



LUNCHEON IN HONOUR OF THE PRIME MINISTER
OF NEW ZEALAND, THE RT. HON. KEITH HOLYOAKE,
AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA

3RD OCTOBER, 1967

Speech by the Prime Minister, Mr Harold Holt

Prime Minister, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen :

We have become accustomed in Australia to an invasion at this time of year from New Zealand to the detriment of our overseas balances, and I understand that yesterday's sporting event in Sydney saw this fulfilled in the order of 1, 2, 3. I don't quite know what the cost will be to Australia from the visit here - the very opportune, timely and happy visit of the Prime Minister, but at least this is something we brought upon our own heads because he is here by invitation of the Commonwealth Government and we welcome him very warmly indeed.

He has brought with him his Minister for Defence, Mr Thomson, Mr Laking, the Head of his Department of External Affairs and General Thornton, and we welcome all of these to the discussions which have already commenced with them.

By a happy coincidence we have with us today a group of distinguished members of the Lok Sabha, the Parliament of India, and to you, Mr Speaker Sanjiva Reddy and your colleagues of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, you are amongst your fellow CPA members and it has added to the felicity of this occasion to have you here with us. And I am sure you welcome this opportunity of seeing the Prime Minister of New Zealand in person.

Keith Holyoake has been with us before, but he wears a couple of hats, and he came on earlier occasions as Foreign Minister. This is the first time, in my recollection of him that he has made an official visit as Prime Minister of New Zealand, and indeed, I think this is about the second visit of an official kind by a Prime Minister of New Zealand in our history. Mr Holland was here at one point of time -- it may be this is the second time subject to Mr Holland.

Keith Holyoake has been Prime Minister of New Zealand since December, 1960. When I was over there earlier this year - and this was the first official visit by an Australian Prime Minister for just on twelve years - he and I were described as the Anzac twins. Now you will be able to judge for yourselves how far he has got to carry that particular label. There are quite a few people in Australia who would feel there is an injustice being done to you, Keith. I don't know whether it is because you and I both smile too often. I am often accused of doing that. Certainly we have both been in the Parliament of our country for the same period of time. You got away to an earlier start in 1932 but you hit one hurdle which kept you out for three years, and this has enabled me to match you in length of service in the Parliament -- our **thirtysecond year** in the National Parliament of our country.

We were both Deputy Leaders of our parties for eight years and that is a very chastening apprenticeship, I can assure you. You have come through that to lead your Government since 1960, some six years before I came to office, and there are one or two people in this room who anticipate

that I won't be able to match your longevity in that particular role.

In point of fact, you have now become, subject to the length of service as head of his government of President Ayub Khan, the doyen amongst the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth. This again is a rather sobering thought. Our occupational hazards don't apparently lead us to a long tenure and you are to be congratulated on being as long as you have in your particular office.

Again there is a point of kinship in that you were returned at the general election you held on the same day last year as we held ours in Australia so that we can claim these points of similarity, but I believe our thinking goes more closely in line than that. And I have been very glad in my own discussions with you always to find an identify of view from you as the Head of your Government with that held by the Head of the Australian Government on many of the problems with which we have to deal together.

With so many things in common, and with so many common interests, it is natural that we should communicate frequently, and now on this occasion, consult directly with each other to the advantage, I hope, of our two countries.

Australia and New Zealand have a common cultural and historical heritage. We have a common language, a common belief in democratic tradition, in the rule of law. We differ to a degree as to the form of our Parliamentary institutions - you have the misfortune to be without the benefit of guidance from an Upper Chamber, but we have a common interest in our two countries in the peace, stability and economic progress in this area of the world.

I said a little earlier that this was your first official visit in your capacity as Prime Minister, and unfortunately in a sense it is a very brief visit and a working visit in which much has to be concentrated here in Canberra in the time we have available to us. And I do hope that you will - and please accept this as a formal invitation from me on behalf of the Government and people of Australia - I do hope you will take an opportunity to spend a longer time with us on an official visit in which you can get beyond the National Capital itself and see something of the fascination and interest of the three million square miles of territory that we can open up for you.

Your country and ours have been close together through many of the crises of our times. We fought together in two World Wars to resist aggression and to preserve the freedom of small countries, and established together what we both proudly acclaim as the ANZAC tradition. We are both active members of the United Nations, and despite the smallness of your population, you have achieved there an influence and a significance out of all proportion to your numbers. You were recently a member of the Security Council. You have had one of your countrymen a President of the Assembly of the United Nations.

We are both active inside the Commonwealth of Nations, and in this area of the world, by geography we are faced together with similar problems and a similar outlook. We are Pacific by geography but we are also Pacific by national intent, and we share a common desire for stability and progress in the countries of Asia and the Pacific. We share a significant treaty relationship with the United States through ANZUS and with our allies in the South East Asia Treaty Organisation. We participate in

efforts for wider regional endeavours through such institutions as ASPAC, the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, the Asian Development Bank, and in our work together in the Colombo Plan. And we stand together with our allies in Vietnam.

The Prime Minister's visit reflects our desire for continuing friendly consultation in all matters of common concern. A visit by the Head of Government of his country would be an event of significance at any time, certainly it is most welcome and timely now, because our main purpose is to discuss together our shared defence policies in relation to South-East Asia and the implication for both our countries of the changes in the British defence posture as outlined in the British White Paper. We have forces working together in Vietnam and we contribute together to the Commonwealth Strategic Reserve in Malaysia and Singapore.

We have been reviewing our situation there. We are not attempting to reach final decisions at this point, but the talks with you and your Defence Minister and members of your official party are part of continuing close consultations which we have with you and with other mutually interested governments over foreign policy and defence matters. Australia is neither at the commencement nor the conclusion of that process. In some respects there is time ahead of us, but planning is important now and we need to know what is going on in the mind of each other.

Already we have found our exchanges last night and earlier today, and those to be continued through the day, of value to our own thinking as we hope they will be to yours. There will be naturally other matters on which you will wish to consult with us, and I know you have had talks with my colleague, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, and this visit is, I hope, not just a rare event to be thought back on as something which happened in the history of our two countries. I hope it will be the beginning of a much more frequent process of consultation which I was able to touch off myself in January, and which I hope you, with your own further visits and those of your Ministerial colleagues here will be able to promote as time goes on.

I think I did mention to you in New Zealand that we had adopted a rather enlightened policy of enabling Members of this Parliament to travel at public expense to your country as they saw the necessity, so that we should get to know each other better. We are working together on our Anzac Scholarships which I hope will also lead to a warmer and deeper understanding of each other's problems. In these ways we hope to manifest our conviction that so far ahead as our destiny lies, we see Australia and New Zealand going closely hand in hand together.

I am now going to ask the Leader of the Opposition to support me before I invite all present to join me in drinking your very good health.
