



STATEMENT BY SENATOR GORTON ON HIS ELECTION
AS LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY

PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA

9TH JANUARY, 1968

I think that you will all realise that this is not really the occasion for a press conference which would delve quite deeply into a number of matters that this is not the appropriate time to deal with.

All I want to say to you and to those who may be looking at this programme is this. This is quite an awe-inspiring thing, using awe-inspiring in its true sense, to happen to a man. In some ways it is a little overwhelming.

I am not yet the Prime Minister of Australia, but I want to talk to you, and any of those who are watching - if they will forgive the presumption - as if I were the Prime Minister of Australia. Tomorrow I have no doubt that we will continue in this country, as we should, arguments, perhaps quite bitter arguments, as to the goals this country ought to seek, as to the methods of obtaining those goals, as to the differing priorities which might be put on different fields of national endeavour. That is tomorrow.

In this moment I want to talk to all Australians, as Australians, not as adherents of this party or of that. And I want to say to them that I believe these last few days have shown it is true that our common history and our common future show that in this nation the things that unite are infinitely greater than the things that divide.

It is not going to be an easy task for me, but to Australians I would now say this in this moment. They can be sure that I will try my best, and I will look to them for the strength successfully to conclude what we start which from within myself alone I think I could not get. And that is all I want to say at this stage and at this point of time.

Thank you all.
