

MERREDIN BY-ELECTION, PARLIAMENTARY RESOURCES

533. Mr MURRAY to the Premier:

What impact would a defeat in the Merredin by-election have on the resources available to the Parliamentary National Party?

Dr GALLOP replied:

Do members remember the movie *Indecent Proposal*? In that movie, the characters played by Demi Moore and Woody Harrelson agreed that Demi Moore's character would spend a night with a millionaire character played by Robert Redford, in return for \$1 million. Of course, they could not resist the money. However, as a result, they lost something more valuable than money. The Leader of the Opposition is a bit like those characters. What was his first press release as Leader of the Opposition? It concerned the resources available to his office. He was most unhappy about the fact that, because of the rules, the National Party was allocated a proportion of those resources.

Mr Barnett: There are no rules and you know it.

Dr GALLOP: There are rules and I applied them. As a result, he has been very unhappy. What did he sacrifice in his grubby little deal with One Nation? Before the last state election, he said that One Nation should be placed last on Liberal how-to-vote cards. An article in the *Voice News* of 31 July 1998 reported that the Leader of the Opposition said -

“On an issue of race, and the nature of Australian society, political tactics don't come into it,” he said.
“You draw a line in the sand and you make a stand.”

What is the position of the Leader of the Opposition today? On an ABC Radio program yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition said -

... one-in-10 people voted for One Nation. I, as the leader of the Liberal Party, am not going to insult those people and turn my back on them.

In other words, political tactics are now everything to the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition has undermined his credibility and the credibility of the Liberal Party in Western Australia. He has created division in the community. Under the deal, the Liberal Party will give credibility and reputation to One Nation in exchange for One Nation giving its preferences to the Liberal Party ahead of the Labor and National Parties in that by-election. The Leader of the Opposition stands condemned for undermining the credibility of his leadership and his party. More importantly, he is willing to allow division in our community by supporting a reactionary, divisive party over and against all those parties that stand for multiculturalism, decent gun laws in this community and investment in our State to create jobs and opportunities. The Leader of the Opposition is willing to do that because he thinks it will give him an opportunity.

I take this opportunity to congratulate another great Western Australian who has bowed out of politics - the former Deputy Premier and Leader of the National Party, Hendy Cowan. He entered the federal campaign from a difficult position. The National Party in Western Australia has not won a seat at the national level for a long time. He campaigned on the grounds of principle, and he goes out with a lot of honour. I congratulate him for the contribution he has made to Western Australia. It is the sort of honour we are not seeing on the opposition benches today.