



PRIME MINISTER

NORTHERN TERRITORY ELECTION

I congratulate Shane Stone and the Country Liberal Party for their rousing victory in the Northern Territory election.

It is a personal triumph for the Chief Minister who has now an emphatic mandate in his own right.

The CLP's success is a measure of their goodwill with the Territory community and is overwhelmingly due to the good government that the CLP has delivered since the Territory achieved self-government.

My Government remains committed to statehood for the Northern Territory. I look forward to working with Shane Stone in achieving this shared goal.

The result does carry some national messages.

The first of these is the complete contempt which Territorians have dismissed Kim Beazley's tawdry attempt to smear Shane Stone with a false charge of racism. Not only did the CLP increase its majority, but the CLP vote rose markedly in many remote areas with heavy enrolments of Aboriginal Australians.

Those Australians are more interested in jobs and a secure future than irresponsible and dishonest political labels.

Furthermore, the result is all the more encouraging because of Shane Stone's strong endorsement of my Government's 10-point plan to respond to the Wik decision.

As the Chief Minister remarked today, the present Native Title Act works for no one. The Government's legislative response to be introduced this week will provide a balanced and fair outcome for all Australians.

31 August 1997

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