

PRESS RELEASE

The Prime Minister today continued his campaigning for State Labor Leader Perc Tucker.

In a crowded schedule, Mr Whitlam attended a Greek Orthodox Church Service and addressed a gathering at the Greek Community Centre in South Brisbane. He stressed the Australian Government's concern at the Cyprus situation, and outlined the financial and welfare assistance already given by his Government.

Advance Australia Fair signalled his arrival at a crowded luncheon at the New Melbourne Hotel.

Mr Whitlam reminded the audience of his longstanding association with Queensland.

"In my concern and affection for Queensland, in my knowledge of your State and my long-standing association with it, I yield to no-one, not even Mr Bjelke-Petersen and Sir Gordon Chalk," he said.

"I came here with no grudge against your Premier, and for all our disagreements, I bear no lasting animosity towards his government. I have done my best to work with him for the good of this State. If I point to failings in his government's performance I know you will understand I have no desire to bucket Queensland or its citizens," Mr Whitlam added.

However, he criticised the Premier for not helping in the fight against inflation.

"As the leader of the national government, I accept responsibility for the economic management of this country," the Prime Minister stated.

"I don't shuffle off that responsibility to Mr Bjelke-Petersen. At the same time he cannot shuffle off his own responsibilities to me.

"My own government has used every weapon at its disposal, every constitutional power it possesses, in the battle against inflation and unemployment. We will not let up in that battle.

"Mr Bjelke-Petersen has done nothing. He campaigned against our referendum to seek greater powers in the fight against inflation. He refuses to use the powers he already possesses," Mr Whitlam said.

"If the Queensland Government co-operated with us in setting up a land commission as the three Liberal States are doing, we could reduce the price of land for the home buyer.

"If the Queensland Government allowed Australian National Line ships to operate between Queensland ports it could cut shipping freights.

"If he co-operated with our plan to reduce electricity costs in Queensland we could check price rises over a vast range of goods," Mr Whitlam said.

Queensland's housing policy was a disgrace.

"They have done less than anyone for the people most in need of housing and even less than Labor did in Queensland in its last year of office 1956-57. That year Labor built 1900 housing commission homes. Last year Mr Bjelke-Petersen built only 1400 homes - and had almost \$12 million left over in unspent housing funds from Canberra, despite a 40% population increase since Labor was last in office in Queensland."

The Prime Minister concluded his address by pointing out that Queenslanders received a larger slice of the national expenditure cake than any other Australians.

Queensland had received \$739 million last financial year from the Australian Government. This represented \$382.00 per head of population, compared with \$343.00 per head average in the other States.

Mr Whitlam attended a function at Redland Bay Hotel before driving to Surfers Paradise where he has a press conference tomorrow morning.

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