



PRIME MINISTER

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

ADDRESS BY THE PRIME MINISTER, MR R.J.L. HAWKE, TO THE
TOWNSVILLE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT BUREAU, TOWNSVILLE
INTERNATIONAL HOTEL, 10 AUGUST 1983.

I AM DELIGHTED TO BE WITH YOU TODAY AT THIS MEETING OF THE
TOWNSVILLE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT BUREAU.

I WAS LAST IN TOWNSVILLE IN FEBRUARY - JUST PRIOR TO THE
LAST ELECTION.

I SPOKE THEN OF LABOR'S STRONG COMMITMENT TO NORTH
QUEENSLAND AND OF THE RANGE OF LABOR POLICIES TO PROMOTE THE
WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE OF NORTH QUEENSLAND.

ALTHOUGH IT IS ONLY 5 MONTHS SINCE THE ELECTION ON MARCH 5,
WE HAVE ALREADY MADE GREAT PROGRESS.

IN JUNE, WE ANNOUNCED WE WOULD HONOUR OUR COMMITMENT TO
BUILD A COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT CENTRE HERE IN TOWNSVILLE TO
HOUSE FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS.

THE CENTRE WILL BE THE FIRST FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OFFICE BLOCK
BUILT IN AUSTRALIA IN THE LAST 10 YEARS.

IT WILL COST ABOUT \$12 MILLION AND ITS CONSTRUCTION WILL BOOST JOB OPPORTUNITIES BY ABOUT 300.

INDEED IT WILL MAKE A CONSIDERABLE CONTRIBUTION TO RESUSCITATING THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IN NORTH QUEENSLAND.

THE BENEFITS TO TOWNSVILLE INCLUDE THE PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES, LONG-TERM WORK FOR BUILDERS AND SUB-CONTRACTORS AND A BOOST TO THE SPENDING POWER OF THE COMMUNITY.

LAST MONTH I ANNOUNCED A DECISION OF MOMENTOUS IMPORTANCE - THE CONSTRUCTION OF STAGE 1 OF THE BURDEKIN DAM.

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAS UNDERTAKEN A PROJECT OF TRULY NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE SINCE THE POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION PERIOD.

WE HAVE ALLOCATED UP TO \$13 MILLION THIS FINANCIAL YEAR FOR THE DAM.

PROMISES TO BUILD THE DAM HAVE BEEN MADE REPEATEDLY SINCE THE SECOND WORLD WAR.

BUT FOR THE FIRST TIME, AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN A TOTAL COMMITMENT TO THE DAM.

IT'S ALL THE DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD BETWEEN SPECIOUS, OPPORTUNISTIC PROMISES, AND POSITIVE ACTION.

IT IS DIFFICULT TO OVERSTATE THE BENEFITS THAT WILL FLOW FROM THE DAM - JOBS, IRRIGATION, CONSTRUCTION, NEW CONTRACTS, DEMAND FOR MATERIALS AND TRANSPORT AND A LIFT IN BUSINESS CONFIDENCE AND TOURISM.

THE DAM IS PROBABLY THE MOST SIGNIFICANT BOOST TO NORTH QUEENSLAND SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SUGAR AND MINING INDUSTRIES.

THE SUGAR INDUSTRY, OF COURSE, IS VITAL TO NORTH QUEENSLAND.

HOWEVER, IN RECENT TIMES THE INDUSTRY HAS SUFFERED THE COMBINATION OF LOW WORLD PRICES AND ADVERSE SEASONAL CONDITIONS.

IN RESPONSE TO THE SEVERE LIQUIDITY CRISIS FACED BY MANY GROWERS, WE PROVIDED \$10 MILLION TO THE INDUSTRY.

THIS MONEY IS BEING MADE AVAILABLE IN THE FORM OF CARRY-ON LOANS AND WILL KEEP GROWERS IN THE INDUSTRY WHO WOULD OTHERWISE HAVE BEEN FORCED OUT.

WE KNOW THE GREAT CONCERN NORTH QUEENSLANDERS HAVE FOR THE UPGRADING OF THE BRUCE HIGHWAY AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF LOCAL ROADS.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REGARDS THE BRUCE HIGHWAY BETWEEN BRISBANE AND CAIRNS AS THE NUMBER ONE PRIORITY FOR THE ALLOCATION OF NATIONAL ROAD FUNDS WITHIN QUEENSLAND.

WE REMAIN COMMITTED TO ITS UPGRADING BY 1988.

THE ALLOCATION OF FUNDS FOR 1983-84 UNDER THE AUSTRALIAN BICENTENNIAL ROAD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AS BETWEEN STATES AND CATEGORIES OF THE PROGRAM IS BEING FINALISED.

WE EXPECT TO SPEND SOME \$65 MILLION ON THE HIGHWAY THIS FINANCIAL YEAR - AN ALL-TIME RECORD.

THIS IS NOT ONLY A WELCOME INFUSION OF FUNDS TO A HIGH PRIORITY AREA BUT ALSO AN EXTENSIVE EMPLOYMENT GENERATION PROGRAM IN ITSELF. OVER 3,000 JOBS WILL BE CREATED, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY.

WE ALSO RECOGNISE THE MAJOR DEFICIENCIES IN THE LOCAL ROADS NETWORK IN QUEENSLAND AS A WHOLE AND PARTICULARLY IN NORTH QUEENSLAND.

LOCAL ROADS IN ALL STATES WILL BENEFIT FROM THE 37 PER CENT INCREASE IN COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE IN 1983/84 UNDER THE COMBINED ROADS GRANTS AND BICENTENNIAL ROAD PROGRAMS.

WE ARE ALSO PROVIDING \$70 MILLION IN 1983-84 FOR JOBS ON LOCAL ROADS UNDER OUR COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM - TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF OUR CONCERN FOR THE UPGRADING OF LOCAL ROADS.

OVER \$12 MILLION HAS BEEN ALLOCATED TO QUEENSLAND AND WILL PROVIDE UP TO 1,000 JOBS.

WE ALSO APPRECIATE THE SPECIAL AIR TRAVEL NEEDS OF NORTH QUEENSLANDERS.

I AM PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT TOWNSVILLE AIRPORT'S NEW DOMESTIC TERMINAL WILL GO AHEAD.

SHORTLY AFTER THE ELECTION, MY COLLEAGUE, KIM BEAZLEY, THE MINISTER FOR AVIATION, ASKED HIS DEPARTMENT TO STUDY AND REPORT ON THE NEED FOR IMPROVED DOMESTIC TERMINAL FACILITIES AT TOWNSVILLE AIRPORT.

THIS STUDY RECOMMENDED THAT NEW DOMESTIC TERMINAL FACILITIES WERE NECESSARY TO PROPERLY OVERCOME THE LONG-STANDING INADEQUACIES OF THE EXISTING TERMINAL COMPLEX.

OTHER LESS EXPENSIVE OPTIONS SUCH AS A GREATER USE OF THE INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL FOR DOMESTIC TRAFFIC WERE CONSIDERED BUT WERE REJECTED, DUE TO THE CONFLICTING NEEDS OF THE DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES.

TOWNSVILLE, BECAUSE OF ITS FAVOURABLE GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION - TOWNSVILLE - THE GATEWAY TO THE NORTH - HAS DOUBLED ITS REGULAR INTERNATIONAL SERVICES SINCE THE TERMINAL WAS OPENED AND IS NOW ATTRACTING CONSIDERABLE USE BY INTERNATIONAL COMMERCIAL AIR TRAFFIC.

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AS IT IS NECESSARY TO CHECK ALL THIS TRAFFIC FOR CUSTOMS, IMMIGRATION AND HEALTH REQUIREMENTS SEPARATE FROM DOMESTIC TRAFFIC IT WAS FOUND IMPRACTICABLE TO USE THE INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL FOR REGULAR DOMESTIC USE.

WHAT WE ARE NOW PROPOSING IS THE UPGRADING OF THE DOMESTIC TERMINAL AS SPEEDILY AND REALISTICALLY AS POSSIBLE,

SUCH A COMPLEX PROJECT REQUIRES A GREAT DEAL OF SPECIALIST PLANNING AND DESIGN EFFORT.

AND WHILE, OF COURSE, WE ALL WANT TO SEE THE PROJECT BECOME A REALITY AS QUICKLY AS PRACTICABLE, NOTHING WILL BE GAINED BY PROCEEDING ON THE OPPORTUNISTIC LINES PROPOSED BY THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT.

FOR EXAMPLE, IT REQUIRES THE APPROVAL OF THE PARLIAMENTARY WORKS COMMITTEE, WHICH HAS TO CONSIDER AND REPORT TO THE PARLIAMENT ON MAJOR PROJECTS OVER \$2 MILLION.

MY GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ADVISED THAT, EVEN THOUGH A GREAT DEAL OF THE PRELIMINARY PLANNING IS COMPLETE, AT LEAST A FURTHER TWELVE MONTHS IS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THE NECESSARY DETAILED DESIGN WORK AND SUBMIT THE PROPOSAL TO THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE FOR ITS CONSIDERATION. I HAVE INSISTED THAT THIS PRELIMINARY WORK BE COMPLETED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

BUT I STRESS; AS SOON AS THIS PROCESS CONCLUDES, DEVELOPMENT WILL COMMENCE.

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ENCOURAGING THE AIRLINES TO INTRODUCE DISCOUNT AIR FARES. AT LEAST PARTLY REFLECTING THIS, ANSETT AND TAA RECENTLY INTRODUCED 45 PERCENT DISCOUNT FARES. THIS INITIATIVE SHOULD BENEFIT NORTH QUEENSLANDERS AS IT INCLUDES ROCKHAMPTON, MACKAY, TOWNSVILLE, CAIRNS AND PROSERPINE.

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CONDITIONS WHICH MAKE THESE FARES UNATTRACTIVE TO MULTI-STAGE TRAVELLERS ARE BEING REVIEWED BY THE AIRLINES AT THE REQUEST OF KIM BEAZLEY, THE MINISTER FOR AVIATION.

HE IS ALSO PURSUING WITH THEM THE CONCEPT OF LOW COST AIR SERVICES AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO EXISTING SCHEDULED SERVICES.

ANOTHER DISABILITY TO WHICH NORTH QUEENSLANDERS ARE SUBJECT IS THE PROBLEM OF TROPICAL ILLNESS AND DISEASE.

PRIOR TO THE LAST ELECTION WE PROPOSED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TROPICAL MEDICINE RESEARCH INSTITUTE AT JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY HERE IN TOWNSVILLE.

THAT COMMITMENT REMAINS.

WE HAVE ASKED THE COMMONWEALTH TERTIARY EDUCATION COMMISSION TO REPORT ON THE ESTABLISHMENT, TIMETABLE AND COST OF THE INSTITUTE IN SUFFICIENT TIME FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE 1984 BUDGET.

THIS WILL ENABLE OUR PROPOSAL TO BE CONSIDERED AND PROGRESSED ON A SOUND, INFORMED BASIS.

NORTH QUEENSLAND HAS A VITAL STAKE IN THE TOURIST INDUSTRY - AN INDUSTRY OF ENORMOUS POTENTIAL.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED TO TAKE WHATEVER ACTION IT CAN TO HELP THE TOURIST INDUSTRY ACHIEVE ITS FULL POTENTIAL.

OUR NATIONAL TOURIST POLICY AIMS TO GET MORE OVERSEAS VISITORS TO AUSTRALIA AND TO ENCOURAGE MORE AUSTRALIANS TO HOLIDAY AT HOME.

AS PART OF THIS, WE WANT TO ENCOURAGE MORE TRAVELLERS - BOTH OVERSEAS AND DOMESTIC - TO VISIT NORTH QUEENSLAND.

TO HELP MEET THIS OBJECTIVE WE WILL PROVIDE A SUBSTANTIAL BOOST TO THE BUDGET ALLOCATION FOR THE AUSTRALIAN TOURIST COMMISSION IN 1983-84.

THIS WILL ALLOW NEW INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE INBOUND TOURISM TO AUSTRALIA.

THESE INITIATIVES INCLUDE

- INTENSIVE ADVERTISING IN ALL MARKETS, ESPECIALLY THE UNITED STATES
- EXPANDED OVERSEAS REPRESENTATION AND
- THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AUSTRALIAN TRAVEL CENTRES IN OVERSEAS MARKETS

THE GREAT BARRIER REEF IS, OF COURSE, ONE OF THE KEY ATTRACTIONS TO NORTH QUEENSLAND FOR INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS.

ONE OF OUR NORTH QUEENSLAND COMMITMENTS TO PROMOTE TOURISM WAS TO EXEMPT THE GREAT BARRIER REEF ISLAND RESORTS FROM THE DIESEL EXCISE IMPOSED BY THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO EFFECTIVELY MEET THIS COMMITMENT BY MAKING A SPECIAL GRANT OF APPROXIMATELY \$1 MILLION THIS FINANCIAL YEAR TO SUBSIDISE THE DIESEL FUEL COSTS TO BARRIER REEF ISLAND TOURIST RESORTS.

THIS GRANT WILL BE A TIED GRANT UNDER SECTION 96 OF THE CONSTITUTION. THE CONDITIONS WILL BE ANNOUNCED LATER.

DIESEL IS THE LIFEBLOOD OF THE TOURIST INDUSTRY IN NORTH QUEENSLAND. THIS IS ESPECIALLY SO FOR THE OFF-SHORE ISLANDS.

POWER GENERATION, AIR-CONDITIONING AND EVEN THE BOATS THAT BRING THE DIESEL TO THE ISLANDS ARE RUNNING ON DIESEL.

THESE TOURIST ISLANDS ARE NOT PART OF THE GENERAL ELECTRICAL GRID SYSTEM.

THEREFORE IT IS FAIR THAT SPECIAL SUBSIDIES SHOULD BE PROVIDED AS COMPENSATION.

THESE ISLANDS ARE PROVIDING THOUSANDS OF JOBS, MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN REVENUE TO THE GOVERNMENT AND VIRTUALLY SUSTAINING A NUMBER OF TOWNS ALONG THE QUEENSLAND COAST.

OUR DECISION TO PROVIDE THIS \$1 MILLION GRANT WILL PROVIDE A WELCOME BOOST TO TOURISM IN QUEENSLAND.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS ANXIOUS TO ENCOURAGE MAN-MADE TOURIST ATTRACTIONS, INCLUDING INTERPRETATION FACILITIES AND CONVENTION CENTRES, AND, WHEREVER PRACTICABLE, FINANCE THEM OR PROVIDE GENEROUS LOANS.

ONE, IN PARTICULAR, IS GREAT BARRIER REEF WORLD HERE IN TOWNSVILLE.

AS SOME OF YOU KNOW, I AM FAMILIAR WITH THIS PROJECT. I KNOW IT IS VERY STRONGLY SUPPORTED IN THIS CITY AND I BELIEVE IT HAS ENORMOUS POTENTIAL.

THE TOWNSVILLE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT BUREAU, OF COURSE, IS HEAVILY INVOLVED. INDEED I NOTICE IT IS CURRENTLY YOUR NUMBER ONE PRIORITY.

REEF WORLD IS SUPPORTED BY THE GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AUTHORITY AND HAS BEEN SUGGESTED FOR INCLUSION UNDER THE BICENTENNIAL PROGRAM.

I FULLY ENDORSE THE COMMENTS OF MY COLLEAGUE BARRY COHEN, THE MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS AND ENVIRONMENT - PROVIDED THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT NOMINATES THE PROJECT UNDER THE BICENTENNIAL PROGRAM, GOVERNMENT FUNDING IS LIKELY TO PROCEED.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZES THE TREMENDOUS WORK BEING CARRIED OUT BY THE DEFENCE FORCES IN NORTH QUEENSLAND AND IS PROUD OF THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS.

FOR EXAMPLE, I NOTICE LAST WEEK THE NO 35 SQUADRON AT THE R.A.A.F. BASE TOWNSVILLE WAS PRESENTED WITH THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER'S CUP BY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL FOR OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE.

MY CONGRATULATIONS! I AM VERY PROUD THE UNIT HAS RECEIVED SUCH A DISTINGUISHED AWARD.

HERE IN TOWNSVILLE WE HAVE THE READY DEPLOYMENT FORCE.

AGAIN THERE IS AN ENVIABLE STANDARD OF PROFICIENCY.

AUSTRALIA MUST HAVE STRONG DEFENCES.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT UNDERSTANDS THAT AND IS DETERMINED TO MEET ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.

ACCORDINGLY WE HAVE DECIDED IN THE COMING BUDGET TO INCREASE DEFENCE SPENDING SIGNIFICANTLY IN REAL TERMS.

NORTH QUEENSLANDERS ARE JUSTIFIABLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE ADEQUACY OF COASTAL SURVEILLANCE.

AGAINST THAT BACKGROUND WE EXTENDED THE COASTAL SURVEILLANCE CONTRACT OF REPROGRAPHICS TO MARCH AT THE COST OF AN ADDITIONAL \$900,000.

THIS OVERVIEW OF SOME OF OUR POLICIES INDICATES IN THE CLEARER TERMS THE FEDERAL LABOR GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO NORTH QUEENSLAND.

WE ARE REWRITING THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH QUEENSLAND.

FOR TOO LONG NORTH QUEENSLAND HAS FAILED TO RECEIVE A FAIR RETURN FOR ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE NATIONAL WEALTH.

FOR TOO LONG THE SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF NORTH QUEENSLANDERS HAVE BEEN LARGELY IGNORED BY FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS.

THE FEDERAL LABOR GOVERNMENT IS STARTING TO RIGHT THAT WRONG.

WE CAME TO OFFICE WITH THE GREAT AIM OF "BRINGING AUSTRALIA TOGETHER".

WE ARE NOW MAKING A START IN BRINGING NORTH QUEENSLAND CLOSER TO THE REST OF AUSTRALIA AND THE REST OF AUSTRALIA CLOSER TO NORTH QUEENSLAND.