



PRIME MINISTER

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26 1983

ADVANCE AUSTRALIA BREAKFAST

I think this is a time when we all like to think about what Australia means to us. It is a time we ought to think about the problems, but also about the opportunities for 1983. I believe that we all understand that there are many difficulties ahead of us, and share those with countries right around the world, but at the same time, I believe in Australia, above all other places, we are determined to approach those difficulties together in a positive fashion and determined to make the most of the opportunities that are clearly available to Australians.

I would like to think that 1983 was the year, or that this was the Australia Day when Australians determined that they just can't sit around and wait for the world. There are so many people who have their eyes cast across the Pacific, and there they ask when there is going to be an economic recovery in the United States, because that is important for us, it means a great deal for our businesses, it means a great deal for our traders and commodity prices. But nobody can give a very firm answer about when that particular recovery is going to occur.

Some of the optimists may be right. The United States might start to move forward through this year, but on the other hand, predictions of their recovery have been repetitive over the last two or three years. I would like to believe that Australians are going to determine this year to do what we can for ourselves to get a larger share of the action, not sit around and wait for the United States or Europe or anyone else, but to recognise that it is a difficult world, it is sometimes a nasty place outside, and just determine to do things better, to be more competitive, to be more efficient, to produce what the world wants and to make sure that we get a bigger share of the action and therefore more opportunities for Australians.

I believe that we can achieve this because if you ask Australians whether anyone else can do something better than an Australian in one field or another, I think most Australians are prepared to say that we can do things as well as anyone. We can win the Ashes, we can do well at the Commonwealth Games. Our scientists, our technologists, our sportsmen and women, our artists are right up with the best in the whole world. So, in the competitive world of business, there is no reason why we can't do the best in the world also.

I believe government and people perhaps need to examine some of their attitudes to make sure that we work very closely together to make sure that we do what is necessary to make sure that the problems that we share are properly understood so that they can be overcome.

What is happening with Advance Australia over recent times is something which all Australians are proud of. America's Cup Challenge is an example of Australians continually being determined to do what many people, and some still say, is impossible, but I haven't got the slightest doubt, whether it is in this particular challenge round or at some future time, Australia is going to bring that America's Cup back to this country and then I think the United States might find it very difficult to take it back to where it has been for so long. But again it is an example of Australians working together.

There are three or four competitors in that America's Cup here. Once the real challenger is decided for all Australia, I have not got the slightest doubt that all those competing very firmly for that honour will work together to make sure that the Australian flag is carried to victory.

I think we all believe that this is the best country in the world but Australia is only what we all make of it, what every one of us adds to Australia, by our own actions, every day as we go through the year.

I would like to wish you all a very happy Australia Day, and a good, challenging but successful 1983.

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