Howard claims state support

HOBART: The Leader of the Opposition, Mr Howard, said yesterday that he had the endorsement of his state counterparts for his stance on National Party coalition troubles.

He said the general agreement supporting him came after lengthy talks at a meeting of Liberal parliamentary leaders in Hobart.

"I stated the view that having a coalition was the best way of defeating the Hawke Government," he said. "But there was no point in having a coalition if it was not an honourable one."

Mr Howard refused to speculate about events which might flow from next week's meeting of the 12 Queensland National Party Federal MPs, who are expected to vote on whether to leave the coalition.

"I think it's just a question of dealing with reality and not becoming a captive to hypothetical questions," he said.

Any problems had arisen because of developments inside the National Party, and there was no question of such a difficulty in relations between Liberal MPs.

"In fact, our relations at a parliamentary level are excellent," he said.

Mr Howard, reminded that some state Liberal leaders had advocated that the Federal party leave the coalition, said, "We had a lengthy discussion about it because it's of interest and concern to everybody, and at the end of the discussion there was agreement amongst all of us that the line I've been pursuing was correct," he said.

Meanwhile, Liberal backbencher Mr Andrew Peacock continued yesterday to press the argument that if the 12 Queensland National Party MPs leave the coalition the Liberal Party should go it alone.

Speaking in a radio interview, Mr Peacock said he hoped efforts would be made to hold the coalition together.

"But if that break occurs, you have a totally different situation," he said. "It seems to me to be illogical to feel you can have a coalition with part of another party.

"You frankly render yourself hostage to the misfortunes of others."

Mr Peacock was asked his view of the recent performance of Mr Howard as Leader of the Opposition.

"He is doing a good job," he said.

When the interviewer asked if it was an excellent job, he said, "I am not going to have words put in my mouth. I just said he is doing a good job, and that's that. It is not putting him down and should not be interpreted in that way."

Police seeking woman's help

Detectives investigating the murder of a woman at the Cotter in January believe a Canberra woman may have information to help their inquiries, Detective Senior Constable Don Bailey said yesterday.

The woman, who had not come forward last night, was believed to have information about a man said to have "intimate knowledge" about the murder.

Senior Constable Bailey said police were following several leads as a result of an appeal to the public yesterday.

Affirmative action 'means good business'

SYDNEY: Improving employment opportunities for women makes good business sense, according to the Prime Minister, Mr Hawke.

Mr Hawke formally launched yesterday the Affirmative Action Agency, which will implement the Government's affirmative action legislation.

He said at the office's opening in North Sydney that he regarded the legislation, along with the Sex Discrimination Act, as among his Government's most important parliamentary achievements.

The overriding message of the pilot program was that equal employment opportunity and affirmative action were "synonymous with good human resources management".

"It makes eminently good business sense to use all available human resources," Mr Hawke said.

"The legislation and the work of this agency will, we believe, substantially improve personnel practice in Australia."

Mr Hawke said today's economic environment meant Australia could not afford to neglect the potential of women in the labour force.

"No country — particularly a country in Australia's current position — can afford to be complacent about the skills and working patterns of its workforce," he said.

"No country can afford to disregard or neglect half its human resources."

If successful, the agency's work would lead to the views of female employees being given greater weight and progress toward dismantling barriers to women.

As well, more money would be spent on training programs and to achieve greater flexibility in work structures.

The agency has been in operation for two months, headed by a former CSR personnel and administration manager, Val Pratt.

The Affirmative Action Act, which was proclaimed on October 1 last year, embraces higher education institutions and all companies with more than 1000 employees in its first year of operation.

Essentially, the Act requires companies to include women in their organisational structure and training programs, an agency official said.

"It is not about competition between individual men and women for specific jobs," an agency official said.

The only penalty for non-compliance with the Act is for offending companies to be named in Parliament.

The Act will expand to cover firms with between 500 and 999 employees in February 1988 and to include 100 to 499 staff the next year.



Picture: MICHAEL PORTER

Venerable Pra Oudom, from the Wat Lao Buddhanimit at Kambah, chants a prayer yesterday during a ceremony conducted by Buddhist monks to bless the recently opened Mongolian Barbeque Restaurant in Altree Court, Phillip.

Obvious short-term gain: Walsh

Benefits from selling some public bodies

There were obvious short-term and on-going benefits to be made from selling public property that did not return a yield at least equal to the market rate of interest, the Minister for Finance, Senator Walsh, said yesterday.

During Question Time in the Senate, Senator Walsh was asked by the Leader of the Australian Democrats, Senator Haines, about media reports that the Government was considering the sale of a "large number of public bodies", including the Overseas Telecommunications Commission, Aussat, and Australian Airlines.

Senator Haines asked what would be the net economic benefit flowing from such sales, given that reduction in the public-sector borrowing requirement would be offset by private-sector borrowing to finance the purchases.

Senator Walsh said he would neither confirm nor deny whatever rumour the press gallery was running, "whether the rumour was generated by the press gallery itself or fed to it by somebody from outside".

He said there was no simple answer to the question of net economic benefit from such sales.

However, if government property was not returning a yield on its value at least equal to the market rate of interest, then the sale of such property would "obviously yield short-term gain, but it would also yield on-going benefits to the public and the Budget".

Senator Walsh said such benefits would result from reduction in the public debt by an amount commensurate to a sale, and similar reduction in the public-debt interest obligation "in perpetuity".

He pointed out that the Government also owned overseas assets, and if continued ownership of these could not be justified in economic terms there were "very clear gains from every point of view" in disposing of them.

There was not necessarily a correlation between public ownership and regulation or deregulation, Senator Walsh said.

For example, Britain's Thatcher Government had sold off publicly owned enterprises while simultaneously increasing the degree of regulation.

Senator Walsh refused to comment on reports that the Government was considering the sale of airport terminal facilities.

Senator Alston (Lib, Vic) had asked about reports that the chairman of Ansett Airlines, Sir Peter Abeles, had privately offered to buy out Ansett's current leases for $100 million.

He said such a sale would constitute a significant barrier to the entry of new airlines in the event of a decision to deregulate Australia's airline industry.

Senator Alston also asked whether the Government had rejected its 1986 national platform opposing privatisation, and how it would assess the current market value of public instrumentalities.

Unions 'to support sanctions'

MELBOURNE: Australian unions would support international moves for comprehensive sanctions against South Africa, ACTU president Mr Simon Crean said yesterday.

But action by the ACTU alone was not enough and coordinated bans involving governments and international union organisations were needed, he said.

Mr Crean, speaking after meeting the leader of the African National Congress, Mr Oliver Tambo, said the ACTU had repeatedly urged the Federal Government to impose comprehensive sanctions against Pretoria.

He said previous isolated ACTU action had had limited effect and he had told Mr Tambo the ACTU would support comprehensive bans on Pretoria by world trade unions and governments.

"That's a position we've been urging in international forums," he said.

Mr Tambo, who arrived in Melbourne from Canberra yesterday morning, said after the meeting that he had asked the ACTU to "influence the Government as much as possible" towards total economic and political sanctions against Pretoria.

Mr Crean said he realised the Government had not been forthcoming on comprehensive bans against Pretoria. He could not outline how the ACTU might support the bans, saying this had yet to be discussed at an international level.

Ad called grotesque and repulsive.

— Page 11.

War-crimes inquiry

A former member of the National Crime Authority, Mr R. F. Greenwood, QC, will head the special unit to investigate allegations of serious war crimes detailed in the Menzies Report, the Attorney-General, Mr Bowen, has announced.

Crocodile death seen by skipper

DARWIN: The skipper of the charter yacht Lady G described yesterday how United States tourist Miss Ginger Meadows was taken by a crocodile while trying to swim to safety.

The luxury yacht tied up in Darwin on Thursday night after being cleared to leave the Prince Regent River in Western Australia where the fatal attack happened on Sunday.

The skipper, Mr Bruce Fitzpatrick, said a small party had left the Lady G and travelled to the Kings Cascades, a well-known waterfall on the river.

"I had climbed up to the top of the falls," he said. "I came back down and, looking down, I saw Ginger and another girl in a saltwater pool at the bottom of the falls.

"At the same time I saw a crocodile in the middle of the pool swimming towards them.

"I yelled at the girls to immediately get out of the water. They swam to the side of the pool and got on a ledge. They were still in the water partially."

Mr Fitzpatrick said one of the girls had taken a shoe off and thrown it at the crocodile, hitting it in the head.

"Ginger then swam off from the ledge towards a clearing at one side of the pool," he said.

"As soon as she started to swim off, the crocodile went after her and took her down. She was taken under, came back up and then went down under the water for a long time. After that we only saw her once more."

The party searched for the crocodile, then returned to the Lady G.

"Everyone was very distraught and very upset," Mr Fitzpatrick said. "It was just a shock, a total shock."

He said the girls had been told not to swim in the salt water along the coast because of the danger of crocodiles.

The body of Miss Meadows, 24, was recovered on Tuesday afternoon and taken to Broome, from where it was flown to Perth on Thursday night for examination after the part-time model's estranged husband, Mr Duane McCauley, could not positively identify it.

A post-mortem yesterday failed to determine the exact cause of death. A police spokesman said the body had too many injuries for pathologists to find out.

Martin wins Gold Logie as top TV personality

MELBOURNE: Afternoon talk and variety show host and former leading current-affairs reporter Ray Martin last night won the Gold Logie for the most popular television personality.

The award, which is decided by public vote, was announced at a ceremony in Melbourne.

Martin also won a Logie as the most popular personality in NSW for his *Midday Show* program on Channel 9.

The Silver Logie for the most popular actress was won by Kylie Minogue, of Network 10's *Neighbours*. Fellow *Neighbours* actor Peter O'Brien won the award for the most popular actor.

And *Neighbours* won the Logie for the most popular drama series.

The Logie for the most popular single drama or mini-series was won by *Sword of Honour*, and *60 Minutes* was again the most popular public-affairs program.

Secretary to study city management

By PHILIP HOBBS, City Reporter

The Secretary of the Department of Territories, Mr John Enfield, Canberra's least travelled departmental head, will spend next month overseas studying city-management practices.

Mr Enfield will visit Britain, Austria, West Germany, France and Mexico and will attend the Metropolis Congress in Mexico City from May 19 to 21.

The Metropolis Congress is held every three years and Mr Enfield attended the first one in Paris in 1984.

The congress was instigated by the chairman of the Ile-de-France Regional Council, with the aim of comparing the development strategies of 31 metropolises.

Mr Enfield said that, although the cities were diverse in geographical terms, urban areas were facing similar problems. Exchanging experiences and identifying common solutions was of benefit to all.

"An area I have an interest in is the management of cities," Mr Enfield said. "I will be looking at city management, public housing and public transport.

"And I shall be giving particular attention to ways at which we can make Canberra's city centre come alive — especially at night.

"It is one of the curious things of city centres that it takes huge resources to establish them largely for a daytime population. It is a tremendous waste of resources that city centres are used little at night."

Mr John Turner, deputy secretary (ACT operations), will run the department in Mr Enfield's absence.

CSR recalls suspect brown sugar

Sugar maker CSR has issued a recall notice for 500g polythene packs of brown sugar because they may be contaminated with glass.

The possibly contaminated packets carry the following codes: PKD 31 Mar 87/1 and PKD 31 Mar 87/2.

All the packets carrying these codes have been distributed to Coles stores in the ACT and NSW and a CSR spokesman said last night that 112 packets had been unaccounted for and may have been sold.

"We ask customers' cooperation in returning all such products immediately to their nearest Coles store or to contact CSR direct," he said.

Queries can be directed to Mr Bruce Coates, regional manager, CSR Refined Sugars Group, NSW region, telephone 02 6927680 business hours, or 02 952684 after hours.

Robert Lindsay will judge art award

The senior curator of contemporary art at the National Gallery of Victoria, Mr Robert Lindsay, will judge this year's *The Canberra Times* National Art Award at an exhibition at the Canberra School of Art on July 24.

The award carries a prize of $5000 and is open to any Australian citizen or anyone normally resident in Australia for two years immediately preceding the closing date of May 29.

Each competitor can submit up to three 35mm colour slides, or transparencies, of paintings of any subject or medium, excluding sculptures, painted not earlier than 12 months before the closing date.

Entries must be the original work of competitors and must not be larger in framed size than 7.4 square metres.

A panel of three, comprising artist and senior lecturer in painting at the Canberra School of Art, Mr Robert Boynes, curator of exhibitions at the school, Mr Pater Haynes, and the winner of *The Canberra Times* National Art Award 1981, Ms Ann Thomson, will select paintings from the transparencies for the exhibition.

The winning entry will be chosen from paintings at the exhibition and announced in *The Canberra Times* on July 25. The exhibition will run from July 25 to August 2.

The National Art Award was initiated by *The Canberra Times* in 1980 to encourage Australian artists.

Entry forms are available from *The Canberra Times* and entries, accompanied by a fee of $5 for each painting, should be sent to *The Canberra Times* National Art Award, GPO Box 443, Canberra.

Auxiliary bishops

The Vicar-General of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, Monsignor Peter Connors, and Father George Pell, of Corpus Christi College, Clayton, Victoria, have been appointed auxiliary bishops to the archdiocese. The appointments were announced last night by the Apostolic Pronuncio, the Most Reverend Franco Brambilla.

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Pratia
Scleranthus unifloris

Shrubs and Trees
Acacia baileyana
Acacia floribunda
Acacia howittii
Acacia longifolia
Banksia collina
Banksia ericifolia
Banksia marginata
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Crowea saligna white
Dodonea viscosa purpurea
Erica melanthera
Eucalyptus alpina
Eucalyptus cinera
Eucalyptus crenulata
Eucalyptus divies
Eucalyptus rhoorei nana
Eucalyptus nicholii
Eucalyptus pauciflora
Eucalyptus stricta
Fenjoa sellowiana
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Grevillea rosmarinifolia
Grevillea victoriae
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Hebe Autumn Glory
Hebe buxifolia
Hebe imperialis
Hakea saligna
Kunzea Badger Carpet
Leptospernums
Liquidamber styraciflua
Ligustrum ovalifolium
Melaleuca armillaris
Melaleuca decussata
Melaleuca Velvet Cushion
Melaleuca linarifolia
Melaleuca thymifolia
Photinia robusta
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