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3 February 1997

**TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRIME MINISTER
THE HON JOHN HOWARD MP
ANNOUNCEMENT OF VENUE OF PRESIDENT'S CUP
MELBOURNE, VIC**

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Thank you very much Mr Walker; to Jeff Kennett, the Premier of Victoria; to Tim Finchem, the Commissioner of the PGA; to two of Australia's all time sporting greats, Peter Thompson and Greg Norman, ladies and gentlemen.

I'm delighted as Prime Minister of Australia to formally acknowledge the decision that the next President's Cup, the President's Cup of 1998 is coming to Australia. This is an acknowledgment of the immense prestige in which Australia is held as a venue for major sporting events. It's an acknowledgment of course of the immense contribution that this country and its players of the years have made to golf.

The President's Cup is a special golfing event. None of the prize money is taken by the participants and the proceeds of it are contributed to various charities. It has been successfully staged in the United States on two occasions, and during his recent visit to Australia in October of last year the President and I discussed the possibility that the event might, for the first time, go outside the United States. And I encouraged in him the thought that it might come to Australia and that if that proved to be the case that he would find that a convenient and indeed overwhelmingly appropriate reason to return to our country.

There's quite a long tradition in politics and sport of particular politicians associating attendance in particular parts of the world with particular sporting events and I encourage the President to follow that long tradition if, in fact, the President's Cup were to come to Australia.

So it is coming to Australia. I'm delighted about that. I want to thank very, very warmly the PGA and the Commissioner for the PGA tour, Tim Finchem and also Mike Bodney, and I'd also like to acknowledge the contribution of Brian Allan, the Chief Executive of the Australasian PGA and of course the immense contribution of the two

Australian golfing legends that I've already mentioned, that's Peter Thompson, the Captain of the international team, and of course Greg Norman.

I, following the pattern of Presidents, Bush and Ford, will be the honorary Chairman of the event. And of course once again this event will focus the attention of the sporting world and the world generally on Australia and the contribution that Australia is making to the life of this region and this part of the world and also the contribution that Australia is making to the world of golf. I've said on many occasions to both Australian and international audiences that there is nothing that quite binds Australians together so enthusiastically and so spontaneously as our passion for sport and our love of the great sporting contest. And in the world of golf, in a short period of time, the President's Cup has grown into being a very great sporting contest that has brought together the uninhibited enthusiasm of great players but also the enthusiastic following of spectators and audiences around the world. It is an event that will of course receive worldwide extensive television coverage. It's an event that will showcase the sporting prowess, not only of Australia and the United States but the sporting prowess of many countries. So I am, as Prime Minister, absolutely delighted that once again the place of Australia in the world of sport, the place of Australia in the world of golf, the place of Australia in international sporting, cooperation has been acknowledged. And I'm delighted that the 1998 President's Cup will be coming to Australia.

Thank you.