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Title:

Speech opening Meridian Lodge Motel, North Adelaide

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2086

SPEECH BY THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN, OPENING MERIDIAN LODGE MOTEL,
NORTH ADELAIDE.

29.3.73

MR. AND MRS. CAREY, MR. RUSSELL, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN;

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR ASKING ME OFFICIALLY TO OPEN "MERIDIAN LODGE".

AS TOURISM MINISTER I'M ALWAYS VERY PLEASED TO SEE ANY ADDITION TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S VERY RAPIDLY GROWING NETWORK OF TOURIST FACILITIES - PARTICULARLY A PROJECT OF THE QUALITY OF THIS ONE.

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF FEATURES ABOUT "MERIDIAN LODGE", WHICH, I THINK, MAKE IT ESPECIALLY WELCOME ON THE ADELAIDE SCENE.

FIRSTLY, IT PROVIDES MORE JOBS. SECONDLY, IT PROVIDES VISITORS TO ADELAIDE WITH A HIGH STANDARD OF ACCOMMODATION AND SERVICE.

THIRDLY, IT INCREASES THE LEISURE FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO LOCAL PEOPLE AND FURTHER ENHANCES MELBOURNE STREET AS ONE OF OUR LEADING SHOPPING AND RECREATION AREAS.

2.

A FEW WEEKS AGO WHEN I OPENED OUR NEW TOURIST BUREAU, I WAS ABLE TO REPORT THAT WE ARE NOW GETTING POSITIVE RESULTS FROM THE CO-ORDINATED PROGRAMME OF TOURIST DEVELOPMENT WE INITIATED THREE YEARS AGO.

ONE OF THE WAYS IN WHICH WE'RE DOING THIS - AND ONE IN WHICH MERIDIAN LODGE IS WELL EQUIPPED TO SHARE - IS THAT WE ARE GETTING A LARGER SLICE OF THE CONVENTION BUSINESS.

THERE IS NO DOUBT THE CONVENTION TRADE IS A NOTABLY VALUABLE SECTOR OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY AS A WHOLE. THE TYPICAL CONVENTION GOER SPENDS THREE TIMES THE AMOUNT OF THE AVERAGE VISITOR. CONVENTIONS ALSO TEND TO BE HELD IN OFF-PEAK PERIODS WHICH GREATLY INCREASES THEIR IMPORTANCE.

NOW, ADMITTEDLY, WE ARE AT A DISADVANTAGE IN GETTING MAJOR OVERSEAS GROUPS WITH OUR PRESENT LACK OF AN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AND THE INTERNAL AIR FARE STRUCTURE. BUT WE ARE EXTREMELY SUITED, BOTH BY LOCATION AND CLIMATE, TO GET A BIG SLICE OF THE EXPANDING AUSTRALIAN TRADE.

WE HAVE EXCELLENT FACILITIES WITH OUR HOTELS AND THE FESTIVAL CENTRE, AND A MEASURE OF THE SUCCESS WE ARE NOW HAVING IS THAT ALREADY SOME 19 CONVENTIONS HAVE BEEN BOOKED HERE FOR THIS YEAR, INCLUDING THOSE OF THE AUSTRALIAN HOTELS ASSOCIATION AND THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS.

AND WE CAN DO BETTER STILL. BUT THE CONVENTION BUSINESS IS A FIERCELY COMPETITIVE ONE AND - IF WE ARE TO GET THE BUSINESS - WE CAN'T AFFORD TO SIT AND WAIT FOR IT JUST TO ARRIVE. BUREAUX TO ATTRACT CONVENTIONS HAVE BEEN SET UP IN NEW SOUTH WALES, VICTORIA AND WESTERN AUSTRALIA. HERE THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BRANCH OF THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL TRAVEL ASSOCIATION HAS ALREADY MADE A START BY SETTING UP A BUREAU IN ADELAIDE. IT HAS AN OFFICE IN THE CITY AND, WHEN THE SECOND PHASE OF THAT UNRIVALLED CONVENTION VENUE IS COMPLETED NEXT YEAR, WILL MOVE TO THE ADELAIDE FESTIVAL CENTRE.

4.

IT'S A VERY GOOD PROJECT AND WILL, I AM SURE, LEAD TO US GETTING MORE AND BIGGER CONVENTIONS TO COME HERE. BECAUSE OF ITS POTENTIAL IMPORTANCE TO OUR TOURISM INDUSTRY AND, THUS, TO OUR GENERAL LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT AND PROSPERITY, I HAVE TODAY AGREED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL GIVE FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THE BUREAU, SUBJECT TO A MATCHING CONTRIBUTION FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

MERIDIAN LODGE IS WELL PLACED TO CATER FOR THE INFLUX OF BOTH CONVENTION AND ORDINARY VISITORS WE CAN CONFIDENTLY EXPECT.

IT'S A VERY WORTHWHILE ADDITION TO OUR HOTEL-MOTEL COMPLEX AND A MOST ATTRACTIVE ONE. I HAVE MUCH PLEASURE IN OFFICIALLY DECLARING IT OPEN.

THANK YOU.