

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER
PRINTRONICS PROJECT - CHENGDU

I AM VERY PLEASED TO HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT THE XINXING INSTRUMENTS FACTORY WHICH IS ENJOYING SUCH EXCELLENT CO-OPERATION WITH OUR AUSTRALIAN COMPANY, PRINTRONICS.

AUSTRALIA'S REPUTATION IN CHINA IN THE PAST HAS BEEN CHIEFLY AS A RELIABLE SUPPLIER OF HIGH QUALITY FINE WOOL, WHEAT, IRON ORE AND OTHER INDUSTRIAL RAW MATERIALS. BUT AUSTRALIA ALSO HAS A WIDE VARIETY OF EXPERIENCE IN INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY AND IS CAPABLE OF SUPPLYING CONSULTANCY AND SERVICES IN MANY FIELDS. THE PRINTRONICS PROJECT IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF HOW AUSTRALIA CAN CONTRIBUTE TO CHINA'S INDUSTRIAL MODERNIZATION PROGRAM.

THIS PROJECT IS AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF BUSINESS CO-OPERATION BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND CHINESE COMPANIES. STAFF MEMBERS OF BOTH PARTIES ARE COMMITTED TO ITS SUCCESS AND HAVE UNDERTAKEN THEIR JOBS MOST PROFESSIONALLY WHICH HAS CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE PROJECT BEING AHEAD OF SCHEDULE.

THIS IS PRINTRONICS' FIRST VENTURE IN SETTING UP A "WHOLLY NEW" PRODUCTION VENTURE OVERSEAS. PRINTRONICS IS A FULLY OWNED AUSTRALIAN COMPANY WHICH WAS LAUNCHED IN 1972. WE ARE VERY PLEASED TO HAVE HERE TODAY MR LEE MING TEE, CHAIRMAN OF SUNSHINE HOLDINGS, OF WHICH PRINTRONICS IS A SUBSIDIARY.

PRINTRONICS TODAY ENJOYS A REPUTATION AS A LEADER IN FINE LINE TECHNOLOGY IN WHICH AUSTRALIAN DESIGNERS AND MANUFACTURERS ARE WORLD LEADERS.

THE PROJECT WILL OFFER GREAT ASSISTANCE TO CHINA IN THE AREA OF TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT. THE PCB'S WHICH WILL BE MANUFACTURED IN THIS FACTORY ARE OF VERY HIGH QUALITY. SUCH HIGH QUALITY PRODUCTS ARE CRUCIAL PARTICULARLY FOR USE IN ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY RELATED TO TELECOMMUNICATIONS, DEFENCE, MEDICAL ELECTRONICS, INDUSTRY PROCESS CONTROL AND COMPUTING.

PRINTRONICS' CONTRACT, SIGNED IN DECEMBER 1984, INVOLVES THE DESIGN, SUPPLY AND COMMISSIONING OF A MODERN PRODUCTION FACILITY. WHEN INSTALLED, THE FACTORY WILL BE ABLE TO PRODUCE 20,000 SQUARE METRES OF DOUBLE SIDED AND MULTI LAYER PCB'S PER ANNUM FOR USE IN COMPUTING AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL FIELDS. IT WILL BE PARTIALLY AUTOMATED AND WILL BE SCHEDULED TO START UP IN AUGUST THIS YEAR, REACHING FULL PRODUCTION BY THE END OF 1987.

THE CONTRACT ALSO INVOLVES THE TRAINING OF CHINESE STAFF IN AUSTRALIA. TO DATE, SOME 18 CHINESE HAVE BEEN TRAINED IN AUSTRALIA FOR PERIODS OF UP TO 6 MONTHS. PRINTRONICS ALSO HAVE AUSTRALIAN MANAGERS AND TECHNICIANS HERE ON SITE. ONE OF THE PLEASING ASPECTS OF THIS VENTURE IS THAT AUSTRALIANS AND CHINESE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO WORK SO WELL TOGETHER, AND LEARN SO WELL FROM EACH OTHER, BOTH IN SYDNEY AND HERE IN CHENGDU.

THE FACTORY, WHICH IS EXPECTED TO BE THE FIRST OF A SERIES, WILL GIVE CHINA ACCESS TO FINE LINE TECHNIQUES AS WELL AS CONVENTIONAL HIGH QUALITY PCB TECHNOLOGY. AND I MIGHT TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO MENTION THAT THE AUSTRALIAN COMPANY, WORMALD, WHICH HAS A CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH PRINTRONICS, HAS JUST FORMED A JOINT VENTURE COMPANY WITH HONG KONG MACAU INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT Co. LTD. THIS JOINT VENTURE, WORTH 17 MILLION AUSTRALIAN DOLLARS, IS DESIGNED TO PROMOTE AUSTRALIAN INVESTMENT IN CHINA AND TWO-WAY TRADE BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES AND IS A FURTHER EXAMPLE OF THE RAPIDLY DEVELOPING SINO-AUSTRALIAN ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP.

I CONGRATULATE THE PARTIES OF THE XINXING ENTERPRISE ON COMMISSIONING THE PLANT AND EQUIPMENT. I APPLAUD THE SPIRIT WITH WHICH BOTH HAVE WORKED TOGETHER TO OVERCOME ALL OBSTACLES TO SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF A PROJECT WHICH REPRESENTS CO-OPERATION IN NEW AREAS OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY. THIS IS THE SPIRIT BOTH THE AUSTRALIAN AND CHINESE GOVERNMENTS ENCOURAGE TO ACHIEVE STILL BROADER CO-OPERATION IN THE FUTURE.