



PRIME MINISTER

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

EMBARGOED UNTIL 12.15 PM

RURAL POLICY SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER

18 NOVEMBER 1984, ARMIDALE

WHEN I HAD THE HONOUR LAST TUESDAY TO PRESENT THE NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY, I SPOKE TO ALL AUSTRALIA AND TO ALL AUSTRALIANS, WHEREVER THEY LIVE.

I PUT FORWARD A PROGRAM OF GROWTH FOR ALL AUSTRALIA AND FOR ALL SECTORS OF THE AUSTRALIAN ECONOMY, FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS AND BEYOND.

I PUT FORWARD A PROGRAM FOR A BETTER AND FAIRER NATION, A PROGRAM TO BENEFIT EVERY AUSTRALIAN AND EVERY AUSTRALIAN FAMILY, WHEREVER THEY LIVE: IN THE CAPITAL CITIES, THE GREAT CENTRES, THE COUNTRY TOWNS, THE RURAL COMMUNITIES, AND THE SPARSELY-SETTLED AREAS OF THIS VAST CONTINENT OF OURS.

AND ALTHOUGH THIS SPEECH TODAY DEALS MORE SPECIFICALLY WITH MATTERS OF SPECIAL CONCERN TO THE FOUR AND A HALF MILLION AUSTRALIANS WHO LIVE OUTSIDE THE GREAT METROPOLITAN AREAS, IT IS EVERY BIT AS MUCH A SPEECH FOR THE WHOLE NATION - A PROGRAM AS RELEVANT TO THE FUTURE OF ALL

AUSTRALIA - AS MY SPEECH, THE NATIONAL POLICY SPEECH,
ON TUESDAY.

WE OF THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY COMPLETELY REJECT THE
CONCEPT OF CONFLICT BETWEEN CITY AND COUNTRY. THERE IS
ONLY ONE AUSTRALIA; AND WE ALL DEPEND ON EACH OTHER AND WE
ALL NEED EACH OTHER.

MORE SPECIFICALLY, MY OWN GOVERNMENT, FROM THE DAY OF
ITS INCEPTION, HAS TAKEN AS ITS FUNDAMENTAL GUIDELINE
FOR ACTION THAT THERE MUST BE AN END TO THE CREATION OF
ARTIFICIAL CONFLICT, TO THE SETTING OF AUSTRALIAN AGAINST
AUSTRALIAN, GROUP AGAINST GROUP, AND REGION AGAINST
REGION.

OUR WHOLE OBJECT HAS BEEN TO REMOVE AS FAR AS POSSIBLE,
THE NEEDLESS MISUNDERSTANDINGS BETWEEN GROUPS, BETWEEN
SECTIONS - AND NOT LEAST, TO BRING ABOUT A BETTER
UNDERSTANDING ON THE PART OF THE CITY PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA,
OF THE REAL PROBLEMS AND NEEDS OF COUNTRY PEOPLE AND THE
VITAL CONTRIBUTION THEY MAKE TO OUR NATIONAL ECONOMY AND
OUR NATIONAL LIFE AND OUR NATIONAL SPIRIT.

IT IS ENTIRELY APPROPRIATE THAT I SHOULD BE LAUNCHING THIS
PART OF OUR NATIONAL CAMPAIGN IN THIS SPLENDID AND
BEAUTIFUL CITY OF ARMIDALE, IN THE HEART OF THE GREAT
NEW ENGLAND REGION.

.../3

IN ITSELF, IT EXEMPLIFIES THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF CITY AND COUNTRY; BUT AT THE SAME TIME THE SPIRIT OF STURDY SELF-RELIANCE WHICH IS THE SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION OF COUNTRY AUSTRALIA TO OUR NATIONAL WAY OF LIFE.

BUT THERE IS ANOTHER REASON FOR THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THIS OCCASION: FOR THIS IS THE HEADQUARTERS - ALBEIT MORE IN THE NAME THAN BY HIS ACTUAL PRESENCE - OF THE LEADER OF THE NATIONAL PARTY.

AND THERE IS NO PARTY IN AUSTRALIA AND NO AUSTRALIAN POLITICAL LEADER MORE CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH THE CONFRONTATIONISM AND DIVISIVENESS WHICH DID SO MUCH DAMAGE TO AUSTRALIA, ECONOMICALLY AND SOCIALLY, FOR ALMOST A DECADE.

FOR A GENERATION, THEY SOUGHT - TOO OFTEN WITH A SUCCESS THEY NEVER DESERVED - TO USE THE TACTICS OF "DIVIDE AND RULE".

NOW, DESPERATE AND DISCREDITED, THEY HAVE DIRECTED THE TACTICS OF DIVISION AGAINST THEIR OWN ERSTWHILE COALITION PARTNERS. THAT, OF COURSE, IS THEIR BUSINESS.

BUT WHAT IS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE IS THEIR ATTEMPT TO DIVIDE THE COUNTRY PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA FROM THE GREAT MAINSTREAM OF AUSTRALIAN LIFE.

THE TRUTH IS, OF COURSE, THE COUNTRY PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AND WILL ALWAYS REMAIN, AT THE VERY HEART OF THE MAINSTREAM OF THE AUSTRALIAN-WAY OF LIFE.

AND THE CURRENT CAMPAIGN OF THE NATIONAL PARTY AND ITS LEADER - SOON TO BE ITS EX-LEADER - IS ONLY FURTHER PROOF - IF ANY WERE NEEDED - HOW COMPLETELY OUT OF TOUCH THEY ARE, AND HOW ONCE AGAIN THE NATIONAL PARTY HAS SOLD THE COUNTRY PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA SHORT, AND SOLD THEM OUT.

DIVIDED, DISUNITED AND DESPERATE AS THEY ARE, THERE IS ONE POINT OF AGREEMENT IN THE CONTRADICTIONARY AND CONFLICTING POLICIES PRESENTED BY THIS OPPOSITION.

AND THAT IS THE DESTRUCTION OF EVERYTHING WE HAVE DONE - AS A GOVERNMENT AND AS A PEOPLE - TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND TO RESTORE ECONOMIC GROWTH TO THIS NATION; EVERYTHING WE HAVE DONE - AND SO SUCCESSFULLY DONE - TOGETHER - TO FIGHT UNEMPLOYMENT AND INFLATION SIMULTANEOUSLY.

BY CONTRAST WE HAVE GIVEN RURAL AUSTRALIA AND THE AUSTRALIAN FARMING COMMUNITY FOR THE FIRST TIME A DIRECT VOICE IN THE PROCESSES OF CONSULTATION AND CO-OPERATION WE HAVE CREATED, AS A CENTRAL ELEMENT OF OUR PROGRAM OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION, NATIONAL RECOVERY AND NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION.

BOTH IN ITS REPRESENTATIVE PRESENCE ON THE ECONOMIC PLANNING ADVISORY COUNCIL, AND IN BILATERAL TALKS WITH ME AND THE MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRY, JOHN KERIN, OVER THE RANGE OF SPECIAL CONCERNS, THE NATIONAL FARMERS FEDERATION HAS ESTABLISHED A CLOSER AND MORE CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT THAN HAS EVER EXISTED.

AND LET ME SAY THAT THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A FIRMER, MORE DEDICATED AND MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE ADVOCATE OF THE RURAL COMMUNITY'S INTERESTS IN AN AUSTRALIAN CABINET THAN JOHN KERIN.

MR KERIN HAS WORKED UNTIRINGLY TO REMOVE ANY MISUNDERSTANDINGS THAT MAY HAVE EXISTED IN THE PAST BETWEEN THE FARM COMMUNITY AND THE LABOR PARTY. THE FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL FARMERS FEDERATION, MICHAEL DAVIDSON, SAID IN MARCH THIS YEAR:

"... THE PRIME MINISTER AND HIS MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRY ARE ALERT AND AWARE OF THE ISSUE, WHICH IS IMPORTANT FOR A START, AND ARE UNDERSTANDING OF INDUSTRY PROBLEMS, AND ARE PREPARED TO TAKE A RATIONAL AND SENSIBLE APPROACH TO THEM."

AND I CAN NOW ANNOUNCE THAT, FOLLOWING MR KERIN'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIONS TO ME, THERE WILL BE A FOLLOW-UP OF THE HIGHLY CONSTRUCTIVE MEETING EARLIER THIS YEAR, BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE OF THE NATIONAL FARMERS FEDERATION AND THE TREASURER, PAUL KEATING, THE MINISTER FOR FINANCE, JOHN DAWKINS, JOHN KERIN AND MYSELF TO DISCUSS FARM COSTS. I NOW UNDERTAKE TO HOLD A FURTHER MEETING EARLY NEXT YEAR WITH THE N.F.F. EXECUTIVE - WITH THE FARM COSTS QUESTION THE SOLE SPECIFIC MATTER ON OUR AGENDA.

AND I PAY TRIBUTE TO THE MANNER IN WHICH THE KEY FARMING ORGANISATIONS, THEIR LEADERSHIP AND THEIR MEMBERSHIP, HAVE CO-OPERATED AND CONTRIBUTED TO THE NATIONAL EFFORT OF THE PAST TWENTY MONTHS.

INDEED, THE WHOLE CONCEPT OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC SUMMIT CONFERENCE, WHOSE WORK DID SO MUCH TO LAY THE FOUNDATIONS FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND ECONOMIC REGENERATION, OWED MUCH TO THE EXAMPLE OF THOSE ORGANISATIONS.

SEVEN YEARS AGO, AS PRESIDENT OF THE AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF TRADE UNIONS, I UNDERTOOK THE ACTION WHICH RESULTED IN THE CONVENING OF THE AGRICULTURAL SUMMIT CONFERENCE WHICH MET IN MELBOURNE IN AUGUST 1977. THIS CONFERENCE BROUGHT TOGETHER, FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINE LEADING PRIMARY INDUSTRY ORGANISATIONS, AND THE NINE KEY UNIONS WITH MEMBERS INVOLVED IN PRIMARY PRODUCTION, FROM FARM TO MARKET TO PORT.

AND WHEN I SAY THAT THIS WAS AN HISTORIC FIRST, I REFER NOT ONLY TO THE FACT THAT IT BROUGHT THE FARM ORGANISATIONS AND THE UNIONS TOGETHER FOR THE FIRST TIME. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME THE FARM ORGANISATIONS THEMSELVES HAD MET IN ONE COMMON FORUM.

AND IT WAS THE SUCCESS OF THAT SEMINAL SUMMIT CONFERENCE - BRINGING TOGETHER GROUPS AND INTERESTS WHICH HAD FOR TOO LONG AND TOO OFTEN BEEN SEEN AS UNALTERABLY AND IMPLACABLY OPPOSED, WITHOUT ANY HOPE OF EVER REACHING COMMON GROUND - WHICH CONVINCED ME THAT THE EXAMPLE COULD BE APPLIED AT THE WIDER NATIONAL LEVEL. IT WAS THAT SUCCESS WHICH CONFIRMED ME IN MY LONG-HELD VIEW THAT AUSTRALIANS COULD BE BROUGHT TOGETHER, COULD WORK TOGETHER, TO ACHIEVE COMMON GOALS AND COMMON PURPOSES.

AND SO IT HAS PROVED.

AND AGAIN I THANK THE PRIMARY INDUSTRY ORGANISATIONS -
FOR THEIR ORIGINAL EXAMPLE AND THEIR CONTINUING CONTRIBUTION.

IN THE ONGOING TASK OF NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION IT IS
CRUCIAL THAT OUR RURAL SECTOR BE RECOGNISED FOR THE
FUNDAMENTAL CONTRIBUTION IT MAKES TO OUR ECONOMY AND TO
OUR SOCIETY, AND THE MAJOR CONTRIBUTION IT HAS MADE TO
OUR RECOVERY SINCE MARCH 1983. NO AUSTRALIAN RESOURCE IS
MORE IMPORTANT THAN OUR LAND - OUR SOILS, WATER AND
VEGETATION. NO SECTOR OF AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY IS MORE
IMPORTANT THAN OUR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES - STILL AUSTRALIA'S
MAJOR SOURCE OF EXPORT INCOME.

THE NEEDS OF THE FOUR AND A HALF MILLION PEOPLE WHO LIVE
AND WORK OUTSIDE THE MAJOR CITIES ARE AT THE FOREFRONT OF
OUR GOVERNMENT'S CONCERNS. WE RECOGNISE THAT DISTANCE
IN THIS VAST COUNTRY CAN CREATE PROBLEMS FOR COUNTRY
PEOPLE AND AS WE IMPLEMENT OUR POLICIES DURING OUR SECOND
TERM IN THE FIELDS OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, TRANSPORT AND
COMMUNICATIONS, THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF COUNTRY PEOPLE WILL
HAVE A HIGH PRIORITY.

.../9

WE RECOGNISE THAT COUNTRY PEOPLE ARE CONCERNED - AS WE ALL ARE - ABOUT THE EMPLOYMENT FUTURE OF THEIR CHILDREN - THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN.

THEY ARE CONCERNED THAT THEY AND THEIR CHILDREN HAVE ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE AT REASONABLE COST; AND THAT THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES, BUT PARTICULARLY IN THEIR OLD AGE, THE VALUE OF THEIR INCOME AND SAVINGS, AND THE VALUE OF THE PROPERTY THEY HAVE WORKED SO HARD TO BUILD, ARE NOT ERODED BY INFLATION.

AND IT'S IN THOSE AREAS OF CONCERN THAT OUR EFFORTS AS A GOVERNMENT HAVE BEEN DIRECTED, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE DIRECTED.

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO STRESS TOO MUCH THE IMPORTANCE, TO AUSTRALIA'S RURAL COMMUNITY, THAT OUR GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC POLICIES SHOULD CONTINUE.

SUSTAINED ECONOMIC GROWTH IS A FUNDAMENTAL CONDITION FOR MAINTAINING THE STRENGTH AND PROSPERITY OF THE AUSTRALIAN RURAL ECONOMY.

AND IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE PRIMARY PRODUCERS OF AUSTRALIA THAT THAT GROWTH BE SUSTAINED IN A NON-INFLATIONARY WAY.

.../10

WE HAVE HALVED INFLATION.

WE WILL KEEP IT BELOW FIVE PERCENT NEXT YEAR.

WE HAVE NOW REACHED THE POSITION WHERE AT LAST INFLATION IN AUSTRALIA COMPARES FAVOURABLY WITH OUR TRADING PARTNERS AGAINST A RATE OF TWICE THAT AVERAGE UNDER THE NATIONAL LIBERAL PARTY GOVERNMENT.

NO SECTOR STANDS TO GAIN MORE FROM THE REDUCTION IN INTEREST RATES WE HAVE ACHIEVED. EVERY ONE PERCENTAGE POINT DROP IN INTEREST RATES MEANS A CUT OF \$35 MILLION IN FARMERS' INTEREST BILLS.

FURTHER REDUCTIONS WILL BE MADE POSSIBLE ONLY IF WE CONTINUE TO CURB THE BUDGET DEFICIT, AS WE HAVE DONE AND AS WE HAVE UNDERTAKEN TO CONTINUE TO DO.

BY CONTRAST OUR OPPONENTS - WHO LEFT THE LEGACY OF THE LARGEST BUDGET DEFICIT IN AUSTRALIA'S HISTORY, HAVE NOW PRODUCED POLICIES OF THE UTMOST IRRESPONSIBILITY WHICH, IF EVER IMPLEMENTED, WOULD BE THE RECIPE FOR ECONOMIC DISASTER.

NO SECTOR HAS GAINED MORE BY OUR HANDLING OF THE AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR, AND IN PARTICULAR, BY THE DOLLAR FLOAT; AND BY OUR STEADY MOVES TOWARDS BANKING AND BUSINESS DEREGULATION.

NO SECTOR HAS GAINED MORE FROM THE DRAMATIC FALL IN THE LEVEL OF INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTATION IS NOW AT ITS LOWEST LEVEL FOR SIXTEEN YEARS; AND WE ARE GOING TO KEEP IT THAT WAY.

NO SECTOR STANDS TO GAIN MORE FROM THE CONTINUANCE OF THE STABILITY, PREDICTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY WE HAVE ESTABLISHED IN WAGE CLAIMS AND WAGE MOVEMENTS.

THE PRICES AND INCOMES ACCORD HAS AT LAST PUT AUSTRALIA IN REACH OF BREAKING THE WAGE-COST SPIRAL. YET OUR OPPONENTS ARE COMMITTED TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ACCORD.

AND FOR RURAL AUSTRALIA, A RETURN TO THEIR POLICIES WOULD MEAN SIMPLY THIS - HIGHER UNEMPLOYMENT, AN END TO SUSTAINED ECONOMIC GROWTH, HIGHER INFLATION, HIGHER INTEREST RATES, A NEW WAGE EXPLOSION, A RETURN TO THE WAGE COST SPIRAL, AND THROUGH A RETURN TO THE OLD CONFRONTATION, RENEWED AND EVER-INCREASING INDUSTRIAL DISPUTATION AND DISRUPTION.

WE ARE NOT GOING TO LET THAT HAPPEN. AND I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE VOICE OF THE COUNTRY PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA WILL BE HEARD CLEARLY IN THEIR DETERMINATION - IN SUPPORT OF OUR DETERMINATION - THAT IT WILL NOT HAPPEN.

ON TUESDAY, I SET THE NATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR AUSTRALIA DURING OUR NEXT TERM.

EACH OF THEM IS HIGHLY AND DIRECTLY RELEVANT TO THE NEEDS AND HOPES OF THE COUNTRY PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA. AND NO SECTION OF THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY STANDS TO GAIN MORE FROM THEIR FULFILMENT THAN THE COUNTRY PEOPLE, NOT ONLY THE FARMING MEN AND WOMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES, BUT ALL THE FOUR AND A HALF MILLION AUSTRALIANS WHO WORK AND LIVE IN THE COUNTRY.

LET ME STATE OUR PRIORITIES AGAIN:

- THE MAINTENANCE OF STRONG ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT GROWTH WITH LOW INFLATION; AND TO THIS END, NEW INITIATIVES TO REMOVE IMPEDIMENTS TO AUSTRALIA APPLYING OUR RESOURCES TO THE MOST PRODUCTIVE USES, AND TO STRENGTHEN INDUSTRY;
- A GENUINE REFORM OF THE AUSTRALIAN TAX SYSTEM TO PROMOTE GROWTH AND TO ENSURE THAT THE BENEFITS OF THAT GROWTH ARE FAIRLY SHARED AND BRING LASTING RELIEF ON PERSONAL INCOME TAXES TO THE MILLIONS OF ORDINARY TAXPAYERS. WHAT WE MEAN BY TAX REFORM IS THAT THE HARD WORK OF THE ORDINARY AUSTRALIAN IS NOT UNFAIRLY PENALISED - THE SELF-EMPLOYED AS WELL AS THE EMPLOYEE, THE FARMER, ALONG WITH THE INDUSTRIAL WORKER;
- A CONCERTED EFFORT TO ATTACK THE CAUSES OF POVERTY AND INEQUALITY IN OUR MIDST, TO ELIMINATE UNEMPLOYMENT AND TO CREATE A FAIRER SOCIETY;

- A DRIVE TO RAISE THE LEVELS OF EDUCATION, HEALTH AND THE OTHER COMMUNITY SERVICES FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS;
- AND TO CONTINUE, WITH RENEWED VIGOUR BASED ON YOUR RENEWED MANDATE, OUR UNREMITTING EFFORTS IN THE CAUSE OF PEACE AND NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT.

THE TASK OF BUILDING UPON THE STRONG FOUNDATION WE HAVE LAID FOR NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION REQUIRES FIRST OF ALL THAT THE CONDITIONS WHICH BUILT NATIONAL RECOVERY CONTINUE: CO-OPERATIVE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, AND FISCAL AND MONETARY POLICY DESIGNED TO SUPPORT GRADUAL REDUCTIONS IN INTEREST RATES AND STRONG ECONOMIC GROWTH WITHOUT ANY RESURGENCE OF INFLATION.

WE HAVE ESTABLISHED THESE CONDITIONS IN THE PAST TWENTY MONTHS, AND UNDERTAKE TO MAINTAIN THEM THROUGH THE LIFE OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENT, AND FOR AS LONG AS THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE CONTINUE TO CHARGE US WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION.

AND BEYOND THE MAINTENANCE OF THESE FAVOURABLE GENERAL CONDITIONS, WE WILL CONTINUE TO WORK SYSTEMATICALLY ON LONG-TERM STRUCTURAL REFORMS DESIGNED TO RAISE THE CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED GROWTH: IN TRADE; IN EDUCATION; IN THE EFFECTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY; IN BUSINESS DEREGULATION; IN RURAL INDUSTRY, MANUFACTURING, TRANSPORT, COMMUNICATIONS, AND OTHER KEY ECONOMIC SECTORS; AND IN TAXATION REFORM. THESE ARE ISSUES AS RELEVANT IN THE COUNTRY AS THEY ARE IN THE CITY.

TRADE POLICY

THE STRENGTHENING OF AUSTRALIA'S CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINED STRONG GROWTH REQUIRES MUCH GREATER EXPORT ORIENTATION OF AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY. THIS DEMANDS THE CONTINUATION OF OUR EFFORTS TO RAISE PRODUCTIVITY AND IMPROVE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS, AS WELL AS TO PURSUE AN ACTIVE TRADE POLICY.

THE DESTINY OF THE SECURE, DYNAMIC, PROSPEROUS AND FAIR SOCIETY WHICH WE ARE BUILDING LIES IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION, AND ESPECIALLY THE WESTERN PACIFIC REGION.

IN THE YEARS AHEAD, WE WILL CONTINUE TO BUILD ON THE CONSTRUCTIVE AND CLOSE RELATIONS THAT WE HAVE ESTABLISHED WITH THE COUNTRIES OF ASEAN, WITH JAPAN AND CHINA, AND WITH OUR SOUTHWEST PACIFIC NEIGHBOURS.

WE WILL PURSUE A VIGOROUS TRADE POLICY, VIGOROUS BOTH IN THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF AUSTRALIA'S TRADE.

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND AN UPGRADED TRADE COMMISSIONER SERVICE HAVE BEEN REORIENTED TOWARDS A TARGETED APPROACH IN KEY MARKETS SUCH AS CHINA, JAPAN, NORTH AMERICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST.

.../ 14A

WE WILL CONTINUE TO DEFEND STRENUOUSLY AUSTRALIA'S INTERESTS IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS AGAINST UNFAIR AND OFTEN SUBSIDISED COMPETITION IN WORLD MARKETS.

WE SHALL CONTINUE TO PRESS, WITH ALL THE RESOURCES AT OUR DISPOSAL, FOR THE PROGRESSIVE LIBERALISATION OF AGRICULTURAL MARKETS.

AN INDUSTRY ADVISORY COUNCIL WILL BE ESTABLISHED, COMPRISING INDUSTRY LEADERS, TO REPORT TO THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ON THE ISSUES INVOLVED IN AUSTRALIA'S TRADING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY.

RESEARCH

IN THE NATIONAL POLICY, I ANNOUNCED NEW INCENTIVES FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT. WE ARE AMONG WORLD LEADERS IN THE APPLICATION OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY. WE MUST CONTINUE TO LEAD.

WE WILL INCREASE FUNDS FOR RURAL RESEARCH WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF IDENTIFYING AREAS OF GREATEST NEED AND DELIVERING THE MOST EFFICIENT USE OF THE RESEARCH DOLLAR.

EDUCATION

THE STABILITY AND PREDICTABILITY WE HAVE PROVIDED FOR EDUCATION IS OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE TO OUR COUNTRY CHILDREN.

OVER THE NEXT EIGHT YEARS, GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS WILL RECEIVE A REAL INCREASE OF NEARLY FIFTY PERCENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS A REAL INCREASE OF MORE THAN SEVENTEEN PERCENT.

HAVING PUT THE DIVISION AND IRRELEVANCE OF MUCH THAT PASSED FOR THE EDUCATION DEBATE IN THIS COUNTRY IN PREVIOUS YEARS BEHIND US, WE CAN NOW PLAN EFFECTIVELY TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION FOR ALL OUR CHILDREN AND TO REDRESS THE IMBALANCE AND INEQUITIES WHICH HAVE FOR TOO LONG WORKED TO THE DISADVANTAGE OF MANY COUNTRY CHILDREN, PARTICULARLY THOSE IN REMOTE AREAS.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS INCREASED THE BOARDING ALLOWANCE FOR ISOLATED CHILDREN, AND THE MEANS TEST HAS BEEN REDUCED IN ORDER TO INCREASE ACCESS TO EDUCATION AMONG COUNTRY CHILDREN. IN ADDITION THE PARTICIPATION AND EQUITY PROGRAM WILL LOOK SPECIFICALLY AT DISADVANTAGES IN EDUCATION IN REMOTE AREAS. THE GOVERNMENT WILL ALSO OUTLAY \$1.1M TO CONTINUE THE LOAN VIDEO PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS IN ISOLATED AREAS.

TRANSPORT

TO PROVIDE THE FULLEST SUPPORT FOR THE RURAL ECONOMY,
WE NEED AN EFFICIENT NATIONAL TRANSPORT SYSTEM.

ACCORDINGLY THE GOVERNMENT HAS INCREASED ROAD CONSTRUCTION
AND ROAD SAFETY PROGRAMS IN AUSTRALIA BY MORE THAN FIFTY
PERCENT.

WE WILL CONTINUE THE GREATEST ROAD-BUILDING AND
MAINTENANCE PROGRAM IN AUSTRALIA'S HISTORY.

WITHIN THE NEXT THREE YEARS, THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM
WILL BE BROUGHT TO AN ALL-WEATHER, VIRTUALLY FLOOD-FREE
STANDARD.

WE ARE ALLOCATING \$65 MILLION THIS YEAR FOR THE UPGRADING
OF THE BRUCE HIGHWAY TO PROVIDE QUEENSLANDERS WITH THE
STANDARD OF HIGHWAY THEY DESERVE.

WE ARE ALLOCATING A RECORD \$189 MILLION THIS YEAR FOR THE
NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM IN NSW, WHICH INCLUDES THE HUME
HIGHWAY AND THE NEW ENGLAND HIGHWAY. BY 1988, THE
HUME HIGHWAY, THIS KEY ROAD LINK, WILL BE A CONTINUOUS
FOUR LANE HIGHWAY.

WE WILL CONTINUE THIS OVERHAUL AND, AS A MATTER OF PRIORITY, DEVELOP A COHESIVE AUSTRALIAN LAND TRANSPORT PROGRAM, AND GIVE CONSIDERATION TO ITS FINANCING BY AN INDEXED SHARE OF EXISTING FUEL EXCISE, SO AS TO PROVIDE CONTINUITY TO OUR ROAD BUILDING EFFORT, AND TO INCLUDE UPGRADING OF OUR MAIN LINE RAIL SYSTEM AS PART OF AN INDUSTRY RESTRUCTURING PACKAGE TO BE NEGOTIATED WITH RAIL UNIONS AND MANAGEMENT.

IN THE YEARS OF THE COALITION GOVERNMENT, FUEL PRICES INCREASED BY OVER 300 PERCENT.

WE WILL CONTINUE THE FAIR AND SENSIBLE FUEL TAXATION POLICIES WHICH HAVE LEVELLED OFF INCREASES IN THE COST OF FUEL IN REAL TERMS.

WE WILL BRING TO COMPLETION THE FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM FOR AVIATION WHICH IS BRINGING ABOUT THE UPGRADING OF REGIONAL AIRPORTS THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA.

COMMUNICATIONS

OUR LANDMARK DECISION TO ESTABLISH THE DOMESTIC COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE SYSTEM, AUSSAT, WILL HELP VIRTUALLY ALL AUSTRALIANS OUTSIDE THE CAPITAL CITIES.

IT WILL ASSIST COUNTRY AUSTRALIANS TO OBTAIN WIDER ABC AND COMMERCIAL TELEVISION AND RADIO SERVICES AND HELP PROVIDE BETTER COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS FOR ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS THE SCHOOL OF THE AIR AND THE ROYAL FLYING DOCTORS SERVICE AS WELL AS HAVING A HOST OF OTHER APPLICATIONS.

THE DOMESTIC SATELLITE WILL ALSO ASSIST IN PROVIDING ADDITIONAL COMMERCIAL TELEVISION AND RADIO SERVICES UNDER THE SUPPLEMENTARY LICENCE SCHEME ANNOUNCED BY THE GOVERNMENT LAST YEAR.

BECAUSE OF THE MOST ENCOURAGING DEMAND FOR SATELLITE SERVICES THE GOVERNMENT IS NOW COMMITTED TO LAUNCHING THREE SATELLITES, THE FIRST IN JULY 1985.

LAST YEAR WE TOOK EARLY STEPS TO HONOUR OUR ELECTION COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE THE MUCH NEEDED SECOND REGIONAL RADIO NETWORK FOR RURAL AUSTRALIANS.

THIS WILL PROVIDE A DIVERSITY OF ABC SERVICES TO THOSE COUNTRY AUSTRALIANS WHO HAVE BEEN DEPRIVED OF THEM FOR SO LONG.

TELECOM, THROUGH ITS RURAL AND REMOTE AREAS PROGRAM WILL ENSURE THAT EVERY AUSTRALIAN WILL HAVE ACCESS TO AN AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE SYSTEM BY 1990 AT A COST OF \$400 MILLION.

MEDICARE

WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE PROGRAM AUSTRALIA NOW HAS, FOR THE FIRST TIME, A FAIR, AFFORDABLE AND STABLE HEALTH INSURANCE SYSTEM COVERING ALL AUSTRALIANS.

GIVEN YOUR RENEWED MANDATE FOR MEDICARE, WE WILL MOVE PROMPTLY TOWARDS THE IMPROVEMENT OF FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO THOSE PEOPLE IN THE COUNTRY AREAS WITHOUT ACCESS TO MEDICARE OFFICES.

WE PROPOSE TO USE POST OFFICES OR LOCAL HOSPITALS FOR THE LODGEMENT OF MEDICARE CLAIMS AND THE PROVISION OF MEDICARE INFORMATION. WE ALSO INTEND MODIFYING THE ISOLATED PATIENTS TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION ASSISTANCE SCHEME (IPTAAS) TO MAKE IT MORE FLEXIBLE IN ITS ADMINISTRATION AND TO RELATE IT MORE DIRECTLY TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICARE BENEFITS. THE EFFECT SHOULD BE TO MAKE THE SCHEME MORE ACCESSIBLE TO THOSE PEOPLE IN REMOTE AREAS WHO HAVE TO TRAVEL LONG DISTANCES TO OBTAIN SPECIALIST MEDICAL TREATMENT.

AGED CARE

WE WILL ESTABLISH EARLY IN OUR NEXT TERM AN OFFICE OF AGED CARE TO CO-ORDINATE THE PROVISION OF ALL GOVERNMENT SERVICES TO THE ELDERLY. IT WILL ESTABLISH PRIORITIES OF NEED FOR AGED AND RETIRED PEOPLE, ASSESS FACILITIES THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA AND BRING TOGETHER THE LEGISLATION AND SERVICE PROVISIONS CURRENTLY SCATTERED AROUND VARIOUS GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

AND IN REGARD TO THE ASSETS TEST, I REPEAT THE FOUR UNEQUIVOCAL COMMITMENTS I GAVE TO THE NATION ON TUESDAY:

THE FIRST IS THAT PENSIONERS WILL NEVER SEE SOCIAL SECURITY INSPECTORS IN THEIR HOMES.

THE SECOND IS THAT THE INFORMATION GATHERED FOR THE ASSETS TEST WILL NOT BE USED FOR ANY OTHER REVENUE PURPOSE.

THE THIRD IS THAT THE ASSETS TEST WILL NOT BE MADE MORE STRINGENT BY THIS GOVERNMENT. INDEED WE HAVE INDEXED THE LIMITS TO ENSURE THAT THIS DOES NOT HAPPEN.

AND FOURTHLY, WE WILL CONTINUE THROUGH THE OFFICE OF AGED CARE TO MONITOR THE ASSETS TEST CAREFULLY TO ENSURE THAT IT IS FAIRLY ADMINISTERED.

/21...

THE GOVERNMENT HAS SOUGHT TO ENSURE THAT PRIMARY PRODUCERS ARE NOT DISADVANTAGED RELATIVE TO OTHER INDIVIDUALS IN THE COMMUNITY BY THE ASSETS TEST. THE TEST CONTAINS HARDSHIP PROVISIONS THAT RECOGNISE THAT THE ASSET AND OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE OF SOME FARMING ENTERPRISES IS SUCH THAT SPECIAL ACCOUNT MAY NEED TO BE TAKEN IN ASSESSING THE ELIGIBILITY OF PRIMARY PRODUCERS.

ZONE ALLOWANCES

IN ADDITION TO THE TAX REDUCTIONS THAT HAVE APPLIED SINCE 1 NOVEMBER FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS, THE ZONE REBATES FOR PEOPLE IN COUNTRY AREAS HAVE BEEN INCREASED, AND THE ZONE BOUNDARIES CHANGED TO BENEFIT THE MOST ISOLATED AUSTRALIAN TAXPAYERS. THIS MEANS THAT PEOPLE LIVING MORE THAN 250 KM FROM A POPULATION CENTRE OF LESS THAN 2500 WILL NOW BE IN A SPECIAL ZONE AND BE ELIGIBLE FOR A REBATE OF \$938.

TOURISM

THERE IS NO INDUSTRY WITH A GREATER POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH IN JOBS AND SERVICES IN COUNTRY CENTRES AND TOWNS THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA THAN THE TOURIST INDUSTRY.

WE HAVE BOOSTED FUNDING FOR TOURIST PROMOTION BY THE AUSTRALIAN TOURIST COMMISSION BY A MASSIVE 128 PER CENT IN OUR FIRST TWO BUDGETS AND TAKEN A RANGE OF OTHER INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE TOURISM.

WE WILL CONTINUE TO GIVE HIGH PRIORITY TO TOURIST PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT. THIS WILL INCLUDE NEW INITIATIVES IN STRUCTURING DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL AIRFARES.

I TURN NOW TO MATTERS OF CONCERN TO THE SPECIFIC PRIMARY INDUSTRIES WHICH GO TO MAKE UP SUCH A SIGNIFICANT PART OF AUSTRALIA'S GREAT RURAL SECTOR, AND OUR GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THEIR PROBLEMS.

WOOL

WE HAVE PLACED THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S CONTRIBUTION TO WOOL PROMOTION ON A STABLE AND PREDICTABLE BASIS: THE WOOL INDUSTRY CAN NOW PLAN WITH CONFIDENCE ON A CONTRIBUTION FROM GOVERNMENT TOTALLING 1.2% OF GROSS PROCEEDS. IN 1984-85 ON THIS BASIS WE EXPECT TO CONTRIBUTE AROUND \$26 MILLION FOR WOOL PROMOTION.

WE HAVE GIVEN THE AUSTRALIAN WOOL CORPORATION MORE COMMERCIAL FLEXIBILITY TO BORROW AND WE HAVE GIVEN GUARANTEES THAT THE CORPORATION'S MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE SCHEME WILL CONTINUE TO OPERATE.

/23...

WHEAT

WE HAVE ALLOWED THE AUSTRALIAN WHEAT BOARD TO BORROW UP TO HALF OF ITS BORROWINGS OVERSEAS, GIVING IT THE POTENTIAL TO SAVE TENS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS FOR GROWERS.

OUR NEW WHEAT PLAN GIVES WHEAT GROWERS A MORE FLEXIBLE NINETY-FIVE PERCENT NET UNDERWRITING, AN IMPROVED PERMIT SCHEME AND A BOARD VESTED WITH THE POWERS NECESSARY TO FINANCE AND MARKET AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST CROP.

WE HAVE GIVEN EXTENSIVE NATIONAL INTEREST COVER TO CREDIT SALES.

MEAT AND LIVESTOCK INDUSTRIES

WE HAVE REFORMED THE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE INDUSTRIES AND REMOVED DESTRUCTIVE INDUSTRY POLITICAL INFIGHTING FROM THE AMLC BOARD.

WE HAVE SET UP A FULLY-FUNDED POLICY COUNCIL AND ARE IN THE PROCESS OF REVAMPING THE INDUSTRY'S RESEARCH COMMITTEE. WE ARE DEALING SENSIBLY AND SENSITIVELY WITH THE ISSUES OF LIVE SHEEP EXPORTS AND MEAT EXPORTS AND IMPORTS.

WE WILL FURTHER DEVELOP THE NATIONAL MEAT INSPECTION SERVICE SO THAT OUR EXPORT INSPECTION SERVICE WILL BE THE MOST EFFICIENT IN THE WORLD. IN THE COMING YEAR WELL OVER NINETY PER CENT OF ALL MEAT INSPECTIONS WILL BE CARRIED OUT BY THE COMMONWEALTH AS A RESULT OF OUR NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE STATE GOVERNMENTS.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS RECENTLY CONCLUDED INTENSIVE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE JAPANESE WHO HAVE NOW AGREED TO INCREASE THEIR IMPORTS OF AUSTRALIAN BEEF BY 2100 TONNES EACH YEAR IN THE NEXT 4 YEARS. WE HAVE ALSO OBTAINED ASSURANCES ON ACCESS FOR CHILLED, AGED AND HIGH QUALITY BEEF THAT WILL ENHANCE THE CAPACITY OF AUSTRALIAN PRODUCERS TO SUPPLY TO THIS MARKET.

DAIRYING

WE HAVE BEEN PATIENTLY NEGOTIATING WITH THE INDUSTRY AND STATES TO PUT IN PLACE BETTER MARKETING ARRANGEMENTS BY 1 JULY 1985.

WE HAVE TAKEN THE DECISION TO PROCLAIM THE 1977 LEGISLATION, IF NECESSARY, TO PRESERVE THE MARKET MILK PREMIUM.

WE HAVE PUT CASH SECURITIES ON CHEESE IMPORTS FROM THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY.

SUGAR

WE ARE ACUTELY AWARE OF THE GRAVE PROBLEM FACING THE SUGAR INDUSTRY. PRICES HAVE FALLEN DRAMATICALLY AND THERE IS LITTLE PROSPECT THAT THEY WILL INCREASE SIGNIFICANTLY IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

MY GOVERNMENT, WITH THE STATE GOVERNMENTS AND INDUSTRY, WORKED HARD TO SECURE A NEW INTERNATIONAL SUGAR AGREEMENT. BUT WE DECIDED, AND THE INDUSTRY AGREED, THAT AUSTRALIA WAS BETTER OFF WITHOUT AN ISA THAN TO BE A PARTY TO AN AGREEMENT THAT IMPOSED CONSTRAINTS ON US WHILE THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY AND CUBA WENT LARGELY UNCONSTRAINED. THE INDUSTRY IS, IN PART, NOW PAYING THE PRICE FOR THE FAILURE OF THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT TO BRING THE E.E.C. INTO THE I.S.A.

WE RECOGNISE THE INDUSTRY'S FORTUNES ARE DETERMINED BY WORLD MARKETS. BUT THE GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED AT THE IMPACT THE SUSTAINED PERIOD OF LOW PRICES IS HAVING ON SUGAR PRODUCERS. IN RENEGOTIATING THE DOMESTIC SUGAR AGREEMENT, MY GOVERNMENT AGREED TO LIFT THE DOMESTIC PRICE BY \$28 A TONNE.

LAST YEAR WE PROVIDED \$11 MILLION IN CARRY-ON FINANCE AND THIS HELPED ABOUT 700 GROWERS.

THIS YEAR, RECOGNISING THAT NEEDS HAVE CHANGED, WE HAVE PROVIDED A FURTHER \$5.5 MILLION TO HELP RESTRUCTURE THE DEBTS OF PRODUCERS WHOSE DEBT SERVICING COMMITMENTS ARE THREATENING THEIR FUTURE IN THE INDUSTRY.

WE HAVE REACHED AGREEMENT WITH THE INDUSTRY THAT IT MUST REVIEW ITS PRODUCTION, MARKETING AND REGULATORY MECHANISMS, MANY OF WHICH GO BACK TO 1915.

VINE FRUITS

FOR THE GRAPE INDUSTRY, WE HAVE SET UP A MAJOR INDEPENDENT INQUIRY TO LOOK INTO ALL ASPECTS OF GRAPE GROWING AND UTILISATION OF THE PRODUCT. THE INQUIRY WILL EXAMINE THE QUESTIONS OF WINE QUALITY, THE PROSPECTS FOR EXPORTS, VINEYARD REHABILITATION AND THE REGIONAL AND SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE INDUSTRY.

WE HAVE RECEIVED THE FINAL REPORT OF THE I.A.C. ON THE DRIED VINE FRUIT INDUSTRY - ALSO FACING SERIOUS PROBLEMS - AND WE WILL BE ADDRESSING THIS INDUSTRY'S PROBLEMS IMMEDIATELY.

RURAL ADJUSTMENT

IN OUR FIRST YEAR WE INCREASED RURAL ADJUSTMENT FUNDING FROM \$17 MILLION TO \$46 MILLION. IN OUR SECOND BUDGET, WE WILL BE SPENDING OVER \$30 MILLION ON ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE. FROM 1 JULY 1985, A NEW METHOD OF FINANCING THE SCHEME WILL MAKE MONEY AVAILABLE WHEN IT IS NEEDED.

ON THE QUESTION OF HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT LET ME STRESS -
HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE UNDER THE RURAL ADJUSTMENT
SCHEME TO FARMERS EXPERIENCING PERSONAL HARDSHIPS.
FARMERS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THE INCOME SUPPORT FOR A FULL
YEAR WITHOUT HAVING EVEN TO CONSIDER, LET ALONE GIVING A
COMMITMENT TO, LEAVING THEIR FARMS.

DROUGHT

BY WAY OF DROUGHT ASSISTANCE WE HAVE SPENT WELL OVER
\$100 MILLION ON FODDER SUBSIDIES AND INTEREST REPAYMENT
SUBSIDIES. TO AVOID AD HOC AND OFTEN DELAYED RESPONSES BY
GOVERNMENT TO DROUGHT, WE HAVE SET UP THE NATIONAL CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE TO ADVISE ON A NATIONAL DROUGHT POLICY WHICH IS
BOTH EQUITABLE AND PREDICTABLE.

SOIL CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

WE HAVE ESTABLISHED THE NATIONAL SOIL CONSERVATION
PROGRAM, INITIATED TREEPLANTING PROGRAMS, AND ARE WORKING
WITH THE STATES ON A NATIONAL FOREST STRATEGY. FUNDS
HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED FOR THE CONSERVATION OF PLANT
GENETIC RESOURCES. WE HAVE PUT IN PLACE MORE RATIONAL
CRITERIA FOR FUTURE WATER PROJECTS.

WE WILL TAKE FURTHER MEASURES TO ENCOURAGE FARMERS TO ADOPT SELF HELP SOIL CONSERVATION MEASURES. AS FUNDS ALLOW, THE GOVERNMENT WILL INVOLVE ITSELF MORE IN THE AREAS OF SALINITY CONTROL, WATER QUALITY, RE-AFFORESTATION AND LAND USE PLANNING.

WE ARE MEETING THE FULL COST OF STAGE 1 OF THE BURDEKIN DAM PROJECT IN NORTH QUEENSLAND - AT A COST OF MORE THAN \$100 MILLION. WE HAVE ALREADY ALLOCATED \$32 MILLION FOR THIS PROJECT IN OUR FIRST TWO BUDGETS. BUT THIS HUGE PROJECT IS THREATENED BY THE OPPOSITION. IN AUGUST LAST YEAR MR HOWARD SAID HE WOULDN'T HAVE REGARDED THE BURDEKIN DAM "AS ANY MORE SACROSANCT THAN OTHER AREAS". THE SHADOW TREASURER SAID: "I'D HAVE PUT IT INTO HOTCH-POTCH WITH SOME OF THE OTHER THINGS".

FISHERIES

FOLLOWING YEARS OF NEGLECT THAT BROUGHT MANY OF OUR FISHERIES TO THE BRINK OF COLLAPSE WE ARE ESTABLISHING EFFECTIVE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT REGIMES.

WE HAVE SET UP A NATIONAL FISHING INDUSTRY ADVISORY PANEL AND ARE CONVENING A MAJOR FISHERIES CONFERENCE EARLY NEXT YEAR TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEMS AND FUTURE OF OUR FISHING INDUSTRY.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

IN DEVELOPING AUSTRALIA'S RURAL ECONOMY, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THERE SHOULD BE AVAILABLE THE WIDEST POSSIBLE EXCHANGE AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ON MATTERS OF RURAL POLICY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.

WE HAVE IN THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTRE, BASED HERE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND, A UNIQUE INSTITUTION. A CENTRAL ASPECT OF ITS WORK IS THE IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES OF MAJOR CONCERN TO PEOPLE LIVING AND WORKING IN RURAL REGIONS WHICH ARE NOT DEALT WITH SPECIFICALLY BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS OR GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

WE WILL STRONGLY SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE CENTRE. TO THIS END WE ARE COMMITTING \$160,000 PER ANNUM TO THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTRE STARTING 1985-86.

REPORT 2000

NOW THAT THE BASIS FOR A SUSTAINED RECOVERY HAS BEEN ACHIEVED, WE INTEND TO DIRECT A MAJOR EFFORT TO CAPITALISE ON THE RESILIENCE AND MASSIVE CONTRIBUTION OF RURAL AND PROVINCIAL AUSTRALIA TO OUR NATION AS A WHOLE. WITH THIS IN VIEW, I HAVE ASKED JOHN KERIN TO PREPARE A MAJOR REPORT ON PRIMARY INDUSTRY TO THE YEAR 2000.

MY GOVERNMENT WILL ALSO EXAMINE AS PRIORITY THE BEST WAY TO CO-ORDINATE, AT THE MINISTERIAL AND DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL, ALL RURAL AND PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THERE BE BETTER INTEGRATION OF THE RANGE OF POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND PROPOSALS, AND IN BOTH THEIR DELIVERY AND THEIR ADMINISTRATION, AS THEY AFFECT RURAL AUSTRALIA.

CONCLUSION

FRIENDS, AS I SAID AT THE BEGINNING, LABOR'S PROGRAM IS FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS - CITY AND COUNTRY.

BUT I BELIEVE THAT IN OUR FIRST TERM, WE HAVE AMPLY DEMONSTRATED OUR CONCERN FOR AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE SPECIAL NEEDS AND PROBLEMS OF THE FOUR AND A HALF MILLION AUSTRALIANS WHO LIVE AND WORK OUTSIDE THE CAPITALS AND THE INDUSTRIAL CITIES.

OUR PROGRAM FOR OUR NEXT TERM INVOLVES THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL POLICIES WHICH WILL PAY ATTENTION TO THE PARTICULAR INTERESTS AND CONCERNS OF PARTICULAR REGIONS, AND INVOLVES A RECOGNITION OF THE NEED TO IMPROVE THE DELIVERY OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES TO THOSE WHO LIVE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES AND COUNTRY TOWNS AND CENTRES.

AS A GOVERNMENT, WE HAVE ADDRESSED THESE PROBLEMS, AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO, BECAUSE IF THE ASPIRATIONS WHICH WE ALL HOLD FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR GREAT COUNTRY'S FULL POTENTIAL ARE TO BE REALISED, THEY ARE PROBLEMS UPON WHICH WE MUST WORK TOGETHER, IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF UNDERSTANDING AND MUTUAL RESPECT.

AND IT IS ON THAT PRINCIPLE OF MUTUAL RESPECT THAT WE CAN BEST CONTINUE TO BUILD A BETTER AND FAIRER AUSTRALIA.

SO, MY FRIENDS, LET THIS ELECTION BE A NATIONAL COVENANT BETWEEN ALL AUSTRALIANS, IN ALL PARTS, STATES AND REGIONS OF AUSTRALIA, THAT NEVER AGAIN WILL WE PERMIT, AS HAPPENED SO NEEDLESSLY AND DAMAGINGLY IN THE SEVEN YEARS OF COALITION GOVERNMENT, THE ELEVATION OF CONFRONTATION AND DIVISION TO BE A CENTRAL FEATURE OF OUR NATIONAL LIFE, AND THAT WE SHALL CONTINUE TO CHOOSE, INSTEAD, THE PATH OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION TOWARDS THE FULFILMENT OF OUR GOALS, AND HOPES, FOR OURSELVES AS INDIVIDUAL AUSTRALIANS, FOR OUR FAMILIES, FOR OUR REGION - WHEREVER WE LIVE - AND, ABOVE ALL, FOR OUR NATION, THIS GREAT NATION OF OURS - ONE AND INDIVISIBLE.

• • • • •