



# PRIME MINISTER

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER FOR  
THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF  
THE AIS HALLS OF RESIDENCE AND ADMINISTRATION CENTRE,  
29 OCTOBER 1985, CANBERRA

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

IN A FEW MINUTES IT WILL BE MY DUTY TO DECLARE OFFICIALLY  
OPEN THIS SPLENDID COMPLEX - THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF  
SPORT'S HALLS OF RESIDENCE AND ADMINISTRATION CENTRE.

BEFORE I DO SO, HOWEVER, I SHOULD LIKE TO REFLECT WITH YOU ON  
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SPORT IN AUSTRALIAN LIFE AND TO SHARE  
WITH YOU A SENSE OF PERSPECTIVE ON WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED  
HERE AT THE AIS.

SPORT HAS TRADITIONALLY OCCUPIED A PROMINENT PLACE IN  
AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY AND CULTURE. AUSTRALIANS HAVE  
TRADITIONALLY CHOSEN TO DEVOTE A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF THEIR  
LEISURE TIME TO PARTICIPATION IN, OR SUPPORT OF, SPORT AND  
SPORTING EVENTS.

THIS IS THE RESULT OF THE NATURAL ADVANTAGES PROVIDED BY OUR  
CLIMATE. IT IS A FUNCTION OF WHAT IS OFTEN REFERRED TO AS  
THE AUSTRALIAN WAY OF LIFE. IT REFLECTS THE GENUINE PRIDE  
THAT AUSTRALIANS HAVE TAKEN IN THE INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS OF  
MANY OF OUR SPORTSMEN AND SPORTSWOMEN, AS WELL AS THE WAY  
THEY HAVE CONDUCTED THEMSELVES IN THOSE ACHIEVEMENTS.

THE GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT FOR SPORT OPERATES AT TWO LEVELS.  
AT ONE LEVEL WE ARE COMMITTED TO PROMOTING AND ENCOURAGING  
THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE IN SPORT. AT ANOTHER LEVEL WE  
CONSIDER IT IMPORTANT THAT THERE SHOULD BE WIDESPREAD  
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SPORT. BOTH OBJECTIVES ARE  
IMPORTANT AND ARE MUTUALLY REINFORCING.

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THESE OBJECTIVES UNDERPIN THE WHOLE RATIONALE FOR THE INSTITUTE AND ITS ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE BEING DEVELOPED IN 1980 BY THE THEN MINISTER FOR SPORT, THE HON. BOB ELLICOTT.

THE ORIGINAL CONCEPT, HOWEVER, BEGAN WITH THE LATE FRANK STEWART, WHO WAS MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR SPORT UNDER THE FORMER LABOR GOVERNMENT.

I CAN THINK OF NO MORE APPROPRIATE COMMENT ON TODAY'S IMPORTANT CEREMONY THAN THAT, IF FRANK STEWART WERE WITH US, I KNOW HE WOULD REALISE THAT EVERYONE HAS DONE HIS CONCEPT PROUD.

TODAY WE FORMALLY MARK THE COMPLETION OF THE FINAL STAGE OF THE CURRENT CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM AT THE AIS.

WE CAN LOOK BACK WITH PRIDE ON WHAT HAS NOW BEEN BROUGHT TO FRUITION FOR THE AIS.

THE NATIONAL ATHLETICS STADIUM, CONSTRUCTED IN 1977 FOR THE PACIFIC CONFERENCE GAMES WAS THE FIRST MAJOR FACILITY COMPLETED. RECENTLY, THE STADIUM WAS THE SITE OF THE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL WORLD CUP ATHLETICS, AT WHICH TWO WORLD RECORDS WERE SET.

THE FACILITIES COMPLETED SINCE THEN INCLUDE THE INDOOR AND OUTDOOR TENNIS AND NETBALL COURTS, THE INDOOR SWIMMING POOL, AND THE WEIGHTLIFTING AND SOCCER HALLS.

THE OPENING TODAY OF THE INSTITUTE'S HALLS OF RESIDENCE AND ADMINISTRATION CENTRE COMPLETES WHAT HAS BEEN A REMARKABLE PROGRAM OF PROJECT DEVELOPMENT OVER A RELATIVELY FEW SHORT YEARS, AND WHICH HAS RESULTED IN AN INSTITUTE NOW RECOGNISED AS ONE OF THE BEST MULTI-PURPOSE SPORTS TRAINING CENTRES IN THE WORLD.

THE RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX ITSELF CAN NOW ACCOMMODATE 320 - INCLUDING SOME 260 FULL-TIME ATHLETES WHO WILL BE ON SITE FOR MOST OF THE YEAR, GROUPS OF ATHLETES UNDER THE NATIONAL TRAINING SCHEME WHO WILL BE ACCOMMODATED FOR BRIEF PERIODS FROM TWO DAYS TO TWO WEEKS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, AND OVERSEAS VISITORS, COACHES AND OTHER SPECIAL GUESTS WHO VISIT THE INSTITUTE FOR SHORT PERIODS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. THIS FINANCIAL YEAR SOME 55 TEAMS WILL BE ACCOMMODATED.

AS IMPORTANT AS THIS CONSTRUCTION PROJECT IS IN ITSELF, THERE IS MUCH MORE TO IT THAN BRICKS AND MORTAR.

THERE IS, FOR INSTANCE, THE DEDICATION AND SPIRIT OF THE AIS ATHLETES AND COACHING STAFF, AND THE RESEARCH AND APPLICATION OF THE SPORTS SCIENCE/MEDICINE PERSONNEL. THIS IS ASSISTED GREATLY BY THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL AND CO-ORDINATING ROLE OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF.

AND, OF COURSE THERE IS THE BACKING OF SPONSORS TO SUPPLEMENT THE ESSENTIAL AND MAJOR ROLE WHICH I AM PROUD TO SAY THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT HAS PLAYED IN CONCEIVING AND CREATING THE AIS AND ITS FACILITIES. IN THE YEARS AHEAD WE WILL CONTINUE OUR SUPPORT FOR THE SPORTSMEN AND SPORTSWOMEN OF AUSTRALIA.

IT WOULD BE WRONG OF ME TO OVERLOOK THE FACT THAT SINCE ITS INCEPTION, AND INCLUDING FOLLOWING THE RECENT WORLD CUP ATHLETICS, THERE HAS BEEN SOME CRITICISM DIRECTED AT THE AIS. WE SHOULD BE CLEAR ON SOME IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THIS ISSUE. THE AIS IS INTENDED TO ASSIST IN UPGRADING PROGRESSIVELY AUSTRALIA'S COMPETITIVE PERFORMANCE IN A WIDE RANGE OF SPORTS. WE SHOULD NOT DELUDE OURSELVES THAT ITS ESTABLISHMENT IS IN ITSELF A GUARANTEE OF INSTANT SUCCESS IN WORLD COMPETITION. OTHER COUNTRIES ARE PAYING THE SAME ATTENTION TO UPGRADING THEIR COACHING AND TRAINING FACILITIES, AND STANDARDS IN ALL SPORTS ARE CONSTANTLY BEING IMPROVED. IN THE LONGER-TERM IT IS A QUESTION NOT ONLY OF HAVING AVAILABLE A FACILITY SUCH AS THE AIS, BUT OF BEING ABLE TO IDENTIFY THE TALENT BEST EQUIPPED TO UTILISE ALL THAT THE INSTITUTE HAS TO OFFER, AND OF THOSE YOUNG SPORTSMEN AND SPORTSWOMEN BEING PREPARED TO MAKE THE TOTAL COMMITMENT WHICH IS NOW ESSENTIAL FOR SUCCESS IN WORLD COMPETITION.

AT THE SAME TIME THE AIS CAN ALREADY BE PROUD OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF A NUMBER OF ITS ATHLETES. THESE INCLUDE - ALTHOUGH THE LIST IS NOT INTENDED TO BE EXCLUSIVE - MARATHON RUNNER ROBERT DE CASTELLA; FEMALE SWIMMERS SUE LANDELLS, MICHELLE PEARSON AND LISA CURRY; A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF THE MEN'S AND WOMEN'S HOCKEY TEAMS; THE MAJORITY OF THE AUSTRALIAN TEAM SHORTLY TO COMPETE IN THE WORLD GYMNASTICS CHAMPIONSHIPS; AND A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF THE AUSTRALIAN NETBALL TEAM.

THEIR SUCCESS, AND THE MANNER OF ACHIEVEMENT OF THAT SUCCESS, WILL BE IMPORTANT IN ENCOURAGING OTHERS TO COMMIT THEMSELVES BOTH TO EXCELLENCE IN SPORT, AND TO PARTICIPATION IN SPORT AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL, IN THE YEARS AHEAD.

I AM SURE THAT ALL AUSTRALIANS JOIN ME IN WISHING THESE AND ALL OTHER ATHLETES - PRESENT AND FUTURE - EVERY SUCCESS.

AND NOW I HAVE MUCH PLEASURE IN OFFICIALLY DECLARING OPEN THE AIS HALLS OF RESIDENCE AND ADMINISTRATION CENTRE.

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