

BENDIGO BY-ELECTION

Statement by the Prime Minister the Rt. Hon. R.G. Menzies

Once more Mr. Calwell's prophecies have been falsified. The result in Bendigo is, I think, quite remarkable. Sixty-eight votes changed would have led to a Labour defeat. When one considers that in the middle year of a Parliament the stocks of the Government are never at their highest because inevitably many criticisms arise, it is, I think, very encouraging to find that in a seat like Bendigo, with now a considerable Labour tradition, the Government has actually improved its position since the last general election.

I recognise that this is in no small measure attributable to the high quality of the Liberal candidate and the vigorous work that was put into the campaign. I hope and believe that Mr. Snell, so far from being discouraged, though on such a close finish he will undoubtedly be disappointed, will determine to continue his political activities which should undoubtedly bring him victory when a General Election comes around.

CANBERRA,
22nd July, 1960.