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SPEECH BY THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN, OPENING NATIONAL  
CONFERENCE OF TECHNICAL TEACHERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA..

ADELAIDE.

9.1.73

MR. WHITE, MR. BONE, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN;

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR ASKING ME HERE TODAY TO OPEN YOUR NATIONAL CONFERENCE. MAY I FIRST OF ALL EXTEND A MOST CORDIAL WELCOME TO YOUR INTERSTATE DELEGATES AND CONGRATULATE CONFERENCE ORGANISERS ON SELECTING AS A VENUE NOT ONLY THE MOST ATTRACTIVE STATE, BUT THE ONE WITH THE GOVERNMENT MOST SYMPATHETIC TO THE NEEDS OF EDUCATION.

MR. BONE, WHO SPEAKS AFTER ME, TELLS ME THAT HE INTENDS TO DISCUSS TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE FUTURE. I'D LIKE TO TALK ON A SIMILAR THEME, PARTICULARLY IN SO FAR AS IT CONCERNS GOVERNMENT AND THE FRAMING OF PUBLIC POLICY.

2.

CHANGE HAS BEEN A CHARACTERISTIC OF HUMAN SOCIETIES FOR ALL TIME. BUT THE LATTER PART OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY HAS SEEN SOMETHING UNIQUE IN THE HISTORY OF MANKIND.

THE SHEER PACE AT WHICH NEW IDEAS, TECHNOLOGIES, PROBLEMS AND MANUFACTURES HAVE COME ABOUT HAS ACCELERATED TO A COMPLETELY UNPRECEDENTED EXTENT.

THE EFFECT ON THE DAILY LIVES OF US ALL HAS BEEN PROFOUND AND REVOLUTIONARY.

WE HAVE TO LEARN TO COPE WITH CHANGE AS NEVER BEFORE AND TO ADJUST TO A SOCIETY IN WHICH VERY FEW MATERIAL THINGS CAN BE ASSUMED TO BE ENDURING.

EDUCATIONAL PLANNING OVER THE PAST TWO DECADES HAS BEEN DOMINATED BY SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S DRAMATIC INCREASE IN POPULATION - THE PRODUCT OF THE POST-WAR BABY BOOM AND THE MIGRATION PROGRAMME.

NEEDS OUTSTRIPPED RESOURCES AND THE PROBLEM WAS - IN OUR VIEW - FURTHER COMPLICATED BY THE EXISTENCE OF A GOVERNMENT WHICH DID NOT ACCORD EDUCATION ITS PROPER PRIORITY.

THE LEGACY OF THAT PERIOD IS WITH US TODAY. MY GOVERNMENT HAS PUSHED SPENDING ON EDUCATION TO AN ALL-TIME RECORD LEVEL TO COPE WITH IT AND STILL THERE IS AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT TO BE DONE.

THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE CLASSROOMS AND TEACHER-STUDENT RATIOS REMAIN OUR BIGGEST PROBLEMS.

BUT IN PLANNING FOR THEIR SOLUTION AND IN FORWARD PLANNING BEYOND THE IMMEDIATE TASK WE MUST NOW, I BELIEVE, TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE KNOWLEDGE REVOLUTION.

WE CAN ALREADY SEE THE RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF TERTIARY AND SERVICE INDUSTRIES AND THE RELATIVE DECLINE OF HEAVY INDUSTRY AS

PROPORTIONS OF OUR ECONOMY.

WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE TO TRAIN TECHNICIANS FOR BOTH.

WE MUST ALSO DEVELOP TRAINING TECHNIQUES AND EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURE WHICH IS FLXIBLE ENOUGH TO COPE WITH THE CONSEQUENCES OF CHANGE WE CANNOT NOW ENVISAGE.

IN PRACTICAL TERMS THIS IS GOING TO MEAN A GREATER EMPHASIS ON LEARNING ABOUT LEARNING SYSTEMS AND ON EDUCATION AS A CONTINUING PROCESS WITH PEOPLE COMING BACK FOR REFRESHER OR RETRAINING COURSES THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES.

THIS WILL PLACE A VERY HEAVY BURDEN ON THOSE INVOLVED IN ALL ASPECTS OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

IT IS ALSO OBVIOUSLY GOING TO MEAN THAT TECHNICAL EDUCATION WILL REQUIRE FAR MORE MONEY.

IN THE PAST TECHNICAL TRAINING - THE MIDDLE LEVEL OF LEARNING - HAS BEEN THE CINDERELLA OF EDUCATION.

PARENTS FORM A VERY EFFECTIVE LOBBY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION - SO I MIGHT ADD DO INSTITUTES OF TEACHERS - WHILE THE UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION AND THE RESEARCH NEEDS OF SOCIETY SPEAK FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION.

THE RESULT IS THAT TECHNICAL TRAINING HAS SOMETIMES BEEN ELBOWED OUT OF THE WAY WHEN THE CAKE IS CUT UP.

THERE IS A NEED TO REDRESS THE BALANCE, BUT NOT - AND I EMPHASISE THIS - AT THE EXPENSE OF THE OTHER LEVELS.

WE NEED TO SPEND ON EDUCATION AT ALL LEVELS AT A GREATER LEVEL THAN WE DO NOW AND CERTAINLY AT A RATE WHICH IS BEYOND THE RESOURCES OF THE STATES.

IT IS MY GOVERNMENT'S VIEW THAT EDUCATION HAS A NATIONAL PRIORITY.

WE BELIEVE THAT THERE MUST BE - AND THAT THERE SHORTLY WILL BE - AN EFFECTIVE NATIONAL POLICY TO OVERCOME PRESENT DEFICIENCIES AND INEQUALITIES AND TO ENSURE THAT THEY DON'T ARISE AGAIN.

IN SUCH PLANNING THERE MUST BE BROAD DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION SO THAT IT CAN PROPERLY TRAIN PEOPLE TO RUN A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD.

THANK YOU.