



PRIME MINISTER

PAUL KEATING WITH KEL RICHARDS, 2GB, JULY 3, 1992

E & OE - PROOF ONLY

RICHARDS: Yes, indeed, according to the Opposition Leader, John Hewson, Prime Minister Paul Keating is going through "a three-month remedial coaching to overcome a lifetime of male chauvinism". It was quite a blast. "After all", said Hewson, "the Prime Minister is a man who, in his maiden speech in Parliament, demanded that the Government do something to put the working wife back in her home." Well, is the man who leads the nation a male chauvinist, or is he not? He joins us now.. Paul Keating, good morning.

KEATING: Hello, Kel, how are you?

RICHARDS: I'm fine. Male chauvinist - guilty as charged?

KEATING: No, not guilty. I mean, Dr Hewson's got to go back to 1969 to find a quotation. You understand, Kel, the Liberal Party have combed everything I've ever said. You've got to go back to 1969 to find a quotation from me about the right of a woman to stay at home, ignoring all of the great changes of the 1980s and then.. he's on the record.. but I've only got to go back two years to find him saying about these things for the ideal woman. He said: "I look for three things in an ideal woman: good teeth, good health and good cookery."

RICHARDS: In other words, you're saying the boot is entirely on the other foot?

KEATING: I mean, he is the chauvinist. I've never spoken of women in this country as Dr Hewson has as though they were sort of, horses. You have a look at their teeth and the sort of health they're in and give them a poke and a prod.. you know, to feel how their general condition is. I mean, this is the sort of stuff he deals in. And then, in references to me, he said what I need is "a very

attractive, blonde, leggy nurse that is thawing him out." I mean, it's all sexist. Or his quote that our airline policy is run "on the number of sandwiches or how attractive the hosties are". I mean, this guy is your classic chauvinist. And here he is up at the Liberal Party's convention trying to tell them about how he is going to add to childcare places, not telling them that he's going to put a 15% GST on childcare services and that there will be no additional money for childcare. And the rest of his policies.. adopting the policies of the Labor Government which he is quite happy to continue, he says.

RICHARDS: On the subject of women and politics though, the longest-serving prime minister in Australia, Sir Robert Menzies, once said he just didn't understand women. Would you claim to understand women?

KEATING: Well, what I've tried to do is to even up the social field in Australia. When I was Treasurer, and let me just run through a couple of things which I was personally involved and responsible for as Treasurer. One was, first of all, the supplementary payments for low-paid women which we do in the workforce for the people - process workers and women working in sort of process jobs in retailing where a great number of women are employed, we arranged through the Accords Mk V and IV for supplementary payments. In superannuation, women in Australia can't preserve benefits.. they come into the workforce for a number of years, go out to have children and then lose all preservation. Benefits are now preserved and a woman can come in and out of the workforce and, at retiring age, have this occupational superannuation pension or lump sum. The child support agency I established in the Tax Office with the Tax Office chasing maintenance dodgers who left women behind and were never prepared often to support them. We now chase them and support their wives and families with funds. The family allowance supplement for low-income families which most, of course, helps women.. what's Dr Hewson going to do for women? Putting 15% on everything they buy and then they've got to try and get the transfer within the home household income from the husband or the breadwinner to pay for the 15% on food, clothing and all of the essentials of life - that's what he's doing.

- RICHARDS: Hm.. mind you, he did tell the conference last night that he now understands women because he had this, he said - and I'm quoting from him: "a blinding flash whilst he was ironing his shirt". He said "he now understands that women have the same hopes, aspirations and values as us", he says.
- KEATING: Well, in 1990, in the Australian Women's Weekly, he was saying he looked for "good teeth, good health and good cookery." In October, 1990, at the Adelaide Chamber of Commerce he's referring to leggy nurses and at the Liberal Party Convention on ABC Radio in August, 1990, he said: "We really have to deal..", this is the Liberal Party, "have to deal with women's issues in a more deliberate way in the Liberal Party, I tend to think there is a lot of rhetoric and not a lot of detail in some of that policy." The fact is, the Liberal Party has never cared less in terms of the great advances for Australian women, which this Government has concentrated on in the 1980s - starting with childcare, taking it from 50,000 places to 250,000 places by the middle '90s. As I say, the Child Support Agency, occupational.. all those things.
- RICHARDS: Maybe it's not a matter of policy, maybe he wants us to be impressed by the fact - and just noticed the fact - that he was, indeed, ironing his own shirt.
- KEATING: Well, I don't think that is a qualification for having what I think is a progressive view, an enlightened view towards the role of women in society in general. And making opportunities, that is, expressly, the Government expressly, doing what it can to make natural opportunities for women to find their way in society and in work.
- RICHARDS: While we're talking, can I ask you about the egg incident last night in Newcastle. I mean, is that.. do you read that incident, an egg being thrown at you, as being any sort of reflection of the way the public feel about you, or think about you?
- KEATING: Oh, no. Look, I had a.. my reception in Newcastle last night was the best I've ever had as Prime Minister. At two clubs, the Phoenix Club and the Newcastle Workers' Club, I had the warmest

reception I've ever had. I would have signed last night, on the back of the invitation cards, maybe 300 of them. People coming up to me, writing for their families, their children, themselves... you know, 'best wishes, warm regards', all the other things that one does. I mean, I was inundated with good wishes. And there was, sort of, one nark, you know.. the way one regards it. I mean, I've never had.. I said last night that the spirit in Newcastle.. the attitude of those people, the sense of cohesion in adversity, and the general bonhomie and optimism of the place, and the good-naturedness of it, was profound. And I've had.. in no place I've visited in the six months I've been Prime Minister have I ever had a warmer reception.

RICHARDS: Hmm.. just a 'one off' bloke just being odd.. yeah.

KEATING: Yeah, that's all..

RICHARDS: The other question that has to be asked..

KEATING: .. and he missed, anyway.

RICHARDS: .. which is the important thing, I suppose, particularly when you're wearing an expensive suit. The other question that has to be asked is, Nick Greiner has gone in New South Wales. Now, can John Fahey lift the.. the general support for the Liberal Party in NSW and make it harder to win seats for you here in the next Federal Election.

KEATING: Well, look.. I don't know. It's very hard to make political judgments. What I try and do is work with each Premier and try and get the best result for each State. That's.. I mean, I think, when one get's so tricky that one's regarding the progress of another party in office as a detriment to oneself, in the end, the national good gets overlooked. And I tried, with Nick Greiner, always to try and find a constructive basis of getting along and doing things. And, in the 'One Nation' package for instance, I mean, he asked me things, he asked me to extend offshore banking units to Australia, particularly New South Wales, by changing the tax system - we did that. He asked me to sort out the funding on the Glebe Island Bridge to provide funds there - I did that. In other words, we run a co-operative, I think, relationship and I'd hope that the same co-

operative relationship could exist between the Government of John Fahey and this Government, my Government, and that we can do some things for New South Wales as we've done for other States.

RICHARDS: Well, yes, he's got that of working class sort of feeling to him, John Fahey. I mean, there is the possibility he could erode some of your support, isn't there?

KEATING: Well, I wouldn't regard a lift in the fortunes of the people of New South Wales as any other than an unambiguously good thing. And I don't go 'round, as I think Dr Hewson does, hoping the place will be sort of in trouble so that one.. you know, gloomy environment sort of advantages one's political cause. I mean, we're all in politics and we're in politics to win. But, by the same token, one has got to move the commonweal on. You know, you've got to get progress and you've got to get development.

RICHARDS: Yeah, because there are people who need that support.

KEATING: .. there are people who need it. And I mean, that's what I was so absolutely encouraged by in Newcastle yesterday. I mean, the sense of sticking together up there, the fact that the place is a.. I mean, everybody on the table--whether they be from the various authorities, the Education Department, or whether it be the Police Department or wherever it might be, they all sing the same song: "We want to advance Newcastle, we want to get more growth in here, we want to do more clever things on the technological side, we are interested in productivity, you know, we want to train our kids properly". I mean, it's a community view.

RICHARDS: And, in the end, that's the Australian spirit, in the end that's what will make us, as a nation, win.

KEATING: That's right. I think.. but, I think 'narkism', you know, from 'narks'.. the nark's view of the world, we're all 'rooned', you know, we are all ruined.

RICHARDS: Yeah, "we'll all be rooned, said Hanrahan, before the year is out".

KEATING: That's right. Well, that sort of view which gets around the recession just does nobody any good. And the fact is, we won't be ruined and we will see a recovery come through this year and the economy in the 1990s will be able to hold its head up in the world as it never was for the last 20 or 30 years.

RICHARDS: Quick final question, Paul, what's your tip for the outcome at Lang Park tonight?

KEATING: Well, I'm.. I'm not a great tipster on.. on the footy. I mostly end up.. mostly end up making a mess of it..

RICHARDS: Confident tip..

KEATING: But I just.. you've always got to barrack for the home side.

RICHARDS: We'll win?

KEATING: Well, I hope we will.

RICHARDS: Okay, Paul, thanks for your time.

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