

NOTES FOR THE PRIME MINISTER
FOR DIAMOND VALLEY A.L.P. BARBECUE
2 DECEMBER 1974

1. WHAT BETTER PLACE TO CELEBRATE LABOR'S GREAT VICTORY TWO YEARS AGO THAN HERE IN DIAMOND VALLEY, ONE OF THE DECISIVE SEATS IN OUR DRIVE FOR POWER. LABOR WOULD STILL HAVE WON IN 1972 WITHOUT ITS GAINS IN DIAMOND VALLEY, HOLT, CASEY AND LATROBE. IT WOULD STILL HAVE WON IN 1974 WITHOUT ITS EXTRA GAINS IN ISAACS AND HENTY. THOSE SEATS, HOWEVER, PROVIDED THE SUBSTANCE OF OUR MAJORITY, IN 1972 AND AGAIN IN 1974. IT IS A PLEASANT IRONY THAT WE HAVE TWICE SECURED OUR NATIONAL MAJORITY THROUGH OUR VOTES IN THE VERY STATE THAT DENIED US GOVERNMENT FOR SO LONG. IN OUR VICTORY IN 1972 A GENERATION OF BITTERNESS AND DIVISION WAS PUT BEHIND US. A NEW ERA OF HOPE AND CONFIDENCE FOR OUR PARTY, FOR OUR COUNTRY, WAS BORN. OUR POPULAR BASE IN THIS CITY, AND THIS STATE, HAS NEVER BEEN STRONGER.

2. I MUST SAY THAT I WOULD RATHER BE IN DIAMOND VALLEY THAN MR. SNEDDEN'S VALLEY. BETTER THIS VALLEY THAN DEATH VALLEY. AND THERE IS NOTHING LIKE A BARBECUE TO RALLY OUR SUPPORTERS THEY MAY NOT WALK OVER HOT COALS BUT AT LEAST THEY CAN GRILL THEIR STEAKS OVER THEM. I AM GLAD OF MR. SNEDDEN'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT THE HOTTER REGIONS OF THE HEREAFTER ARE RESERVED FOR HIS PARTY. WHEN LABOR MEN WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY OF DEATH I HOPE THEY'LL GO UP INSTEAD OF DOWN.

3. ONE OF THE GREAT BENEFITS OF OUR SUCCESS IN THIS PART OF HILLBOURNE HAS BEEN THE ADDITION OF MANY YOUNG AND TALENTED NEW MEMBERS TO OUR RANKS. DAVID MCKENZIE, TONY LAMB, RACE MATHEWS, MAX OLDMEADOW, JOAN CHILD, GARETH CLAYTON - THEY ARE ALL FIRST-RATE MEMBERS, EXCELLENT ACQUISITIONS TO THE PARTY AND THE PARLIAMENT. THEY HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE DEBATES AND DECISIONS THAT MADE POSSIBLE LABOR'S GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS.

4. THOSE YEARS HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT, AS YOU KNOW. IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, ESPECIALLY, WE HAVE FACED IMMENSELY COMPLEX ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. IT HAS BEEN A TEST OF OUR NERVE, OUR FAITH, OUR INGENUITY. WE HAVE HAD TO CONTEND WITH THE TWIN PROBLEMS OF INFLATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT THAT AFFLICT EVERY WESTERN COUNTRY. WE HAVE HAD TO FIGHT BOTH THOSE PROBLEMS AT THE SAME TIME, AND WE ARE CARRYING ON THE FIGHT WITH EVERY AVAILABLE WEAPON, EVERY CONSTITUTIONAL POWER WE POSSESS. IF YOU COMPARE OUR PERFORMANCE WITH OTHERS AROUND THE WORLD I THINK YOU WILL FIND THAT WE ARE DOING BETTER THAN PRACTICALLY ANY OTHER COUNTRY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT AND WE ARE HOLDING OUR OWN IN THE FIGHT AGAINST INFLATION. WE HAVE TAKEN ACTION ON MANY FRONTS. WE ARE READY TO TAKE FURTHER ACTION WHENEVER IT IS NEEDED.

5. YOU WOULDN'T BE HUMAN IF YOU WERE NOT SOMETIMES DISPIRITED AND DISHEARTENED BY THE FRUSTRATIONS OF THE PAST YEAR. I SYMPATHISE WITH YOU. I SHARE YOUR FEELINGS. YOU COULDN'T BE HUMAN IF YOU WERE NOT SOMETIMES DISMAYED BY THE BARRAGE OF PROPAGANDA AGAINST US, BY THE MISREPRESENTATION, BY THE MALICE, THE OBSTRUCTION OF OUR OPPONENTS, BY THE OMISSIONS AND DISTORTIONS OF THE MEDIA, BY THE INCESSANT ATTACKS ON THE GOVERNMENT FROM VESTED INTERESTS - WHETHER ITS REG ANSETT, BJELKE-PETERSEN, THE DOCTORS, THE WEALTHY PRIVATE SCHOOLS, OR WHOEVER ELSE IT MAY BE WITH A GRUDGE AGAINST US. THERE MUST BE TIMES WHEN YOU HAVE ASKED YOURSELVES: ISN'T THERE SOMETHING THE GOVERNMENT HAS DONE TO BE PROUD OF? ISN'T THERE SOMETHING THAT WILL GIVE THE LIE TO THESE ATTACKS? THE TRUTH IS THAT WE HAVE A GREAT STORY TO TELL, A FINE RECORD TO OUR CREDIT. I SHALL GIVE YOU SOME DETAILS OF IT SHORTLY. BUT THERE IS ONE FACT I ASK YOU TO REMEMBER: FOR ALL THE MOANING AND GROANING, THE DOOM-TALK AND GLOOM-TALK OF OUR OPPONENTS, AUSTRALIANS ARE EVERYWHERE BETTER OFF TODAY THAN THEY WERE BEFORE LABOR CAME IN. THE REAL PURCHASING POWER OF AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS, ALLOWING FOR INFLATION, INCREASED BY 3.2% IN THE YEAR TO JUNE 1973 AND BY A FURTHER 3.9 % IN THE YEAR TO JUNE 1974. THAT'S AN INCREASE OF MORE THAN SEVEN PERCENT IN REAL LIVING STANDARDS UNDER A LABOR GOVERNMENT.

6. I DON'T SUGGEST THAT OUR ACHIEVEMENTS SHOULD BE MEASURED IN MONETARY GAINS ALONE. INDEED, THE PURPOSE OF THE LABOR GOVERNMENT, ITS CENTRAL AMBITION, HAS BEEN TO OFFSET THE IMPORTANCE OF WAGES, OF TAKE-HOME PAY, AS THE SOLE DETERMINATION OF A FAMILY'S STANDARD OF LIVING. OUR POLICIES ARE DESIGNED TO IMPROVE THOSE ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS OF A CIVILIZED LIFE THAT ONLY GOVERNMENTS CAN PROVIDE - A DECENT EDUCATION, PROPER HEALTH CARE, ROADS, URBAN TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, CITIES FIT TO LIVE IN. TO NEGLECT THESE THINGS IS TO UNDERMINE THE TRUE BASIS OF PROSPERITY, THE CONDITIONS THAT MAKE FOR GENUINE SOCIAL ORDER, GENUINE SECURITY, AND GENUINE FULFILMENT FOR EVERY CITIZEN, WHATEVER HIS PRIVATE MEANS. OUR AIM HAS BEEN TO WIDEN AND EQUALISE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AUSTRALIANS IN EVERY FIELD WHERE GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAYS A PART. SO ALL THIS YEAR WE HAVE PRESSED AHEAD WITH OUR GREAT PROGRAM OF SOCIAL REFORM AND INNOVATION. WE HAVE NEVER ABANDONED THAT PROGRAM OR WATERED IT DOWN TO SUIT OUR OPPONENTS. THE PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA HAVE TWICE ENDORSED IT. THEY HAVE TWICE ELECTED US TO CARRY IT OUT. WE WILL GO AHEAD WITH IT. IT WILL TAKE TIME. IT WILL TAKE PATIENCE. AND IN THE FACE OF OBSTRUCTIVE TACTICS AND DELAYS IT WILL TAKE DETERMINATION. BUT WE WILL GO ON WITH THE JOB YOU ELECTED US TO DO.

7. I HAVE PREPARED A LIST OF SOME OF OUR PRINCIPAL ACHIEVEMENTS IN 1974. I SHALL READ TO YOU THE HIGHLIGHTS - AS MANY OF THEM AS YOU HAVE TIME TO HEAR. I HAVE BROUGHT COPIES OF THIS LIST AND YOU ARE WELCOME TO TAKE THEM AWAY TONIGHT. LATER THIS WEEK I SHALL BE TABLING IN THE PARLIAMENT AN EVEN LONGER AND MORE COMPREHENSIVE ACCOUNT OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS. IT IS ON THIS RECORD THAT WE ASK TO BE JUDGED. ON THIS RECORD WE ARE PROUD TO BE JUDGED - BY YOU, OUR SUPPORTERS, AND BY FUTURE GENERATIONS. A LABOR GOVERNMENT IS AN ACTIVE GOVERNMENT OR IT IS NOTHING. A LABOR GOVERNMENT IS A REFORMING GOVERNMENT OR IT IS NOTHING.
8. THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A TIME WHEN LABOR NEEDED A GREATER UNITY, GREATER SOLIDARITY, GREATER EFFORT. THE BITTER DIVISIONS AND FRUSTRATIONS AMONG OUR OPPONENTS DO NOT ALLOW US TO REL. OUR GUARD. THE YEAR AHEAD WILL TEST OUR NERVE AND OUR SPIRIT AS NEVER BEFORE. WE WILL BE VULNERABLE TO PANIC TALK, TO SCARE TACTICS, TO THE HYSTERIA OF OUR OPPONENTS. WE WILL BE VULNERABLE TO A CERTAIN IMPATIENCE AND BEWILDERMENT AMONG OUR OWN SUPPORTERS. WE WILL WIN THROUGH IF WE STICK TOGETHER. IN THE SHORT TERM YOU HAVE A GUARANTEE OF OUR DETERMINATION TO PROTECT THE WEAK, THE DISADVANTAGED AND THE LOWER PAID AGAINST THE EFFECTS OF TEMPORARY ECONOMIC AND SOCI. HARDSHIP. IN THE LONG TERM YOU HAVE A GOVERNMENT PLEDGED TO RAISE OUR SOCIAL AND LIVING STANDARDS, WIDEN THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL OUR PEOPLE, AND BUILD A PROUD REPUTATION FOR AUSTRALIA AS ONE OF THE MOST JUST AND ENLIGHTENED SOCIETIES.