



**PRIME MINISTER**

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JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, when will the election be?

PM: I'd like to be able to break the news here, but I don't know yet.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, we've heard from Melbourne that the result of the pilots case is some \$6 million, I believe. What's your reaction to the amount?

PM: Well, it was just a matter of decision by the court as to how many days were involved. They had agreed, between the two parties, as to what the amount today would be, so that's just a judicial decision as to the number of days that were involved.

JOURNALIST: Are you disappointed by the amount, given that you urged the airlines not to proceed with the damages case?

PM: Well, that's a finding of the judge now as to what the damages should be now. As to what will happen after that will be a matter for decision by the airlines. I've got no reason to change what I've said.

JOURNALIST: Mr McCarthy said that ... would have to sell their homes to pay for that. How do you feel about that?

PM: Well, ... I don't want to see individuals suffer. It's a pity that Mr McCarthy and those officials hadn't thought about the suffering that they've inflicted on so many people, including their own members. But, as I said, on the question of damages, I've made my position clear about that - that I don't want to see damages against people however stupidly they have acted, but I've got nothing to add to what I've said about that before.

JOURNALIST: Is there anything you can do about that Sir?

PM: Well, not publicly at this stage. I've made my position known and we'll see what happens ... I mean, I really haven't got anything useful to add on that.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, with the release of Mr Mandela, would you favour a relaxing of sanctions against South Africa?

PM: I've made my position quite clear on that and let me say it again. Firstly, I welcome the decisions that have been taken by the Government of South Africa - the ones that preceded the release of Mr Mandela and his release. Now, what I've said is that those decisions create the stage for negotiations. Apartheid is still in place and it is a vicious, abhorrent, totally unacceptable system and it is still in place. I have said that we should be prepared to indicate that we will look at the lifting of sanctions if, having created that stage they now go on with the stage and actually enter meaningful negotiations between the Government of South Africa and the representatives of the black people, and if it is seen that those negotiations are taking place and are leading towards the objective, the common objective of a democratic multi-racial South Africa, free of the practice, philosophy of apartheid, then of course we should be prepared to lift sanctions - and I trust that that stage will be reached where they will enter into negotiations.

JOURNALIST: (inaudible)

PM: Just a minute, one here.

JOURNALIST: Several times today earlier you were urged to help a city which has been cracked down the middle by an earthquake and has been severely battered around in recent years, to push for the establishment of a Taiwanese-backed steel works in the midst which could produce thousands of jobs. You were also urged, if you were returned to power, to try and influence the Liberal Government in New South Wales to overcome its apparent disincentive to try and help business along, how do you feel about that request which was put to you today?

PM: We've made it quite clear, not just by words but by action. We've moved to bring in the legislation which would remove any impediment to that because there was some concern that because there was not a recognition of Taiwan that that would create commercial difficulties. Now we've brought in legislation to remove that concern, so we've put our ... actions where the mouths of other people are.

(PM cont): So we are committed to helping and I think now that you've got that legislation indicated by the Government and you've got the indication of the commitment of the working people of this region, the trade union movement and our commitment, in the best possible environment has been created. I understand there's some developments within Taiwan that they may not be as close now to making a decision, as has been contemplated before, but if they are going to move offshore in any way, Australia in general and Newcastle in particular, is where they should come.

JOURNALIST: How would you feel about working closely with a Liberal State Government?

PM: I don't have any problems working with them. I mean, after all look at the question of the disaster at the end of last year. I immediately saw Mr Greiner and I suggested to him that we should just scrub all the red that's usually associated with these sorts of things in setting up the national disaster relief arrangements ... let's scrub that, let's agree now that we'll share dollar for dollar the costs and we agreed. So I've shown that I don't have any trouble working with Liberal Governments. I mean, I'd prefer that they were Labor Governments that I had to deal with, but they're the democratically elected Government and when you have a thing like the earthquake, politics get put aside. You've got to concern yourself with the needs of people and act accordingly. One over here?

JOURNALIST: Yes. Prime Minister, further on the election date ...

PM: Nothing further on any specific date.

JOURNALIST: And what about the sitting of Parliament. Can you confirm that that will or will not go ahead?

PM: I've got nothing to add to what I said yesterday on that.

JOURNALIST: Can you rule out March -

PM: I've got nothing to add to what I said yesterday.

JOURNALIST: But apparently you did rule it out this morning though.

PM: I haven't been talking to anyone this morning. I looked at myself in the mirror, cleaned my teeth, had a shower, but I haven't been talking to any media, so I've neither ruled it in or out this morning. I mean, I don't talk to myself about election dates - talk to a lot of other people, but not to myself.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, on the question of elections and industrial relations, you referred in your speech here to the creation by unions of single bargaining ... How important is that in your strategy?

PM: Well, I think it's obviously, as we see the evolution of a degree of enterprise bargaining within the framework of ... it allows a aggregate national ... of outcome to be predicted, that at those levels there should be a combination of the unions into a unit because it makes it more, not just easier, but it makes the laying down of a framework for future industrial relations within the enterprise easier.

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