



17.

PRIME MINISTER

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

**SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA
THE HON R J L HAWKE AC MP
BANQUET DINNER HOSTED BY CHANCELLOR KOHL
BONN - THURSDAY 29 JUNE 1989**

I am delighted to be in Bonn, Mr Chancellor, to return your visit to Australia last October, for our Australian Bicentenary; and it is a very great pleasure to be able to renew our friendship and resume our discussions so soon.

Your visit, the first ever by a Federal Chancellor, represented a milestone in the relations between our two countries. There is clearly a growing awareness in both countries of the mutual value of our even broader co-operation at all levels. That is the goal of my visit. It is a goal I know you share.

It is, Mr Chancellor, an invigorating - indeed inspiring - experience to be here at such a momentous period in the history of the peoples of Europe. In such an historic, and so hopeful a process, Germany stands centre stage.

Today, a revitalised Germany, transformed in forty years by the energy and determination of its people, is playing a pivotal role in Europe and in East-West relations. The German economy exerts a tremendous influence in the world economic system. There is renewed interest in the rich heritage of German culture and language.

Mr Chancellor,

In coming here to renew and extend our relationship, I build on very long and strong human associations between our peoples.

From the earliest days of European settlement, people of German origin have made a valuable contribution to Australian life. For the first hundred and fifty years, German people and their descendants formed by far our largest community of non-Anglo-Celtic origin. Today, in our richly diverse and vibrant multicultural society, they remain a vital and valued part.

Now, both our countries are vigorous Federal democracies. Now, we share a deep commitment to parliamentary democracy and the rule of law. Now both countries draw a significant part of our economic strength and political stability from the contribution of strong, free and responsible trade union movements.

Both our countries are committed members of the Western Alliance. We have each made a contribution to more constructive relations between East and West in our respective regions. We co-operate closely with each other, as staunch members of the United Nations, on the great issues of disarmament and arms control, nuclear non-proliferation, and human rights. That co-operation is also now expanding to embrace international environmental issues. And I refer here in particular to our useful discussions today on the Antarctic.

When we met in Canberra last year, Mr Chancellor, we gave special attention to encouraging greater contact between our respective business communities. You were accompanied in Canberra by a number of leaders of German industry; and I have now travelling with me distinguished representatives of Australian industry. Senior officials of our two governments met in Canberra in early May for the inaugural session of annual economic consultations. The very successful Business Meeting I attended in Cologne yesterday underlined the potential for the development of a more dynamic economic relationship between us.

These exchanges are all valuable in identifying opportunities which our private sectors will, I am sure, follow up with vigour.

Mr Chancellor, the European Community, particularly the Federal Republic, as the world's largest exporter, has a huge stake in a healthy multilateral trading system, and in the successful outcome of the Uruguay Round.

Australia looks forward to working with the Federal Republic of Germany in achieving a comprehensive and balanced result.

We welcomed, Mr Chancellor, your personal assurances last October in Canberra that the European single market, planned for 1992, will not, as you put it, come to resemble a fortress. We urge you to continue your efforts to ensure that the single market will indeed be a free and fair market place for all.

May I make it very clear, Mr Chancellor, notwithstanding our caution on specific areas of direct economic concern - as we discussed them with great frankness today, in particular our concerns over the Common Agricultural Policy - Australia regards the growing unity of Europe as of potentially vast political importance and benefit. Apart from the economic importance of a single market of 320 million, European integration has already transformed the historical political relationships between the nations of Europe. It has placed Europe in a position where it can have an even more influential role in world affairs. These are developments which we welcome unreservedly.

Mr Chancellor,

Your country has experienced in the sharpest and most direct way the tensions and the traumas of East-West confrontation. You have witnessed at first hand the measureless tragedy of families and neighbours divided by the barriers of fear and imposed dogmas. Yet we are seeing those barriers coming down.

Today, we are witnessing immensely important changes. In the Soviet Union, and elsewhere in Eastern Europe, the quest for economic progress is now being joined to political reform, enhanced human rights, demands for free expression, greater openness in the conduct of public affairs - as inevitably it must, as ultimately it will be, everywhere.

For the first time for more than forty years, we are seeing co-operation from the East in arms control and the search for resolution to regional conflict.

Mr Chancellor,

Australia pays tribute to the constructive and responsible role which the Federal Republic, as a key member of NATO, has played over the years in East-West relations and the pursuit of arms reductions. Your personal role has been important indeed - constructive, realistic, balanced, far-seeing.

Australia also, as a member of the Western alliance, is proud to play its part in maintaining global stability, while at the same time working unceasingly for progress in arms control and disarmament.

I refer in this context to our work in favour of a global ban on chemical weapons and our proposal to hold a conference of Government and industry representatives on the trade in chemicals with potential use in the manufacture of chemical weapons. I look forward to high-level West German participation in this Conference, by Government and industry.

Mr Chancellor,

Our talks today have confirmed that the scope for expanded co-operation between our two countries is excellent. Our Governments are committed to it. So are our business communities. I am confident this visit, which my wife and I, together with my Australian colleagues in government and business, will long remember with warmth and gratitude, will advance that co-operation substantially.

Mr Chancellor,

There can be no doubt we stand at a crucial and challenging point in the affairs not only of Europe, but of all humanity. It is nothing less than the turning point of the nuclear age; and upon the direction we now take, the decisions we make, depends, quite literally, the future, indeed, the very existence, of civilisation. Because of these immense stakes, the responsibilities, challenges, and opportunities for leadership have never been as great, since the dawn of the nuclear age. No country in Europe understands better than Germany how much is at stake. It is that deep understanding on the part of the German people and leadership, Mr Chancellor, combined with their commitment to democracy, which provides one of the great sources of hope, in this new era - a bright new hope, for Germany, for Europe, and for all the friends of Europe and Germany throughout the world - not least the firm friend you certainly have, in Australia.
