



## PRIME MINISTER

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER

- AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS WOMAN OF THE YEAR, SYDNEY, 15 NOVEMBER 1984

I AM VERY PLEASED TO BE HERE TODAY TO PRESENT THE AWARD OF BUSINESS WOMAN OF THE YEAR. I AM ESPECIALLY PROUD TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH AN AWARD WHICH ENCOURAGES WOMEN TO STRIVE FOR SUCCESS - FOR EXCELLENCE - IN THE WORLD OF BUSINESS.

WHEN TREVOR KENNEDY ASKED ME SEVERAL MONTHS AGO IF I WOULD PRESENT THIS YEAR'S AWARD, I WAS HAPPY TO ACCEPT.

MY CONGRATULATIONS GO TO THE AUSTRALIAN CONSOLIDATED PRESS, PUBLISHERS OF THE BULLETIN, AND TO QANTAS FOR PROMOTING THIS MOST SIGNIFICANT AWARD. IT HIGHLIGHTS THE DIVERSE CONTRIBUTION WOMEN ARE MAKING TO AUSTRALIA'S ECONOMIC LIFE. WOMEN'S EFFORTS, BE THEY IN SMALL, ONE-WOMAN OPERATIONS OR IN LARGE AND EXPANDING ENTERPRISES, ARE INTEGRAL TO THE CONTINUED PROSPERITY OF AUSTRALIA.

THE ANNUAL QANTAS/BULLETIN BUSINESS WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD RECOGNISES THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN TO AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS.

WOMEN ARE MAKING AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT IMPACT IN THE BUSINESS WORLD. THE GOVERNMENT WELCOMES THIS PROGRESS - AND THE ENCOURAGEMENT IT RECEIVES FROM AWARDS SUCH AS THIS.

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FOR OUR PART, WE AS A GOVERNMENT ARE ALSO ENCOURAGING WOMEN TO REALISE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL. WE HAVE UNDERWAY AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PILOT PROGRAM IN COOPERATION WITH A NUMBER OF AUSTRALIA'S MAJOR COMPANIES.

THROUGH THIS PROGRAM, THE GOVERNMENT IS ENCOURAGING EMPLOYERS TO GIVE GREATER OPPORTUNITIES TO WOMEN. WE HAVE DONE SO KNOWING FULL WELL THAT THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE ARE TO BE FOUND IN ONLY A VERY SMALL NUMBER OF OCCUPATIONS.

WE ARE ENCOURAGING EMPLOYERS TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN WHO WOULD LIKE TO MOVE OUT OF 'TRADITIONAL' WOMEN'S JOBS INTO MANAGEMENT OR SUPERVISORY ROLES OR INTO OCCUPATIONS WHICH IN THE PAST HAVE BEEN LARGELY CLOSED TO WOMEN.

WE ARE ALSO ENCOURAGING EMPLOYERS TO CONCENTRATE THEIR EFFORTS TOWARDS ENSURING THAT EXISTING EMPLOYEES AND NEW STAFF TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF ACTUAL - OR POTENTIAL - TRAINING AND PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.

THE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION RESEARCH UNIT IN THE OFFICE OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN REPORTS THAT PROGRESS TO DATE IS VERY ENCOURAGING. MOST PARTICIPANTS HAVE ALREADY CHANGED THE WAY THEY ADVERTISE JOBS, AND HAVE INFORMED THEIR EMPLOYEES OF THEIR DETERMINATION TO REMOVE ANY CONTINUING DISCRIMINATION IN THEIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES. THEY HAVE ALSO BEGUN CONSULTING WITH EMPLOYEES AND UNIONS ON MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN ALL AREAS AND AT ALL LEVELS WITHIN THEIR ORGANISATIONS.

SOCIAL CHANGE CAN OFTEN EVOKE HOSTILE COMMUNITY REACTION. ONLY COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR PROGRESSIVE MEASURES WILL ENSURE THEY ARE ENDURING. OUR GRADUALIST APPROACH TO AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, GUIDED BY CLEAR PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES, WILL DO PRECISELY THAT IN THE CASE OF THIS INITIATIVE.

ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT I THANK THOSE THIRTY-ONE PARTICIPANTS IN THE PILOT PROGRAM. THE GOVERNMENT VALUES THE CONSIDERABLE EFFORTS OF ALL THOSE INVOLVED.

ANOTHER VITAL MEASURE TO HELP REMOVE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE AND THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IS OUR SEX DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION PASSED EARLIER THIS YEAR.

AS WELL, WE HAVE APPOINTED MORE THAN 100 WOMEN TO GOVERNMENT BOARDS AND AUTHORITIES.

WOMEN ARE ALSO STARTING TO ACHIEVE THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE AMONG THE SENIOR RANKS OF THE AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC SERVICE. SINCE WE CAME TO OFFICE LAST YEAR THE NUMBER OF WOMEN IN WHAT IS NOW TERMED THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE HAS MORE THAN DOUBLED.

THE GOVERNMENT RECOGNISES THAT THE AVAILABILITY OF CHILD CARE FOR AUSTRALIAN FAMILIES IS IMPORTANT FOR MANY WOMEN. IN MY POLICY SPEECH ON TUESDAY I PROMISED THAT IN OUR NEXT TERM WE WOULD ADD AN ADDITIONAL 20,000 CHILD CARE PLACES - AN INCREASE OF ONE THIRD. THIS WILL PARTICULARLY ASSIST WOMEN WANTING TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN THE WORKFORCE.

I DISCUSSED THE ISSUE OF CHILD CARE - AND OTHER MATTERS - LAST WEEK WITH MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL, THE BODY CHARGED WITH CONVEYING THE VIEWS OF WOMEN TO THE GOVERNMENT. AT THAT MEETING WE ALSO DISCUSSED TAXATION. I ASSURED MEMBERS THAT THEY WOULD BE REPRESENTED AT THE TAXATION SUMMIT NEXT YEAR AND WOULD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DOCUMENTS WHICH WILL BE CONSIDERED AT THE SUMMIT. THE GOVERNMENT IS AWARE OF CONCERN AMONG SOME WOMEN ABOUT ASPECTS OF THE PRESENT TAXATION SYSTEM SUCH AS ITS INTERACTION WITH THE INCOME SECURITY SYSTEM.

POSITIVE CHANGE OCCURS THROUGH THE ACTIONS OF INDIVIDUALS. TODAY WE SALUTE THE EXCELLENCE OF ONE WOMAN IN BUSINESS.

THE AWARD OF AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS WOMAN OF THE YEAR HAS TENDED TO GO TO WOMEN WHO HAVE SUCCESSFULLY RUN THEIR OWN BUSINESSES. BUT THIS YEAR'S AWARD WILL GO TO AN OUTSTANDING EMPLOYEE.

I HAVE GREAT PLEASURE IN ANNOUNCING THAT THE WINNER OF THE AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS WOMAN OF THE YEAR FOR 1984 IS BEVERLY HANCOCK.

THIS YEAR'S WINNER IS THE DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR AND MARKETING DIRECTOR OF THE LARGE AND WELL KNOWN RETAIL GROUP, SUSSAN.

BEVERLY HANCOCK BEGAN AS A JUNIOR SALES ASSISTANT AT SPORTSGIRL IN MELBOURNE. TODAY SHE CONTROLS THE FASHION DIRECTION AND MARKETING OF THE SUSSAN GROUP'S 192 RETAIL OUTLETS THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA.

ON BEHALF OF YOU ALL, I CONGRATULATE HER ON HER ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE HIGHLY COMPETITIVE WORLD OF FASHION RETAILING. HER WIN IS THOROUGHLY DESERVED. I NOW HAVE GREAT PLEASURE IN PRESENTING THIS AWARD TO BEVERLY HANCOCK.

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