



**PRIME MINISTER**

**TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH DON CHIPP, RADIO 3AK,  
MELBOURNE, 21 AUGUST 1989**

**E & O E - PROOF ONLY**

CHIPP: It was about 25 years ago, we almost had a punch-up the first time we met, a friendly one. It was in John Gorton's office, solving the problems of the world and I heard this voice about 10 metres away saying, 'who's that fellow, get him out of here'. And I said who's going to get me out? You come up here and say ... like a couple of big kids we, in high noon fashion confronted each other and I thought well if he's going to give me one I'll get the first one in and then we both started laughing at each other, put our arms around each other, and I think it's fair to say we've been pretty good buddies ever since.

PM: Fair commentary.

CHIPP: Anyway, welcome to the program. I'm deeply grateful that you've come on.

PM: Pleasure.

CHIPP: I must say that you're looking fabulous.

PM: Feeling well Don, feeling very well.

CHIPP: It's the clean living, is it?

PM: It's a number of factors, that's part of it.

CHIPP: What's the day in the life of Bob Hawke? I know you're asked this a million times. What time do you normally get up?

PM: ... I wake reasonably early, I read the papers and then

CHIPP: What's that, six o'clock?

PM: Six, half past six. I wake about then. I try and read as much of the papers as I can Don, and then it's go, go, go and then I can finish at midnight, 1 o'clock in the morning.

CHIPP: And breakfast. What sort of breakfast do you have?

PM: When I'm at The Lodge it's always Pritikin. I have fresh fruit, bran, muesli, wholemeal bread and orange juice, that's the go.

CHIPP: You're still sticking to that Pritikin diet?

PM: Always when I'm in Canberra I have it at The Lodge and over in the office. But of course when you're travelling Don, you can't be absolutely on it. But I try to do it as much as I can.

CHIPP: But you've put a lot of ... good health, don't you?

PM: Just look at it this way. What I say Don, is this; if you're got a motor car or motor bike or something, you know that the quality and the performance of that engine is going to depend overwhelmingly on what you put into it. If you don't put good oil or petrol into the thing it's not going to perform at its maximum. Now the human body's no different.

CHIPP: Well talking about the performance of the human body, I was told something just a couple of months ago and I didn't think you could learn anything when you get to my age but you can. I've always thought that the body and the mind needed work and play.

PM: That's right.

CHIPP: But somebody has said this to me, this very wise thing. But there's another thing; work, play and idleness. Sheer idleness. Now idleness is different to play.

PM: Absolutely. I think -

CHIPP: Do you agree with that?

PM: Absolutely. I think the capacity to relax is a secret of productive and happy living and it's quite right to play is not necessarily the constituent to give you relaxation. The capacity to just sit, lay about and part of that also is the capacity to listen. You've been in politics and public life a long time. How many good listeners do you know?

CHIPP: Not many.

PM: That's right.

CHIPP: In fact they give the pretence of listening but they don't listen.

PM: That's right. You can see them preparing you know their spiel while people are there. I mean the essence of, I think, of intelligent public life is to try and learn as much from others as you possibly can.

CHIPP: If I may say so it's one of the things that always impressed me about you and leading the Democrats I'd come in with some very vexed problem and you'd sit there and you'd listen, you wouldn't interrupt and you'd just listen. Would you believe that Bob Menzies used to do the same thing? He was known as being an arrogant man but a great listener, and in the Cabinet he was extremely patient and he had a few boring Ministers around who used to go on and on. Do you find it difficult to lose your patience in those sorts of situations.

PM: Sometimes, sometimes but I've always, you know going back as far as I can remember, I've always thought that it's just plain stupid to assume that dialogue is just described as monologue. I mean really you should have the good sense to listen to what people have got to say ... the overwhelming majority of cases that they've got integrity and mean what they say, that's fine and in the end life is about not imposing - or sometimes you've got to ... imposition, but in the end the things are going to stick and work and the things that people can be persuaded about.

CHIPP: Just as ... God, who can restrain his tongue when he knows he's in the right.

PM: Well ... it's a mixture of the truth and ...

CHIPP: How many times do you and Hazel have dinner together a week on average?

PM: Not too often because I'm virtually always working at the office, you know, when I'm in Canberra.

CHIPP: You're still not doing ... sandwich over work?

PM: Not a sandwich. I have a good bloke there where my dinner and lunch is bought over from The Lodge, it's Pritikin stuff so none of this sandwich business, mate.

CHIPP: Well what do you do? I mean you're in your office, do you have a couple of mates in to eat with you? Do you eat alone or do you work while you eat? I suspect you do that.

PM: I tend to work most of the time while I eat but I often use it to have my staff in to talk about things or handle a bit of correspondence or issues that they want some guidance or opinions on.

CHIPP: But that's not relaxing while you're eating is it? Is it wise to do it that way?

PM: Well I try and relax a bit at times. I mean I do a cryptic crossword at times when I'm eating.

CHIPP: Prime Ministers have lots of interesting little tidbits to do from time to time, ... needs the Prime Ministerial decision. I suppose that's the sort of thing you'd do over a meal?

PM: ... my Principal Private Secretary will come in and say well these things can be handled ... just a signature or I'd like your view on this and those sorts of things you can handle while you're eating.

CHIPP: I know you're a great family man, you ... love in the family. It must hurt you a bit not to be able to get together as a family as often. Do you do that once a year like at Christmas? Do you still try to do that?

PM: Well as a matter of fact Don, in the very, very near future we'll all be together because my son Stephen is having a book he's written on Nookenhah is being launched in a few weeks time and the whole family is going to be there in Canberra for the launch that, which we're quite excited about.

CHIPP: Yes, yes. I'll bet you're looking forward to it then.

PM: Yes, I am. I'm very proud of him.

CHIPP: What do you think you're going to do when you get out of politics, when you do?

PM: Well as I've said Don, I would love to have the opportunity - in fact I will do it - to have a series of interviews with people I've met during my Prime Ministership. People who in one way or another I think have had some significant influence in the way the world has gone or this country has gone. I've felt enormously privileged Don, to be able to know these people and to ... or in the case with them and I would just like to be able to share my feelings about what those people have done over the wide areas. So I intend to do a series of television interviews with people.

CHIPP: You have really met some movers and shakers in your time, the real heavyweights of the world. Can I ask you which one stays in your mind? If you walked out of his or her office ... 'my God, that was impressive', and you came away thinking about it for hours afterwards? Is there any one particular man or woman who had that impression on you?

PM: I think the two that really I'd have to single out would be Zhao Ziyang - and we're all just praying so fervently that he's going to survive in China - and I'd have to say Mikhail Gorbachev. I had the great privilege of having about 3 1/2 hours with Gorbachev. The most part of that - about 2 1/4 hours - as I say just the 2 of us with an interpreter - which was a very special sort of privilege and then another hour or so when Bill Hayden was there. But

(PM cont) basically it was still good talking to him ... and I think in answer to your question I'd have to say those two. Although let me say it's a strange sort of thing that you know when your with Reagan you never went away with impression of, you know, the same sort of ... But I just think its fair as I've mentioned Gorbachev, if we're talking about the basis for optimism in the world today I mean there's a greater basis for optimism now than at any other stage since the Second World War. I think it's fair that credit be given to Reagan. I mean -

CHIPP: For listening?

PM: Well for listening and for being prepared to change. I mean we believed and I think ... correctly that when he came to the office of President of the United States Don, that this status and the stature of the United States had been weakened and ... that situation had been able to get away with murder, and he committed himself to increasing the credibility and structure of the United States. I think in a funny sort of juxtaposition Gorbachev needed Reagan and Reagan needed Gorbachev.

CHIPP: But Gorbachev pricked the balloon of those tight arsed rednecks in the United States who were always going around at the White House saying what we need prevalent is another good war. It certainly fixed those fellows, didn't it?

PM: Yes, well see we're at this conjunction of circumstances in history where at last, thank God, the leaders of the communist world have realised that they've been living a charade, an irrelevancy and that if they are going to provide improved standards for their people, and properly to take account of their security considerations, then they've got to abandon this stupid pretence that a command economy is the best way of utilising the resources. So you've that understanding and a commitment on the part of your Gorbachevs and the people that live in so many parts of the Eastern Bloc and China, although we can talk about that seperately. The realisation that they've got to change the system and fortunately you've got intelligent responses, including some traditionally conservative people like Margaret Thatcher and Reagan and Bush. They haven't allowed their innate political conservatism to blind their understanding that you must have a constructive response to these things and this is a unique period in history.

CHIPP: What's your impressions of Margaret Thatcher? You've got a deep respect for her, haven't you?

PM: I have profound differences of view on many issues with Margaret Thatcher. But we have a relationship of respect. I don't question the sincerity and the integrity with which she holds her views. She has been prepared to be tough to carry through her position. I mean there are lots of things about what she's done, as I say, I disagree with.

(PM cont) But if you're looking at it in a global sense, again Margaret Thatcher is one of the earliest of world leaders to recognise the importance of Gorbachev. She held out the hand and she said, 'alright, we're ideologically poles apart. But I recognise that you are dinkum and in me you have a person who is going to be -

CHIPP: Why has she got it in for Malcolm?

PM: Well I can't go into all the details of it but she did -

CHIPP: There's a story there, isn't there?

PM: Well in regard to 1979 -

CHIPP: Robert James Lee Hawke I'll press the question, is there a story there or is there not?

PM: There is a bit of a story in regard to 1979, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting at Lusaka. A bit of a story there.

CHIPP: And you can't go any further than that?

PM: I don't think ... either of us were participants. One day I might tell you a little bit about it and you'll laugh.

CHIPP: You're not going to tell me ...

PM: No, I can tell you what it's about. I mean there was a -

CHIPP: inaudible

PM: Now, now. I can't go into all the details but I can give you the essence of what it was about and that was that there was the workings out of the agreement as to how the transition from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe would be handled by the Heads of Government and essentially Margaret had the feeling that Malcolm jumped the gun a bit in the releasing of this to the public. I mean that's the essence of the story but it has some "amusing" aspects to it.

CHIPP: As amusing as Memphis?

PM: I don't want to talk about Memphis. I think life is more important than -

CHIPP: Yes it is. What about your religious beliefs? I haven't had a talk to you about that for a year or so. Have you changed in any way towards your belief in a God or your non-belief in a God?

PM: No, I'm still agnostic. I've always tried to let people understand - to the extent that they're interested in what I believe and don't believe - that I ceased to believe in the form and so on that I have never really lost not only my beliefs but commitment to what I perceive to be the essential principle of Christianity and of some of the other religions but essentially of religion in which I was brought up. I mean what are those essentials? I think they're very simple basically and that is that all people are created equal or they are as they say in ... of Christianity well all sons and daughters of God as for Jesus Christ. As my father would put it to me if you have the one Father then you're all brothers and sisters and that involves a relationship between human beings. Now that sort of fundamental has always guided my life.

CHIPP: Prime Minister, would you mind waiting near the ... so we can ... few people around here?

PM: Well I can see you need it mate, and I ...

CHIPP: Prime Minister, I want to congratulate you, I'm going to give you a bad time hopefully in a minute. But for the moment I want to congratulate you on the strength that you and the Government have handled the pilots' strike. I don't know anything more outrageous or contemptible than what they are doing. They ... immeasurable damage to our tourist industry and what they could do to is ... what I regard of the most significant achievement of your Government, namely ... the Accord. This morning I spoke to the President of the Air Pilots Federation and he said this and, I'd like you to comment ...  
(comments were not fed to Canberra)

CHIPP: Well Prime Minister, it's a pretty serious accusation, it's almost conspiratorial. I'd like you to comment on that as far as Australian Airlines are concerned and maybe Sir Peter Abeles has told you something about Ansett?

PM: I simply don't believe Captain McCarthy and I've been with the owners of the airlines and operators of airlines yesterday. It simply is not true and if we're talking about the president of the Airline Pilots Federation I'd just like to read what a former president of the Federation, Captain Tony Fitzgibbon's has said and this is the quote from a memorandum which he circulated, 'there is no other pilot group in the world that enjoys your overall pay structure'. Now that's what they said and he's right. I mean if you'd just like me to talk briefly about this, I won't take a long time. What we've got to understand when we're talking about pilots is that they have attempted to create some mystical, magical illusion that pilots are somehow different because they're up there flying aeroplanes, but not only are they above the world in a physical sense but they are above and beyond everyone else. Now let's get it straight. First of all, how long do they work?

CHIPP: Well on average they told me ... available 300 hours a month which is, I think, twisting a few figures.

PM: Look what is the average hours worked at the stick? Eight hours a week at the stick. Now what do you do about becoming a pilot? I mean are they really some mysterious ... group of people? I mean I have learnt to fly. When I was at Oxford I joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve Squadron. I learnt to fly. So I'm not talking about something I know absolutely nothing about. I've learnt to fly ... Now it's not extraordinarily difficult to learn to fly. I mean you're a knock-about bloke, I mean you know tradesmen don't you, a bloke's sort of done 4 or 5 years of apprenticeship to become a tradesperson. In the very real sense if your training involved in acquiring the skills in many trades I mean ... to become a pilot.

CHIPP: Well I could support that. I was in the Air Force and we had a 10 hour test. If you couldn't fly after 10 hours training -

PM: inaudible

CHIPP: No you got kicked out, kicked out. So most of us learnt to fly in about 7 hours.

PM: Yes, I was about 7. Now you and I would be saying in putting that point that they haven't got an enormous responsibility, of course they have. A bus driver has got an enormous responsibility. The other thing again as a pilot you notice when I first started flying as a passenger in this country DC3's were the ... Now Don, you just compare flying in those days with now. First of all, you know they say they're only ... of the time. Secondly, no radar to enable them to dodge all the tough and rough conditions. I mean in terms of actually flying now, it's easier, infinitely easier, to fly now than it was before.

CHIPP: And safer.

PM: And safer. Now what they've got to understand is sure it's glamorous but they are nothing special in terms of the acquisition of skills or their importance to society.



CHIPP: Let's go to an even more fundamental issue, is it your view and I ask you this, not only as Prime Minister but your experience in the trade union movement, if they grabbed this 30 percent outside the guidelines, would you say that is the end of the Accord? .... wages breakout, the like of which we have not seen since 1974?

PM: That's right, although 1981 -

CHIPP: That was the last one, but the '74 breakout was caused by a pilot -

PM: Well it was '74, .... but you had the breakout in '81. The interesting thing is, if I can make the political about this, because what .... to some extent in the Financial Review today, that what's on trial here is the Opposition's new wages policy because the pilots are practising the Opposition's wages policy. They say, get away with the centralised wages system, let there be just negotiations between employers and their employees, the pilots are practising the Opposition. It's just a recipe for disaster.

CHIPP: But to be fair, didn't the Opposition bring in an amendment, a private members' bill last week, or tried to bring it in in the Senate, which would have laid heavy penalties on the pilots if they wouldn't return to work?

PM: They're talking about legislation penalties, but that's not the point. The fundamental point about the Opposition's wages policy is to do away with a centralised system so that there can, in fact, be negotiations .... let it be worked out between the employer and the employee. Now, as I say, that's a recipe for disaster - we've been there, tried it, done it.

CHIPP: Well, the President of the air pilots said on this program, virtually 'if we can't get what we want within the system, we'll go outside the system and grab it'.

PM: You have said that and what we're saying is OK boys, we don't want you to go out, we want you to stay in, but the system .... Alright .... if that's what you decide to do this afternoon then you'll find out what's it's like outside the system.

CHIPP: Can you confirm that your Government has given a strict, unequivocal instruction to Australian Airlines that under no circumstances are they to cave in on this?

PM: The interesting thing is we haven't had to (tape break)

PM: .... and they made it quite clear there have been no directive, they haven't needed to direct them because their position has been quite clear, as is Ansett's. They know -

CHIPP: Well if Australian don't give in it's on principle that Ansett's would.

PM: Ansett won't give in and Australian won't give in. We have this position that its operators and the Government are at one on this because we all know that this would be the end of the wages -

CHIPP: There are about 1600 pilots, there's a nonsense story coming out of Canberra this morning, that you might bring the RAAF pilots into it.

PM: (inaudible)

CHIPP: There wouldn't be enough.

PM: No, no, no, what we've got to face is if they go outside the system and they don't provide their services, there's no way in which we can provide an equivalent service that the two major operators are providing, but what we are looking at are ways in which we can provide some skeletal sort of service.

CHIPP: For emergency only?

PM: Well perhaps more than emergencies -

CHIPP: You're not ruling out that if the worst comes to the worst you could bring in, without prejudicing defence requirements, a number of airforce pilots?

PM: I'm not ruling out anything.

CHIPP: I don't want to get a heavy talk on the Budget and I'm sure you don't, but can I just .... your next question like this? The newsroom around here, which is one of the best in the country, 3AK, .... on Thursday of last week and said simply there's no news. I thought that was extraordinary in Budget week, that on Thursday there was no news to talk about.

PM: They're a great newsroom, but what they really meant by that, what they really meant by that, there was no bad news, there was nothing, no criticism going around. There's an enormous amount of news in it. I mean, as you know, the importance of what we've done in the area of pensions and superannuation. Enormous news but not bad news.

CHIPP: Exactly, well that ought to please you. But could I just put a gloom note -

PM: Come on -

CHIPP: Yes, I must because there are two messages loud and clear in that goddamn Budget, mainly that we're going to have inflation, according to you, of 7.5 percent for the year and that we're going to be \$18.5 billion deeper in debt at the end of the year. Now those two figures are very bad news.

PM: But the good part, and you're right in terms of the year on your average, but the Budget and Budget papers make it quite clear that through the year there's going to a decline, I mean, the rate will be going down, both in inflation and in regard to the current account deficit. In other words, we will have in the first part of the financial year high figures, but they will be coming down through the year.

CHIPP: The latest you can have an election without having a half Senate is about May isn't it?

PM: That if we go with the half Senate, that's about it.

CHIPP: Are you prepared to rule out today that you will not have a half Senate election?

PM: I've answered that question, I just said it's not on as far as I can see it.

CHIPP: It's rule out -

PM: As far as I can see, I can't see -

CHIPP: .... we can now look forward with certainty, there will be an election in May or before 1990?

PM: That's as I see it, yes. In May or before.

CHIPP: But you're the only one who has got a say in it.

PM: I make the decision, yes.

CHIPP: I put it fair on you, right here and now, as a buddy. Come on, is there going to be an election in May or before?

PM: There'll be, I believe, an election in May or before.

CHIPP: What sort of circumstances would lead you to going earlier?

PM: Well, I've indicated I can go before May.

CHIPP: Well, what sort of circumstances would persuade you to go earlier than May?

PM: Well I'm not talking about significantly earlier than May. I mean, it just seems to me, that if you look at the record of my Government, it's gone from what we did in '84, as you know, as you were fully aware and you agreed with, we had the election in '84 early so that you could synchronise the Senate and the House of Representatives.

CHIPP: Are you prepared to rule out this morning you won't go before Christmas?

PM: I don't see it. I don't see it.

CHIPP: A fair question is do you rule it out?

PM: You're asking me to say in regard to every conceivable or unconceivable circumstance, if, not on. The honest answer I give you, as far as I can possibly see it, it is not on.

CHIPP: So if circumstances continue as they are you'd rule it out?

PM: Yes.

CHIPP: Thank you. Prime Minister, .... people can talk to the Prime Minister of Australia. We've got a few calls if you wouldn't mind putting your earphones on and we'll go to David from ....

CALLER: Prime Minister, I'd like to say that I support your .... on your line with the pilots and I think most of my friends feel the same way -

PM: Can it just be turned up a bit, I'm not hearing it too well.

CALLER: OK, well look I'm going to get a bit contrary now unfortunately, but I've got a bone to pick with you on what I see as a very big contradiction in Government policies.

PM: Yes.

CALLER: Namely the immigration policy and the environmental statement that you just released.

PM: Yes.

CALLER: Now the statement targets basically .... soil degradation and pollution and so forth -

PM: Yes.

CALLER: But it seems to totally ignore the impact of the increase in population.

PM: Yes.

CALLER: Now the ACF policy states that increasing population is inconsistent with environmental protection and in fact the CSIRO, I think, state that the upper sustainable limit is about 22 million in this country, as they see it and we'll probably be about 29 million .... population will lead directly to increased pollution and soil degradation. Now -

CHIPP: David, would you come to your question please, we've got a lot of calls.

CALLER: I'd just like to ask you why just totally ignore it? It just seems that the Government seems to think that increase in population really has nothing to do with the environment?

PM: No, I don't think that. In fact any scientific study that you want to look at will point to the fact that in regard to the major environmental problem facing the world, that is the Greenhouse effect and depletion of the ozone layer, the enormous increase in .... population and associated human activity is one of the fundamental contributing factors. Now having said that, you haven't rendered any intelligent analysis of the issue, you've got to say alright, what are the sorts of things which you can do in the context of a growing population to limit the adverse environmental factors of the way we as human beings conduct our activities now and there are many ways in which we can amend and adjust our activities, both here and around the world. The other point I want to make is this, .... that our population policy in this country is a component obviously of two things. One, our natural increase within the country and our immigration policy. I want to make it clear to you that, as far as I'm concerned, we have an obligation to take people from other parts of the world and we need, I think, to optimise our productive capacity, more people. So the answer is, sure population is relevant, intelligently see what you can do to change the pattern of activities to avoid the worst consequences of excessive past practices.

CHIPP: We now go to Don from Blackburn. Good morning Don.

CALLER: Good morning Don.

CHIPP: Is Bob Hawke stopping you and your wife from having children?

CALLER: Yes, I believe there's two forms of discrimination going on. I'd like to ask Mr Prime Minister a question, is that both my wife and I have worked extremely hard to get into our house for many years, we have no need for Government subsidies or anything such as that. We're ordinary Australians who pay taxes, but we feel if we have children we're going to then rely on the Government to help us out with certain subsidies because we can't afford to pay the interest rates. The second thing is, there is discrimination with two sets of interest rates as far as 13, opposed to 17. I'd like to find out what advice Mr Hawke has for me.

PM: Well first thing, Don, I want to say is that I know that high interest rates are hurting but I hope that you accept that I'm a reasonably intelligent sort of bloke and that I know that they are causing some discomfort and I haven't got them there for fun. They are there for a very simple reason. They are there for the interests of all Australians, including yourself. We've got a situation now where the level of activity in the economy is so high that we're sucking in a level of imports that we can't afford. Now, we have got to slow the level of activity down. We couldn't have a Budget policy tighter, we've got the fourth successive year of real reductions in our Commonwealth outlays, we've moved the Budget into massive surplus. We've got a tight wages policy, the third arm of policy is monetary policy. That means we've got to have tight monetary policy and high interest rates and that's for your welfare and the welfare of all Australians because if we didn't do that, if we laxed these arms of policy then what would in fact happen, the economy would collapse and interest rates would go absolutely through the roof. So Don, they are there because it's necessary. I wouldn't have interest rates at that level for one second higher than is necessary. I give you the undertaking that they will come down as soon as it's responsible to take that action. The second point in regard to discrimination, you had a position where there was the regulation of those interest rates at 13.5 percent, it's now only of the order of 35 to 40 percent who are in that situation, that commitment was made and that will be kept.

CHIPP: Thank you very much for your call. We now go to Gary from Ivanhoe.

CALLER: Good morning Don, happy birthday.

CHIPP: Thank you very much mate.

CALLER: Thank you for the opportunity of talking to Mr Hawke. Mr Hawke,

PM: Yes, Gary.

CALLER: About two and a half years ago I lost my eyesight. I'm not whingeing about that, for a year I sat under a rock and felt sorry for myself, but for the last eighteen months I've been busting my guts to get back into the workforce and re-establish myself. I've had a managerial background and had my own business and so on, but what really gets up my nose is the fact that the whole system is designed to crush you, from the point of view, people say 'oh yes, but Gary, now what you're good for is opening the bloody letters or answering the phone'. Your equal opportunity, I'm not blaming you because you probably don't know, but the equal opportunity philosophy is not working. There's 8,000 visibly impaired people here in Victoria, 44 of them are looking for work. Of those 44, probably 12 will make it. I'll make it because what this has taught me is that it's taught me that I'm very strong. In fact I had a talk to your, my local member is Peter Staples and a pretty fair bloke too -

PM: Good bloke.

CALLER: Good bloke, and he said he has to stay at arms length to the Public Service. He can't ring up one of his guys and say 'look, have a look at this Gary Farmer and get him into a position of his ability'.

PM: Yes.

CALLER: It is very frustrating.

PM: Gary, look, let me say two things quickly and the second thing I hope which will be specifically helpful to you. First, we are conscious of the need to improve the whole disabilities program, we've made lots of improvements, by no means perfect. But look, in regard to your own case, obviously on air I can't discuss it in detail, but would you do this, please? Would you write to my mate, Chippy, and just set out your background and your address, I'd like to correspond with you directly and take into account, because while Peter is right in saying you can't instruct the Public Service, you've got to stay at arms length, there's nevertheless some things that we may be able to help. I'd like to know the circumstances. If you write to Don I give you my personal undertaking I'll look at it and see what we can do.

CHIPP: Gary, you can't do better than that.

CALLER: No, that's great.

CHIPP: OK, fantastic and we'll help you .... here as well. Gary thanks for calling and thanks for everyone else who called.

PM: Don, I deliberately hadn't said anything about this point beforehand because I didn't know whether, before I came on, it had been shared with the public, but it is your birthday.

CHIPP: Yes, indeed -

PM: Well you've told me some of the rudenesses, but often rudeness only occurs because it's properly attracted.

CHIPP: .... bottle of vitamin E cream?

PM: Well looking at your face, I'd put it on my face. But sincerely, mate, what you said at the beginning is right, we've been mates for a long time, had the odd arguments, but I feel a great friendship for you and I think you're lucky to have survived this long.

CHIPP: (inaudible)

PM: Yes, yes, sure it helps but -

CHIPP: Two things in the world that you've got to do is to love and be loved. You can do those two things, you're going to be happy and you're going to live a long time.

PM: Yes .... I'm not talking in a sensual or serious way, but love is something that is capable - I'm not talking in a sexist sense -

CHIPP: No, no -

PM: There's more than the physical relations and so you can have love for an enormous number of people.

CHIPP: I know you love a lot of people. I've seen the emotions on your face .... and we're not talking in a sensual or sexual way and it makes it one of the best things that you can have.

PM: And mateship is not just between blokes.

CHIPP: That's right.

PM: Well you can have the quality of mateship between sexes. But any rate, I just want to say to you really happy birthday, all the best.

CHIPP: Thanks for coming in. Keep on being a good Prime Minister.

PM: Thank you very much indeed.

ends