

FINAL BROADCAST.

BROADCAST BY THE PRIME MINISTER (THE RT. HON. R.G. MENZIES)
OVER NATIONAL STATIONS AT 8 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1961.

In a very remarkable series of meetings and in my previous broadcasts, I have dwelt upon the great national tasks in hand, the wonderful growth of the last decade, and the immense prospects for the future, provided we adhere to the policies that are serving our country so well.

In this final broadcast, almost at the end of the campaign, I want to put to you some of the elements which should determine your vote.

Our opponents, by common consent the most unimpressive and divided Opposition ever to sit in the Commonwealth Parliament - even our recently converted newspapers critics have always conceded this! - are asking you to vote out of office myself and my experienced and loyal band of Ministers, and hand over to them the government of Australia for all purposes local and international.

It is your choice, and I know that you will make it with the true interests of our country at heart.

The only way in which you can express your choice is by your vote in your particular House of Representatives seat, and your vote for the Senate. If, for some reason you vote for a Labour candidate on personal grounds, though you support the Government in general, you are voting to put the Government out. Think that over.

In making your choice, I suggest that you look first at Australia's position in the world, at our relations with other countries, and at what your present government has done about these matters.

Our policy and record are quite clear. While loyally observing our duty to the United Nations, and playing a substantial part in Colombo Plan aid and in the civilised development of Papua and New Guinea, we have sought to assure the safety of Australia by developing treaty agreements with the great democratic powers and by bringing our own defences to a modern and efficient condition not previously equalled in time of peace. Our relations with the U.S.A. have become close and intimate. In both London and Washington, our views are constantly sought and offered. Australia's standing in significant quarters overseas is both high and useful. Would you trust Labour to improve this state of affairs? Or will Labour's position be as ambiguous in office as it has been in opposition?

We are not a neutral or unaligned government. We know what side we are on, and have always recognised that if we are to look for help and protection to great powers, we must accept mutual obligations.

But in the present Labour Opposition there are influential members and aspiring Ministers who are deeply tainted by neutralism, uncritical of the Communist aggressors, sometimes their apologists, constantly critical of our allies, by no means favourable to SEATO and ANZUS.

I want to tell you, with great gravity, that I believe it would be a disaster for Australia's relations with the free world to be handed over to the present Labour Party.

Let me illustrate by saying something about the position of Communist China. It is well-known that any diplomatic recognition of that aggressive country, or any movement to instal it in the United Nations would be unacceptable to the Communists unless it conceded China's claim to Formosa. Yet our Labour

opponents have regularly, in Parliament, advocated the recognition of Red China, knowing that this would involve recognising its **right** to take over the anti-Communist nation of Formosa! The adoption of such a policy would, of course, damage our relations with the U.S.A. Worse still, it would give a diplomatic victory to China which would gravely weaken SEATO, encourage Chinese aggression in South-East Asia, and discourage resistance to Communism in those Asian nations which are our nearest neighbours.

Are you going to vote for this?

Turn back home, to this happy and prosperous land.

Mr. Calwell is, as usual - he has done it before every election - making great play of unemployment, which he appears to want me to make the dominant, if not the sole issue in this election. I have refused to play his game for him. That there is, in total terms, some small degree of current unemployment is true. The special financial provisions we have made for housing and State works are already producing a marked improvement. The great national works in various States to which we have already agreed to make massive Commonwealth contribution will undoubtedly lead to further employment. In his policy speech, Mr. Calwell promises "to restore full employment within 12 months". Without any of his grossly inflationary policy, we expect the same position to be achieved under our administration.

We do not forget that the over-all statistical position of employment, so much better here than in the U.S.A. and Canada, provides no comfort to the willing and competent man who is at present without a job.. We want to see him in a job as soon as possible. Meanwhile, we have made a great improvement in Unemployment Benefit.

The conditions for obtaining it are today precisely those laid down and operated by the Government in which Mr. Calwell served. The one difference is in the amount paid.

Under Labour, in 1949, the Basic Wage was £6.9.0 per week.

For an unemployed man with a wife and child, the unemployment benefit was £2.10.0 a week, or a little over 38% of the Basic Wage.

Under us, in 1961, the Basic Wage is £14.8.0 per week.

For an unemployed man with a wife and child, the unemployment benefit is £7 per week, or just under half of the Basic Wage!

Yet we are told that we are indifferent to the plight of the unemployed.

But I will go further. The Labour Policy, if carried out will increase unemployment. My reasons for this statement can be shortly stated.

Labour's programme will add hundreds of millions to the already steadily rising Commonwealth expenditure. I understand that Mr. Calwell says "no increased taxation". What then, is he going to use for money, unless he forces upon the Reserve Bank the creation of vast sums of new money, not matched by new production. The effect of this can be imagined. Inflation would gallop. Costs would rise rapidly. The export industries, which cannot pass on inflated costs, and upon whose solvency Australia's solvency largely depends, would suffer. Labour's proposal to restore automatic quarterly adjustments of wages would accelerate the process. These things would inevitably lead, in the absence of strong corrective measures, to loss of confidence, collapse and unemployment.

But the truth is if Labour wants to spend real money, created by productive effort, it must, to honour its promised expenditures, increase taxation very much. What would be the effect of this on savings, industrial investment, and employment?

But the whole story is not yet told. One of the reasons for record high employment in Australia over our term of office is the high degree of industrial peace and therefore continuity of production that have been maintained. A great contributor to this has been our legislation to help to get rid of Communist influence in key unions. The Secret Ballot legislation, which Labour opposed in Parliament, and which Labour is under direction to repeal, provides that a substantial group of union members can apply for a court-conducted secret ballot for union office. This was designed to get rid of the stand-over tactics of Communist minorities. It has had a great deal of success, and would have had much more but for the discouraging attitude of the A.L.P., and its feeble treatment of Unity Tickets. Labour's policy to repeal it would give great pleasure and encouragement to Communist leaders, and would usher in a period of Communist-promoted industrial disorder. Has Mr. Calwell forgotten that in 1949, when he was a Minister, a Communist-led coal strike did such damage that 118,000 people - the highest number ever - were on unemployment benefit?

But on top of all this, Labour, again yielding to a Communist campaign which, as you all know, has been going on for years, has promised to repeal the laws providing for penalties for industrial offences. Such a repeal would be a direct incitement to strikes and lock-outs. Over-all production would fall, and employment with it.

I have time to deal with just one more element. Great industries, and employment for many scores of thousands of Australians, have over these years been provided by the industrial investment in Australia of hundreds of millions of pounds and much technical skill from outside, chiefly from the U.K. and the U.S.A. Labour is very critical of such investment, and will discourage it. Yet without this much-needed capital a large country like Australia, with a relatively small population, cannot be rapidly and adequately developed. The political and economic climate which has attracted investors to come here has taken years to establish. It can be destroyed over-night, with growing unemployment the inevitable consequence.

In short, Labour's so-called attractive policy of gifts all round is both dangerous and deceptive. It is dangerous because it will create the very evils which Mr. Calwell wrongly charges to us. It is deceptive because you, who are offered the gifts, will in one way or another, pay for all of them yourselves.

Our continuing policy, the notable results of which you have seen and appreciated for a decade, is not, I hope and believe, lightly to be abandoned by you. If you want it to go on; if you want to be represented in the councils of the world and in the Common Market negotiations of which I have had much to say during the campaign, by your present experienced leaders; if you want the credit of Australia to continue to stand high; if you want the outside world to go on regarding Australia as one of the most attractive countries in the world, building, growing, full of opportunity for people of enterprise, you will vote for the Government in both Houses, Senate and Representatives, and send us once more to our great tasks.