PRESIDENT NIXON'S STATEMENT ON CHINA Statement by the Prime Minister, Mr William McMahon

I welcome without reservation President Nixon's statement concerning United States relationships with the People's Republic of China and his intention to visit China early next year. I was informed of the purport of his statement in advance.

The President's purpose of normalising relationships with China has been the publicly-announced policy of the Australian Government for some time.

Indeed, President Nixon's anxiety to "seek normalisation of relations and exchange views on questions of concern" precisely describes what we ourselves have been seeking to do by our approaches through diplomatic channels in Paris.

In particular, I want to draw the attention of the Australian people to President Nixon's statement that the action he is taking will "not be at the expense of old friends".

In the future, Australia's policies and actions will be guided by these principles as they have been in the past.

I share wholeheartedly the President's view that all will gain from a reduction of tension between the United States and the People's Republic of Chi na. I wish him good fortune in an initiative that has the full support of Australia.

I emphasise that President Nixon's statement relates to the normalisation of relationships with China in the interests of world peace.

CANBERRA, 16 July 1971

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