



PRIME MINISTER

TRANSCRIPT OF NEWS CONFERENCE, WARRAGUL ARTS CENTRE
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E & OE - PROOF ONLY

JOURNALIST: I was wondering why this is your second visit to Warragul in such short a time. Are you concerned about Mr Cunningham retaining McMillan?

PM: No, no. He will increase his majority. But there've been good reasons for coming here and as I indicated in my remarks in there I like the region very much. It's been an important part of my life when I lived in Melbourne. But when I was down then it was to do things that were appropriate to be done here. On this occasion it seemed to me that it was a very good place in which to launch our rural program. Barry will increase his majority whenever the election is held, as he deserves to. An outstanding Member.

JOURNALIST: Are you concerned by the NSW Labor Council's findings that you're in trouble at the next election?

PM: It was not a finding of the NSW Labor Council. I understood it was some draft document which someone there put down some thoughts at apparently a period when our fortunes weren't at their most brilliant. But I would've thought if you wanted to get your money on now as to outcomes it's quite clear which side you should be on. I just noticed the Sun headline. It said 'jitters'. We need to look at the end of this week in Parliament who's got the jitters and it ain't us boy.

JOURNALIST: Are you saying that report was out of date?

PM: I'm saying it had no status. It wasn't a finding, it wasn't a decision of the Labor Council. I could you provide you with papers that are floating around the Liberal Party that would make you shudder. I could find you papers, draft papers and ideas in our Party at times that I'd shudder at. What you've got to worry about is what will be the decision of the union movement. Now the Labor Council of NSW is part of the ACTU. Now they didn't shuffle around a few draft papers in Adelaide at their meeting this week. They unanimously decided, including the Labor Council of NSW, that they would be supporting the Labor Government in its re-election next year. That's a very sensible decision.

JOURNALIST: If I could ask you perhaps about the Queensland election, your prediction and why you haven't been there.

PM: I have been there and I went up there with Mr Goss and we had a very very fine time together in Mt Isa. So the premise of the question is not right. As to the outcome, I believe that at last truth, beauty and justice will triumph and that Queenslanders at last will rid themselves of the corruption and the darkness which has featured in Queensland politics for all this period now of more than 30 years. The Queenslanders realise that there is basically one issue and one issue alone, that is are they going to get rid of corrupt government and have decent, clean and competent government. And they know that there is only one way they can do that. This isn't a partisan ... It's not as though you've got here's two or three over there out of which one could provide an alternative. The fact is that the only alternative government for Mr Goss would be a combination of the two parties that have been up to it in their eyeballs in all this for the greater part of this last 32 years. So the only way to cleanse Queensland politics is by electing Goss. I believe that's what will happen.

JOURNALIST: Are you predicting a close victory or -

PM: No, you'd be silly to be talking about landslides. I think on all the private indications I've got as well as the public polling I think it will be a clear victory. But -

JOURNALIST: ... chance, or roughly.

PM: Yes, it's of that sort of order, 52 can do it. And of course it depends upon how the vote is actually distributed between electorates. I mean we've seen a pattern of politics in Australia over the last few years where you can get quite sophisticated distributions within electorates. But all I can say is on all the evidence available to me I think that Queenslanders do know what the issue is. That is, do we want to get rid of corrupt government - yes. How do we do it? Is there any way other than voting for Goss - answer, no. Therefore, conclusion - I believe Goss will be elected.

JOURNALIST: On another subject, if I could just ask your feelings on the possibility of the pilots rejoining the arbitration system ...

PM: I've made it quite clear all along that that's what I wanted them to do. I mean from the beginning of this issue I urged them, don't go outside the system. That was Hawke's consistent position. I said stay in the system, you can't operate outside it and we will not accept the position of your operating outside it. Now they wouldn't accept that advice at the beginning. It

looks as though after all this trauma that they've inflicted on themselves and on the country, it looks as though they understand that it's only in the system. Now what they've done is lodged the application. Obviously the Commission will have to consider it. The Commission has said there are three conditions that they'll need to abide by. I trust that the AFAP will do that because at no point have I wanted to see a smashing of the AFAP. Quite the contrary. My position would be if they accept those conditions that the Commission has laid down, conditions may I say which are not special for the AFAP. They're the same as every other organisation has to abide by. I hope they'll accept those conditions and that then they'll make an application to be bound and that the Commission will hear that and make the decision on its merits. In that way what will happen is what should've happened, as I've said, from the very beginning.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, have you got anything to say about the Aquino government and its problems?

PM: Yes, I can say that I've been kept informed from early this morning about developments and the advice that I have is that the Aquino government should survive. The President seems to have the support of the majority, the significant majority of the armed forces. That's the latest report I've got. I have sent a message to President Aquino indicating of course the support of the Australian Government and people for her duly elected government.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, with the election date. When are you making your announcement?

PM: Oh mate, good try.

JOURNALIST: You alluded in there before that you might make an announcement within the next few weeks.

PM: I didn't. I said I couldn't give you a scoop here. But good try. I'd love to be able to do it in Warragul but I'm sorry mate, sorry.

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