

GOVERNMENT ACHIEVEMENTS IN TASMANIA

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SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER  
THE HON. E. G. WHITLAM, Q.C., M.P.,  
TO A LUNCHEON OF THE HOBART CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,  
HOBART, 22 FEBRUARY 1974

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THIS IS MY FOURTH VISIT TO TASMANIA SINCE I BECAME PRIME MINISTER. I CONFESS THAT IT IS ALTOGETHER TOO RARE A PLEASURE FOR ME TO VISIT YOUR CHARMING AND HISTORIC CITY. AFTER THIS WEEK, I DECIDED I WOULD RATHER BE HERE WITH YOU THAN TALKING TO THE GIPPSLAND FARMERS. THERE'S NOTHING LIKE A FRIENDLY GATHERING OF TASMANIAN BUSINESSMEN TO MAKE ONE FEEL AT HOME! NO TOMATOES, NO EGGS, NO PITCHFORKS. THEN I WAS REMINDED THAT MUCH OF AUSTRALIA'S SUPERPHOSPHATE IS MANUFACTURED HERE IN TASMANIA. SO YOU CAN UNDERSTAND WHY AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTERS OCCASIONALLY WANT TO GO ABROAD.

NOW SINCE I'VE RAISED THIS MATTER OF THE PHOSPHATE BOUNTY, AND SINCE IT IS CLEARLY A MATTER OF VERY GREAT INTEREST TO AN AGRICULTURAL STATE SUCH AS YOURS, LET ME BEGIN BY SAYING A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE DECISION WE MADE. THE OTHER DAY IN VICTORIA I QUOTED SOME REMARKS BY SIR JOHN McEWEN WHEN THE LIBERAL-COUNTRY PARTY GOVERNMENT ABOLISHED THE LAST PHOSPHATE BOUNTY IN 1950. I WANT TO REMIND YOU OF WHAT THE FORMER LEADER OF THE COUNTRY PARTY SAID BECAUSE I KNOW HE IS A MAN YOU RESPECT AND I REGRET THAT HIS WORDS DID NOT RECEIVE THE PUBLICITY WHICH I HOPED THEY WOULD. DON'T FORGET THAT IT WAS A LABOR GOVERNMENT THAT INTRODUCED THE FIRST PHOSPHATE BOUNTY AS A WARTIME MEASURE AND IT WAS THE LIBERAL-COUNTRY PARTY GOVERNMENT THAT REPEALED IT. THEIR DECISION WAS EXPLAINED BY SIR JOHN McEWEN IN THESE TERMS:

THE ACT TO BE REPEALED WAS PASSED AS A WARTIME CONTINGENCY AND IT HAS SERVED ITS PURPOSE. IT HAS ONLY A LIMITED USEFULNESS. THERE IS NO LONGER ANY JUSTIFICATION FOR PAYMENT FROM PUBLIC FUNDS OF A BOUNTY TO REDUCE THE COST OF A PRODUCT WHEN FOR THE OVERWHELMING PERCENTAGE OF ITS USERS IT HAS SERVED ITS PURPOSE.

NOW THAT IS PRECISELY OUR POSITION TODAY. THE BOUNTY HAS OUTLIVED ITS USEFULNESS. IT HAS SERVED ITS PURPOSE. IN THE PRESENT BOUYANT CONDITION OF THE RURAL SECTOR, NO GOVERNMENT CAN JUSTIFY THE EXPENDITURE OF \$60 MILLION A YEAR ON A SUBSIDY THAT IS NO LONGER USEFUL. WE HAVE GIVEN A FULL YEAR'S NOTICE OF THE REMOVAL OF THE SUBSIDY AND I HAVE REMINDED FARMERS THAT IF THEY FEEL THEY HAVE A CASE FOR SPECIAL ASSISTANCE THEY SHOULD PUT IT TO THE INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE COMMISSION WHICH MY GOVERNMENT SET UP. I MUST SAY I FIND IT CURIOUS THAT THE PEOPLE OBJECTING MOST LOUDLY TO THE REMOVAL OF THIS SUBSIDY ARE THOSE WHO ARE CONSTANTLY TELLING US TO REDUCE GOVERNMENT SPENDING.

LET ME EXPRESS THAT FIGURE OF \$60 MILLION A YEAR IN TERMS RELEVANT TO YOUR OWN STATE. IT IS ROUGHLY EQUAL TO THE ESTIMATED TOTAL - \$65,159,000 - OF ALL SPECIFIC PURPOSE REVENUE PAYMENTS TO BE MADE BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT TO TASMANIA IN THE PRESENT FINANCIAL YEAR. IT IS ALMOST TWO-THIRDS THE TOTAL OF ALL GENERAL REVENUE ASSISTANCE TO TASMANIA. IT IS ROUGHLY FIVE TIMES THE AMOUNT PAID BY THE COMMONWEALTH TO TASMANIA FOR ALL EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES IN THE CURRENT YEAR. NOW MUCH AS I WOULD LIKE TO TELL YOU THAT THE WHOLE \$60 MILLION SAVED IN THIS WAY WILL BE PAID TO TASMANIA, I REGRET I CANNOT DO SO. IT IS QUITE CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT SAVINGS OF THAT ORDER, WHEN APPLIED IN OTHER WAYS, CAN HAVE A CONSIDERABLE IMPACT ON THE WELL-BEING OF THE SMALLER STATES. MODEST SAVINGS ON A NATIONAL SCALE CAN BRING MORE THAN MODEST REWARDS TO A STATE SUCH AS YOURS.

I WELCOME THIS OPPORTUNITY TO TALK TO YOU BECAUSE I KNOW THERE IS TENDENCY FOR TASMANIANS TO FEEL - WHATEVER GOVERNMENT MAY BE IN POWER - THAT THEY ARE NEGLECTED OR FORGOTTEN IN CANBERRA. YOUR PRIDE, YOUR UNIQUENESS, YOUR HISTORY, YOUR ISOLATION - IN A LITERAL SENSE, YOUR INSULARITY - MAKE YOU SOMEWHAT SUSPICIOUS OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS. IF YOU EXAMINE THE RECORD FAIRLY I DOUBT IF YOU WILL FIND ANY INSTANCE OF TASMANIA BEING UNFAIRLY TREATED BY MY GOVERNMENT OR PLACED AT A DISADVANTAGE COMPARED WITH THE OTHER STATES. INDEED IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT TASMANIA HAS BENEFITED PROPORTIONATELY BETTER FROM NATIONAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING THAN THE REST OF AUSTRALIA. I SHALL LIST SOME OF THESE AREAS IN A MOMENT. BUT FIRST LET ME MAKE A PURELY POLITICAL POINT. AS YOU KNOW, THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY, WHICH COMPOSES THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT, CURRENTLY HOLDS ALL FIVE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SEATS IN TASMANIA. THAT IS A REMARKABLE, GRATIFYING AND, I BELIEVE, QUITE UNPRECEDENTED EXPRESSION OF PUBLIC TRUST IN A POLITICAL PARTY. NOW THOSE FIVE SEATS IN TASMANIA REPRESENT, FOR THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT, MORE THAN HALF ITS ENTIRE MAJORITY. I MERELY SAY THIS: IT MAY BE THAT YOUR BEST ASSURANCE, YOUR MOST COMPELLING GUARANTEE OF MY GOVERNMENT'S CONCERN FOR YOUR STATE LIES IN THOSE FIVE SEATS. I ASK YOU TO ACCEPT, AS POLITICALLY REALISTIC MEN, THAT NO GOVERNMENT ENJOYING THE PUBLIC TRUST PLACED IN IT BY THE PEOPLE OF TASMANIA COULD AFFORD FOR A MOMENT TO NEGLECT YOUR INTERESTS OR YOUR WELFARE.

THE OTHER BASIC ASSURANCE YOU HAVE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S CONCERN LIES, PARADOXICALLY IT MAY SEEM, IN OUR CONCERN FOR THE LARGER CITIES OF THE MAINLAND. NO GOVERNMENT WHICH IS COMMITTED TO RESTRICT THE GROWTH OF SYDNEY AND MELBOURNE CAN BE INDIFFERENT TO THE GROWTH OF THE SMALLER CAPITALS. FOR THE SAME REASON THAT WE ARE ENCOURAGING THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW CITIES LIKE ALBURY-WODONGA WE ARE ENCOURAGING THE GROWTH OF EXISTING CITIES SUCH AS HOBART. MIND YOU, WE ARE DETERMINED THAT HOBART WILL AVOID THE INTOLERABLE PRESSURES PLACED ON THE LARGER CITIES. IT IS, HOWEVER, ESSENTIAL TO OUR PLANS FOR BALANCED DEVELOPMENT AND MORE EQUITABLE AND EFFICIENT USE OF OUR RESOURCES THAT SOME OF THE GROWTH OF SYDNEY AND MELBOURNE SHOULD BE DIVERTED TO SMALLER CITIES WHERE IT WILL NOT ONLY BE ACCEPTABLE, BUT BENEFICIAL. SYDNEY'S LOSS, I TRUST, WILL BE HOBART'S GAIN.

WITH THAT IN MIND, LET ME GIVE YOU SOME EXAMPLES OF HOW TASMANIA BENEFITS FROM THE WIDE RANGE OF NEW AND INCREASED EXPENDITURES PROVIDED IN THE GOVERNMENT'S FIRST BUDGET.

TOTAL PAYMENTS TO THE TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT IN 1973-74, FOR ALL PURPOSES AND INCLUDING THE STATES' LOAN COUNCIL PROGRAM, ARE ESTIMATED TO TOTAL \$228 MILLION, AN INCREASE OF \$32 MILLION OR 16% OVER THE AMOUNT IN 1972-73. THIS REPRESENTS OVER \$570 PER HEAD OF POPULATION IN TASMANIA, COMPARED WITH AVERAGE PAYMENTS TO ALL STATES OF \$337 PER HEAD.

IT IS ESTIMATED THAT TASMANIA WILL RECEIVE GENERAL REVENUE GRANTS TOTALLING \$97.7 MILLION IN 1973-74, REPRESENTING \$245 PER HEAD COMPARED WITH A NATIONAL AVERAGE OF \$143 PER HEAD.

TASMANIA HAS BEEN ALLOCATED \$64 MILLION IN GENERAL PURPOSE CAPITAL FUNDS, UNDER DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE LOAN COUNCIL LAST JUNE, FOR STATE GOVERNMENT WORKS IN 1973-74, INCLUDING AN INTEREST-FREE GRANT FROM THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT OF \$20.5 MILLION. IN PER CAPITA TERMS, TASMANIA IS RECEIVING OVER DOUBLE THE NATIONAL ALLOCATION - \$161 PER HEAD - COMPARED WITH \$66.9 PER HEAD FOR THE SIX STATES COMBINED.

ALL THESE ALLOCATIONS RECOGNISE THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF YOUR STATE, ATTRIBUTABLE TO ITS SMALL POPULATION AND ITS RELATIVELY LOW CAPACITY TO RAISE REVENUE AND SPREAD ITS OVERHEAD COSTS.

IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION AUSTRALIAN  
GOVERNMENT GRANTS WILL RISE DRAMATICALLY, MAINLY AS A RESULT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE KARMEL COMMITTEE. GRANTS FOR SCHOOLS IN TASMANIA ARE ESTIMATED TO TOTAL \$5.5 MILLION IN 1973-74, AN INCREASE OF \$2.9 MILLION OR 112% OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR. GRANTS FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION WILL TOTAL ABOUT \$12.5 MILLION THIS YEAR, AN INCREASE OF \$6.6 MILLION OR 112% OVER THE CORRESPONDING TOTAL IN 1972-73. OUR ADVANCES FOR HOUSING WILL INCREASE BY 82% OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR. WE HAVE ALSO MADE GENEROUS GRANTS TO TASMANIA FOR GROWTH CENTRES AND OTHER URBAN AND REGIONAL PROJECTS, FOR LAND ACQUISITION, URBAN TRANSPORT AND SEWERAGE. IN ADDITION, TASMANIA WILL RECEIVE GRANTS OF \$14 MILLION IN 1973-74 UNDER THE COMMONWEALTH AID ROADS ARRANGEMENTS. THIS IS ANOTHER AREA WHERE TASMANIA DOES PROPORTIONATELY BETTER THAN OTHER STATES. IN 1973-74 ITS GRANTS WILL BE ABOUT \$35 PER HEAD OF POPULATION COMPARED WITH \$24 PER HEAD FOR THE SIX STATES. TASMANIA'S SPECIAL PROBLEMS, SUCH AS THE HIGH COST OF ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE DUE TO YOUR PECULIAR TOPOGRAPHICAL CONDITIONS, ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WHEN GRANTS ARE DETERMINED.

IF WE LOOK AT TASMANIA'S ECONOMY AS A WHOLE -  
AND AS BUSINESSMEN I KNOW THAT IS YOUR MAJOR CONCERN -  
WE FIND A STRONG PATTERN OF EXPANSION IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS.  
RETAIL SALES IN THE SEPTEMBER QUARTER WERE 12.7% HIGHER THAN  
THE SAME QUARTER OF 1972. REGISTRATIONS OF NEW MOTOR VEHICLES  
IN THE DECEMBER QUARTER WERE 12.4% HIGHER THAN A YEAR BEFORE,  
COMPARED WITH A 10.3% INCREASE FOR THE WHOLE OF AUSTRALIA.  
THERE WAS A STRONG GROWTH IN HOME BUILDING. THE NUMBER OF DWELLINGS  
UNDER CONSTRUCTION WAS 40.7% GREATER IN THE DECEMBER QUARTER  
OF 1973 THAN IN THE DECEMBER QUARTER OF 1972 - WELL ABOVE THE  
AUSTRALIAN AVERAGE OF 33%. IT IS TRUE THAT THE LABOUR  
MARKET HAS RECORDED ONLY MARGINAL IMPROVEMENT IN THE PAST  
YEAR, BUT THERE HAS BEEN A SIGNIFICANT ACCELERATION IN  
EMPLOYMENT GROWTH. BETWEEN NOVEMBER 1972 AND NOVEMBER 1973  
(THE LATEST MONTH FOR WHICH FIGURES ARE AVAILABLE) THE NUMBER  
OF EMPLOYED WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS INCREASED BY 3.8%, A MARKED  
IMPROVEMENT ON THE 0.9% INCREASE BETWEEN NOVEMBER 1971 AND  
NOVEMBER 1972. THE EXPANSION IN FEMALE EMPLOYMENT HAS  
BEEN ESPECIALLY PRONOUNCED: 6.9% IN THE LATEST 12-MONTH  
PERIOD, COMPARED WITH A GROWTH OF 0.7% IN THE PRECEDING YEAR.



I WOULD NOT WANT THOSE FIGURES - IMPORTANT AS THEY ARE, ENCOURAGING AS THEY ARE - TO BE TAKEN IN ISOLATION TO GIVE A MISLEADING PICTURE OF CONDITIONS IN TASMANIA. I ACKNOWLEDGE FRANKLY THAT GROWTH AND DEMAND IN YOUR STATE HAS BEEN LESS MARKED THAN IN AUSTRALIA AS A WHOLE DURING RECENT MONTHS. IN PARTICULAR YOUR LEVEL OF UNEMPLOYMENT - JUST OVER 3% AT THE END OF JANUARY - IS STILL UNACCEPTABLY HIGH, ALMOST 1% HIGHER THAN THE NATIONAL FIGURE. I BELIEVE THIS IS DUE TO UNIQUE LOCAL AND SEASONAL FACTORS IN TASMANIA. NEVERTHELESS WE WANT TO SEE THAT FIGURE REDUCED, AND IT WILL BE REDUCED. MY GOVERNMENT'S FIRST PRIORITY - ITS FIRST DUTY TO ITS SUPPORTERS AND TO THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE - WAS TO RESTORE FULL EMPLOYMENT AFTER THE RECESSION OF 1971-72. WE HAVE RESTORED FULL EMPLOYMENT IN NATIONAL TERMS AND WE HAVE RESTORED A STRONG LEVEL OF REAL NATIONAL GROWTH. WE HAVE OPENED UP IMPORTANT NEW MARKETS IN ASIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES FOR OUR EXPORTS, ESPECIALLY PRIMARY PRODUCTION. FARMERS IN PARTICULAR ARE ENJOYING RECORD INCOMES, RECORD PRODUCTION, RECORD PROSPERITY. WE HAVE GOT OUR OVERSEAS RESERVES INTO A MUCH HEALTHIER STATE OF BALANCE. WE HAVE TAKEN OVERDUE MEASURES, INCLUDING TWO REVALUATIONS, TO PLACE THE CURRENCY ON A SOUNDER FOOTING IN RELATION TO CURRENCIES OVERSEAS. I BELIEVE WE CAN NOW CLAIM THAT THE AUSTRALIAN DOLLAR IS THE STRONGEST CURRENCY IN THE WORLD.

I HAVE SAID MANY TIMES THAT INFLATION REMAINS THE MOST IMPORTANT SINGLE PROBLEM FACING THE GOVERNMENT. THE MEASURES WE HAVE TAKEN TO RESTRAIN INFLATION - OUR TARIFF CUTS, OUR REVALUATIONS, THE PRICES JUSTIFICATION TRIBUNAL, OUR MONETARY POLICIES - HAVE ALL HAD POSITIVE AND IMPORTANT EFFECTS ON THE LEVEL OF INFLATION. INFLATION WOULD BE A GREAT DEAL HIGHER TODAY IF MY GOVERNMENT HAD NOT TAKEN THE ACTION IT HAS - IF WE HAD NEGLECTED THE OVERDUE MEASURES WHICH WERE SHIRKED FOR SO LONG BY OUR PREDECESSORS.

I GIVE AN ASSURANCE THAT OUR UNREMITTING AND MANY-SIDED BATTLE AGAINST INFLATION WILL GO ON. THE ENERGY CRISIS AND THE ENORMOUS UNCERTAINTIES IT HAS BROUGHT TO THE ECONOMIES OF OUR TRADING PARTNERS MAKE THE FUTURE MORE HAZARDOUS AND UNPREDICTABLE. I SHOULD MAKE IT QUITE PLAIN, HOWEVER, THAT INFLATION WILL NOT BE TACKLED WITH THE OLD-FASHIONED METHODS OF THE PAST. WE WILL NOT REDUCE INFLATION BY CREATING UNEMPLOYMENT FOR WORKERS OR STAGNATION FOR BUSINESSMEN. WE WILL NOT FIGHT INFLATION BY RENEGING ON THE PROMISES WE MADE TO THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE FOR SOCIAL REFORM, FOR EDUCATION, FOR DECENT CITIES, FOR BETTER TRANSPORT, FOR A NEW DEAL FOR PENSIONERS, MIGRANTS, ABORIGINALS AND THE POOR. WE ARE OFTEN TOLD THAT WE MUST REDUCE GOVERNMENT SPENDING. NO ONE EVER TELLS US WHAT SPENDING WE SHOULD CUT. THE FACT IS THAT EVERY MEASURE FOR INCREASED WELFARE OR INCREASED SPENDING ON SOCIAL REFORM PROGRAMS HAS BEEN SUPPORTED BY OUR OPPONENTS IN THE PARLIAMENT. IN THE CASE OF EDUCATION THEY EVEN ASKED US TO SPEND A LITTLE MORE ON SCHOOLS THAT DIDN'T NEED IT. IN THE CASE OF PHOSPHATES, THEY ASKED US TO KEEP A SUBSIDY THAT NO LONGER SERVES ITS PURPOSE AND WHICH OUR PREDECESSORS THEMSELVES ABOLISHED WHEN ITS USEFULNESS EXPIRED. IT IS ALL VERY WELL TO TALK ABOUT CUTS IN SPENDING, BUT I ASK: WHERE ARE THE CUTS COMING FROM?

I COME NOW TO SOME MATTERS OF SPECIAL CONCERN TO YOUR STATE. I KNOW THERE IS ANXIETY FOR THE OUTLOOK IN THE APPLE INDUSTRY. MY COLLEAGUE, SENATOR KEN WRIEDT, THE MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRY, IS AWARE OF THE NEED FOR EXPANDED EXPORT MARKETS. LAST OCTOBER HE ANNOUNCED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD DECIDED TO ESTABLISH AN AUSTRALIAN APPLE AND PEAR CORPORATION TO REPLACE THE EXISTING APPLE AND PEAR BOARD. THE CORPORATION WILL BE ABLE TO TRADE IN ITS OWN RIGHT AND PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN RESEARCH AND PROMOTION. THE SEARCH FOR NEW MARKETS WILL BE AN IMPORTANT TASK OF THE NEW CORPORATION. IN ADDITION, THE GOVERNMENT HAS MADE EMERGENCY PAYMENTS TOTALLING \$2.1 MILLION TO ASSIST APPLE EXPORTERS ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THE REVALUATION OF THE DOLLAR. SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS OF \$1,000 WILL ALSO BE MADE TO FARMERS GROWING EXPORT APPLES WHO MAY BE IN EXTREME FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES. I SHOULD SAY THAT NO ONE UNDERSTANDS YOUR PROBLEMS BETTER, OR HAS DONE MORE FOR THE LONG-TERM INTERESTS OF PRIMARY PRODUCERS IN THIS COUNTRY, THAN YOUR FELLOW-TASMANIAN, KEN WRIEDT. I BELIEVE HE IS HELD IN UNIVERSAL RESPECT THROUGHOUT THIS STATE AND THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA.

NEXT, I MENTION OUR POLICY ON WATER RESOURCES.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS PUBLISHED A DOCUMENT, "A NATIONAL APPROACH TO WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT", WHICH SETS OUT A NUMBER OF OBJECTIVES AND PROPOSED COURSES OF ACTION BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF AUSTRALIA'S WATER RESOURCES. A MEETING OF STATE AND AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT MINISTERS IN MELBOURNE ON 14 DECEMBER ENDORSED OUR CONCEPT OF A NATIONAL WATER POLICY, AND FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WILL BE HELD ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THAT POLICY. YOUR PREMIER HAS SOUGHT AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE FOR THE NORTH WESTERN REGIONAL WATER SCHEME, WHICH WILL AUGMENT THE WATER SUPPLIES OF SEVERAL TOWNS IN THE BURNIE-DEVONPORT AREA. CONSULTATIONS ON THIS PROJECT WILL BE UNDERTAKEN SHORTLY.

IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR IMPORTANT MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES, ESPECIALLY THOSE BASED ON YOUR MINERAL AND TIMBER RESOURCES, MY GOVERNMENT RECOGNISES THE SPECIAL DIFFICULTIES IMPOSED BY HIGH TRANSPORT COSTS BETWEEN TASMANIA AND THE MAINLAND. ON 30 NOVEMBER LAST YEAR I ANNOUNCED THE APPOINTMENT OF MR J. F. NIMMO, FORMER SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING, AS A ROYAL COMMISSIONER TO UNDERTAKE AN INQUIRY INTO THE IMPACT OF FREIGHT RATES ON THE TASMANIAN ECONOMY. WE HAVE ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT MR M. M. SUMMERS, FORMER SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT, WILL INQUIRE INTO THE LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT OF THE MARITIME INDUSTRY. I AM HOPEFUL THAT BOTH THESE INQUIRIES WILL BENEFIT TASMANIA.

I MENTION OUR IMPORTANT DECISION TO MOVE THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE ANTARCTIC DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE TO HOBART. THE DIVISION WILL MOVE INTO A NEW UNIFIED COMPLEX TO COST AROUND \$3 MILLION AND EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN 1977. THIS WILL BE A MAJOR DECENTRALISATION OF AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT. MUCH OF THE DIVISION'S BUDGET OF MORE THAN \$3 MILLION A YEAR WILL BE SPENT IN TASMANIA PURCHASING SUPPLIES FOR EXPEDITIONS AND SHIPS. HOBART WAS CHOSEN BECAUSE OF ITS EXCELLENT PORT FACILITIES AND GREATER PROXIMITY TO THE ANTARCTIC. THE RESULT WILL BE A MORE FREQUENT USE OF HOBART BY THE POLAR VESSELS ON CHARTER TO THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT. THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA, WHICH HAS HAD A LONG ASSOCIATION WITH THE DIVISION IN RESEARCH WORK ON COSMIC RAYS, WILL BE ABLE TO CO-OPERATE MORE CLOSELY IN OTHER AREAS OF RESEARCH AND BUILD UP ITS ALREADY CONSIDERABLE SCIENTIFIC REPUTATION. THE ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, SIR GEORGE CARTLAND, AND THE ACADEMIC STAFF OF THE UNIVERSITY TO THE TRANSFER OF THE DIVISION UNDERLINES THE LONG-TERM IMPORTANCE THAT THEY SEE IN THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION.

I REFER NEXT TO OUR SPECIAL ENCOURAGEMENT FOR TOURISM IN TASMANIA. WE ESTABLISHED A NEW DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM AND RECREATION, AND LAST YEAR THE MINISTER APPROVED A GRANT OF \$95,000 TO TASMANIA TOWARDS THE RESTORATION AND CONVERSION OF THE HISTORIC ASYLUM AT PORT ARTHUR. WE HAVE APPROVED GRANTS, ON A DOLLAR FOR DOLLAR BASIS WITH THE STATES, TO DEVELOP YOUTH HOSTELS FOR YOUNG TRAVELLERS.

FINALLY I MENTION THE IMPORTANT WORK OF THE CSIRO AND THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE IN CHECKING AND MONITORING MERCURY POLLUTION IN THE DERWENT; LAST YEAR OUR LABORATORIES IN TASMANIA DETECTED A HIGH LEVEL OF MERCURY IN SOME TYPES OF FISH AND WARNINGS WERE ISSUED TO THE PUBLIC BY THE TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT. THE DEPARTMENTS OF SCIENCE AND HEALTH ARE MAKING A CONTINUING INVESTIGATION INTO THE PRESENCE OF MERCURY AND BROMIDE IN HOUSEHOLD FOODS.

I KNOW THAT A SMALL STATE SUCH AS YOURS HAS SPECIAL PROBLEMS IN KEEPING PACE WITH THE DEVELOPMENT AND LIVING STANDARDS OF THE LARGER STATES. SO LET ME CONCLUDE WITH SOME REFERENCE TO THE MEASURES WE ARE TAKING TO ENSURE GREATER EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IN THE ALLOCATION OF OUR NATIONAL RESOURCES. THESE RELATE SPECIALLY TO THE AREA OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT. TASMANIANS ARE WELL AWARE OF THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF THE COMMONWEALTH GRANTS COMMISSION IN REDRESSING THE INEQUALITIES BETWEEN THE STATES. YOU ALSO HAVE DIRECT EXPERIENCE OF INEQUALITIES BETWEEN REGIONS WITHIN YOUR STATE, FOR SMALL AS TASMANIA IS IN GEOGRAPHICAL TERMS, THERE ARE AREAS WITHIN IT WHICH ARE MARKEDLY LESS DEVELOPED, LESS PROSPEROUS, THAN OTHERS. IT IS FOR THAT REASON THAT MY GOVERNMENT DECIDED LAST YEAR TO WIDEN THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GRANTS COMMISSION TO ENABLE IT TO GIVE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT ON A REGIONAL BASIS. APPLICATIONS FOR ASSISTANCE HAVE BEEN MADE AND I EXPECT THE COMMISSION TO COMPLETE ITS HEARINGS ABOUT THE END OF MAY, WITH RECOMMENDATIONS IN TIME FOR THE 1974-75 BUDGET.

OUR OTHER INITIATIVE IS DESIGNED TO GIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT A VOICE AND A VOTE ON THE LOAN COUNCIL AND TO ENABLE THE NATIONAL PARLIAMENT TO BORROW MONEY ON BEHALF OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND GRANT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE DIRECT TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT BODIES. THIS WILL BE POSSIBLE IF OUR REFERENDUM ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS APPROVED IN MAY. I STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS PROPOSAL TO TASMANIA. YOUR STATE HAS MANY SPECIAL NEEDS WHICH ONLY LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN SUPPLY. IF WE ARE TO ENSURE THAT TASMANIA'S DEVELOPMENT KEEPS UP WITH THE OTHER STATES; IF WE ARE TO ENSURE THAT THE FINANCIAL RESOURCES OF THE NATION ARE FULLY AND EFFECTIVELY USED FOR THE WELFARE OF THE SMALLER STATES AND THE REGIONS WITHIN IT, IF WE ARE TO ENSURE THAT TASMANIA AND TASMANIANS HAVE JUST AND PROPER ACCESS TO THE RESOURCES OF THE NATION AND THAT THESE RESOURCES ARE USED WHERE THEY ARE MOST NEEDED, THEN I URGE YOU TO SUPPORT THE REFERENDUM WE SHALL BE PUTTING TO THE PEOPLE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SENATE ELECTIONS. THERE WILL NO LONGER BE ANY NEED FOR A SMALL STATE TO BE DISADVANTAGED OR FOR REGIONS WITHIN THAT STATE TO BE DEPRIVED. BY THIS REFERENDUM I HOPE TO SEE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHED AS A FULL AND EQUAL PARTNER IN THE FEDERAL SYSTEM. IN THE SAME WAY, AND WITH THE ASSISTANCE AND CONTINUED SUPPORT OF THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT, I BELIEVE TASMANIA WILL PROSPER AS A FULL AND EQUAL PARTNER IN OUR FEDERATION.

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