

NEW ZEALAND TOUR 1967

LUNCHEON GIVEN BY MR. HOLYOAKE, PRIME MINISTER
OF NEW ZEALAND IN HONOUR OF MR. HOLT, PRIME
MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA

WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

3RD FEBRUARY, 1967

Text of Speech made by Mr. Hugh Watt (Deputy Leader of the Opposition)

The Right Hon. the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. Mr. Holt, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Could I first of all apologise for the absence of the Leader of the Opposition Mr. Kirk, who I understand could well be, Sir, in your country while you are over here. He would have loved to have joined you today at this function. But I do want to join with the Prime Minister in extending a very warm welcome - at least as warm a welcome as it is humanly possible to extend on such a day as this in Wellington, to welcome you to our shores - a very important occasion for us here in New Zealand. As the Prime Minister has stated, we are the same people: we have the same principles: we have the same ideals: we enjoy similar standards of living: and the more we visit one another's countries the richer we will be. There was a time when New Zealand depended a great deal on Australia: in fact, there was a time when we were governed from Australia - at least, from part of Australia: New South Wales. But we grew up, and we gained our independence, our own Government, but we are not completely independent of one another, neither would we wish to be. But it is strange how many people in the world still think that New Zealand is part of Australia. And you know, somehow, Sir, that does annoy Kiwis. When you are in New York or London and somebody says to you "Where are you from": "I'm from New Zealand": "Oh, that's an island off the coast of Australia, isn't it," And then of course we have to explain, we have to explain that we are not any longer governed by Australia, that we are not part of the Australian Constitution, but that we do depend a great deal on Australia, on our friendship and co-operation, one with the other. It is only natural that we will have a great deal in common. Incidentally, I was born in Australia, but I have never in my whole life taken any credit for that.

One of the problems facing both of our nations at this time is this problem of trade. Our growth and expansion has brought immense problems with it, and we are both concerned with expanding our trade with the rest of the world. In the past you have built your industry. Your industrial development has been nursed and encouraged by your Government's protection. It has made Australia a great industrial country. We admire your drive and expansion in the field of trade, and the standard of workmanship is a credit to your technicians. We are pleased to purchase the products of your industry, but at the same time we believe you could purchase more from us. The New Zealand-Australia Free Trade Agreement signed two years ago was designed to give freer trade between the two countries, but unfortunately there are some who believe that the reverse is indeed happening. I hope that the spirit behind the Free Trade Agreement is in fact given effect to, and that the figures that have been produced to show that New Zealand is indeed in a worse position today than she was when the agreement was signed are only a temporary indication of a reverse, and that before long Australia will be purchasing more of New Zealand's production. We need to trade with you: we want to purchase Australian goods: but we have a feeling that Australia could do more to assist New Zealand by purchasing her production.

I have stated that you concentrated on developing your industry. We in New Zealand have done likewise. We must continue to do so. We can learn a lesson from what you have achieved in your country. You gave protection to your industry. We must continue to protect ours, to maintain our standard of living, and as long as we can both understand the problems that each country faces, well, then, we can really achieve something. New Zealand has some advantages over Australia. In this field Australia has many advantages over New Zealand. One advantage we have that I am sure you would love to have is some of that cheap electric power that we can produce from the lakes and the rivers that you will have an opportunity of seeing. We in New Zealand are using that cheap power for the development of our industry, and we must continue to do so. You will not have the opportunity on this visit of seeing the foundation being laid for New Zealand's iron and steel industry in the North Island. I wish you had. I hope you will return to see it, and I hope you will realise that when you do, Sir, this great iron and steel industry will mean that we will be producing here in New Zealand much of the goods that we are now importing from Australia. We have to do it, because we have to be self-supporting where we possibly can. I read from your itinerary that you will be visiting the South Island. You will see there, especially at this time of the year, some of the best wheat growing country in the world - wheat growing country that can produce over twice as many bushels per acre as the wheatgrowing country of Australia. It is not so long ago that New Zealand exported wheat to Australia. Last year we imported 4 1/2 million bushels, but when you pay a visit to the South Island, Sir, you will see that this year there are 20,000 additional acres of wheat under production, and so we will only need to buy one million bushels of wheat from Australia possibly, and I hope we will see the day when we will not have to buy any wheat from Australia. Now, Sir, that does not mean that we do not want to trade with Australia, but we are following a pattern that you have shown us, that we, as you, have to develop our own country.

I do believe that there is a great future, as the Prime Minister has said, in the tourist industry, but I do believe, Sir, that we know you much better than you know us. Why, we know when Bobby Simpson wins the toss or goes out for a duck, or whether the great Australian Davis Cup is being played for, or whether the Wallabies have won their match in France or in Scotland. We know everything that you do, but when we go to Sydney or to Melbourne we can scarcely read a word of what is happening in New Zealand. I think a great deal more can be done to advertise our country in your country as you have done to advertise your country in ours. And so, Sir, I do say that I appreciate the opportunity of joining with the Prime Minister in this very warm welcome to you today. May you and Mrs. Holt have a most enjoyable few days in this country of ours, and may you leave it with an appreciation of the fact that it is worth coming back to and it is worth encouraging other Australians to do likewise. All the very best to you and a safe journey home.

Right Hon. Keith Holyoake -

Mrs . Stevenson and Gentlemen:

I give you the toast to the Guest of Honour, the Right Hon. Harold Holt.