

QUESTION: Mr Whitlam, has the Senate any right to reject Supply?

PM : It's very dubious, no Senate has ever refused Supply to the Government in the Australian Parliament, and this would not now happen anywhere in the world. It's not been possible, for instance, in Britain for the House of Lords to do this since 1911.

QUESTION: Supposing they do force an election on these grounds?

PM : Oh, well when you say force an election, it is for me to advise the Governor-General whether there should be an election for the House of Representatives or when he should ask the State Governors to issue writs for an election for half the Senate. That can be done at any time between now and the end of June when there has to be an election for half the Senate. Or it's my job to advise the Governor-General whether there should be a double dissolution, an election for the whole of the Senate as well as the House of Representatives.

QUESTION: Now the Liberal, the Coalition, seems to be basing its hopes on a double taxation system. Do you think that will catch votes?

PM : No, I think this will lose votes because I don't believe that Australians want to go back to the system which applied in Australia before the war, and which still applies in Canada. This system where you have Federal income taxes, everybody in Australia has to pay them, but on top of that the people in each State have to pay an additional State income tax. And in Canada still, and in Australia before the war, this meant that the people paid different taxes in each State. For instance, the big States like New South Wales and Victoria paid a lower rate of State income tax; all the other States, including Queensland, paid a higher rate of State income tax. The only people who benefited were the people in Canberra, because they didn't have to pay State tax. So that's the reason why Sir Gordon Chalk, the Liberal leader here, the Treasurer, and people like Kevin Cairns, one of the Liberals MHR's from Queensland, have expressed such misgivings about this proposal to go back to double taxation. It's really a system of unequal taxation.

QUESTION: Thank you Mr Whitlam

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