

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

THIS AFTERNOON, THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL COMMISSIONED ME TO FORM A GOVERNMENT.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS COMMISSION IS TO PERMIT THE DEADLOCK BETWEEN THE TWO HOUSES OF THE PARLIAMENT TO BE RESOLVED.

IT WILL BE MY SOLE PURPOSE AS HEAD OF THE GOVERNMENT, TO RESTORE RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT TO THE NATION'S AFFAIRS AND TO ENSURE THAT AUSTRALIA HAS THE GENERAL ELECTION TO WHICH IT IS CONSTITUTIONALLY ENTITLED AND WHICH HAS SO FAR BEEN DENIED IT.

UNTIL THE JUDGEMENT OF THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE HAS BEEN REGISTERED AT THIS ELECTION, MY GOVERNMENT WILL MAKE NO APPOINTMENTS OR DISMISSALS, NOR INITIATE ANY OF OUR POLICIES.

I HAVE WRITTEN TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL IN THE FOLLOWING TERMS -

11 NOVEMBER 1975

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

YOU HAVE INTIMATED TO ME THAT IT IS YOUR EXCELLENCY'S PLEASURE THAT I SHOULD ACT AS YOUR CHIEF ADVISER AND HEAD OF THE GOVERNMENT.

IN ACCEPTING YOUR COMMISSION I CONFIRM THAT I HAVE GIVEN YOU AN ASSURANCE THAT I SHALL IMMEDIATELY SEEK TO SECURE THE PASSAGE OF THE APPROPRIATION BILLS WHICH ARE AT PRESENT BEFORE THE SENATE, THUS ENSURING SUPPLY FOR THE CARRYING ON OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE IN ALL ITS BRANCHES. I FURTHER CONFIRM THAT, UPON THE GRANTING OF SUPPLY, I SHALL IMMEDIATELY RECOMMEND TO YOUR EXCELLENCY THE DISSOLUTION OF BOTH HOUSES OF THE PARLIAMENT.

MY GOVERNMENT WILL ACT AS A CARETAKER GOVERNMENT AND WILL MAKE NO APPOINTMENTS OR DISMISSALS OR INITIATE NEW POLICIES BEFORE A GENERAL ELECTION IS HELD.

YOURS SINCERELY,

(J.M. FRASER)

HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE SIR JOHN KERR, A.C., K.C.M.G., K.ST.J.
Q.C.,
GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF AUSTRALIA,
GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
CANBERRA. A.C.T. 2600

ONCE THE SENATE MADE ITS DECISION, THERE WAS ONLY ONE APPROPRIATE COURSE OF ACTION FOR MR WHITLAM TO TAKE. HE SHOULD HAVE CALLED A GENERAL ELECTION.

HE REFUSED TO DO SO.

I DEEPLY REGRET THAT HE DID NOT TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY OPEN TO HIM.

A WEEK AGO WE PROPOSED THAT MR WHITLAM UNDERTAKE TO HOLD ELECTIONS FOR THE HOUSE AT THE SAME TIME AS THE NEXT SENATE ELECTION.

HE REJECTED THAT OFFER.

THIS MORNING, I CALLED ON MR WHITLAM TO DISCUSS WITH HIM ARRANGEMENTS FOR A GENERAL ELECTION. THESE DISCUSSIONS WERE FRUITLESS.

IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL WAS LEFT WITH NO ALTERNATIVE. HE HAS ACTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS DUTY UNDER THE CONSTITUTION AND WITHDRAWN MR WHITLAM'S COMMISSION.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH MY DUTY, I HAVE TODAY ADVISED SIR JOHN KERR TO DISSOLVE BOTH HOUSES OF THE PARLIAMENT, SO THAT THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES CAN DECIDE WHAT GOVERNMENT THEY WANT FOR AUSTRALIA.

BEFORE THE PARLIAMENT WAS DISSOLVED, THE BUDGET WAS PASSED. NONE OF THE DIRE CONSEQUENCES WHICH WERE THREATENED BY THE LABOR PARTY WILL NOW OCCUR. MONEY FOR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES WILL NOW FLOW NORMALLY. I HAVE TODAY ISSUED WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE AS A WHOLE THAT ALL THE GOVERNMENT'S OUTSTANDING DEBTS SHOULD BE PAID.

THE LIBERAL AND NATIONAL COUNTRY PARTIES TOOK THE ACTION WE DID AFTER THREE YEARS OF GROSSLY INCOMPETENT AND DAMAGING ECONOMIC MISMANAGEMENT, AND AFTER THE SECOND MAN WHO HAD ACTED AS PRIME MINISTER HAD BEEN DISMISSED FOR DECEIVING THE PARLIAMENT.

UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE BELIEVED THAT THE PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA OUGHT TO HAVE THE CHANCE TO EXERCISE THEIR RIGHT TO JUDGE - TO JUDGE THE LABOR PARTY AND TO JUDGE OURSELVES. OUR ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN TO GIVE PEOPLE THEIR RIGHT TO VOTE.

THOSE FEW EXTREMISTS URGING CONFLICT AND DIVISION ARE DAMAGING AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY. I BELIEVE THAT RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE WILL SUPPORT THE REASONABLE AND RATIONAL APPROACH WE HAVE ADOPTED.

THERE WILL NOW BE AN ELECTION AS THE CONSTITUTION REQUIRES. THE GREAT DEFENSE OF OUR DEMOCRACY IS THAT THE CONSTITUTION MUST BE UPHELD.

THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE WILL HAVE THEIR SAY. THE CHOICE IS THEIRS AT THE BALLOT BOX.