

Undecided Aussie voters ponder issues

About one in four of Australia's 13,645,073 registered voters have yet to decide how to vote in Saturday's general election, according to recent opinion polls, with one in 10 not expected to decide until election day



Median house prices (Sep 2007)

Perth:
\$510,254

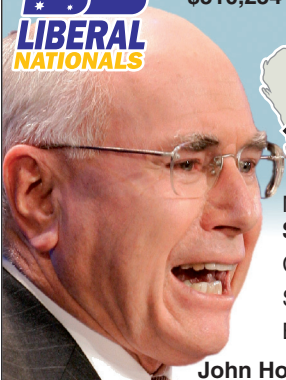
House prices
are 10.6%
higher than
a year ago

Melbourne:
\$431,000

Canberra: \$485,262

Sydney: \$548,344

Brisbane: \$408,000



John Howard:

Prime Minister and Liberal Party leader. 68-year-old has dominated Australian politics for more than 11 years



Kevin Rudd:

Labor leader since December 2006. 50-year-old former diplomat and China expert is fluent Mandarin speaker

ECONOMY

■ Unemployment rate at 33-year low – currently **4.3%**. Claims success due to **WorkChoices**, scheme which removes protections for workers. Interest rates at **6.75%** are highest for decade

■ Plans to ditch unpopular WorkChoices and return to centralised wage-bargaining – move which has angered business leaders but is seen by many as way to improve life for middle Australia

ELECTION GIVEAWAYS

■ Both parties have promised to spend upwards of **\$50 billion** on tax cuts and other handouts, including savings systems to allow first-home buyers to accumulate larger deposits. Labor has also pledged to fund an **“education revolution”**

HEALTH

■ Supports model of local community boards for state hospitals

■ Advocates federal takeover if hospitals do not meet standards

ENVIRONMENT

■ Has consistently refused to sign UN-backed **Kyoto Protocol**

■ Will lead Australia's delegation to **Bali climate summit** and sign Kyoto pact

NATIONAL SECURITY

■ Denies securing oil supplies is key factor behind Australia's presence in Iraq

■ Will pull **combat troops** out of Iraq, after consultation with U.S. and “allies”