

MR. DOWNER.- Thank you, Your Excellency. I am sure we all agree that yours was a most charming and telling speech. It has been a great honour to have you here. It gives me great pleasure to ask the right honourable the Prime Minister to address the gathering.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE R.G. MENZIES, C.H., Q.C., Prime Minister of Australia.- Sir, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen: I feel almost embarrassed to come, even for a few minutes, between you and the memory of the remarkable speech that has been addressed to us by His Excellency the Governor-General because I am sure it did our minds good and our hearts good to listen to it. There is really very little that needs to be said by me on an occasion of this kind. This is the thirteenth of these conventions. I daresay you have had speeches galore made to you in the course of that time. Some of you, as I can tell by the still optimistic expression on your faces, are here not for the first time.

On the last occasion when I spoke here, I took the opportunity of saying something that I hope you will let me repeat, not in words but in substance. For a variety of reasons, we in Australia have become accustomed to talking about New Australians. It is a very sobering reflection that if, at the end of a few years, the Governor-General became so enamoured of life in Australia that he decided to stay here, he would be a New Australian. He would be a migrant. In fact, I do not want to prejudice the interests of the Treasury, Sir, but you might perhaps be able to apply retrospectively for an assisted passage.

But we here who are old Australians, are all non-migrants. My grandparents came here. They migrated to Australia. Some of the more distinguished among us are able to trace our ancestry back further than that. Some of them prefer not to. But it is interesting to recall that all of us

who are, you might say, the old brigade, are people whose parents or grandparents or great-grandparents or whatever it may be came out to Australia seeking a new life in a new country. They lived then under much more primitive conditions than exist today.

Therefore, I do not like these artificial distinctions very much. We in Australia ought to recall - as I am sure we do - that we are a very young country. I do not mean that we are young geologically but we are a very young nation. It is not so long since 1788. It is only a few generations when you come to think of it. Therefore, this, of all modern and civilised countries, is perhaps the youngest. We are nearer to each other, from whatever generation we come, than are the people of perhaps any other country in the world.

Even in the case of Great Britain there are blanks in history. I have never quite discovered, Your Excellency, what happened between the time when the Romans left and the Angles and the Saxons came. There are silent passages in history. But with us, over this relatively short period of time, there is continuity of history and a tremendous surge of growth. All periods of our history in Australia have had their own turbulent and sometimes confused activity. We had the old pastoral days, the old mining days, the agricultural era and the manufacturing era. These things have come, one on top of another, and in the result, this is a country full of life and hope, achievement and ambition. It is therefore easy and, indeed, natural for us to receive into the population people who possess this same spirit; who are the same kind of people as those who originally created this spirit.

It is easy for us to welcome them, and I believe I can say that it is easy for them to live here and to feel that they are among friends and living in a lively family atmosphere.

We in Australia, as Sir Winston Churchill once reminded me, are rather disposed to conduct our political affairs with a fine eighteenth century vigour, and I dare say that that is quite right. Being before this audience, I speak no party politics. It is very seldom in Australia that you can get the great political parties - the great political bodies of thought - to coincide precisely on some topic, but on migration we are as one. The great movement of migration which began in substance after the war was created by the Labour Administration and has been carried on by my own. It has, up to a point, changed the face of Australia, and it will continue to have the most profound effects on the intellectual development, the cultural standards, the scientific achievements and the social consciousness of people in Australia. We will, in 50 years' time, be a different people - not detached from our old anchors, not detached from our old traditions, but enriched by new ones. We will be a different people - I believe, a dynamic people - a people with much to contribute to the world. One of the great factors contributing to that is that we have received so many hundreds of thousands of people from outside Australia who have come here not to be dependent and not to be different, but to be part of Australian society and contributors to the overall wealth, happiness and future of Australia. That is one reason why many of us, as we look at this remarkable process and get such comfort and such hope from it, always hope that those who come here, for example, from various countries of Europe, will not form colonies and will not segregate themselves from the rest of the community. I do not want

to be taken as exaggerating on this matter. I believe it is essential for Australia that there continue to be powerful Scottish and Caledonian societies. I insist on that. I am willing to concede to His Excellency the Governor-General St. George's society. I think it is a very good thing that we from time to time remind ourselves of our inheritance, but it would be a bad thing indeed if, in a country like this, racial communities tended to separate themselves out. The great thing about building up Australia through a programme of this kind is that we should become one people. These are the immortal words of the younger Pitt: "You must be one people." And one people we must be or we shall be in peril.

These splendid bodies such as the Commonwealth Immigration Planning Council, the Commonwealth Immigration Advisory Council and the Good Neighbour Movement - that is an organization which has so much to do with this matter - know that so well. They have done such superb work and they know that they are not dealing with an academic problem. A convention of this kind is not an occasion for a collection of rather philosophical reflections. The real business is to see that we become, steadily, one people. You are a good neighbour because you prefer your neighbour to yourself. You are a good neighbour to a new citizen in Australia because you want him to feel that he is your neighbour and that you are his, and that you both are members of one people. Therefore, I regard the work that is being done as being of the highest order of practicality. This is a splendid thing to be doing. Looking at it with a broad view, one can say that before very long there will be occupying high office in Australia people whose names will fall unfamiliarly on the ears of the Australians of this generation. It would

be indeed one of the great triumphs of the migration policy that we so weld all new elements in with the old as to produce an alloy which will be of power and significance and achievement in our own country.

We all, on whichever side of Parliament we sit, are tremendous supporters of this programme. We all are conscious of the fact that, if it were not for the work of hundreds, and, indeed, thousands, of people like yourselves, who devote much time to the practical affairs of integration in Australia, the programme could not succeed so well and could not endure so long. It does endure - I repeat that word - because it does not create internal hostilities. Allow it to create internal hostilities, allow it to create some sort of differences between one community and another or one race and another, and you will find the whole object of migration frustrated. The fact is that that has not happened. The fact is that, so long as there are people like you, ladies and gentlemen, who will bend your minds to these great problems, it will not happen.

Sir, it is a very great pleasure to be here and a great pleasure to be allowed to say something to this distinguished audience.