

OFFICIAL OPENING OF "GEORGE MONCRIEFF BARRON MEMORIAL", OCEAN BEACH, MANLY.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Just so I won't miss the bus, I declare this building open.

Just so that you won't fall into a state of despair I see that somebody has very kindly put up over there a notice next to my namesake, the sergeant, which says "Four-hour Parking", I take it that that's the dead limit, four hours.

Now I won't go on for more than another three.

Now you may complain about it raining, but I do not - my one regret about this rain is this, I wish it were falling in Canberra- you don't need it, having enjoyed a typical summer, but we do. But there is one reason I like to see it falling here, you know, for years and years, and years, I've put up with the unkind remarks of my colleagues at Canberra, the ones who come from Sydney, making uniformly rude remarks about the Melbourne climate - particularly the Melbourne summer - I had to come here to discover it.

Now this is really a great occasion, I am not going to speak at any length to you, you have just had an admirable summary of the history of this great Scheme and the work that it does. But I'm here very largely because this work, this great Scheme is, I think, one of the most exciting things in Australia. You will allow me to make just one broad remark on this matter - we have rather got into the habit, haven't we, of looking to governments for all the good things that we think out to be done. We have a very great disposition to say, well, we pay our taxes, there are governments, we elect them, we don't think much of them, still they're the best we can get and we must leave it to them until we get the opportunity of tossing them out.

All this, of course, is highly intelligible to me, but don't let's fall into the error of thinking that in this human life, full of human beings, we can leave everything to a government department, because as I once took the liberty of saying on another occasion, there are many departments in all governments, but I don't know a single department of "loving kindness", and if we're to have loving kindness - not parcelled out according to the rules of the statute or the regulations made under a statute - then it still remains for human beings to provide it. And the interesting thing in Australia is that so many human beings, relatively speaking, have seen this challenge and have wonderful things for all of us. They may at some stage be assisted by a government or by a department or by some officials of it, but they themselves have the vision, the imagination, the kindness in their hearts to start the work.

Now there are two great names as we all know, in the Inland of Australia, one is the name of Drummond because of this Scheme, and the other is the name of

Flynn of the Inland, with the Flying Doctor Service, with all these things that have been done, (do you think I require this-) (If I take this (umbrella) I'll speak longer, I think you'd better take it back). Flynn of the Inland, now all sorts of things happen in the centre of Australia. But you see it was one man, with imagination, with devotion, who started all these things in the inland, and that's why the name of Flynn is immortal. And in this case it was one man, quickly accompanied by another, - Drummond, and then Barron, - who thought of this, who created this, who provided the fire and the inspiration and the generosity to make it go on.

Really, I dare say that not all of you read the Bible as regularly as you should, but there is one line in it that we ought to remember on an occasion like this and it is "Let us now praise famous men and our fathers which begat us". Let us praise famous men. We are praising one to-day - we are commemorating one to-day in the name of this building - but really every night we ought to thank heaven we have been able to produce in this country, people of unselfishness, of skill, of devotion, of imagination, who have enabled these great things to be done.

When I was a very small boy in a very primitive section of the bush in Victoria there was a doctor here, another doctor 25 miles away, that's true, but what happened to little children who had some physical defect, some kind of complaint? Without diagnosis, I wouldn't know. When you think that in this very place, hundreds and now thousands of children have been received and treated and given a vision of a new life, when you think of that, then this wouldn't have happened if we hadn't had people with imagination, aided in this case, of course, by that remarkable woman, Mrs. Hill.

This is a great triumvirate, a great triumvirate, and although their names may be personally unknown to a great number of people in Australia, I can assure you indeed that this great Scheme is increasingly well-known to the people of Australia and that they have a proper pride in it. Now I call on you to have pride in it, I call on you to have a feeling of something like inspiration when we think about it. I call upon you to remember that what can be done by three people, initially, can be done by three thousand or three millions, so be it that they have imagination and generosity in their minds and hearts.

So, Sir, this is a great human occasion. You are getting wetter and wetter, and I, like all public speakers, am performing the remarkable feat of getting drier and drier at the same time. Therefore, to repeat myself, I want to thank you for your patience under these conditions and to repeat, that I have a signal honour in declaring this building open.