



## PRIME MINISTER

TRANSCRIPT OF NEWS CONFERENCE, KELMSCOTT FOOTBALL CLUB,  
PERTH, 25 NOVEMBER 1989

E & O E - PROOF ONLY

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, it looks like the Labor Government could hang on over there, it must be a boon?

PM: I understand that the Labor Government has won. It deserved to. There's been some swing against, but it's not a massive one and very importantly there has been no joy in this for the Liberal Party. The minor parties seem to have picked up, been the major beneficiaries of the swing that there has been. But I want to say to John Bannon congratulations. He's a very, very considerable man, a good Premier. I'm glad that the Government of South Australia is going to be in his hands for the next three years.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, the swing. Is that a protest against high interest rates?

PM: You can't identify what the elements are, but there'd have to be some element of that in it. But it's impossible to say just precisely, you know, how that's composed. The important thing is that the Liberals are seen as lacking substance, there's no answer there. The policies that we've got we've tried to explain why they're necessary. As I keep on saying, I'm not a masochist, I'm not a sadist. We don't want to hurt the people, we don't want to hurt ourselves, but it's necessary for a while to have those rates there so that we can protect the country into the future. But the important thing about South Australia is, as I've said, the decision had to be who was going to govern South Australia for the next three years. That's the issue and I'm very, very grateful that the people of South Australia decided that it should be John Bannon because he deserves that honour.

JOURNALIST: Considering his win, when will you go to the polls, Mr Hawke?

PM: It's got nothing to do .... the outcome of the South Australian election wasn't going to determine my decision on that matter. I mean, we've got an election coming up in Queensland next week and I hope we'll get the outcome there that is proper for the people of Queensland because there, the issue is obviously one central issue. That's the question of corruption in Queensland and I believe that Wayne Goss is the man, the only man, who can provide good, clean, efficient government for Queensland. I hope that will be the outcome of next Saturday.

JOURNALIST: Sir, a swing of five percent. Any change in policies -

PM: Well, there is no swing of five percent. That is not the figure.

JOURNALIST: Well, any change to Federal policies ....

PM: No, as I've said, as far as I'm concerned the question there was who was going to govern South Australia. I don't change economic policy on the basis of what I think is going to be just electorally desirable. I mean if I wanted to get some cheap short term kudos, I could just say alright, down come interest rates, but that would be irresponsible at the moment. I must insist I don't have interest rates high for fun, I don't want them to hurt anyone. I don't want to hurt myself, but I would hurt the Australian economy if I was to lower them precipitately at this time. We've just got to level off the economy a little bit, when that happens then interest rates will come down.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, what do you understand the size of the swing is in South Australia? We've just been listening to Andrew Peacock on the radio saying ....

PM: Yes, well you ought to have learned by now this is a very desperate man. Just to look at his behaviour in the Parliament last week. I mean a pathetic performance there and what you've got now is a Liberal Party which has undertaken a very, very remarkable course. They started at the beginning of the last week by saying it was going to be a dirty campaign and then dive their hands into the bucket of grime and they've been throwing it ever since. Now if Mr Peacock wants to delude himself that that's the outcome, that the Liberal Party has been the beneficiary in South Australia, no-one will be happier than Bob Hawke that he reads it that way.

(Question about George Gear's chances of a position in the Ministry)

PM: He's got a very, very good chance.

ends