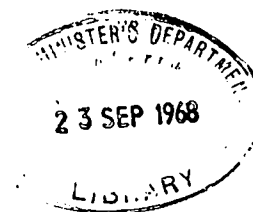


STATE VISIT BY PRESIDENT PARK OF KOREA

LUNCHEON AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE,

CANBERRA

17 SEPTEMBER 1968



Speech by the Prime Minister, Mr John Gorton

Mr President, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen :

This function in our National Parliament gives the opportunity to do you and your country honour. You represent a country with a history which goes back much further than ours, and you represent a country which, in the course of that history, has had to face much harsher tests than ours.

You have known foreign rule which we have not. You have suffered direct armed aggression on your own people and your own land which in any comparable way we have not, and you are still subject to the threat of aggression and indeed to the infiltration of armed commandos with missions to kill those significant in your country including, Sir, yourself.

In recent history, you gained self-government in 1945 , after some thirty-six years of foreign domination which you could not, by force of arms, resist or overthrow, but which you never at any time accepted in your hearts and minds, which you consistently rejected and which ultimately you managed to see removed.

Then, within but a short time of that, you faced an incursion across your Northern border of well-armed, well-organised, well-prepared military formations seeking to subject your government or the Government of South Korea and the South Korean people by force. It took years for that attack to be repulsed and for those who made it to be sent back from whence they came. We remember the great sacrifices and devotion which the South Korean people made themselves to throw back this assault and which the United Nations, to its credit, helped and which we, as a nation, contributed towards, as I believe, to our honour and to the honour of the United Nations.

You are, Sir, as I have said, still challenged, and I believe that that challenge is real. We have seen in recent weeks what can happen in a country when the forces of suppression can walk in and can deny the expression of the free will of the people of that country. What we saw happen in Czechoslovakia could have happened and could happen in South Korea. You have got to face this threat and are facing it - a nation of 30 million people with 600,000 troops under arms because of this ever-present pressing threat.

You are providing those twin deterrents against aggression and against subversion - the willingness and ability to resist by military force the breaching of a frontier or a demarcation line, and the determination to improve the economic living standards of the peoples of your country so that by these both methods you will together prevent the dangers which threaten you.

We have admiration for both of these efforts on your part, great admiration in particular for the determination you are showing to increase your economic capacity and the living standards of your people. Your first Five-Year Plan, I am told, was a great success. Your GNP rose by an average of something like 10 per cent a year, and as a result, the employment capacity and the wage capacity for the people of Korea rose with it.

Your second Plan is now off to what appears to be a magnificent start. You are working towards complete self-sufficiency by 1980, and that, bearing in mind the war-torn recent history of your nation and the way it had to be lifted up industrially by its bootstraps is, as has been said in one of our journals, something that approaches an economic miracle.

And so you are engaged in these two great tasks, but you have not only a determination to resist aggression, not only a realisation that wherever a demarcation line or a border is violated that is a danger to all small countries, not only an insistence on providing self-help in your economic growth, but also beyond that an eye for the future in that it was on your country's initiative that ASPAC came into being. That is an organisation of which we in Australia are proud to be a foundation member and which is designed towards regional co-operation in economic fields and in other fields for the good of all and which will be far more effective and far more able to advance the good of all if that day ever comes when those threats posed to the region by communist aggression are removed.

For all these things, for all these efforts on your part, we in Australia and the Australian Parliament are proud to do you honour.

Sir, you are a very welcome guest.

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