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PRIME MINISTER

2 October 1996

**TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRIME MINISTER
THE HON JOHN HOWARD MP
DOORSTOP INTERVIEW - GOSNELLS, PERTH**

E&OE.....

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, the tax summit is on this week in Canberra. There is a push for a GST on. What's your attitude to that?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, my attitude is that we went to the last election promising that there would be no GST and it is just not on. I mean, there is no way in this term of Government that we would dream of that, contemplate or consider a GST. We said we wouldn't and we meant what we said about it. I don't mind debate about taxation reform and I want to say to everybody who is talking about it now, our policy remains and we are not changing that policy but I watch the debate with interest.

JOURNALIST:

Jeff Kennett has suggested that there might be a recession in the next couple of years. What's your response to that?

PRIME MINISTER:

I think Jeff ought to have a holiday.

JOURNALIST:

Are you working on plans for a GST in any future

PRIME MINISTER:

No.

JOURNALIST:

If there's a ground swell of support there for it, would you reconsider it? Jeff Kennett wants one, Richard Court wants one, I mean, there's a fair bit of support there for it.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, we've only just been elected and I'm going to do in this term what I said I would do in this term. I've got a full agenda of economic reform in this term and I'm sticking to that and I just want to make it plain to everybody and it is always easy of course to debate the other bloke's agenda - that's easy. I'm responsible for my agenda, the Federal Liberal Party agenda this term does not include any contemplation of a GST.

JOURNALIST:

Do you accept Mr Howard that basically the tax system ...

PRIME MINISTER:

I can't hear either of you.

JOURNALIST:

...(inaudible).. media barons...(inaudible).. against a full public media inquiry. Why did ..(inaudible)... not to go with the public inquiry?

PRIME MINISTER:

Because the decision we made yesterday was better.

JOURNALIST:

Why?

PRIME MINISTER:

Because it will produce a more intelligent debate.

JOURNALIST:

Do you have some reminders in sight for voters in Lindsay?

PRIME MINISTER:

I certainly have got some reminders. The people of Lindsay have been told by the Labor Party that after seven months of opposition there solution is to jack up their tax. I don't think the people of Lindsay are going to appreciate being told that they ought to pay more tax. The battlers of Lindsay are paying enough tax already, they don't want to be told by the Labor Party to pay more tax.

JOURNALIST:

...campaign in the seat?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, that's a matter for the people of Lindsay, but you've got a very clear choice. If you vote Labor, you are voting for Gareth Evans' higher taxes.

JOURNALIST:

Mr Howard, are you planning an overhaul of family court services?

PRIME MINISTER:

No.

JOURNALIST:

There are rumours that you are going to privatise mediation services within the family court to make the family court a port of last resort.

PRIME MINISTER:

I am not personally aware of that. I mean, I'll go and check it. I am not aware of that. Look, it's not something that comes to my mind at all.

JOURNALIST:

.... in your plan for the family.

PRIME MINISTER:

No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no!!!

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, Pauline Hanson was invited by the National Party to address the meeting in Queensland. Do you approve of that?

PRIME MINISTER:

Oh look, I don't run the yardstick over what the hundreds of Liberal and National Party branches around Australia do, and I'm not going to be the judge and jury of who ought to be invited to different branches. I'm staying right out of that, that's entirely an organisational matter. If you want to know my views on immigration, my views on relations with the rest of the world, my views on Aborigines, I am always happy to give them, but I just say again and I'll keep on saying it, John Howard does not announce the policy of his Government to the Australian people by way of reaction to the speech of an independent member of Parliament.

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