

HRH THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S  
SIXTH COMMONWEALTH STUDY CONFERENCE  
MANAGING CHANGE IN AN INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

CLOSING SESSION

AT THE  
GREAT HALL, UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

THURSDAY 29 MAY 1986

SUMMING IT UP - THE TEN LESSONS

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BY

JUSTICE MICHAEL KIRBY, CMG

NOTE: REFERENCES IN BRACKETS ARE TO THE RESPECTIVE GROUP REPORTS.

## OUR LIMITED CAPACITIES

The theme of this Study Conference adopts a confident, even jaunty, perspectives. The notion that we can manage change in the industrial society (or at least can do so with any degree of confidence and success) is one which not all observers accept. Some problems are intractable. Sometimes, the price of successful management and control of events is too high for our diverse and democratic communities to pay.

There have been other criticisms of the chosen theme of the Conference. Australia's indefatigable Science Minister, Barry Jones, suggested that the theme begged two major questions. First, it assumed that we are living in the industrial (and not the post industrial) society. Secondly, it assumed that change was capable of being managed. He suggested that "managing change" sounded a trifle autocratic. Yet, despite this prompting, none of the Group reports questioned the fundamental notion, inherent in the charter of this Conference. Many, it is true, came back with reports, both on India and Australia, which recognised the daunting and even overwhelming nature of the problems faced by community leaders of the future.

I propose to derive ten lessons from the Conference (the same number as the instruction of the Almighty). In the Royal presence, I dare not call them Commandments. The first of them is: -

### I Our capacity to manage change is strictly limited.

Many group reports showed recognition of this simple truth. In Bombay 350 families arrive in the city each day to an inadequate city infrastructure of public works (20). A talk with a tribesman near Ootacamund produced the encouraging intelligence that he had undergone vasectomy; but the discouraging news that he had already produced ten children (19). Attempts to manipulate events in India run headlong into the history and traditions of the country (17). This is also true of Australia with its individualistic and hedonistic traditions and a people that delights in cutting down the tall poppies with their bright ideas (17).

Furthermore, some solutions produce inescapable problems in their wake. Everyone is nowadays concerned about growing unemployment. But labour intensive industries can sometimes be inescapably dreary or dirty. This was the arresting defence of the oil company executive at La Trobe. Oil, we were told, is just a dirty business (6). You cannot entirely escape that reality.

The complexity of both of the societies studied, Australia and India, inevitably makes management of change a daunting task. We would therefore do well to pause at the beginning of this review and to recognise that, try as we might, our human capacity to influence events is strictly limited. Especially is this so if we are unwilling to introduce oppressive policies of control, uncongenial to our tradition.

Fresh from Pune and Bathurst, one Group stressed the importance of not pushing too far ahead, lest the leaders and shapers of society get out of touch with people (12). Another emphasised the risks of too rapid an expansion and the need always to blend change into the established culture (4). Another, spoke of the systemic nature of the process of change (17). Change has a ripple effect. It touches society downstream.

It is not necessary to be a "super pessimist" to accept this first lesson. Human mortality, finite resources, oppressive nature (9) and our own limited imaginations impose restraints on us. The beginning of wisdom is the adoption of humility in the face of our problems, and of the opportunities and responsibilities which we have, and will have.

#### THE GLOBAL DIMENSION.

You will all recollect how the Duke of Edinburgh, our oracle and guide, spoke at the end of one report on "the global village" (11). Time after time, the reports came in to establish the second lesson. It is: -

II Increasingly in an interdependent world, domestic policies are subject to international imperatives.

In the Hunter Valley, the decline in overseas markets has forced a previously industrial society to look to diversity in wine production and tourism (1). In Whyalla, a declining industry in a "company town" presented problems only partially solvable by home-grown solutions (10). BHP has restructured and has sought to develop new products. But one suspects that decisions made in Tokyo and New York have a greater impact on the future of that town and its people than any decisions made in Australia (10).

A similar tale was told in Broken Hill (2). The suggested need to adjust to international pressure has led to a painful dispute. This is presented by management as one of viability and survival. To the Unions, it is a challenge to established rights and safe employment practices. Countries such as Australia and India, dependent on exports of primary products, have long been vulnerable to international markets and adverse terms of trade. But now, there are new global forces. The new technology is international. Added to this are new, well organised international competitors. The sugar and tobacco farmers of North Queensland complain of EEC policies (5). Wheat farmers complain of the United States Farm Bill. The greater the concentration on particular products, the greater is the vulnerability of the area under review. A number of reports on the post industrial cities of Australia, illustrate, in microcosm, world wide developments (14).

For all that, the tale is not one of unrelieved gloom. The challenge is to adapt to change and to seize opportunities. In North Queensland, sugar has been replaced, as one group reported, by coffee - marketed on a new capital intensive basis (5). Similar examples abound. One has only to think of the ubiquitous kiwifruit. But what if there is a world glut of coffee or kiwi? Where do the farmers turn next in the cyclical fortunes of primary production?

Until now, the economies of Australia and India have been partly protected behind tariff walls. One of the strongest lessons emerging from this Conference is that the world is shrinking. Our capacity to control events at home depends increasingly upon international cooperation. After Hiroshima, it is increasingly urgent to promote economic and political cohesion. The world may simply not need more coffee grown in North Queensland. Local self-sufficiency may be relatively inefficient. It may also be incapable of withstanding international pressures. A recognition of the trans-border dimension of many problems should stimulate international efforts to find their solutions. But we should not underestimate the urgencies which face home politicians and other leaders to find instant solutions to pressing local problems.

#### THE BLIGHT OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT.

It would be easy, in a Conference such as this, to forget that we are ultimately talking about people and the impact of change on fellow human beings. Fortunately, a recognition of this dimension came through a number of the reports. People, we were told, are the very basis of change (11). For those who urge a total "revamp" of the Indian economy, they are cautioned to pause and to reflect upon the matrix of culture, language and religion that makes up that society (17). Take that away, and you have Dallas not Delhi. Accordingly, we should approach the management of change, by getting clear where it is we want to go. Change for its own sake, with more factories and car lines, is the way of the past. Now we must ask what it is we want to change, for not all change is good. The break-down of family cohesion was instanced as one bad change in some Western societies (19). But even that change may sometimes have a liberating effect.

Survival is a basic human necessity. Accordingly, the spectre of mass unemployment, particularly amongst the young, is a challenge which defies easy solutions. But the recognition of this problem recurred in almost every report to this Conference. Whether in India or Australia, we see the human degradation of mass unemployment. In Australia, the problem reaches proportions unprecedented for this country. A specially vulnerable group faces the prospect of alienation, under-utilisation and hopelessness. Is it any wonder that popular culture (reflecting popular values) portrays an angry young generation - with a streak of violence and despair in its anger?

I need a job.  
I need a chance.  
The time has come when I've begun to see.  
If there's a God, he doesn't like me.  
How can I try to make a start,  
When everything around me just falls apart.  
Oh, I .....

It's all the news about the private sector  
With all the millions from the tax collector  
All I want to do is earn my cup of tea.  
I need a job, I'm on the alert  
It doesn't matter if I'm shovelling dirt  
I need a chance  
Why can't you see  
That all these lousy things will stop happening to me.  
The Naturals "On the Alert" (I need a job)

Youth unemployment was described as "chronic", and above the national average, in North Queensland (5). In Wagga, there were reports of the rising cost of smashed windows (2). In the Western Region of Melbourne, high rise chimneys have been replaced by high rise hopelessness (9). Graffiti is the standard modern art form (9). In Wollongong, a quarter of the youth is unemployed (14). Sadness and frustration come with these reports. Whereas in Bombay and Pune, unemployment for many is life's natural expectation, in Bathurst and Pokolbin it is an unwanted and unexpected fate. For many it seems unacceptable. It teaches the third lesson.

III The young are specially vulnerable to structural change, and their despair is the breeding ground of social and political unrest.

It would be easy to say that we should tackle the causes rather than the symptoms of youth violence, drug abuse, apathy and boredom, and there is an urgency to look closely at all policies that work. But here we run into an irony pointed out by our Convenor. The modern technological economy, necessary for efficiency and competitiveness, actually diminishes rather than increases the number of job vacancies for the young.

What can we do? One group suggested improved skills training (8). Another proposed special assistance with trade apprenticeships (1). Promises of exemption from industrial strife could encourage new enterprises in employing the young (1). Penalty rates were mentioned as in need of review. Yet His Royal Highness gave a timely warning that we could not just shuffle young people around to meet industrial needs, forgetful of their self respect. Human beings are not an ordinary resource.

For all that, the message came to this Conference with a growing sense of frustration and urgency, and from two Continents. Our democracies will reap a whirlwind unless we can manage to adjust to change in such a way as promises hope for the next generation. If sizeable numbers have no jobs (and no prospect of self fulfilment in work), we must either deliver the jobs or change the expectations of society and its attitude to leisure and unemployment. Perhaps in the future it will be a privilege to work. Workaholics like us may be in for a rough time.

THE LEGITIMATE DEMANDS OF OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS.

The young are not the only section of society who bear a disproportionate burden in structural change. Other groups were identified in numerous reports. They must be held steadily in mind by those who have the responsibility of influencing change.

The poor, it is said, will always be with us. But will the rural poor in India always be a factor in the Indian equation? The report from Pune suggested that there are "two Indias" - an elite superimposed upon the urban and rural poor. Many policies are directed at the former because the return is more promising (18). But the rural worker still exists on less than forty cents a day (20). How can such a massive group, suffering such deprivation, be ushered into the twenty-first century?

In Australia, one special group, whose problems have been increasingly recognised are the migrants. Many reports talked of the migrant contribution to the economy and to culture (14). Whereas in earlier times attempts were made to stamp out the vitality of difference, there is now an increasing recognition, in many lands, of the value of diversity and that policies must be framed accordingly.

But if there has been partial success in building a multi-cultural society in Australia, there has been less success in adjusting to the new insistence of equal opportunity for women and other groups long disadvantaged. True, women are being chosen for elective office. But in hard times, young women are especially vulnerable to unemployment. Particularly in industry and rural work, there is resistance to employing them (13), except in menial work (10). Mind you, we were reassured from La Trobe that there has been a 300% increase in staff in the oil refinery in the past ten years. The three women employed there have increased to ten (6). The abject "Yes, dear" response of Mabel to every crass utterance of her dairy farmer husband reflect the reality of the entrapment of many women, in Australia as well as India (6). The need for new policies on child care, domestic violence and equal opportunity, as the means to secure practical liberation, was recognised by a number of groups (13, 10).

The most vulnerable section of society surveyed were the Australian Aboriginals. One after another, the groups who went to rural Australia reported their shock and concern at the predicament disclosed in Aboriginal Australia. Employment and health are down. Infant mortality and alcoholism are up (15). Although Aboriginals are 28% of the population of the Northern Territory, they are less than 1% of the workforce (15). Their despair, as with their young brothers and sisters in the city, breeds boredom and frustration. Alcohol and drug abuse are the anaesthetics (12).

For their problems, there are no instant solutions. Perhaps India can teach Australia relevant lessons in the acceptance of diversity and the appreciation of non-material values (19). Whereas it is not satisfactory to ignore the blight of neglect; nor is it acceptable to stamp out the remaining features of Aboriginality. What seems to be necessary is the preservation of Aboriginal culture, but the extension of equal opportunities to those who opt for non-traditional lifestyles (15). There is some evidence that, 200 years on, Australia is at last facing up to this issue. But there is a long way to go. And this teaches the fourth lesson:

IV New attention must be given, in the name of equal opportunity, to those who suffer discrimination - including the rural poor, women, the old, and indigenous people.

#### ADAPTING TO THE ENGINE OF TECHNOLOGY.

Jacob Bronowski once said that the greatest engine of change in our time was science and technology. Who could doubt that this was so in the age of the microchip, biotechnology, interplanetary flight and nuclear fission?

A number of groups reported encouraging developments in the embrace of technological change in India and Australia. From Tasmania came reports of electronics and pharmaceuticals industries (16). From Pune there was the story of the nine-fold increase in milk production by the use, in local stock, of imported semen (18). In South Australia, a technology park produces and exports original integrated microchip circuits (11). Electronic newspaper plants (19) and robotised car assemblies (11), all contribute to new technology-based employment.

There is no doubt that, to some extent, the technology opens up new opportunities. But, as was made painfully clear in many reports, there are problems.

- \* Those thrown out of work may not be suitable or properly trained for the new high-tech jobs;
- \* They may not be in the right place; and
- \* In any case, the new plants tend to be capital, not labour intensive, so the jobs created are relatively few.

For all this, it is impossible to turn our back on science and technology. Whether we like it or not, high technology is here to stay. The challenge before us is to influence its impact (1). A number of the reports stressed the unexpected and unpredicted success of some employers in adapting to technological change in a sensitive way (11). Several reports suggested belated recognition by trade unions of the need to adapt to the cold wind of technological readjustment, being a necessary realism which is nowadays hard to escape. This teaches the fifth lesson:

- V Technology is a powerful dynamic of change. We ignore it at our peril. But we must recognise that it brings as many problems as it solves.

No group addressed the basic question of the incapacity of slow moving democratic institutions to adjust to the onward rush of technology, though many referred to the inefficiencies of Government.

#### THE NECESSITY OF INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVES.

Amidst the frequent despair of the seemingly oppressive problems revealed by the reports, was an occasional bright jewel of hope. Individual initiative in free societies remains the mainspring of progress. Whether it was the coffee farmer in North Queensland (5), the two men who started building surfboards in Geelong (8), the small car assembly line in Madras (19), or the innovative Research Foundation in the Hunter Valley (1), the not surprising conclusion came forth loud and clear. Individuals still matter. Government cooperation, planning commissions and other agencies of the state can sometimes play a useful, stimulating, role. But, in our form of economy, the chief hope still lies in individual initiative. Change must usually commence at the grass roots level (4).

Most people would rather not change. Therefore the challenge before those who would manage change is to stimulate the complacent into new activities, where necessary. Small achievements may secure more in the long run than bold leaps forward, announced in a blaze of self-gratulatory government propaganda. The aggregation of many private initiatives remains the best hope for the future. Leaders have the obligation to foster economic and social conditions which facilitate and encourage such initiatives. Indeed, this teaches the sixth lesson:

VI Individual initiative remains a vital factor in effecting wide-spread change in an efficient way. Policies should be designed to promote and encourage such initiatives, not frustrate them in bureaucratic control.

THE IMPERATIVE OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION.

But what of the impediments to change? A recurring theme of the Conference was the impediment of inefficient industrial relations. More often than not this problem has, at its heart, incompetent communications. Contrasts were painted between industrial relations and the power of the unions in India and in Australia (17). In India, the concern is still overwhelmingly wages and job security. In Australia, it has stretched into occupational health and safety, worker participation, equal employment opportunity and other like questions (10). Despite the Accord, which received qualified approval from some groups as a means of securing a measure of industrial peace, the adversarial nature of industrial relations in Australia obviously struck some overseas observers as peculiar, as indeed it is (17). The rigidities were most vividly displayed in the report from Broken Hill (2). That group demonstrated that, as is often the case, there are two sides to the typical industrial relations problem. The single voice with which the union movement can speak was contrasted with the multiple voices of employers - which puts them at a disadvantage (11). The foolish disputes which can break out were illustrated by a strike at the Parliament House site in Canberra, where 300 workers walked off the job when a safety tag was removed (14).

Industrial relations problems involve the welfare of people (20). Success stories abound in the reports (1; 10). In difficult times of adjustment, it appears that new realism is required from the three players: Government, Union and Employers. This suggests the seventh lesson:

VII Improved industrial relations, necessary to the management of change, require improved communication and heightened realism.

Fortunately there is evidence that this lesson is being learned. One hint given by His Royal Highness was that those who would achieve change in this field, must sometimes let others think that they came upon the answer first. All too often, pride gets in the way.

COPING WITH GOVERNMENT INEFFICIENCY AND "PASSING THE BUCK".

More than a few reports expressed astonishment with the inefficiency of Governmental arrangements in Australia and India. In India, the problem, more often than not, is the bureaucracy - the successors to the "Heaven-born". In Australia, it is typically the multitude of levels of Government, inherent in a Federal country. You will recollect the suggestion that the growth centre at Albury Wodonga was the more remarkable because it had to struggle under five governments (7).

The Federal system of Government is a form of planned inefficiency. But it may not be unsuitable for that reason. In continental countries, the alternative, of total control from a distant capital, is unthinkable. Yet the lesson of more than half the reports was an abiding concern about the high level of governmental inefficiency. Furthermore, the division of power can all too often result in passing the buck of responsibility. Effecting change frequently requires an infrastructure of roads, sewers and other public works (4). Numerous examples, only some of them humorous, were presented by which responsibility was passed by one authority to others (10). The call for integration of essential Government services was a Leitmotiv woven through a number of presentations (3, 13, 1). In a sense, the growth centres at Albury Wodonga and Bathurst are attempts to respond to this institutional problem. Whether they have succeeded or failed was a matter of controversy in the respective reports (7, 18).

Far from encouraging enterprise and new initiatives, excessive Government regulation and control was often seen as an enemy of efficiency and managed change. Hence the call to "Set the Territory free, Bob", from the Northern Territory (15) and the establishment of numerous agencies, established to provide a "fast track" for much needed local development (1).

Nowhere were the inefficiencies of Government policies more severely castigated than in the field of education. At a time of remarkable technological change, the reports come in with damning indictments of educational policies inherited from yesteryear. Low school retention in a country such as Australia, and in a time of high youth unemployment, is simply unacceptable. The syllabus is plainly not seen as relevant to many young people who leave school in droves (10). Nor is it preparing them for the adaptation in work and leisure life available in the post industrial society (12). Yet, for all this, there were some hopeful figures. From South East Queensland came the reports of a 20% increase in school retention rates in the last four years. Such changes are long overdue. In Australia, and in the elite in India, to service a growing capacity in high-tech industry, there are needs for major changes in educational policies. But the institutional resistance will be great. And some of the apparently easy solutions, such as "back to basics", suggested by one or two reports, may fail to provide the adaptable workforce we need (8).

The eighth lesson is, accordingly:

VIII A scalpel must be taken to Governmental and bureaucratic inefficiency. And particularly to the failure of Governments to respond to the needs of educational change.

#### COPING WITH CHANGING SOCIAL CONCERNS.

Another theme coming through the reports speaks of changing social concerns which would have astonished and bemused the participants in the first Study Conference. Prizes go today to those who can foresee even some of the issues which will concern our successors.

For example, the environmental question remains high on the list of social priorities. This was brought out in the report from Tasmania (16). But it also featured in the report from the Northern Territory (15), the Pilbara (12), and North Queensland (5). One person's woodchip industry is another's irreplaceable heritage. Whatever one's viewpoint, it is plain that careful consideration of the environment must now be taken into account in planning, for there is undoubtedly a heightened sensitivity to this social issue. And, it is not the only one.

Changing attitudes to smoking necessarily impact the tobacco industry (5). Changing attitudes to meat consumption may doom a cattle farmer or two. Changing habits in salt consumption may affect the salt miner (8). What is necessary is a healthy serving of positive thinking. Coffee growing may replace tobacco (5). The fish industry may replace cattle. The use of salt in gardening may replace table salt (8).

In many parts of Australia, and in India, the solution of tourism is presented as the universal panacea - a means of picking up the increasing leisure, utilising in labour intensive activities the unemployed and taking advantage of tourist attractions, abundant in both countries. The lesson of so many of the reports, however, is that tourism brings in its train its own problems. Certainly, it requires an effective infrastructure. You simply cannot allow tourists to wander around without toilets. As we know, many American tourists will never stray far from a Hilton.

Adapting tourism to the environment, in a congenial and acceptable way, is a major challenge for policy makers of the future (15, 13, 16, 4). Tourism was described by one group as a "ticking timebomb". But on a dark landscape, it offers some hope. And because tourism has the potential to increase harmony within the world, and within nations, it has a beneficial side effect which we should willingly promote. Thus, the ninth lesson is:

- XI Societies are changing their habits and leisure patterns. The laurels will go to those who can foresee and adapt to the opportunities presented by these changes.

COPING WITH CONFLICTING DATA.

Threaded through the reports to the Conference were numerous examples of the ironies and quandaries that face the would-be modern manager of change. Can I remind you of some of them?

- \* The people of Central Queensland are gentle, hospitable and compassionate to visitors. But they are less supportive to their Aboriginal neighbours, whose neglected state daily confronts them.
- \* Bringing Australian Aboriginals and the rural poor of India into the twenty-first Century, may sometimes involve the destruction of their unique cultures (17).
- \* At the very time when expectations of improved quality of life are raised, the capacity of our societies to provide such improvements to all the people has diminished (9).
- \* Pointless disputes need to be avoided; but not at the price of removing the stimulus of competition (10).
- \* Democracies and representative government are a blessing of free people. But excessive Government can be plain inefficient - except, of course, in the eyes of those who aspire to be the local Mayor or Town Clerk.
- \* Technological change is the way of the future. But, as has been shown, it may be a way which promises relatively little relief to the vulnerable unemployed (3)!

These quandaries involve the decision-maker in the reconciliation of the apparently irreconcilable. They teach the tenth lesson:

X Managing change requires an ability to react positively and imaginatively to conflicting and often puzzling data.

THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE.

I have now completed my ten lessons. But as an outside observer, I cannot leave this summary without a few remarks, from the side as it were, about the Conference itself.

Obviously, the principal beneficiaries of this experience are the participants. They will take away memories of shared hardships and joys, and excitement which will flash upon the inner eye in the most unexpected moments, decades hence, far away. As groups they have travelled a long way. They have learned from each other. They have had to work together. They have demonstrated that necessity and will can breed a rare level of international cooperation.

The sophistication and intensity of their reports, like their dramatic quality, varied enormously. Naturally, I felt most at home in the court scenes. Or when the La Trobe lawyer rightly warned his client to say nothing. The written reports will repay careful reading. They disclose the humane and inquisitive approach that was adopted to unusual assignments, far removed from the normal activities of those involved.

In the last report, Group 13 recorded the fact that, despite the huge differences in culture, economic conditions and other aspects of their background, these young people shared a respect for decency and for each other, a compassion for the people with whom they came into contact and hope for the future. Those words should be carved in stone as the guiding principles for those bold enough to seek the management of change as it affects their fellow citizens.

There were, of course, occasional superficialities in some of the reports. Sometimes, a more questioning and self-critical approach might have been apt. Sometimes, courtesies and proper decency to the host country restrained candour and cruel honesty. But these are excuseable faults.

A notable item entirely missing from any of the reports, was an examination of the burden of leadership on the change agents themselves. No-one mentioned the stress of leadership and the toll that is taken in working constantly under the expectation of achievement, particularly in circumstances where the odds are so often stacked in favour of failure.

Nor was there enough thought given to the fundamentals of change. Why do we want it? Until we get our basic objectives clear, we cannot be expected to agree on methodology. Such basic questions go to the purposes of human life and the nature of human society. Boringly enough, despite the best endeavours of 'A type' personalities such as ourselves, the humble farmer in rural India, safe in his superstitions, may often lead a happier life than we do. And a young "surfie", on the dole, living in a commune on a sandy Australian beach, may have a fuller life than many a merchant banker. We should not assume that the object of managed change is to make more and more people mirror images of our good selves. Diversity, variety and respect for human difference should remain our guiding stars.

#### ALL IN GOOD HUMOUR

Perhaps the most remarkable feature running through the reports, like a thread of Ariadne, was the good humour of the participants, in all the groups.

From the first report, when The Honourable Virginia Chadwick, MLC, senior member of the oldest Parliament in Australia, led her troupe of unlikely school truants through the singing of the Geelong song, to the last moment, the reports were bright with optimism and general self confidence. Perhaps this is just as well. For if this group falters and stumbles, the future would be bleak indeed.

Group 15 actually kept a straight face when it described Darwin as the "Manhattan of the North". Group 19 gave a timely national diagnosis with the aphorism "You can always tell an Australian - but you can't tell him much". Group 7 modestly described itself as a "specially convened international team of investigative reporters". Group 2 took credit for bringing rain to Griffith. And not content with that accolade, it accepted self-conferred praise as a "world famous and highly acclaimed team of international consultants".

Group 4 donated their bodies to scientific research on the effect of five meals a day and two cocktail parties on the human frame. The Vice Chancellor of Sydney University will take possession of the bodies at the end of this Ceremony. Receipts will, of course, be issued. But the same group stretched our credulity by claiming to have initiated an international run on emerald prices by its cartel operations in Queensland.

The vivid demonstration of the origins of dry cleaning by Group 12 and their production of insect repellent has been attributed in the Pilbara region to a xenophobic objection to the protective spraying of incoming aircraft, which is such a delight to tourists coming to Australia. So far as communal showers, alcoholism and Singapore travel brochures are concerned, the less said, the better.

Group 2 seems set to corner the market with Professor Twit's book. You will recall its arresting title "How to sleep through meetings and wake up with a question". So far as is known, half of Group 4 is still watching Rocky II.

That such a group of "distinguished guests and those poised to become distinguished" (3) should come together (and work together) is a precious thing. It would be easy to squander the link of the Commonwealth of Nations - and to throw away, negligently, the common bond of language, experience and history that we share. But in a changing world, and testing times, we do well to nurture our links and cultivate this special, yet loose and voluntary bond that still holds together a quarter of mankind. The personal associations that have been forged in this Sixth Study Conference will certainly endure. And as Sir Zelman Cowen said, when he stood in this place on the last occasion that this Conference was held in Australia, returning to the four corners of the earth, the participants will never be quite the same again.