



A.B.C. BROADCAST BY THE PRIME MINISTER, MR. E.G. WHITLAM, QC, MP,
 TO BE BROADCAST ON TUESDAY, 30 APRIL 1974

Last night, for the second time in 17 months, I put to you, the Australian people, the program of the Australian Labor Party. For the second time I delivered my policy speech in the civic centre of a suburb which symbolises so many of the problems which my party and my Government have been determined to solve. Australia regrettably abounds in areas like it, areas where the residents have had to suffer inadequate transport, overcrowded hospitals and inferior and uncoordinated community services. In 1972 the Australian people looked to us as the only political party in Australia which had considered and devised comprehensive programs to deal with those shortcomings.

That was 17 months ago. Since then we have taken giant steps towards dealing with the problems of our nation. For the first time in a generation Australia has had a Government dedicated to equal opportunity for all its citizens. For the first time Australia has had a Government determined to promote Australian ownership and control of Australian industries and resources. For the first time Australia has had a Government determined to reduce inequalities between regions.

Nowhere has this new and vital presence been more keenly felt than in our schools and other educational institutions. In our first Budget, we nearly doubled the amount of money for Government and non-Government schools throughout Australia. We have abolished fees for tertiary education. We have approved a massive injection of finance for technical education. We have been the first national Government to provide significant funds for the care and education of pre-school children.

We have not yet been given a fair chance to implement all of the program I put to you for the 1972 elections. A number of those programs will grind to a halt and be abandoned if we are not given that chance. That is what the election on 18 May is all about: whether the programs, the new hope of 1972 should be fulfilled; whether the vigour and enthusiasm for change and improvement, released through your decision in 1972, should be replaced by the old lethargy.

There is a striking similarity of background, not just of content, between the speech I delivered last night and that which I gave in 1972. Neither speech contained piecemeal or unconsidered policies. All of our policies have been researched, not just by politicians but by independent experts. All have been given the widest possible dissemination. That process has taken time, in some cases as much as 7 years. But it has twice enabled me to stand before you as the leader of the only party with a coherent and consistent plan for our development.

What a contrast with our opponents. They forced a premature election - and then discovered they had to make up some policies on which to fight it. Bit by bit, you have had to watch their ideas and whims dribble out of hastily convened and divided meetings held behind closed doors. Even then you have had to listen to their spokesmen tell you that they have not been able to cost these so-called policies.

The same men who cannot put a price on their hasty and unconsidered plans expect you to believe them when they say they will cut taxes. It is all too similar to 1969 when they promised to cut your income tax but did not tell you that they proposed increased duties on petrol, cigarettes and wine, higher postal charges, and increased sales taxes.

This is the choice you face on 18 May. It is a clear choice between our careful planning and their patchwork of last-minute promises and gimmicks. It is a choice between the continuation of your new aspirations for Australia or a return to the stale ideas of yesterday.