

PREMIER.

Speech for the Premier  
The Hon.N.F.Greiner M.P.  
Delivered on the occasion  
of an official ground breaking ceremony  
to mark the commencement  
of site works for  
the University to be  
established for Western Sydney  
at Werrington

Monday May 23, 1988

Werrington Park  
Werrington

Ladies and Gentlemen

Today is an historic occasion for New South Wales and for Australia. It is an optimistic occasion for the people of western Sydney.

Today's ceremony will leave no one in any doubt as to my Government's commitment to the establishment of a first class university for western Sydney.

We have supported this project from the outset and I acknowledge the progress made as a result of the previous Government's initiatives.

My Government's commitment, however, is not just to the provision of a top quality university for the western Sydney region. We are committed to western Sydney itself.

This is a growth area. The new university cannot succeed without the support of a thriving community. Our aim is to promote the self-sufficiency of the region through the development of attractive residential and recreational facilities and the encouragement of job-creation projects.

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The realisation of these objectives, together with the progressive educational policies being implemented by Dr Metherell - including a senior high school to be located in this area - will see an end to the image of western Sydney as a region of lost opportunity and social disadvantage.

Of course I am not in a position to promise miracles for the University or for the region. The success of our policies for both will largely depend on the Commonwealth's attitude. The manifest inconsistencies in the Commonwealth's failure to support the States while expecting the States to make increased contributions in areas such as higher education, give cause for grave concern.

I gave notice at the recent Premier's Conference that I intend to pursue a strong line with the Commonwealth Government in asking it to meet its commitments.

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Because the Commonwealth controls funding to higher education institutions, the massive restructuring of higher education foreshadowed in the Dawkins' Green Paper has forced a review of administrative arrangements for all tertiary institutions in New South Wales. The review must take in this new university. This university's future scope, scale and administration, and its relationship with other institutions will be decided in more detail after the release of the Commonwealth's White paper later this year.

Our commitment is clear. It is the Commonwealth that must now come good with the money for policies essential to this university's potential for greatness.

The New South Wales Government will be supporting those charged with responsibility for planning the development of this university in their negotiations with the Commonwealth, to ensure a healthy beginning and speedy progress.

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but on W.P. about here, I think.*

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Today's start to the commencement of the university site has been made possible by my decision to exempt the university project from the capital works freeze which I have been forced to impose on other State projects. This project and Western Sydney itself are at the very top of my priority list for exciting developments for New South Wales.

As well as the planning funds which we will continue to provide, site works are being initially funded by cash advances from the State.

Dr Metherell has commenced already extensive consultations with the western Sydney community on the question of an appropriate name for the new university. As soon as the Unsworth Government announced its decision on a name, Dr Metherell was quick to point out the inappropriateness of the decision. We are giving local people their chance to have a say on this important issue.

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We support the decision on the location of the university. This is clearly a beautiful site, as well as providing the necessary space for expansion over many years to come. With enhanced public transport, the site will be one of the most accessible of any university in Australia.

There are exciting opportunities for developments on adjoining land to link the university with research and industrial activity.

To the university planners, I have this to say: Get on with the exciting challenge you have been set. My Government will give you its full support. We recognise the urgency of the need.

I have great pleasure in officially starting site works with this ceremonial first breaking of the ground.