodge with Wayne, we had a very congenial discussion there. We share one thing absolutely in common that this is an issue about politics in Queensland, about State politics. You're not going to divert, in my judgement, the people's attention in Queensland away from the fact that they have now suffered for a generation and more from the worst Government in Australia, the most corrupt Government. The Government with diverse resources from the many to the few, to the cronies. Those are the overwhelming issues in this campaign and Wayne Goss is absolutely right in wanting to ensure that the concentration of the people of Queensland is honed in on those things. In the period that I've been here, in the last 24 hours, that's what I've been talking about. The simple issue. That is there is only one way, only one way the people of Queensland are going to clean Government in Queensland and that's by electing a Goss Labor Government because what they must never forget is that for the overwhelming majority of this period of darkness in Queensland politics, the Liberals have been part of it. You can't cleanse Government in Queensland other than by the election of Goss and Labor and Wayne is absolutely right to be concentrating on that.

JOURNALIST: So you didn't take it as a personal snub -

PM: There was no personal snub, there wasn't any.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, how much emphasis do you put on the State election with a Federal election looming?

PM: I would put it this way, I would obviously as far as you want to talk about the Federal scene, I would obviously prefer a Goss Labor Government in Queensland and some continuation of the darkness of the conservatives. That would be better for the people of Queensland to have Goss Labor in. It would be better for us federally, but that's not the way in which I'm viewing it. I mean, this is about the Government of Queensland.

JOURNALIST: Is the Labor Opposition here in Queensland going to be hampered by your interest rates ....

PM: The people of Queensland would be hampered if we'd had a position where we'd said we'll just slacken policy and have a situation where demand would just go through the roof. If you'd had that the economy would have collapsed. I mean, I'm a very, very attuned politician. I haven't got interest rates high because I like it. They're there because they are necessary to keep the level of activity down. But that's not basically the issue of concern here because State Governments don't set the level of interest rates - they can set their views and so on, they will and obviously when Wayne Goss becomes the Premier of Queensland we'll listen very closely to what he has to say about the issues of Queensland generally. But however much you or anyone else in the conservative parties may want to have diversionary tactics, the simple fact is this, that it's had the Nationals and the Liberal Party running Queensland in this corrupt, unclean manner for over a generation. If you're going to change that, then you've got to change the Government and elect Goss Labor. That's the issue, there's no other.

JOURNALIST: It was said in a newspaper yesterday, I think the Australian, that South Australia and perhaps even Queensland .... do you put that sort of weight on most elections? As far as you're concerned, must Labor take those two elections for the safety of your Government?

PM: No, no, not at all. I mean, what will decide the election federally, when we have it, will be the consideration by the Australian people of our policies against the policies of the Conservatives. We'll win that election and win it comfortably. Now, as I said quite honestly, I mean, I don't muck around on these things. I'll be much happier from the general political point of view when Bannon is re-elected, as he will be, and when Goss gets elected.

JOURNALIST: (inaudible)

PM: Just a minute, let me finish. I mean, obviously that's the outcome that we would prefer. It's the one I think we'll get.

JOURNALIST: But were you saying at the start of your answer that you could afford to lose those -

PM: No. I mean, I'm fascinated by this Press conference. The tortured way, I mean, I really am fascinated. You ought to read the transcript. The tortured way in which so many of you are trying to avoid what the issue is. I mean, let's understand out there what ordinary Queenslanders are about. They are about a question of whether they are going to have any more of the corrupt, unclean State Government of Queensland provided by the National Party and the Libs. You can torture yourself - not for very much longer because, you know, I'm not going to put up with it much longer, I've got to go to catch a plane to Melbourne - you can torture this issue as much as you like about other issues. About whether a bloke here at the Trades and Labour Council of Mount Isa has upset this campaign .... remarkable, we've had ten minutes of that. Go for your life. The simple issue is the one I've put and it's the one I think which will mean that Wayne Goss will be elected as the Labor Premier in Queensland.

JOURNALIST: .... Country Task Force submission since July, when can we expect -

PM: These things will be, obviously, looked at in the Budget context. I've had the opportunity of representations from my friend Tony McGrady here on that and others. I've given them a straightforward answer. We'll look at those things in the Budget context. You don't come up and make an announcement here about those sorts of things.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, the raising of homosexuality has been raised in the State election. Do you see that as a sign of desperation or a real issue?

PM: A sign of massive desperation. I mean, I've been in public life now for 30 years and in public life you get used to it. It's .... hypocrisy. But I wrack my brain as much as I can. I can't think of a greater example of hypocrisy in the post War history of politics in this country in that this mob, the Nationals, are talking about public morality. They have debased and debauched moral standards in public life in a way never before seen in the history of politics in this country. For those people to be talking about moral issues is laughable in the extreme and will be so regarded by the electors of Queensland, in my judgement.

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