

TRANSCRIPT OF TELEVISION INTERVIEW GIVEN  
BY THE RT. HON. R. G. MENZIES ON W.I.M.  
CHANNEL 4, WOLLONGONG, ON 12TH JULY, 1962

Interviewer - Mr. Max Ambrose

QUESTION

: Mr. Prime Minister, I understand this afternoon you have had the opportunity of seeing some of the great industrial growth in the city of Wollongong. Would you be so kind, Sir, as to give us your impressions of how this ties in with your Government's policy of growth and prosperity?

MR. MENZIES

: Well, I've seen a little - not as much as I would have liked to have seen. I have, of course, been here before. But the development down here I think is phenomenal, not only in iron and steel and coal, and of course with the new development of the coal port, the export of coal, but also of course, your great primary industries down on this coast. It is phenomenal. And what I like about it is that at a time when great stability has been arrived at - no change in the consumer price index for eighteen months, a considerable degree of monetary stability in Australia - the production and export of coal and of iron and steel down here have risen almost fabulously. This demonstrates something that I am frequently saying - that stability is the condition of growth and not the enemy of growth. In other words: that stability is not stagnation but it is the condition on which true growth depends, and here you have in one district, with its multiplicity of activities, the most perfect example of this that I could think of.

Q.

Now, Sir, one facet of our area is the dairying industry further down South from Wollongong. This brings to mind the question of Britain's proposed entry into the European Common Market. Would you care to say something on this subject, Sir?

A.

Well, yes. Quite briefly, because I don't need to tell you it would take an hour to explain the various aspects of the Common Market. But I don't think people need to be over-excited about this matter. The dairying industry is a very important one in Australia and no Government would dream of allowing it to be fatally affected by anything and we, are of course battling hard to get, through the United Kingdom Government, conditions of their entry into the Common Market which will give some stability and prospect to the dairying industry. I don't despair of that. I think the Government of the United Kingdom is working hard on it - we certainly are working hard - it has occupied a great deal of our time. We are determined to put the best case that can be put and nobody knows yet whether the Six European countries will accept conditions that would enable Great Britain to go in without damaging the dairying industry in Australia or

the dairying industry in New Zealand which, of course, is tremendously important to that country. But I am not among the pessimists on this matter. I don't believe that Great Britain would go in on terms mostly unfavourable to us and I am perfectly certain that any Australian Government would be found ready to defend its own primary industries - mine certainly will be - and develop, as far as possible, other markets, in case we lose some market into Great Britain and Europe.

Q. Now, Sir, you've just mentioned other markets. The coal industry is one which affects us very greatly in the Wallangong and Illawarra area. Do you see any future prospects for coal export from this area, Sir?

A. I do, indeed - an enormous prospect. You know, I can look back to a time just before I came back into office in 1949, and for a year or two thereafter, when coal production here was so low that we were importing coal. It's hard to believe, but we were importing coal from South Africa and India, and paying very lush rates on it because there was a seller's market in the charter-party market and, today, we are exporting coal; not only producing all we want for our own purposes, but exporting. Down here, there is this great coal-handling apparatus that's being developed with the assistance of my own Government. Up in Newcastle, up in Gladstone in Queensland, we are really developing remarkable sources for export of coal to the Far East. And this, of course, not only means a great deal to the coalmining industry, but it means a considerable thing for our balance of payments. It varies our exports. I'm all for it. I see a great future for it.

Q. Well, now Sir, before the all-important Prime Minister's Conference in London in September, could you give us a brief outline of what your occupation will be in the next couple of weeks?

A. Well, I never appear to be without some occupation. You know, when I get back from a pretty strenuous series of discussions overseas - what, a fortnight ago - I found myself plunged into Cabinet Meetings and into the Loan Council and the Premiers' Conference and since then, I have been trying to catch up a few arrears of work and next Tuesday morning, the Cabinet meets to discuss the Budget, the great problem of the Budget for 1962/3 and I expect to be heavily immersed in that for at least three days thereafter. As a matter of fact, before then, because some of the papers are being sent to me in Sydney where I am going tonight and I will be doing a good deal of work on them. But you can say broadly that our great task in July is to prepare a Budget and, of course, everybody who doesn't have to prepare the Budget knows how to do it and only the people who have to do it are familiar with the facts. This is going to be a pretty difficult one. Anyhow, we'll do it. Then the Parliament meets on Tuesday, August 7th for the Budget Session and then at the end of August

by arrangement with the Opposition, the House will adjourn for a month and some of us will go off to the Prime Minister's Conference in September on the Common Market. We won't go just as if we were out of the eggshell, you know, because during August we will receive a great deal of information from Great Britain and from Europe about the leak of it, what conditions might be agreed upon, what tentative arrangements might be made, what is going to happen to dried fruit, canned fruit and butter and meat and wheat and sugar and so on and we will be getting this not necessarily in a final form, but in an interesting form. We will be able to discuss it and decide what attitude we are going to adopt on these matters when the Prime Ministers meet. Now, they meet on September 10th in London. I am perhaps recklessly assuming that I will be there. I don't know, because if there's one time in which a Government with a majority of one can be kicked out, it is in the Budget Session and therefore I may be a mere giddy optimist. I am talking about what I am going to do and what I am going to say. But, anyhow, other things being equal, with a little bit of luck as they said in the comic opera, I'll be there, and by that time, my Ministers, particularly Mr. McEwen, the Minister for Trade and Mr. Holt, the Treasurer, will have been able to discuss what goes on and what our attitude ought to be. So there will be no lack of occupation.

Q. Sir, will you find any time for recreation between these matters of Commonwealth?

A. Do you know that you are about to betray my guilty secret? For a long time, the Rugby League authorities in Sydney have been trying to get me to see a Rugby League match. I'm a Melbourne fellow - you know - Australian Rules; this was what I played when I was young and understand. And now, they've got me. I'm going to be present on Saturday afternoon at the Third Test Match and, of course, I'll be tremendously interested because, although I gather that Australia lost the first two Test Matches, I've been much pleased to discover down here that you've beaten the English team. Everybody has been talking about it. I read about it in the papers. I think it is magnificent. And if this has a stimulating effect, a galvanising effect, on the Australian team on Saturday, I'll see a jelly good match, even though I am bound to admit to you there are many aspects of it that I won't understand.

Q. Now, finally Sir, could we have a few words from you on the forthcoming Royal Tour next year?

A. Well, we are all looking forward to it. I discussed this first with the Queen a year ago - more than a year ago. I can assure you she's very, very keen on coming out and so is Prince Philip. One point to be remembered is that we can't expect each time the Queen comes to have a sort of geographical tour - you know what I mean - covering a large area of country in each State, with one town saying, "Well, she didn't come here last time, she ought to come here this time." The whole advantage that I am trying to get, and that the Queen would like, would be for her to visit State

by State, to attend some particular matter that is of importance; maybe in one State, some great event that would lend itself to Royal attendance, and in another, some other event. It is not to be thought that the Queen is just going on the big trek around each State because this really does become very tiring, and as I want to have quite a few Royal Visits, I would like them to be related to particular events so that we may have more, shorter visits. Do you see the point I am making?

Q. Yes, Sir.

A. And fewer long visits, and therefore our people will need to be very understanding about that. But I can assure you that the Queen is tremendously keen on this visit.

Q. So, Sir, we may assume that in the forthcoming Royal Tour the accent will be to a more marked degree on informality?

A. Oh yes. Particular events cut out a good deal of the formality, cut out a good deal of what I call the honorific business of receiving addresses and answering them. We are looking for a visit that will leave the Queen with agreeable memories of some vivid event or place or thing that she saw. This is the advantage. I would like to think that in two or three years' time, she would look back on the visit and say, "Oh, yes, I remember what I saw in such and such a State. It was splendid. I remember what happened." Instead of trying to remember a series of routine visits. I am sure you will understand that and I am sure that the people of Australia will understand. If we are going to become closer to our Queen, understand her better, as I think I do myself, then we must understand that she is a warm human being of great intelligence, fine memory, who likes to see things that she will remember and take away the memory of the people of her own allegiance whom she has seen in Australia and who have received her with approval and warmth.

Q. Sir, we thank you very much for your comments this evening and in parting may we trust that you enjoy yourself very much over the weekend in Sydney.

A. Thank you.

Q. Goodnight Sir.

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