

**PRIME MINISTER****AUSTRALIA DAY LUNCHEON****26 JANUARY 1984**

I AM MOST GRATEFUL TO THE AUSTRALIA DAY COUNCIL FOR NEW SOUTH WALES FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE PART IN THE AUSTRALIA DAY CELEBRATIONS - FOR THE FIRST TIME AS PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA - AND TO SPEAK AT THIS INAUGURAL AUSTRALIA DAY LUNCHEON, IN THIS GREAT CITY OF SYDNEY, WHERE THE STORY OF MODERN AUSTRALIA BEGAN.

I EMPHASISE THE WORD "MODERN", BECAUSE THERE COULD BE NO GREATER DELUSION THAN THAT THE HUMAN STORY OF THIS CONTINENT, AND INDEED, THE STORY OF HUMAN CULTURE AND CIVILISATION ON THIS CONTINENT, BEGAN ONLY ON THE 26TH OF JANUARY 1788.

THE RECOGNITION OF THIS FACT, AND ITS PRACTICAL EXPRESSION, WILL BE CRUCIAL TO THE SUCCESS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BICENTENARY YEAR - NOW ONLY FOUR YEARS AWAY.

AND THE RECOGNITION OF THAT FACT IS QUITE FUNDAMENTAL IN GIVING TRUE MEANING TO THE THEME WHICH THE AUSTRALIA DAY COUNCIL FOR NEW SOUTH WALES HAS SET FOR THIS OCCASION - THE THEME "ONE NATION - ONE FUTURE".

HERE, I AM SPEAKING NOT SIMPLY OF THE QUESTIONS OF THE ROLE AND RIGHTS OF THE AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINES, FUNDAMENTAL AS THOSE QUESTIONS ARE.

I AM SPEAKING OF OUR OWN SENSE OF IDENTITY AS MODERN AUSTRALIANS.

FOR IF WE PLACE OUR PRESENCE HERE IN THE LONGER PERSPECTIVE OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS OF THE HUMAN STORY AND THE HUMAN STRUGGLE IN THIS CONTINENT, WE CAN SEE HOW TRIVIAL AND IRRELEVANT BECOME CONSIDERATIONS OF ETHNIC ORIGIN OR FAMILY DESCENT IN DEFINING THE TRUE AUSTRALIAN.

THAT IS A DEFINITION THAT DOES NOT DEPEND UPON A PLACE OR A DATE ON A BIRTH CERTIFICATE, OR EVEN ON A CERTIFICATE OF NATURALISATION.

ONE THING AND ONE THING ONLY DEFINES AN AUSTRALIAN TODAY.

AND THAT IS A COMMITMENT TO AUSTRALIA AND ITS FUTURE.

AND GIVEN THAT COMMITMENT, THE FAMILY OFF THE LAST PLANE IS AS AUSTRALIAN AS THE SEVENTH GENERATION DESCENDANT OF THE FIRST FLEET.

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IT IS A CLICHE, BUT NO LESS TRUE, THAT MODERN AUSTRALIA IS A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS.

IN SUCH A NATION, THERE CAN BE NO HIERARCHY OF AUSTRALIAN-NESS. THE COMMITMENT IS ALL.

AND IT IS SUCH A COMMITMENT, MADE BY INDIVIDUALS, AND BY THE GROUPS AND INTERESTS WHICH GO TO MAKE UP THE FABRIC OF OUR SOCIETY AND OUR NATION, WHICH LIES AT THE HEART OF THE ENDEAVOURS MADE OVER THE PAST YEAR - NOT JUST BY MY GOVERNMENT, BUT THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY, TO BRING AUSTRALIA TOGETHER, TO WORK TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE RESOLUTION OF THE TREMENDOUS PROBLEMS. IN MANY RESPECTS THE UNPRECEDENTED DIFFICULTIES, WE HAVE FACED TOGETHER - AND STILL DO FACE - TOGETHER.

THE NEED FOR AN EFFORT TOWARDS NATIONAL RECONCILIATION, THE NEED FOR AUSTRALIANS TO BE BROUGHT TOGETHER AND TO WORK TOGETHER, IS SOMETHING I HAVE HELD AS FUNDAMENTAL THROUGHOUT MY PUBLIC CAREER.

THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PAST YEAR - NOT MINE MERELY, BUT AUSTRALIA'S EXPERIENCE - CONFIRMS ME ABSOLUTELY IN THAT BELIEF.

BUT MUCH MORE THAN THAT, IT UTTERLY CONFIRMS MY BELIEF THAT THE PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA ARE CAPABLE OF A GENUINE RESPONSE TO THE CALL FOR CO-OPERATION AND RESTRAINT TO MEET A CRISIS, AS MUCH IN PEACE AS IN WAR.

WE HAVE BY NO MEANS OVERCOME ALL THE DIFFICULTIES. THE RECOVERY WHICH IS NOW CLEARLY UNDERWAY, WILL BE ALL BUT WORTHLESS UNLESS THERE IS A CONTINUATION OF THAT CO-OPERATION AND RESTRAINT, AND UNLESS THE SPIRIT EPITOMISED BY THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC SUMMIT CONFERENCE OF LAST APRIL CAN BE MADE A REAL PART OF THE AUSTRALIAN WAY OF DOING THINGS.

BUT I DO BELIEVE WE CAN NOW SEE THE EVENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS OF 1983 IN THE WIDER PERSPECTIVE OF THEIR TRUE MEANING IN AUSTRALIA'S HISTORY.

WE AS A GOVERNMENT, AND AS A COMMUNITY, HAVE NOT BEEN WORKING TOGETHER MERELY FOR A TEMPORARY OR AD HOC SOLUTION OR DIMINUTION OF SOME OF THE PROBLEMS FACING MODERN AUSTRALIA IN THE LAST FEW YEARS OF ITS SECOND CENTURY.

I BELIEVE OUR HISTORIC TASK HAS BEEN, AND OUR HISTORIC MISSION TOGETHER IN THE YEARS IMMEDIATELY AHEAD, IS TO PREPARE AUSTRALIA FOR THE FUTURE IN ITS THIRD CENTURY AND INDEED, ITS FUTURE IN THE 21ST CENTURY.

UNLESS WE CAN TAKE THAT LONGER PERSPECTIVE, THE EFFORTS AND HARD WORK OF THE PAST YEAR WILL HAVE LITTLE ENDURING MEANING OR SIGNIFICANCE.

LET ME VERY BRIEFLY IDENTIFY WHAT I SEE AS THE FOUR GREAT CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES FOR AUSTRALIA, FOR ITS GOVERNMENTS, ITS REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANISATIONS AND THE PEOPLE AS A WHOLE.

FIRST, THE QUESTION OF EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT. LEVELS OF UNEMPLOYMENT ANYTHING LIKE THOSE OF THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS, PARTICULARLY AMONG OUR YOUNG PEOPLE, CANNOT AND SHOULD NOT BE TOLERATED. ALL OF US MUST GIVE THE HIGHEST PRIORITY TO TACKLING THIS PROBLEM. ALREADY IN THE EIGHT MONTHS FROM APRIL TO DECEMBER 1983 PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE WITH EMPLOYMENT RISING BY OVER 158,000 JOBS - A SHARP REVERSAL FROM THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING EIGHT MONTHS, WHEN OVER 146,000 JOBS WERE LOST. BUT EVEN WITH EXTRAORDINARILY RAPID AND SUSTAINED EMPLOYMENT GROWTH, ANY RETURN TO THE FULL EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS OF THE POST-WAR GENERATION WILL BE A LONG, SLOW AND DIFFICULT PROCESS. THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES PROVIDE AN APPROPRIATE FRAMEWORK AND SENSE OF DIRECTION. THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE MUST BE INVOLVED IN MAKING THEM WORK. THE WHOLE COMMUNITY, NOT JUST GOVERNMENTS, MUST FACE UP TO AND TACKLE THE UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM. ALL OF US MUST RECOGNISE AND ACCEPT OUR RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS CRUCIAL AREA.

SECONDLY, JUST AS WE HAVE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE ECONOMIC REALITIES IMPOSED ON THE YOUNGER PEOPLE, SO WE HAVE TO PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO THE ECONOMIC REALITIES FACING THE OLDER GENERATION. WE HAVE TO FACE THE FACT THAT WE ARE GOING TO LIVE IN A SOCIETY WITH AN AGEING POPULATION. PUT BLUNTLY, AN INCREASINGLY SMALLER PROPORTION OF THE POPULATION WILL BE IN EMPLOYMENT AND ABLE TO SUSTAIN THOSE IN RETIREMENT AFTER THEIR PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT OR THOSE WITHOUT ANY EMPLOYMENT AT ALL. IT IS IMPERATIVE, THEREFORE, THAT WE CREATE CONCEPTS AND MECHANISMS GOVERNING OUR SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM WHICH WILL ENSURE THAT EXPENDITURES ARE MORE CLOSELY RELATED TO THE REAL NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE.

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THIRDLY, WE WILL HAVE TO MEET THE CHALLENGE - AND RISE TO THE OPPORTUNITIES - OFFERED BY THE INEVITABLE INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW TECHNOLOGY. CLEARLY, OUR EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS ARE CRUCIAL TO AUSTRALIA'S ABILITY TO BENEFIT FROM THE PROFOUND REVOLUTION OF TECHNOLOGY. AND IT IS ESSENTIAL IF WE ARE TO MAXIMISE OUR GROWTH PERFORMANCE, AND OUR LONGER TERM EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS, THAT WE DO NOT TURN OUR FACE ON THE OPPORTUNITIES ASSOCIATED WITH TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT. A COMMON THREAD RUNNING THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE OF THOSE COUNTRIES MOST SUCCESSFUL IN HANDLING THE INTRODUCTION OF MODERN TECHNOLOGIES, HAS BEEN THE WILLINGNESS OF THE SOCIAL PARTNERS - OF GOVERNMENT, UNIONS AND EMPLOYERS - TO CONSULT WITH EACH OTHER AT THE NATIONAL, INDUSTRY AND ENTERPRISE LEVELS. AS IN SO MANY OTHER VITAL AREAS, CO-OPERATION AND CONSULTATION ARE ESSENTIAL TO ENSURE THAT THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW TECHNOLOGY CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED IN A MANNER WHICH ENSURES THAT ALL AUSTRALIANS PARTICIPATE IN THE LONG TERM BENEFITS.

AND FOURTHLY - AND THIS IS A CHALLENGE CLOSELY RELATED TO THE NEW TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION - WE MUST FACE THE CRITICALLY IMPORTANT TASK OF GIVING GREATER SUBSTANCE TO OUR LINKS WITH THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION, PARTICULARLY IN THE FIELD OF TRADE, AS THIS IS THE FASTEST-GROWING REGION OF THE WORLD ECONOMY, AND THE REGION IN WHICH AUSTRALIA'S DESTINY HAS PLACED US FOREVER.

I REFERRED EARLIER TO OUR QUEST FOR A NATIONAL IDENTITY. AT LEAST PART OF THAT QUEST LIES IN THE REALISATION OF WHERE WE ACTUALLY LIVE IN THE WORLD, A REALISATION OF WHO ARE OUR NEIGHBOURS, A REALISATION OF OUR COMMON AND MUTUAL INTERESTS AND A REALISATION OF THE CONTRIBUTION WE HAVE TO MAKE TO THE PEACE AND PROSPERITY OF THIS REGION.

YOU CAN BE ASSURED THAT THIS GREAT QUESTION WILL BE AT THE FOREFRONT OF MY CONCERNS IN THE MISSION I AM ABOUT TO UNDERTAKE TO HONG KONG, JAPAN, KOREA, CHINA, SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA.

AND INDEED, THE THEME OF "LIVING TOGETHER", WHICH SOME YEARS AGO, WAS ORIGINALLY DECIDED UPON AS THE THEME FOR THE BICENTENARY YEAR, IS AS APPROPRIATE A STATEMENT OF OUR GOALS ABROAD AS OF OUR PURPOSE AT HOME.

THE "LIVING TOGETHER" THEME WAS LATER REPLACED,
OFFICIALLY, BY THE THEME: "THE AUSTRALIAN ACHIEVEMENT".

I PERSONALLY RATHER REGRET THE OFFICIAL CHANGE.
I BOW TO NONE IN MY PRIDE IN ALL THAT IS TRUE AND GOOD
IN THE AUSTRALIAN ACHIEVEMENT.

BUT IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, IT WILL BE OUR ABILITY
TO LIVE TOGETHER, TO WORK TOGETHER IN A GENUINELY
MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY, AND A GENUINELY FREE AND OPEN
SOCIETY, THE DEGREE TO WHICH WE CAN ACHIEVE DIVERSITY
WITHIN UNITY, THAT WILL SHAPE OUR FUTURE AND WHICH WILL
INDEED BE THE FINEST AND TRUEST AUSTRALIAN ACHIEVEMENT
OF ALL.
