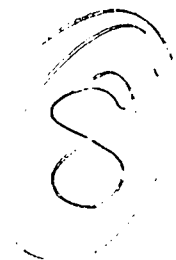


17 September 1997

**TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRIME MINISTER
THE HON JOHN HOWARD MP
DOORSTOP INTERVIEW
FAIRBAIRN RAAF BASE, CANBERRA**



E&OE.....

JOURNALIST:

Mr Howard, do you think you're going to be able to persuade the South Pacific leaders of the merits of Australia's position? Do you think they'll come around to an understanding on greenhouse gases?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, I'll explain my position. I understand their concerns, but they must understand that this is an issue that directly affects jobs and the living standards of all Australians.

JOURNALIST:

So it will have no effect on Australia's position even if they all line up against it?

PRIME MINISTER:

I will defend the Australian national interest, but wherever possible I'll try and ensure that we help neighbours and we help friendly countries and they're all friendly in this region. But at the end of the day my job, in a sensitive way, is to look after the interests of Australia and Australians.

JOURNALIST:

Are you confident of being able to restore relations with the South Pacific leaders possibly damaged by that now notorious...[inaudible]...?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, that's in the past.

JOURNALIST:

Mr Howard, what about this silly business yesterday on the financial markets, these rumours of your resignation, what do you make of all that?

PRIME MINISTER:

You ought to get the financial markets to explain. I have no intention of resigning. I can assure everybody of that.

JOURNALIST:

So you found it amusing.

PRIME MINISTER:

Slightly amusing. I think in the rather fervid atmosphere of the financial markets, with nothing better to do with their screens, anything can happen.

Thank you.