

FOR PRESS :



PM. No. 1/1968

UNITED STATES AND BRITISH GOVERNMENT MISSIONS  
TO VISIT AUSTRALIA

Statement by the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. John McEwen

The Prime Minister, Mr McEwen, announced today that a high level mission from the United States would arrive in Canberra this week for talks with the Australian Government on the effects of the balance of payments programme outlined in President Johnson's message to the United States on 1 January, 1968.

Mr McEwen said the mission would be led by the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Mr Eugene V. Rostow. He would be accompanied by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, Mr Robert Barnett and other officials.

The Economic Committee of Cabinet would meet in Canberra on Thursday and would have talks with the visiting mission on Friday.

The mission would have talks in Tokyo before flying on to Canberra. While in Canberra, it would explain to members of the Cabinet the new US economic programme. Mr McEwen said that Cabinet Ministers would discuss with the mission the implications for Australia of the programme.

A second mission led by the Under-Secretary of State, Mr Nicholas Katzenbach, has gone to Europe for talks with the governments of the major trading countries there.

Mr McEwen said that the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee of the Cabinet was also preparing for talks in the following week with a mission from Britain led by the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs, Mr George Thomson.

Mr Thomson would be accompanied by the Permanent Under-Secretary of the Commonwealth Office, Sir Saville Garner, an Under-Secretary of the Commonwealth Office, Mr J.O. Morton, and an Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Defence, Mr F. Cooper.

This mission would visit Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Wellington and was due in Canberra on 11 January. Talks would be held in Canberra on the following day and the mission would leave for London on 13 January.

The mission would discuss with the Australian Government economic and defence aspects of the review which was being made by Britain of her spending at home and abroad following devaluation.

Mr McEwen said that advice was received only at the weekend from the two governments that the missions were coming.

---

CANBERRA,  
2nd January, 1968.