

RETIREMENT OF SIR ERIC HARRISON
STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER

The Prime Minister (Sir Robert Menzies) today announced the retirement of the Right Honourable Sir Eric Harrison, K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., Australian High Commissioner in London.

"Sir Eric has represented Australia with distinction since he took up his appointment in 1956. Over this period, far reaching changes have been occurring within the Commonwealth and many matters of great importance have required the attention of our High Commissioner. We have been fortunate indeed to have in London a man of Sir Eric's qualities, experience, and personality, and he has made a particular contribution in fostering Australia's own intimate ties with Britain. He and Lady Harrison, who has made her own distinctive contribution, will be remembered too by many thousands of Australian visitors passing through Australia House over these years.

"On behalf of my colleagues and myself, I express our thanks to Sir Eric for the outstanding job he has done and I wish him and Lady Harrison a long and enjoyable retirement."

BACKGROUND

Sir Eric Harrison entered the House of Representatives in 1931 as member for the N.S.W. seat of Wentworth which he held until his appointment as High Commissioner in 1956. He held such ministerial posts as Minister for the Interior, Postmaster-General, Minister for Repatriation, Minister for Trade and Customs, Minister for Defence and Minister for Defence Production.

He was also Vice-President of the Executive Council and Leader of the House of Representatives. He served as Resident Minister in London in 1950-51 and was Minister-in-Charge of the first visit by The Queen in 1954. He was appointed a Privy Councillor in 1952 and a K.C.M.G. in the New Year's Honours List in 1961.

The Honourable A.R. Downer, whose appointment as successor to Sir Eric Harrison has already been announced, will assume office today.

CANBERRA
25th October, 1964.