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PRIME MINISTER

GOUGH WHITLAM

Gough Whitlam celebrates his eightieth birthday today. All Australians will wish him well.

Whatever one's politics may be, it must be acknowledged that Gough Whitlam has been a colourful, forceful and influential figure in the affairs of our nation for many years.

His success in leading the Labor Party to victory after 23 years of Coalition Government was, of course, his greatest political achievement.

Despite our political differences, I have long had a warm personal regard for Gough Whitlam. His company, and that of his wife, Margaret, is always enjoyable, lively and, of course, from time to time provocative.

Janette and I wish him and his family a very happy celebration on such a milestone.

11 July 1996

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