

EMBARGOED



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NOVEMBER

"AUSTRALIA'S SECURITY"

Transcript of Election Telecast by the Prime Minister,  
Mr. Harold Holt

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Throughout this year there has been a great national debate in Australia about South Vietnam. This has been so widely discussed that most people now know where they stand.

The side issues have been eliminated. The great question of security that has emerged may be stated simply: Are we right in joining with our allies to stop aggression before it spills over into all South East Asia? Are we right in joining with our friends to stop aggression before it comes near to our shores? We think we are right - and we believe that the majority of Australians support us.

Let me put this to you simply: Our fighting in South Vietnam is buying time for a new and stronger Asia. This is not a commitment to war; it is a commitment to peace and freedom.

The whole world, with the exception it would seem, of Communist North Vietnam and Communist China, wants peace in Vietnam, as it wants peace everywhere. The olive branch has been extended time after time but has been rejected by Hanoi and Peking.

Why?

Communists in Vietnam and China do not want peaceful negotiations which could guarantee the right of the people of South Vietnam to choose their own way of life. They demand a surrender - a withdrawal by the friends and allies of South Vietnam so that South Vietnam may be taken over by Communism.

There are, of course, people in Australia who disagree with our policy and with America's policy. They have produced no practical alternative but their views seem to be, when reduced to hard, realistic terms, that we should make peace with the Communists by giving them what they want.

Peace is not a one-way traffic. We and our allies are ready and willing to talk peace when Peking and Hanoi are ready. But we are not willing to surrender to them.

There is too much at stake - for South Vietnam, for South East Asia, for Australia, for the whole Free World.

The Communists must learn that South Vietnam and the allies of South Vietnam will not lose heart, will not be worn down, but have the strength and staying power to defend the

right of every people to choose their own political institutions and their own social and economic order.

When that day arrives we shall be found amongst those helping our Asian neighbours to acquire the food, the wealth, the skills, the education - and the strength - they need.

This is the kind of involvement we want with the new Asia.

Most Australians understand by now that we can't separate our domestic affairs from our foreign affairs. We can't have prosperity and security at home unless we have security abroad.

So we have joined with others in paying a price for our freedoms.

We have accepted responsibilities and obligations.

We believe that unless there is security for all small nations there cannot be security for any small nation.

That is why we played our part in the making of the SEATO and ANZUS treaties.

That is why I have welcomed the fruitful talks I've had with Prime Minister Harold Wilson and his Defence Minister, Denis Healey, on security problems East of Suez.

That is why we believe strongly in our American alliance.

You have only to look at the map of this part of the world to see we have a vital interest in the effective presence and participation of the United States. There are unfortunately some people in Australia who would like to see our American alliance weakened. I wonder why.

Our international interests are directly involved in preserving South East Asia from aggression and from Communist domination. That is how three successive American Presidents have measured the situation. Surely that is how all people who believe in freedom and reject tyranny should see it.

What alternative is offered by our political opponents? They offer this country a retreat to isolationism and a walk-out on our friends. The Australian people will not accept that alternative.

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(This Telecast will be programmed by the A.B.C. Network at 7.30 p.m. 16th November, 1966)