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PRIME MINISTER

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

DEBATES

When the election campaign began, I proposed two head to head debates between Mr Howard and myself at the ABC with a moderator of the ABC's choice.

The Coalition have been unwilling to accept this proposal and I'm sure that the impasse has become a source of irritation to the Australian people.

Australians are entitled to hear what the parties are offering and who is offering them. That is the fundamental point. And we owe it to them to end the impasse.

I propose, therefore, that one debate be held, as Labor first proposed, at the ABC with a moderator of the ABC's choice. And that another debate be held, as the Coalition proposed, at Channel 9 with Mr Ray Martin as moderator.

And to decide which debate shall occur first I propose that we toss a coin.

8 February 1996

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