



PRIME MINISTER

CANBERRA

The following is the Prime Minister's Australia Day message for publication on 26 January 1989:

Our Bicentennial year saw a host of activities - large and small - across our nation, as Australians celebrated our past and present achievements. It was a time when more people than ever before chose to show publicly their pride in being Australian.

Now is an appropriate time to think about the future - what we would like Australia to be, and what each of us can do to build on our achievements and take our nation successfully into the twenty-first century. Our national identity then, as now, will be the sum of every Australian's contribution - because Australia is its people.

We are a young nation. One way or another most of us or our forbears come from overseas. The process continues, enriching our country, adding to its vitality and helping establish the linkages a modern Australia simply must have in an age of internationalism.

The cement which binds us together, whatever our origins, is a common commitment to Australia and to Australian values - a fair go for all, tolerance, and insistence upon the rights of the individual. No matter how our social, economic and political landscape may change in the future, in ways which none of us can fully foresee, those values and that commitment will remain the bedrock of our unity and our vitality.

Citizenship is perhaps the most important symbol of commitment to our nation. It is for this reason that I have declared this a Year of Citizenship. I want to raise awareness in the community about what it means to be an Australian, and to encourage as many people as possible to make this solemn and public affirmation of their commitment to our nation. On this Australia Day 1989, all over Australia, people will be doing so.

Australians have much to celebrate. We have inherited and created a wonderful country - and each of us has responsibilities to see that it continues to be a peaceful, just and prosperous nation. We can take pride in being recognised as a people of courage, determination and achievement - people who have always been prepared to 'give it a go' even in the hardest of times.

One Bicentennial project last year listed the two-hundred people who had made Australia great. But the fact is that it is the millions of Australians, past and present, who in their everyday lives have contributed to this country who have made this, in many ways, the greatest of nations in which to live.

I hope you will join me in celebrating Australia Day.

R J L Hawke

