



PRIME MINISTER

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

OPENING OF THE BOB HAWKE COMMUNITY CENTRE
COBURG - 14 FEBRUARY 1987

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

IT WAS A VERY GREAT HONOUR YOU DID ME WHEN YOU ASKED ME TO GIVE MY NAME TO THIS COMMUNITY CENTRE AT COBURG. THIS PROJECT BRINGS TOGETHER TWO SPECIAL AREAS OF CONCERN TO THIS GOVERNMENT NAMELY, AGED CARE AND MULTICULTURALISM, AND IT DOES SO IN A PARTICULARLY BRILLIANT FASHION.

THIS COMMUNITY CENTRE IS SET UP TO BE JUST THAT - A CENTRE FOR THE COMMUNITY OF COBURG. IT WILL PROVIDE ELDERLY PEOPLE OF MANY ETHNIC ORIGINS WITH A MEETING PLACE AND ACTIVITIES CENTRE - FOR ANYTHING FROM A CUP OF COFFEE TO A FULL SCALE FESTIVAL. PEOPLE OF COBURG'S LEBANESE, TURKISH, MALTESE, ITALIAN AND GREEK COMMUNITIES HAVE ALREADY BEEN USING THE CENTRE SINCE BEFORE CHRISTMAS AND, I TRUST, USING IT WITH PLEASURE.

THERE IS ALSO A VERY SPECIAL FEATURE HERE KNOWN AS A MULTICULTURAL KITCHEN. THIS IS INTENDED TO ALLOW ITALIAN, GREEK, LEBANESE AND TURKISH GROUPS TO PREPARE MEALS-ON-WHEELS FOOD FOR PEOPLE OF THEIR COMMUNITIES WHO ARE LIVING AT HOME UNABLE TO COOK FOR THEMSELVES. AS WELL, THE KITCHEN IS SET UP TO COOK SPECIAL MEALS FOR DIABETICS AND PATIENTS WITH CANCER, ULCERS AND CARDIAC PROBLEMS. THE KITCHEN WILL BE ABLE TO PRODUCE 600 MEALS A DAY.

IT'S A WONDERFUL IDEA AND I COMMEND THE ORGANISERS VERY STRONGLY FOR THEIR IMAGINATION IN PUTTING THE PLAN INTO ACTION.

SO I AM PROUD TO BE HERE FOR THREE REASONS - BECAUSE IT CARRIES MY NAME, BECAUSE IT SERVES MY CONSTITUENTS AND BECAUSE IT IS THE OUTCOME OF ONE OF MY GOVERNMENT'S IMPORTANT NEW INITIATIVES IN THE AREA OF COMMUNITY WELFARE.

MY GOVERNMENT ALLOCATED JUST OVER \$1/2 MILLION TO SET UP THIS COMMUNITY CENTRE AND TO FUND THE MEALS-ON-WHEELS SERVICES WHICH OPERATE FROM HERE.

THIS MONEY WAS ALLOCATED UNDER THE HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE PROGRAM, WHICH IS DESIGNED TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF THE NINE-OUT-OF-TEN OF ELDERLY PEOPLE WHO LIVE AT HOME.

HACC SEEKS TO GIVE EFFECT TO THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO CHANGE THE BALANCE AWAY FROM EXPENSIVE INSTITUTIONAL CARE IN FAVOUR OF COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES TO HELP AGED OR DISABLED PEOPLE REMAIN IN THEIR HOMES FOR AS LONG AS THEY CAN.

THE COMMUNITY CENTRE STANDS AS A GREAT SYMBOL OF THE COMMITMENT BY ALL THREE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT TO HELPING ELDERLY PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY.

AS WELL AS MY GOVERNMENT'S ROLE, CAROLINE HOGG HAS POINTED OUT THE VICTORIAN LABOR GOVERNMENT ALLOCATED SOME LAND FOR THE CENTRE. AND OF COURSE COBURG CITY COUNCIL HAS PLAYED A VERY CONSIDERABLE ROLE IN ENSURING THE CENTRE CAME INTO EXISTENCE, BY CONTRIBUTING \$1/4 MILLION TO THE COST OF THE PROJECT.

IN CATERING TO THE NEEDS OF ALL AGED RESIDENTS OF COBURG, INCLUDING THE ETHNIC COMMUNITIES, THE CENTRE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF THE VIBRANT AND HARMONIOUS MULTICULTURALISM THAT THIS GOVERNMENT HAS ENCOURAGED.

THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT AUSTRALIA CAN BE PROUD OF ITS ACHIEVEMENT IN BRINGING TOGETHER PEOPLE OF MANY ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS INTO ONE NATION IN WHICH THEY CAN ENJOY THEIR OWN CULTURES AS WELL AS PARTICIPATE TO THE FULL IN OUR NATIONAL CIVIC LIFE.

AS MANY OF YOU WILL KNOW, MULTICULTURALISM IS A SPECIAL AREA OF MY CONCERN AND I HAVE ESTABLISHED AN OFFICE OF MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS AND AN ASSOCIATED ADVISORY COUNCIL WITHIN MY PORTFOLIO.

I BELIEVE THAT THE NEW BODIES WILL MAKE AN ACTIVE AND EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF MULTICULTURAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMS. THEY WILL BE WELL PLACED TO PROMOTE BETTER CO-ORDINATION AND TO BRING ETHNIC AND MULTICULTURAL INTERESTS TO NOTICE IN THE POLICY AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES OF THE GOVERNMENT.

I AM CONFIDENT THAT THIS COMMUNITY CENTRE WILL PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN ENHANCING MULTICULTURAL VALUES AND IN ENABLING AGED PEOPLE IN THE COBURG AREA TO CONTINUE TO LIVE IN THEIR OWN HOMES IN A FAMILIAR ENVIRONMENT.

I AM NOW PLEASED OFFICIALLY TO OPEN THE BOB HAWKE COMMUNITY CENTRE AND IN DOING SO I EXPRESS THE WISH THAT IT WILL BE ENJOYED BY ALL WHO USE IT.
