

8 114

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER,  
THE HON. E.G. WHITLAM, J.C., M.P.,  
ON HIS RETURN FROM CHOGM 1975  
CANBERRA, 11 MAY 1975

---

My overseas visit achieved three purposes. I was able to take part in important discussions at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, to renew my personal contacts with President Ford, and by visiting Peru, to establish for the first time close links between Australia and a South American country.

There can be no doubt of the Commonwealth's growing importance as an international forum. Its members represent a quarter of the world's people. The talks in Jamaica were the most productive and harmonious Commonwealth conference ever held. There was a remarkable identity of views on many of the world's problems, including the need for positive steps to redress the imbalance between rich and poor nations.

In Washington I had cordial and frank talks with President Ford and other American leaders. <sup>They all gave</sup> ~~I took heart from~~ the ready expressions of good will towards Australia, and assurances of America's continuing commitment to her allies in our region. Australia's relations with the U.S. have never been healthier. Our understanding has never been closer or more soundly based.

I expect in the next few days to report fully on my visit in a national broadcast.

CANBERRA