



PRIME MINISTER
CANBERRA

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA
THE HON. E.G. WHITLAM, Q.C., M.P.,
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CONTRIBUTION FOR THE "INVENTORY OF HOPE"
(BY GOUGH WHITLAM, PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA)

Bertrand Russell once described himself as a cheerful pessimist, and if I may adapt the phrase of so illustrious a man, I should call myself a sanguine optimist. It is not difficult to be optimistic about Australia. With her moderately small population, basically sound economy and vast natural resources, her prospects are considerably brighter than average, though there is a danger that these blessings, combined with isolation, may make her heedless of other nations' misfortunes. We must resist that tendency, not simply on grounds of morality, but because the survival of humanity and civilized democracy will require from all nations an unprecedented measure of international cooperation. The opportunity for such cooperation exists in the United Nations. There is as yet no substitute for it and there is a good chance that it will survive as a workable and practical forum.

There are three other things on which I base my hopes. I base them on science, or rather on the scientific method, which is our ultimate defence against dogma and mysticism. I base them on the idealism of youth, of a generation which has already rejected war and which displays a greater capacity for love and human tolerance than any before it. And I base them on man's instinctive common sense, his natural will to survive, which has carried him through crises in the past and will do so again.
