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PRIME MINISTER

ADDRESS TO MELBOURNE OLYMPIC CANDIDATURE MEMBERS, NEW TAKANAWA
PRINCE HOTEL, TOKYO - 17 SEPTEMBER 1990

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John Ralph told a story about 99 per cent accurately about the 12 to 18 months ago. What he didn't say is that I said with a proper sense of decorum and modesty, I said, subject to the election John. He had more confidence than I did.

Now I don't want to speak for long but I hope that what I can say will be relevant to these next 24 hours. I introduce it by saying that in the seven and a half years that I have been Prime Minister there have been very few occasions which have really given me such a sense of pride as I have felt around this bid and now leading up to this last 24 hours.

Because Australians have shown a remarkable sense of national togetherness, pride and commitment. That has been true across the political spectrum and I pay tribute to the Opposition parties in Victoria and the Opposition parties federally. This is an issue where there is no political division and I thank everyone for that. There has been a total commitment, as there has importantly been a geographical commitment. There was a fight on the part of Melbourne to get the nomination, but once Melbourne got the nomination the rest of Australia has fallen in behind, and I thank all Australians for that.

It's also been a matter of pride, that I found when I got here in many comments last night, that Australia has indeed been constructive in its approach. It hasn't been aggressive, it has been forward in putting the virtues of our case. But there has been, as far as I can see, a universal approbation of the way in which you've gone about the task.

Now what are the best things that we have got to say in this next 24 hours? I think there are these things that ought to be emphasised. Firstly there are the intrinsics, as I put it, of the bid. We are entitled to say, and to believe, that no candidate has an intrinsically better case than Melbourne.

Whether you look at the facilities, which are outstanding and so much in place already, the centrality and propinquity of the facilities, there is no candidate which can match those. I believe there is no candidate which can match the degree of the universality of support for the bid. Australians are sports fanatics and the most fanatic of all are the people of Melbourne. So we can ensure the success of the Games in terms of the facilities and the commitment of our people.

In terms of being prepared by 1996 we have the total commitment, and here I thank you John Halfpenny, for the total commitment of the trade union movement. You've signed the agreements and those facilities will be ready and they will be ready on time as will the delivery of all the services during the period of the Games.

Weather-wise it's a perfect time of the year in Melbourne in late September early October. So, as I say, all the intrinsics are there.

We also have the great advantage of being a country, more than any in the world, which can properly speak with pride of our fundamental political stability and security. The concept of terror is alien to Australia and it is not part of our history or our record and we can guarantee as can no other country, I believe, we can assert the security of Australia.

So those are all the obvious intrinsics of our claim. But may I suggest that we have one obvious claim that we can make that no other country can and in a sense Melbourne typifies it as much as any other part of Australia, and it's this. I believe that Australia is the permanent embodiment of the Olympic ideal.

I mean by that that we are a nation which in the post-war period has welcomed to our shores people from 140 different nations. We have opened up Australia without now discrimination on the basis of colour or creed or nationality. We have opened up Australia as a home, a permanent home, to the people of every nation of the globe. That is the sense in which I mean we are the permanent embodiment of the Olympic ideal of people living and cooperating peacefully together. I think there is no other bidding city or country which is able so proudly and realistically to make that boast. Just as in this post-war period and particularly in the last 20 years or so that we have made Australia a home for all people and have welcomed them without discrimination permanently.

So we are able to say, I think, to those who are going to be casting their vote tomorrow that we therefore speak with the authority of our record and the very fabric of our country, we speak with that authority when we say that we will truly be a host to the nations of the world in the true Olympic spirit. I think we are able to say that, as I say, in a way that no-one else can do. So may I conclude by saying John, to you personally, you've been a magnificent Chairman of the bid, I thank you. I thank you all my friends, you've done Australia proud and if justice is done we will all be celebrating tomorrow night.

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