THE HON. MALCOLM FRASER, M.P.  
RADIO BROADCAST.

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The Prime Minister is trying to perpetuate a confidence trick in what he is now saying and doing about education and the Karmel Committee funds. The Prime Minister has tried to suggest that the Opposition is opposing the allocation of funds in the Government legislation which would implement the Karmel Committee proposals. This is completely false - it is untrue. We have supported and voted to support every cent of the expenditure of $694m included in the Government's legislation. We have voted to support the expenditure of that money to advantage Australian schools in precisely the way that the Government wants and the Prime Minister cannot sustain the view that the Opposition Parties are opposing and obstructing that legislation. It is false. We support the expenditure as the Government wants to spend that money.

The Prime Minister was trying to suggest that the Opposition is opposing the legislation. Our votes in the Parliament deny that. We have voted to support these aspects of the legislation. We supported the expenditure, we supported it wholeheartedly.

This is the second confidence trick that the Prime Minister has sought to perpetuate in this issue. On 2nd May, 1972, on 20th June, 1972, and on 13th December, 1972 - after the election - he gave certain assurances to many people and as a result of those assurances, it was strongly believed that the Australian Labor Party would continue to enforce the support for schools that had been introduced by the previous Government. We knew that the Labor Party...
would introduce additional proposals but everyone was led to believe that what this new Government was going to do would be additional and placed on top of the proposals that we had enforced. The statements of the Prime Minister on May 2nd before 4,000 people at the Festival Hall, on June 20th and at a Men's Catholic Luncheon Club in Melbourne in particular led to that conclusion. I have copies of the statements. I have a tape of the Prime Minister's tape on 2nd May so there is no doubt that these statements were made.

The media tends to remain silent about the Prime Minister's broken promises, but the record is there.

We have taken the action we have in the House of Representatives - and there will be similar action in the Senate - because we believe that it is right. We believe that there ought to be basic support for all children in all schools and indeed the Minister for Education himself, Mr. Beazley, has said, and is on record in the Parliament as having said, that he would like to see the Commonwealth identify itself with the education of every child including children even at Geelong Grammar. We need to understand that the Government's present proposals would make sure that secondary independent schools from Categories A to F would get less under the Government's proposals than they would have under the previous legislation and our proposals would have only lifted those who get less to a basic level of support which would then help them to plan and look after their own future. Our proposals were that children in all independent schools should get 20% of the cost of education in Government primary or secondary schools, and that as those costs rose, that 20% would...
naturally increase to a certain extent. That would have given them basic support. On top of that, we accept and believe that those with particular disabilities and hardships should get additional support and we would want that to take place precisely as the Karmel Committee recommends.

Last year, Mr. Whitlam must have believed that these policies were also right because of the pledges he gave. We want him to keep his word. To meet the Opposition's views and to keep the Prime Minister's word would cost an additional $5m a year. Does anyone really believe that the Labor Party would want to jeopardise a $694m programme for the sake of that $5m? I think that that is a nonsensical proposal and the Prime Minister can only get away with this outrageous situation if he can have people believe that we, the Opposition, have opposed the $694m. He can't get away with that because we support it and support it wholeheartedly and have voted to support it.

Mr. Whitlam and the Australian Labor Party will not be able to perpetuate that falsehood - that we are holding up these funds. (We voted for them, we will vote for them again.) If the legislation is not proclaimed, if it is not put into effect, it will be the fault of the present Labor Government. The unfortunate part about all of this is that the Prime Minister is playing politics with the fortunes of schools, with the fortunes of school children in an immoral and shameful manner.
Author/s: Fraser, Malcolm
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