



FOR PRESS :

PM. No. 95/1967

CAPRICORNIA BY-ELECTION

Comment by the Prime Minister, Mr Harold Holt

It is not surprising that the Labor Party has retained in a by-election a seat it has held for the last six years.

No doubt it will try to make much of its victory, but a close analysis of the poll figures at Saturday's end of count gives it little cause for encouragement. Compared with the count at the same stage in the general election of 1966, the Labor vote has increased by less than 1 per cent, that for the Government parties is up by 1.6 per cent, while there was a decline of 2.4 per cent in the DLF vote.

The Labor vote of 53.4 per cent is still appreciably below the percentage of 56.1 per cent it gained in the general elections of 1963, when the Liberal/Country Party coalition secured a majority of 20 seats.

By-elections notoriously run against governments and there can be few on record when a government has actually gained a better percentage of the vote than it did at the preceding general election.

All parties stressed the issue of development. While the circumstances of a by-election offer the Government small prospect of success, it is to be regretted that Central Queenslanders have passed up the opportunity to place in the National Parliament an able spokesman in the person of Frank Rudd who has devoted so much of his time and energies to furthering the objectives of development in that area.

CANBERRA,
1st October, 1967