

8

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER : JAPAN/AUSTRALIA SOCIETY RECEPTION:

TOKYO : 16 MAY 1986

PROFESSOR SAITO, MEMBERS OF THE JAPAN-AUSTRALIA SOCIETY,
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS.

MEMBERS OF THE JAPAN/AUSTRALIA SOCIETY KNOW VERY WELL THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES AND THE CLOSENESS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AUSTRALIAN AND JAPANESE GOVERNMENTS.

I HAVE DISCUSSED OUR ECONOMIC RELATIONS IN DETAIL IN AN ADDRESS EARLIER TODAY. WHAT I WANT TO EMPHASISE TO YOU THIS EVENING IS A COMMENT I MADE AT A SYMPOSIUM HELD EARLIER THIS YEAR IN MELBOURNE. I POINTED OUT THEN THAT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES IS NOT JUST A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRADERS IN THE MARKET PLACE OR BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS IN THE ARENA OF FOREIGN POLICY, IT IS ALSO A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PEOPLE. TO ME, ONE OF THE MOST HEARTENING DEVELOPMENTS IN AUSTRALIA/JAPAN RELATIONS HAS BEEN THE INCREASING STRENGTH OF CONTACT AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN AUSTRALIANS AND JAPANESE.

TOURISM FROM JAPAN TO AUSTRALIA PASSED THE 100,000 MARK LAST YEAR. CULTURAL EXCHANGES ARE NOW TAKING PLACE AT ALL LEVELS. A GROWING NUMBER OF AUSTRALIAN ARTISTIC GROUPS AND INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS ARE VISITING JAPAN. JAPANESE PERFORMERS AND EXHIBITIONS ARE INCREASINGLY SOUGHT FOR CULTURAL FESTIVALS IN AUSTRALIA. THE APPRECIATION OF JAPANESE CULTURE IN AUSTRALIA HAS NOW REACHED A SOPHISTICATED LEVEL. WHAT COULD BE A BETTER SIGN THAN THAT YOUTH EXCHANGE IS A GROWTH AREA? MORE AND MORE YOUNG AUSTRALIANS STUDY JAPANESE AND ONLY A FEW DAYS AGO AN AUSTRALIAN STUDIES CENTRE WAS OPENED AT NANZAN UNIVERSITY IN THIS COUNTRY. AUSTRALIAN STUDIES ARE TAUGHT AT TOKYO UNIVERSITY AND FIVE OTHER UNIVERSITIES IN THIS CITY.

IN THESE WAYS WE ARE BUILDING WITH JAPAN THE SORT OF RELATIONSHIP WHICH SHOULD CHARACTERISE AUSTRALIAN RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRIES OF ASIA GENERALLY, FOR THESE COUNTRIES ARE AND WILL ALWAYS BE AMONGST OUR NEAREST NEIGHBOURS.

12

I WOULD LIKE TO TELL YOU THAT THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAS RECENTLY TAKEN A MAJOR INITIATIVE WHICH WILL GIVE VERY TANGIBLE AND PRACTICAL EXPRESSION TO OUR COMMITMENT TO BUILD MATURE, BENEFICIAL AND LONG TERM RELATIONS WITH ASIA. I AM REFERRING TO THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO ESTABLISH AN ASIAN STUDIES COUNCIL TO PROMOTE THE STRENGTHENING OF ASIAN STUDIES AT EVERY LEVEL OF THE AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM, AND ALSO TO MEET THE NEEDS OF INDUSTRY WHICH MUST BECOME INCREASINGLY INTEGRATED WITH ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE REGION. WHAT WE ARE SEEKING IS PRODUCTIVE INTERDEPENDENCE BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND ASIA. I REPEAT THAT WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING WITH JAPAN IS IN MANY WAYS A MODEL FOR THIS LARGER ASPIRATION.

IN FOREIGN POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AUSTRALIA AND JAPAN START FROM A SOLID BASE OF SHARED INTERESTS WHICH INCLUDE, BUT EXTEND WELL BEYOND, THE SECURITY AND STABILITY OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION. WE ALSO HAVE A FUNDAMENTAL INTEREST IN GLOBAL SECURITY AND STABILITY. IN CASE IT MIGHT BE THOUGHT THAT THAT IS RATHER ABSTRACT LET ME SAY THAT IT IS THE FOUNDATION OF THE ROLES AUSTRALIA AND JAPAN EACH TRIES TO PLAY ON CURRENT ISSUES OF GREAT MOMENT, RANGING FROM THE PRESERVATION OF AN OPEN INTERNATIONAL TRADING SYSTEM TO ENCOURAGEMENT OF PEACE AND DISARMAMENT AND THE COMBATTING OF TERRORISM.

IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RELATIONS YOUR SOCIETY HAS LONG PLAYED A ROLE OF WHICH YOU CAN BE PROUD. AND BEFORE CONCLUDING, MR PRESIDENT, I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR LATEST UNDERTAKING. THE SOCIETY IS PROVIDING THE SECRETARIAT FOR THE FUND WHICH HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED TO ENABLE THE JAPANESE PRIVATE SECTOR TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL BICENTENARY SCIENCE CENTRE AS PART OF JAPAN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE AUSTRALIAN BICENTENARY IN 1988. I AM DEEPLY APPRECIATIVE OF THE EFFORT THAT THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS WORLD ARE MAKING TO COMMEMORATE THE BICENTENARY AND OF THE EFFORT OF THE SOCIETY ITSELF. I VERY MUCH HOPE THAT MANY OF YOUR MEMBERS WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT US IN AUSTRALIA IN OUR BICENTENARY YEAR.