



PRIME MINISTER

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E & O E - PROOF ONLY

P.M.: ... sexist parts. It's not Australia's sons let us rejoice, it's Australians let us all rejoice and I was perhaps a little bit peremptory, but after hearing that beautiful rendition I just couldn't help myself.

JOURNALIST: You were guilty of a Cabinet leak were you?

P.M.: I was amazed that it hadn't occurred before, it's such an important item. The Special Minister of State will be conferring with the Governor-General about it. God Save the Queen will be kept as the royal anthem when the Queen is present.

JOURNALIST: ... referendum.

P.M.: It didn't have anything to do with a referendum. We just believed it was time to do this. At the Olympics I understand Advance Australia Fair will be used there as it should be and I think it's just something that the overwhelming majority of Australians will think is appropriate.

JOURNALIST: And the overwhelming majority of Cabinet.

P.M.: I think it was a unanimous decision, like most of our decisions.

JOURNALIST: Is this decision immediate?

P.M.: Well, the Special Minister of State will be conferring with the Governor-General as a matter of courtesy and then the appropriate arrangements will have to be made, people will be informed, but it's being put into effect as of now.

JOURNALIST: Do you expect much opposition?

P.M.: No, not at all. Why should anyone be opposed to Advance Australia Fair.

JOURNALIST: The R.S.L. probably would.

P.M.: No, I don't think so. Their feelings are perhaps more about the flag. We've made no decision on that.

JOURNALIST: Have you discussed it in Cabinet?

P.M.: Yes - we have just decided that there is more time for discussion needed in the community. There are deeper feelings about that and I respect them because you have people who have fought under the existing flag, who have had relatives that have died and that arouses deep feelings and emotions. So there is no intention to move precipitately in that area.

P.M. cont...: But the question of having our own national anthem is very important. I mean I have found it just appalling that at previous Olympics, for instance, that you have the Brits getting up, they win a medal -- you know they win one occasionally -- ... God Save the Queen, and Australians getting up and they play the same anthem. Now that's crazy.

JOURNALIST: (inaudible - Waltzing Matilda)

P.M.: Nope. It's a great song, a great part of Australian tradition, particularly when you are overseas and people want you to give an Australian item and they expect you to sing Waltzing Matilda but it's not the most appropriate for our national anthem.

JOURNALIST: The sexist aspect of the lyrics - is that the only thing that's going to be modified.

P.M.: Yes, 2 or 3 things that have been modified to take account of that. That is the first line. I forget the other two. I haven't got the exact words now.

JOURNALIST: ... all Australians to learn the notes ... I am sure not everyone would know the notes to Advance Australia Fair?

P.M.: Yes, as long as the Prime Minister didn't lead by singing them because that would certainly lose votes galore.

JOURNALIST: Do you know the lyrics Mr Hawke?

P.M.: Yes, didn't you watch me singing them?

JOURNALIST: Were there any other options given to Cabinet what might be a national anthem or was that the only choice? ^{ask}

P.M.: That was the one that was chosen. ... the opportunity of suggesting Tie Me Kangaroo Down Sport instead - that perhaps recommended itself to them - but there was a great feeling that Advance Australia Fair was appropriate.

'Advance Australia Fair'

Original Words of Verses 1 and 3 by
Peter Dodds McCormick

Australia's sons let us rejoice,
For we are young and free;
We've golden soil and wealth for toil;
Our home is girt by sea;
Our land abounds in nature's gifts
Of beauty rich and rare;
In hist'ry's page, let every stage
Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing,
Advance Australia Fair.

Beneath our radiant Southern Cross
We'll toil with hearts and hands;
To make our youthful Commonwealth
Renowned of all the lands;
For loyal sons beyond the seas
We've boundless plains to share
With courage let us all combine
To Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing,
Advance Australia Fair.

Revision of Peter Dodds McCormick's
Words (Changes Underlined)

Australians all let us rejoice,
For we are young and free;
We've golden soil and wealth for toil;
Our home is girt by sea;
Our land abounds in nature's gifts
Of beauty rich and rare;
In history's page, let every stage
Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing,
Advance Australia Fair.

Beneath our radiant Southern Cross
We'll toil with hearts and hands;
To make this Commonwealth of ours
Renowned of all the lands;
For those who've come across the seas
We've boundless plains to share
With courage let us all combine
To Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing,
Advance Australia Fair.