



PRIME MINISTER

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P.J. KEATING, MP
RESPONSE TO HEWSON POLICY STATEMENT

Dr Hewson talked today about looking people in the eye - and what he failed to do once again was look Australians in the eye and tell them how a 15 per cent Goods and Services Tax will create jobs when it has failed everywhere else.

What he called today a tax reform is in fact a tax slug.

Today's Liberal Policy launch did nothing but increase the speed with which Dr Hewson's credibility is fading.

It was notable not for what was announced, but for what was kept secret or left unexplained.

He failed to answer real concerns about the key question in this election campaign.

He failed to explain why Australia needs a Goods and Services Tax.

He failed to show how it would create one new job.

He failed to release a list of the goods and services which will rise in price under a GST.

He failed to explain why all small businesses must become tax collectors and waste hours each week processing his complicated GST paperwork.

He also failed to explain how he will fund his promises, given the \$7-8 billion hole dug by his absurdly inflated Telecom figure.

He also failed to say why he wants to remove bulk billing for 13 million Australians and make people pay \$32 up front for each visit to the doctor.

He failed to explain why he and John Howard will not release the Coalition's industrial relations legislation until after the election.

He failed to explain why he wants to pay Australia's youth \$3 an hour, while paying doctors \$3 a minute.

He failed to explain why he wants to restrict access to education by charging full fees for university - more than \$25,000 for an arts degree.

He failed to explain why he wants to cut \$53 million from the ABC - and make others cuts to SBS, the Australia Council and the CSIRO.

He failed to explain how, with his attacks on living standards, wages and working conditions, universal health care, education, social security, and our greatest cultural institutions, his GST package differs from those policies which have failed with a devastating social and economic impact in other countries.

He failed to explain why Australia needs a failed model with a debilitating and unjust flat tax at the centre of it.

And, perhaps most importantly, he failed to explain why Dr Hewson's package of:

a 15% consumption tax + a 42% company rate + a disruptive industrial relations model

is likely to create more jobs than Labor's

no consumption tax + a 32% company rate + cooperative industrial relations + an investment allowance of up to 20%

While Dr Hewson was pretending to look Australians in the eye, he should have also taken the chance to explain to them the policies he has failed to release or adequately explain such as the environment and industrial relations.

PERTH
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