

KOREA

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER, MR. HAROLD HOLT
ON DEPARTURE FROM SEOUL

9TH APRIL, 1967

As I make my departure from Korea, I would like to sum up in these few final words, some of the impressions that Mrs. Holt and I and the other members of my party will take away with us at the end of this most memorable visit.

First of all, Mr. Prime Minister, I heartily endorse your description of this visit as an important milestone in the history of the relationship between our two countries. It has provided us with a clear indication of the progress we have made in cementing that comradeship that we established in the days of your greatest peril seventeen years ago.

One indelible impression that we shall take away is that of the tremendous warmth of your welcome to us and of the great kindness that you and all your people have extended to us since our arrival here. We have always understood that the Koreans were a warm-hearted people who did not hesitate to display openly their liking and respect for friends, and it has been a stirring experience to us to have this understanding so strikingly confirmed.

We have also been deeply impressed by all the evidence we have seen of the splendid progress you have made in the reconstruction and modernisation of your country, particularly in the past two years. This was graphically demonstrated to me yesterday at Ulsan, where I was invited to inspect some of your flourishing new industries. I am quite sure there is a genuine and a justified pride in these achievements, and I can sense that they have created a new feeling of self-confidence and self-reliance throughout your country.

I have also had an opportunity to admire the disciplined efficiency and toughness of your armed forces. It is not difficult to see how they have earned their considerable reputation as fighting men: I know that they enjoy the respect of our Australian forces, who are now serving with them in the resistance of communist terrorism and aggression in Vietnam.

Finally, Mr. Prime Minister, let me say I have drawn great encouragement from the several frank discussions that I have had in these three days with your President and with you and your Ministers. I shall go away reassured by the close similarity of our views on the issues that bear upon the future peace and prosperity of the Asian and Pacific region, and by the conviction that both of us, Korea and Australia, are working towards the same ends.

I would ask you to convey to His Excellency, President Park, the good wishes of all Australians and my compliments for all that has been achieved in Korea under his inspired leadership.

To you, Mr. Prime Minister, and to Mrs. Chung, I express once again the grateful thanks of Mrs. Holt and myself and my party for all your many kindnesses to us. This has been a wonderful experience. Goodbye to you all, and may our friendship continue to prosper.
