

OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE SIXTEENTH CONFERENCE OF
THE COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION
CANBERRA, A. C. T.

2 OCTOBER 1970

Speech by the Prime Minister, Mr. John Gorton

Your Excellency, Mr President, Mr Vice-Chairman, Leader of the Opposition, Mr Premier of Queensland, Mr Speaker and Parliamentary Colleagues :

Yesterday at a social occasion I welcomed you here to Australia and extended wishes for the success of this Conference. Now that you are met in the Chamber in which your deliberations will take place, I extend again on behalf of the Government of Australia, and I believe I can say on behalf of all Australians, our best wishes for the success of your deliberations in our country.

You have much of which to speak, and yesterday you had to listen to much of what we had to say. I think that on this occasion, so that you can get on with what you will make your business, I will merely say some few sentences in welcoming you to this Chamber and to your work in it. But if those sentences are short, that is not to be taken as an indication in any way that the strength of feeling behind them is not strong and that the welcome is not very genuine.

It is not for me to repeat what was said yesterday, and what His Excellency expanded on today, but I feel that at this and succeeding conferences much will depend that will affect the future of the world.

In all the diverse nations of which His Excellency has spoken and which meet here, there does lie hope. And I believe this Conference and this Commonwealth Association will be successful as long as it never seeks to turn itself into a mini-United Nations, as long as it never seeks to pass resolutions which purport to be binding on all the members present, as long as it keeps to its charter of bringing together Parliamentarians for discussion of problems and for meetings of people from the various countries of the Commonwealth.

And now - if I can say this without anybody seeing any political implications in it - I quote

"Let observation with extensive view
Survey mankind from China to Peru"

And this, indeed, is what this Commonwealth of Nations will be doing, spread as it is across the world, and the possibility of being a force for good across the world.

Welcome.
