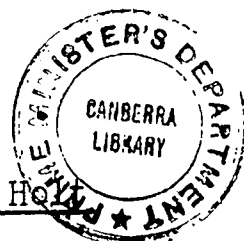


PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO U.S. AND U.K.

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Press Conference given by the Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Holt  
on arrival at Dulles Airport, Washington.

28th June, 1966.

MR. HOLT: I am glad to be in Washington, looking forward very much to my first meeting with President Johnson. I believe that he and I have this in common, that we prefer talking to people to talking to paper. And, although we have been in communication from the outset of my own Prime Ministership, I have been looking forward, and I gather that he has been looking forward, to making personal contact.

The visit, I think, is timely in that quite recently I have been in South Viet Nam myself and I have come from the formal opening of the SEATO Conference where I have been able to talk to the Foreign Ministers of the countries directly involved in the area.

And so, having talked with his own Secretary of State, I shall be able to pass on to the President the views of other Foreign Ministers from South East Asia.

We, of Australia, have very good cause to be appreciative of what America has done in that part of the world. We recall with gratitude the American action which saved our own country from invasion at the time of the second world war. And we have so many interests in common which have brought us together again as comrades in arms in Viet Nam. We believe that thanks to American resolution, communist aggression will be successfully resisted there. And it is from the more hopeful reports that have been brought to us by the delegates to the SEATO Conference and from the evidence we can give of the valuable gains made in other parts of South East Asia that I shall be able to strike a brighter note for the President than some of the reports I have been reading lately. (Applause).

Q. Mr. Prime Minister what is the most significant thing you expect to come out of the SEATO Conference?

MR. HOLT: Well, this brings together in the SEATO Conference not only the countries of the area but the major powers which have brought strength and given a basis of aid and security to those countries that are situated in the area. And coming out of the present conference will be, I think, a deeper understanding of each other's viewpoints. They will be able to point not only to the gains which have been made over the last year, but some of the emerging problems, particularly the increasing pressure from communism in Thailand, the developments which will arise out of the abatement of confrontation by Indonesia. There will be plenty for them to talk about, but by their combination they are able to act with strength and in each country there is recognition now that victory is not to be gained by military means alone, that we must combine also on constructive

positive measures of economic co-operation if we are to persuade the peoples of the area that there is a better world order for them and that liberty can have a significance which they have never known before.

Q. Who else do you expect to see while you are here?

MR. HOLT: In the United States I expect to see in addition to the President, Mr. McNamara, Mr. George Ball, Mr. Averell Harriman and to have some talk with my old friends from my days as the Finance Minister, Mr. Connor and Mr. Fowler. So it will be quite a comprehensive cover in Washington itself. I go then to New York where I am meeting another old friend in David Rockefeller., talking to the Australian-American Association on the day after your July fourth celebration. And Mayor Lindsay has been kind enough to extend me a dinner on Tuesday night before I take off for London.

In London I shall be talking with the Prime Minister, with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the Minister for Commonwealth Relations and other senior members of the British Administration.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister you spoke of the brightening picture in that part of Asia. Do you think the prospects for peace have improved, and, if so, in what direction?

MR. HOLT: Well, I think you have to direct that question to Hanoi rather than to the government I represent. We have welcomed the United States initiative in pursuing every conceivable avenue for a peace negotiation. So far every such attempt has been rebuffed from Hanoi. And this is true not only of efforts made by the United States but by other representatives of countries that, too, are seeking a peaceful end to the struggle there.

The good-will towards negotiations is present with us all. But in order to negotiate there must be two parties to the discussion. And so far Hanoi has turned a deaf ear to every effort made in this direction.

MR. EGGLETON: Thank you gentlemen. I think that is about all we have time for today.

Q. I would like to ask..this brightening picture, does it also include the political situation in South Viet Nam?

MR. HOLT: I understand that it does. We had a talk with the Foreign Minister of South Viet Nam who feels that there has been a significant strengthening of the governments position with the people. And he spoke optimistically himself, not merely of the military progress, but of the political stability which could be anticipated in the months ahead. I merely give you his judgment on that matter but it was the judgment of a very responsible-minded man whose faithful account of events in his own country I have learned to respect.

well, thank you all.

The Press - Thank you, sir.