



## PRIME MINISTER

FOR PRESS:

PM. NO. 105/1972

### THE CHANNEL 7 (BRISBANE) INTERVIEW

Statement by the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon.  
William McMahon, CH, MP

A great deal of publicity has been given to comments made by me in a television interview recorded in Brisbane on Friday for telecasting next Wednesday.

These have been misconstrued as criticism by me of my Ministers.

The following is the extract from the transcript of the interview which deals with the incident :-

"QUESTION: Looking back, Prime Minister, over the last twenty months, what have you, yourself, learnt from being Prime Minister?

PRIME  
MINISTER: I have learnt a lot. I have learnt first of all the fact I now must make more decisions than I had intention of making when I first became the Prime Minister. I wanted to be the head of a team. I wanted to delegate the authority to the relevant Ministers responsible for the Departments.

QUESTION: What went wrong with that principle?

PRIME  
MINISTER: I couldn't get the work done quickly enough and I found frequently that the political approaches to it were not as good as I thought they should be. So from September of last year, I gradually started to change, and I have been changing a little more quickly as the days have gone by - and I believe with success."

As I said last night, any suggestion that I am criticising my Ministry is absolute nonsense.

I was not reflecting in any way on any member of my Ministry.

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There are times when one must, in co-operation with the relevant Minister, make decisions which cannot be kept waiting.

I have an extremely competent team in whom I have complete confidence, as I said in my Policy Speech.

It is obvious that as we developed new programmes, I have had to take increasing responsibility.

Since I took office twenty months ago, a whole range of liberal policies have been transformed.

Many new measures have been introduced, including some of the most significant policy initiatives of the postwar period.

I make no apologies for having got these things done, and done responsibly and rapidly.

More will be done when my Government is returned to power on December 2.

Mr Whitlam has no qualifications to speak about Cabinet administration.

His caucus, under outside pressure, has forced him to accept an unworkable Cabinet system with up to 27 members. Nothing could be more impracticable.

Under our Cabinet system, the Prime Minister is the leader of his team.

Under Labor, a much larger and unwieldy team would control the Prime Minister.

That team would, in turn, be subject to the outside control of Labor's non-elected machine.

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SYDNEY,

25 November, 1972