

Speech by the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr Helmut Schmidt, at a dinner in honour of the Prime Minister of Australia in Bonn on 17 January 1975

Three years ago I was a guest of your country and I am therefore delighted to be able today to reciprocate your hospitality in our little capital. On that occasion in Australia I had talks with you as the Leader of your Party. You were still in opposition. We have had a number of talks in the last decade, some in Bonn. Today it is gratifying to renew and deepen our personal contacts, this time in your capacity as Prime Minister of Australia.

Your visit to some degree is overshadowed by the catastrophe recently inflicted upon the people and the town of Port Darwin. Allow me once again to express my deep sympathy, Sir.

Our two countries are separated by oceans and continents, yet they are closely and firmly linked by a network of relations and common basic political concepts: internally a democratic order based on the rule of law and a federal structure, externally the political and economic potential of our countries is aimed at international division of labour and aimed at co-operation. Under your leadership, Prime Minister, Australia is making intensive efforts to help resolve the world's political problems confronting us. You set an example of the attitude that is needed to secure humanity and justice in our time by using our common sense and by appreciating reality.

Mr Whitlam with Mr Scheel, the President of the Federal Republic of Germany.



Your visit to our country comes at a time of change. The old international economic order has been called in question more and more. But we must find a relationship between the industrialised states and the countries of the third world and as well between the raw material countries, oil-exporting countries on the one hand, the industrial countries on the other. Also a new relationship between Europe and extra-European countries like yours and like, for instance, New Zealand, is to be established. And there is no mistaking the fact that nations in their economic performance are becoming increasingly interdependent. Nobody can secure lasting advantages for himself or for his own national economy by taking unilateral measures or by embarking on mercantilistic autonomous economic policies.

World economic problems are a central theme of our talks today. I would feel that in this very year of 1975 there is hardly any problem of such overriding importance in terms of foreign policy, in terms of world policy, as is the complex of economic problems in which we find ourselves entangled.

The main prerequisite for restoring stability and achieving progress is, we feel, and I think I can say this not only for the German Government but also for the great mass of thinking people in our country, irrespective of their political leanings, co-operation and partnership between the industrialised countries; between the producers and the consumers of oil, raw materials; between the third world and the industrialised world.

The past few months, I might as well say the past few weeks, have shown that it is not impossible to find a basis for common action. The danger of solutions to these problems being found in unilateral protectionist measures seems to be a little smaller now since everybody has recognised the negative effect they will have on the world economy and thereby on national economies and on the individual.

Prime Minister, we have the impression that Australia has seized the opportunity of the present time and that Australia is making a contribution both in the Pacific and also on a world-wide basis which natural resources and the achievements of its people permit it to make.

We welcome in particular the contribution which Australia is making in her own regions towards the development of neighbours in need of help in other Asian states. I also very warmly welcome your effort in strengthening European/Australian ties by your present tour of the Old Continent, and, of course, we very heartily welcome you on the soil of our country.

The history of your country enables you to understand our European problems. I thank you, Mr Prime Minister, for this understanding, and I would like to endorse what you—at least by the reports I have seen—seem to have said at the beginning of the month here in Europe. You are reported to have said you believed the West would in general be much stronger, happier and more successful if Western countries co-operated with each other and that included co-operation between—I dare say—Great Britain and its neighbours on the Continent. In spite of all strains the spirit of European co-operation has so far withstood the tests.

We have found our way to pragmatic solutions and have not capitulated in the face of problems. We will continue to intensify our political co-operation and proceed along the road to European integration.

Prime Minister, we agree that the foreign policies of our two countries have one overriding aim, namely to safeguard peace. The Federal Republic of Germany on her part will continue the present policy of detente steadfastly and consistently. This policy seems to us to be the best way to achieve a stable peace in Europe and throughout the world in which the German people too can regain—even if we have a long way to go—can attain or regain their unity in free self-determination. Detente policies in the multilateral sphere are a necessary supplement to our bilateral efforts. We also know that the political solidarity and the defence potential of the West are indispensable prerequisites for any process of detente. We appreciate your coming here at a time of such crucial importance for both world peace and the world economy. Your visit marks an important phase of relations between our two countries, and I am confident that you take home the impression that German-Australian co-operation continues to develop on the basis of lasting friendship.

Speech by the Prime Minister of Australia at a luncheon given in his honour by the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany in Bonn on 17 January 1975

I have been touched, Mr Chancellor, by the warm welcome and the generous hospitality you have extended to me and my party during our stay in the Federal Republic. My visit to Germany is the culmination of an extensive visit I have made in recent weeks to several countries of Europe. It is fitting that I should conclude my European tour in the nation that best symbolises two of the broad themes I have sought to develop and explore. The first of these is Australia's wish to strengthen her trade and economic links with the European community. This message has a special significance in Germany. As the richest and most powerful nation in Western Europe, you have a strong, and perhaps decisive, voice in shaping the future prosperity of Europe and the Western World. My second theme has been the interdependence of nations, the overriding need for co-operation and understanding in solving our common problems. No nation has set a better example in this than Germany, a vigorous and co-operative member of the European Community, and the nation whose wise and far-sighted initiatives did much to set in train the great movement of detente, on which depend so much of the hopes of mankind for a better and more peaceful world.

Germany, then, has a central and crucial role in the shaping of a more rational world order. I know you will accept the responsibilities for which your great economic and industrial strength have prepared you. The achievements of the German people in rebuilding their nation during the past thirty years have been an example, an inspiration, to the world. I believe Australia is well placed to work with you in strengthening the economic foundations of the Western Nations. We are both highly developed, highly industrialised countries. Australia is rich in resources and raw materials, and I have been at pains to stress, during my visit to Europe, our readiness to make these resources available on fair terms to the nations that need them. I repeat that assurance today.

At the same time Australia needs Germany's exports and manufactured goods to develop her own industrial economy. We also need and welcome your capital investment.

The interdependence of our two economies is a source of strength to both of us. It is equally important that we recognise and encourage the same interdependence among all nations.

Economic co-operation must be thorough, it must be universal, if the world is to overcome the complex and daunting problems that confront it. In every Western country I have visited national leaders face the same problems of unemployment, inflation, energy shortages, social unrest and incipient recession. There has never been a time when international consultations and co-operation were more necessary. There has never been a time when generosity and far-sightedness were more necessary. There has never been a time when it was more important for nations to keep their nerve and keep their faith in calm and rational solutions. It is a crowded world. It is a complicated world. It is a dangerous world. Nothing will be gained if nations live for themselves. Nothing will be gained by the wealthier nations—like Germany, like Australia—if our policies on trade or resources or foreign aid fail to take account of the needs of less fortunate peoples.

In particular, I believe there is scope for greater co-operation between producers and consumers of raw materials to build a better framework for the orderly and rational development of production and trade. There is a greater need for freer, more open trade policies among all nations. Australia in the past two years has sought to promote these conditions through her own policies. We warmly and wholeheartedly support the ideal of European unity and the spirit of international co-operation embodied in it. We applaud Germany's constructive and creative role in Europe. We seek to be a partner of a vigorous and outward-looking Europe—a Europe with the widest possible membership, a

Europe offering the widest and fullest access to its total market.

During my visit to Europe I have sought the understanding of Australia's friends for the new independent role Australia is following in the world. I believe we have a rather special and fortunate place in international affairs. Relatively remote from the scenes of historic rivalries and conflicts, we are trying to see political questions objectively, free from the passions of alignment, though remaining loyal to our traditional alliances and staunch in our friendships. As major exporters of food, fibres and minerals, we have much in common with the developing countries. We share their concern to secure a just return for producers and stable terms of trade. We believe in the right of states to sovereignty over their natural resources.

Yet, as an industrialised country, we understand the needs of the exporter of manufactured goods. We seek to play our full part in the maintenance of international peace and security. Like Germany we support the efforts of the United Nations in the pursuit of justice and world order. Guided in large measure by the Federal Republic's contribution towards the promotion of detente and the achievement of peace in Central Europe, Australia will co-operate towards the same end in the Indian Ocean and in our region of South-East Asia. Our common interest in peace and world security is inseparable from our common interest in stable economic growth and the rising prosperity of all nations.

There are good reasons, Mr Chancellor, why Australians and Germans are well fitted to work together and develop their friendship. Our countries are both federations. We understand each other's problems of economic management, of federal-state co-operation, of regional development. Our bilateral trade is growing. Australian manufacturers exhibit more and more frequently in your remarkable trade fairs. The already close links between German and Australian industry will, I hope, be further promoted by an agreement on co-operation in science and technology. The flow of German migrants to Australia continues, though at the reduced level made necessary by the uncertainty of employment. I pay tribute here in your Federal Capital to the hundreds of thousands of

German migrants who have helped to strengthen and diversify our cultural traditions and develop our important industries. In recent years the Stuttgart Ballet has come to Australia and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has played in German cities. We want to increase the range and frequency of these cultural exchanges.

Mr Chancellor, my visit to Germany is only the second which an Australian Prime Minister has paid to the Federal Republic. Sir Robert Menzies made a short, informal visit to your country in 1959. Another visit was overdue. I am grateful for the warmth and cordiality of our talks and for the frank understandings we have reached together. I have sought in recent weeks to dispel the impression—a common impression in Australia—that Europe no longer matters to Australia, that our interests, our destiny, lie exclusively in Asia and the nations to our north. All I have seen and heard convinces me that Australia's future and prosperity are inseparable from yours. The Common Market is our second largest trading partner. I shall leave Germany knowing that our two countries can make an important contribution together to the solution of our problems and the strengthening of our friendship.

I shall leave Europe convinced that Australia can never turn aside from this ancient centre of power and ideas, that with reason and goodwill—and above all with peaceful co-operation—the nations of the West will triumph over their present difficulties and embark on a new phase of progress and enlightenment.