



PRIME MINISTER

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON. P.J. KEATING MP

WHO IS LEADING THE COALITION?

"I'm absolutely committed, and our party is absolutely committed to the introduction of a broad-based goods and services tax as part of tax reform. We are prepared to stake our political fortunes on that as an element of the package. I am personally prepared to stake my political career on it. We are absolutely determined to demonstrate to people that we are genuine about tax reform and genuine about structural change in Australia."

John Hewson, October 1991

The statement today by Ian Sinclair that the Coalition may now not introduce a consumption tax requires an immediate explanation from the current leader of the Coalition, Dr Hewson.

Mr Sinclair said on radio:

"We're talking about the impact of a policy [the GST] that may or may not be implemented and a policy that is really only a proposition that's been advanced by the alternate government."

Either Mr Sinclair knows something that Dr Hewson does not, or Dr Hewson has been misleading the Australian people about what is intended under a Coalition Government.

In a radio interview only yesterday Dr Hewson said:

"I want to actually tell the truth and I refuse to deceive people, so I've gone out and told people the truth about the GST."

And in a press statement yesterday he said:

"We shall continue to advocate reforms...among these are tax reforms, including a GST."

Mr Sinclair's remarks confirm speculation that Dr Hewson's leadership is now a matter of open discussion at the highest level of the Liberal and National parties.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that Dr Hewson is the wrong man with the wrong policies for Australia.

Dr Hewson belongs to the era of Thatcherism which is now in the dust bin of history. The GST belongs there as well.

With Dr Hewson and the GST the Liberal Party now has both hands tied - one to a rock, the other to a hard place.

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