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PRIME MINISTER

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WELCOMING SPEECH TO THE QUEEN

Your Majesty, we are all delighted and honoured to have you, Queen of Australia, with us on this twenty-fifth anniversary of your accession to the throne.

It is already clear, we believe, that your reign has been one of the most significant and successful in our history. You have performed your Constitutional duties with wisdom, grace, assurance, and dignity. Because of the strength and continuity which your reign has given us, it is easy to forget how great have been the changes during the past twenty-five years.

Most of the former British colonies have achieved independence. The membership of the British Commonwealth has increased from eight to thirty-six and it has proved itself with you at its head to be a significant force for peace and cooperation in the world.

Australia too, has changed in that period, just as the Commonwealth is a multi-cultural group of varying traditions, we also have become a multi-cultural society. We have been enriched by the culture and tradition of large numbers of Australians, who have come from Italy, Greece, The Netherlands, Germany, Eastern Europe, Asia and elsewhere, all seeking a better and more equal future here. Australia has clearly benefitted as a result.

We are a diverse nation, yet we are a united nation. Our ability to accept and adapt to change is in large part made possible by our adherence to the best of our traditions - and one of the most important of these is the Constitutional Monarchy.

To celebrate and commemorate your Jubilee, we wish to make you a gift. It is not a gift to be delivered to you tonight. Indeed, it might fairly be said that the gift is still a twinkle in the eye. For we, the people of Australia, are to give you a thoroughbred racehorse. Within the past month, a champion Australian stallion, "Without Fear", has been joined with six mares and in due course, the outstanding foal amongst the progeny will be selected, trained, and presented to you. Knowing your interest and expertise in these matters, we trust that you will welcome this gift. I hope that "Without Fear's" progeny has the ultimate success of carrying your colours to victory.

I am sure that all Australians will take a keen interest in the development of the foals.

It is an odd irony that, today, when women strive for equality in all things that we can look to Elizabeth I and Elizabeth II as two of Britain's outstanding monarchs. As in many other things, the Monarchy has given the lead to contemporary society. All Australians thank you for the twenty-five years past and wish you well for all the years to come.

The second Elizabethan era has been superb. It has given us strength, stability and inspiration.

To mark your Silver Jubilee, we intend to establish a Trust which will foster community leadership by making awards to young people.

Your Majesty: the warm welcome you have already received expresses the feelings of the Australian people toward you. You are the first Monarch to take the title, Queen of Australia - we could never have hoped for better.

The good wishes of all Australians are with you on this tour.

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