



Archived at the Flinders Academic Commons:

<http://dspace.flinders.edu.au/dspace/>

Speech presented by Adam Graycar, Chief Executive Officer, Office of Tertiary Education, Adelaide

"World University Consortium"

at Whyalla, South Australia, 27 November 1990

© Government of South Australia
Except as otherwise noted, this speech transcript is licenced under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence. To view a copy of this licence, visit:

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



SP1

WORLD UNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM

27 NOVEMBER 1990

WHYALLA

ADAM GRAYCAR

Chief Executive Officer
Office of Tertiary Education
GPO Box 2564
ADELAIDE SA 5000

- The choice of Adelaide as the site for the proposed MFP gives us the opportunity to think creatively about new technologies and their application to our societal well-being. The ball is in our court to create something monumentally innovative and far-reaching. We have to break out of the shackles of the past and harness our brainpower for the benefit of human kind. What we are on about is trying to convey a long term vision of educational excellence and innovation.
- Adelaide is known as the Festival City - it is also known as the Grand Prix City. There are those who said that aiming to be the Festival City or aiming to be the Grand Prix City was unrealistic. We are happy to lay down the challenge to those who might suggest that aiming to be the University City is unrealistic. At this stage of our development the goal is attainable and the Government is prepared to offer the leadership to make it a reality.
- Leadership only works if there are shared visions, and those offering the leadership are able to ensure that all who have an interest participate together to bring that interest to fruition.
- For Australia to be a technologically-advanced society, it is essential to have world-class scientific and technological capabilities in higher education institutions, in the private sector, in the CSIRO and in other Commonwealth and State Government research organisations.

In order to benefit from Australia's investment in research, there is a need to ensure that advances in science and technology are linked as effectively as possible to applications in industry and other sectors such as health and the environment and all aspects of social well-being.

- The World University is a central component of the Multifunction Polis but the concept of a University City and a World University are not dependent on the MFP. We could achieve a World University without an MFP because we have much to be proud of from the excellent work already being done by our tertiary institutions. However, it is unlikely we could achieve an MFP without a World University, or some similar educational innovation.

- The skills and knowledge developed and expanded within the World University will underpin the other technological advances we expect to be developed at the MFP.
- The World University will not be a fourth university campus in Adelaide. It will not compete with other South Australian universities. It will not divert resources from other South Australian universities. It will not be an overarching or coordinating mechanism. Let me repeat each of the above:-

It will not be a fourth university campus in Adelaide.

It will not compete with other South Australian universities.

It will not divert resources from other South Australian universities.

It will not be an overarching or coordinating mechanism.

Adelaide is regarded as a major centre of excellence in several fields - agricultural education and research (especially sustainable agriculture and dry-land agriculture); electronics and engineering; environmental sciences; petroleum and geophysics; medical sciences, in particular primary health care, and labour studies to mention a few. With the choice of Adelaide as the site for the proposed Multifunction Polis we would envisage the development of a truly international setting offering world class research and educational activity in a small number of fields.

- Our thinking at present is that we must enhance existing higher education in South Australia by providing opportunities which would not otherwise be available, and as a consequence we would see the World University as a consortium built around the three South Australian universities and other associated partners.
- It is important always to think of it as the **World University Consortium**. In that way good ideas can be developed and shared. They can bring credit to the institutions from which they come and at the same time they can be acted upon collaboratively to bring about these major activities:-
 - research;
 - post-graduate training;
 - dissemination of knowledge.

- The general goals and specific activities aren't simply plucked out of the air. They have to be negotiated with participating institutions with existing track records, and in which a cooperative and collaborative spirit can enhance their activities.
- As you can see this is not another institution teaching first year Chemistry or first year History. It is not a campus in the traditional sense. It is a catalyst for collaboration among South Australian universities, encouraging and enabling cooperative action to achieve an appropriate balance between the independence of South Australian universities and their necessary interdependence. It will be a joint venture between the public and private sectors.

It will be a **private** institution in that:

- various fees will be charged for services to students, industry and commerce, government and other institutions;
- private sector funds will be sought for the capital and operating expenses of the World University.

It will be a **public** institution in that:

- its existence and charter will be legislated by the South Australian Parliament;
- it will operate for the enhancement of existing public universities;
- consistent with the principle that resources should not be diverted from other higher education institutions to the detriment of those institutions, it will receive some public funds.

The World University will include a wide variety of courses in its range of educational offerings. International symposia, intensive leading-edge short courses, specialised training, master classes, joint courses with international institutions, educational teleconferences, and programs of educational events that will involve both academic and industry resources located in any part of the world will all be part of the World University curriculum.

- We are simply not interested in building another conventional university, even if we had all the necessary capital and all of it came from private sector endowment. To establish another stand-alone university would be a 20th century response to 21st century thinking, when the time has clearly come to provide educational infrastructure in a new way.

Key Academic Issues

- Possible areas to explore are:
 - Environmental Management;
 - Advanced Learning Technologies;
 - Language and Cultural Studies;
 - Communications and Information Technology;
 - Health Sciences;
 - Management Training;
 - Comparative Legal System (focusing in particular on Technology Law and Intellectual Property);
 - Labour Studies;
 - Population Studies.

Not all of these might come to fruition, but they are a sort of sampler that we could contend with.

Next Steps

- The next steps involve a feasibility study focusing on the funding of the proposal. We have no doubt about our intellectual capabilities, but the concept has to be financially feasible.
- A significant and substantial consultation process whereby all ideas are taken on board, discussed thoroughly, and all with an interest are invited to contribute their ideas and share in this significant development of intellectual enhancement.