

EMBARGOED AGAINST DELIVERY
AT 3.00 P.M.



CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

PRIME MINISTER

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER, MR BOB HAWKE, TO THE COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT, MELBOURNE, 19 JANUARY 1983

I AM VERY PLEASED TO BE HERE TODAY TO JOIN IN THE OFFICIAL LAUNCHING OF THE COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT.

I AM AWARE THAT THE COMMITTEE HAS FOR SOME TIME NOW BEEN WORKING QUIETLY BEHIND THE SCENES AND HAS ALREADY MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN VICTORIA IN OPENING UP EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. WHEN I LOOK AT THE EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE OF THE COMMITTEE'S MEMBERS, I AM CONFIDENT THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO GO ON AND ACHIEVE A GREAT DEAL MORE IN THIS MOST IMPORTANT AREA.

WHEN MY GOVERNMENT CAME TO OFFICE SOME 10 MONTHS AGO WE FACED A NUMBER OF SERIOUS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS - NONE WORSE THAN THE DISASTROUS UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION, PARTICULARLY THAT FACING YOUNG AUSTRALIANS. WE PLACED THE HIGHEST PRIORITY ON TACKLING THIS PROBLEM. WE BELIEVED THEN, AS WE DO NOW, THAT LEVELS OF UNEMPLOYMENT ANYTHING LIKE THOSE OF THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS CANNOT AND SHOULD NOT BE TOLERATED.

IN CONSEQUENCE, WE HAVE DEVELOPED POLICIES DIRECTED AT THE PROMOTION OF SUSTAINED ECONOMIC GROWTH, WHICH WILL LEAD TO INCREASED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS, INCLUDING YOUNG PEOPLE.

THE AUSTRALIAN UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM HAS BEEN OF SUCH MAGNITUDE THAT ONLY SUSTAINED GROWTH IN EMPLOYMENT OVER LONG PERIODS CAN MAKE REAL HEADWAY AGAINST IT.

WE ARE MAKING SOME HEADWAY, BUT THERE IS A LONG ROAD AHEAD.

THE POLICIES BASED ON CO-OPERATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT, WORKERS AND BUSINESS THAT WE BEGAN TO PUT IN PLACE AT THE SUMMIT LAST APRIL HAVE ALLOWED US TO CAPITALISE ON THE GOOD FORTUNE OF THE BREAKING OF THE DROUGHT AND IMPROVED OVERSEAS ECONOMIC CONDITIONS. IN THE EIGHT MONTHS FROM APRIL TO DECEMBER 1983, EMPLOYMENT ROSE BY OVER 158,000 JOBS - A SHARP REVERSAL FROM THE SITUATION IN THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING 8 MONTHS, WHEN OVER 146,000 JOBS WERE LOST. THIS GROWTH IN EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTED SOME REDUCTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT ON A SEASONALLY ADJUSTED BASIS, FROM 10.3 PER CENT IN APRIL TO 9.2 PER CENT OF THE LABOUR FORCE.

BUT WE HAVE ALWAYS RECOGNISED THAT EVEN WITH EXTRA-ORDINARILY RAPID AND SUSTAINED EMPLOYMENT GROWTH, ANY RETURN TO THE FULL EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS OF THE POST-WAR GENERATION WILL BE A LONG, SLOW AND DIFFICULT PROCESS.

AND THROUGH THIS PROCESS, UNEMPLOYMENT WILL AFFECT OUR YOUTH MOST SEVERELY. UNEMPLOYMENT AMONGST TEENAGERS HAD BEEN INCREASING STEADILY UNTIL IT REACHED HISTORICALLY HIGH LEVELS IN 1982-83. IN JANUARY 1983 THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR TEENAGERS SEEKING FULL TIME WORK PEAKED AT 29 PER CENT. THERE HAS BEEN A SLIGHT DECLINE SINCE THEN, BUT THE RATE REMAINS UNACCEPTABLY HIGH. THIS SITUATION IS BEING AGGRAVATED BY THE ARRIVAL OF THE CURRENT ROUND OF SCHOOL LEAVERS LAST MONTH AND THIS MONTH.

NEARLY A QUARTER OF A MILLION PEOPLE ARE THOUGHT TO HAVE LEFT SCHOOL AT THE END OF LAST YEAR - OF THESE AROUND 145,000 ARE NOW BEGINNING TO LOOK FOR WORK. THESE SCHOOL LEAVERS WILL FIND THEIR SEARCH FOR EMPLOYMENT MADE MORE DIFFICULT BY COMPETITION FROM THE ABNORMALLY HIGH PROPORTION OF THE PREVIOUS YEAR'S SCHOOL LEAVERS WHO ARE STILL UNEMPLOYED. AS AT OCTOBER 1983 SOME 60,000 TEENAGERS WERE STILL LOOKING FOR THEIR FIRST JOB.

AS I MENTIONED, SOUND ECONOMIC POLICIES ARE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE LONGER TERM RESPONSE TO YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT. BUT MANY HAVE USED THIS REALITY AS AN EXCUSE FOR TURNING THEIR BACKS ON THE IMMEDIATE NEEDS OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE AFFECTED. SPECIAL MEASURES ARE NECESSARY TO ALLEVIATE THE PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY IMPACT OF UNEMPLOYMENT, BOTH BY GOVERNMENT, AND THROUGH PRIVATE INITIATIVES, OF WHICH THE WORK OF YOUR COMMITTEE IS AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE.

FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S PART, OUR MOST IMPORTANT INITIATIVE IS THE COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM. WE HAVE ALLOCATED \$300 MILLION TO THIS PROGRAM IN 1983-84 - THIS SHOULD RESULT IN THE CREATION OF UP TO 40,000 JOBS THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA THIS FINANCIAL YEAR, WITH UP TO 70,000 JOBS PER YEAR BEING CREATED WHEN THE PROGRAM IS FULLY OPERATIONAL. THESE JOBS WILL BE IN PROJECTS SPONSORED BY FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS. FUNDS FOR THESE PROJECTS HAVE STARTED TO FLOW. THE CEP GIVES SPECIAL PRIORITY FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE MOST DISADVANTAGED JOB SEEKERS AND THOSE WHO ARE LEAST LIKELY TO BENEFIT FROM A GENERAL ECONOMIC RECOVERY, ESPECIALLY THE LONG TERM UNEMPLOYMENT. IT IS A SAD FACT THAT MANY YOUNG PEOPLE NOW FIT INTO THIS CATEGORY.

COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM JOBS HAVE A VITAL FUNCTION TO PERFORM, THAT OF PROVIDING PARTICIPANTS WITH SKILLS AND WORK EXPERIENCE. WE SEE THESE AS BEING NECESSARY FOR PEOPLE TO BREAK OUT OF THE UNEMPLOYMENT CYCLE INTO PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT IN THE OPEN LABOUR MARKET.

WE INHERITED A MISCELLANY OF LABOUR MARKET AND TRAINING PROGRAMS. THE PROGRAMS WERE GENERALLY UNCO-ORDINATED AND MANY DEVELOPED UNDER SUBSTANTIALLY DIFFERENT LABOUR MARKET CONDITIONS. THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED THAT THERE IS A NEED FOR A MAJOR REVIEW OF THE PROGRAMS TO ENSURE THAT THEY FULLY MEET THE GOVERNMENT'S LABOUR MARKET POLICY OBJECTIVES. AN EXTERNAL COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY HEADED BY PETER KIRBY, CHAIRMAN OF THE TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION BOARD OF VICTORIA HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED.

WE ARE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED THAT THE PROGRAMS, THE MAJORITY OF WHICH ARE AIMED AT YOUNG PEOPLE, SHOULD BE BOTH COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED. ONLY IN THIS WAY CAN WE HOPE TO PROVIDE THE SKILLS NEEDED FOR FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WHILE AT THE SAME TIME PROVIDING ADEQUATE SUPPORT TO THE MORE DISADVANTAGED MEMBERS OF SOCIETY WHO FIND IT DIFFICULT TO COMPETE IN THE OPEN MARKET WITHOUT ASSISTANCE.

THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY WILL BE MAKING AN INTERIM REPORT TO THE GOVERNMENT IN TIME FOR CONSIDERATION FOR THE NEXT BUDGET - AND A FINAL REPORT BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR.

IN THE MEANTIME WE HAVE TAKEN STEPS TO STRENGTHEN SUBSTANTIALLY EXISTING PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

WE HAVE EXPANDED THE COMMUNITY YOUTH SUPPORT SCHEME WITH A 27% INCREASE IN THE BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR THIS FINANCIAL YEAR. CYSS AIMS TO ENCOURAGE COMMUNITIES TO ASSIST LOCAL YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH PERIODS OF UNEMPLOYMENT BY DEVELOPING THEIR SKILLS AND INCREASING THEIR SELF-RELIANCE. THE ADDITIONAL FUNDING HAS ALLOWED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF 31 NEW PROJECTS IN AREAS OF HIGH NEED. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CYSS PROJECTS NOW FUNDED THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA IS 306. FUNDING FOR EXISTING PROGRAMS HAS ALSO BEEN SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED:

- GRANT LEVELS HAVE BEEN INCREASED BY UP TO 21% TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF INCREASED PROJECT OPERATING COSTS;
- 38 EXISTING PROJECTS IN AREAS OF HIGH NEED HAVE HAD THEIR GRANT LEVELS UPGRADED.

THESE MEASURES WILL ENSURE THAT CYSS PROJECTS CAN CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SUPPORT AND ASSIST IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF UNEMPLOYED YOUNG PEOPLE IN THEIR LOCAL AREA.

WE HAVE MORE THAN DOUBLED THE FUNDING FOR THE VOLUNTEER YOUTH PROGRAM. THIS PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO ASSIST UNEMPLOYED YOUNG PERSONS MAINTAIN AND DEVELOP THEIR CAPACITY FOR OBTAINING EMPLOYMENT THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES. WHILE THIS PROGRAM AT PRESENT INVOLVES ONLY 10 PROJECTS, SOME TWO AND A HALF THOUSAND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE EXPECTED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY THE PROGRAM THIS YEAR.

WE ARE PROVIDING MORE ASSISTANCE THAN EVER BEFORE UNDER THE SPECIAL YOUTH EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PROGRAM. THIS PROGRAM HELPS EMPLOYERS TAKE ON YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO ESTABLISH THEMSELVES IN THE LABOUR FORCE. IT PROVIDES NECESSARY WORK EXPERIENCE TO BRING THEM UP TO A LEVEL WHERE THEY ARE ABLE TO ADEQUATELY COMPETE FOR JOBS. THIS YEAR WE HOPE THAT SOME 90,000 YOUNG UNEMPLOYED WILL GAIN THE BENEFIT OF WORK EXPERIENCE UNDER THE PROGRAM.

OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SITUATION HAS BEEN EXACERBATED BY A SERIOUS FALL IN THE NUMBER OF APPRENTICESHIPS BECOMING AVAILABLE. THIS HAS AFFECTED BOTH SCHOOL LEAVERS SEEKING APPRENTICESHIPS AND THOSE WHO HAVE PARTIALLY COMPLETED THEIR APPRENTICESHIP BEFORE BEING LAID OFF.

.../7

IN RESPONSE TO THIS SITUATION THE GOVERNMENT HAS ADOPTED A FLEXIBLE APPROACH, ATTEMPTING AS FAR AS POSSIBLE TO TAILOR ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUAL NEEDS. ON THE ONE HAND WE PROVIDE SUBSTANTIAL ASSISTANCE TO PRIVATE EMPLOYERS TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO TAKE ON AND RETAIN APPRENTICES. ON THE OTHER, WE ARE PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO THE STATES TO UNDERTAKE PRELIMINARY TRADE TRAINING COURSES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE UNABLE TO FIND AN APPRENTICESHIP. THE COURSES WILL GIVE PARTICIPANTS BASIC TRAINING IN THEIR CHOSEN TRADE AND MAKE THEM MORE ATTRACTIVE AS EMPLOYEES, AS THEY WILL NO LONGER HAVE TO BE TRAINED FROM SCRATCH.

THESE PRACTICAL MEASURES ARE BEING REINFORCED BY A MAJOR PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN FOCUSED ON INCREASING APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATES OF PRE-EMPLOYMENT COURSES AND THOSE WHO HAVE PARTLY COMPLETED THEIR APPRENTICESHIP. YOU MAY HAVE SEEN THE ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL PRESS ENCOURAGING EMPLOYERS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYING PARTLY TRAINED APPRENTICES.

TOTAL EXPENDITURE ON MANPOWER AND TRAINING PROGRAMS IN 1983-84 IS EXPECTED TO BE \$958 MILLION - AN OVERALL INCREASE IN FUNDING OF 80% WHEN COMPARED WITH THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

THESE PROGRAMS ARE ALL CONCERNED WITH ASSISTING YOUNG PEOPLE AFTER THEY HAVE LEFT SCHOOL. I BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT WE ALSO NEED TO LOOK AT THE PROBLEMS BEING FACED BY AUSTRALIA'S YOUNG PEOPLE IN RELATION TO THE COMPARATIVELY LOW RETENTION RATES AT AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS AND TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS.

IN TODAY'S WORLD, YOUNG PEOPLE NEED A BROAD, DURABLE BASE OF SKILLS SO THAT THEY CAN PLAY A FULL PART IN SOCIETY AND BE SUCCESSFUL IN AN INCREASINGLY COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT MARKET IN AN INCREASINGLY COMPETITIVE WORLD ECONOMY. TO TAKE MAXIMUM ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES BEING MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE, YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY NEED MORE THAN THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS OF LITERACY AND NUMERACY. OUR YOUTH NEEDS FLEXIBILITY AND BROAD UNDERSTANDING SO THAT THEY ARE ABLE TO ADAPT READILY TO NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND THE RAPID PACE OF CHANGE.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING MUST BE SEEN AS A LIFE-LONG PROCESS AS IT IS CERTAIN THAT MANY PEOPLE IN THE FUTURE WILL HAVE TO CHANGE THEIR OCCUPATION DURING THEIR WORKING LIFE.

INCREASED SCHOOLING AND TRAINING ARE VITAL IF YOUNG PEOPLE ARE TO ACQUIRE THESE SKILLS AND REALISE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL AND IF AUSTRALIA IS TO HAVE THE SKILLED WORKFORCE WE NEED. GOVERNMENT POLICY AIMS TO ENCOURAGE INCREASED SCHOOLING AND TRAINING AFTER THE LEGAL SCHOOL LEAVING AGE.

IN PARTICULAR WE WANT TO ASSIST THE DISADVANTAGED AND OTHERS WHO LEAVE SCHOOL LACKING THE SKILLS NECESSARY TO OBTAIN JOBS, TO STAY ON.

ACCORDINGLY, WE HAVE ALLOCATED \$75.3 MILLION TO THE PARTICIPATION AND EQUITY PROGRAM IN 1984. THIS PROGRAM IS DIRECTLY AIMED AT REDUCING THE NUMBERS OF STUDENTS LEAVING FULL-TIME EDUCATION PREMATURELY WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THOSE SCHOOLS WHERE MANY DO LEAVE EARLY. THE PROGRAM WILL BUILD UPON ACTIVITIES ALREADY UNDERWAY IN SCHOOLS AROUND AUSTRALIA, TO PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR INITIATIVES AND NEW IDEAS IN AREAS SUCH AS CURRICULUM CHANGE, ASSESSMENT, AND CO-OPERATION WITH THE TAFE SECTION. AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE PROGRAM WILL BE MEASURES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF GROUPS SUCH AS GIRLS, ABORIGINALS AND THOSE FROM NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING BACKGROUNDS, WHO HAVE TENDED TO BE DISADVANTAGED WITHIN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM.

ALONG WITH THE NEED FOR INCREASING PARTICIPATION AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL THERE IS A NEED FOR IMPROVED ACCESS TO TERTIARY EDUCATION. THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROVIDED A FURTHER \$10 MILLION IN 1984 FOR UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES OF ADVANCED EDUCATION FOR AN ADDITIONAL 3000 PLACES IN HIGHER EDUCATION.

WE SEE IT AS IMPORTANT ALSO THAT SCHOOLS PROVIDE VOCATIONALLY RELEVANT TRAINING. IN THE PRESENT DAY AND AGE COMPUTER LITERACY IS BECOMING AN INCREASINGLY ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITE TO A WIDE RANGE OF JOBS. ACCORDINGLY THE GOVERNMENT HAS INITIATED A NATIONAL COMPUTER EDUCATION PROGRAM OF \$18M OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS TO ENSURE THAT SCHOOLS PROVIDE AN ADEQUATE UNDERSTANDING OF THE USES OF NEW TECHNOLOGY, ITS IMPACT ON THE NATURE OF WORK, JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND TO REMEDY BASIC DEFICIENCIES IN COMPUTER LITERACY.

THE GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT CONVENTIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS ARE NOT THE ONLY WAYS OF APPROACHING THE YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM OR INDEED UNEMPLOYMENT GENERALLY. WE SEE MERIT IN EXAMINING A RANGE OF POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING CHANGES TO EXISTING WORK PATTERNS, AND SUPPORT FOR WORKER CO-OPERATIVES OR SMALL BUSINESSES ESTABLISHED BY THE UNEMPLOYED AS WELL AS DEVELOPMENT OF APPROACHES OUTSIDE THE CONVENTIONAL PRODUCTION SYSTEM. AS A RESULT WE HAVE EMBARKED UPON SOME EXPLORATORY INVESTIGATIONS INTO SUCH INNOVATIVE APPROACHES.

THESE IDEAS ARE BREAKING NEW GROUND IN AUSTRALIA, AND AS SUCH, WILL NEED TIME AND CAUTION IN THEIR DEVELOPMENT. HOWEVER, THE COMMONWEALTH IS CONCERNED THAT THIS WORK SHOULD PROGRESS AND IS GIVING IT PRIORITY. IT IS ENCOURAGING TO SEE THE DEVELOPMENTS BY THE STATE GOVERNMENTS IN THIS AREA.

THE PROBLEMS OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT ARE NOT ONLY THOSE THAT CAN BE MEASURED BY STATISTICS - ALTHOUGH THEY ARE ALARMING ENOUGH. THE RAMIFICATIONS ARE WIDESPREAD AND ARE REACHING DEEP INTO THE NATURE OF OUR SOCIETY.

THIS GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT MUST BE DEALT WITH IN A MANNER THAT BOTH RECOGNISES ITS IMPORTANCE, IN TERMS OF MAGNITUDE AND IMMEDIACY AND THE MANY SIDED NATURE OF THE PROBLEM. THERE IS MUCH MORE TO SOLVING THE PROBLEM THAN GIVING A HAND OUT TOGETHER WITH SOME GRATUITOUS NAME CALLING. THESE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE NOT UNEMPLOYED THROUGH ANY WISH OR FAULT OF THEIR OWN. THEY NEED TO BE GIVEN A CHANCE OR AS THE COMMITTEE HAS SO APTLY PUT IT: "GIVE YOUTH A FAIR GO".

THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES AND PROGRAMS WHICH I MENTIONED EARLIER ARE NOT ONLY THERE TO PROVIDE THE NECESSARY FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE UNEMPLOYED; THEY ARE ALSO POSITIVELY AIMED AT ASSISTING OUR YOUTH ACQUIRE THOSE SKILLS AND ABILITIES THAT WILL ENABLE THEM TO PARTICIPATE IN FULL AS MEMBERS OF THEIR COMMUNITY. BUT AS WITH OUR MACRO ECONOMIC POLICIES THE GOVERNMENT CAN ONLY PROVIDE AN APPROPRIATE FRAMEWORK AND SENSE OF DIRECTION - THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE MUST BE INVOLVED IN MAKING THEM WORK.

IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT I AM PARTICULARLY HEARTENED BY THE ACTIONS OF THIS COMMITTEE. WITHOUT WAITING FOR GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES OR ASSISTANCE YOU HAVE SET OUT TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OFFERED BY OUR ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE BEST WAY POSSIBLE - BY GENERATING JOBS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. FURTHERMORE THIS IS BEING DONE THROUGH THE RESOURCES OF LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS. I AM SURE THAT AS THE RECOVERY GATHERS PACE YOU WILL HAVE INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANDING YOUR WORK.

THE WAY THE COMMITTEE HAS HARNESSSED THE TALENTS AND ENERGIES OF A WIDE SECTION OF THE BUSINESS AND WIDER COMMUNITY IS ESPECIALLY IMPRESSIVE. YOURS IS EXACTLY THE TYPE OF CO-OPERATIVE ENDEAVOUR THAT IS NECESSARY TO COMPLEMENT THE EFFORTS OF GOVERNMENT. IT IS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF THE VALUE AND STRENGTH OF CO-OPERATION AMONGST AUSTRALIANS TO ADDRESS A GREAT NATIONAL ISSUE.

I KNOW YOU WILL ALL HAVE BEEN HEARTENED BY THE ACCUMULATION OF INCREASINGLY UNEQUIVOCAL AND PERSUASIVE EVIDENCE THAT THE ECONOMY HAS TURNED AROUND AND BROUGHT WITH IT SIGNIFICANT GROWTH IN NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT LEVELS.

I AM SURE YOU WOULD ALL AGREE, HOWEVER, THAT THIS IMPROVEMENT OFFERS NO CAUSE FOR COMPLACENCY.

FOR ITS PART, THE GOVERNMENT IS AIMING TO CONSOLIDATE THIS RESURGENCE IN ACTIVITY BY PUTTING IN PLACE AND MAINTAINING AN APPROPRIATE MIX OF POLICIES.

THERE IS ALSO A CONTINUING NEED FOR MAXIMISING OPPORTUNITIES AND FOR EXTENDING THE TYPE OF WORK AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT OF THE KIND INITIATED BY THIS COMMITTEE.

I WELCOME THE COMMITMENT YOU HAVE MADE AND PRAISE THE APPROACH YOU ARE TAKING.

I COMMEND THE COMMITTEE IN THE STRONGEST TERMS AS AN EXAMPLE TO THE REST OF THE COMMUNITY.

I CONGRATULATE YOU AND I WISH YOU WELL IN THE PURSUIT OF YOUR GREAT OBJECTIVES.

* * * * *