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Title:
Opening of Weerama Festival, Murray Bridge

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SPEECH BY THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN, AT THE OPENING OF THE WEERAMA FESTIVAL, MURRAY BRIDGE: 28.1.72.

YOUR WORSHIP,
PARLIAMENTARY COLLEAGUES,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

THANKS FOR ASKING ME TO OPEN THIS FOURTH WEERAMA FESTIVAL. THE WORD MEANS "HAVE FUN TOGETHER" AND I'M SURE THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT RESIDENTS AND VISITORS ALIKE WILL BE DOING OVER THIS HOLIDAY PERIOD.

THE PROGRAMME YOU'VE PUT TOGETHER THIS YEAR ENSURES THAT THERE'S SOMETHING IN MURRAY BRIDGE FOR ALL TASTES AND I'M VERY MUCH LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING AS MANY OF THE EVENTS AND FUNCTIONS AS I CAN.

A PROGRAMME AS DETAILED AND COMPREHENSIVE AS THIS OBVIOUSLY CAN'T BE ORGANISED WITHOUT A LOT OF VERY HARD WORK BEHIND THE SCENES. THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE AND ALL THE OTHER BACK-ROOM BOYS WHO'VE PUT MONTHS OF EFFORT INTO ITS COMPILATION AND ARRANGEMENT ARE TO BE CONGRATULATED ON THEIR DRIVE AND ENTHUSIASM.

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IT'S PRECISELY THIS KIND OF ENERGY AND INITIATIVE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL WHICH WE MUST HAVE IF THE POLICIES FOR TOURIST DEVELOPMENT WHICH WE ARE NOW IMPLEMENTING AT GOVERNMENT LEVEL ARE TO BE FULLY EFFECTIVE.

THE LOCAL OR REGIONAL FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTING THE ATTRACTIONS OF A PARTICULAR AREA OR CITY WITH THE FRAMING OF A TOURIST-ENTICING PROGRAMME AROUND THEM IS ONE OF THE BEST WAYS IN WHICH LOCAL EFFORT CAN SUPPLEMENT ACTIVITY AT STATE LEVEL. IT NEEDS, OF COURSE, TO BE PART OF A CO-ORDINATED AND CONTINUING PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN - AS I KNOW THE WEERAMA FESTIVAL ORGANISERS APPRECIATE - BUT AS THE FOCUS OF THIS EFFORT THE ANNUAL FESTIVAL IS EXTREMELY VALUABLE.

IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA WE ARE WELL ON THE WAY TO BECOMING AUSTRALIA'S FESTIVAL STATE AND THIS, I THINK, WILL PROVE A VERY USEFUL TOOL IN TOURIST PROMOTION IN PERSUADING SOUTH AUSTRALIANS THEMSELVES TO HOLIDAY IN THEIR OWN STATE, AND IN ATTRACTING INTERSTATE AND OVERSEAS VISITORS.

THE ADELAIDE FESTIVAL OF ARTS ALREADY, AND DESERVEDLY, HAS AN INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION. SUPPLEMENTED BY THE BAROSSA VALLEY VINTAGE FESTIVAL, THE SCHUETZENFEST, TUNARAMA OF PORT LINCOLN, ALMOND BLOSSOM OF WILLUNGA, POINSETTIA OF PORT AUGUSTA, AUTUMN LEAVES OF ALDGATE, AND THE RIVERLAND FESTIVALS AS WELL, OF COURSE, AS WEERAMA WE ALREADY HAVE A LOT TO OFFER. IT'S LIKELY, TOO, THAT BEFORE LONG THERE'LL BE A CORNISH FESTIVAL IN THE OLD CORNISH MINING TOWNS OF THE STATE.

TOGETHER THESE WILL MAKE A VERY SALEABLE PACKAGE.

TOURISTS NEED INDUCEMENTS TO VISIT A PARTICULAR TOWN AND THE FESTIVAL CONCEPT IS AN EXCELLENT INDUCEMENT. AND THEY'RE NOT COMPETITIVE EITHER. IT'S A CASE OF THE MORE, THE BETTER.

THE MORE ATTRACTIONS ON OFFER, THE MORE VISITORS YOU'RE LIKELY TO GET, THE MORE MONEY SPENT, THE MORE JOBS CREATED. WE NEED VARIETY IF WE ARE TO SUCCEED AND TOURISM PROMOTION, PARTICULARLY, IS A FIELD IN WHICH THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO PLACE FOR LOCAL OR REGIONAL JEALOUSIES.

MURRAY BRIDGE, BECAUSE OF ITS RELATIVE PROXIMITY TO ADELAIDE, HAS, OF COURSE, A SPECIAL INTEREST IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA SINCE IT'S A POTENTIAL DRAWING GROUND FOR ADDITIONAL VISITORS.

YOU'LL BE INTERESTED, THEREFORE, THAT THE STATE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH AN INTERNATIONAL STANDARD HOTEL IN VICTORIA SQUARE HAS BROUGHT AN ENCOURAGING RESPONSE.

WE CIRCULARISED VARIOUS ORGANISATIONS AND CONSORTIA, IN AUSTRALIA AND OVERSEAS, SEEKING PROPOSALS.

A NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED AND ARE NOW BEING EXAMINED AND ASSESSED IN DETAIL BY AN OFFICIAL COMMITTEE. I CAN'T AT THIS STAGE, OF COURSE, ANTICIPATE THE OUTCOME. BUT IT SEEMS FROM WHAT WE HAVE SEEN SO FAR THAT INITIAL SITE WORK ON THE PROJECT COULD START THIS YEAR.

A HOTEL OF THIS KIND WOULD BE AN EXTREMELY VALUABLE FILLIP TO SOUTH AUSTRALIAN - AND I STRESS SOUTH AUSTRALIAN NOT SOLELY ADELAIDEAN - TOURISM. INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS WON'T COME HERE UNLESS THEY CAN BE ASSURED OF FACILITIES OF INTERNATIONAL STANDARD. BUT IF THOSE FACILITIES CAN BE PROVIDED THEN THE BENEFITS CAN BE VERY GREAT INDEED. TO GIVE JUST ONE INSTANCE, AN INTERNATIONAL HOTEL OF THE TYPE WE ENVISAGE WOULD HAVE A MAJOR IMPACT ON THE LOCAL EMPLOYMENT SITUATION. THE NUMBER OF JOBS PROVIDED WOULD RUN INTO THREE FIGURES. AND MANY OF THOSE JOBS WOULD BE FOR WOMEN AND SCHOOL-LEAVERS, THE PRESENT AREA OF GREATEST NEED.

TOURISM IS ONE OF THE FASTEST GROWING INDUSTRIES IN THIS STATE AND IN ORGANISING THE WEERAMA FESTIVALS, THE PEOPLE OF MURRAY BRIDGE HAVE SHOWN THEIR DETERMINATION TO SHARE IN THIS GROWTH.

AND TOGETHER WITH THE PEOPLE OF EUCLA YOU'VE MADE A VERY SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION TO ████████ AUSTRALIAN CULTURE - OR AT LEAST ITS MYTHOLOGY. NULLABOR HAS - OR HASN'T, OR MAY HAVE - ITS NYMPH. MURRAY BRIDGE HAS ITS BUNYIP.

YOU'LL FORGIVE ME IF I SAY THAT WHILE I'M SURE BOTH HAVE GREAT TOURIST APPEAL I KNOW WHICH I'D PREFER TO MEET ON A DARK NIGHT.

AND I HOPE, TOO, YOUR ORGANISERS APPRECIATE THE RISK THEY'RE TAKING. THE BUNYIP LEGEND IS VERY STRONG. AND YOU'LL ONLY HAVE YOURSELVES TO BLAME IF, ONE MISTY MORNING, YOU WAKE TO FIND ANOTHER BUNYIP MURMURING SWEET NOTHINGS TO THE ORIGINAL.

AGAIN, SIR, THANKS FOR ASKING ME. I HOPE EVERYONE IN MURRAY BRIDGE
AND ALL YOUR VISITORS ENJOY THEMSELVES DURING THIS FESTIVAL.
I KNOW I'M GOING TO AND I NOW HAVE VERY MUCH PLEASURE IN DECLARING
THE WEERAMA FESTIVAL OPEN.

THANK YOU.