



PRIME MINISTER

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

**SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER
KEEL-LAYING CEREMONY
PORT ADELAIDE - 1 MARCH 1991**

Dr Don Williams, Managing Director, Australian Submarine Corporation
Premier John Bannon,
Mrs Jean Farncomb
Vice Admiral Mike Hudson
Distinguished Guests

Three years ago this site was open land.

Fifteen months ago I came to Port Adelaide to open what had become a brand-new facility for the construction of Australia's planned class of submarines.

It is satisfying indeed to come back today and to see the progress which you have made since then - and in particular to be present at the genesis of this boat, the Farncomb.

It is a special pleasure to be joined on this occasion by Mrs Jean Farncomb, the widow of Rear Admiral Farncomb whose lifetime of service in the Royal Australian Navy is commemorated in this vessel.

On this occasion of such importance to the Royal Australian Navy, it is right that I should express on behalf of us all, our pride in the skill that our service men and women have shown in recent months in the Gulf. They have done honour to themselves, to their service, and to the nation. We in turn honour them, and we rejoice with them, and with their families, that they have been spared casualties. As I said yesterday, we hope that we can welcome them all safely home soon.

A great deal is spoken about defence self-reliance. Today, with this submarine and with this construction project, we see the proof of Australia's capacity to provide, as never before, for its own defence.

There are two important elements to this notion of self-reliance.

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