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Speech at Edmund Wright House

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1965 71
SPEECH BY THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN, AT EDMUND WRIGHT HOUSE.

3.3.73

MY LORD MAYOR, THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, MY MINISTERIAL AND PARLIAMENTARY COLLEAGUES, MR. WHITE, MR. RICHARDS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN;

THIS IS, I THINK, ONE OF THE MOST CHEERFUL OPENING CEREMONIES WE'LL HAVE THIS YEAR, COMBINING AS IT DOES THE COMPLETION OF THE EDMUND WRIGHT HOUSE RESTORATION AND A WEDDING.

AND I THINK EVERYONE HERE IN THIS MAGNIFICENT HALL WILL AGREE WITH ME THAT THE PROJECT IS AN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS.

EDMUND WRIGHT HOUSE IS A GEM.

AND IT'S HERE TO BE USED AND ENJOYED BY EVERYONE - RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TO THE CITY ALIKE.

2.

THERE SEEMS TO BE SOMETHING ABOUT THIS BUILDING WHICH BRINGS OUT THE BEST IN EVERYONE.

EDMUND WRIGHT, LLOYD TAYLOR, JOSEPH DURHAM AND W.J. MAXWELL TOGETHER CREATED A BUILDING WHICH WOULD BE NOTABLE IN FLORENCE OR PARIS AND WHICH IN AUSTRALIA IS A NATIONAL TREASURE.

CHARLES WRIGHT AND PERCE COLYER COMBINED IN A DETERMINED CRUSADE TO ENSURE THAT IT DIDN'T DISAPPEAR UNDER THE WRECKER'S HAMMER.

TO THAT LIST MUST NOW BE ADDED DEAN BERRY AND ALL THE MEN WHO'VE JOINED HIM IN THIS SUPERB JOB OF RESTORATION.

ARCHITECTS ARE GENERALLY THOUGHT OF AS CREATING NEW BUILDINGS. MR. BERRY HAS IMPRESSIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS THERE, BUT HE HAS SHOWN US TOO THAT THE RESTORATION OF A FINE OLD BUILDING IS A TASK WHICH CAN REQUIRE, AND GENERATE, CREATIVE TALENT OF AT LEAST AS HIGH AN ORDER.

IT'S OBVIOUSLY BEEN MORE OF A CHALLENGE THAN A COMMISSION AND ONE THAT HE'S ANSWERED SUPERBLY.

BUT MR. BERRY WOULD BE THE FIRST TO ADMIT THAT THE RESULTS ARE NOT HIS WORK ALONE.

ALL THE WORKERS INVOLVED HAVE BEEN PAINSTAKING AND IMAGINATIVE, CONTRIBUTING NOT ONLY THEIR SKILLS BUT THEIR IDEAS IN HOW TO IMPROVE THE WORK. THE TEAM THAT HAS PRODUCED THE NEW EDMUND WRIGHT HOUSE HAS PROVED THAT ANYONE WHO WANTS METICULOUS CRAFTSMANSHIP SHOULD LOOK TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA FIRST.

THERE IS NOW INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE NEED TO PRESERVE IMPORTANT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BUILDINGS AND, INDEED, THE CHARACTER OF WHOLE AREAS OF A CITY.

CONSERVATION IS NOT SYNONYMOUS WITH ECOLOGY. THE PRESERVATION OF A BEAUTIFUL URBAN ENVIRONMENT CAN BE AS IMPORTANT AS KEEPING A WILDERNESS UNSPOILED.

THIS IS VIRTUALLY RECEIVED BELIEF IN EUROPE AND AMERICA. IT IS ESSENTIAL, I BELIEVE, THAT IT BECOME SO HERE.

OUR HISTORY SINCE SETTLEMENT IS RELATIVELY SHORT. BUT IT IS IMPRESSIVE AND THE NINETEENTH CENTURY ARCHITECTURAL ACCOMPLISHMENT IN AUSTRALIA IS IN MANY WAYS UNIQUE.

IT'S OUR JOB TO ENSURE THAT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE IS RETAINED. AN ENLIGHTENED PRESENT SHOULD PROTECT THE PAST FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE FUTURE.

AUSTRALIANS HAVE IN THE PAST GENERALLY BEEN FAR TOO WILLING TO ASSOCIATE PROGRESS WITH THE SOUND OF THE JACKHAMMER.

IT WOULD BE TRAGIC IF OUR HERITAGE AS EXPRESSED IN NORTH ADELAIDE OR PADDINGTON IS PERMITTED TO BE DESTROYED BY DEFAULT.

I BELIEVE THERE HAS TO BE JOINT PUBLIC, LOCAL COUNCIL AND GOVERNMENTAL EFFORT TO RETAIN THESE TANGIBLE CHAPTERS OF OUR HISTORY.

EDMUND WRIGHT HOUSE IS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT CAN BE DONE.

IT IS A RARE AND BEAUTIFUL BUILDING. I AM DELIGHTED THAT THE STATE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ABLE TO PRESERVE IT, RESTORE, IT, AND PUT IT BACK INTO DAILY PUBLIC USE.

I HOPE THAT AS MANY PEOPLE AS CAN COME HERE AND SEE FOR THEMSELVES JUST WHAT A DELIGHT WE'VE GOT HERE.

I INVITE OUR GUESTS TO DO SO THIS EVENING, AND NOW HAVE MUCH PLEASURE IN MAKING WAY FOR THE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE OF THE EVENING, DENISE LEE AND DAVID RICHARDS.

THANK YOU.