

MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION TO GO OVERSEAS

Statement by the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. R.G. Menzies

The Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies, announced today that the Minister for Immigration, Mr. Downer, would leave on Tuesday, 22nd May, for a quick visit to Britain and Europe.

Mr. Downer would study the problems of migration at first hand and discuss future prospects and arrangements in a number of countries with which Australia has migration agreements, now due for revision.

En route, Mr. Downer would visit Washington briefly to discuss general migration problems with United States authorities preparatory to visiting the Geneva headquarters of the Inter-Governmental Committee for European Migration and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

His itinerary would include London, The Hague, Paris, Cologne, Rome and Madrid. In Madrid, Mr. Downer would discuss the operations of Australia's first migration mission in Spain and investigate the likelihood of attracting a stream of suitable Spanish migrants to this country in the coming years.

"Since Mr. Downer's last visit three years ago, there have been considerable changes in the countries from which most of our migrants come", Mr. Menzies said.

"These changes, which include the return of prosperity to Europe and the development of the Common Market aims, are altering the character of Australian immigration and demand immediate attention in formulating our future plans.

"For, whatever the changes overseas, Australia must continue to maintain a steady flow of migrants at a satisfactory level" Mr. Menzies said.

Mr. Downer would leave Sydney by Qantas at 7 p.m. on Tuesday. The Minister for Air, Mr. Bury, would act as Minister for Immigration during Mr. Downer's absence.

CANBERRA, 17th May, 1962.