



PRIME MINISTER

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**SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER
CLOSING CEREMONY OF WORLD EXPO 88
BRISBANE - 30 OCTOBER 1988**

Sir Edward Williams,
Sir Llew Edwards,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Tonight the final curtain falls on the biggest single event of the Bicentennial celebrations: World Expo 88. I believe the applause for this event will ring on loudly for many months and many years because Expo 88 has truly been a stunning performance.

Throughout Australia many people have participated enthusiastically in many Bicentennial events. But no Bicentennial event can match the magnificent record of participation achieved by Expo 88: 38 national governments, 12 other governments, 154 corporations - including 32 as exhibitors - and most importantly 15.5 million visitors from Australia and around the world.

Expo's success is due to the unfailing dedication, determination and vitality of many people. I especially want to extend my thanks to Ned Williams, Commissioner-General of Expo 88, representing the Australian Government, and the Commissioners-General for each pavilion for their vital contribution. And let me say that as Chairman of the Expo Authority, Llew Edwards has from the outset been a superb chief executive of a massive and enormously successful undertaking.

It seems incredible that only a few months before Expo opened it was being written off as an impending embarrassment, even a disaster. Today we all recognise that in every respect it has been a brilliant success.

Commercially, World Expo 88 has been a resounding winner. The huge influx of tourists has been one manifestation of this. But, even more enduringly, it is estimated that as a direct result of contacts made under the Business Visitors Program, trade contracts worth some \$350 million have been signed. This is very good news for the Australian and Queensland economies.

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World Expo 88 will long be remembered as one of the best examples of what can be achieved through those great Australian qualities of hard work, long term vision and co-operation among all the sections of our society.

I pay tribute to all those many people - from the Commonwealth, State and foreign Governments and from private enterprise - who have worked in close co-operation to make Expo 88 the success it has been.

I am proud the Federal Government was a supporter of this major Bicentennial event from start to finish.

One of the important and pleasing features of the Bicentenary is that it has given us the opportunity to show the world what great attributes Australia has to offer, and to reaffirm and strengthen our links with the nations of our region and of the wider global community.

As well as being a celebration in its own right and a recognition of human achievement and initiative, Expo 88 has, through the participation of our international friends, provided a timely reminder of our common heritage as citizens of the world.

So, to those who leave Expo tonight, let me say that your time here has left us with fond memories of your friendship. We have enjoyed your company and hope you take with you many happy memories of Australia. And to the citizens of Brisbane and Queensland who will tomorrow begin the first day of the rest of their lives without Expo, I offer you my thanks for the unstinting hospitality and warm welcome you have extended to the world.

I am pleased to say that Australia will be present when the Expo curtain is raised again in Seville, Spain, in 1992 when we will renew the friendships which have been established so firmly at World Expo 88 in Brisbane.
