



PRIME MINISTER

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

WA ROYAL COMMISSION: FROM *FAWLTY TOWERS* TO *YES, MINISTER*

The announcement yesterday by the Marks Royal Commission of a widening of the range of issues on which it may make adverse findings against the Minister for Human Services and Health, and the Western Australian Labor MP, John Halden, has put an end to any credibility which this flawed and unjust political inquisition might have had.

If the Commission wanted to widen its scope into fruitful areas, it might, for example, have given itself the task of examining the inconsistencies in Premier Court's account of how he obtained the Goldrock documents, which he handed to Penny Easton.

Was Richard Court not telling the truth when, according to the police transcript presented to the Royal Commission, he told the West Australian police in early 1990, - '*...as far as the minutes go, the minutes didn't come from Withers. To my knowledge they just arrived ... and basically what I did with Withers is I just wanted to confirm whether this was correct.*' ?

Or was he not telling the truth on Tuesday when he told the Royal Commission itself, - '*Mr Withers quite openly provided me with all of the minutes of Goldrock's operations.*' ?

There are many other issues concerning the behaviour of Premier Court which, on the basis of Tuesday's evidence, the Royal Commission could have chosen to investigate.

That it has not done so, but rather has preferred to continue to operate within narrow terms of reference while widening the net of political allegation against Carmen Lawrence, has ensured that any findings the Commission makes will be ignored by fair-minded people.

**CANBERRA
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