



PRIME MINISTER

132/92

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

DR HEWSON'S DOCTORS

It is no wonder the AMA is campaigning for Dr Hewson.

Doctors can expect \$760 million from the fee increases which Dr Hewson will allow, and another \$300 million from the increased numbers of private patients which Dr Hewson's policies are designed to create.

Dr Hewson has offered doctors what is surely the biggest bribe per person in Australian history - more than \$1 billion for about 40,000 people.

This from the man who so often accuses others of doing deals with vested interests.

If the Doctors for Dr Hewson are really concerned about people and not their own pockets, they might ask themselves whether his economic and social policies are good for Australians' health?

Is the withdrawal of \$7 billion from the economy good for people's health?

Is a 15 per cent tax on food and services good for their health?

Is knocking them off unemployment benefits after nine months good for their health?

Are lower wages and less job security good for their health?

And Australians might ask themselves why the elite of the medical profession would campaign for the type of health system which Americans have just overwhelmingly rejected?

Why would they campaign against a system which is fair, comprehensive and makes quality health care accessible to all. And one which is consistently supported by a majority of Australians?

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Dr Hewson tells us that he's out to break the mould of Australian politics. This is palpable nonsense.

In fact he's out to break the mould of Australian society.

His industrial relations policy is one example.

His health policy is another.

As Peter Shack the former health spokesman stated in the notorious January 1990 press conference with "all the frankness" he could muster, "the Liberal and National Parties do not have a particularly good track record in health."

There appears to be no danger of Dr Hewson displaying the courage and honesty of Mr Shack.

He hasn't held a press conference for a year.

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