

Joyce admits he knew as soon as Campion was pregnant that he'd lose his job

Written by Michelle Grattan, Professorial Fellow, University of Canberra

Barnaby Joyce has said he knew as soon as Vikki Campion found she was pregnant that he would lose his job as deputy prime minister, in a tell-all interview sure to further infuriate colleagues already angry at the damage he has caused the government.

In the couple's much-anticipated [appearance](#) on the Seven Network Joyce, asked his reaction when Campion had a positive pregnancy test, said he didn't believe in abortion "so I just knew straight away that ... I was going to lose my job as the deputy prime minister".

But it was only in February - after he was re-elected at the December 2 New England byelection and following the baby story breaking in the media as well as allegations against him of sexual harassment - that Joyce finally quit the Nationals leadership.

"I knew that the day would come that I had to step down – I wasn't going to have Seb as the deputy prime minister of Australia. ... I suppose towards the end I was fighting more out of spite than logic and just thinking, I'm not going to let these people beat us," Joyce said.

In the pre-recorded interview aired on Sunday night, during which Joyce and Campion sometimes disagreed and she was often emotional, Campion accused conservatives "within the parliament" of pressing her to have an abortion.

She didn't identify anyone but said these people had told her she had to get an abortion because "if you don't they're going to come after you".

Pushed to be more specific she said "can I just say conservatives, you know, people who are supposed to be conservatives." When it was put to her, "god fearing conservatives", she said, "Yeah I wouldn't want to tar the brush of everyone in the National party as like that at all".

Campion, Joyce's former staffer and now partner, said she thought a woman had the right to choose an abortion up until the baby had a heartbeat, and she disclosed had considered one. She had bought medicine online, but decided she could not do it. She then thought she might

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be having the baby on her own.

The Seven Network paid a reported \$150,000 for the interview which Joyce and Campion are putting into a trust fund for Sebastian, who was born in April.

Joyce sought to stop Campion answering questions about a confrontation in Tamworth between his wife Natalie and her. "You don't have to answer it dar!", he told her, saying he wanted to make certain they weren't putting someone else in the interview who mightn't wish to be part of it. "Natalie has every right to be left alone".

Campion did however say "I can't repeat the words on television" that had been said.

She also said she was "deeply hurt" when Joyce had publicly said the child's paternity was a "grey" area. Joyce told the program they had made the decision together for him to say something but Campion said, "I didn't say use the words grey area". Joyce sought to explain the comment by referring to the media pressure they were under at the time.

With some speculation that he might not seek re-election, Joyce gave no hint about his plans for the future. He is currently on [leave](#), with a medical certificate, until mid June. The leave followed a backlash last week, including from some colleagues, at the paid interview.

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Campion said of the whole saga, that she "never intended for any of this to happen. I never intended for anyone to be hurt and I am sorry".

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But Joyce said the “fault doesn’t revolve around Vikki, it resides with me”.

“I don’t like them looking at you and saying ‘the Scarlet womn’ That’s bullshit, you know. It takes two to tango and I was part of that”.

Campion took a swipe at Malcolm Turnbull over his attack on Joyce over his “shocking error of judgement”.

“It’s like you can chew out your vice captain in the locker room but not on the field”, she said.

Michelle Grattan does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organization that would benefit from this article, and has disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond their academic appointment.

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