

RECEPTION AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA, IN HONOUR
OF HER MAJESTY, THE QUEEN, ON 18TH FEBRUARY,
1963

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

Your Majesty, Your Royal Highness :

It's my very great privilege as Prime Minister - your Prime Minister, Ma'am - of Australia to offer you and His Royal Highness a very, very warm welcome once more to this country.

I know that we had a little arrangement that speeches should be reduced to the minimum, a matter of which I think I might safely say Your Majesty warmly approved, but you can't expect, really, in this place of Parliament which is the house of speeches, and with myself and then the Deputy Prime Minister and then the Leader of your Opposition in this country, to let the occasion pass without saying something. But I assure you, Ma'am, we will reduce it to a minimum.

The first thing that I want to say is to remind everybody of something you said when you were here last, when you referred to the fact that in the constitutional structure of Australia - Parliamentary, executive, judicial - you are there. You are, indeed, the Head of this House. "Be it enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty" - and, therefore Ma'am, you are among your friends, and in one sense, among your colleagues.

We, of course, are also delighted to see His Royal Highness, Prince Philip, who has been here a few times - not enough - but a few times and who has a standing among us which I don't need to describe because he has been conscious of it so many times.

Ma'am, there are a lot of interesting people in the world who like to discuss the Monarchy. There are clever people in the world - at least so I understand - who have discovered that all sorts of things ought to be done to the Monarchy to democratize the Monarchy, to do something to it, to do something to what we all are proud to say is the most democratic Monarchy in the whole wide world. (Applause) We pay no attention to that; when we see you, we see you as our Queen, we see you as our Sovereign Lady, we see you as the successor of monarchs who, in this very century, have by their own conduct and their own standards and their own genius, helped to preserve our Monarchy in a world in which crowns have been tumbling and disasters have beset mankind. And we are proud to think that so far from abrogating any of our liberty because we are your subjects, we know that we add to our liberty because we are your subjects as are scores and scores of millions of people around the world, and out of all our joint allegiance to you comes an addition to our freedom, not a subtraction from it.

Your Majesty, it is a proud thought for us to have you here, to remind ourselves that in this great structure of Government which has evolved and of which this Parliament is one of the fruits, you - if I may use the expression - are the living and lovely centre of our enduring allegiance. (Applause)

Ma'am, I say one thing more and one thing only. You today begin your journey around Australia. It is a journey you have made before. You will be seen in the next few weeks by

hundreds and thousands and, I hope, by millions of your Australian subjects. Mothers will hold their children up to look at you as you go by, and they themselves, and their husbands will have a look at you as you go by. This must be to you now something that is almost a task. All I ask you to remember, in this country of yours, is that every man, woman and child who even sees you with a passing glimpse as you go by, will remember it - remember it with joy, remember it in the words of the old seventeenth-century poet who wrote those famous words -

"I did but see her passing by
And yet I love her till I die"
