

NOTES FOR THE PRIME MINISTER

MARYBOROUGH, QLD.

30 NOVEMBER 1974

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1. WE HAVE APPROVED THE FIRST DIRECT GRANTS EVER MADE BY AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS. FOR THE FIRST TIME AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT IS READY TO HELP LOCAL COUNCILS DEVELOP THEIR SERVICES AND AMENITIES FOR THE PEOPLE. MARYBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL IS RECEIVING \$130,000 ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE GRANTS COMMISSION. LOCAL COUNCILS THROUGHOUT QUEENSLAND ARE RECEIVING \$8.9 MILLION. THESE GRANTS ARE GIVEN WITHOUT INTEREST; THEY NEED NOT BE REPAID. THERE ARE NO STRINGS ATTACHED. THEY CAN BE SPENT BY THE LOCAL COUNCILS AS THEY SEE FIT. THEY ARE MADE ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF AN EXPERT INDEPENDENT BODY. THEY INVOLVE NO POLITICAL PATRONAGE OR FAVOURITISM. THE DJELKE-PETERSEN GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS RESISTED ATTEMPTS TO INVOLVE THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT IN THE WELFARE OF LOCAL COUNCILS AND REGIONS. IF THEIR EFFORTS HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL MARYBOROUGH TODAY WOULD BE \$130,000 WORSE OFF AND COUNCIL RATES WOULD BE MUCH MORE LIKELY TO RISE FURTHER.

 2. UNDER LABOR'S PROPOSALS A HIGH-GRADE ALL-WEATHER HIGHWAY WILL LINK MARYBOROUGH WITH BRISBANE - AND EVENTUALLY WITH SYDNEY AND MELBOURNE. DESPITE OPPOSITION OBSTRUCTION WE HAVE PASSED THE NECESSARY LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE \$1,126 MILLION FOR OUR NATIONAL ROADS PROGRAM OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS.

WE ARE THE FIRST NATIONAL GOVERNMENT TO UNDERTAKE THIS ESSENTIAL PROGRAM. NO STATE GOVERNMENT HAS HAD THE RESOURCES TO DO IT ALONE. NO PREVIOUS FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CARED ENOUGH TO DO IT - EVEN THOUGH THEY HAD THE NECESSARY CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS.

QUEENSLAND COASTAL CITIES

3. WE WANT TO SEE ~~MARYBOROUGH~~ PROPERLY SERVED BY SHIPS OF THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL LINE. MR. BJELKE-PETERSEN, ALONE AMONG THE PREMIERS HAS PREVENTED A.N.L. SHIPS OPERATING BETWEEN PORTS WITHIN HIS OWN STATE. QUEENSLAND CITIES HAVE BEEN DENIED AN ESSENTIAL SHIPPING SERVICE SOLELY BECAUSE OF THE OBSTINACY AND PREJUDICE OF THE OUTGOING PREMIER. MR. BJELKE-PETERSEN'S ATTITUDE IS NOT SHARED BY THE AUTHORITIES IN OTHER COASTAL PORTS. MR. BORZI, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CAIRNS HARBOUR BOARD, AND A FORMER STATE CANDIDATE OF THE NATIONAL PARTY, SAID IN HIS 1973-74 ANNUAL REPORT:

"THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL LINE'S WEEKLY CARGO SERVICES TO AND FROM THE SOUTH BROUGHT INCREASED TRADE AND REVENUE. UNFORTUNATELY THE BOARD'S SUPPORT OF MOVES TO HAVE A.N.L. GRANTED THE PRIVILEGE OF CONDUCTING AN INTRA-STATE CARGO SERVICE HAS NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL TO DATE."

4. THE BJELKE-PETERSEN GOVERNMENT HAS REFUSED TO CO-OPERATE IN OUR EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN THE WALKERS LTD. SHIPYARD IN MARYBOROUGH. WHEN WALKERS ANNOUNCED THEIR DECISION TO CEASE SHIPBUILDING WE IMMEDIATELY SOUGHT WAYS OF KEEPING THE INDUSTRY GOING. ON 24 APRIL I INVITED WALKERS LTD. AND THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT TO JOIN WITH US ON A 50-50 BASIS TO ESTABLISH A NEW SHIPBUILDING AND ENGINEERING WORKS AT MARYBOROUGH AND REHABILITATE WALKER'S EXISTING FACILITIES WHILE THE NEW YARD WAS BEING BUILT. MY COLLEAGUE, CHARLIE JONES, THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT, VISITED MARYBOROUGH TO SEEK WAYS OF KEEPING THE YARD OPEN. HE OFFERED TO GO IT ALONE IF THE OTHER PARTIES REFUSED TO CO-OPERATE. WALKERS REFUSED THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S OFFER TO LEASE THE YARD AS A GOING CONCERN. THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT REJECTED OUR OFFER TO TAKE A HALF SHARE IN REHABILITATING THE YARD AND DEVELOPING A NEW SHIPBUILDING AND ENGINEERING WORKS. THE WORKFORCE HAS NOW DISPERSED AND MUCH OF THE EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN SOLD. MARYBOROUGH HAS BEEN DEPRIVED OF THIS THRIVING AND IMPORTANT INDUSTRY LARGELY BECAUSE OF THE ATTITUDE OF THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT.

5. INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY IN MARYBOROUGH IS AT A LOW EBB BECAUSE THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT HAS FAILED TO ATTRACT NEW INDUSTRIES TO THE REGION. MARYBOROUGH'S INDUSTRIAL ESTATE IS VIRTUALLY UNUSED. YET THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT REJECTS OFFERS OF ASSISTANCE FROM THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD STIMULATE EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS CONFIDENCE. MONEY PROVIDED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT IS SPENT MORE SLOWLY AND SPARINGLY BY QUEENSLAND THAN BY ANY OTHER STATE. SO FAR THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT HAS SPENT ONLY 18% OF THE MONEY AVAILABLE IN CAPITAL GRANTS FOR EDUCATION IN 1974 AND 1975. IT IS BUILDING FEWER HOUSING COMMISSION HOMES THAN ANY OTHER STATE DESPITE OUR OFFER OF A VIRTUAL BLANK CHEQUE FOR WELFARE HOUSING CONSTRUCTION. ONLY A STATE LABOR GOVERNMENT LED BY PERC TUCKER AND WORKING IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT CAN DEVELOP MARYBOROUGH'S FULL POTENTIAL AS AN INDUSTRIAL CITY.