



PRIME MINISTER

SPEECH TO THE BULLETIN-NEWSWEEK LUNCHEON - 4 JULY 1984

IT IS A HAPPY COINCIDENCE - AND I AM SURE A HAPPY OMEN FOR SUCCESS - THAT THIS FIRST ISSUE OF THE COMBINED BULLETIN-NEWSWEEK SHOULD FALL ON THE FOURTH OF JULY - INDEPENDENCE DAY.

SO, FIRST LET ME SAY TO OUR FRIENDS FROM NEW YORK, REPRESENTING THE AMERICAN HALF OF THIS VENTURE, THAT YOUR PARTICIPATION IS ENTIRELY COMPATIBLE WITH THE SPIRIT OF INDEPENDENCE WHICH THIS DAY CELEBRATES - NOT FOR AMERICANS ALONE, BUT FOR ALL THOSE WHO CHERISH DEMOCRACY EVERYWHERE AROUND THE WORLD.

FOR, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, THIS UNIQUE VENTURE IN AUSTRALIAN PUBLISHING IS NEITHER A MERGER NOR A TAKEOVER; BUT AN ALLIANCE OF TWO INDEPENDENT FORCES TO COMPLEMENT THE STRENGTHS OF EACH; AND BY THIS DECLARATION OF INTERDEPENDENCE, THE BETTER TO MAINTAIN AND ENSURE THE INDEPENDENCE OF BOTH.

AND THAT IS THE SORT OF ALLIANCE, WHERE AUSTRALIAN AND AMERICAN INTERESTS ARE INVOLVED; THAT I CAN ALWAYS ENDORSE AND SUPPORT.

THERE WAS, I MUST SAY, ONE ASPECT OF TREVOR KENNEDY'S LETTER OF INVITATION WHICH RAISED A DOUBT, IF NOT APPREHENSION, IN MY MIND.

BECAUSE, AFTER OUTLINING THE COURSE THESE PROCEEDINGS TODAY MIGHT TAKE AND WHAT WAS EXPECTED OF ME, TREVOR WROTE:

"PHILIP ADAMS WILL WIND THE WHOLE THING UP."!

NOW, IF EVER I SENSED A SET-UP, THAT IS IT.

BUT I SUPPOSE AT LEAST WHEN PHILIP WINDS THE WHOLE THING UP, IT WILL HELP OUR AMERICAN FRIENDS UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY'RE REALLY GETTING INTO.

BECAUSE PHILIP, AMONG OTHER THINGS, REPRESENTS ONE OF THE GREAT STRANDS OF THE BULLETIN TRADITION - ICONOCLASTIC, RADICAL REPUBLICANISM.

THAT'S THE OLDEST BULLETIN TRADITION; AND IT'S SOMEHOW MANAGED TO SURVIVE - SOMETIMES SO FAINTLY AS TO BE ON THE VERGE OF EXTINCTION - FOR OVER ONE HUNDRED YEARS.

AND OF COURSE WHEN WE'RE SPEAKING OF THE BULLETIN'S RADICAL TRADITION, WE CAN'T IGNORE THE OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION OF ONE OF ITS LEADING WRITERS.

I MEAN, OF COURSE, DAVID McNICOL.

HOW COULD IT EVER BE SAID OF AUSTRALIA, TO ADAPT OSCAR WILDE ON THE UNITED STATES, THAT WE HAVE NO OLD INSTITUTIONS AND NO ANCIENT MONUMENTS, WHEN WE HAVE THE BULLETIN AND DAVID McNICOL!

BUT SERIOUSLY, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, FOR ALL THE VAST CHANGES IN ITS STYLE, OUTLOOK, POLITICS AND OWNERSHIP, THE BULLETIN IS AN INSTITUTION; AND IT IS AN AUTHENTIC AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTION.

AUSTRALIAN NATIONALISM, THE AUSTRALIAN ETHOS OF THE MATESHIP OF THE BUSH, A DISTINCTIVELY AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE, THE AUSTRALIAN BRAND OF HUMOUR - ALL GREW TOGETHER WITH THE BULLETIN; AND THE BULLETIN'S CONTRIBUTION TO EACH, ESPECIALLY IN ITS FIRST THREE DECADES FROM 1880, WAS SEMINALLY AND ENDURINGLY IMPORTANT.

AND IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT DURING THIS GREAT FLOWERING OF THE AUSTRALIAN SPIRIT, THE ORGANISED LABOUR MOVEMENT TOOK DEEP ROOT IN OUR NATIONAL LIFE AND THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY ITSELF WAS BORN.

THE BULLETIN CELEBRATED ITS CENTENARY FOUR YEARS AGO; AND THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY WILL CELEBRATE ITS FIRST CENTURY OF UNBROKEN FORMAL EXISTENCE IN 1991 - LESS THAN SEVEN YEARS AWAY.

AND THESE SIMPLE FACTS SERVE TO REMIND US OF A MOST SIGNIFICANT, BUT OFTEN IGNORED, ASPECT OF AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL LIFE.

AND THAT IS, THE REMARKABLE STABILITY AND CONTINUITY OF MANY OF OUR KEY INSTITUTIONS.

AND THAT IS ESPECIALLY TRUE IN POLITICS AND JOURNALISM.

THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY ITSELF IS NOT ONLY FAR AND AWAY AUSTRALIA'S OLDEST POLITICAL PARTY; IT IS ONE OF THE VERY OLDEST IN THE WORLD; AND IN THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD, OF THE PARTIES WHICH REGULARLY FORM GOVERNMENTS, WE ARE OUTRANKED ONLY BY THE DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN PARTIES OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE BRITISH CONSERVATIVE PARTY.

IN JOURNALISM, THE RECORD ON CONTINUITY IS JUST AS REMARKABLE.

FOR EXAMPLE, SEVEN OF THE TEN MORNING DAILIES NOW PUBLISHED IN THE SIX STATE CAPITALS WERE ESTABLISHED BEFORE THE END OF THE LAST CENTURY - THAT IS, BEFORE THE AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION ITSELF.

AND AS I HAVE SAID, THE BULLETIN FALLS WELL INTO THIS CATEGORY, AS FAR AS VENERABILITY IS CONCERNED.

NOW, THROUGH THIS UNIQUE VENTURE, ANOTHER CHAPTER IS BEING WRITTEN IN ITS LONG HISTORY.

IT IS TRUE THAT IN THIS UNDERTAKING, THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT EACH PUBLICATION WILL RETAIN ITS SEPARATE IDENTITY.

HOWEVER, THERE WILL INEVITABLY BE AN INFLUENCE OF EACH PAPER UPON THE OTHER.

AND IT WILL BE A REAL CHALLENGE FOR THE STAFF AND MANAGEMENT OF BOTH TO ENSURE THAT THAT INFLUENCE AND THE CHANGES IT WILL BRING ABOUT, WORK FOR THE MAXIMUM BENEFIT OF THE READERS THEY NOW SHARE IN COMMON.

FOR EXAMPLE, IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE - IT WOULD I BELIEVE, BE A RETROGRADE STEP - IF THE BULLETIN WERE TO ABANDON ITS OWN OVERSEAS COVERAGE OR TO CEASE TO INTERPRET NEWS AND EVENTS OVERSEAS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN POINT OF VIEW.

ON THE OTHER HAND, WE SHOULD HOPE TO SEE, ON THE NEWSWEEK SIDE, AN EXPANSION - AND INDEED A BIAS - OF ITS COVERAGE OF NEWS AND EVENTS IN THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC REGION - THIS GREAT AND GROWING REGION TO WHICH AUSTRALIA BELONGS.

AND FROM THAT EXPANDED COVERAGE IN THE AUSTRALIAN EDITION OF NEWSWEEK, WE CAN HOPE TO SEE ULTIMATELY AN EXPANDED COVERAGE OF AUSTRALIA AND ITS REGION IN THE NORTH AMERICAN EDITION OF NEWSWEEK ITSELF.

IF THOSE THINGS HAPPEN IN THE BULLETIN AND IN NEWSWEEK - THEN THIS VENTURE WILL SERVE A VALUABLE PURPOSE, NOT ONLY FOR THE READERS, BUT FOR BOTH OUR COUNTRIES.

INDEED THIS MERGER REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT RECOGNITION BOTH OF AUSTRALIA'S OWN ROLE IN REGIONAL AND WORLD AFFAIRS AND OF THE INCREASED INTEREST OF THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY IN SUCH DEVELOPMENTS.

WE HAVE TO BE REALISTIC ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTION WHICH AUSTRALIA CAN MAKE TO FOSTERING THE OBJECTIVES OF REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND STABILITY. BUT THERE ARE CLEAR OBLIGATIONS UPON US TO ACCEPT THE RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PURSUIT OF THESE OBJECTIVES.

AUSTRALIA MUST MAINTAIN A COHERENT, CREDIBLE AND REALISTIC FOREIGN POLICY, AN APPROACH TO FOREIGN RELATIONS WHICH IS AT ONCE PRINCIPLED AND SENSITIVE, FLEXIBLE AND RESPONSIVE, AND ADEQUATE TO THE DEMANDS OF THE COMPLEX AND FAST-CHANGING WORLD AROUND US. CLEARLY SUCH A POLICY MUST BE KEENLY MINDFUL OF THE EFFECT ANY DECISION OR SET OF DECISIONS MAY HAVE ON THE BROADER FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES TO WHICH I HAVE ALLUDED.

THE MATURITY REQUIRED IN THE CONDUCT OF OUR FOREIGN RELATIONS REQUIRES AN INCREASINGLY SOPHISTICATED PUBLIC, AND THIS WILL, I BELIEVE, BE FURTHER NURTURED BY THE PRODUCT RESULTING FROM THE MERGER OF THE BULLETIN AND NEWSWEEK. THIS IN ITSELF INCREASES THE RESPONSIBILITIES UPON YOU AS INDEED IS THE CASE FOR THE AUSTRALIAN MEDIA MORE GENERALLY.

FRIENDS, BEARING IN MIND THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THIS OCCASION, AND THE AUSPICIOUS DAY ON WHICH IT TAKES PLACE, IT MAY NOT BE INAPPROPRIATE IF I CONCLUDE BY QUOTING SOMETHING I SAID TO THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB IN WASHINGTON JUST OVER A YEAR AGO.

I WAS SPEAKING OF THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE NATIONS - BUT IT IS NOT WITHOUT RELEVANCE TO THE NOBLE PROFESSION OF JOURNALISM IN THE WORLD TODAY. I SAID:

"HOWEVER JEALOUSLY EACH OF US MAY GUARD OUR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, WE MUST EQUALLY RECOGNISE OUR INTERNATIONAL INTERDEPENDENCE.

AND ULTIMATELY, WE HAVE TO RECOGNISE, HOWEVER DIFFICULT IT MAY BE, EVEN HOWEVER UNPALATABLE IT MAY BE - WE HAVE TO RECOGNISE THAT INTERDEPENDENCE IS GLOBAL AND UNIVERSAL.

AT STAKE, IN THE RECOGNITION AND ACCEPTANCE OF THAT FUNDAMENTAL FACT, IS NOTHING LESS THAN THE SURVIVAL OF CIVILISATION ITSELF.

THIS WILL BE THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA: THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF THE NATIONS OF OUR REGION; OUR INTERDEPENDENCE WITH THE GREAT DEMOCRACIES; BUT ULTIMATELY, AND INESCAPABLY, THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF US ALL - ALL NATIONS, ALL PEOPLE - IN THE STARK CHOICE BEFORE US ALL - A CHOICE NEVER BEFORE FACED BY HUMANITY - THE CHOICE BETWEEN SURVIVAL OR EXTINCTION."

MY FRIENDS, THE PRESS OF OUR TWO GREAT DEMOCRACIES SHARES A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN MEETING THIS ULTIMATE CHALLENGE FOR HUMAN REASON AND HUMAN UNDERSTANDING.

AND IN EQUIPPING THESE TWO IMPORTANT JOURNALS BETTER FOR THE PART THEY CAN PLAY IN THAT TASK, THIS VENTURE IS WELCOME.

I CONGRATULATE YOU UPON IT, AND WISH YOU EVERY SUCCESS.
