



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

15 MARCH 1990

I have today reaffirmed the Labor Government's unequivocal commitment to a fair, balanced and non-discriminatory immigration policy, and to multiculturalism as a policy for all Australians.

Foundations for the Future, the ALP's election policy document, summarizes the Government's significant achievements of the past seven years in the areas of immigration, ethnic affairs and multiculturalism.

These policies will continue under the fourth Hawke Government and will be supplemented by a number of further initiatives I announced today. These commitments build on the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia, the comprehensive policy and program package released last July.

In its fourth term an ALP Government will:

- . develop a nationally networked ethnic radio news and current affairs service, through the SBS, public radio stations and the Public Broadcasting Foundation, at a cost of up to \$1.4 million in a full year (\$3.4 million over the next three years)
- . earmark \$0.9 million over the next three years, through the ABC and SBS, to provide training and career development opportunities for non-English speaking background Australians in the television industry
- . recognise the important communication role of the ethnic press by aiming to direct at least 5 percent (approx \$1.5 million per annum) of government print media advertising through ethnic newspapers
- . extend the reach of SBS television and legislate to ~~establish SBS as an independent corporation committed to multilingual and multicultural broadcasting~~
- . continue to develop the National Policy on Languages, including continued support for a balanced program of second language learning for all Australians
- . establish a National Bureau of Language Services to provide better interpreter and language services across the nation.

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At the same time the Government will continue implementation of the reform processes initiated in the National Agenda, including new arrangements for the recognition of overseas qualifications; examination of the needs for interpreters in courts; review of the law and of administrative decision-making processes as they operate in a multicultural society; promotion of multicultural education in schools through our National Strategy for Schools; development and implementation of the Government's expanded and strengthened Access and Equity requirements; and substantially increased spending on English language programs.

Although the Opposition Parties have pulled back from the brink of divisiveness that had characterised their stance on immigration issues, there remain significant differences between the major parties. Unlike the Opposition:

- . we will not deny social security benefits to permanent settlers during their first year in Australia
- . we will not slash \$20 million from the immigration portfolio budget
- . we will not make the acquisition of Australian citizenship harder by increasing the qualifying period from two to four years
- . we will not contemplate marginalising the influence of the Office of Multicultural Affairs by moving it from the Prime Minister's portfolio
- . we will not abolish the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

The Government's record in the area of multicultural affairs is unimpeachable. They are policies designed to achieve three purposes: to enhance individual rights, to promote greater social justice, and to maximise the efficient use of Australia's human resources.

Today I unequivocally commit my Government to a non-discriminatory immigration policy and equal opportunity for all Australians no matter what their birthplace or their colour, no matter what their religion or first language. We have stood by our great ethnic communities when the going was at its toughest and we will continue to do so during the term of the fourth Hawke Government.