

**SPEECH BY MR. ROBERT G. MENZIES PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA  
AT THE OPENING OF THE "SOUTHERN CROSS" - AUGUST 24th, 1962.**

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Sir,

I have not been told whether I am to open the hotel or give a general address on the state of the nation, but I think it might be agreeable if I declare that this hotel has been well and truly opened, and indeed it may be noted that we are standing on historical soil, or a little bit above it, as it is here where the old Eastern Market used to be.

If any of you came to live here in this city and wandered around the old premises you might have encountered a woman who told fortunes and may also have done something else on the shadier side of the law.

Looking at the hotel with all its facilities, in comparison to the Eastern Market with its so called facilities I would say it has taken 15 or more years than it should have to disappear, and now it has disappeared and we have in its place a great modern hotel which is a pacesetter for hotels in this country.

I recall, in the days of my youth, as no doubt some of you can, what was regarded as an average hotel, say in one of the provincial centres, was a good old established nineteenth century hotel most likely with the light in the wrong place and windows that wouldn't open, and when you found you wanted to follow certain rules of nature no doubt you found you had to do a fifty yard march to the bathroom and then unconcernedly stand in a queue for another half hour.

Not so many years ago, while travelling through the United States I stayed in many hotels some with over a thousand bedrooms and a thousand bathrooms. A hotel with a hundred bathrooms would have put our Victorian great grandparents in a state of great excitement to think of all that water being wasted but now we have moved on and the progress of the world we are living in is such that we can come to a hotel such as this one and regard it as a matter of course.

Time is marching on and in Australia this hotel venture represents the bringing together of Australian talent and research and American talent research which we have all come to look on as a happy association more and more since the last war. And so we have a happy marriage between Australian and American talent, capital and experience all brought together by one hotel.

There are some countries in the world which have for a long time understood that the tourist in the world is an important element in the industry of the world. The Swiss and the French are two examples.

I can remember going to Tasmania and trying to convince them to cater for tourists with good hotels to handle people but we have, for too long in Australia thought that nothing could be called an industry if there was no smoke coming out the top.

Development of this section of industry in Australia is remarkable and I promise to help, without a subsidy, to bring it to the attention of the prospective tourists for Australia.

Ending as I began I declare this hotel well and truly opened.

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