



## PRIME MINISTER

FOR PRESS

8 SEPTEMBER 1977

### MISREPRESENTATION

The Prime Minister made the following statement in the House this afternoon:

"With your indulgence, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the sake of accuracy, I should like to add to an answer I gave to a question asked this morning.

This morning the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. E. G. Whitlam) said that I had used a single line quotation from the Flowers Report. The single line quotation, as he indicated in his question, was as follows:

"We are confident that an acceptable solution will be found."

The sentence that the Leader of the Opposition read out this morning was not in my speech announcing the Government's uranium decision. It is contained in two background papers. It appears at page 5 of the paper headed "Health and Safety Aspects of Nuclear Power Generation" and at page 4 of the document "Uranium - Your Questions Answered". The Leader of the Opposition indicated that only one line from the Flowers Report had been quoted and that the quotation omitted several other sentences. The facts are quite different.

The quotation contained in the background papers came from paragraph 181 of the Flowers Report. The sentences which the Leader of the Opposition claimed I had omitted came from paragraph 504 of the Flowers Report - 111 pages later. As I was using a quotation from paragraph 181, it is not surprising that the quotation that the Leader of the Opposition used, which came from paragraph 504 - 111 pages later - was not included in the original quotation. Obviously, the quotation from paragraph 504 was not a part of the quotation contained in the background documents.

As I have indicated, the quotation from the Flowers Report which was contained in the background papers was not a "single sentence - one line" as the Leader of the Opposition so misleadingly described it. It was an extensive quotation from the Flowers Report together with a further sentence summarising the attitude towards waste isolation which had been expressed in the Flowers Report.

/Let me

Let me read the quotation which appeared in the background documents. It was as follows:

"There are various proposals for the permanent storage of the solidified wastes under the ocean beds or in deep geological formations where they will be virtually inaccessible. Much research is needed (though still on a very modest scale compared with that on reactors) to establish the safety and the feasibility of such methods. ... We are confident that an acceptable solution will be found ..."

The Leader of the Opposition suggested that the only sentence that had been used was as follows:

"We are confident that an acceptable solution will be found."

The following additional sentence appears in the background documents:

"The Commission goes on to recommend that there should be no commitment to fission power on a massive scale until at least one method for safe isolation has been demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt."

In other parts of the Flowers Report, a view is indicated very similar to that indicated in the Fox Report. The Commission had indicated that the present state of knowledge certainly was not one which should cause people to put aside the further development of nuclear power for peaceful purposes. I think that what we have seen on this occasion is yet one more example of the unparalleled capacity of the Leader of the Opposition for deception, and the blatant way in which he tries to carry out distortions.

May I conclude Mr. Deputy Speaker, by summarising the facts. As has been mentioned, the quotation used in the background papers came from paragraph 181 of the Flowers Report. The sentences which the Leader of the Opposition claimed had been omitted came from paragraph 504 of the Flowers Report - 111 pages later. I do not think it is surprising, therefore, that the sentences quoted by the Leader of the Opposition were omitted from the quotation, because obviously they were not part of it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you for the indulgence of the Chair. I am quite certain that all Honourable Members will be able to understand exactly what the Leader of the Opposition did."