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TALK GIVEN BY THE PRIME MINISTER,
MR. JOHN GORTON, OVER ABC NETWORK
ON FRIDAY 17 OCTOBER

In my previous talk to you, I dealt with the lack of policy of the ALP in matters of defence and of foreign affairs. Also I spoke of how I believed their policy of running out of our overseas obligations and then cutting our own defence forces imperilled Australia's future security and, indeed, made it quite possible that the existence of Australia as an independent nation might, in the years ahead, well be threatened by these policies.

And so, naturally, they have in their policy speech no provision for increasing Australia's defences at all. Rather, as would be expected, do they have a proposal to cut Australia's Army by one-third by abolishing National Service Training, and this we will not do. And also they have a proposal to deny the Air Force that strike aircraft which the Air Force and all our military advisers say Australia's defence needs. So they have no policy in those directions.

But when you examine the propositions put before you, they don't have policies in other directions either. There are no policies for development which have been put before you by the Labor Party. We, on the other hand, have put specific proposals.

We have proposed to build railways in South Australia. We propose to establish an Institute of Marine Science so we can learn about the Barrier Reef and help to protect it. We propose to take Australia into the atomic age by establishing an atomic plant at Jervis Bay. We propose to help the film industry in Australia so that our talent can be employed, so that the pictures we make can be exported and so that people overseas can see what the real Australia is like. These are some of the specific proposals that we have put. There are no such specific proposals to counter them from the Opposition.

Further, we have in what we have said, made it clear that we realise that the State Governments will in the years ahead as our revenue rises, need more and more revenue themselves so that they can, as their population grows, provide the schools, the roads, the hospitals, the other services they now give.

There is no indication whatsoever in the speeches of the Opposition that they realise there will be this need. No indication whatsoever. All there is is an indication that they will bypass the States; that they will in education, for example, set up a Commission to examine ten thousand schools and assess the needs of each. Whereas we are already working and have been for months been working with the States not to bypass them, but with each State Education Department to assess, so that they could assess, the needs of their own schools. This surely is a better way to do it.

Then we have in one field only these large promises in welfare - large promises, very costly promises, promises which will lead to inflation and yet promises which Dr. Cairns, one of the economists in the Labor Party, has already said may be so costly that they won't be able to be carried out. It is not surprising he should say that because in the Opposition, no matter what the Leader wants to do, he is told what to do by an outside body.

Let me give you one example of that. In Bendigo not long ago, the Leader of the Opposition went to the people saying, "My policy is to make a grant for education. I will give half to State schools; half to independent schools. Elect my candidate". And a few scant weeks later he had to change that under dictation.

You cannot rely on what a Parliamentary party, dictated to by an outside body, will do no matter whatever they may promise to do.
