



**PRIME MINISTER**

PRESS STATEMENT NO. 23

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PREFERENCE TO AUSTRALIAN SUPPLIERS

The Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam, announced today a new system of preference to Australian suppliers in purchases by the Australian Government.

He has directed that Australian Government contracts should be awarded to an Australian-owned company in cases where Australian and overseas-owned firms submit tenders which meet specifications and are equal in respect of price and availability.

This represents a change from present procedures for selecting successful tenderers.

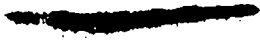
The present practice in most cases in which equal tenders are submitted is to accept the tenderer who has been the most recent satisfactory supplier of identical supplies.

His decision follows discussions between Government departments, held to ensure that future purchasing arrangements for the Australian Government would take into account the question of Australian ownership and control.

Mr. Whitlam has also ordered that a study be made of future arrangements which might apply to the purchase of petroleum products from Australian-owned and controlled companies.

Mr. Whitlam said current contracts for petroleum products will not expire before the end of 1973.

In his election policy speech, Mr. Whitlam pledged that the Labor Government will give a lead to maximising Australian ownership and control of the oil industry by ensuring that where price, availability and accessibility are as good, the Commonwealth will make its purchases from Australian-owned and controlled companies.



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