

I led push for freer economy, says Fraser

By PAUL AUSTIN and STUART RINTOUL

THE former prime minister, Mr Malcolm Fraser, agreed last night that he was the driving force behind economic deregulation in his government, not the then treasurer, Mr Howard.

Mr Fraser said a "certain mythology" had grown up about his government, suggesting Mr Howard pushed for deregulation, only to be blocked by Mr Fraser.

He said he could not disagree with a statement by his former economic consultant, Professor John Rose, that "the action, the drive for change, came from Fraser. It didn't come from Howard."

Professor Rose's comment is recorded in an authorised biography of Mr Fraser by Melbourne academic Dr Philip Ayres.

The book, Malcolm Fraser: A Biography, will be launched in Melbourne today by the president-elect of the federal Liberal Party, Mr John Elliott.

Credibility

In it, Dr Ayres seeks to demolish what he calls the "enduring myth" that Mr Fraser resisted the efforts of Mr Howard to move towards deregulation, which has become pivotal to the Howard policy.

Mr Howard has angrily condemned the account, saying it lacks credibility because Dr Ayres did not interview him before publication.

In an interview on ABC radio last night, Mr Fraser supported the book's account and launched an attack on the head of Treasury during his government, now Queensland National Party Senator John Stone.

Mr Fraser said there was "a great deal of Treasury opposition to change - they thought it would reduce Treasury's power."

He said Treasury caused "very great delays" in the launching of the historic Campbell inquiry into the financial system, which finally triggered deregulation.

"The Treasury was a very tough instrument in those days," he said.

"The current Treasury is of quite a different calibre and quality, and I would very much commend, looking from the outside, what (the present head of Treasury) Mr Bernie Fraser - no relation of mine - has done in relation to it."

Asked if Mr Bernie Fraser had done a better job than Senator Stone, Mr Fraser replied: "Let me say the Treasury of today, whether it has secret misgivings or not, gives the appearance of supporting government policy in all respects."

"That is enormously important in the markets in New York and London. It's important for confidence generally. "There's not the slightest doubt that in some things the Treasury of my day gave the impression of not supporting government policy."

Mr Fraser took the unusual step yesterday of issuing a statement to say there had been a "misunderstanding" by some people about his involvement with the book.

He said the fact that the book was "authorised" did not mean it had to be approved by him. Nor did it mean he gave the author any instructions about the way in which it was to be written.

"The authorisation was necessary to enable Philip Ayres to have full access to all the Cabinet documents and decisions, minutes and memoranda of my time in government," he said.

On ABC radio later, Mr Fraser said the fact that he had not approved the book did not mean Dr Ayres had "got it wrong".

Employer bodies plan full merger

By MIKE TAYLOR

TWO of Australia's largest industry organisations, the Australian Chamber of Manufacturers (ACM) and the Chamber of Manufacturers of NSW, have agreed to a full merger of operations and functions.

The move was outlined in Canberra yesterday by the president of the ACM, Mr Kevin Groagh, and the president of the NSW chamber, Mr Pat Donovan.

They said a formal affiliation agreement had been signed, providing for full union to take place in three years.

"Today's announcement is seen as the biggest single step taken in recent years towards unity amongst employer organisations," they said.

The merger would create the largest single manufacturing industry organisation in Australia, representing 900 companies operating in all segments of the manufacturing industry in the two largest States - NSW and Victoria.

But the presidents were careful to emphasise the merger would not in any way affect the Confederation of Australian Industry, to which both bodies are already affiliated.

Uluru owners 'likely to veto monorail'

By staff reporters

THE traditional owners of the Uluru National Park are expected to reject the radical proposal by the Minister for the Environment and Tourism, Mr Brown, to build a monorail from Ayers Rock to the Olgas.

However, a spokesman for the Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara said last night the Aboriginal people wanted to talk directly to the Minister about his proposal.

"They have discussed the monorail and want to meet the Minister or a representative before anything further happens," the spokesman said.

Yesterday the proposal was still attracting brickbats from Mr Brown's Canberra colleagues, environmentalists and the Opposition.

The scheme to link Australia's best known natural landmarks with a 42km monorail has provoked fierce debate, with critics describing it as an "environmental

blight" and an attempt to turn Uluru into a Disneyland.

The Opposition spokesman on tourism, Mr John Sharp, described the proposal as "blatantly, costly, and environmentally dangerous" and said a new bypass road would be a fraction of the cost.

He questioned Mr Brown's comment on Tuesday that the monorail would allow people to view the waterfalls running over the Olgas during the wet season.

Support

In reply, Mr Brown said the monorail was just one of several propositions put forward by the National Parks and Wildlife Service to replace the inadequate existing roadway.

Each proposal would be subject to environmental impact studies and consultation with park management and the traditional Aboriginal owners, he said.

One unexpected source of support came from the director of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Professor Derek Ovington, who said he proposed the idea about a year ago as he believed it would help preserve the natural beauty of the area.

A strident critic of the scheme is Mr Brown's predecessor, Mr Barry Cohen, who yesterday said the monorail would be equivalent to putting a McDonald's restaurant on top of the Olgas and a water slide on Ayers Rock.

Mr Brown said: "I'm not interested in his hysterical rantings and ravings."

By last night Mr Brown was refusing any further comment on the matter, while Mr Cohen was saying they had talked and "made up".

Mr Brown is also out of step with two other ministers, his own junior Minister for the Arts and Environment, Senator Richardson, and the Min-

ister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Hand.

The director of the Australian Conservation Foundation, Mr Phillip Torma, yesterday said the mood of the Uluru board of management was strongly against the idea.

The board chairman, Mr Yami Lester, said a monorail would make the park "like Disneyland".

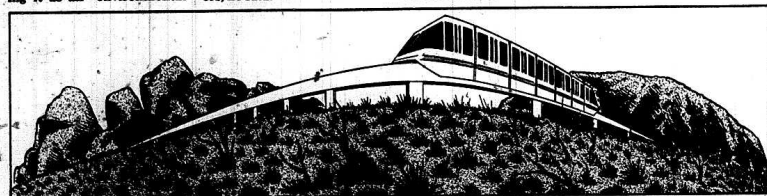
The board is expected to consider alternatives to the monorail at its November meeting.

These will include other means of controlling the rapidly increasing traffic flow between the two attractions, possibly with park-owned shuttle buses.

The bus solution, like a monorail, would stop off-road drivers damaging the environment and Aboriginal sacred sites.

Like a monorail, the plan could be self-funding.

Editorial - Page 10



An artist's impression of the monorail... 'equivalent to a waterslide on Ayers Rock'

Intelligence satellite station site selected

THE Federal Government has selected a site 25km east of Geraldton, Western Australia for its new intelligence satellite station.

The Acting Minister for Defence, Mrs Ros Kelly, said yesterday that the station, foreshadowed in the Defence White Paper, will comprise a 43ha buffer zone, surrounding a 35ha compound.

"Although the site has been identified, negotiations are still being undertaken with the current landowners," Mrs Kelly said.

The buffer zone will be offered for agricultural use to present landowners on a rental basis.

Mrs Kelly said the project, which will begin in January 1988, would mean "a progressive build up to about 120 jobs for the Geraldton area dur-

ing the early 1990s, boosting the local economy."

The station will employ specialist operators, technical, administrative and security staff, cleaners, drivers and ground staff, Mrs Kelly said. Housing for about 55 families would also be required.

Mrs Kelly said the site was selected through extensive evaluation involving technical and environmental studies by federal and State authorities and specialist consultants.

The satellite station, which will be operated by the Defence Signals Directorate and is expected to start operating in the mid 1990s, will significantly boost Australia's independent intelligence collection capability.

- MARA MOUSTAFINE

Name of the selling game a concern

By legal correspondent DAVID SOLOMON

NAMES and characters sell. Put the name of Crocodile Dundee, Greg Norman, The Man from Snowy River, Star Wars or Sesame Street on a product, and it is likely to increase sales.

But what if someone attached a well-known name to their unendorsed product? What if "character merchandising", as the sales technique is called, was not fully protected by law?

This has been a concern for the Federal Government's industrial property advisory committee, following a decision by the House of Lords in London that suggested character merchandising might not be properly protected by the Trade Marks Act.

The House said the Act

seemed to ban "trafficking" in trade marks. The possibility that names might be moved from endorsing one product to another seemed an essential part of character merchandising.

After a one-year investigation, the committee is not convinced that a legislative change is necessary, because Australian law may be sufficiently different from the United Kingdom's.

However, it has published a discussion paper canvassing the problem and proposing three options as resolutions.

The first is to do nothing, leaving the owners of character merchandise to rely on the Trade Practices Act and, perhaps, on the Australian Trade Marks Act.

The second option is to

change the Trade Marks Act to allow the registration of "traffickable" marks, such as those involved in character merchandising.

The third is to cover another legal difficulty under the Trade Marks Act, to ensure that registration would be allowed where quality controls were included in licensing agreements.

Quality

The types of merchandising covered by the recommendation includes the use of real or fictional names; of film or literary characters such as ET, Donald Duck or Snoopy; live characters having a fictional "persona", such as the A-Team, sports celebrities and teams, enter-

Suspected Nazis to be tried here

By HELEN TRINCA

SUSPECTED Nazi war criminals living in Australia are expected to be tried here rather than being extradited or deported to another country under legislation introduced in Federal Parliament yesterday.

The Attorney-General, Mr Bowen, said no one would be deported to any country on the basis of a simple allegation that the person had committed a war crime.

He said that while Australia had to honour its obligations under extradition treaties, the intention was that Australian citizens and residents accused of such crimes would be dealt with in Australia.

The introduction of the legislation follows the establishment in February of a special unit headed by a former member of the National Crime Authority, Mr Ron Greenwood QC, to investigate migrants suspected of being Nazi war criminals.

The Government is believed to have the names of 240 to 250 suspected war criminals, 70 of whom are believed to have been the result of internal investigations, with the remainder coming from Nazi-hunting groups.

The Bill makes express provisions for crimes not normally covered by Australian law.

tainers, famous people and famous events, such as the America's Cup or a papal visit.

"A product bearing a character mark may have a kind of 'reputation' and a consequent appeal to purchasers, which depends neither on the trade source nor on the quality of the product."

The report focuses on the need for changes to the Trade Marks Act, but it also mentions that some protection may be available for character merchandisers through the Copyright and Designs Acts and the Trade Practices Act.

It also mentions that the Commonwealth and States have sometimes passed special laws to protect particular names.