



PRIME MINISTER

THE CARETAKER MINISTRY

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER,

THE HONOURABLE MALCOLM FRASER, M.P.

ON 11 NOVEMBER 1975 IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES I STATED THE TERMS ON WHICH HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL, HAD INVITED ME TO FORM A CARETAKER GOVERNMENT - "THAT IS ONE THAT MAKES NO APPOINTMENTS OR DISMISSALS AND INITIATES NO POLICIES UNTIL A GENERAL ELECTION IS HELD".

I SAID THAT I HAD GIVEN HIS EXCELLENCY THAT ASSURANCE. I ALSO SAID THAT THERE WILL BE NO ROYAL COMMISSIONS OR INQUIRIES INTO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE WHITLAM GOVERNMENT THROUGHOUT THE PERIOD OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN.

WHEN I ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION OF MY MINISTRY YESTERDAY I WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THAT MY GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT ALTER THE POLICIES OF THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT UNTIL THE ELECTION IS DETERMINED. WE WILL OF COURSE BE ADVOCATING THE POLICIES THAT WE BELIEVE OUGHT TO PREVAIL AND THAT WE WILL IMPLEMENT AS A RESULT OF WINNING THE ELECTION.

I HAVE, THEREFORE, ISSUED INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL MINISTERS THAT EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY THEY SHOULD TAKE ONLY THOSE ACTIONS NECESSARY FOR THE ORDINARY ADMINISTRATION OF THEIR DEPARTMENTS AND THAT AS FAR AS POSSIBLE THEY SHOULD AVOID MAKING DECISIONS THAT COULD GIVE RISE TO CONTENTION.

YESTERDAY IN CABINET IT WAS AGREED THAT IF CASES ARISE WHERE APPOINTMENTS ARE UNAVOIDABLE, THE TERMS OF SUCH INTERIM APPOINTMENTS SHOULD NOT RUN BEYOND 1 JANUARY 1976.

THE GOVERNMENT AGREED THAT THE PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD SHOULD ADVISE DEPARTMENTS THAT, IN THIS INTERIM PERIOD, EXCEPT IN SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES TO BE OUTLINED TO DEPARTMENTS BY THE BOARD, THE CREATION OF NEW POSITIONS SHOULD NOT BE PROCEEDED WITH AND NEW PROVISIONAL PROMOTIONS SHOULD BE HELD OVER.

IN THE ELECTION PERIOD, NORMAL DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION, ADVICE AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES WILL BE AVAILABLE TO MINISTERS. THIS ACCORDS WITH THE USUAL PRACTICE.

13 NOVEMBER 1975