

Explanatory comments by the State President of the Queensland National Party, Sir Robert Sparkes, Brisbane, 3 June 1987

(Chapter 10, p. 138)

“After a long discussion yesterday afternoon the Premier agreed that the best interests of the Party and the anti-socialist cause would be served by the Joh for Canberra Campaign not proceeding further. The principal reasons for this decision were:

1. The extremely severe time constraint imposed by the early election on July 11 precluded any reasonable possibility of implementing a campaign effectively across the nation.
2. The severe time constraint has also precluded us from raising sufficient funds to cover the vast cost of the exercise.

The decision to terminate the campaign was a very difficult one but we were encouraged in making this decision by the knowledge that the campaign to this point had gone a long way to achieving its principal objectives especially ensuring that we had the right policies for implementation after the next election.

I am pleased to be able to report that a meeting took place between the Premier and John Howard today and that the whole philosophical orientation of the Liberal Party had moved to the right (largely you would agree due to the pressure from Sir Joh) and that the Liberal Policies, especially in relation to tax and industrial relations were fairly similar to those of the Premier. John Howard also assured the Premier that the Liberal Party had a very stringent timetable for implementing major policies immediately after the election.

In short, we have achieved a situation where we have starched up the Liberal leadership and moved their policies very close to the Joh for Canberra policies.

In all these circumstances we can justifiably say that the Joh for Canberra move has been an extremely well worthwhile political exercise that has made a major contribution towards advancing the cause of conservative politics in Australia.”