

SAN FRANCISCO

ARRIVAL PRESS CONFERENCE AT AIRPORT
GIVEN BY THE PRIME MINISTER, MR. JOHN GORTON

25 MAY 1968

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, could you tell us what you hope to accomplish on this visit?

PM. Yes. I hope to have a much better understanding of the thinking of the President, of the Administration, of the officials concerned with policy making, and if the primaries permit, which is always pretty doubtful, of the thinking of other possible candidates.

Q. Will you be discussing the F-111 and its higher price?

PM. I won't be. No.

Q. What about trade controls and the restrictions?

PM. Well, trade is down for discussion.

Q. How about specifically the Australian Government commitment to Vietnam?

PM. Well, I don't think it's down for discussion.

Q. Do you anticipate discussing it?

PM. Well no, we've got our commitment there and it's not bad.

Q. Will Australia have somebody in Paris watching the exploratory peace talks?

PM. Yes, we've got a man from External Affairs there who is liaising with Governor Harriman. Well, it used to be Governor. . . . once a Governor; always a Governor, eh?

Interjection: And once a Senator, always a Senator?

PM. Except when you become a Prime Minister! We've got our Ambassador here expressing our own views to the people at various levels of the State Department and Mr. Anderson's in Paris, keeping in close touch with the negotiators over there.

Q. In view of the withdrawal of the British Government from South East Asia earlier than was expected, will you be discussing Australia's new role in South East Asia?

PM. Somebody might bring it up.

Q. Such as a naval base outside of Fremantle?

PM. You're getting so specific!