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PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIAMONDAY, 15 MARCH 1982

"THIS WEEK IN CANBERRA" - BTV6

The Premier of Victoria, Lindsay Thompson, last week outlined his policies for the next three years of Liberal Government in this State. He was able to present an impressive record of Liberal achievement in Victoria, and his policies for this election are the right ones for the 1980s.

For decades Victoria has been a great productive centre for the whole of Australia. Despite its comparative smallness, Victoria produces about a quarter of the total value of Australia's agricultural output, and one third of Australia's manufacturing employment is in Victoria. Victoria has long been developing its great resources, especially brown coal and oil, and other states are now following the paths of progress which are often taken for granted in Victoria.

Over the last three decades, living standards in this country and in this State have virtually doubled and Victorians now enjoy the highest average household income of any state, and the highest rate of home ownership of any state.

Lindsay Thompson's policy package is economically responsible and it is addressed to people's real hopes and concerns. It is a policy aimed towards continued economic growth, which is the basis of future improvements in living standards. It will provide great help to many people in achieving home ownership, and it will maintain the Victorian Government's firm stance on industrial relations. It will address real needs in education and in training for jobs, and will continue to build up tourism in Victoria. It will maintain high health care standards in Victoria and it will provide further practical help for the aged.

State Governments are immensely important. Their influence on people's lifestyles and prosperity is direct and immediate.

The Labor Party is committed to a number of policies which are out of touch with the needs and wants of people today. Labor has said they would repeal some vital industrial relations legislation. They have said they would impose probate duty; they have said they would abolish per capita grants to non-Government schools - and require such schools to accept new Government requirements as a condition of receiving any State aid.

Policies such as these would turn back the clock. They illustrate how wrong any socialist objective is for this State and this nation.

What Victoria needs is the kind of policies which the Premier put forward last week. Policies which will encourage opportunity and freedom of choice, and which will enable production and economic growth to go ahead.

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