



PRIME MINISTER

THURSDAY, 17 DECEMBER, 1981

ADDRESS AT ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ADVANCE AUSTRALIA
CHALLENGE, AMERICA'S CUP, 1983
MELBOURNE

It gives me very, very great pleasure indeed to announce formally that the Western Australian, Victorian and New South Wales syndicate challenging for the 1983 America's Cup have agreed to become part of the one Advance Australia national challenge, a challenge for the America's Cup in 1983.

This is really a very significant occasion because it means that there will be a truly national effort under the banner of Advance Australia to try once again to get the America's Cup to Australia.

I share everyone's enthusiasm for this Advance Australia challenge. It is a real breakthrough towards helping Australia capture the America's Cup. As I understand it, one of the problems in the past is that the challengers here have not had the competition in Australia before going to Newport, and that just makes it a little bit harder to have that extra bit of edge which would make it possible for us to bring home the Cup.

Ever since the first Gretel challenge in 1962, when Jock Sturrock and his crew put up such a good showing, there has been a determination amongst Australians that the America's Cup should get a chance to look around Australia.

There are now three syndicates in existence, as you know: Bill Fesq in New South Wales; Peter Derham, Victoria; Alan Bond in Western Australia. I know from a little experience of dealing with other people from those States that agreement between the States does not always come quickly, or easily and readily. The fact that they have combined to form a national challenge from which the best boat will challenge under the Advance Australia banner is really a great advance. It is good for Advance Australia, it is good for the country.

The Advance Australia campaign generally is an expression of co-operation amongst Australians. It is a demonstration of belief in Australia, a demonstration of confidence in what we can achieve, and victory in an America's Cup challenge would obviously and very clearly fire the imagination of all Australians.

The combination of competition and co-operation which Advance Australia will bring to the 1983 challenge, ought to maximise our opportunities and our chance of success.

Through competition between the syndicates, the strongest challenger will be chosen, and through the pooling of technology and skills, the boat which sails for Australia will get all the support that it can. The yacht that goes to the United States in 1983 will be the best that Australia can build. Everyone involved will be working towards the common objective of taking the America's Cup off that shelf where it has sat for 130 years.

I applaud this national challenge. I wish it every success, and I look forward to welcoming the America's Cup in Australia.