

MARTIN ALBRECHT AC
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
OCCASIONAL ADDRESS – GRADUATION CEREMONY
WEDNESDAY 1 APRIL, 2009

GREETING:

CHANCELLOR – DR IAN GOULD
VICE CHANCELLOR – PROFESSOR PETER HØJ
MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGIATE COMMUNITY, GRADUANDS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

RECOGNITION OF GRADUANDS AND THEIR FAMILIES:

IT IS INDEED A GREAT HONOUR TO BE INVITED TO SPEAK TO YOU ON THIS VERY SPECIAL OCCASION.....

TODAY IS A SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE IN YOUR LIVES....IT IS A TIME TO CELEBRATE YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPORTANTLY,A TIME TO CONTEMPLATE THE FUTURE.....

THE WORLD YOU ARE ABOUT TO ENTER IS FACING THE GREATEST ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES ON RECORD....YET DESPITE ALL THE UNCERTAINTIES, THIS IS A TIME OF UNPRECEDENTED OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO EMBARK ON CAREERS THAT ENABLE YOU TO MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE.

I WANT TO CONGRATULATE EACH OF YOU FOR CHOOSING UNI SA AND GIVE RECOGNITION TO THE ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT OF PARENTS, PARTNERS, FAMILIES AND FRIENDS IN ASSISTING YOU TO REACH THIS MILESTONE.....

I AM FOREVER GRATEFUL TO THIS UNIVERSITY FOR EDUCATING ME AND BESTWOING ON ME THE RIGHT ...SOME 43 YEARS AGO ...TO SAY I AM A PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER...

SINCE THEN, ENGINEERING HAS BEEN MY WAY OF LIFE A PASSPORT TO AN INCREDIBLE JOURNEY THAT HAS EXCEEDED ALL MY WILDEST DREAMS..... I OWE MY "TICKET TO RIDE" ON THIS JOURNEY, TO THIS INSTITUTION....AND REMAIN PROFOUNDLY GRATEFUL TO IT!

AS THE CAREERS YOU ARE ABOUT TO BEGIN WILL ALSO FILL A LARGE PART OF YOUR DAILY LIVESSO MAKE SURE YOU DON'T COMPROMISE YOUR GOALS....

ACKNOWLEDGE HONORARY DEGREE:

I AM DEEPLY HUMBLED THAT THE UNIVERSITY HAS SEEN FIT TO AWARD ME THIS HONORARY DEGREE.... THE HONOUR REALLY BELONGS TO THIESS, THE ORGANISATION THAT GAVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO, OVER THE PAST QUARTER OF A CENTURY, REALISE SO MUCH MORE THAN I EVER DREAMT WAS POSSIBLE.....

....THIS YEAR, THIESS IS CELEBRATING ITS 75TH ANNIVERSARY....

TODAY, IT IS A DYNAMIC, MULTI-DISCIPLINED COMPANY, EMBRACING ALL THE DISCIPLINES REPRESENTED HERE AT THIS CEREMONY.

I AM NOT ACCUSTOMED TO SPEAKING ABOUT MYSELF, BUT LAST YEAR I WAS INVITED TO SPEAK AT A REUNION OF MY GRADUATING CLASS.

THE SUBJECT OF MY PRESENTATION WAS FROM HERMANN'SBERG IN CENTRAL AUSTRALIA, WHERE I GREW UP, TO INNAMINCKA IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

TODAY, I WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU A GLIMPSE OF THIS JOURNEY....AND THE AWESOME OPPORTUNITY NOW UNFOLDING AT THE FINISH LINE.

IT ALL BEGAN IN 1939 IN CENTRAL AUSTRALIA AS THE YOUNGEST OF 5 CHILDREN TO AN IMMIGRANT FAMILY OF MISSIONARIES.

I WILL ALWAYS REFLECT WITH PRIDE ON THE LIFETIME OF PERSONAL SACRIFICE MY PARENTS GAVE TO OUR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE.....THIS HAS BEEN MY PERSONAL INSPIRATION FOR CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY!....

....BACK TO MY EARLY CHILDHOOD – PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION WAS BY CORRESPONDENCEAND SCHOOL OF THE AIR.

....I PLEADED WITH MY FATHER TO ABANDON SECONDARY SCHOOLING,..... I AM FOREVER GRATEFUL HE WOULD HAVE NONE OF THIS!

HE RECOGNISED A GOOD EDUCATION WAS THE GATEWAY FOR ANY FUTURE CAREER OPTIONS.....THIS IS EQUALLY VALID FOR EACH OF YOU HERE TODAY.

THERE WERE NO ENGINEERS IN MY FAMILY HISTORY. (NOW HAVE 3 SONS – ALL ENGINEERS!) SO, MORE BY ACCIDENT.... I COMMENCED STUDIES PART TIME FOR A CIVIL ENGINEERING DEGREE (NIGHT LECTURES).

PART TIME STUDIES WERE A CHARACTER BUILDING EXPERIENCE ...NOT AT ALL ROMANTIC!

IT WAS A GREAT LESSON IN THE VALUE OF **PERSISTANCE** FOR ATTAINMENT OF OUR GOALS IN LIFE... MY WIFE STILL MISTAKES THIS VIRTUE FOR MULE HEADED GERMAN STUBBORNESS!!!

SOON AFTER GRADUATION, EXCITEMENT OF THE SNOWY SCHEME BECAME AN IRRESISTABLE ATTRACTION – MY TIME ON THE SNOWY AND THE EXPERIENCE WHICH I GAINED.....PROFOUNDLY INFLUENCED MY CAREER.

IT GAVE ME AN EXCITING EXPOSURE TO THE “FORCES OF WATER AND ENERGY!” (PENSTOCKS, SURGE TANKS, POWER STATIONS...) ...ALSO THAT ENGINEERS DO MAKE MISTAKES THAT CANNOT BE BURIED!

IT WAS ALSO MY FIRST INTRODUCTION TO “THIESS BROTHERS”.... WHO DELIVERED OVER 25% OF THE CIVIL PROJECTS ON THE SCHEME.

I NEVER DREAMT MY FUTURE CAREER WAS DESTINED TO BE LINKED TO THIS ORGANISATION!....

....I RETIRED AS CHAIR OF THIESS AND AS A DIRECTOR OF LEIGHTON HOLDINGS LAST YEAR.

LOOKING BACK – I FEEL INCREDIBLY FORTUNATE FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN SOME OF THE MOST EXCITING PROJECTS LAST CENTURY.....INCLUDING THE SNOWY MOUNTAINS SCHEME!

THE PACE OF LIFE HAS NOT YET ALTERED....BUT IT HAS GIVEN ME SOME TIME TO REFLECT ON THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE....AS WELL AS FOCUS ON MATTERS OF MY PERSONAL SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY... (NOW CHAIR OF IRF AND WRI – MOST REWARDING BUT TIME CONSUMING!!!)

CHALLENGE TO GRADUATES:

BEFORE I TAKE YOU ON MY JOURNEY TO INNAMINKA, I ASK YOU TO PAUSE FOR A MOMENT ...TO CONSIDER WHAT SORT OF WORLD YOU WILL BE CREATING IN 20 OR 50 YEARS FROM NOW.

SURGING POPULATION GROWTH, PROJECTED TO EXCEED 9 BILLION BY 2050.....AND CLIMATE CHANGE LINKED TO MAN MADE GLOBAL WARMING.....IS APPLYING A “DOUBLE SQUEEZE”.... WITHOUT PRECEDENT....AND POTENTIALLY IRREVERSIBLE CONSEQUENCES TO LIFE ON THIS PLANET.

CONCERNING CLIMATE CHANGE

THERE IS INCREASING SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE THAT THE EARTH IS REACTING MORE QUICKLY TO GREENHOUSE GASES, WITH THE 2007 IPCC REPORT ON CLIMATE CHANGE PREDICTING THE SEA LEVEL FROM MELTING ICE..... WILL RISE 50% FASTER THAN PREVIOUS FORECASTS.

ACCORDING TO OUR NATION’S CHIEF SCIENTIST, PROFESSOR PENNY SACKETT.....

“WITHOUT INTERVENTION,..... CHILDREN BORN TODAY..... ARE LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE AN AUSTRALIA THAT IS ABOUT 4⁰C WARMER ON AVERAGE,A WORLD IN WHICH PREVIOUSLY ONCE-IN-A-CENTURY BUSHFIRES ARE COMMON,..... WATER IS EVEN MORE SCARCE,..... AND HEAT DEATHS MUCH MORE COMMONPLACE”.

WE ARE INDEED AT A TIPPING POINT FOR CIVILISATION ON THIS PLANET.

CONCERNING POPULATION GROWTH

OVER HALF OF THE WORLD’S RAPIDLY INCREASING POPULATION IS NOW LIVING IN URBAN ENVIRONMENTS.

FOR GRADUATES OF ALL DISCIPLINES, THERE ARE EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS GLOBAL TREND TO

URBANISATION IT IS HOWEVER, IMPORTANT THAT THE INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIRED BY FUTURE GENERATIONS, IS DEVELOPED, RECOGNISING THE IMPERATIVE TO REDUCE OUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT!

DAVID SUZUKI SAID, “IN A WORLD WHERE EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED TO EVERYTHING ELSE, ANY ACTION HAS REPERCUSSIONS, AND SO RESPONSIBILITY ACCOMPANIES EVERY DELIBERATE ACT.”

..... THE CHALLENGE TO EACH OF YOU IS TO RECOGNISE THIS INTERCONNECTIVITY AND DRAW ON THE STRENGTH OF A **TEAM APPROACH** ENCOMPASSING ALL DISCIPLINES, INCLUDING YOUR OWN!

ALLOW ME TO RETURN TO THE SUBJECT OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND MY INTRODUCTORY REMARKS RELATING TO THE SNOWY MOUNTAIN SCHEME. WATER AND ENERGY ARE INDEED ENDURING PASSIONS WHICH HAVE CONTINUED INTO MY "RETIREMENT."

AND THIS BRINGS ME TO THE END OF MY JOURNEY FROM HERMANNSBURG TO INNAMINCKA.....

MORE IMPORTANTLY..... A CHANCE TO SHARE WITH YOU A GLIMSE OF THAT AWESOME OPPORTUNITY NOW UNFOLDING AT THE INNAMINCKA FINISH LINE!.....

GEODYNAMICS HAS THE POTENTIAL TO DELIVER OUR NATION'S NEXT "SNOWY MOUNTAINS" FOR THIS CENTURY AND BEYOND.....MY VISION FOR OUR COUNTRY, 20 YEARS FROM NOW.....IS FOR GENERATION OF 2,000 MW OF GEOTHERMAL ENERGY (4 SNOWY MOUNTAIN SCHEMES)....AND WITH MORE TO FOLLOW.

THE COOPER BASIN IS ONE OF THE "HOTTEST" GEOTHERMAL PLACES ON EARTH....UNQUESTIONABLY, WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEAD THE WORLD IN ITS DEVELOPMENT!

IT IS ENTIRELY FEASIBLE THAT WE CAN CONSTRUCT ANOTHER "SNOWY MOUNTAINS" OF ZERO EMISSIONS ELECTRICAL ENERGY WITHIN A DECADE!

THE CHALLENGE OF "ENGINEERING" THE BUSINESS MODEL WHICH RAISES THE FUNDING OF SEVERAL \$BILLION TO CONSTRUCT THIS PROJECT....IS A CHALLENGE ALSO FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING GRADUATES HERE TODAY!

AN ARTICLE IN THE MARCH 16TH EDITION OF FORBES ASIA, HIGHLIGHTS GOOGLE'S RECOGNITION OF GEOTHERMAL POWER AS THE MOST EXCITING CLEAN ENERGY RESOURCE FOR THIS CENTURY. GLOBAL ENERGY DEMAND FOR I.T. AND DATA PROCESSING APPLICATIONSIS FORECAST TO CONTINUE GROWING AT A COMPOUND RATE EXCEEDING 15%.

EVEN MORE EXCITING FOR INNAMINKA, IS THE PROSPECT OF CAPTURING THE SYNERGIES BETWEEN GEOTHERMAL POWER AND I.T. DATA PROCESSING APPLICATIONS..... FIBRE OPTIC TRANSMISSION OF PHOTONS IS LESS THAN 1/10 OF THE COST OF HIGH VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION OF ELECTRONS..... THIS MAY DELIVER AN EXCITING CATALYST FOR DEVELOPMENT OF OUR COOPER BASIN RESOURCE.

MY JOURNEY IN COMMUNICATIONS FROM INNAMINCKA BACK TO HERMANNSBURG WILL THEN BE MEASURED IN LESS THAN A NANO SECOND!

OUR GEOTHERMAL POWER DEVELOPMENT ILLUSTRATES HOW AUSTRALIA CAN PROVIDE A PLATFORM FOR THIS NATION TO EXPORT LEADERSHIP IN OVERCOMING PRESSING GLOBAL CHALLENGES.....AND CREATE THE NEXT GENERATION OF OPPORTUNITY IN CLEAN ENERGY!

CLOSING REMARKS:

I PREFACE MY CONCLUDING REMARKS WITH AN EXTRACT FROM PROFESSOR PENNY SACKETT'S SPEECH IN THE GREAT HALL, CANBERRA LESS THAN 2 WEEKS AGO.....

“WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY AND THE NECESSITY TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD IN A WAY AS PROFOUND AS THAT WITNESSED AT THE DAWN OF THE INDUSTRIAL AGE”.

“OURS IS THE FIRST GENERATION.... TO KNOW WITH CERTAINTYTHAT OUR OWN ACTIVITIES ARE ALTERING THIS PLANET,..... OUR HOME,.... IN A MANNER THAT MAY DENY THE NEXT GENERATION THE PROSPERITY WE HAVE ENJOYED AND ENDANGER THE LIVES OF MILLIONS,..... PARTICULARLY THE WORLD'S POOR”.

“WE ENJOY MORE PRIVILEGE AND RESPONSIBILITY THAN ANY GENERATION OF HUMANKIND”.

INDEED, WE HAVE AN AWESOME RESPONSIBILITY TO TRANSFORM LIFE ON THIS PLANETAND DESPITE THE GLOBAL RECESSION.....THERE IS NO ROOM FOR DESPAIR.....THIS TRANSFORMATION WILL ALSO BRING AWESOME OPPORTUNITIES!

MY CONCLUDING REMARKS ARE ESPECIALLY ADDRESSED TO THE YOUNG GRADUATES..... I ENCOURAGE YOU TO FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS..... NEVER SETTLE TO BE ANYTHING BUT THE BEST THAT YOUR ABILITIES WILL ALLOW YOU TO BE..... KEEP LOOKING FOR OPPORTUNITIES WHICH ALLOW YOU TO BE PASSIONATE ABOUT WHAT YOU DO.

OUR TIME IS LIMITED, SO DON'T WASTE IT MARKING TIME RESTING ON THE LAURELS OF YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS RECOGNISED HERE TODAY! HAVE THE COURAGE TO FOLLOW YOUR HEART IF YOU HAVE A GOAL IN LIFE AND BELIEVE IN IT YOU WILL MOST LIKELY SUCCEED!.....

LIKE NEVER BEFORE,..... ACHIEVING YOUR GOALS WILL REQUIRE PERSERVANCE!

COLLECTIVELY WE NEED TO CREATE A NEW SUSTAINABLE ORDER..... **BUILT ON A SMALLER ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT!**..... THE QUALIFICATIONS YOU RECEIVE TODAY FROM THIS UNIVERSITY ARE FIRST CLASS AND EQUIP YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS CHALLENGE!

I WISH YOU ALL THE **VERY BEST**..... THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS YOU ON THIS VERY SPECIAL DAY IN YOUR...AND MY LIFES JOURNEY.... **I KNOW OUR FUTURE IS IN GOOD HANDS.THANK YOU**