



PRIME MINISTER

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

**SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER
LAUNCH OF THE 1991 AUSTRALIAN MADE CAMPAIGN
POWERHOUSE MUSEUM
SYDNEY - 28 AUGUST 1991**

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to be here at the Powerhouse Museum to launch the 1991 Australian Made campaign.

There are plenty of examples of Australian ingenuity on display here already, and if what is in the new campaign is any guide, there will be plenty more products of the clever country looking for display space in the future.

This is the fifth anniversary of Australian Made - and the green and gold kangaroo has become the symbol of Australian excellence.

There has been a perceptible change in the way we look at home grown goods and services. Where once, perhaps, we automatically thought that imported was always better, now we have second thoughts. Now we know that in many areas Australian is just as good, if not better.

In manufactured goods, in particular, I believe quality has improved substantially - which is reflected in what we think in Australia, but equally in what buyers think overseas, as reflected in the substantial increase in manufactured exports.

Buying Australian is certainly better value. Every time we buy Australian we do something for our fellow Australians. In a recession or a boom, buying Australian has a direct impact on jobs.

What I say is: Be Australian, buy Australian.

Ladies and gentlemen, few things we can do as individuals, as businesses - or as governments - are more important to the future of Australia than buying Australian.

For every \$1 million used to replace imports 35 jobs are created in industry.

Import replacement - buying Australian - is one of the ways we will create sustainable jobs as part of our long term sustained economic recovery. And the key word is "sustained". Sustained and sustainable recovery is the only answer to the present thoroughly unacceptable level of unemployment.

It was part of last week's Budget, it was part of my March economic statement - it has been part of the overall economic of the Government economic strategy that we been putting in place, not simply with the Budget, but with a whole range of activity through 1991 - including the March Statement and the Special Premiers Conference process.

For a Labor Government, nothing is more distressing than high unemployment. Ladies and gentlemen, we could have artificially changed the economic climate and created hothouse jobs.

But there is nothing more cruel than creating the hope of secure employment and then seeing it fade away like a hothouse plant dumped out in the cold.

We are not prepared to allow the economy to fall back into the cyclical boom and bust habit which has characterised it for too long.

We are about reforming the structure of the economy - which means that some hard decisions have been taken, and will continue to be taken.

Take tariff reform. You might think that the quickest way to get people to buy Australian would be to tax imports so that the Australian products can compete on price.

But protection is like the banning of books. It doesn't prevent the new ideas competing with the old, and it doesn't do anything for the efficiency or security of industry either. Just the opposite.

We cannot and will not simply rely on tariff protection for Australian products. We will create an internationally competitive economy. We will help them become more competitive in Australia and overseas.

Part of that help is the \$2 million provided to continue the Australian Made campaign in my March Statement.

Then, I said, it was because "reducing our reliance on imports is totally complementary, in economic terms, to expanding our performance in exports." And we have made some great strides toward improving our export performance - especially in the crucial area of manufactured exports.

In the seven years, 1983 - 1990, the value of manufactured exports increased at an annual average rate of 17%, rising from 2.9 billion in 1983/4 to \$7.6 billion in 1989/90.

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The volume of goods and services exports, rose by 13% in 1990-91 with manufactured exports rising by 25.5%

That is a demonstration of the fundamental changes in the economy working through. In the Budget the balance of goods and services is forecast to be in surplus in 1991-2 for the first time since 1979-80.

Australians can compete on world markets, provided we work harder, and we think smarter.

But Government can only create the conditions for economic success and a high quality of life. At the end of the day it comes down to individuals to make it happen.

The Australian Made Campaign's efforts since 1986 to licence Australian Made products is a good example of self-help in action.

Before earning the right to display the Australian Made certification mark on their products, local industries are assisted by the Campaign to put their own house in order in terms of the quality and local content of their goods.

In return, Australian Made licensees derive considerable advantage from the right to display what is undoubtedly one of Australia's most familiar symbols - the distinctive green and gold kangaroo.

With the Campaign's encouragement, more and more local producers have realised the benefit to be gained from the marketing edge offered by a clearly identifiable national product.

The Campaign now plans to supplement its licensing activities with two important new initiatives, both of which extend the self-help concept.

The first initiative is the *Australian Made Product Directory*, a copy of which I was pleased to receive some weeks ago.

The Directory is the first ever comprehensive guide to Australian Made licensees and their products, and it goes a long way toward informing both the public and private sectors of the wide range of quality Australian goods on offer.

The Campaign's new initiatives offers Australian Made licensees the chance to improve the quality of their products in order to enter export markets.

The Advance Australia Foundation has arranged for the National Industry Extension Service and the Industrial Supplies Office to assess the quality of licensees' products for export quality, and advise on how quality can be improved.

I am pleased to see that the public and private sectors are collaborating to help Australian producers improve the export quality of their products.

Self-improvement initiatives of this sort help our local industries - and therefore Australia - meet the challenges of a tough and increasingly competitive world.

The Government is also playing its part.

We have even, believe it or not, developed a kind of portable igloo that we are selling to Eskimos and other North Americans.

It was developed as a result of a deliberate purchasing and specification decision by the Commonwealth Government's Antarctic Division. They required a new kind of shelter for scientists who had to stay away from their main base. The result was an innovation that fitted our requirements in the Antarctic, and could be exported to the Arctic too.

That is an example of a simple purchasing and specification decision creating a new export product.

The total Government market is huge. The Commonwealth alone spends some \$10 billion each year, and the States and Territories an additional \$20 billion. We are not in the business of having some central command system to compel all the agencies and departments of nine governments on how to purchase - that way of operating is well and truly in the dustbin of history.

But we have launched the Purchase Australian campaign aimed to promote the purchase of Australian (and New Zealand) goods and services by Government. It has raised the awareness of government buyers to the advantages of local goods and services, and is maximising local suppliers opportunities.

In addition, I launched the Environmental Futures Group, headed by George Negus, earlier this year. One of the aims of this group is to promote the use of Australian environmentally suitable goods and services by the government.

In many areas Australian know-how is already a world beater. You will see some of it in the new television commercials which celebrate our achievements in solar technology, boat design, and the bionic ear, but every day, it seems to me, we find out about something new that Australians have invented or discovered.

Australia is a clever country.

But as you watch the television commercials over the next few months, I hope you don't say about the bionic ear, "I didn't know we invented that!" I hope you already knew.

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What I do hope is that you will make Australia a definite part of the decision making process when you are next purchasing something - anything. Food, technology, clothes

Ask yourself whether the imported product is as good as the Australian alternative.

Ask yourself - Where was it made? Who made it? Who benefits from your purchase?

Have a look for the green and gold kangaroo that tells you it is Australian Made.

But don't buy something just because it is Australian.

Buy it because it is better.
