



PRIME MINISTER

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**SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER
LUNCHEON FOR THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES
THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF YORK
CANBERRA - 29 SEPTEMBER 1988**

Your Royal Highnesses,
Mr President,
Madam Speaker,
Leader of the Opposition,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It gives me great pleasure on behalf of the Australian Government and people to welcome to Australia their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York - and in particular to receive them as our guests here in our National Parliament.

May I at the outset take this opportunity to congratulate you both on the birth of your daughter Her Royal Highness Princess Beatrice. We are naturally sorry you were unable to bring her with you on this occasion but we appreciate your presence here all the more.

Your Royal Highnesses, we are delighted that, in your first official visit to Australia, you are able to share with us in our Bicentennial celebrations.

Your visit follows those of the Prince and Princess of Wales in January and the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh in April and May.

Between them they have visited all the Australian States and Territories. Their presence has given pleasure to many Australians. Among their many memorable contributions here we recall in particular the speech by Prince Charles in Sydney on Australia Day and the opening by the Queen, in this Great Hall, of our new Parliament House.

Your Royal Highness, it is especially appropriate that you, as a serving Naval Officer, should participate in the Bicentennial Naval Salute on Sydney Harbor and should as the Queen's representative take the salute on Saturday.

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It will be the greatest peace-time assembly of Naval ships ever to grace Australian waters - some fifty vessels will take part in the review, from fifteen countries as well as Australia, and involving more than seventeen thousand sailors.

We all remember with pride the celebration of the Royal Australian Navy's 75th Birthday just two years ago when the Duke of Edinburgh, as Admiral of the Fleet, took the salute.

Having seen fleets on Sydney Harbor both on that occasion and last January when the Tall Ships arrived, I can assure you of a spectacular and memorable sight this weekend.

Your Royal Highnesses, Australians are proud, with good reason, of their achievements in creating over two hundred years a democratic society and a peaceful and tolerant and multicultural community.

Proud as we are of our British heritage, today Australia is home for people of many cultures from all corners of the globe - and we are aware too of the achievements of the Aboriginal people who cared for this land for more than 40,000 years before 1788. We are a nation which reaches out to the rest of the world in friendship and which takes pride in the opportunities which abound here for prosperity and growth.

Over the next few days as you travel around this country, I trust you will see this Australia and that you will meet many Australians who I am sure will extend to you a warm Australian welcome.

Your Royal Highnesses, it is with real pleasure that we welcome you both to our country. We hope that you enjoy your visit - because we enjoy having you visit us.
