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PRIME MINISTER

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JOURNALIST: Are you going to inspect the flood damage?

PM: Well I don't know about that but I'll certainly be talking as soon as I can to Mr Keating who has been up there.

JOURNALIST: Are you concerned though? Have you been receiving briefings on the trip?

PM: Yes I have been receiving constant briefings, that's right, yes. As I said before, I express my deepest sympathy to all those who have been adversely affected by them and I've been kept constantly briefed and now that I'm back I'll continue to be informed and will make the appropriate decisions.

JOURNALIST: Are you worried that a lot of people aren't covered by insurance policies?

PM: Well I want to get fully briefed on just what exactly the position is.

JOURNALIST: Just on Gallipoli Mr Hawke, were you surprised by the number of young people that made the effort to go to the celebrations?

PM: I don't know if surprised is the right word because we'd had indications there would be a lot there but it was indeed very gratifying to see so many young people there and the link between the generations was magnificent. The old veterans, an average age I suppose of about 95, and the rapport between them and the young people was magnificent.

JOURNALIST: What was the highlight of the trip?

PM: The Dawn Service and the service at Lone Pine and then there was a very touching moment of course at the luncheon when the two old veterans, 102 year old Turkish veteran and old Jack, one of our characters, swapped uniforms and boots and shook hands and then kissed one another on the cheeks - that was very moving.

JOURNALIST: How are the veterans standing up to the trip?

PM: Remarkably well. We had a lot to do with them on the day and we were watching them closely right through from the service and breakfast and lunch. One just wonders how they'll be coming back, whether it will be some sort of let down. But they are truly remarkable men and may I also pay an unqualified tribute to the minders who were just superb in the way they looked after them.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, have you heard much about the large turnouts on ANZAC Day in Australia -

PM: I read the reports, yes, and said they were very, very large turnouts and I was very pleased to see this and if in any small way the visit of the veterans that we facilitated and this whole pilgrimage, if that's helped in any way to rekindle an understanding of Gallipoli in 1915 and what it meant for Australia then we'll all be very pleased to have been associated with that.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, do you think some of the ANZAC spirit has been shown up though, there are a number of appeals going for flood victims, there are sporting club launching appeals. Do you think that shows some of the ANZAC spirit?

PM: Well I hope so because if there was one message that came out of Gallipoli in 1915 and the spirit of ANZAC was as I said at Lone Pine, it was the understanding and the dependence of one another, the men there knew that they depended on each other for their very survival and I hope that in Australia today we have some of that sort of understanding.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, what's your response to India's anger over the Mirage sale?

PM: I'm not surprised that there is some feeling. But of course the facts are that the availability of the Mirages was known to everyone. India themselves could've bid for them if they were interested. They won't be available to Pakistan until towards the end of the year and if, and heaven forbid that that were the case, that there were to be conflict in the near future the aircraft, the availability of the aircraft, would be reviewed.

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