

**SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA, MR. R.G. MENZIES
AT A LUNCHEON IN HIS HONOUR AT LEEDS TOWN HALL - MAR 23 1961**

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Your Royal Highness, My Lord Mayor, ladies and gentlemen. It has been well said by a very notable authority that good wine needs no bush and a good play no epilogue. And therefore I, perhaps, should sit down at once, because you have heard a good play - sometimes right and sometimes wrong, always engaging. I have had two speeches made about me today, and I must confess I wouldn't have known myself. This generosity is, I would think, something phenomenal; because it is true, I have been here before. It's true that in 1948 I came up here to see Australia play England at Headingley. It's true that on that occasion my eye was filled for the first time with the black beauty of this City Hall; and that when I came back yesterday afternoon I said 'Do, please - I hope that we are going that way; I want to see whether it is still black'. And it is. Still, having a philosophic mind, after a lot of experience, I dare say that some practical man said: 'Well after all, it does help to keep it together. You never know what will happen when you wash something down'. But I was here on that occasion and I thoroughly enjoyed myself. Lovely ground, Headingley. I remember the match - it was a magnificent match - we won! Most unexpectedly. The then Lord Mayor of Leeds was sitting next to me on the final day, and looked at me with shocked disbelief - we having to make 400 odd to win on the final day - but I said to him: 'You know, Australia will win today'. And he looked at me for the next half hour as if, in the local speech, I was 'daff'. But I wasn't - we won. It's just as well to remember that, because we don't always. And what will happen this year, I don't know, since we have been given a pretty severe shock in Australia this year by the West Indian players.

Now on one occasion, a few years ago, I was made a Freeman of the City of London with all the ceremonies which attend such an event. And like every man who is properly constituted, I was hoping - having been driven along the Strand in an open coach, with my wife, so that the coach was heavily down on the port quarter, as you can understand; and having gone up Ludgate Hill to the Guildhall - I was hoping there would be no hitch. When somebody (it may have been the Sheriff), said in a loud clear voice at the appropriate time: 'Who presents this man?' 'Oh dear' I thought, 'I haven't arranged this. Perhaps this is where it all ends'. And up got the Master of the Clothworkers and said 'We do. We present Robert Gordon Menzies, citizen and clothworker'. Oh, what a wonderful thing! I who couldn't darn a sock! I who couldn't sew a button on! I, who would go shabbily into a corner if I didn't have a careful wife - elevated to the rank of clothworker! But I recovered from that, as I did in 1941 when they made me a clothworker; because it is a splendid appropriate thing that there should be one more of these links between my country and your greatest industry and your country. And we need all those things. This is a period of the world's history in which it becomes fashionable to be hostile. Even in the last ten days I've experienced that. It becomes fashionable to examine what other people are doing, to rebuke them, and criticise them and censure them. We have lived in a decade - two decades - of hostilities, of the promotion of hostilities, always taking our friendships for granted; and we can't take them for granted.

I've seen, quite recently, one or two old friendships broken. That won't do. We will remain your friends, you will remain ours; we will maintain our sense of common pride, common interests and common fate, only if we positively maintain these friendships - refresh them from time to time; keep on reviving our knowledge of each other; keep on reviving our contacts with each other. It may be the mere reflection of a man who has lived a long, long time in public affairs, but I believe, still, that the greatest moral hope, the greatest inspirational hope (if I may use that word) of the world remains that we of the British family contribute to it. And if we grow tired of it, if we grow tired of fame, of authority and the responsibility that they carry with them; if we withdraw into ourselves; if we say: 'Well, is it worth it?' we will be depriving the world of something, without which the world has a very fair chance of dissolving into pain.

And so even when a person so unimportant as a representative of my own small country arrives, I'm very glad to be received here; very glad to have the opportunity of talking to people who have some material interest, but much more importantly, some interest of the spirit and of the mind, which they share with us. It is a delight to be able to refresh ourselves in this way. I hope that Leeds goes on and prospers. I hope that as the years go by we shall all go on and grow in strength. However strong we grow, we cannot hope, at this stage, to be as strong in material terms as one or two other countries or great groups of countries. That doesn't matter. What we have to be strong in, is in will, in courage, in contributing to the world in the pursuit of quality, in the pursuit of excellence, in whatever we do. And let us all say, with modesty, if we can't do it, who can? There's a bit of pride in all these things. (Pardon me having to say that to a Yorkshire audience). And yet, of course, with all the pride we are not to become pompous; we are not to lose our sense of fun. I once wrote - so I am not inventing it for your purpose - I once wrote about the importance of humor and, in particular, of what I had ventured to call the "Yorkshire humor". Not the superficial, flippant verbal dexterities that one sees elsewhere, but that deep chuckle at life that comes from right down in the stomach. This is what I like because it is endearing - this rich sense of fun, this marvellous capacity for hostility! And when the hostility is over, an equally marvellous capacity for affection and friendship. These are the things we have to keep, you have to keep - you're among the greatest trustees of them in these islands. And so long as I live I hope to strike a small blow for them occasionally, in my own fashion in my own country.