

PRESS STATEMENT NO. 42

23 January 1973

TRIBUTE TO FORMER PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON

Lyndon Johnson will be remembered as one of the great reforming Presidents of the United States. Nothing should be allowed to diminish the memory of this achievement.

He came to office in the most difficult and tragic circumstances and assumed his great responsibilities with valour and distinction. He went on to secure, in the Presidential election in 1964, the greatest popular mandate in the history of the Republic. Under his Administration, the 90th Congress was among the most active in his country's history, with a record of achievement and innovation in social and welfare legislation unmatched in our generation.

President Johnson involved his country more deeply in the Vietnam war than any other President. He was, in a real sense, a victim of this disastrous conflict. Yet no one would have welcomed more warmly the present steps towards a peaceful settlement.

Australians have vivid and cordial memories of his visits to Australia in 1942, in October 1966, and in December 1967. He was the only American President to have visited this country while in office. His presence at the memorial service for the late Harold Holt was a signal demonstration of his affection for the Australian people and his own high estimation of the value of the Australian-American alliance.

On behalf of the Australian Government, I extend to his family and to the American people our profound sympathy in the loss they have sustained.

CANBERRA. A.C.T.