

15



**PRIME MINISTER**

**TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRIME MINISTER  
THE HON. JOHN HOWARD MP  
SPEECH AT THE LAUNCH OF ALL ACCESS APPLICATIONS  
TOMAGO, HUNTER REGION**

**17 July 1997**

**E & OE.....**

Thank you Bob. To Mr and Mrs Zeitsch, to Mr Barr, and thank you very much for coming all the way from the United States for this little ceremony and to everybody else, I share Bob Baldwin's enthusiasm for being here today because there is nothing like formally opening a new business, there's nothing better for Australia than new small businesses that are getting bigger and All Access is a very good example of precisely that. These new premises, these new headquarters are as a consequence of the business doing better and of the business expanding and the good news is that because of the policies that we are now putting into place, the climate for small business in Australia will continue to get better and this is an opportunity because it marks the opening of the expansion phase of a very successful business in Australia. It is an opportunity to remind you and to remind the Australian community of some of the major changes that my Government has made to improve the climate for small business.

Some of you may not know that as from the beginning of this month it is now possible because of the rollover relief under the capital gains tax legislation for anybody in business who is expanding and diversifying, to sell an existing business and to invest up to \$5 million of the proceeds of the sale of that business in the acquisition of another business, not necessarily of the same kind but indeed, of any kind and what that means is that we are giving, as from the first of July this year an enormous additional incentive for people to grow and develop businesses, to realise their effort, to invest the proceeds free of capital gains tax, up to \$5 million free of capital gains tax and invest the proceeds of that into another business.

We have produced the economic circumstances for a significant fall in interest rates. We have delivered a very, very stable climate of very low inflation. We have provided relief in the area of provisional tax. The major changes made to the industrial relations system are of particular benefit to small and medium sized businesses. They are also incidentally of significant benefit to some of the larger corporations in Australia and we have also made a number of important changes to the unfair dismissal laws that increase the attractiveness of putting on more staff for small business and we have in the pipeline some further changes that will increase that.

Now I take the opportunity of mentioning those things, ladies and gentlemen, because it is important that all of us understand that one of the very top priorities of my Government is to continue to create a better and an improving climate for small business in Australia. I have moved responsibility,

Ministerial responsibility for small business affairs into the inner Cabinet and given it to one of the most senior members of the Government and that itself sends a very powerful message to the small business community that it is a valued element of the economic regeneration and the economic growth of Australia, and what is particularly encouraging about All Access, what is particularly encouraging about the expansion plans of this company is of course it involves a highly skilled workforce. It involves investing in an industry which is at the leading edge of the technology of this particular discipline and it also involves a company that has aspirations for regional growth and regional exports and when you take all of those things together you really are talking about the new future of the Hunter region. You are talking about new enterprises, you are talking about high quality service industries, well remunerated, high quality jobs and you are talking about boosts to exports and boosts to the capacity of the company to build and expand around Australia.

This company has a very good track record in the time of its existence in the area of employee relations and building a bond and a trust between employer and employee, creating a co-operative workplace, creating a spirit of working together towards a common goal of higher profits and higher wages is the foundation of the new workplace philosophy that my Government has brought to Australia. It is not a philosophy built on confrontation. It's a philosophy built on co-operation. It's a philosophy built on believing that if employers and employees work together with a common purpose to the benefit of the firm and to the benefit of themselves, they benefit, they benefit together and the community collectively benefits.

Australia is entering a very strong phase of economic growth. The economic basics and fundamentals of Australia are very strong indeed. We have a very low level of inflation, we have high levels of business investment. We are repaying our debts. This year Australia will repay \$5 billion of debt that's been accumulated over the last ten years. We are increasingly seen around the world as an attractive place for foreign investment. We are increasingly seen as a highly competitive country in the Asia Pacific region and we have within our grasp enormously attractive economic prospects.

Fortunately, we live cheek by jowl with the fastest growing economic region in the world, the Asia Pacific region, and if we can continue to build greater competitiveness, if we can continue to improve the climate for small and medium sized businesses in Australia the opportunity for economic expansion and the opportunity for economic growth is practically limitless. I would therefore in formally opening these headquarters of All Access, I would particularly like to congratulate and complement Mr and Mrs Zeitsch for the tremendous leadership that they have given to their company. I would like to thank the management and the workforce of the company for the way in which all of you have co-operated to build a very important enterprise in a region that has delivered a very clear message to me over the past two days and a message that I am happy on your behalf to relay to the rest of Australia, that any thought that the Hunter region has lost heart, has lost spirit, couldn't be further from the truth. I have found great optimism, great hope, great enthusiasm, a determination to live beyond and to overcome some of the adversities of recent months and this is a marvellous example today. More businesses of this kind, more investment of this kind is precisely what the Hunter region wants and I know because of its attractiveness and its resilience, it is precisely what I believe the Hunter region will get and could I finally say that to cap all of that, the district of course has a magnificent Federal representative in Bob Baldwin, the Federal Member for Paterson who I can say as his Parliamentary leader, does a tremendous job in pressing the particular needs, the particular requirements and the particular aspirations of this marvellous part of Australia.

I therefore have very great pleasure in declaring the regional headquarters of All Access formally open. I wish all of you who work here great success, great prosperity and great happiness.

Thank you.

ends