



## PRIME MINISTER

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TRANSCRIPT OF SPEECH BY PRIME MINISTER AT RECEPTION FOR  
JAPANESE - AUSTRALIAN BICENTENARY COMMEMORATION COUNCIL  
IMPERIAL HOTEL, TOKYO - 15 MAY 1986

Mr Saito, distinguished members of the Australian Bicentenary Commemorative Council, thank you very much for joining me this evening and making it possible for me to convey to you personally and on behalf of the Government and people of Australia our thanks for the efforts that you have made in considering Japan's participation in Australia's Bicentenary celebrations of 1988.

I particularly treasure the time that you are putting into this effort because I am very much aware of the many demands on the time of such eminent gentlemen.

For more than half of the two hundred years of European settlement that is to be celebrated in 1988 Australia has had contact with Japan but as you all know during the last 30 years our links have developed spectacularly and despite our different cultures and languages we have achieved very real interdependence and a very substantial affinity.

No one, of course, with any certainty can predict the future but it seems to me that because of the fundamental characteristics of our two countries, the nature of our economies and the fact of geography suggests that our interests will be closely intertwined for very many years to come.

My Government is delighted that you have decided to make a substantial contribution to Australia's Bicentennial Science Centre. This project located in the national capital's parliamentary triangle will provide a very permanent reminder of the closeness of the relationship between our two countries as the Australian nation enters its third century and I think we must all agree that it is fitting that that relationship should be symbolised by a science and technology centre as that relationship between us has flowered in the age of technology.

I am very glad to note also that you endorse Japan's participation in a number of other events and activities during our Bicentennial year. In particular through the participation of the Nippon Maru in the tall ships event which will be a spectacular part of the celebrations early in the Bicentennial year.

The Prime Minister's very special gift of 300,000 cherry trees which will be strategically placed around our new Parliament House and other important parts. And of course also your participation in Expo '88 in Brisbane will enable very many hundreds of thousands to come to know Japan better in our Bicentenary year.

May I, in conclusion gentlemen, thank you again most sincerely. I repeat personally and on behalf of the Government and the people of Australia and in thanking you also thank the Japanese private sector for its decision to participate so substantially in our Bicentennial celebrations particularly for your contribution to the national science centre. I express the hope that each one of you will come and personally inspect that centre after it is completed in 1988 because it will be one of the permanent centrepieces of reminder to this and succeeding generations of the importance of the relationship between our two countries.

Thank you.