



PRIME MINISTER

TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P J KEATING MP
OPENING OF CAMPAIGN OFFICE FOR BILL KARDAMITSIS, WILLS
ELECTORATE, MARCH 10 1992

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Bill, Haroula, ladies and gentlemen, we know this will be a difficult election for Labor but we believe we can win it.

We believe we can win it because it will be a test, in many respects, about the way Australia runs - whether or not the Government should be involved in a recovery, the Government should be involved in the economy, or whether it should be a policy of Government withdrawal as our friends in the Opposition wish. That is, that the Government sits on the side lines and lets the economy just simply move at its own pace, to not accelerate a recovery, to not try to make things better for Australia, and then to not try to make the economy more efficient and society better.

So this contest is going to be one where the style and policies of the Labor Party, the policies about partnership, about people working together, about co-operation, are in the vogue or whether it is policies which are about confrontation, about survival of the fittest and loser take the hindmost.

And it is about those issues that I think we will be campaigning. And Dr Hewson should tell us, as he called our One Nation Statement irresponsible, he should tell us why he is opposed to the Western Ring Road around Melbourne, why he wants traffic running through these suburbs, why he is opposed to the expansion of Tullamarine Airport, why he is opposed to the building of a standard gauge railway line between Melbourne and Adelaide to lift the commerce of this city, why he is opposed to putting our young children into technical and further education so that they have the opportunities in TAFE that others have had in universities - why he is opposed to these things. Why he is he opposed to one-off payment to families, why he is opposed to on-going payments to the low paid and the families of the low paid. These are the things that he should tell us. And he should

tell us how Australian women are going to wear the burden of the goods and services tax. He should tell us how they are going to carry that 15 per cent impost in their grocery bills, in their dry cleaning, in their clothing, in all of these other things. He should tell us about transfers within families and how women who run households will get that 15 per cent transfer in their household budget to make the system work. He should tell us those things as well.

And he should tell us particularly about why he believes a tax on our Kelloggs and our clothes and our shoes and our newspapers and our dry-cleaning and everything else is going to really make a difference to the way we live - how it's going to fix the railways, how it's going to fix the ports, how it's going to make the factories more efficient, how it's going to change the enterprises. These are the things which, of course, he hasn't been able to say because he knows that a goods and services tax won't fix these things.

So, Labor will stand again for the sort of society it has always stood for - progress, bringing the nation together, co-operation, looking after the disadvantaged, looking after low paid families, looking after families in general, looking after children and giving them their chance in secondary school and beyond. These are the things we have always stood for and the things we will continue to stand for. And particularly now, inducing the recovery, having the Government get off the sidelines and into the action to promote a recovery in Australia, to bring employment and jobs to Australians, rather than sit on the sidelines offering tax cuts to the wealthiest people in society.

That's what this battle is about and that's why I'm glad Bill is at my side in this by-election, as a person of substance in the electorate of Wills, a person of the community of the electorate of Wills, that people will relate to him, people will relate to him as someone who has taken an active role in this community and as somebody who stands for all of those ideals of Labor which we think are going to be important to Australians, now and always.

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