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PRIME MINISTER

SPEAKING NOTES FOR THE VICTORIAN ALP DINNER DANCE

MELBOURNE -- 27 JULY 1984

TWO WEEKS AGO THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY'S 36TH BIENNIAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE ENDED.

THAT CONFERENCE WAS AS SUCCESSFUL AS ANY IN AUSTRALIA'S HISTORY.

OUR GREAT PARTY, THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY, EMERGED WITH A RENEWED COMMITMENT TO REFORM, RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION.

WE IN THE LABOR PARTY UNQUESTIONABLY HAVE THE POLICIES TO PILOT AUSTRALIA THROUGH THE 1980S AND BEYOND.

WE HAVE THE VISION AND PURPOSE THAT AUSTRALIA NEEDS.

WE HAVE THE PROGRAM THAT AUSTRALIA NEEDS.

THE CHALLENGE WE FACE IS TO IMPLEMENT THAT PROGRAM.

TO DO THAT, OF COURSE, WE NEED TO REMAIN IN GOVERNMENT.

AND TO DO THAT WE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE. WE NEED TO KEEP THEIR CONFIDENCE, THEIR RESPECT, THEIR TRUST.

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2.

LABOR WILL ACHIEVE NOTHING LANGUISHING ON THE OPPOSITION BENCHES.

THAT SIMPLE REALITY SHOULD NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.

LEAST OF ALL SHOULD WE FORGET IT IN THE MONTHS IMMEDIATELY AHEAD OF US.

IN THE NEAR FUTURE LABOR WILL FACE A FEDERAL ELECTION AND A VICTORIAN ELECTION.

IN THOSE TWO ELECTIONS LABOR HAS AN UNPRECEDENTED OPPORTUNITY - THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONSOLIDATE IN POWER LONG-TERM LABOR GOVERNMENTS AT BOTH THE NATIONAL AND STATE LEVELS.

VICTORY IN THOSE TWO CAMPAIGNS WOULD BE AN HISTORIC TURNING POINT FOR LABOR.

WE CAN PUT BEHIND US ONCE AND FOR ALL THE CONSERVATIVE LEGACY THAT HAS BEDEVILLED THIS STATE AND THAT HAS BEDEVILLED THIS NATION.

IT IS A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY FOR LABOR, AN OPPORTUNITY WE MUST GRASP WITH ALL OUR STRENGTH.

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3.

FOR MY PART, I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO BOTH THESE CAMPAIGNS -
TO WORKING FOR THE RE-ELECTION OF JOHN CAIN AND HIS TEAM
AND TO WORKING FOR THE RETURN OF AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL
LABOR GOVERNMENT.

I HAVE NO DOUBT ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF BOTH THESE CAMPAIGNS.

JOHN CAIN AND HIS GOVERNMENT WILL BE RETURNED - AND OUR
OWN FEDERAL LABOR TEAM WILL RECEIVE A RENEWED MANDATE
FROM THE PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA.

BUT I WOULD ALSO WARN EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU THAT NONE
OF US CAN AFFORD TO BE COMPLACENT.

TOO MUCH IS AT STAKE FOR THAT.

IF WE MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY TO CONSOLIDATE LABOR IN
GOVERNMENT IN VICTORIA AND NATIONALLY, I BELIEVE THAT
OPPORTUNITY MAY NOT RECUR FOR YEARS TO COME.

AND I WOULD ALSO SAY THIS: NEVER UNDERESTIMATE OUR
POLITICAL OPPONENTS.

YES, THEY ARE DIVIDED AND LEADERLESS.

YES, THEY ARE DEVOID OF COHERENT POLICIES.

YES, THEIR CREDIBILITY IS IN TATTERS.

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BUT WHAT THEY STILL HAVE IN FULL WORKING ORDER IS THEIR
WELL-KNOWN EXPERTISE IN DISTORTION, IN DIVISION, IN
DECEPTION.

THEY STILL KNOW HOW TO PLAY ON FEAR AND PREJUDICE.

THEY STILL KNOW HOW TO OPEN OLD WOUNDS.

THEY ARE STILL PAST MASTERS AT EXPLOITING CONFRONTATION
AND DIVISIVENESS FOR THEIR OWN BASE ENDS.

AND WE SHOULD ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT.

OUR OPPONENTS, OF COURSE, ARE DEMORALISED.

HOW COULD THEY NOT BE?

THEY ARE STARING DOWN THE BARREL OF YEARS IN THE
POLITICAL WILDERNESS.

BUT THERE IS ONE SURE WAY OF GIVING THEM NEW HOPE.

THERE IS ONE SURE WAY OF BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO THEIR
DEPLETED RANKS.

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5.

THERE IS ONE SURE WAY OF PUTTING THEM BACK ON THE ROAD TO POWER.

AND THAT IS TO ALLOW DISUNITY TO GRIP OUR PARTY.

WE IN THE LABOR PARTY SIMPLY CANNOT AFFORD TO GO INTO THESE TWO CRITICAL ELECTION CAMPAIGNS AS ANYTHING BUT A TOTALLY UNITED PARTY.

HISTORY SHOWS HOW POTENTIALLY DEVASTATING THE ALTERNATIVE CAN BE.

WE NEED UNITY OF PURPOSE, UNITY OF COMMITMENT, UNITY OF VISION.

WE ALSO NEED THE RESTRAINT, THE SELF-CONTROL, THE DISCIPLINE THAT GOES WITH IT.

WITH THAT UNITY, WE'LL SWEEP THE PEACOCKS, THE SINCLAIRS, THE HODGMANS OF THIS WORLD INTO THE DUST-BIN OF HISTORY.

IN WINNING - AND WINNING WELL - IN VICTORIA AND NATIONALLY WE WILL LAY THE BASIS FOR A DECADE OR MORE IN POWER AT BOTH STATE AND NATIONAL LEVEL.

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6.

AND MAKE NO MISTAKE: LABOR NEEDS THAT LONG IN POWER TO
ACHIEVE ALL WE WANT TO ACHIEVE.

WE CAN'T CHANGE THE NATION IN A TERM OF GOVERNMENT.

WE CAN'T IMPLEMENT OUR ENTIRE PROGRAM IN TWO OR THREE YEARS.

WE NEED A DECADE IN POWER TO ACHIEVE THE WIDE-RANGING
REFORMS AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF AUSTRALIA THAT WE ALL
WANT TO SEE.

WITH THAT CONSOLIDATION OF POWER, LABOR WILL CHART A NEW
AND FRESH COURSE FOR AUSTRALIA.

THAT NEW DIRECTION WILL BE BASED ON THE FUNDAMENTAL
PREMISE THAT ACHIEVING SO MANY OF LABOR'S GOALS WILL
DEPEND IN TURN ON ACHIEVING A HEALTHY, PROSPEROUS,
GROWING ECONOMY.

SUSTAINED ECONOMIC GROWTH IS CRITICAL - AND NOWHERE IS IT
MORE CRITICAL THAN IN THE TASK OF CREATING NEW JOBS.

I GIVE YOU AND THE PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA ONE SOLEMN UNDERTAKING.

IT IS THIS: THE NEW DIRECTION - THE NEW VISION WE HAVE FOR
AUSTRALIA - WILL BE BASED FIRST AND FOREMOST ON THE CREATION
OF NEW JOBS.

...7/.

THERE ARE TWO NATIONS IN AUSTRALIA - THE EMPLOYED AND THE UNEMPLOYED.

UNDER LABOR THE UNEMPLOYED, THE FORGOTTEN PEOPLE, WILL BE FORGOTTEN NO LONGER.

WE HAVE ALREADY MADE AN OUTSTANDING BEGINNING.

BUT IT IS STILL ONLY A BEGINNING.

WE WILL BUILD ON OUR SUCCESS SO FAR AND CONTINUE THE TASK OF CREATING NEW JOBS WITH TOTAL DEDICATION AND VIGOUR.

THE NEW DIRECTION LABOR WILL STEER WILL ALSO ADDRESS THE VITAL ISSUES OF INDUSTRY RECONSTRUCTION AND REVITALISATION.

WE WILL ENSURE THAT AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY IS EFFICIENT, EXPANDING AND ABLE TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF THE BURGEONING INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OCCURRING ON OUR DOORSTEP.

AS ALWAYS, WE WILL WORK VERY CLOSELY ON INDUSTRY POLICY WITH THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT AND EMPLOYERS.

WE HAVE ALREADY SHOWN WHAT THIS COOPERATIVE APPROACH CAN ACHIEVE BY DRAMATICALLY RESTORING THE FORTUNES OF THE AUSTRALIAN STEEL INDUSTRY.

LABOR IS ALSO COMMITTED TOTALLY TO ADVANCING THE RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF WOMEN, TO ENSURING THAT WOMEN ARE FULLY ABLE TO UTILIZE THEIR TALENTS AND CAPACITIES IN WHATEVER FIELDS THEY WISH.

OUR SEX DISCRIMINATION ACT AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROPOSALS REPRESENT THE BEGINNING OF WHAT I BELIEVE WILL BE A NEW ERA FOR AUSTRALIAN WOMEN.

ANOTHER VITAL PRIORITY WILL BE ENSURING THAT THE ABORIGINAL PEOPLE - THE FIRST AUSTRALIANS - HAVE THE FULL RIGHTS, ENTITLEMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF OTHER AUSTRALIANS.

WE CANNOT UNDO THE PAST.

BUT UNDER LABOR WE CAN AS A NATION WORK TOGETHER TO ENABLE ABORIGINAL PEOPLE TO PUT BEHIND THEM THE DEPRIVATION AND DESPAIR OF THE PAST.

FINALLY WE WILL DEDICATE OURSELVES AS A LABOR GOVERNMENT TO THE PURSUIT OF PEACE AND DISARMAMENT.

THERE IS NO CHALLENGE MORE IMPORTANT FOR AUSTRALIA AND ALL COUNTRIES.

WE ARE A SMALL NATION WITH A MODEST APPRECIATION OF OUR INFLUENCE.

BUT ON THIS ISSUE OUR VOICE WILL BE HEARD BY ALL THE WORLD.

IT WILL BE A VOICE OF REASON, OF MODERATION, OF HOPE.

AND WITH A CLEAR MESSAGE - THE IMPERATIVE OF DISARMAMENT,
THE IMPERATIVE OF ARMS CONTROL, THE IMPERATIVE OF PEACE.

WHATEVER ROLE WE CAN PLAY WE WILL PLAY - AND WILL CONTINUE
TO PLAY UNTIL PEACE AND DISARMAMENT ARE NO LONGER HOPES
BUT REALITIES.

THESE, THEN, ARE AMONG THE ISSUES LABOR WILL BE ADDRESSING
IN THE YEARS AHEAD.

AS A UNITED PARTY, WE WILL CREATE AN AUSTRALIA WHICH IS A
FAIRER, BETTER, MORE HARMONIOUS NATION IN WHICH TO LIVE.

AND WE AS AUSTRALIANS WILL PLAY OUR PART IN CREATING A
WORLD WHICH IS A SAFER AND MORE PEACEFUL PLACE IN WHICH
TO LIVE.
