

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE RT.
HON. R.G. MENZIES, C.H., Q.C., M.P. RE-
CORDED FOR THE CELEBRATION PARTY TO MARK
FIRST TEN YEARS OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
HELD IN SYDNEY, THURSDAY, 10TH DECEMBER,
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I am very proud that you should have drunk my health (in my absence from Australia) and given me so much credit, undeserved though it may be, for the events of the last 10 years. On the other hand, I am very sorry that I should not be with you on so happy an occasion. My wife, who has done so much, has the same emotions.

As you know, our relationships with South-East Asia are of tremendous importance to us. It would be a misfortune if we were always to consider them in military terms. I therefore accepted invitations to go to Indonesia and to Malaya for a brief visit of goodwill and of understanding. It is of the greatest importance that in our dealings with our Asian neighbours we should emphasise our points of unity and not dwell too heavily upon our possible points of difference. Thus, it is that one of the main things to say to the Indonesians is that, apart from our difference of opinion about West New Guinea, we both have all the reasons in the world for getting to understand each other and establishing positive friendship.

In the case of Malaya, we already have considerable historical and current reasons for being friends. Australian capital and skill were many years ago invested in Malaya, particularly in tin and in rubber. Through the former Governor-General of Australia, Sir William McKell, we played an active and constructive part in the devising of the Malayan constitution after the achievement of Malayan self-government.

The Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, recently visited Australia and was, I am sure, delighted at his reception and at the instinctive friendliness of our people.

As part of the British Commonwealth reserve of forces, we have been and are represented, in all arms, with the willing co-operation of the Malayan people.

To return to Indonesia, it is, of course, well-known that we recognise Dutch sovereignty in West New Guinea and that on this matter we have, so to speak, agreed to disagree with the Indonesian administration.

As we are in no sense anxious to promote hostility, we have, in the first place, strongly supported the reference of the Indonesian territorial claim to the Permanent Court of International Justice. The Government of Indonesia has, for its own reasons, not thought this to be a suitable tribunal. We have made it clear that, as we recognise Dutch sovereignty, so equally, do we recognise the right of the Dutch to conduct negotiations with Indonesia so long as those negotiations are not conducted under either threat or duress. On this matter you will recall, as I do, that the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Dr. Subandrio, on his recent visit to Australia entered upon a joint declaration to the effect that Indonesia did not intend to solve those differences of opinion by force of arms. This, you will agree, is a civilised attitude and, as your government, we will do our best to preserve it.

It seems to me that the truth is that the great problems before the new nation of Indonesia are those of civil administration and economic development. We will do all in our power to help to solve these problems.

Indeed, it may be said about both of these neighbouring countries - Indonesia and Malaya - that Australia has a genuine interest in seeing them develop as free, well-administered and self-governing communities, with rising standards of living and that pride in democracy which is the best assurance of resistance to Communism.

Looking back over these 10 years, we feel proud of the economic and social development of our own country. We have experienced unpopularity and popularity, but at all times we have tried to maintain a steady course; a course which in the result has, I believe, as you do, contributed powerfully to the greatest period of national development within living memory. But we have not confined ourselves to domestic and economic affairs. We have set about the task of building up these friendships and associations abroad which mean so much to our national security and our national future.

It may occasionally be forgotten that the Colombo Plan originated with Australian initiative; that we played an active and, I think, a determining part in the creation of the ANZUS Pact with the United States and New Zealand; and that we were one of the founders of the South-East Asian Treaty which has done so much to stabilise those freedom-loving countries in South and South-East Asia who are determined not to pass within Communist control.

In short, we have had a positive, constructive and fruitful foreign policy. Our association with Great Britain and the other nations of the British Commonwealth has never been stronger or more genuine. Our association with the United States of America has never been so happy or so helpful. Thus it is that I think we may say at the end of a decade of government that both at home and abroad we have served our country with integrity and with success. It is a good thing that we should be able to say this to ourselves at this time.

That I should say it to you is not an expression of personal self-satisfaction, because nobody knows half so well as I do how much the progress of events has depended upon the intense loyalty and co-operation which has been received from Ministers, Parliamentary Members and the many thousands of Party Members in the field of organisation whose names are perhaps not well known but without whose sacrificial work we could never hope to achieve success.

Ten years seems a long time looking forward. It seems an astonishingly short time looking back. But I see no reason to doubt that so long as we provide service to the Australian people, a sound character which inspires that service, and a patriotism which prefers the interests of the nation to the interests of the individual, we should be able to look forward to another decade of which we may be as proud as we are of the 10 years just ended.
