



PRIME MINISTER

**TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P.J. KEATING MP
DOORSTOP, REGENT HOTEL, MELBOURNE, MONDAY, 23 MAY 1994**

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J: What is your view of the leadership challenge that is going on this afternoon?

PM: Well, whether the Liberal party changes jockeys or not, this is just about people, about who they think can sell the same policies better. They might say, "we are not running the GST anymore". It's not about the GST, that is out, everyone thinks that's out, the Liberal party. It is about the general cast of their policies. This is not a contest about policies and ideas, it is a contest about who can sell them the best. I think, the Liberal party has reached the stage in its political history where its usefulness to Australian society is very debatable, exceptionally debatable, because I don't think it has touch with the great majority of Australians, I don't think it understands the way Australia is these days or what its future is. So, whether it is John Hewson or Alexander Downer or whoever, until the Liberal party decides to change the way it thinks about Australia and to look at Australia in broad terms rather than sectional terms as it did at the last election and the one before that, and the one before that, then, I think, the Liberal party changing jockeys will not change the nature of the horse.

J: Would you take advantage of the instability in the party and call an early election?

PM: I get asked early election questions every day of the week and I give them the same answer - elections are too hard to win without giving away free time. Thank you.

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