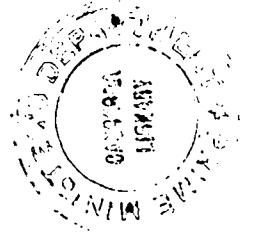


PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO U.S. AND U.K.



Exchange of remarks between President Johnson of the U.S. and Prime Minister Harold Holt of Australia at arrival ceremonies for the Prime Minister on the South Lawn of the White House.

29th June, 1966.

ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

Mr. Prime Minister and Mrs. Holt:

We greet you this morning as friend and partner. It is a very genuine pleasure to welcome you and Mrs. Holt, and the distinguished members of your party, to our country.

My personal ties to your country are as deep as a man's can be. During the war I found among you openhearted friendship when I was far from home. Now, once again, our two nations are fighting side by side in the defence of freedom.

The first thing that I read every morning are the battle reports from Viet Nam. I want you to know that I follow the exploits of 4,500 Australians fighting there with the same interest and concern as those of our own men. Mr. Prime Minister, I take great pride in their courage and their dedication. I derive great strength from the sacrifices they are making.

You in Australia know that in Viet Nam we are meeting a challenge which just must be met. It must be met because it is always dangerous to let aggression succeed. It must be met because our SEATO commitments require us to defend the people of South Viet Nam from external attack.

It must be met because the security of Australia and the United States of America is directly at stake in preserving the independence and the freedom of the nations of South East Asia.

We also know that behind the struggle against aggression in Viet Nam a vital, free Asia is rapidly emerging. Shielded by the courage of the Vietnamese and their allies, many Asian countries are driving forward with real success in their economic and social development.

We all know of the remarkable growth of Australia and Japan in recent years. But last year the growth rate in South Korea was 8 per cent., in Taiwan it was 7 per cent., in Malaysia it was 5½ per cent., in Thailand it was 6 per cent. Growth in Iran has been averaging better than 6 per cent a year.

Pakistan is rapidly recovering from the setback caused by the conflict last year.

Last week I received word from India which moved me greatly. The monsoons have begun. It looks as though the rainfall this year will be ample and the harvest will be good. With adequate rainfall, the courageous measures of the Indian government, and the support of the world community, I hope and I expect that India will surge forward in the year ahead.

Indonesia is turning the corner into the most promising phase of its postwar history.

Meanwhile, there is rising in Asia a new spirit of regional association and regional self-confidence. It was that spirit to which I responded and which I tried to encourage in the talk I gave in Baltimore in April, 1965.

Now the dream of an Asian development bank is a reality, binding up the peoples from Teheran to Seoul in a great common enterprise. Work goes forward to develop the Mekong Valley, despite the conflict close by.

I know that Australia has, for many years, assumed a major responsibility for the security and the development of its region, through the Colombo Plan, the Mekong Committee, SEATO, and bilateral contributions to developing regions of the area. Our own security is heightened because we are joined with you in ANZUS.

We feel a new sense of fellowship and common destiny emerging in Asia. We followed with great interest the recent meeting in Seoul of the Asian and Pacific Council, in which your government participated.

Nations that were long isolated from each other are now beginning to know each other and to find new common ground. Old antagonisms are giving way to a new awareness that there are great possibilities in working together, great challenges to be met and great jobs to be done.

Above all, Asia is proving once again that stability and power are not to be found in tyranny and aggressive wars against a neighbour.

Stability and power come from free men and free nations working together on behalf of the people. We both know that should we fail in Viet Nam these new possibilities in free Asia would be endangered or destroyed.

Mr. Prime Minister, as you come this morning to this house on your long-awaited visit, I wish to tell you and, through you, to tell your wonderful people, that we shall not fail. We shall persist. We shall succeed.

The good, brave people of South Viet Nam shall be given their chance to forge their own destiny in peace.

The free peoples of Asia shall be given their chance to shape the destiny of their own region.

These are your goals in Asia, Mr. Prime Minister, and they are also the goals of the United States of America.

Welcome.

Address by Mr. Holt:

Mr. President and Mrs. Johnson..

Thank you for your warm welcome, Mr. President. You have said warm and generous things about Australia and its people.

What a memorable morning for the Australian people and for an Australian Prime Minister. I thank you for the honour which, by this ceremonial, you have accorded to my country and you have accorded to me. What has been done will be appreciated deeply by my people as it is by myself as head of my government.

We meet, Mr. President, as heads of government while our two nations are again comrades in arms. This is at least the fourth time in this century that Americans and Australians have combined together with other friendly forces to resist aggression.

We fought alongside each other in two world wars, and then Australia was the first country, I believe, to announce itself beside you when America made the historic decision to bring its strength to the aid of South Korea.

I say historic decision advisedly, because I believe that to have been, Mr. President, one of the turning points in human history. I believe at that critical point of time was decided the issue of whether we handed Asia over to penetrating, aggressive communism, or whether we kept intact a large part of Asia as member countries of the company of free people throughout the world.

Australia was with you when you decided on the decision, critical also to you and to us, in South Viet Nam, another battleground against communist aggression.

You have spoken of the task force of Australians which is now assembled in Saigon. You will be aware, Mr. President, that in other parts of South East Asia Australia is making a military contribution, small by the standards of your own great country, but useful in the company in which we find ourselves there.

I know that this task force in South Viet Nam will acquit itself with distinction. The men that are serving there are men of quality. They are well trained. The first battalion was accorded the highest commendation by your own leaders and by the leaders of South Viet Nam. The task force which follows them will acquit themselves with no less courage and distinction.

The outcome of this struggle is critical for the hopes that you and we share for a better and more secure way of life for the free people of Asia.

You have spoken of the vital free Asia that is emerging. I can speak of this from some personal experience, because not merely do we have a view from down under which is perhaps a different perspective from that of others in different parts of the world, but it has been my own good fortune in recent times to have travelled over several of these countries of South East Asia.

What has occurred over recent years is a transformation. To go through Thailand, Malaysia, and even South Viet Nam, itself, and see the massive support being rendered there, see the security, the progress which has been found possible by these other countries where communism has successfully been held in check - to see these things is to give heartening encouragement to go on with the job of resisting aggression where we find it.

But it does not take a war to bring Americans and Australians close together. We like each other. Friendships form quickly between us. We have many mutually beneficial links.. our trade with each other., the investment that you make with us with your capital. We co-operate in many constructive international interests and causes.

You mentioned, Mr. President, your time in Australia 25 years ago. A new Australia has arisen since then. When can we see you there again? - And this time we hope with Mrs. Johnson, and perhaps the whole family.

You will be encouraged to see the National growth in which many American skills and resources have assisted.

Mr. President, we recognize all too clearly in my own country that on you, personally, falls the heavy and at times lonely responsibility of free world leadership, on your country these burdens have been assumed in comparatively recent times in terms of modern history. But America has shouldered those burdens firmly, and you have inspired and encouraged us all by the strength of your own resolution.

You know that in Australia you have an understanding friend. I am here, Sir, not asking for anything - an experience which I am sure you value at times when it is not so frequent as it might be.

You have in us not merely an understanding friend, but one staunch in the belief of the need for our presence with you in Viet Nam. We are not there because it is right to be there, and, like you, we shall stay there as long as seems necessary in order to achieve the purposes of the South Vietnamese government and the purposes that we join in formulating and progressing together.

And so, sir, in the lonelier and perhaps even more disheartening moments which come to any national leader, I hope there will be a corner of your mind and heart which takes cheer from the fact that you have an admiring friend, a staunch friend, that will be all the way with LBJ.
