

Thank you for coming along in your thousands to support the cause of democracy in Australia. In the last twenty-five years, three million people who were born overseas have decided to live in Australia. Most of them have come from countries where democracy has disappeared or where democracy is weak or where democracy is being challenged. Most of them came to Australia because they had heard that Australia was a democracy, a Parliamentary democracy. They had heard that Australia was a country where everybody could express his political views and where every three years people could go along to polling booths and pass the secret votes for the Party which they themselves supported. And they had heard that not only in the national Parliament of Australia but in all the six States in Australia it was possible every three years to choose a government you wanted.

Three years ago, no-one was more delighted than the migrants in Australia to find that after a very vigorous election campaign when all the political parties were able to put their arguments on the radio or in the TV or at public meetings, then you could have an election. In December 1972 you were delighted, you were enthusiastic that you were able to see a change of government in Australia. The people voted against the government that there had been and they voted for a new government, a Labor Government.

The change from the Liberal Country Party Government to the Labor Government was a peaceful change. The people expressed their wishes and their wishes came about. They were fulfilled; in Australia migrants saw all their hopes were fulfilled. Migrants saw that at least in Australia, it was possible by the democratic means of a vigorous and open election campaign, by a secret vote on the polling day it was possible to have a peaceful change of government. Migrants expected, as all other Australians expected, that the Government which was elected in December 1972 would be able to govern for three years.

How many migrants were disappointed when the Government which they helped to elect was forced to go to the people prematurely in May last year, only 1½ years after the Government was elected for three years? But once again the people of Australia, including the millions of migrants who have votes, once again they voted, after a vigorous campaign, in a secret ballot, to have three more years of the Labor Government.

And now after another 17 months, before the Government's 2nd term of office is half-way through, the reactionary, the conservative, the fascist elements in Australia are once again trying to interrupt democracy in Australia, to frustrate democracy in Australia...

The Fraser fascists are now saying that because they can get half the Senators voting against anything that we put up, because they are therefore able to frustrate any of our legislation, any of our motions, they are entitled to govern the country...

But if you count up all the Members of Parliament in Canberra, all the men and women who belong to the national Parliament of Australia, there is a big majority of Labor men and women over all the others combined. That is, in the Parliament as a whole and in the House of Representatives in particular, Labor has a majority. Labor is entitled to govern.

And I will point out to you what the obstruction has been this last week and the week before. The Budget Bills, the basic Bills which enable the Australian Government to pay the Public Servants, to pay the soldiers, to pay for services and contracts which people have provided, that's in a couple of Budget Bills. And when they've gone to the Senate, the Senators haven't voted against the Bills, they've just carried a motion to defer the Bills, to postpone them.

And the device they used is to move an amendment to the Bills that they don't be debated until there is an election for the House of Representatives. And that motion has been

carried three times in the week before last, three times last week, because a Labor Senator from Queensland died. And Mr Bjelke-Petersen appointed an anti-Labor Senator to take the place of the Labor Senator who died. If the Labor Senator had still been alive he would have been voting as he had all the years he was in Parliament, he would have been voting with the Labor Party. And in that case, these six motions to adjourn the Bill would have been defeated because there would have been as many Senators voting against the motion as were voting in favour of the motion. That is, there would have been an equal number of votes and the motion to adjourn would have been defeated. And as Senator Steele Hall has said: the motion to adjourn the debate on the Budget Bills was carried over a dead man's corpse. Because the Liberals know that if they were to have a vote to reject the Budget, then some of their people would vote to pass it. Because not all Liberals are fascists; there are some decent Liberals...

The only way that Mr Fraser can keep all his people in line, is to move an amendment to defer the vote to put it off, to postpone it, to stall it, because if he were to have a vote on passing or rejecting the Budget, the Budget would be passed. And it would be a very good Budget indeed, because there are three million people who would pay smaller taxes once the Budget is passed. And there are half a million people who have to pay income tax now, who will not have to pay income tax once the Budget is passed. And instead of having these tax concessions or deductions, which benefit the rich people much more than they benefit the poor people, there will be a system of rebates which will be of equal value to everybody, whatever their incomes. This is a very good Budget indeed. It is the best Budget this country has put to the Parliament for years and years.

This Budget will particularly help migrants, it will help the family man, the working man, the underprivileged, the disadvantaged, the newcomers. It is of particular benefit

for migrants. And the Liberals don't want you to feel and enjoy the benefits of Bill Hayden's Budget. And they've got no alternatives themselves. Because when Mr Fraser started the debate on the Budget on the Opposition side, everybody saw the disadvantages that would come if they got the chance. Because there is going to be two lots of income tax, not only Federal income tax but State income tax on top of that, if the Liberals become the national Government. And now they say that their Budget proposals are inoperative. You remember that infamous word that President Nixon's Press Secretary came out with, that a particular thing that the President had said was "inoperative". Well that's what they say now about their Budget. And they don't vote against the Budget; they say that if there's going to be an election for the House of Representatives, they will pass the Budget...

They're blackmailing you, they're depriving you of the benefits of this Budget.

You ladies and gentlemen who come from overseas have seen from your own bitter experience, that of your mothers and fathers, how the reactionary, conservative and fascist elements in your countries have stopped at nothing to destroy democracy.

It's warming to see on an occasion like this, that the people of Melbourne, and particularly the people in Melbourne who were born overseas, want to see that democracy is preserved in Australia. Because migrants in particular realise that in my Government they have the first national Government which has ever been interested in their welfare. Because Liberal Government - the government of Menzies and Holt and Gorton and Billy McMahon - once the migrants arrived at the airport or at the port, they lost interest in them. They were only interested until they landed or alighted in Australia. After that they were factory fodder. And the migrants in Australia have been the principal victims of our unplanned cities and our impoverished schools and our expensive hospitals.

You know it's the Labor Government which has made sure that wherever people live in Australia, wherever they were born, whatever their occupation, whatever their income, they will have equal opportunities in this country.

It is the Labor Government which has seen that you are entitled to get citizenship rights all after the same length of time: no first, second, third grades of citizens; everybody who comes to Australia is treated the same. You are all entitled to portability of pensions; if you become entitled to any social welfare payments in Australia then you can now enjoy those payments anywhere in the world. And if you have dependent wives or children or parents in another country, you can get benefit from your taxation for them before they get here. You're now having ethnic radio stations; you can hear on the radio, you can hear programs of your own choice, in your own language when you want. You now have legal aid, you have Medibank, and if you ring up a Federal Government Department you can speak to people in your own language or you can get your documents translated.

We have looked for people to appoint to government commissions and boards and departments. Because we have appointed migrants to Qantas; we've appointed migrants to the Universities Commission; we've appointed migrants to the Australia Council; we've appointed migrants to the International Women's Year National Committee; we've appointed migrants to the Australian Broadcasting Commission; we've appointed migrants as Head of Government Departments. Certainly we've been criticised for these things. But there is no doubt, for the first time, under the Labor Government elected in 1972 and re-elected in 1974 for a three year term, migrants are being considered for government appointments.

You are now getting all the opportunities which are available to people who were born here. Don't lose it: support the Labor Government which brought these benefits.

The Government that you elected twice, the Government which you most recently elected in May last year, the Parliament which was first able to meet on the 9th July last year, the Parliament, the Government, which you elected for three years still has a Labor majority. And with your support and the support of millions of your fellow Australians, you will have a three year Government, a people's Government, with a majority in the People's House.

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