

## STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
OTTAWA - CANADA

No. 58/33      UNIVERSITIES AND THE COMMONWEALTH

Address by Mr. Sidney E. Smith, Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the VIII Quinquennial Congress of the Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth, The Queen Elizabeth Hotel, Montreal, September 1, 1958.

To extend, on behalf of the Canadian Government, greetings to you is my privilege this evening. In doing so, I use the word greetings in its Sassenach sense, "to salute with words or gestures", rather than as it is used in the Celtic regions north of the Tweed where to greet means to weep copiously. Far from expressing sorrow, my "words and gestures" on this occasion betoken our pleasure and pride at the honour which this Congress has done us in meeting in Canada for the first time.

That distinguished Canadian and Commonwealth citizen, Leonard Brockington, has commented that Canadians indulge in more speeches per square meal than the people of any other nation and although most of the distinguished participants in this Congress represent all the diverse areas of the Commonwealth, I ask them to forego their separate claims to nationality and become forbearing Canadians at least for this evening. Not that it would be such a bad idea over the long term, for in being citizens of the Commonwealth, you are related to us and your mass adoption into the Canadian family would be the most worthwhile single acquisition to our nation since the Scots who settled in my native Nova Scotia. To that event, no other can, of course, compare.

On the eve of the Battle of Waterloo, Byron rhapsodized, Brussels had gathered together Belgium's beauty and chivalry. I do not know what history-changing event is likely to take place tomorrow, but tonight Montreal has certainly assembled a high proportion of the Commonwealth's brain-power and while I seek to cast no reflection on personalities, I am bound to observe that our age is not, alas, a chivalrous one, and that in any event beauty never was an attribute highly prized in the academy, unless perhaps by the poets who often seem to require a pulchritudinous type of inspiration.