



PRIME MINISTER

FOR PRESS

8 OCTOBER 1978

NEW SOUTH WALES ELECTION

I congratulate Mr Wran on his very significant, personal victory.

It was a personal success for the Premier who distanced himself during the campaign from the ALP, and from traditional ALP policies in an election fought largely on State issues.

Obviously, I am disappointed with the Liberal result in New South Wales. Mr Coleman fought a courageous campaign. He was handicapped by the briefness of his own term as Leader of the Opposition, and I much regret that for the time being at least, Mr Coleman is lost to the Parliamentary Liberal Party in New South Wales.

Mr Wran depicted his Government as moderate and as seeking to restrain Government expenditure and to reduce taxation.

He was able to avoid tax increases over three State Budgets and during the course of this year to offer significant tax concessions to New South Wales, because of the financial policies that the Commonwealth Government has introduced over the same period.

Indeed, it is worth noting that all State Governments have managed to avoid tax increases over that period. This could not have happened were it not for the financial arrangements made by the Commonwealth.

During the campaign, the Premier pointed to the significant economic progress being made in New South Wales. He pointed to the improving economic performance in New South Wales industry and to the fact that the run-away increase in unemployment had been halted.

Mr Wran claims this as a credit for his government. While not begrudging him, I do point out that the improvement would not have been possible had it not been for the overall economic policies of the Commonwealth Government, policies designed to overcome inflation and restore profitability. Indeed, during the elections, Mr Wran said he was at one with the Commonwealth in its fight against inflation.

The Commonwealth welcomes Mr Wran's support, and the support of other Premiers in the fight against inflation, I am quite certain that the economic progress which Mr Wran spoke of during the course of the elections will be continued in New South Wales, and in the rest of Australia as a result of the Federal Government's policies. Clearly, these policies will operate with greater effect when they have the support of State Governments.