PRESS STATEMENT:

June 27th, 1964

MALCOLM FRASER’S REPORT FROM WASHINGTON

ITINERARY FOR RETURN TO AUSTRALIA.

I am very near the end of my visit to the United States insofar as Washington is concerned. Next Monday I start moving out across the United States, visiting various points on the way, and I will return to Australia via Alaska, Saigon in South Vietnam and Kuala Lumpur in Malaya.

The discussions of the South-East Asian problems which I have had here with many people in the Government, in Congress, in the academic field and in journalism would not be complete without discussions with people who have actively participated in the problems that have arisen. Therefore, I want to talk with people in South Vietnam and in Malaya to see what their impressions and their views are on the current difficulties facing both these countries. Without these discussions the views and opinions that I have heard would not be complete.

On my way across the United States I will be visiting Bay City where our D.D.G. Destroyers are being built. I have already been down to the Norfolk Naval Installations to see American destroyers of the same type and with largely the same armament and I am most impressed by the capabilities of these particular ships. It will be interesting to see our own ships under construction. When finally commissioned they will be an extremely valuable addition to the Australian Navy. Then I will be visiting Omaha, where the Strategic Air Command has its underground headquarters. This is the Air Command that maintains aeroplanes in the air every hour of every day in case of some threatened or possible attack on the United States. For a long while the Strategic Air Command was the main deterrent force for the West in the nuclear stalemate between the West and the Soviet powers. Although it is still of very great significance in the world-wide power arrangements it has probably lost first place in importance to the polaris submarines which are less vulnerable and more likely to be able to hit a target. I then go to Fort Worth in Texas, where the TFX is being built. This is the machine which has been ordered for the Australian Air Force, and we will be taking delivery of these in 1967 or 1968. They will be available to us just as soon as they are available to the United States Forces. The TFX is what is called a strike reconnaissance bomber, and it again will make a most effective contribution to Australian military strength. In particular, I think it will be valuable to meet the people who are building and working on these armaments. In this way it is possible to get an impression and a knowledge of their capability that I might otherwise not be able to obtain.