



PRIME MINISTER

CHECK AGAINST DELIERY

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH
NATIONAL ITALIAN DAY CELEBRATIONS
THE DOMAIN - SYDNEY 1 JUNE 1986

CAVALIERE CAPELLETTO, PREMIER WRAN, YOUR EXCELLENCY,
DR ERIC DA RIN, CONSUL GENERAL ALVISE MEMMO, MAYOR
SUTHERLAND, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

TODAY WE ARE CELEBRATING AN IMPORTANT DAY FOR ITALY - THE
40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC, A DAY ON WHICH
ITALIANS TAKE PRIDE IN THEIR GOVERNMENT AND CONSTITUTION.
HERE IN AUSTRALIA THIS OCCASION GIVES US THE OPPORTUNITY TO
REFLECT ON OUR SHARED COMMITMENT TO FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY,
AND ON THE MANY OTHER CLOSE TIES BINDING OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

THE GREAT STRENGTH OF OUR TIES DERIVES FROM THE MANY
AUSTRALIAN ITALIANS LIVING HERE, A COMMUNITY WHOSE ORIGINS
IN AUSTRALIA GO BACK WELL OVER A HUNDRED YEARS, AND WHOSE
GREAT CONTRIBUTION TO OUR COUNTRY AND OUR CULTURE ARE VALUED
BY ALL AUSTRALIANS.

MY VISIT TO ROME LAST MONTH GAVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO TALK
TO PRIME MINISTER CRAXI ABOUT THE AUSTRALIAN ITALIAN
COMMUNITY AND THE IMPORTANCE THE GOVERNMENT ATTACHES TO IT.
THIS IMPORTANCE WAS REFLECTED BY THE SIGNING OF THE SOCIAL
SECURITY AGREEMENT BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES, AN AGREEMENT
REACHED AFTER MANY YEARS AND AFTER CLOSE CONSULTATIONS WITH
THE COMMUNITY IN AUSTRALIA.

I AM DELIGHTED THAT UNDER THE AGREEMENT THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE IN AUSTRALIA AND IN ITALY WILL NOW BE ABLE TO BENEFIT FROM ITALIAN OR AUSTRALIAN PENSIONS.

BOTH PRIME MINISTER CRAZI AND I WERE PLEASED TO BE ABLE TO DISCUSS WAYS IN WHICH OUR TWO COUNTRIES, SO CLOSELY LINKED THROUGH THE AUSTRALIAN ITALIAN COMMUNITY, COULD WORK TOGETHER TO OUR MUTUAL BENEFIT. WE SAW ADVANTAGES IN INCREASING TRADE AND JOINT VENTURES, PARTICULARLY IN THE HIGH TECHNOLOGY FIELD. MR CRAZI SAID, TOO, THAT HE WOULD ESTABLISH A BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE TO CO-ORDINATE ITALIAN INVOLVEMENT IN OUR BICENTENARY, REFLECTING THE LONG INFLUENCE OF ITALIAN MIGRANTS ON AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY. WE BOTH LOOKED FORWARD, TOO, TO ITALIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE AMERICA'S CUP, WHEN AUSTRALIA HOPES TO WELCOME MANY VISITORS FROM ITALY.

I WAS VERY PLEASED THAT HAZEL HAD THE OPPORTUNITY, ON BEHALF OF THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE, TO OPEN THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE IN AVELLINO, THE LATEST IN A REMARKABLE SERIES OF PROJECTS FOR VICTIMS OF THE SOUTHERN ITALIAN EARTHQUAKE DISASTER IN 1980 FUNDED THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF THE ITALIAN COMMUNITY IN AUSTRALIA. I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK ONCE AGAIN THE AUSTRALIAN COMMITTEES, HEADED BY GENNARO ABIGNANO AND CARLO VALMORBIDA, FOR THEIR LONG AND SUCCESSFUL INVOLVEMENT WITH THE EARTHQUAKE RELIEF APPEAL.

I THINK I CAN SAY THAT MY VISIT SERVED TO ILLUSTRATE THE FACT THAT AUSTRALIA AND ITALY TODAY SHARE A MATURE AND SYMPATHETIC UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHER'S ASPIRATIONS: WE SHARE THE WILL TO FURTHER DEVELOP OUR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC LINKS. WE ARE INCREASINGLY COMING TOGETHER IN THE CULTURAL AND SPORTING FIELDS AS EVIDENCED BY THE CURRENT TOUR OF AUSTRALIA BY THE ITALIAN RUGBY UNION TEAM. AND ALTHOUGH WE ARE SORRY THAT THE SOCCEROOS DID NOT GET TO THE WORLD CUP IN MEXICO, DESPITE THEIR VALIANT EFFORTS, WE WISH ITALY ALL THE BEST.

TODAY I AM PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE FORMATION OF THE AUSTRALIA-ITALY PROMOTION COMMITTEE, A NEW BODY WHOSE MEMBERSHIP HAS BEEN DRAWN FROM A CROSS-SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY. THE AUSTRALIA-ITALY PROMOTION COMMITTEE WILL CO-ORDINATE AND ADVISE ON THE PROMOTION OF CONTACTS AND EXCHANGES IN THE FIELDS OF SPORT, TOURISM, INFORMATION DISSEMINATION AND SOME CULTURAL ACTIVITIES.

I UNDERSTAND MY COLLEAGUE, THE MINISTER FOR SPORT, RECREATION AND TOURISM, MR BROWN, WILL BE ANNOUNCING FULL DETAILS LATER TODAY, BUT I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE PARTICULAR MENTION HERE OF HOW GRATEFUL I AM TO MR FRANCO BELGIORNO-NETTIS, WHO HAS GENEROUSLY AGREED TO CHAIR THE COMMITTEE. MR BELGIORNO-NETTIS ALREADY CONTRIBUTES GREATLY TO AUSTRALIA'S CULTURAL LIFE THROUGH HIS ROLES AS CHAIRMAN OF THE BIENNALE OF SYDNEY AND AS DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL CORPORATION OF AUSTRALIA.

TODAY, NATIONAL ITALIAN DAY, LET US CELEBRATE NOT ONLY FORTY
YEARS OF THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC BUT ALSO THE GREAT
CONTRIBUTION OF AUSTRALIAN ITALIANS TO THE QUALITY AND THE
ACHIEVEMENTS OF THIS LAND OF OURS.
