

Radio 18/11/56

OLYMPIC GAMES

By MALCOLM FRASER, MEMBER FOR WANNON.

Athletes from nearly every country in the world are gathering in our own city - Melbourne. Not only Victorians but all Australians are hosts to these people. The impressions that they gain here will be taken back into their own countries and into every corner of the world. It is for us, for every Australian, to make sure that their visit is successful, that it is happy and that they leave us with good wishes and as ambassadors for us in their own countries.

Melbourne has been transformed over the last 18 months in preparation for the visitors. It is true in the past there have been arguments over construction of this work or over the organisation in general but in recent weeks things seem to have been going forward with calm efficiency. Now only the finishing touches remain before the Olympic Games begin.

Hotels and houses have been given a coat of paint to look bright and clean for our visitors. The great olympic arena has been completed and the new stand has already held huge crowds for Football League finals.

The modern and futuristic swimmingpool which we hope will see world records broken is a masterpiece of present-day architecture. In addition to these, there are other smaller arenas for special events such as cycling and basketball.

A complete village has been built for our visitors, modern homes and conditions, and I think it has already been said that olympic athletes have never before been given such pleasant surroundings.

In the arena the contest will be hard with athletes struggling to win honors for his or her own nation, but one of the chief values of the Olympic Games is not that this nation or that nation wins the most gold medals or has the greatest number of successful athletes (although in the spirit of competitive sport these are important), the most vital thing is that people of all the countries of the world shall meet each other and outside the arena develop real friendships. It may be thought difficult with the present tragic and disturbed events in Europe and the Middle East for all people to accept wholeheartedly the Olympic spirit but it is up to us as the Host Nation to make sure that



politics are kept apart from the Olympic Games: for only while this is so will the Olympic year continue to be one in which international goodwill and friendship is strengthened and one in which the world's best athletes may meet on any equal footing to test their skill and their strength to the utmost.

Australia's hopes are high and we pray that John Landy will be fit, one of our best athletes and certainly one of our greatest ambassadors wherever he goes. Australia's eyes will be on him in his two hard races and I think we wish him in particular every success and every bit of luck.

In other events too, and in the swimming with such people as Lorraine Crapp, Faith Leech, John Marshall and Murray Rose, we have great chances of success.

Visitors will be coming to Melbourne, not only from all over Australia, but we hope from all over the world. I believe that they will be impressed by our city and by our country. We have something to offer in this country which cannot be found in any other part of the world and the Olympic Games could be the beginning of a growing tourist trade to Australia.

Our aim should be not to try and offer an imitation of what a tourist can find in Europe but we should rather develop our own natural resources in this respect. We have natural geographic beauties and wonders in Australia which are unlike those seen anywhere else and which are unexcelled in any other part of the world. The Olympic Games can and should mean a great deal to Australia. It is up to us as the Host Nation to see that they are successful and the forerunner of continuous overseas visitors to Australia.

---

12/11/1956.