

FOR PRESS:

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AUSTRALIA DAY MESSAGE

From the Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Holt

Today we Australians celebrate the 179th anniversary of our founding. Ours is not a long story as the history of many other nations is counted but in that time we have evolved our distinctive national identity and character. We have been assisted to do so by our heritage of British democracy and the cultures of European civilisation. We owe much to the courage, the industry, the enterprise and the endurance of earlier generations of Australians.

We are a fortunate people enjoying, in an environment that is stable, peaceful and yet stimulating, one of the world's highest living standards. We are growing both in maturity and stature.

But increasingly Australians of today are finding their thoughts dwelling on the challenges, opportunities and the obligations which derive from our proximity to the teeming countries of Asia and our neighbours in the Pacific.

We face our tomorrows in good heart. Our rich and varied resources are being developed with skill and energy. We rank already amongst the great trading nations of the world. And so we should celebrate this national birthday with high expectation and confidence in our future and with gratitude for our past.

It is a happy coincidence for me that this national day is also the first anniversary of my own government. Confirmed in strength so recently by the electorate, it will be my continuing endeavour to promote the peaceful progress of the nation with fair dealing to all.

CANBERRA,
25th January, 1967.