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Title:

Address by Honourable Don Dunstan A.C. Q.C. to National Tourism Conference, Kuala Lumpur October-November 1986

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ADDRESS BY HONOURABLE DON DUNSTAN, A.C., Q.C.,
TO NATIONAL TOURISM CONFERENCE, KUALA LUMPUR
OCTOBER-NOVEMBER, 1986

PRIME MINISTER, TUNKU ISKANDER, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES
AND GENTLEMEN.

THANK YOU FOR ASKING ME TO ADDRESS THIS IMPORTANT CONFERENCE.
I AM VERY SENSIBLE OF THE HONOUR OF DELIVERING THE KEYNOTE
SPEECH.

ALL VISITORS TO PATA CONFERENCE EARLIER THIS YEAR WERE
EXTREMELY IMPRESSED BY THE EVIDENT DEDICATION OF THE MALAYSIAN
GOVERNMENT TO TOURISM WITH A VERY CONSIDERABLE COMMITMENT OF
NATIONAL RESOURCES TO MAKING THAT CONFERENCE A RESOUNDING
SUCCESS.

GOVERNMENTS IN MUCH OF THE WORLD HAVE COME TO RECOGNISE IN
TOURISM AN AREA OF EMPLOYMENT WHICH IN WIDELY VARYING
SITUATIONS CAN BE COUNTED ON TO PROVIDE JOBS FOR A STEADILY
EXPANDING NUMBER OF CITIZENS.

IT IS WITHOUT THE CONSIDERABLE PROBLEMS OF MANUFACTURING
INDUSTRY. WITH THE COLLAPSE OF THE PROPOSALS OF THE NORTH-
SOUTH DIALOGUE DUE TO THE INTRANSIGENCE OF A HARD-CORE OF
THE AFFLUENT NATIONS, A CRITICAL RE-EXAMINATION OF THE PATH
OF INCREASED INDUSTRIALISATION MAKES IT CLEAR THAT THE MARKET
FOR MANUFACTURERS IS NOT INFINITELY ELASTIC, AND THAT INCREASING
INDUSTRIALISATION LEADS TO INCREASING COMPETITION FOR EXISTING
LIMITED MARKETS. JAPAN HAS NOT SO MUCH CREATED ADDITIONAL
MARKETS FOR ITS OUTPUT, AS BEATEN EXISTING INDUSTRIALISED
NATIONS FOR THE MARKETS THEY WERE SUPPLYING. IMPORT

SUBSTITUTION IN INDUSTRIALISATION ALSO, FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES CAN CREATE DIFFICULTIES ECONOMICALLY.

THIS IS NOT THE PLACE TO GO IN DETAIL INTO THESE QUESTIONS, I MENTION THEM MERELY TO CONTRAST THE POSSIBILITIES IN THE TERTIARY SECTOR - THE SERVICE INDUSTRIES.

WHILE IN DEVELOPED, AFFLUENT NATIONS MOST SERVICE INDUSTRIES DID NOT EXPAND EMPLOYMENT AT WHAT IN THE 1960'S HAD BEEN THEIR GENERALLY ANTICIPATED RATE, (AND THAT WAS BECAUSE OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE SILICON CHIP-COMPUTERS SUBSTITUTED FOR MANUAL SYSTEMS OF PROVIDING BANKING, INSURANCE, SHIPPING SERVICES AND THE LIKE) THE TOURIST INDUSTRY PROVIDED MORE THAN THE ANTICIPATED EXPANSION OF ITS AREA, AND CONTINUES TO DO SO.

THE REASON IS THAT WHILE THESE DAYS THE BEST OF SERVICE IN TOURISM REQUIRES COMPUTERISED INFORMATION, BOOKING AND TICKETING, ACCOUNTING AND PAYMENT SYSTEMS, THE INDUSTRY HAS TO REMAIN LABOR INTENSIVE. YOU CAN'T SATISFY TOURIST DEMAND EXCEPT PERSONALLY IN HOTEL, ACCOMMODATION, ENTERTAINMENT, PROVISION OF ARTS AND CRAFT, OR TOUR GUIDING. YOU CAN'T MAKE A BED OR SERVE A MEAL THROUGH A SILICON CHIP, AND A CHIP WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO REPRODUCE THE FINE HAND OF THE PRIME MINISTER IN COOKING RICE FOR THE CUSTOMERS OF M.A.S.

WHY IS THE DEMAND FOR TOURISM EXPANDING SO AS TO DEMAND THE ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT?..

IN THE AFFLUENT NATIONS THE POPULATIONS ARE AGEING. AS THEY DO SO, THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY WITH

LEISURE AND RESOURCES TO SPEND IS INCREASING. THAT IS SO IN EUROPE, IN NORTH AMERICA, IN JAPAN, IN TAIWAN, AND IN AUSTRALASIA. THAT ACCOUNTS FOR INCREASE IN TOTAL DEMAND. HOWEVER, ONE MUST EXAMINE CAREFULLY THE DEMANDS OF EACH MARKET ONE IS ADDRESSING, BECAUSE DIFFERENT MARKETS TEND TO LOOK FOR SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT THINGS. WHAT CAN BE VERY APPEALING TO THE CALIFORNIAN MARKET CAN BE OF LITTLE APPEAL IN JAPAN, AND SO EACH MARKETING EXERCISE REQUIRES CAREFUL PRE-STUDY. BUT THERE IS A VERY CLEAR TREND EMERGING IN THE AFFLUENT MARKETS OF EUROPE, U.S.A., CANADA AND AUSTRALASIA.

IN THE PAST TOURISM FROM THOSE COUNTRIES HAS TENDED TO CONCENTRATE ON ACCUMULATING A LARGE NUMBER OF SUPERFICIAL EXPERIENCES. THE MORE SITES OF INTEREST THAT COULD BE VISITED IN A SHORT TIME, IT SEEMED, THE BETTER. POSSIBLY BECAUSE OF THE VERY SHORT ANNUAL HOLIDAY PERIOD FOR MOST JAPANESE, THIS STILL SEEMS TO BE IMPORTANT TO THEM. THEY EXPECT TO "DO" AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND IN EIGHT DAYS, OR HONG KONG, THAILAND, MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE WITHIN A SIMILAR PERIOD.

BUT MORE AND MORE TOURISTS ARE TENDING TO WANT EXPERIENCES IN DEPTH IN THE COMMUNITIES THEY VISIT. THE RESEARCHERS ARE NOW TELLING US THAT "QUALITY" AND "EXPERIENTIAL" TOURISM IS THE INCREASING TREND. IF TOURISTS ARE GOING TO BUY CRAFTS, MORE AND MORE THEY WANT TO SEE THE CRAFTSMAN. IF THEY ARE TO EAT THE LOCAL FOODS, THEY NOT ONLY WANT TO SEE HOW IT IS DONE, BUT KNOW ABOUT THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENTS OF THE CUISINE AND THE PRODUCTION OF THE FOODSTUFFS. I AM NOT SUGGESTING THIS IS UNIFORM - IT IS AN EMERGING, DISCERNIBLE INCREASING TREND. TOURISTS ARE SEEKING A SENSE OF PARTICIPATION

IN THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITIES THEY ARE VISITING. THEY SEEK THE HISTORIC, THE UNUSUAL, THE UNIQUE, THE DIVERTING, AND THEY WANT TO FEEL INVOLVED.

SO THESE DAYS THEME PARKS, MUSEUMS, HISTORIC DISPLAYS, CRAFT CENTRES CANNOT AFFORD TO BE STATIC - A COLLECTION OF OBJECTS, AN OLD MANSION OR A VILLAGE FURNISHED IN THE STYLE OF ITS BUILDING PERIOD. ACTIVATION, STREET THEATRE ARE IMPORTANT.

MAY I JUST CITE ONE OR TWO EXAMPLES FROM AUSTRALIA TO SHOW WHAT I MEAN. AUSTRALIANS UNTIL THE LAST 20 YEARS HAVE PAID BUT LITTLE ATTENTION TO THEIR HISTORY - IT WAS LITTLE TAUGHT IN SCHOOLS, AND THERE WAS BUT POOR CONSERVATION OF MAN-MADE ENVIRONMENT - HISTORIC BUILDINGS WERE TORN DOWN OR ALTERED WITHOUT QUESTION. HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN A TRANSFORMATION IN THE LAST 20 YEARS. HISTORIC BUILDINGS ARE NOW SAVED, RESTORED AND ENHANCED. LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ALMOST WITHOUT EXCEPTION HAVE COMMISSIONED HISTORIES OF THEIR AREAS. A FEATURE OF THIS MARKED CHANGE IN PUBLIC ATTITUDE AND INTEREST HAS BEEN THE CREATION OF HISTORIC THEME PARKS, SEEKING TO GIVE TOURISTS A PICTURE OF A SIGNIFICANT PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF A REGION. THESE THEME PARKS DIFFER QUITE WIDELY IN THEIR PRESENTATIONS AND THEIR SUCCESS. THE MOST REMARKABLE AND THE MOST SUCCESSFUL IS AT BALLARAT IN VICTORIA. THE SOVEREIGN HILL SETTLEMENT IS A RECREATION OF THE TOWN OF BALLARAT IN THE 1850'S. IT IS CAREFULLY RESEARCHED AND ACCURATE. IT PRESENTS THE FORMATIVE PERIOD OF THAT PART OF THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY, AS THE FIRST GREAT INFLUX OF FOREIGN SETTLEMENT OCCURRED IN THE GOLD RUSHES OF THE LAST CENTURY, IN JUST THIS AREA. IT NOT ONLY HAS THE SHOPS,

HOTELS, THEATRES, CAFES, HOUSES, SCHOOLS AND TROOPERS CAMP OF THE PERIOD, BUT THE MINES, CAMPS, PANNING FOR GOLD, DEEP GOLD-MINING, AND THE STREET LIFE OF THE PERIOD. ITS STAFF ARE ALL DRESSED IN THE COSTUME OF THE PERIOD AND INVOLVE VISITORS IN WHAT IS CONTINUING STREET THEATRE. IT HAS SOME 500,000 VISITORS A YEAR, AND THAT NUMBER IS CONSTANTLY EXPANDING. IT STANDS IN STARK CONTRAST TO SOME OTHER HISTORIC THEME PARKS, AND THE MANY HISTORIC HOUSES WHICH HAVE BEEN CONSERVED BY THE NATIONAL TRUST. MUCH CARE HAS BEEN LAVISHED ON THESE, BUT THEY ARE STATIC EXHIBITS AS TO HOW THE BUILDINGS AND ARTEFACTS OF THE PERIOD WERE. THERE IS NO LIFE - THERE ARE NO PEOPLE. AND IN CONSEQUENCE THEY DO NOT GET EVEN ONE TENTH OF SOVEREIGN HILL'S ATTENDANCE. IN THE EMERGING TREND OF EXPERIENTIAL TOURISM, PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT ARE OF VITAL IMPORTANCE.

HOW THEN IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD ARE WE TO GO ABOUT PROVIDING THE INTEGRATED TOURIST INFRASTRUCTURE WHICH WILL MAXIMISE INVESTMENT AND EMPLOYMENT.

CENTRAL TO THIS WILL BE EFFECTIVE CONSULTATIVE PLANNING. THAT IS NECESSARY FOR TWO REASONS. HOWEVER WEDDED WE MAY BE TO A MARKET ECONOMY, THE EVIDENCE OF DEVELOPMENTS ELSEWHERE MAKES IT OBVIOUS THAT ENTREPRENEURS ARE LIKELY TO HAVE BRILLIANT IDEAS SOMETIMES ABOUT PROVISION OF A PARTICULAR PIECE OF TOURIST PLANT, BUT RARELY PRODUCE A WHOLE INTEGRATION OF INTERRELATED PLANTS. PLANNING TO SEE THAT ALL COMPLEMENTARY FEATURES OF A TOURIST INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS TO BE UNDERTAKEN AT STATE LEVEL, THOUGH WITH CONSTANT INDUSTRY CONSULTATION.

THE STATE ALSO HAS THE VITAL ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT TOURIST DEVELOPMENT PRESERVES AND ENHANCES THE COMMUNITY, ITS HISTORY, ITS ENVIRONMENT, AND DOES IT IN A BENIGN WAY.

THERE IS A REAL DANGER TO ANY COMMUNITY OF WHAT CAN BE CALLED TOURIST POLLUTION, A DANGER OF LOSING WHAT IS OF VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY AND THEREFORE WHAT TOURISTS MOST WANT TO SEE BY RAPID AND UNCONSIDERED DEVELOPMENT.

RECENTLY THE WORLD TOURIST ORGANISATION FOUND THAT IN NUMBERS OF CASES THE SMALLER NATIONS OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC, IN EXAMINING TOURIST DEVELOPMENT HAVE SAID REPEATEDLY, "WE DON'T WANT TO GO THE WAY FIJI HAS DONE"!

SADLY, THEIR JUDGMENT HAS HAD TO BE THAT THE DEGREE OF TOURIST DEVELOPMENT, PARTICULARLY ON THE SOUTH AND SOUTH-WEST COAST OF VITI LEVU, HAS SERIOUSLY INTRUDED ON THE NATURE OF THE COMMUNITIES WHICH WERE A UNIQUE PART, NOT ONLY OF WHAT IS INHERENTLY OF VALUE - BUT ALSO OF WHAT IS ATTRACTIVE TO TOURISTS.

IF PLANNING PROCEEDS PROPERLY, IT IS POSSIBLE TO HAVE BOTH THE TOURISTS AND AN ENHANCEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE RESIDENT CITIZENRY.

BUT GOVERNMENT MUST ALSO BE CONCERNED WITH MARKETING, AS CLEARLY THE GOVERNMENT OF MALAYSIA IS. THE CURRENT RESEARCH SHOWS THAT THIS MARKETING NEEDS TODAY TO BE PRODUCT SPECIFIC. A REGION CAN BE MARKETED - IT IS MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO ENSURE THE FORMING OF HOLIDAY INTENTIONS OVER A WHOLE NATION.

TO TAKE AN EXAMPLE FROM A NEIGHBOUR - IT IS NECESSARY TO MARKET BALI AND LAKE TOBAH. IT IS DIFFUCULT TO MARKET INDONESIA AS A WHOLE.

TUNKU, I HOPE I HAVE NOW SAID A NUMBER OF PROVOCATIVE THINGS TO GET SOME DISCUSSION BOILING, AND THAT FROM THAT BOILING WILL COME PROGRESS TOWARDS AN INCREASE IN THE AVAILABILITY IN MALAYSIA OF AGREED, BENIGN, ENTERTAINING, AND EXPERIENTIAL TOURISM.