PRESS STATEMENT:

MALCOLM FRASER:

November 20th, 1966

Next Saturday you will decide which Government you want for the next three years.

Briefly I want to look at the domestic policies of the Government and then the foreign policies.

If the Government is re-elected policies that have been proven over seventeen years will be continued. The policy has been and is to undertake new developmental projects or to make improvements in conditions of national welfare and social services when and as resources become available. In particular our policy is designed to encourage private individuals and companies to use their own initiative and resources. These policies have been successful. A high rate of employment has been maintained, standards of living have risen. For example, in 1930 it would have taken 600 hours work to pay for a refrigerator, it now takes 200. Many other examples could be quoted. Production has risen on every side. New discoveries of minerals and natural gas have completely changed the outlook for Australia's industrial and economic future.

There is increasing attention being focused on education, and the Government's decision to establish a Ministry of Education will bring a new energy and initiative to this field.

Against these proven policies you have been offered a program of indiscriminate promises which could not be fulfilled without gross inflation or very heavy taxation. Policies of living beyond one's means have resulted in the United Kingdom Government desperately instituting measures which could lead to one million unemployed in England during the next year.

The Opposition program could not be achieved without great harm to the progress that has been made in recent years.

While these issues are of great importance the issues of foreign policy and defence will be of prime concern in this election.

The policies are diametrically opposed.

The Government parties and the Opposition have a completely different attitude to defence and security. The Opposition would appear to want to build a brick wall around Australia, to shut her off from the other countries of south-east Asia. Whether one would want to do this or not it
is not practical. Geographically we are a part of south-east Asia and our ultimate future is dependent upon the security and well being of that area. We have recognised this. We have co-operated in social and economic programs and we have co-operated in military terms when this has been necessary. All this is appreciated.

The withdrawal from Asia advocated by the Opposition involves turning our backs upon friends and allies when the going gets difficult. Nobody likes having troops outside Australia, whether they are regulars or national servicemen, but the Government took this decision only because, on all the evidence available to us, it was a decision of importance to Australia's future.

None of the countries of south-east Asia can preserve their own independence by themselves without co-operating with allies and without the basic support of the United States. Only two things can prevent the downward thrust of aggressive communism from reaching Australia's shores. These are the determination of the people in the countries concerned, including the determination of Australians together with the power of the United States.

Mr. Calwell, for his part, has shown that he hasn't the will or the determination and he has also shown that he would pursue policies that would deny us the assistance of American power if we should ever need it. Under his policies we would be very much more likely to need it than under the ones now being pursued.

I cannot really believe that the policies of desertion of our friends and allies advocated by the Opposition is a policy that will attract your support. If it did it would be a complete denial of all our past attitudes to these problems and I would shudder for the security of Australia.