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Channel 9 News. (Acknowledgement is requested).

Interview with the Prime Minister.

Reeves; In general terms, how would you rate the governments performance, over the last two years. Better than you thought?

Whitlam; We have been a very active government. I think we have done more legislatively and administratively in our two years than our predecessors did in their last 20 years. Of course we have had our frustrations. We would have liked to have done more. But nevertheless, we in fact are achieving a very great deal of what we promised.

Reeves. Is there any area of personal satisfaction to you.

Whitlam; I suppose I would be particularly pleased at the different standing that this country has in the world. We were embroiled still, long after most countries had ceased to be, in this cold war attitude. Secondly, we had been pointed into a corner in our region, the same way that South Africa has been in the continent of Africa. We were seen as a racist enclave. Now, we have rid ourselves of those two objectionable situations, the cold war and the racist attitude. But on top of that we have contributed very positively to new programs around the world, human rights, disarmament and trade. This has given me very much satisfaction naturally.

Reeves. Foreign affairs is still, obviously, a very great love of yours.

Whitlam; Oh. yes. Naturally. I think Australia, as a somewhat isolated country, and a very large trading country, must always be very much aware of relations between her and other countries.

Reeves. Have any of your Ministers performed particularly well, anyone you would like to single out.

Whitlam; This is always an invidious thing to answer. There are many Ministers who were well known before we became a government, and who were therefore expected to do well. And they have. But there were several others who were not so well known before we became a government. I suppose I could identify some of them. Fred Daly, as leader of the House of Representatives, has been superb. Lionel Bowen as the Minister assisting me, Ken Wreidit, as Minister for Agriculture and Rex Connor as Minister for Minerals and Energy. All of these have done superbly. People were not aware of them two years ago, but they are very great and effective public figures now.

Reeves. Perhaps an unfair question, but how do you think you have performed as Prime Minister.

Whitlam. This is much more difficult for me to say, but I would guess that most people would concede that I would be the best available, shall I say.

Reeves. In terms of Prime Ministers over the years. How do you think you would rate with people like Curtin and Menzies.

Whitlam. I would rather be compared with people like Deakin, by way of achievements, and Curtin. Menzies, of course, was a superb tactician and practitioner. But I believe the Prime Ministers who have been most effective in contributing to Australia has been Deakin and Curtin.

Reeves. Looking to the future,

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Reeves. Looking to the future, what are your governments main aims for the next 12 months.

Whitlam. We want to continue these programs, and I suppose our programs fall into two principal categories. One is that there should be equality of opportunity as far as governments can achieve that, and secondly, there should be a general enrichment of the quality of life. What we have wanted to do is to see that what governments have to do, should be available everywhere in Australia, irrespective of what people do and irrespective of where they live. We want to see that everybody shares in the benefits of those programs which governments, these days, have to initiate and accomplish.

Reeves. Do things like inflation and unemployment come as a shock to you.

Whitlam. Yes, they have. There is no question that unemployment and inflation are much worse in Australia than anybody expected. They are throughout the western world. There is not a country with which we deal that is not hit to a completely unexpected, and unpredictable extent by these two problems, concurrent problems of unemployment and inflation. Every country in Western Europe and the United States, Canada and Japan and New Zealand, all are suffering it. We are all infecting each other. We happen to be the countries which are most developed in the world, which do most of the trade in the world. We just cant insulate ourselves, none of us.

Reeves. Yesterday, the Party's Federal Secretary, David Coomb, said that, looking towards the future, some members of the Party were disillusioned and disinterested in the future of the Labor government. Have you felt this as well.

Whitlam. I suppose some of the initial exhilaration has faded. But I believe that when people, who are Labor supporters, Labor members, come to reflect on what we have done, and the way we have overcome difficulties at home and abroad, and we were dealing with some of those abroad which have their inevitable effect on us, but also domestically we have been beset by difficulties that nobody previous government has ever had. There has never been an opposition which has been so cantankerous and negative. There has never been a federal government which has come in for so much abuse, constant abuse by so many state governments. But when you look, despite all this, we have achieved immense things. Education. health, the facilities in our cities, the capital and provincial cities, the overseas trade agreements, we have made an immense improvement in the structure within which governments have to operate in this country.

Reeves. Could I suggest that some of the abuse has come from members of ~~an~~ your own Party, or members outside the Parliament.

Whitlam. This would be so. I mean, you are a very skilled practitioner in the media, and you know if anybody in government says something, the technique is to go around and solicit opinions from people who might not ~~be~~ be attracted to what it has done. Of course, you can always get off the cuff criticisms from people. I am sure there are quite a lot of favorable responses, but they are not publicised. So, it is a fair enough technique, but we are all familiar with it.

Reeves. Do you think there are too many nervous nellys belly aching in the Party about things which the government has not done, or which people think should have been done.

Whitlam. Yes, there is quite an amount of this. But this is understandable in politics. The people to whom you so kindly and gently refer are very often those who have sought office in the