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TRANSCRIPT OF NEWS ITEM  
RAJESH LAW - ROSS WARNEKE PROGRAM  
17/12/98 - 9:34 AM  
RE: INTERVIEW WITH JEFF KENNETT



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**ROSS WARNEKE:**

There are important things happening in Victoria like the debate over the Esplanade Hotel in St Kilda.

**JEFF KENNETT:**

Yes.

**ROSS WARNEKE:**

Now I noticed that one (1) of your ministers, Louise Asher, was a member of the coalition fighting the Becton development. Do you object to one (1) of your ministers doing that?

**JEFF KENNETT:**

No, if she feels strongly about it, it's in her community, very much encourage it, I mean...

**ROSS WARNEKE:**

All right, do you support the decision of the council to stop the thing?

**JEFF KENNETT:**

Well, I don't know all of the ramifications but I think they have a unanimous decision and the authority fundamentally lies with councils and this is what we have been saying for a long time now, that whether it is in residential areas or wherever, is fundamentally a decision of council and I will be very surprised given that that decision has been made even if the developer appeals against it, given that it was a unanimous decision, whether the minister would actually call it in and try and attempt to reverse the councils decision.

**ROSS WARNEKE:**

That's interesting because I mean Rob McClelland has a reputation as being a very interventionist minister on planning matters, especially major things like this.

**JEFF KENNETT:**

No I don't think that's so. I think you will find most planning issues are resolved locally where they should be resolved. Every now and then he calls something in and that's a high profile issue, obviously, but he is not a strong interventionist at all, but the things that he does intervene in are obviously one's that are subject to a great deal of public comment.

**ROSS WARNEKE:**

I'm sure a lot of people who suppose the Espy and oppose the Becton Corporation plans would be rather heartened by what you've just said because they have been saying they have been fearful of what Mr McClelland would do. You're virtually saying, you doubt if he would do anything.

**JEFF KENNETT:**

I didn't quite say that, I said I doubt very much whether he would override a unanimous decision of the council.

**ROSS WARNEKE:**

I mean it's doubting if he will do anything isn't it?

**JEFF KENNETT:**

No, because he is always doing everything, he is a very good minister.

**ROSS WARNEKE:**

I'm sure he is a very busy man.

**JEFF KENNETT:**

But you know when you get the unanimous decision, this has been debated strongly and yes the developers are obviously upset but they have got to understand that we live in a balanced society and we have given councils the authority so there will always be the occasion which a developer will appeal. But and they have every right to do so but whether we, whether it's taken further or not I will be surprised.

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