

October 23, 1973.

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER  
MR E. G. WHITLAM, Q.C., M.P., AT THE  
SIGNING OF THE ALBURY-WODONGA  
AREA DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

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JUST NINE MONTHS AGO, SIR ROBERT ASKIN, MR HAMER AND I MET HERE IN ALBURY-WODONGA AND AGREED ON A HISTORIC PLAN FOR A NEW AUSTRALIAN CITY IN THIS AREA. IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TODAY TO MEET THE PREMIERS AGAIN TO SIGN THE ALBURY-WODONGA AREA DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT.

WITH THE CONCURRENCE OF THE STATES THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT INITIATED THE MEETING IN JANUARY, BUT FROM THAT DAY IT BECAME A JOINT VENTURE. LET'S NOT IMAGINE THAT THIS IS AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT PROJECT EXCLUSIVELY - FAR FROM IT. ITS SUCCESS DEPENDS ON CONTINUED CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AND THE STATES. THE THREE GOVERNMENTS ARE EQUAL PARTNERS.

THE JANUARY MEETING WAS THE FIRST STEP. IT THEN BECAME THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL - MR UREN, MR FULLER AND MR BYRNE - TO ESTABLISH AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE THREE GOVERNMENTS WHICH WOULD EMBODY OUR JOINT COMMITMENT AND PROVIDE A SOUND BASE ON WHICH THIS AREA CAN GROW IN HARMONY WITH THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

THEY HAVE DONE WELL. THE DOCUMENT WE HAVE BEFORE US TODAY IS EVIDENCE OF THAT. IT IS A CREDIT TO THEM AND TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN INVOLVED. IT REFLECTS A CONTINUING SPIRIT OF CO-OPERATION AND PROVIDES A FIRST-CLASS EXAMPLE OF HOW THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AND THE STATES CAN WORK TOGETHER TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THOUSANDS OF AUSTRALIANS OVER THE NEXT FEW DECADES.

THE PREPARATION OF THIS AGREEMENT HAS BEEN A FORMIDABLE LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE TASK. IT HAS TAKEN ONLY NINE MONTHS. I KNOW THAT MANY MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY WOULD LIKE MORE ACTION, BUT THE IMPORTANCE, THE SIZE AND THE QUALITY OF THIS PROJECT CALL FOR A GREAT DEAL OF FORBEARANCE AND PATIENCE ON THE PART OF US ALL.

A PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE AGREEMENT IS TO ESTABLISH A STRONG AND EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GROWTH COMPLEX. EXPERIENCE OVERSEAS AND IN THIS COUNTRY HAS SHOWN CLEARLY THAT THIS IS AN ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT IN THE SUCCESS OF NEW CITY DEVELOPMENT.

DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION WERE ANNOUNCED AND WELL PUBLICISED BY THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL ON 4 JULY. TO REFRESH YOUR MEMORY CHARTS HAVE BEEN CIRCULATED AND I HOPE THEY WILL BE WIDELY BROUGHT TO THE NOTICE OF THE PUBLIC.

AT FIRST GLANCE THE FORM OF THE ORGANISATION MAY APPEAR COMPLEX, BUT FUNDAMENTALLY IT IS NOT. IT IS A FULLY INTEGRATED ORGANISATION WITH COMMON MEMBERSHIP AND COMMON STAFF. THE THREE LEGAL CORPORATIONS ARE REQUIRED TO MEET THE CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE THREE GOVERNMENTS. IN PRACTICE, HOWEVER, THE ORGANISATION WILL WORK AS A SINGLE ENTITY RESPONSIBLE TO THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL.

I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEES OF THE ORGANISATION WILL IDENTIFY WITH ONE BODY AND ONE GOAL - NAMELY THE CREATION OF A NEW GROWTH CENTRE WITH A HIGH-QUALITY ENVIRONMENT, IMAGINATIVELY PLANNED AND DEVELOPED.

I WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED TO SEE THAT PROVISION HAS BEEN MADE FOR A CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL TO PROVIDE A VEHICLE FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE PROJECT. OVER THE PAST NINE MONTHS THE INTERIM CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE, MADE UP OF REPRESENTATIVES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY INTERESTS, HAS PLAYED A VITAL AND CONTRIBUTING ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT SO FAR.

THE AGREEMENT OF COURSE REQUIRES COMPLIMENTARY LEGISLATION AND I UNDERSTAND THAT THE STATES ARE CURRENTLY DRAFTING BILLS. YOU HAVE MY ASSURANCE THAT THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION WILL BE INTRODUCED WITHOUT DELAY AFTER THE SIGNING OF THIS AGREEMENT.

YOU WILL ALSO BE AWARE THAT THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAS ADVERTISED FOR A CHAIRMAN OF THE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION. WE SHALL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ENSURE THAT WE GET THE RIGHT MAN FOR THIS ALL IMPORTANT POSITION.

YOU WILL ALSO BE AWARE THAT \$9 MILLION HAS BEEN BUDGETED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT FOR EXPENDITURE IN 1973-74 ON THE FIRST PHASE OF THE ACQUISITION PROGRAM UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF APPROPRIATE STATE LAND PRICE STABILISATION LEGISLATION AND SELECTED PUBLIC WORKS. THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING - IT WILL BE A CONTINUING COMMITMENT.

AN IMMENSE AMOUNT OF WORK HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PLANNING STRATEGY. A FIRM COMMITMENT HAS BEEN GIVEN, AND INCLUDED IN THE AGREEMENT, THAT AREAS TO BE ACQUIRED FOR URBAN AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT WILL BE ANNOUNCED NO LATER THAN 30 JUNE NEXT YEAR. THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL WISELY DECIDED NOT TO WAIT ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION BEFORE PLANNING COMMENCED.

WE WOULD ALL LIKE TO SEE THINGS HAPPEN IMMEDIATELY,  
BUT IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE HAVE THE RESULTS OF THE VERY  
NECESSARY MAJOR STUDIES THAT ARE UNDERWAY BEFORE THE OVERALL  
STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT IS ANNOUNCED.

I WOULD LIKE TO RECORD THE SATISFACTION OF THE  
AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AND MY OWN PERSONAL SAT ISFACTION AT  
THE SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THIS FIRST PHASE IN THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF ALBURY-WODONGA. IT AUGURS WELL FOR THE  
FUTURE AND, AS I HAVE SAID, PROVIDES AN HISTORIC EXAMPLE  
OF HOW THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AND THE STATES CAN WORK  
TOGETHER IN THE INTERESTS OF THE TOTAL AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY.

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