



PRIME MINISTER

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REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

All Western Australians who favour the maintenance of the powers of their State and of the Senate should vote in favour of the simultaneous elections referendum proposal on Saturday.

This proposal was considered and adopted unanimously at the Hobart Constitutional Convention last October.

That Convention was set up at the instigation of the States - and was dominated by the States. The States had 72 of the 92 votes.

Page 80 of the published minutes of the Convention show that every Western Australian delegate voted in favour of the simultaneous elections proposal, including Sir Charles Court, Mr. Medcalf, Mr. McPharlin and Mr. McNeill.

When the decision to hold the referendums was announced, Sir Charles Court commented that the proposal for simultaneous elections made "good sense".

This support was entirely consistent with the support given by Sir Charles Court and other members of the Western Australian delegation at Hobart.

I regret the Premier's puzzling last minute reversal of his attitude on proposals that are straightforward, reasonable and fair. This is out of character for Sir Charles, especially in the light of the comment by Sir Eric Willis.

The four proposals on which Western Australians and all other Australians will be asked to vote for on Saturday are:

1. That elections for the House of Representatives and the Senate should be held at the same time. This is a matter of simple common sense. Unless this proposal is passed, there could be as many as four Federal elections in the next four years. The country does not want or need this.

A Yes answer will strengthen the Senate and, in particular, protect Western Australia and the other less populous States.

2. That if a Senator dies or resigns he will be replaced for the remainder of his term of office by a member of the same party.

A Yes vote on this proposal will ensure that the voters choice at the election will be preserved. This is basic to our democracy.

3. That electors in the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory should be able to vote in referendums as do all other Australians.

A Yes vote will give Territorial voters the same fundamental rights as their fellow Australians.

4. That High Court Judges should retire at the age of 70 and that a retiring age should be set for other Federal Judges.

The Western Australian Government has set a retirement age of 70 for their State Judges, and it is only fair that at the age of 70 Judges in the Federal area should pass the job on to younger people.

Western Australia has the most progressive record of any State with respect to constitutional reforms.

I urge all Western Australians to vote Yes on all four proposals on Saturday.
