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SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER,  
THE HON. E.G. WHITLAM, O.C., M.P.,  
FOR THE OPENING OF AUSTRALIA 75  
FESTIVAL OF CREATIVE ARTS AND SCIENCES,  
LAKESIDE INTERNATIONAL HOTEL, CANBERRA,  
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OCCASIONS SUCH AS THIS ARE AMONG THE REWARDS, IF NOT THE LUXURIES, OF POLITICAL LIFE. WHERE ELSE BUT IN POLITICS WOULD ONE FIND MORE CONGENIAL SURROUNDINGS, MORE REFINED COMPANY, A GATHERING OF SUCH DIVERSE TALENTS AND RARE MINDS, AN ATMOSPHERE OF SUCH LIVELY DEDICATION TO ALL THAT IS BEST AND MOST CULTIVATED IN OUR SOCIETY? THIS IS A UNIQUE FESTIVAL - BRINGING TOGETHER THE ARTS AND THE SCIENCES AND BRINGING THEM BOTH TO A WIDE AUDIENCE. WE HAVE HAD ARTS FESTIVALS BEFORE, WE HAVE HAD SCIENTIFIC EXHIBITIONS BEFORE; BUT I CANNOT REMEMBER AN OCCASION WHEN THE TWO WERE COMBINED SO SUCCESSFULLY, SO LOGICALLY AS THEY HAVE BEEN IN THE PLANNING FOR AUSTRALIA 75. IT IS A TRIBUTE TO THE ORGANISERS; AN HISTORIC EVENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR NATIONAL CAPITAL; A DEMONSTRATION OF THE HIGHEST ATTAINMENTS OF A NATION'S CULTURE AND THE HIGHEST VALUES OF OUR CIVILIZATION.

NOT LONG AGO A FRIEND SENT ME A COPY OF THE LATE DR. JOHN BRONOWSKI'S BOOK THE ASCENT OF MAN. SOME OF YOU WILL REMEMBER THE RECENT TELEVISION SERIES BASED UPON IT; I'M NOT SURE IF THE BOOK WAS BASED ON THE FILM OR THE FILM ON THE BOOK - FILMS AND BOOKS ARE PLEASURES ALL TO RARE FOR ME. NEVERTHELESS, I CAME ACROSS THIS STATEMENT: "MAN IS UNIQUE, NOT BECAUSE HE DOES SCIENCE, AND HE IS UNIQUE NOT BECAUSE HE DOES ART, BUT BECAUSE SCIENCE AND ART ARE EQUALLY THE EXPRESSIONS OF HIS MARVELLOUS PLASTICITY OF MIND." THAT SEEMED A FITTING TEXT FOR THIS FESTIVAL. PERHAPS I MIGHT EXTEND IT BY SAYING THAT MAN IS UNIQUE IN PERCEIVING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ART AND SCIENCE, IN RECOGNISING THEIR INDEPENDENCE, THEIR EQUAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE GOOD LIFE.

THAT IS WHAT YOUR FESTIVAL IS HELPING TO DO. THE BEST ART AND THE PUREST SCIENCE REFLECT THE SAME ATTITUDES OF MIND - CREATIVITY, IMAGINATION, A DISINTERESTED LOVE OF BEAUTY AND TRUTH. BERTRAND RUSSELL OBSERVED THAT PURE MATHEMATICS, PROPERLY VIEWED, POSSESSED THE SAME AUSTERE BEAUTY OF THE BEST MUSIC, WITHOUT ITS GORGEOUS TRAPPINGS. UNDOUBTEDLY THERE HAVE BEEN RARE INDIVIDUALS WITH BOTH SCIENTIFIC AND ARTISTIC GIFTS. ONE THINKS OF LEONARDO, OF DARWIN, OF EINSTEIN AND AGAIN OF RUSSELL. C.P. SNOW WAS THE FIRST POPULAR WRITER IN OUR OWN GENERATION TO SEEK A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE HUMANE AND SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINES.

CERTAINLY IT IS TIME WE ABANDONED THE IDEA THAT SCIENCE AND THE ARTS ARE HOSTILE, OR EVEN NECESSARILY DISTINCT. A GREAT DEAL OF MODERN ART HAS A TECHNOLOGICAL BASE. THE CINEMA IS A PRODUCT OF CHEMISTRY AND ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING; TELEVISION SPRINGS FROM ADVANCED ELECTRONICS; THE THEATRICAL ARTS DEPEND MORE AND MORE ON THEIR SOPHISTICATED TECHNOLOGY OF STAGECRAFT AND PRODUCTION; LITERATURE RELIES ON MODERN TECHNIQUES OF PRINTING.

WHAT I HOPE THIS FESTIVAL WILL DO IS CONVINCING US THAT A SOCIETY WITHOUT A RESPECT FOR ART IS AS BARREN AND DANGEROUS AS A SOCIETY WITHOUT A RESPECT FOR SCIENCE. THE PRE-SCIENTIFIC AGE IN EUROPE WAS NO LESS BARBAROUS FOR ITS ARTISTIC GLORIES. NOT UNTIL THE DAWNING OF THE AGE OF SCIENCE, WITH THE GROWTH OF SCIENTIFIC METHOD AND SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINE, WAS MAN READY TO TEMPER HIS DESTRUCTIVE URGES, HIS MEDIEVAL FANATICISM, WITH REASON AND TOLERANCE. AND THE CONVERSE IS EQUALLY TRUE. WE HAVE SEEN EXAMPLES OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETIES WITH CRIPPLING RESTRAINTS ON THE ARTIST'S FREEDOM. I HAVE BEEN CRITICISED IN RECENT MONTHS FOR MY FONDNESS FOR ANCIENT GREECE. THE UNIQUE GLORY OF GREEK CIVILIZATION WAS ITS EQUAL RESPECT FOR SCIENCE AND THE ARTS; THE TWO WERE HELD IN A PERPETUAL BALANCE. THE GREEK CONTRIBUTION TO PHYSICS AND MATHEMATICS WAS AS ENDURING AS HIS CONTRIBUTION TO POETRY AND DRAMA. AND THAT WAS NO MERE COINCIDENCE: THERE WAS UNDOUBTEDLY A QUALITY IN THE INTELLECTUAL SPIRIT AND TEMPER OF ATHENS THAT INSPIRED BOTH ART AND SCIENCE WITH A COMMON PURPOSE.

ONE OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR TIME IS THE DEPENDENCE OF ART AND SCIENTIFIC ENDEAVOUR ON GOVERNMENT SUPPORT - ON PUBLIC FUNDS.

I SEE NOTHING WRONG WITH THAT; IT IS PROBABLY INEVITABLE, EVEN DESIRABLE, PROVIDED ARTISTS AND SCIENTISTS MAINTAIN THEIR INDEPENDENCE OF GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY. OUR CURRENT BUDGET FOR THE ARTS IS \$20 MILLION A YEAR. OUR OUTLAYS FOR SCIENCE COVER AN ENORMOUS RANGE OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES. EXPENDITURE ON THE C.S.I.R.O. AND THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION ALONE AMOUNTS TO SOME \$110 MILLION IN A FULL YEAR. IN ADDITION, MUCH OF OUR EXPENDITURE ON TERTIARY EDUCATION IS DIRECTED TO SCIENTIFIC AND ARTISTIC OR CULTURAL PROJECTS. THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A TIME WHEN GOVERNMENTS WERE MORE INVOLVED IN SCIENCE AND THE ARTS. (THE GREEKS, INCIDENTALLY, WERE EXPERTS IN ALL THREE.) THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A TIME WHEN SCIENCE AND THE ARTS - ACTIVITIES SO PERVASIVE, SO POPULAR, SO FUNDAMENTAL TO OUR WAY OF LIFE - WERE LESS ABLE TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES.

THE FACT IS THAT IN THEIR PUREST FORM THEY HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH PROFIT-MAKING, THOUGH BOTH CAN BE APPLIED FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES. AND I MUST SAY I PREFER THAT OUR INVESTMENT IN THESE FIELDS SHOULD BE A COMMUNITY INVESTMENT, THAT THESE BASIC AREAS OF RESEARCH AND CREATIVITY SHOULD BE PROTECTED FROM ANY SUSPICION OF PRIVATE GAIN OR OFFICIAL PATRONAGE. ONLY GOVERNMENTS CAN PROVIDE THE FUNDS FOR AN OPERA HOUSE; ONLY GOVERNMENTS CAN PROVIDE THE FUNDS FOR A NUCLEAR REACTOR, A THEATRE, A TELESCOPE OR AN ORCHESTRA. MODERN ENLIGHTENED GOVERNMENTS ACCEPT THESE THINGS AS BEING JUST AS MUCH PART OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITY AS EDUCATION OR HEALTH.

IN OUR POLICIES FOR THE ARTS IN PARTICULAR WE HAVE SOUGHT TO ENSURE THAT PUBLIC FUNDS ARE DISBURSED THROUGH INDEPENDENT AGENCIES. WE HAVE LEGISLATION CURRENTLY BEFORE THE PARLIAMENT TO ESTABLISH THE AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS AS AN INDEPENDENT STATUTORY AUTHORITY. IT IS ALREADY ADMINISTERING ITS POLICIES THROUGH AUTONOMOUS BOARDS WITH COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE OF GOVERNMENT OR MINISTERIAL INFLUENCE. ONLY TWO NIGHTS AGO I INTRODUCED LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH IN CANBERRA THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL GALLERY. IT WILL DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A NATIONAL COLLECTION OF WORKS OF ART AND PROVIDE AN ART FOCUS FOR THE WHOLE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY. THE GALLERY WILL BE A STATUTORY AUTHORITY. THE NATIONAL LIBRARY AND THE A.B.C. OPERATE WITH SIMILAR INDEPENDENCE. THESE ARE SOUND PRINCIPLES AND NO GOVERNMENT WOULD WANT TO CHANGE THEM.

THE ARTS BY THEIR NATURE ARE A PUBLIC ACTIVITY. THEY ARE MEANT TO BE SEEN AND HEARD. SCIENCE IS MORE RETIRING, MORE CLOISTERED - MORE ESOTERIC. ONE OF THE GREAT THINGS ABOUT YOUR FESTIVAL IS THAT THOUSANDS OF AUSTRALIANS WILL COME TO SEE MORE OF AUSTRALIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENT AND INQUIRY. WE HAVE A GREAT RECORD, BUT FAR TOO LITTLE IS KNOWN. I CAN RECALL THREE OCCASIONS AS PRIME MINISTER WHEN I HAVE HAD THE HONOUR OF OPENING, OR BEING PRESENT AT THE OPENING, OF NEW SCIENTIFIC FACILITIES - AND ALL OF THEM WERE SYMBOLIC OF AUSTRALIA'S RENOWNED AND IMPORTANT WORK IN THEIR FIELDS.

THERE WAS A NUCLEAR FACILITY AT THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY; OUR WORK IN HIGH ENERGY PHYSICS IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE. THERE WAS THE NEW OPTICAL TELESCOPE AT SIDING SPRINGS, AND THE DEEP SPACE TRACKING STATION AT TIDBINBILLA. WE ARE AMONG THE LEADING NATIONS IN ASTRONOMY, PARTICULARLY IN THE FIELD OF RADIO ASTRONOMY, AND WE ARE AN IMPORTANT LINK IN WORLD-WIDE SPACE TRACKING NETWORKS. THESE, PERHAPS, ARE THE MORE SPECTACULAR AND POPULAR ASPECTS OF SCIENCE; I DO NOT FORGET THE QUIET, DEDICATED, VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AUSTRALIAN SCIENTISTS TO ANTARCTIC RESEARCH, TO GEOLOGY, TO BIOLOGY, TO MEDICINE, TO PHYSICS. THIS FESTIVAL WILL BRING MANY ASPECTS OF OUR SCIENTIFIC EFFORT TO A WIDE AND INTERESTED AUDIENCE.

IT WOULD BE A PITY IF I MADE THIS OCCASION SEEM TOO ACADEMIC OR SOLEMN. IT IS, AFTER ALL, A FESTIVAL - ESSENTIALLY A TIME FOR ENJOYMENT. THERE ARE MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHEER FUN AND RECREATION. I AM GLAD IT IS TO BE A BIENNIAL EVENT, AND I AM PARTICULARLY GLAD THAT THE FIRST IS BEING HELD IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL, SYMBOLISING THE CREATIVITY AND ACHIEVEMENT OF THE WHOLE NATION. I AM NOT AN ARTIST OR A SCIENTIST, BUT AT LEAST I CAN ENJOY AUSTRALIA 75 AS A CENTRALIST. I CONGRATULATE THE FESTIVAL BOARD FOR THEIR DEDICATED PLANNING AND PREPARATION. AUSTRALIA 75 WILL ENHANCE OUR KNOWLEDGE OF SCIENCE AND OUR ENJOYMENT OF THE ARTS. JUST AS IMPORTANT, IT WILL BRING THESE ETERNAL DISCIPLINES TOGETHER, REVEALING THEIR COMMON PURPOSE IN THE GREAT WEB OF BEAUTY, KNOWLEDGE AND CONTEMPLATION.

I HAVE THE GREATEST PLEASURE IN DECLARING OPEN AUSTRALIA 75, THE FESTIVAL OF CREATIVE ARTS AND SCIENCES, IN CANBERRA.