



PRIME MINISTER

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**SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA
THE HON R J L HAWKE AC MP
DINNER HOSTED BY THE MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, M. ROGER FAUROUX AND
THE ASSOCIATE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
MME EDWIGE AVICE
PARIS - MONDAY 19 JUNE 1989**

I am delighted to be able to return to Paris for my second official visit to France. I count it a special privilege to be here as Prime Minister of Australia at this time - on the eve, as it were, of the celebration of the epoch making events of two hundred years ago.

At such a time, it gives me particular pleasure to be able to state that the fundamental relations between our two countries have never been stronger. Australia and France now have a friendly and co-operative relationship which reflects our shared history, our shared democratic ideals and our shared aspirations for the advancement of our people.

Already, during my visit, I have had powerful and poignant reminders of our long and close association. Tremendous tides of history have worked to bring our two peoples together. Yesterday, at the Somme, Australian and Frenchmen and women assembled together to honour the sacrifice of two generations of our fellow countrymen in the cause of democracy and freedom.

This evening, during my call on the Mayor of Paris, M. Jacques Chirac, I announced an Australian gift to the City of Paris of a bust of the great explorer Jean-Francois de La Perouse. This, in itself, commemorates one of the most remarkable - and indeed, romantic episodes - in the history of exploration; that day in January 1788 when two expeditions from the far ends of the earth met near what is now the great city of Sydney - the French on a scientific naval voyage of discovery and the British to found a tiny settlement from which the modern nation of Australia has

grown. That remarkable encounter further serves to remind us of the significant role played by France in the exploration of Australia and the Pacific - not only by the ill-fated La Perouse, but by Bougainville, D'Entrecasteaux, Baudin and Peron.

I had the opportunity today to discuss with President Mitterrand and Prime Minister Rocard developments in New Caledonia. I told them that we applaud and support your achievement in bringing about agreement between the major parties to the dispute in that territory. We share your hope that the Matignon Accords will provide the basis for a long-term and peaceful settlement in New Caledonia.

Australia stands ready, in agreement with the French authorities, to do what it can to co-operate with the people of New Caledonia in this crucial period of their development, which is important to the peaceful and stable development of the South Pacific region.

Australia welcomes France's policies in New Caledonia as a constructive contribution to the affairs of the South Pacific, where we are willing to co-operate with you in the pursuit of common goals and policies.

I do not seek, however, to gloss over Australia's disappointment and opposition to the continuation of your nuclear testing program in our region. Australia's views are, of course, shared by other member countries of the South Pacific Forum.

As my talks with French leaders today confirmed, Australia and France share common views on a wide range of international issues. Both countries are prepared to take risks in the search for peace, as evidenced by our efforts in respect of Cambodia and the Middle East, specifically Lebanon. Likewise, we have worked together closely on disarmament issues, especially those relating to Chemical weapons.

Mr Fauroux, Mme Avice, this important occasion tonight, involving both business and Government leaders, demonstrates our commitment to work towards a significant improvement in our economic relationship. As we agreed in our earlier talks, there is considerable scope to expand two way trade and investment. I very much appreciate the involvement of you, Mr Fauroux, of Mme Avice, and of your Ministerial colleagues.

My Government has taken major policy initiatives over the past six years to open up the Australian economy to foreign trade and investment. We welcome French interest and French investment: we are convinced that Australia offers much to French businessmen both in its own right and as a

springboard to the considerable and rapidly expanding markets of the Asia-Pacific region.

I very much welcome the initiative of Prime Minister Rocard in creating a 'Club Australia' under the guidance of Mr Jean Gandois, to work towards improving French knowledge of the Australian market and of the opportunities which exist for trading with and investing in Australia. I can assure you that this initiative has the full support of my Government. As I told you before dinner, we are working actively in Australia to establish complementary institutional arrangements which will strengthen further the vital links between our private sectors. It is they who are at the sharp end of the relationship and it is incumbent upon both governments to ensure that they have a positive and supportive framework in which to operate.

For our own part, we are conscious of the need to develop greater awareness in the Australian business community of the opportunities represented by the large French market and of the significant role you play in leading-edge scientific and technological developments. The Australian business leaders who have accompanied me to Paris represent some of Australia's largest and most highly respected companies. As was evidenced in our discussions before dinner, they are interested and committed to finding mutually beneficial commercial opportunities with their French counterparts. Some are already positively involved in the French market in a very significant way.

A great challenge for Australia is to take advantage of the enormous opportunities offered by the creation of a single European Market in 1992. Indeed, an important purpose of my visit is to explore further the implications of 1992, and to urge European Governments not to lose sight of the impact of their decisions on other trading nations and regions in the world.

The Australian Government and people welcome the historic developments now unfolding in Western Europe. They portend for the peoples of Europe a transformation of the pattern of their history as momentous as that achieved by the French Revolution itself.

A Single Market open to the outside world will be a truly positive force in the international trading system and is something Australia would very much welcome. A Market closed and restrictive will have failed its ultimate promise.

Mr Fauroux, Mme Avice, I cannot mention these issues without referring to the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Community.

The CAP has done great damage directly to Australia, by distorting internal agricultural markets. Indirectly, that damage has been compounded through the United States' retaliation in the form of its Export Enhancement Program and other mechanisms. Australia has been caught in the crossfire of the EC/US trade war.

In Australia's view, subsidised agricultural trade casts a shadow over our relations with France, and other Community countries. As you know, we, and our Cairns Group partners, are working actively to ensure that such problems are resolved in the Uruguay Round of negotiations due to end in 1990. A successful outcome would not only be to the benefit of efficient primary producers worldwide but would bring very direct benefit to European consumers in the form of cheaper food and foodstuffs.

If agriculture represents a difficulty between us, there is a matter of supreme importance to this generation and all future generations which offers enormous scope for French-Australian co-operation.

I take this opportunity to place on record the Australian government's recognition of the French contribution towards focusing the world's attention on the crucial question of the environment. We are grateful for the leadership that France gave at the Hague meeting last March. We salute President Mitterrand and Prime Minister Rocard for their leadership and commitment.

My discussions in Paris have established common ground between our two countries on Antarctica. We share deeply felt reservations about jeopardising this unique area of the world by exposing it to mining. I am confident that we can work together to protect the Antarctic wilderness as a legacy to future generations of the environmental sense of responsibility of this generation.

M. Fauroux, Mme Avice,

It is a special privilege to be here in Paris at such an historic time for France and for the world.

The history of European settlement in Australia is contemporaneous with the history of Western civilisation since the French Revolution. Indirectly, that momentous event has had a profound influence on us. Over the years, Australia and France have found themselves on the same side in the great and tragic conflicts which have shaped the modern era. And today, I find enormous encouragement in the common values and goals which link the citizens of Australia and France as we prepare to enter the 21st Century.