

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Seventeen months ago the people of this city and this State and this country had an election for Federal Parliament: for the House of Representatives and for the Senate. And a very large majority of the people of this city and this State and this country said that they wanted, once again, to have a Labor Government as the Government of Australia. And throughout that campaign my colleagues and I, on behalf of the Labor Party, and the various people on behalf of the Liberal Party and the Country Party all said that that election was to choose a Government for the following three years. I never said that if we didn't get a majority in the House of Representatives but were able to break even only in the Senate and use the Senate to block the Government which had a majority in the House of Representatives, that we would block it. We were very clear with the public; we didn't want once again the situation to arise, which arose in April last year, where also, after only seventeen months, the Senate threatened to block the money for the Government to carry on the affairs of the Nation. Everybody knew that that had happened once and during the campaign nobody said that it would happen again if he didn't get a majority in the House of Representatives. I never said it and Mr Snedden, who was the leader of the Liberal Party at that time, he never said it either. And for those who knew of Mr Fraser, he never said it during the campaign. So the people were asked, only seventeen months ago to say, who was to be the Government of this country for the next three years.

And the people said that they wanted another three years of a Labor Government in Australia. And they gave the Labor Party a comfortable majority in the House of Representatives. In the hundreds of divisions which have taken place in the House of Representatives last year and this year the Labor Government has never been defeated. And every time we have sought a vote on anything that we put there, any time we've been challenged to have a vote on something the Liberals and the Country Party put up there, we have won it fairly and convincingly.

Now in the Senate, the system is so complicated, we only broke even in May last year. We got 29 out of 60 Senators. The Liberals and the Country Party also got 29 out of 60 Senators and there were two independents. Now, in this State, we've got an overwhelming majority for the Senate, and in the whole of the country, the Labor candidates for the Senate got 165,000 more votes than were given to the candidates of every other Party in the Senate. All of them combined got 165,000 fewer votes than the Labor Candidates. But the system is so complicated and Tasmania, one eleventh of New South Wales' population, still gets as many Senators as New South Wales. We only were 50-50 in the Senate. Now in those circumstances it was reasonable enough that we should form the Government. Governments always are formed in the House of Representatives, and not only that, only in the House of Representatives can a Money Bill be initiated, only in the House of Representatives can a Money Bill be amended. The Senate can not initiate a Money Bill let alone a Budget and the Senate could not amend a Money Bill let alone a Budget. Now in those circumstances we were the Government of Australia. We had the majority in the House of Representatives. Now the proposition that is being put to you now by the Liberals is,

the people who've lost out in the House of Representatives, the people that got 165,000 fewer votes in the Senate should still be able to use the Senate to block the House of Representatives. And the principle for which we are fighting is that the House of Representatives shall continue to be the Federal House where Governments are made and unmade. If I, for a second time, do what I did in April last year, that is at the mere threat of the refusal of the money for the Government to carry on, then ask for a double dissolution - and I could at this moment - if I do that, I abandon the principle that the House of Representatives is where Governments are made or unmade. And that will not only, that will not only interrupt Government in Australia, frustrate Government in Australia on this occasion: it will interrupt and frustrate Government in Australia whenever the Senate chooses to reject or delay a Money Bill, even a Budget. And we can't have that happen a second time. It's not just the fortunes of the present Government, the Labor Government, my Government, it's not that; it is the fortunes of every subsequent Government in Australia which the people choose by giving a majority to its Party in the House of Representatives.

I am impressed here as I was in Melbourne last Monday and as my colleagues were last weekend in every other capital in Australia by the immense number, the thousands of people who've attended these protest rallies, who were born in other countries. Because people from other countries know how fragile democracy is: how much, how often, how ruthlessly the conservative reactionary forces will kill democracy when they think they can get away with it. And one of the things that enthused and elated and uplifted the migrants in Australia was that in December 1972 they saw that in Australia after the hard fought campaign, at a secret ballot, it was possible to change the Government. And they expected that Government to have at least 3 years, not just from December '72 to April '74; they expected it to have 3 years. And when they made their great, their immense contribution to reelecting that Government in May last year, they expected it to have 3 years and not just seventeen months. And we don't want the system in Australia that has bedevilled and weakened democracy in so many countries from which migrants have come, where Governments change too frequently, where no government has the opportunity to carry out its program. In Australia we elect Governments, it's always been thought, for three years and at the end of three years there is a ballot, a secret ballot, a free campaign and you can then decide whether you want to have the Government for another three years or whether you want another Party to be the Government - also for three years.

And what is at stake now is not whether you will have House of Representatives elections every one and a half years, which is what the Liberals are now saying, but whether you could have House of Representatives elections every six months. Because twice every year the House of Representatives passes Budget tide Bills, Supply Bills. Every year in October the House of Representatives passes Bills which will carry out the whole of the financial arrangements of Australia from July to June, the whole twelve months. And then in April every year the House of Representatives passes other Bills as to how much money you will have and how you will spend the money from July to November following; twice a year, in October and in April the House of Representatives initiates Money Bills, the Budget

and Supply and then they go to the Senate. And for the 75 years that we've had a National Parliament in Australia the Senate has always passed those Bills, it has never delayed those Bills, or frustrated those Bills. Australian democracy for three quarters of a century has operated on the basis that twice a year the House of Representatives brings up this collection of Money Bills and the Senate passes them.

But the Liberals are now saying that on every one of those occasions, every October, every April, they can reject the Money Bills and then... But I want to assure you because most of you depend on weekly or fortnightly incomes paid by employers - many of your employers are Government or Government Departments or instrumentalities - I assure you that we have the money passed last April to pay every salary, every wage bill, not only this week but in a fortnight's time and in four weeks time. The money is there to see that everybody who depends on the Australian Government for his income, for her income, will receive that on the dot until the end of November. And we are confident that if by the end of November the Senate has still refused to debate the Budget, or has still refused to pass the Budget, other arrangements can be made to enable people to stick at their jobs, to do their duty, to serve the people of Australia; other arrangements will be made. We shall not let the men and women of Australia who depend on the Australian Government for payment for their services or their supplies, we shall not allow them to be let down. But meantime we are determined that the Australian Government will govern for the three years for which you elected us. We will not allow the Senate...

I'd ask you to note that the Senate has not rejected the Budget, it's only deferred, it's delayed it, it's stalled it. Because even the most cussed and unprincipled and greedy Liberals realise that this would be a step that has never been taken in Australia, to reject a Federal Budget. It's never been done and they hesitate to do it. In the House of Representatives, it's true, they've twice voted against all the Budget Bills; they did so a month ago; they did so this week. But when the Bills go to the Senate they hesitate; they don't vote against them, they just move an amendment to defer them. Now I would point out that they would not be able to carry these amendments to defer the Budget had not a Labor Senator, Senator Milliner from Queensland, died four months ago. And Mr Bjelke-Petersen appointed a non-Labor Senator to take the place of Labor's Senator Milliner.

Now if the Labor Senator Milliner was still alive he would be voting in the Senate with his Labor colleagues as he had done in every day of his life. And this amendment to delay the Budget would not have been passed. The Senate would have been evenly divided. And in the Senate, if there's as many people voting against a proposition as for a proposition, if the numbers are equal, then the proposition is lost. And that's the basis of Senate democracy. That is, the House of Representatives should have a majority and the Senate can be evenly divided but yet the Senate can prevail because you need a majority of votes to get something through the Senate. Now if Senator Milliner were still alive he would be voting against the amendment which the Liberals have moved to defer the Budget; to delay the budget; to stall the budget; there would be as many people voting against the amended motion as for it and it would be lost.

And in those circumstances the Liberals would have to make up their minds whether to vote for it or not. Now you might think they had some dissatisfaction with the Budget, some of them have even said the Budget's failed. I don't see how they can say that when they haven't passed it. So, of course, their real fear is that once the Budget is passed people will be known to benefit from it, because when this Budget is passed, 3 million taxpayers in Australia will be paying taxes at a lower rate. And when this Budget is passed, half a million people who've been paying income tax will no longer have to pay income tax. And when this Budget is passed, all those reports, those concessions from which the wealthy used to benefit will be replaced by rebate which are of equal value to everybody. And the Liberals are terrified of the popular response which the people will show to this Budget when it passes.

Now you sometimes hear, 'Well what about a double dissolution?' It may well be that in due course there will be a double dissolution. But not yet. And I'll tell you why you can't have a double dissolution on the Budget. For one thing, if you were to have a double dissolution, this is what has to happen. The Senate has to reject a Bill and then 3 months later the Bill has to be passed again by the House of Representatives, passed a second time by the House of Representatives and rejected a second time by the Senate. So if we were to have an election, a double dissolution, on the Budget, you couldn't have it for at least 4 months and the Senate would have to reject the Budget, not just delay it, reject it; then 3 months later we'd have to debate it again. The whole of that process would take about 4 months: that is, if the Senators next Tuesday, were to reject the Budget, we couldn't introduce it again in the House of Representatives for another 3 months and then in about a fortnight we might be able to have the vote in the Senate on the second occasion. And if it were rejected a second time you could have a double dissolution on the Budget. You couldn't have it for 5 or 6 weeks after it was rejected and then the last double dissolution, the one that was held last May, it took over two months to count; for 3 months Australia was without a Parliament, the Parliament was dissolved on the 10 April last year and it couldn't meet until the 9 July last year. For 3 months less one day, Australia was without a Parliament and the whole of the Government and Public Servants were tied up for 3 months. Now if you want a double dissolution, on the Budget you couldn't - you want the Budget now. A double dissolution couldn't be held on the Budget, the Parliament couldn't meet to vote on the Budget another time for 5 or 6 months from now. You can't wait that long; you shouldn't be fobbed off from the benefits of Bill Hayden's Budget for another 6 months. You want to get the benefits in a month's time as you are entitled to have them.

Now there may be a double dissolution before, by about the end of next year, if the Senate keeps on the obstruction it has up till now. Because in the 3 years that we've been in Government the Senate has rejected more bills that it passed in the previous 72 years. From 1901 till 1972, the whole of those 72 years, the Senate has not rejected as many bills as it has already rejected in 1973-4-5. Now if we hadn't had the double dissolution last May, it's true we wouldn't have got through the Medibank Bill. You wouldn't have had Medibank and you wouldn't have been able to get through the Bills which provide that everybody's vote in Australia will be of equal value. But while the Bills have gone through the Senate, on 4 occasions has rejected the proposals which will carry out that electoral distribution. Because what is at the heart of the objection by the

Liberals and the Country Party to my Government is, that my Government is determined to see that Australians wherever they live, whatever they do, however old or whatever their education or their means, they will all have an equal vote. And in this State of New South Wales there are some electorates, some Federal electorates, where there are fewer than 50,000 people with a vote and there are other electorates in New South Wales where there are nearly 90,000 people with a vote. The variation between less than 50,000 and almost 90,000; it's very uneven and we want to see that in Australia, as in the United States or as in most European countries, at least the electorates have the same number of people in them. They are dead scared that if we have a half Senate election, which we will before the end of next June, we'll be able to get a fair electoral system through the Senate at last.

Now, you've got the record of the Senate in general, more bills defeated in 3 years than in the previous 72. But the present issue is the Budget. And what's the alternative? The only alternative that Mr Fraser has put up to the Budget is to bring in double taxation. So that there will be a State system of income taxation on top of the Federal system. We abandoned that back in 1942; we don't want that unequal system back in Australia. And every other feature, what he said about the Budget, what he said in his own speech on the Budget is now, he says, "inoperative." It's a great word which came from President Nixon, "inoperative". That is, not only have they now abandoned, as of Wednesday week the Budget proposals they put up, but they now say that if we have an election for the House of Representatives now, that is if I accept their blackmail - as I did in April last year, what would they do? They'd pass the Budget.

Now you see the whole design: they don't have any objection to the Budget; their own alternative Budget is now inoperative; it's been exposed; it's been abandoned and they say if we have an election of the House of Representatives - as if that's any business of the blasted Senate - then they'll pass the Budget through the Senate. Or alternatively, if there's a double dissolution, we can wait for 5 or 6 months to pass the Budget. The other thing is to have an election for half the Senate only. Now that wouldn't be a bad idea; it's the usual time of the year to have them. I know that Sir Robert Menzies said, 'What a monstrous idea, what a monstrous idea to have an election for the Senate in November or December'. Now when Sir Robert Menzies was Prime Minister he had 6 elections for the Senate one of them was in April, for the Senators to take office in July and the other 4 were in December or November previously. That is, 7 or 8 months ahead of when the Senators were to take office. And the sixth one was in September, 9 months before they were to take office. And now he says what an impertinence it would be to have a half Senate election now. He forgets what he did; he always had them about this time of the year. But there is a catch, because Mr Bjelke-Peterson - and pardon me for mentioning it again - he said that if the Governor-General, in a usual way, writes to all the State Governors and says, 'Well I suggest and request that you issue the writs to the Senators for your State on such and such a date', then the Governor of Queensland, Sir Colin Bannah - you'd never heard of him before he spoke out of turn a fortnight ago - he will be advised by Mr Bjelke-Petersen - and he might even do it without any advice - he'll say to the Governor-General, 'I'll take no notice of your suggestion, I'll have it on a date which suits me'. So that means that we

can't get a Labor replacement for Senator Milliner, the deceased Labor Senator in Queensland, until we have an election for the Senators in Queensland. Five of them would take office on the first of July next but the successor, the Labor successor to Senator Milliner, would take office from the day the poll was declared and they won't have, they'll put off as long as they can getting a Labor replacement for a deceased Labor man. They want to be able to pass motions to defer the Budget. They will only be able to pass those motions, as Senator Steele Hall said, 'over a dead man's corpse'. That is the way the Liberals and the Country Party operate. They take advantage of deceased Senators and they want to bury democracy in the process. Because this is what the conservatives, the reactionary forces, in this country are prepared to do. For the first time in 75 years they're prepared, it may be, to reject the Budget. They're certainly prepared to defer and delay a Budget. It's never happened in 75 years: in the hundred and fifty times that there has been a Budget or Supply put up from the House of Representatives to the Senate. There could have been 139 Bills rejected, Money Bills rejected, by the Senate on the occasions when there was not a majority of Government support in the Senate. But it has never happened before. For the first time in the 25 years since we had proportional voting for the Senate, for the first time, here in New South Wales, now in Queensland, you have anti-Labor State Governments appointing a non-Labor successor to a Labor Senator.

When we put Labor's Attorney-General Murphy on the High Court to pair off with the Liberal Attorney-General Barwick, they appoint an anti-Labor Senator. That is, when Senator Milliner died they appointed an anti-Labor successor. For the first time in 20 years State Governments - each State, both sides of politics - have done the wrong thing; the conservatives have done the wrong thing. And now they are threatening that when I advise the Governor-General to suggest a Senate election date for the State Governors, some of them say they'll advise the Governors to disregard what the Governor-General says. And this comes from people who are now asking the Governor-General to get them off the hook, to cover up for their mistakes. There is nothing, ladies and gentlemen, that the conservative forces in this country are not prepared to do to get hold of the people's money again: to reject or delay the Budget; to replace deceased Labor Senators with anti-Labor Senators; to tell State Governors to disregard the request of the Governor-General, for the first time in the 25 years that Governor-Generals have made those requests.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you can't trust the conservative forces in this country.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is immensely encouraging for my colleagues and me on the platform to see you come out here to the heart of Sydney on a wet day in tens of thousands, millions of you here, to support democracy in this country. You've turned out in your lunch time on a wet day in your millions, not just to support a Labor Government, the present elected Government. You have come here to support democracy itself. And from now on every political Party will realise that when there is an election for the House of Representatives there will be an election for a Government to govern for 3 years. And never again will the Senate, whoever has a majority - or, which is enough, half the members of the Senate - be able to frustrate the House of Representatives where Governments are made and unmade.

Never again, by threatening to cut off the Government's right to spend the taxes as they come in, never again, will the Senate be able to threaten that against the elected Government. After this the Senate's money power will be destroyed. But democracy will be preserved. And the House of Representatives will last for its full 3 years. And the rights of the House of Representatives, the people's House, to determine how the people's money will be spent on their behalf will be vindicated and enshrined in the practice of this country.

Ladies and Gentlemen, seventeen months ago you determined in this City, this State, this country, that you would have another 3 years of Labor Government.

The Government which you elected has a comfortable majority in the House of Representatives, the Peoples House, the House where Governments are made or unmade. Ladies and Gentlemen, when at the end of 1976, there's a double dissolution to clear out all the obstruction of the Senate, the piled up Bills which they've rejected twice, or in 1977 in the normal time for a House of Representatives election, when then you are again electing the Government of Australia, I am confident that on our record, our principles, you will once again have a Labor Government of Australia.