

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY



EMBARGOED UNTIL 9.30 P.M.

**PRIME MINISTER**

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER  
-AOF FUND RAISING DINNER  
29 OCTOBER 1983

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MR. GIBBS, SIR DONALD (TRESCOWTHICK), KEVAN (GOSPER),

I AM HONOURED TO HAVE BEEN MADE THE NUMBER ONE MEMBER OF THE OLYMPIC SUPPORTERS CLUB.

I AM PARTICULARLY DELIGHTED TO HAVE RECEIVED THIS HONOUR ALONGSIDE SUCH GREAT ATHLETES AND FINE REPRESENTATIVES OF AUSTRALIA AS RAELENE BOYLE AND ROBERT KABBAS.

I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU HAVE ASKED ME TO ACCEPT THIS MEMBERSHIP PRIMARILY AS PRIME MINISTER, BUT IT IS ONE OF THE TASKS THAT I AM ASKED TO TAKE ON WHICH ALSO GIVES ME PERSONAL PLEASURE.

ACCORDINGLY I AM PARTICULARLY DELIGHTED TO BE INVOLVED WITH AND TO BE SUPPORTIVE OF AUSTRALIA'S OLYMPIC EFFORT.

SPORT HAS TRADITIONALLY OCCUPIED A PROMINENT PLACE IN AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY AND CULTURE.

IT IS CLAIMED BY SOME THAT IT HAS BEEN TOO PROMINENT, AND HAS OVERSHADOWED THE DEVELOPMENT OF OTHER CULTURAL ACTIVITIES.

IT HAS EVEN BEEN SUGGESTED THAT AS PRIME MINISTER I HAVE ENCOURAGED THIS.

I REJECT SUCH VIEWS OF THE ROLE OF SPORT IN AUSTRALIAN LIFE AS BEING SIMPLISTIC, AND TO IGNORE SIGNIFICANT CHANGES THAT ARE TAKING PLACE IN OUR NATION AND AMONGST OUR PEOPLE.

IT IS WIDELY RECOGNISED THAT IN RECENT YEARS AUSTRALIA HAS BECOME MUCH MORE DIVERSE CULTURALLY, AND THAT, FOR EXAMPLE, AUSTRALIAN FILMS, MUSIC, BALLET AND LITERATURE HAVE GAINED INCREASING INTERNATIONAL RENOWN.

THESE ARE DEVELOPMENTS THAT LIKE ALL AUSTRALIANS I WELCOME, AND THESE ARE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH MY GOVERNMENT HAS ACTIVELY SUPPORTED AND ENCOURAGED.

AT THE SAME TIME THE REALITY IS THAT AUSTRALIANS HAVE TRADITIONALLY CHOSEN TO DEVOTE A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF THEIR LEISURE TIME TO PARTICIPATION IN, OR SUPPORT OF, SPORT AND SPORTING EVENTS.

IT IS THE RESULT OF THE NATURAL ADVANTAGES PROVIDED BY OUR CLIMATE.

IT IS A FUNCTION OF WHAT IS OFTEN REFERRED TO AS THE AUSTRALIAN WAY OF LIFE.

IT REFLECTS THE GENUINE PRIDE THAT AUSTRALIANS HAVE TAKEN IN THE INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS OF MANY OF OUR SPORTSMEN AND SPORTSWOMEN, AS WELL AS THE WAY THEY HAVE CONDUCTED THEMSELVES IN THOSE ACHIEVEMENTS.

IN THIS REGARD I FEEL THAT AS A NATION WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO FEEL GRATIFIED BY THE SUCCESS OF MANY OF OUR ATHLETES IN PAST OLYMPIC GAMES, AND BY THE ENTHUSIASM AND COMMITMENT OF THE THOUSANDS OF OTHERS WHO HAVE DONE THEIR BEST WHILE REPRESENTING AUSTRALIA.

MY GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT FOR SPORT OPERATES AT TWO LEVELS.

AT ONE LEVEL WE ARE COMMITTED TO PROMOTING AND ENCOURAGING THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE IN SPORT.

AT ANOTHER LEVEL WE CONSIDER IT IMPORTANT THAT THERE SHOULD BE WIDESPREAD COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SPORT.

BOTH OBJECTIVES ARE IMPORTANT AND ARE MUTUALLY REINFORCING.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SPORT PROMOTES A HEALTHIER, MORE VITAL COMMUNITY - A COMMUNITY LIKELY TO BRING A MORE ENERGETIC, MORE PRODUCTIVE APPROACH TO THE NEEDS OF CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIA.

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OVER THE YEARS WE HAVE PRODUCED MANY INTERNATIONALLY SUCCESSFUL SPORTSMEN AND SPORTSWOMEN OVER A WIDE RANGE OF SPORTS AND OUT OF ALL PROPORTION TO THE SIZE OF OUR POPULATION.

IN RECENT YEARS OUR REPUTATION FOR DOING THIS HAS TAKEN SOMETHING OF A BATTERING, AND OUR RELATIVE LACK OF SUCCESS HAS PROBABLY CONTRIBUTED IN PART TO THE TREMENDOUS OUTPOURING OF NATIONAL FERVOR AT THE RECENT SUCCESS OF ROBERT DE CASTELLA AND THE CREW OF AUSTRALIA II.

THIS IS IN NO SENSE TO DETRACT FROM THEIR RESPECTIVE ACHIEVEMENTS WHICH HAVE ATTRACTED INTERNATIONAL ACCLAIM.

(I UNDERSTAND THAT) JOHN BERTRAM IS HERE TONIGHT.

I'M SURE THAT HE AND EVERYONE HERE WOULD AGREE THAT WE SHOULD NOW BE PRESSING TO HAVE THE 12 METRE CLASS INCLUDED AS AN OLYMPIC YACHTING EVENT.

BUT ON A MORE SERIOUS NOTE WHAT IS DEMONSTRATED BY THE SUCCESS OF ROBERT DE CASTELLA AND BY THE CREW OF AUSTRALIA II IS THAT DEDICATION AND HARD WORK ON THE PART OF THE ATHLETES, WITH EFFECTIVE INSTITUTIONAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT, ARE ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS OF SUCH ACHIEVEMENTS.

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THE AUSTRALIAN OLYMPIC FEDERATION MOTTO FOR 1984 "TEAM UP FOR AUSTRALIA" STRIKES THE RIGHT NOTE.

OUR OLYMPIANS ARE NOT IN IT FOR THEMSELVES.

THEY WILL BE IN SARAJEVO AND LOS ANGELES AS AUSTRALIAN REPRESENTATIVES.

WE KNOW THAT IN THE LEAD UP TO THE OLYMPIC GAMES AND AT THE GAMES THEMSELVES, THOSE SELECTED FOR THE AUSTRALIAN TEAM WILL GIVE OF THEIR BEST.

WE ALSO OF COURSE HOPE THAT THE TEAM WILL WIN A NUMBER OF MEDALS FOR AUSTRALIA ALTHOUGH OUR EXPECTATIONS MUST BE TEMPERED BY THE RECOGNITION THAT THE COMPETITION IN SARAJEVO AND LOS ANGELES WILL BE TOUGHER THAN EVER BEFORE.

BUT WE CAN BE ENCOURAGED THAT AT PRESENT OUR MEN'S HOCKEY TEAM IS RANKED NUMBER ONE IN THE WORLD AND THE WOMEN'S HOCKEY TEAM NUMBER FOUR.

ROBERT DE CASTELLA IS THE WORLD CHAMPION MARATHON RUNNER, AND HAS PERFORMED SUPERBLY OVER THE PAST YEAR IN BRISBANE, ROTTERDAM AND HELSINKI.

AND AUSTRALIA AT PAST OLYMPICS HAS PERFORMED CREDITABLY IN SWIMMING, ATHLETICS, CYCLING, YACHTING AND EQUESTRIAN EVENTS, AND WE NOW LOOK FORWARD AGAIN TO GOOD PERFORMANCES IN THESE AND OTHER EVENTS IN SARAJEVO AND LOS ANGELES.

BUT AS I SAID RECENTLY, WHEN I VISITED THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF SPORT, AUSTRALIA HAS SOME DISTANCE TO GO TO CATCH UP TO THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH IN RECENT YEARS HAVE ENJOYED MOST SUCCESS IN THE OLYMPIC GAMES, BOTH IN TERMS OF FACILITIES AND THE SCIENTIFIC PREPARATION AVAILABLE TO ITS ATHLETES.

THIS GAP IS NOW BEING CLOSED, AND I AM GREATLY ENCOURAGED AND IMPRESSED BY THE WORK BEING DONE AT THE INSTITUTE.

BUT WE MUST RECOGNISE THAT WE CANNOT EXPECT MIRACLES OVERNIGHT FROM OUR ATHLETES.

TO MAXIMISE AUSTRALIA'S REPRESENTATION AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES IN SARAJEVO AND LOS ANGELES, AND TO ENSURE THAT OUR ATHLETES HAVE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE OF THEIR BEST AT THE GAMES IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE OLYMPIC SUPPORTERS CLUB IS SUCCESSFUL IN ITS FUND-RAISING TASK.

THE \$1.4 MILLION CONTRIBUTED DIRECTLY BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS BUT A START.

A FURTHER \$3 MILLION IS NEEDED TO ASSIST OUR OLYMPIC REPRESENTATIVES WITH THEIR ESSENTIAL PRE-GAMES TRAINING AND COMPETITION PROGRAMS.

I ASK ALL AUSTRALIANS TO CONTRIBUTE GENEROUSLY THROUGH THE OLYMPIC SUPPORTERS CLUB SO THAT OUR 1984 OLYMPIC TEAM WILL BE THE BEST PREPARED AND BEST EQUIPPED TEAM EVER TO REPRESENT AUSTRALIA AT AN OLYMPIC GAMES.

THIS IS A WORTHY OBJECTIVE AND ONE THAT I BELIEVE ALL AUSTRALIANS WILL SUPPORT.

IN THIS WAY AUSTRALIANS CAN NOT ONLY BE PROUD OF THE SUCCESS OF OUR OLYMPIANS IN SARAJEVO AND LOS ANGELES, BUT CAN BE PART OF THAT SUCCESS.

I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE WILL NOT DISAPPOINT THOSE FELLOW AUSTRALIANS WHO ARE PREPARED TO SACRIFICE MUCH TO REPRESENT THEIR COUNTRY IN SARAJEVO AND LOS ANGELES.

I WARMLY COMMEND TO ALL AUSTRALIANS THE OLYMPIC SUPPORTERS CLUB AS AN EFFECTIVE AND NECESSARY CONTRIBUTION TO OUR COUNTRY'S REPRESENTATION AT THE 1984 OLYMPIC GAMES.