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## PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

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### SYDNEY AIRPORT

I am very disappointed indeed to see Mr Wran's reply to the Commonwealth proposals to meet the future aviation needs of Sydney and the whole of New South Wales.

Because of the pressure of growth in this city and of air traffic, we had proposed that a second parallel runway be built at Mascot, but that for long term planning a new airport site be determined and secured. It will take between 12 and 20 years to build a new modern international airport for Sydney and therefore a decision to build a new site alone does not meet the needs of Sydney over that period. There is already heavy congestion at Mascot, there is already diversion of traffic, general aviation is already suffering considerably and this is bound to get worse.

Mr Wran has made a decision to strangle the growth of air transport in and out of Sydney. That, therefore, is a decision to strangle the commercial development of this city. Quite obviously international flights would have to be diverted under this policy. No doubt other Premiers will welcome that, but that will not help Sydney and the legitimate commercial needs of that city.

Mr Wran, through his whole period of government, has shown himself quite incapable of taking the difficult decisions which are necessary for the progress of his own State. This not only affects the city of Sydney, it will affect all the people of New South Wales. Especially it would mean charter and commuter services to Sydney would be rationed and regional services would have to be limited as the congestion at Mascot grows worse.

So he has taken a decision which affects all the people of the State, a retrograde and damaging step which he no doubt believes has short term political advantage. That of course has characterised Mr Wran's premiership throughout his whole term. Short term political advantage without the long term sensible planning which any government ought to undertake.

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The delays in reaching any decision on this are right in Mr Wran's court. I first wrote to Mr Wran on this subject on 30 August 1976. We established a joint Commonwealth State committee to examine the subject that held 30 meetings over a period of 36 months. Then in December 1979 Mr Wran withdrew his State representatives and the report could not proceed on a joint basis.

We therefore tried to determine the issue in the only way that can meet the transport needs of Sydney and New South Wales by proposing a parallel runway and a second airport which obviously would involve massive expenditure over a period of years. Mr Wran has rejected the only solution.

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