

EMBARGO: 2.30 P.M.

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON. E.G. WHITLAM, Q.C., M.P.,  
AT THE OPENING OF THE K.H. BOYKETT BUILDING OF THE CAULFIELD  
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, MELBOURNE, FRIDAY, 16 AUGUST 1974

FEW OCCASIONS ARE MORE CONGENIAL TO THE LEADER OF A GOVERNMENT THAN THE OPENING OF A BUILDING WHOSE PURPOSES REFLECT AND SYMBOLISE MANY OF THE GOVERNMENT'S CENTRAL POLICIES AND AMBITIONS. SO IT IS WITH THIS BUILDING AND THIS INSTITUTE. K.H. BOYKETT'S LONG AND DISTINGUISHED CAREER AS AN EDUCATOR, AS A BUSINESSMAN, AS AN ADVOCATE, AS A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL OF THIS INSTITUTE FOR 16 YEARS, SAW CHANGES OF GREAT AND LASTING SIGNIFICANCE IN THE PATTERN OF EDUCATION IN THIS STATE. HE WAS PRESIDENT OF YOUR COUNCIL WHEN THE CAULFIELD INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY BECAME AN AUTONOMOUS BODY AND HE DIED WHILE STILL A SERVING MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL. HE PARTICIPATED IN A PROCESS OF EVOLUTION AND REFORM WHICH CULMINATED IN THE ASSUMPTION LAST YEAR BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT OF FULL FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION. THIS IS THE FIRST SIGNIFICANT EXTENSION TO A TERTIARY INSTITUTION TO BE COMPLETED SINCE THAT CHANGE WAS MADE. THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT, I AM PROUD TO SAY, HAS CONTRIBUTED MORE THAN \$2 MILLION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THIS BUILDING IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF VICTORIA. I AM DELIGHTED THAT IT SHOULD BEAR THE NAME OF SO DISTINGUISHED A SERVANT OF EDUCATION IN THIS STATE.

IT IS EASY FOR THE COMMUNITY TO FORGET THE ESSENTIAL PART PLAYED BY COLLEGES OF ADVANCED EDUCATION AND INSTITUTES SUCH AS YOURS IN THE TOTAL EDUCATIONAL PROCESS. YOUR INSTITUTE, NOW MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY OLD, HAS A PARTICULARLY LONG AND IMPRESSIVE HISTORY. INDEED, THE LEADING COLLEGES AND INSTITUTES IN THIS COUNTRY HAVE A LONGER HISTORY THAN ALL BUT SIX OF THE AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES. YOU HAVE A KEY ROLE IN TRAINING YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN IN TECHNICAL SKILLS AND DISCIPLINES, IN THE APPLIED SCIENCES AND INDEED IN THE HUMANITIES, IN A MANNER ESSENTIAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ADVANCED AND PROSPEROUS SOCIETY SUCH AS OURS.

IN ITS APPROACH TO EDUCATION, THE GOVERNMENT'S PURPOSE HAS BEEN TO STRESS THE CONTINUITY AND INTERDEPENDENCE OF ALL ITS ASPECTS. MANY PEOPLE HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S GREAT AND LASTING REFORMS IN EDUCATION HAVE BEEN CONFINED TO PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ALONE. THAT IS NOT SO. IT IS TRUE THAT OUR FIRST PRIORITY WAS IN THESE AREAS BECAUSE THESE WERE THE AREAS OF GREATEST NEED. OUR PLANS, HOWEVER, ARE DIRECTED ACROSS THE WHOLE SPECTRUM OF EDUCATION. WE REGARD ALL LEVELS AND SEGMENTS OF EDUCATION AS RELATED PARTS OF A CONTINUING AND ALL-EMBRACING PROCESS OF INSTRUCTION AND ENLIGHTENMENT.

THE GREAT FAILURE OF OUR PREDECESSORS - IF I MAY SAY SO - WAS TO TREAT EDUCATION ON A PIECEMEAL BASIS, PATCHING UP DEFICIENCIES HERE AND THERE. WE LOST SIGHT OF THE NEEDS AND PURPOSES OF EDUCATION AS A WHOLE. WE PRODUCED MORE INEQUALITIES AND ANOMALIES THAN WE REMOVED. ONLY NOW ARE WE BEGINNING TO SEE THE NEEDS OF EDUCATION AS A WHOLE, AND TO RECOGNISE THAT THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF INSTITUTES SUCH AS THIS ARE EVERY BIT AS IMPORTANT TO THE TOTAL CONCEPT AS SECONDARY SCHOOLS OR UNIVERSITIES.

THIS HAS MEANT A CONSIDERABLE CHANGE IN MANY OF OUR ATTITUDES, AND NOT TO PUT TOO FINE A POINT ON IT, IN MANY OF OUR PREJUDICES. IT HAS ENABLED US, FOR EXAMPLE, TO FREE THE WHOLE DEBATE ON PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION FROM ITS FORMER SECTARIAN PREOCCUPATIONS. I BELIEVE THE COMMUNITY NOW ACCEPTS AS AN UNALTERABLE PROPOSITION THAT THE QUALITY AND EXTENT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO OUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THEIR RELIGION. IT HAS ENABLED US TO APPROACH THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION ON THE BASIS THAT PRE-SCHOOLING IS A RIGHT OF EVERY CHILD AND AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE TOTAL EDUCATIONAL PROCESS. IT HAS ENABLED US TO INAUGURATE A NEW DEAL FOR TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION, FREEING THIS AREA FROM ARTIFICIAL NOTIONS OF SNOBBERY AND CLASS DISTINCTION. IT HAS ENABLED US TO TREAT INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY AND COLLEGES OF ADVANCED EDUCATION IN A NEW AND MORE ENLIGHTENED WAY - RECOGNISING THEIR UNIQUE AND INDISPENSABLE PLACE IN THE EDUCATIONAL CONTINUUM, AND DISPELLING FOREVER THE IGNORANT AND DESTRUCTIVE IMPRESSION THAT THEY WERE POOR RELATIONS OF UNIVERSITIES.

I BELIEVE THE ESSENTIAL QUALITY OF A DYNAMIC AND DEMOCRATIC EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IS DIVERSITY - BUT A DIVERSITY OF EQUAL AND RELATED PARTS. EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE TO THE FULL IN THE TYPE OF EDUCATION THAT SUITS HIM BEST. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN EDUCATION DOES NOT MEAN THAT EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE THE SAME EDUCATION OR, JUST AS IMPORTANT, THAT EVERYONE SHOULD WANT THE SAME EDUCATION. ONE OF OUR MISTAKES HAS BEEN TO PLACE TOO HIGH A SOCIAL PREMIUM ON CERTAIN KINDS OF EDUCATION AT THE EXPENSE OF THE COMMUNITY'S NEEDS. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY MEANS THAT THE SAME STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE, OF DEDICATION, OF MATERIAL ENDOWMENT, OF TEACHING SKILLS SHOULD APPLY IN WHATEVER INSTITUTION AN INDIVIDUAL CHOOSES. OF COURSE PEOPLE SHOULD BE FREE TO CHOOSE THE KIND OF EDUCATION THEY WANT, BUT THIS CHOICE MUST BE ONE BETWEEN SYSTEMS AND COURSES; NOT BETWEEN STANDARDS, NOT BETWEEN A GOOD EDUCATION AND A BAD ONE, AN EXPENSIVE EDUCATION OR A POOR ONE, A SOCIALLY ESTEEMED EDUCATION OR ONE THAT IS SOCIALLY DOWNGRADED. THE PURPOSE OF MY GOVERNMENT'S REFORMS HAS BEEN TO ENTRENCH THIS GENUINE PRINCIPLE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, NOT IN A NARROW FINANCIAL SENSE, BUT AS A BROAD PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLE BINDING ON US AND ON ALL FUTURE GOVERNMENTS.

YOUR INSTITUTE REFLECTS THE GOVERNMENT'S CONCERN THAT EDUCATION SHOULD SERVE, OR AT LEAST RECOGNISE, THE OVERALL NEEDS OF SOCIETY FOR TRAINING AND SKILLS. NOT ONLY DO WE REGARD THE DIFFERENT LEVELS AND SEGMENTS OF EDUCATION AS PART OF A SINGLE PROCESS: MORE THAN ANY OTHER GOVERNMENT, WE ARE ANXIOUS THAT EDUCATION ITSELF SHOULD BE INTEGRAL TO A TOTAL CONCEPT OF SOCIAL GOALS AND PRIORITIES. AS YOUR FIRST ANNUAL REPORT STATED:

"C.I.T. IS DESIGNING ITS FUTURE TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF A FAST CHANGING TECHNOLOGY, PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH THE PERSONAL REQUIREMENTS AND THE NECESSARY SKILLS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS, AND KEEPING CLOSE CONTACT WITH INDUSTRY THROUGH FULL-TIME, PART-TIME AND SHORT COURSES."

THAT IS ONLY ONE OF YOUR FUNCTIONS, BUT IT EXEMPLIFIES THE SENSE OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY WHICH MUST GOVERN THE CHOICE OF COURSES AND PROGRAMS IN INSTITUTES OF THIS KIND.

THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT TODAY IS MORE DEEPLY INVOLVED IN TERTIARY EDUCATION THAN ANY PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT. FROM THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR WE HAVE ASSUMED TOTAL FUNDING RESPONSIBILITIES FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION. TUITION AND RELATED FEES IN COLLEGES OF ADVANCED EDUCATION AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS OF TERTIARY AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION HAVE BEEN ABOLISHED.

APART FROM FUNDING, THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CO-ORDINATION AND BALANCED DEVELOPMENT OF ADVANCED EDUCATION FACILITIES THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA. TO THIS END IT LOOKS FOR ADVICE TO THE COMMISSION ON ADVANCED EDUCATION. THE COMMISSION IS NOW CONSIDERING SUBMISSIONS FROM ALL COLLEGES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDING DURING THE 1976-78 TRIENNIUM. AS A RESULT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ACCEPTANCE OF THE COMMISSION'S REPORT ON TEACHER EDUCATION, FORMER STATE TEACHERS' COLLEGES AND PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS' COLLEGES ARE NOW ALSO BEING FUNDED UNDER ADVANCED EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS. THE GOVERNMENT'S TOTAL FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO ADVANCED EDUCATION IN THE 1973-75 TRIENNIUM IS MORE THAN \$600 MILLION.

THIS IS A LARGE SUM BUT IT IS ONLY PART OF OUR COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION AS A WHOLE. SOME INDICATION OF THE SCALE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES TO EDUCATION GENERALLY CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE COMPARATIVE ANNUAL FIGURES FOR EXPENDITURE. IN 1972-73 THE TOTAL AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT OUTLAY ON EDUCATION AT ALL LEVELS WAS \$439 MILLION. IN 1973-74 (THE FIRST FULL FINANCIAL YEAR OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT) WE SPENT NEARLY TWICE THAT AMOUNT - OVER \$800 MILLION - DESPITE THE FACT THAT OUR MAJOR NEW PROGRAMS OF FINANCE FOR EDUCATION WERE NOT OPERATING FOR MORE THAN THE FINAL SIX MONTHS OF THAT YEAR. NOT UNTIL NEXT YEAR - 1974-75 - WILL WE SEE ANYTHING LIKE THE FULL IMPACT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAMS. (EVEN SO IT WILL NOT REFLECT THE FULL IMPACT OF NEW PROGRAMS IN THE PRE-SCHOOLS AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION AREAS). WHILE THE PRECISE FIGURE OF EXPENDITURE FOR 1974/75 IS NOT AS YET KNOWN, IT IS CLEAR THAT IT WILL BE MORE THAN THREE TIMES THE TOTAL LEVEL OF EXPENDITURE IN 1972-73.

THE MAJOR ELEMENTS IN THESE MASSIVE INCREASES IN OUR COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION HAVE OF COURSE BEEN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE KARMEL REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS AND OUR ASSUMPTION OF FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR FINANCING TERTIARY EDUCATION. THE EXPENDITURE FIGURES, HOWEVER - IMPRESSIVE AS THEY ARE - DO NOT SHOW THE FULL PICTURE. WE ARE CONCERNED NOT JUST WITH QUANTITY BUT WITH QUALITY. SO OUR NEW PROGRAMS HAVE REFLECTED CONCERN FOR THE NEEDS OF THE INDIVIDUAL PARTICULARLY THE HANDICAPPED AND OTHER DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS, AND WITH THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF INNOVATION.

THIS EMPHASIS ON INNOVATION WILL BE PARTICULARLY MARKED IN THE AREA OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION. THE REPORT OF THE AUSTRALIAN COMMITTEE ON TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION - THE KANGAN REPORT - WAS TABLED BY THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION IN APRIL. IT RECOMMENDED CAPITAL AND RECURRENT GRANTS TO THIS AREA OF MORE THAN \$104 MILLION. THE GOVERNMENT PROMPTLY ACCEPTED THE VALIDITY OF ITS BROAD PROPOSALS, AND BUT FOR THE DOUBLE DISSOLUTION, THESE PROGRAMS WOULD NOW BE WELL UNDER WAY.

I HAVE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE WHICH MY GOVERNMENT PLACES ON LINKING TOGETHER OUR VARIOUS INITIATIVES IN A CO-ORDINATED AND INTEGRATED FASHION. WHAT THE KANGAN REPORT SAYS ABOUT THE CONCEPT OF RECURRENT EDUCATION AND OPENING UP THE ACCESS GENERALLY OF ADULTS TO EDUCATION IS REFLECTED ALSO IN THE PROPOSALS RECENTLY PUT FORWARD IN THE DRAFT REPORT ON OPEN TERTIARY EDUCATION, WHICH HAS BEEN PRODUCED BY A COMMITTEE OF THE ~~UNIVERSITIES~~ UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION. SIMILARLY, THERE IS A CLOSE LINK BETWEEN THE KANGAN REPORT ON TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION AND THE COCHRANE REPORT ON LABOR MARKET TRAINING WHICH WE RECEIVED LAST MONTH. THE COCHRANE REPORT OUTLINES PROPOSALS FOR A NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SCHEME WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED IN PRINCIPLE TO ADOPT. IT CAN BE EXPECTED TO HAVE AN IMPACT UPON THE FACILITIES REQUIRED IN TECHNICAL COLLEGES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, AND THE KANGAN REPORT IS OF OBVIOUS IMPORTANCE IN RECOMMENDING ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THOSE COLLEGES. THE TWO GO TOGETHER. ONCE AGAIN WE SEE THE IMPORTANCE OF A CO-ORDINATED AND PLANNED APPROACH TO EDUCATION AS A WHOLE.



WE SEE OUR NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SCHEME AS A MAJOR COMPONENT OF A MANPOWER POLICY AIMED AT IMPROVING THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE WORKFORCE. IT WILL BE NO MERE SHORT-TERM PALIATIVE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT. IT WILL BE COMPREHENSIVE AND FLEXIBLE; IT WILL COVER A WIDE RANGE OF SKILLS; IT WILL RESPOND TO CHANGES IN TECHNOLOGY AND THE NEEDS OF MODERN INDUSTRY. CLEARLY ITS SUCCESS WILL DEPEND ON CO-OPERATION WITH IMPORTANT COLLEGES AND INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY SUCH AS YOURS.

LET ME QUOTE SOME REMARKS MY COLLEAGUE MR. BEAZLEY MADE LAST YEAR TO THE FIRST MEETING OF THE KANGAN COMMITTEE. THEY INDICATE OUR BROAD APPROACH TO EDUCATION AND ARE RELEVANT TO THE WIDER PURPOSES OF THIS INSTITUTE. MR. BEAZLEY SAID:

"WE ARE NOW IMPLEMENTING A POLICY INVOLVING EXPERT COMMISSIONS CHARGED WITH THE TASK OF EXAMINING THE NEEDS OF ALL AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS. THE PRE-SCHOOLS COMMITTEE IS INVESTIGATING THE DEMAND FOR KINDERGARTENS, THEIR PLACEMENT AND REQUIREMENTS, WITH THE AIM OF PROVIDING FACILITIES OF CANBERRA STANDARD TO ALL AUSTRALIAN PRE-SCHOOLS WITHIN SIX YEARS; THE INTERIM SCHOOLS COMMITTEE IS WORKING TO DESTROY THE INEQUALITIES WHICH HAVE PLAGUED AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION FOR TOO LONG BY ENSURING THAT FEDERAL MONEY GOES FIRST TO THE AREAS WHERE IT IS NEEDED MOST....

"I HOPE THAT YOU WILL DEVELOP FOR AUSTRALIA NOT MERELY A STRATEGY OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION, REACTING TO THE STATES' NEEDS. YOUR GREATEST SERVICE MAY WELL BE PREVENTING WASTE OF SKILL, WASTE OF MANPOWER, WASTE OF EFFORT AND FRUSTRATION, BY DEVELOPING A PHILOSOPHY OF TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION. THIS WILL EMBRACE PROPER RESPECT FOR CRAFTSMANSHIP, A HAPPY USE OF LEISURE, AND EFFECTIVE LIVING FOR MANY PEOPLE."

IT GIVES ME THE GREATEST SATISFACTION THAT VICTORIA'S INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY, LONG REGARDED AS THE POOR RELATIONS OF THE TERTIARY SECTOR, ARE NOW EMBARKED ON A COURSE OF STEADY GROWTH AND ENHANCED PRESTIGE. I BELIEVE YOUR PROPER AND RIGHTFUL PLACE IN THE HIERARCHY OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM HAS AT LAST BEEN RECOGNISED BY ALL - BY GOVERNMENTS AND BY THE COMMUNITY. A BRIGHT FUTURE LIES BEFORE YOU.

THIS IS A TIME, AS YOU KNOW, WHEN HEAVY AND  
COMPETING CLAIMS ARE MADE ON THE GOVERNMENT'S RESOURCES.  
FOR MANY OF US - FOR ALL OF US - IT IS A TIME OF NECESSARY  
FINANCIAL STRINGENCY. I GIVE YOU MY ASSURANCE, HOWEVER,  
THAT THE PRIORITY WE ACCORD TO EDUCATION WILL REMAIN AS  
HIGH AS BEFORE. FROM THE BEGINNING WE HAVE RECOGNISED  
EDUCATION AS A PARAMOUNT RESPONSIBILITY OF THE NATIONAL  
GOVERNMENT AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO. THERE WILL BE  
NO RETREAT FROM THAT GOAL. THERE WILL BE NO SLACKENING  
IN OUR EFFORTS TO REBUILD OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND GIVE  
THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY TO EVERY  
AUSTRALIAN CHILD AND TO EVERY AUSTRALIAN STUDENT - WHATEVER  
HIS MEANS, WHEREVER HE LIVES OR WHATEVER HIS GOAL IN LIFE.

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