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## PRIME MINISTER

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### NEW SOUTH WALES CAMPAIGN OPENING

This election is a choice between the responsible, realistic and progressive Government offered by the Liberal Country Parties and the irresponsible extravagance of the Labor Party.

In December last year the people of Australia, the people of New South Wales, decisively endorsed the Liberal Country Party approach to solving Australia's problems.

The people overwhelmingly rejected the Labor Party which had done so much damage to Australia.

At the Federal level, we now have a Government committed to strengthening freedom, opportunity and concern for all Australians, - a Government committed to responsibility to restoring prosperity, to giving Australians the opportunity of achieving their goals in life.

But alongside a responsible Federal Government, Australia also requires State Governments committed to playing their part in working for a return to prosperity.

Both in the State and Federal spheres, the Liberal and Country Parties are the only parties offering idealistic and responsible Government.

The philosophy of the Liberal Party is the only philosophy which can provide realistic, responsible Government, and progressive enlightened reform.

More and more people are realising that Labor's approach does not work. It is easy to promise to spend more and more of the taxpayer's money on more and more Government schemes. Some of these schemes are for worthwhile ends. But all these schemes have to be paid for - paid for through higher taxes. These taxes in turn, eat away at the ability of individuals and families to meet their own needs, make their own decisions about how their earnings will be spent. This approach in the end just creates new problems.

It reduces people's capacity to meet their own needs and make them more and more dependent on what politicians choose to give them. It fuels inflation, creates unemployment, and undermines prosperity.

The Wran Labor Party is sounding more and more like the Whitlam Labor Party of 1972 - making promises which will lead to higher taxes, more inflation, more unemployment.

No wonder he does not want Mr Whitlam to come into New South Wales for this election. He is frightened people will notice the similarities between his programme and Mr Whitlam's.

The Labor Party still has not realised that their approach does not work.

In December 1975 the Federal Liberal and Country Party Government began the task of bringing constructive management to Australia's affairs.

Our first task was to bring Labor's wild and extravagant spending under control.

We have already made savings at the rate of over \$1 billion in a full year.

We have halted the growth of the Federal bureaucracy.

We have adopted a range of constructive policies to encourage business to expand plant and equipment and provide jobs.

We have introduced a comprehensive set of flexible monetary measures.

We have begun a review of the mass of Labor's crippling regulations.

We have undertaken a realistic wages policy which has the overwhelming support of the Australian people.

With the measures we have undertaken, we have already been able to introduce a feasible home savings grant scheme well ahead of the time announced during the election.

We are going to introduce one of the most important tax reforms in Australia's history - tax indexation.

We have made a start.

We need Sir Eric Willis as Premier of Australia's largest state - we need the support he will give to our programme.

New South Wales cannot afford a Labor Government. Australia cannot afford a Labor Government in New South Wales.

Unless inflation is brought under control there will never be jobs for all who want to work - because business will not have the confidence to invest and consumers to spend.

The solutions to both unemployment and inflation are bound up together.

Where was Wran when the Labor Party in Canberra was undermining Australia's prosperity?

Judging by comments this week he seems to support Mr Whitlam's view that the States should remain financially dependent on Canberra.

The electors of New South Wales are entitled to know whether he shares Mr Whitlam's view that the role of State Labor Parliamentarians is to bring about their own dissolution.

What self respecting political leader could hold that view?

We believe that power must be shared between the Commonwealth and the States, between State Government and Local Government and within the broader community.

The Labor Party believes that all power should be centralised in a few men, that Government should have much greater control over the lives of everyone in every part of Australia.

Labor tried to destroy the States and centralise control over Local Government.

The Labor Party tried to destroy the Senate which was established by the Constitution to protect the States.

In the Labor Party's view, all wisdom resided in a few men in Canberra.

Many thousands of Australians are now paying the price for that approach - school leavers still trying to find jobs, retired people whose savings have been eaten away by inflation, the poor and the disadvantaged whom inflation affects worst of all.

The Liberal Party has pledged itself to one of the most important and progressive reforms in Australia's history.

Our Federalism policy will be the strongest guarantee that irresponsible attempts to centralise all power in the hands of a few men can never succeed in Australia again.

Our Federalism policy will ensure that the States - and Local Government - will have a guaranteed and flexible source of income. After this reform the people will have a clear view of which Government is spending their money. It is a reform which should give people greater effective control over Government spending.

Sir Eric Willis has been a major force in supporting this reform because he knows that it will be of great benefit to the people of New South Wales.

The people of New South Wales are entitled to know whether the Labor Party in this State will support our Federalism policy or whether they stand by the Labor Party's traditional view of centralising all real power in the hands of a few.

When the Liberal Party's Federalism Policy is put into effect participation by people in local and State Government will be more effective. Decisions especially affecting local communities and the States will again be made where they should be made - by the Government closest to the people affected.

Sir Eric Willis and the Liberal Party in New South Wales will work enthusiastically to bring about this vital reform. To say that this reform means double taxation is totally false. There will be one form, one assessment, one set of tax rules, one system. It will mean that you will be able to see who is spending your money. It will also give the States greater flexibility. It will mean that governments will have to stand and be counted and take responsibility for their own actions.

I am not surprised that Mr Wran does not want the system. Like Mr Whitlam he is looking for a scape-goat. He wants the Commonwealth to be that scape-goat. Sir Eric Willis, as any self-respecting Premier ought to be, is prepared to stand and be counted. It is a system which would be wanted by anyone who is not frightened to take responsibility for his own commitments.

The return of a Liberal Country Party Government will ensure that relations between the Federal Government and New South Wales will continue to be based on genuine cooperation and good will.

Australians are demanding greater responsibility from their Governments. Our reforms of the Federal system will be a significant step in securing that objective.

It is one thing to offer a grab-bag of promises - it is another to have to take responsibility for paying for them.

Only on the basis of responsibility can we get Australia growing again.

Only if real economic growth can be got under way again can there be genuine improvement in the position of the disadvantaged and the weaker sections of the community.

The Liberal Party is a Party for all Australians.

Despite all its pretensions, the Labor Party has damaged weaker sections of the community through its incompetence.

Fine words are worth nothing if they are not matched by a willingness to look reality in the face and do the hard work that good Government requires.

The Federal and State Liberal Parties stand together in their belief in reform which ensures greater responsibility, greater freedom, greater independence - combined with a deep concern for those who are truly disadvantaged.

That is the path along which our philosophy directs us.

That is the path the Australian people chose in December.

That is the path I believe the people of New South Wales will choose on 1st May.