

EMBARGO: NOT TO BE PUBLISHED, BROADCAST OR TELECAST BEFORE
7.15 P.M. ON TUESDAY, 24TH NOVEMBER.

BROADCAST NO. 1 - SENATE ELECTION

BROADCAST BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE RT. HON.
SIR ROBERT MENZIES, OVER ABC NATIONAL STATIONS
IN ALL STATES AT 7.15 P.M. ON TUESDAY,
24TH NOVEMBER, 1964

The primary issue in this Senate Election is whether you want to reverse your decision of December last.

Now, why should you? You agreed with us that Labour, divided, and under the growing influence of the Left Wing, is not to be trusted to maintain sturdy foreign policies, or to have a realistic defence policy.

Why should you change your minds?

Take our domestic policy, from development to education to housing. We have just concluded the most active and productive Session in the history of the Commonwealth Parliament. Many of our special policy promises have already been performed or put into legislative form so that they may operate next year. Prosperity is high. Wages are at record levels. The national income has grown. Unemployment has disappeared.

You elected us to carry out a three-years policy. Why should you now defeat your own choice?

True, Labour does not like our provision for science teaching and scholarships in secondary schools, without discrimination between State and Church or private schools. With a majority in the Senate, it could defeat any further legislation in this field, or disallow any Regulations.

On top of all this, we now have a cleavage between the parties on the vital matter of Defence.

But I should say something to you about our reasons for introducing a limited measure of compulsory selective military service in the Regular Army.

Our strategic position has suffered a deterioration since the end of last year. North Vietnam has not hesitated to attack U.S.A. ships and forces. South Vietnam is increasingly threatened by the Communists. Indonesian attacks upon Malaysia are increasing in illegal boldness. Our own forces have been engaged in resisting them. Clearly our defence provisions must be stepped up.

The present strength of the Regular Army, well trained, well equipped, and mobile, is 22,750. We are convinced, on the highest military advice, that we should increase this to 37,500, which would mean an effective force of 33,000 by the end of 1966. Current experience of recruiting shows that these numbers just cannot be achieved in the time unless there is a compulsory call-up.

We have adopted this policy in the interests of the national security. You will take your own way of expressing your own opinions about it. You would have had a poor opinion of us if we had delayed the announcement until after the Senate Election. We thought you ought to know right away. Without this new policy the defence of Australia would be inadequate. This, in a period of great risk, would be a grave breach of Government duty.
