



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

24 JANUARY 1986

The British official gift to Australia for the Bicentenary will be a specially commissioned sail training ship.

The ship will be sailed to Australia by a joint crew of young Britons and Australians to participate in the Tall Ships Event in 1988 and will then be handed over to Australia.

The British Prime Minister, Mrs Thatcher, has written offering the ship to Australia and I will be writing to thank her for the British Government's offer.

The ship is a significant gesture by the Government and people of the United Kingdom towards Australia's Bicentennial Year and is a most appropriate tribute to the longstanding relationship between Australia and the United Kingdom.

This gesture is one of many aspects of British participation in the events of 1988 in Australia, which were being co-ordinated by the Britain-Australia Bicentennial Committee.

The Government will give early consideration to how the gift can be utilised in support of its Priority One commitment to young Australians in the years ahead.

The British gift of a vessel will, over the years, offer many young Australians a unique opportunity for the personal development which sail training offers.