REPORT TO THE NATION

TALK ON GTV9 BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE R.G. MENZIES, C.H., Q.C., M.P., 25TH AUGUST, 1959.

I am delighted to have the opportunity of saying something to you about this last journey of mine around the world. I know there are people who think that every visit around the world or anywhere else by a politician is a species of holiday jaunt. I can assure you that they are not. Mine was in fact the busiest journey I have ever had. I had almost no leisure time but I found it much more exciting because in the course of my journey around the world, I had quite close intimate discussions with about ten heads of government in the various countries in the world. And although, of course, it won't be possible to speak of all of them, I do anticipate that before this little programme is over, I will have the opportunity of saying something to you about some of them.

JOHN FOSTER DULLES.

I knew John Foster Dulles very well indeed. We were very closely associated in the negotiations for the ANZUS treaty; in the early discussions about the Suez crisis and, of course, later on. In that event, it was my duty, as I felt it, to disagree with him. Up to that point, we had been in complete unity. But the great thing about John Foster Dulles - not always understood during his life - was that he was a patriot, a man of the highest ideals and a man of the highest courage. It was always possible to disagree with him; sometimes one might feel bound to disagree with him, because we all have our own views. But it was never possible to doubt that he was a man of great quality. He was of enormous service to his own country, though not always recognised for that service. He was of enormous service to the free world, though a very contentious figure. I believe that he has made an enduring mark in the modern world, in circumstances of great difficulty.

QUESTION: And you've met his successor, Mr. Herter?

PRIME MINISTER: Well, I did. In the course of my life, as you know, I have met a great number of people, but I had never met Mr. Herter before, and therefore I was very interested to do it. He flew in from Geneva, I think, only that morning, but he was good enough to give me an interview within half an hour of his arrival. I found him a man of immense personal attraction. He has charm; he obviously has a high intellectual background; he has experience. And I think that, provided he gets the necessary backing, he is quite likely to prove to be a very, very distinguished Secretary of State in the United States. I liked him. I came away happy about his point of view and what he was doing. I took the liberty - as I usually do, with my characteristic impudence - to give him a little moral backing in what he was doing at Geneva. I think he is a good man and I think we may be very, very happy about him.

QUESTION: And you had talks with the President.

PRIME MINISTER: Yes, I did. The President was extraordinarily good to me about it, because he had invited us to have lunch with him on the day which turned out to be the day of the funeral of John Foster Dulles, and so he gave me a very long interview that morning. I had not seen him for two years. I had seen a bit of him, of course, over the last three or four years before that.

I was delighted to find that he was in such health and spirits that I could hardly believe it. He has had illnesses; we have all been given somewhat gloomy reports about it. I assure you that he sat there as a man in a very vigorous health and certainly in a very vigorous condition of mind. He left me

in no doubt as to what his views were on anything that cropped up. In other words, I found him a revived and vigorous man. And that, I think, is a very good thing, and a very good thing because the responsibilities that rest on the President of the United States are tremendous. He has a duty of leadership, a duty which he owes not only to the people of the United States, but to a lot of other people. That I perhaps remember more vividly than anything else. The point of view in Bonn, the point of view in Paris was considerably influenced by the view in Washington.

QUESTION: President Eisenhower seems diffident about the idea of a Summit Conference.

PRIME MINISTER: Well I, of course, have no right to be speaking for him, you know. But I think that on the whole, his attitude can be summed up in this way - or it could have been: "I am always prepared to attend a conference anywhere if it will help to preserve or to restore the peace. But I am not prepared to have a Summit Conference unless I see some guarantee of success, some practical thing done by the Soviet Union as an indication that goodwill is intended and a settlement is desired." That has been his attitude. As you know, he is a man of very high ideals and a most earnest seeker after peace. His view in the long run, particularly in the events of the last two years, did not commend itself very much to me, because I thought that the problem had reached a point of urgency.

Anyhow, the President has now taken a very important step. He has not yet said "I am for a Summit Conference"; nor, let it be made clear, is he going to see Khrushchev, or is Khrushchev seeing him, as representatives of the free world on the one side, and of the Soviet Union on the other. What the President has made very clear is that he will speak for his own country, and of course, as a very distinguished man, for himself; that he does not regard himself as negotiating. Well, that I think, is a point of view that is quite understandable. But I have lived long enough in the world to believe that if the President of the United States and the President of the Soviet Union - not the "President" but the master of the Soviet Union - get together for a few days of easy informal conversation - walking around the garden, or sitting at the table after dinner, then much could well come of it, because if the ice is broken, then the road to the Summit Conference of a more elaborate kind will have been opened.

And so I find in the development that has occurred in the American attitude, great room for hope. I have, myself, lively expectations of it. The President, of course, is a determined man, but I thought I detected in Washington in the high quarters in Washington, a growing feeling that we must get to grips with these matters by getting into the closest and most frequent personal contact with people on the other side - if I might use that expression - on the other side of the whole conflict of the world of ideas, on the other side of the Iron Curtain.

And therefore, not to make too long a story of it, I was delighted to find the American President in such good form, so lively, so eager; and I am sure that we will all have the benefit of it.

QUESTION: Finally, could you sum up your own attitude towards the Summit Conference?

PRIME MINISTER: Well, perhaps what I have just been saying about the position of the American President reflects some light on my own view. I believe - I have always believed -- that if you are going to discuss some complex concrete matter, say an international trade discussion, or something of that kind, there must be an enormous amount of preliminary work - detail work. Things have to be put down on paper. Documents have to be abstracted and put together. All sorts of work must be done. And, until

a couple of years ago, I thought that this probably was the rule that applied to a Summit meeting. I confess I have changed my mind, because in the last two years, we have seen such a tremendous acceleration of the Soviet propaganda about a peace offensive - as if only the Communists wanted peace, and we didn't. A terrible thought - that the Communists should be able to represent themselves, and themselves alone, as wanting peace, when everybody knows that all the wars and rumours of war since the great war, have been as a result of their actions.

And therefore, I believe, it is time - more than time - to have a democratic peace offensive. We are not to be on the defensive. We are to assume the initiative. And the right way to assume the initiative is to say, "Very well, we will talk with you anywhere and at any time." Let's have Summit meetings. Don't let's have them necessarily surrounded by brass bands and publicity - or even television. Let's have private conversations designed to arrive at thos preliminary, personal understandings which may lead to concrete results in a series of discussions thereafter. Now, that exhibits why I believe in this business. I do not think we have anything to lose - how could we? - but I think we have everything to gain, by making it quite clear that we are for peace and that we are prepared to talk anywhere and at any time in order to obtain it.

DISCUSSIONS WITH MR. MACMILLAN

QUESTION: You discussed many questions with Mr. Macmillan.

PRIME MINISTER: Yes. We had, of course, problems of the ordinary kind between the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth countries, including Australia. Then, of course, we had, in an overwhelming degree, the problems associated with a Summit Conference, of which Mr. Macmillan himself and his ministers were powerful advocates. We had no formal conference. It was one of those occasions when you could have informal discussions to a probably far greater degree than if a number of people were there; and so I saw a great deal of Mr. Macmillan, who is, of course, a very old friend of mine and who has the happiest recollections of his visit to Australia. With him, I had talks about our mutual relations to the European Common Market, a highly important but somewhat technical matter. We had discussions about other matters of common concern. But above all things, we were pursuing our discussions about the world position and particularly the European position, because it was in relation to Berlin that the Geneva conference was occurring.

We had a good deal to say about that, of course, not only on Berlin but on the whole question of world settlement; and on this, Mr. Macmillan has shown, as he showed when he went to Moscow without much warning, without much preliminary preparation, that he is all for arriving at peace by conference. We discussed that a great deal, and in point of fact, I went, at his invitation to a Cabinet meeting at No. 10, and there we discussed the same matter. I was given the courtesy of taking a hand in the talks; and therefore, when I subsequently went to Europe, I was rather well informed as to what the state of mind in London, at any rate, of the Government, was. All these things proved to me to be extraordinarily interesting. I felt, and I know from subsequent correspondence with Mr. Macmillan, that he felt that as two old friends and two people of responsibility - his, of course, much greater than mine - we had secured mutual advantage, and, I think, some comfort, from being able to talk to each other without the intervention of other people or other circumstances.

QUESTION: We've been inside No. 10 with you. This wasn't your first visit of course.

PRIME MINISTER: Not my first visit by any means. Oddly enough, - though I am, as you can see, quite a boy - I attended a meeting of Prime Ministers for the first time in 1935. I was not Prime Minister then, but I deputised for the late Mr. Lyons. Since then, I have sat in that historic room with, I think, every succeeding Prime Minister of Great Britain. Of course, the outstanding one is this marvellous man (Sir Winston Churchill). It is not saying anything derogatory about anybody else to say that he IS No. 10 Downing Street. He is the greatest memory that anybody could have. I sat there with him early in the war and, of course, later on after the war when he became Prime Minister once more. I was delighted this time - I may say, I never go to London without going down to see him, either at Chartwell or wherever he may be, and we have talks as old friends. And this time you may be interested to know that I found him quite remarkable. He is like you and me; he is ten years older than he was ten years ago. That is something that happens to all of us; and therefore he was not the old robustious leader that we became accustomed to. But his mind is clear. I went to a dinner at the Australian Club - seven hundred men at it - in London, and he sat between myself on the right and the American Ambassador on his left. And all I can tell you is that he was a great deal livelier than I was. He was in superb form. He discussed pseudo-political matters with me in a rather bright and witty fashion; and on the other side, I could hear him conducting a most learned discussion on racehorses with Ambassador Whitney. That is something that appeals to us all - versatility and vigor, prolonged so magnificently. I shall never forget him.

<u>BERLIN</u>.

We have all been saying of recent days that we hope that the balloon won't go up over Berlin. Personally, I don't think it will. Berlin's significance, of course, to us of what I will call the western world, is tremendous. If Berlin passed into the hands of East Germany, which is today a Soviet satellite country, then I think that the blow to the pride of Germany would be enormous; the blow to the whole western alliance in Europe would be tremendous. I believe that it would give rise to an attitude of arrogance and aggression from which anything could come. Therefore, Berlin has been at the centre of the discussions at Geneva. As you know, Berlin has become not only a city, but a symbol of a conflict which everybody wants to see resolved, but resolved on terms of justice to European nations.

Now, of course, I had discussions about these things in Bonn with Chancellor Adenauer. He is a very remarkable man. He is about 83, 84; so full of vigor that he is already talking about the next election. I think that is magnificent. I knew him pretty well. In 1956, I had visited Germany specially. I had some days with him and we became very friendly. He has a nice sense of humour, and like me, he likes having his own way, if he can, so we got on pretty well.

He has, of course, done a remarkable job. I know that people argue now and think that he is becoming old and difficult and all that kind of thing. The great recovery of Western Germany since the war is to be credited to Adenauer, more than to any other single human being. He has been a magnificent leader, full of courage and, I think, full of understanding of the European problem. He has got to very good terms with President De Gaulle. He himself feels that relations between the Germans and the French have been vastly improved.

He was extraordinarily good to me. He had a little trouble on his hands, because, you remember, he was going to become President and then decided to remain Chancellor. And under those circumstances, I thought I might be lucky to get an hour with him; but he gave me about five or six and nothing could have been more interesting than our discussions. He has reservations

about a Summit meeting, largely of the same kind as those entertained by President Eisenhower. He feels, and I am sure he is right, that it would not be good to see Europe indefinitely divided in an economic sense between the Common Market to which Germany belongs, and to the Little Free Trade Area led by the United Kingdom, and he looked forward to some reconciliation between these two bodies. But one thing I did notice about him, and it is worth a great deal of thought on the part of many people: He is firmly convinced, or he was when I saw him, that the British people, and presumably the British Government, is inveterately and bitterly hostile to Germany and to himself in particular.

He followed this line so much that first of all I tried to discover why he should have any distrust of Great Britain; why he should have this feeling that was so obvious. After an hour, it appeared that he felt that some appeasement might be in the air; that something might be done which would prejudice the re-unification of Germany. I tried to get at that. We elicited various things, not one of which I thought was crucial. But it turns out he believes that the British have this hostility which I have described. Well, I was so struck by this competely confirmed attitude of mind that I chided him a little and said, "You know, you are quite wrong. I think you must have been confining your reading to one or two newspapers of a critical kind." I rather think he had, but he certainly had this impression. I took the liberty of saying, "Look, firstly it is not in the tradition of the British people to maintain hatreds indefinitely. They never have and they never will. Secondly, I know something about opinion; certainly about top level opinion in Great Britain, and I tell you that there is warm admiration for what West Germany has done since the war - the enormous recovery - and a very great admiration for what you, Mr. Chancellor, have done by providing leadership in that process of events."

Well, I hope our discussions did some good. One never can tell. I certainly felt that I, myself, had been a good deal illuminated in my mind by discovering what was going on in all this process of discussion from the German point of view, and so I left very well informed, I think, on that matter, and I hope I was able subsequently to convey to Mr. Macmillan some of my impressions in a helpful way.

GENERAL DE GAULLE.

Well, that last picture you were looking at showed you the President himself - myself on one side and the Prime Minister of France on the other, walking out from the Elysee, the President's palace, into the back garden.

Of course, I was tremendously interested, because I had known him during the war in 1941 when he was not perhaps the easiest man in the world to negotiate with. He had what we might describe as a rather dour characteristic about him - immensely tall, rather dour; magnificently determined on the ultimate liberation of his country; a man who found no reason to suppose that you ought to have any jesting or lightness when you are in the middle of a great struggle. In that respect, of course, he was so unlike the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, who always had time for a jest and struck his blows no less heavily because of the jest.

So I was tremendously interested to see how De Gaulle had gone in the intervening years - years, do not forget, in which he was grievously frustrated. Here he was, the whole spirit of the delivery of France, of the Croix de Lorraine; and after France had been liberated, after government was restored, he had to live in his place in the country, seeing a new government every six months or every nine months - not a very happy state of

affairs for him. But now he is back. He is the all-powerful; he is the President, with width and depth of authority that no previous President of France has ever had. He has not just sat down and glorified himself with all this power. He has behaved with most tremendous energy. Just let me give you one example.

Two years ago in Lond, having discussions about the European Common Market, everybody said, with great truth, that Germany was the dominating factor and that France, so to speak, was the weak member, because France's economy was in a battered condition - galloping inflation going one, all sorts of currency problems, the usual inability to get in the taxes, a lack of adequate industrial development. And then came De Gaulle. With his wide prestige and with the most superbly able advice, the programme has been put into operation in France which has had the result of making France one of the king pins - if you can have more than one king pin - in the European Common Market. In Bonn, Chancellor Adenauer spoke to me all the time about the resurgence of France. I heard it in Lond. And for this, great credit must be given to the prestige, the patriotism and the authority of this very remarkable Frenchman.

THE NETHERLANDS.

QUESTION: There has been speculation that the new government of the Netherlands might mean a change in policy on West New Guinea - - -

PRIME MINISTER: There has undoubtedly been a great deal of speculation, because we did not know what would happen to the point of view of the Dutch Government after their elections. Prime Minister Drees, the previous Prime Minister, was a great believer in what I will call the Dutch policy on West New Guinea. His party, the Labor Party, was thought not to be quite so keen on it as he was and there was some speculation as to what would occur when he went out, because he made it clear that he would not be resuming. And therefore, I was tremendously interested to see the new Prime Minister, Mr. De Quay, who used to be a Professor of Psychology and who was then Queen's Commissioner in Brabant; and I was interested to find out from him and his colleagues whether there might be some change in their approach. The answer was quite clear and unhesitating: "No change. Our policy on this matter will be precisely the same as the policy of our predecessors."

Later on, when I left The Hague and flew to Zurich, I saw Mr. Luns, Foreign Minister of the Netherlands, and he confirmed the proposition that the policy was a continuing policy and that it need not be thought to be modified in any way. That means, of course, so far as Australia is concerned, we continue with our attitude and we continue with the little measures of administrative contact with the Dutch that we have been developing quite publicly over the last few years.

INDIA AND NEHRU.

I was very interested, of course, to see Mr. Nehru. We are very old friends. We are - believe it or not - the two senior Prime Ministers in the entire British Commonwealth, and we have sat almost side by side at conferences at No. 10 Downing Street for ten years, and therefore I am always pleased to see him and always pleased to get from him his point of view. His worries were enormous of course. There was this wretched business in Kerala about which he had subsequently taken some pretty strong action. And there had been the alleged rebellions and the most positively brutal massacres in Tibet, with a lot of refugees. That was a great problem.

Very interesting - if "interesting" is not too foolish a word - to think about this problem of refugees. Do you know

that we forget that after partition of the subcontinent of India, there were 18 million refugees who moved from one country to the other. Eighteen million - tremendous poverty, tremendous squalor in many places - there were marks of it all over India and Pakistan. Similarly, up in the north when the Tibet outbreak occurred, there were many Tibetans who came across, and there again is one aspect that one might not realise. He pointed out to me that to settle refugees who were accustomed to living in a high, cold country like Tibet was very difficult. You could not put them down into a hot country and expect them to endure. And therefore, settlement has to be in the more mountainous areas of India; and it is upon the mountainous areas, along what is called the McMahon line, that constant discussion has occurred between the Chinese Communists and Mr. Nehru's government. So this is not all fun and games, not all milk and honey. There are great points of difference, and Mr. Nehru was, as always, able to discuss them with great realism and with great clarity. He was able to tell me some very interesting things about development in Communist China and I certainly came away with the impression that it would be very foolish - and this is an impression I had had a long time - for anyone to imagine that Mr. Nehru is an apologist for the Chinese administration. He merely takes what he believes to be a realistic view of the matter.

One other thing I will mention, and no more. In both India and Pakistan, there was enormous pleasure at the prospect of settling the Indus Waters problem. I think it will be settled. We are all providing some money towards settling it and if it is settled then, I believe, one of the greatest causes of difference between India and Pakistan will have disappeared and if that happens, we will all be delighted.

SINGAPORE.

I was looking forward to seeing Dr. Lee (leader of the new Singapore Government) and to seeing his ministers. I regard elections in a country like Singapore as a great triumph for modern British policy. All these places that were once simple complete colonies are moving towards their independence, and when, as in the case of Singapore, a popular election occurs and a ministry is produced as a result, it deserves not our hostility or our fear, but our sympathy and understanding. It is the choice of its country. I had, of course, heard all sorts of extravagant rumours about the Lee administration being a sort of Communist or fellow-traveller administration. I don't believe it. I entirely accept Dr. Lee's repeated statements that he is not either a Communist or a Communist sympathiser, but that on the contrary he regards it as a very important duty to keep his country out of the Communist orbit. He is a Socialist...yes...but there are many Socialists in the British countries - in the world. We have them in our own country. I am not a Socialist. I would not, perhaps, have voted for him. I do not know. But he is there and I formed a very warm opinion of him.

You must not think of people like that as if they were backward in some fashion. Dear me, Dr. Lee himself is a double first at Cambridge. He is a man of scholarship. He has a young and enthusiastic team. Thirty-seven-and-a-half is the average age of the Singapore Government.

A big population on a small island - a population that is increasing by 60,000 a year, with an additional 25,000 a year additional people seeking employment - and all that on an island in which agricultural development is out of the question and the future depends on industrial development.

It is not the kind of problem that any one of us would be in a hurry to undertake. The Singapore Government, quite plainly, has considerable hope, if not expectation - do not think expectation at the moment - but considerable hope of joining up

with the Federation of Malaya, because they feel that under those circumstances, movement of population and perhaps the use of resources might be considerably increased. Anyhow, that is their problem; but I just say for myself and for my own people, that we want them to succeed; we want them to remain a community within the British Commonwealth; and therefore they are entitled to our sympathetic understanding - not our patronage; they won't like that, but to our sympathetic understanding in everything they do.

QUESTION: To sum up, can you say what are the world danger spots and what are the hopes for peace?

PRIME MINISTER: I suppose I could answer that question in a rather abrupt way perhaps, because first of all, Berlin: Will there be a settlement about Berlin? Will it become necessary to have either violence or the threat of violence in Berlin? I am hoping not, but so far very little progress has been made. There is Berlin. That means Germany and the whole future of Europe.

There is the Middle East. It is out of the news a little at the time, but we must never forget that the seeds of trouble are always there - great conflicts in the Middle East, sometimes concealed; and where there are conflicts, the Communists usually have some faculty for securing some kind of profit.

Next there is the trouble spot at the moment in Laos. Now Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam, Thailand - all extremely vulnerable. If the Vietminh of the north of the old French Indo-China became aggressive, and in particular, if they have the backing of Communist China - I do not want to exaggerate the dangers there, but they are genuinely there, and we will all hope that something will be done through the United Nations or in co-operation with it to restrain the fervour of some of the actions, the revolutionary actions, now occurring in Laos.

And then, of course, for months now disappeared out of sight, there is the problem of Formosa, the Matsus, Quemoy, the off-shor islands of China - all those problems which seem to blow up about once a year with threats, and then subside a little. But the fact that they subside does not mean that they have disappeared.

It was a very great privilege for me, and a great opportunity for me, in the presence of so many points of difficulty, to be able to have so many interesting and fruitful discussions of which I have been able to give you only a hint, with so many of the world's leading and most responsible men.

I think I ought to say that I am very greateful to you for listening to me, as presumably you have, as patiently as you have, if in fact you have been patient. But thank you very much.

With the compliments of -
HUGH DASH,
PRESS SECRETARY TO THE PRIME MINISTER,
CANBERRA, A.C.T.