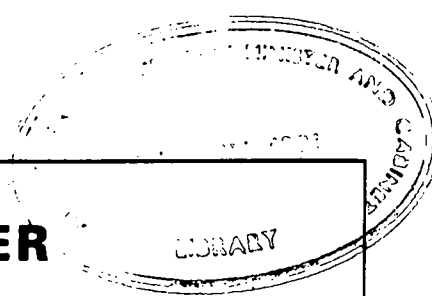




PRIME MINISTER



FOR MEDIA

3 MAY 1991

Senator Nick Bolkus, Minister for Administrative Services, and Mr Ben Humphreys, Minister for Veterans' Affairs, will travel to Crete to attend on my behalf the ceremonies in commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Greece and Crete.

I am also delighted and honoured that the Greek Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Tzannetakis, has been able to visit Australia to celebrate this anniversary.

The principal commemoration of the Battle of Greece and Crete will be held in Crete during the week of 20 May, exactly 50 years after the commencement of the battle for Crete itself. A memorial overlooking the Galatas battlefield will be consecrated as part of the ceremonies.

Australian Defence Force involvement in the ceremonies on Crete will be substantial. The Chief of the Defence Force, the Chief of the General Staff, and 104 soldiers including an honour guard and band will participate, and HMAS Perth, a successor of the original ship that took part in the Battle of Crete, will visit Greece and Crete. The Acting Minister for Defence will be announcing full details of the ADF participation today.

Ceremonies in Australia to mark this important anniversary have included services at the Australian War Memorial and the Hellenic Memorial attended by Mr Tzannetakis, Defence Forces representatives and community and veterans' groups, and a wreath laying ceremony at the Cenotaph, Martin Place, in Sydney on 20 April 1991, which I attended.

On this 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Greece and Crete, Australians recall the sacrifices of Australian servicemen and of the Greek people during the Greek campaign and the Battle of Crete of 1941.

In marking the Anniversary Australia pays tribute to the heroic efforts made to secure our freedom, and help to keep alive the memory of the sacrifices that both Greeks and Australians made to this end.