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PRIME MINISTER

**TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P.J. KEATING MP
DOORSTOP, WILLIAMSTOWN, FRIDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 1994**

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J: I was just wondering what you thought about Mr Peacock?

PM: Well, I wish him well. He has had a long parliamentary career. I think he has been a real ornament to his party and there is no doubt that in the future the Liberal Party will see the seat of Kooyong as an opportunity for them. He has been part of their highs and their lows and he has had a few highs and a few lows and he is young enough to embark on another phase of his life.

J: You have been quite critical of him in the past. Your soufflé comment is now legendary. How would you actually sum up his political career?

PM: I think he was part of that tradition of Liberal ministers who largely saw the scheme being run by the bureaucracy essentially. You know, that they were there presiding over what was a largely, whatever changes were made were done by the bureaucracy. It's before the period of great change in Australian economic and social life in the 1980s. This is another epoch of Australian politics and politics and, I think, probably, Andrew belonged to the earlier one.

J: So, you don't think he has actually had a huge contribution to Australian economic or ...

PM: That's for other people to decide. Certainly, I think, he has been part of this interregnum in the Liberal Party going from the old politics of Australia to the new politics and the need for economic reform and social reform.

J: What would you think about Mr Kroger being in Parliament? Would you welcome perhaps taking him on?

PM: I don't worry about the Liberals these days. We need them around for a bit of light entertainment.

J: When is the by-election going to be?

PM: Well, that's up to the Speaker, I think.

J: ... bring up a candidate as well?

PM: Again, that's up to the Labor Party.

J: What about the prospect of Mr Kennett going to Canberra and being in Parliament?

PM: Well, you ask Mr Kennett about that. He does his regular radio show, you can ask him there or someone else can.

J: Mr Keating, how do you see our situation if the Americans decide to invade Haiti?

PM: Well, there is a UN sponsored resolution on this. I think, that the President now, in that UN sanctioned opportunity, told the Haitian government that it has to either respect democratic norms or get out. And, I think, the President apparently made this warning and we'll see what takes place from there, but there has been more than enough opportunity here from the time of the UN having carried its resolution for this government or this group to take heed of their international opinion. So, I think, they should take due warning from the President.

J: Do you see any chance of Australia getting involved there?

PM: Not in a combat sense, no. It is possible that we may commit a small group of police officers were the position to obtain where there is a combat period and where a government is established thereafter.

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