

UNCLASSIFIED
FM CANBERRA
TO DESKBY 210800Z FCO
TELNO 614
OF 210630Z JUNE 89

IMMEDIATE FOR SIR JOHN COLES, C/O HEADS OF MISSION SECTION

THE POLITICAL SCENE
SUMMARY

1. PEACOCK PLEDGES A NATIONAL REVIVAL UNDER A COALITION GOVERNMENT. THE COALITION LEADS BY 6 PERCENT IN THE LATEST POLL. IN ANOTHER POLL, MRS THATCHER IS RATED MORE HIGHLY THAN MR HAWKE.

DETAIL

2. THE LIBERAL PARTY FEDERAL COUNCIL MEETING OPENED LAST NIGHT WITH A SPEECH BY PARTY PRESIDENT JOHN ELLIOTT. HE PAID GLOWING TRIBUTE TO DEPOSED LEADER JOHN HOWARD WHO, HE SAID, HAD SHARPENED THE PARTY'S POLICY FOCUS AND SHOULD BE A SENIOR MINISTER IN A FUTURE COALITION GOVERNMENT. MR ELLIOTT SAID THAT THE LIBERAL PARTY HAD BEEN RE-INVIGORATED BY THE LEADERSHIP CHANGE AND STOOD ON THE THRESHOLD OF VICTORY AT THE NEXT FEDERAL ELECTION, WHICH HE EXPECTED TO BE EARLY NEXT YEAR. BUT HE HAD ONE CAVEAT - THE PUBLIC REJECTED CATEGORICALLY DISUNITY AND PUBLIC SQUABBLING. OPPOSITION LEADER PEACOCK, IN HIS OPENING SPEECH, HAS OFFERED AUSTRALIA 'NATIONAL REVIVAL' IF THE COALITION WINS THE NEXT ELECTION. HE SAID THAT AT THE END OF THE FIRST 3 YEARS OF A COALITION GOVERNMENT, TAXES AND INTEREST RATES WOULD BE LOWER AND HOME OWNERSHIP RESTORED AS AN ACHIEVABLE GOAL FOR YOUNG AUSTRALIANS.

3. AN OPINION POLL PUBLISHED IN THE AUSTRALIAN TODAY SHOWS THE OPPOSITION'S LEAD OVER THE GOVERNMENT TO HAVE INCREASED BY ONE POINT (45 TO 39) WITH THE DEMOCRATS ON 9 AND OTHERS ON 7. MR HAWKE'S RATING HAS DROPPED TO 40 PERCENT SATISFIED AND 53 PERCENT DISSATISFIED, MR PEACOCK'S HAS RISEN TO 27 PERCENT SATISFIED, 46 PERCENT DISSATISFIED WITH 27 PERCENT STILL UNCOMMITTED.

4. IN ANOTHER POLL (BY THE BULLETIN), 57 PERCENT OF THOSE INTERVIEWED HAD A GOOD OPINION OF MR HAWKE (AND 40 PERCENT 'NOT SO GOOD'),

AS AGAINST 67 PERCENT WHO HAD A GOOD OPINION OF MRS THATCHER
(24PERCENT NOT SO GOOD) AND 72 PERCENT OF MR GORBACHEV (14 PERCENT
NOT SO GOOD). EVEN AMONG LABOR VOTERS 57 PERCENT HAD
A GOOD OPINION OF MRS THATCHER AND ONLY 33 PERCENT A NOT SO GOOD
OPINION.

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