

SECOND VISIT TO U. S. 1969WASHINGTONTELEVISION INTERVIEWS GIVEN BY THE PRIME  
MINISTER, MR JOHN GORTON AT BLAIR HOUSE8 MAY 1969CHANNEL 7 NETWORK (Interviewer Norman Bennell)

- Q. Firstly, Prime Minister, I wonder what assurances you had this morning from your talks about the future of the F111?
- PM: Well, we gathered a whole lot of technical information and about the intentions of the United States Air Force. I think this will be of great advantage to our own Defence Department when we return to Australia.
- Q. Did you ever feel before these talks that the F111 might be in jeopardy from Australia's point of view?
- PM: Well, one felt that there might be a problem and we wanted to go into it pretty carefully to see whether that problem was likely to develop or not. At the moment I would think it would not, but we want to study all the information, the technical information, the facts about intentions, the period of use and all that kind of thing.
- Q. Turning to your talks in general, I wonder if you could sum up the success of them?
- PM: I think they were successful. I think that the statement made by the President himself was of great value to Australia and New Zealand as a reaffirmation by the new President and the new Administration of the ANZUS Treaty as it applies to Australia, New Zealand and the United States. You will remember the phrase taken from the Treaty itself which he used. It says nobody should think that Australia, New Zealand or the United States stands alone. I think that was very helpful and very reassuring. I believe the talks were successful beyond that point. Though I think I would prefer to wait to make a report to Parliament before I go into any further details.
- Q. Your own impression of the President this time?
- PM: Well, it was the same as last time. I liked him very much. I felt he was a strong man, a man with a sense of history and the requirements of history, and I feel he would not be a man to sacrifice what he thought was historically right for some ephemeral immediate political popularity.

Q. Is this why you use the term that you would go Waltzing Matilda with him?

PM: No. You see, I never did say we would go Waltzing Matilda with him. If you actually look at what I said, I said that wherever the United States or the United Kingdom or any other country is seeking to resist aggression, whatever joint effort is made to try and improve the living standards and the material well-being and the spiritual well-being of the peoples of the world, then we'd go awaltzing, and indeed, this is what we have done throughout our history -- with the United Kingdom in two World Wars, in Malaya, in Korea, now in Vietnam, in the Confrontation and in trying to assist the general rise in living standards. This, I think, is a policy which can be very difficult to say was wrong.

Q. Returning to Vietnam, Sir, did you find from these talks anything hopeful for a settlement of the situation?

PM: I think that I couldn't say that I did find that. But there is a feeling there may be a possibility in the future some time of some hope but I don't think it is much stronger than that.

Q. Thank you very much, Sir.

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CHANNEL 9 NETWORK (Interviewer Michael Ramsden)

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, four weeks ago you said of Mr. Nixon, "I like the guy". How do you feel about him now?

PM. My liking and respect has, if anything, grown very much. Previously we met for a comparatively short time. On this occasion, we met for much longer and the talks were far more wide-ranging, and as they progressed my liking and respect for President Nixon increased.

Q. Your "Waltzing Matilda" comment at the White House Dinner. Is this "an all the way with LBJ" type remark?

PM. Perhaps I can best answer that by quoting from the transcript of the dinner and of what I said.

"And this is that for our part speaking for Australians, wherever the United States is resisting aggression, wherever the United States or the United Kingdom or any other country is seeking to ensure that there will

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be a chance for the free expression of the spirit of man, wherever there is a joint attempt to improve not only the material but the spiritual standards of life of the peoples of the world we will go Waltzing Matilda with you."

Now this is in fact what Australia has always done. She has with the United Kingdom fought in the First World War to resist the overrunning of Europe. With the United Kingdom and other allies later in the Second World War she took the same course. In Indonesia, with confrontation between Indonesia and Malaysia, she was there. In the Malayan emergency she was there, in Korea she was there and in Vietnam she is still there. And I believe that not only in resisting aggression but also in positive action to try to improve the general standards of living materially and spiritually of the peoples of the worlds, Australia should be there. And that is what I meant when I said, "We will go Waltzing Matilda with you".

Q. Sir, how conscious have you found the Nixon Administration of the fact that Britain is pulling out of South East Asia and the gap there has to be filled?

PM. Well, they are very conscious that Britain is pulling out of South East Asia and I found the Administration generally extraordinarily appreciative of Australia's decision to assist to the limit of her capacity and particularly that that decision was made without asking for anything in return, was made by Australia as its own decision, without saying that this was conditional on something else. They were quite strongly appreciative of this.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, you have now had your talks with the Defence Department about the F-111. What would you say the odds are about Australia purchasing this plane now?

PM. I'm not a racing man. Does "odds on" mean that it is very, very likely to happen?

Q. Yes, I think that is what it means.

PM. Subject to a full examination of all the data, I believe there is in fact not likely to be a problem.

Q. If in the event that we were to take action - I know you are approaching the situation very cautiously - is Australia likely to be penalised in any way financially or do we put this money in a new venture if we have to?

PM.

Well, it hasn't got anywhere near that stage yet. People seem to think we are considering the possibility of cancellation or something like that. We are not doing anything of the kind. We are looking at the new data, getting new information about the intentions of the United States Air Force, the number of aircraft it will have, the length of time it will be in service with that Air Force, the question of spare parts. We are looking at that to see whether there has emerged a problem since the initial arrangement and that is all. It is not that we say that there is a problem. But we're looking to make sure there isn't.

Q.

One final question, Sir. You've invited Mr. Nixon to Australia. When do you think the visit will take place and what sort of a welcome would you like Australians to give him?

PM.

I would like to see Australians give him the warmest welcome that was possible. I wouldn't say when the visit would take place because, after all, he is a new President and he has a very heavy programme. But at the latest I would say 1971 and possibly before.

Q.

Thank you very much, Sir.

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AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION (Interviewer Peter Barnett)

Q.

Mr. Prime Minister, at the White House Dinner the other night you spoke in terms of going Waltzing Matilda with your friends. What did you mean by that?

PM.

Can I quote from the transcript that was made that night because I think it will make it pretty clear what I meant. I said:

"And for our part speaking for Australians, wherever the United States is resisting aggression, or the United Kingdom or any other country is seeking to ensure that there will be a chance for the free expression of the spirit of man from within himself and not from dictatorship; wherever there is a joint attempt to improve not only the material but the spiritual standards of life of the peoples of the world, then Sir, we will go Waltzing Matilda with you."

*Defense*

PM.  
(contd.)

And what I meant by that was that Australia would continue to do what she has done throughout her history and that is to join with the United Kingdom or the United States or the United Nations in attempts to prevent aggression from being successful either in the First World War, the fascist aggression of Hitler, confrontation in Indonesia, the Korean war, the Vietnam war, the Malayan emergency - this is what we have done. . . . Just as we have joined in joint programmes seeking to improve material standards for peoples of the world and as we have in our own bilateral programmes, we'll be there. And that is what I meant.

Q. As you leave Washington after your talks with the new Administration do you feel reassured that the Nixon Government will have a continuing interest in our part of the world?

PM. Yes, I believe it will.

Q. And in terms of the President himself. You said last time you liked the guy. What is your assessment this time, having got to know him better?

PM. That the liking had increased and the respect had very greatly increased. Australia is a close friend of the United States, and is a focus of special interest here.

*U.S. - Aust. Relations*

Q. Have you felt that in this trip?

PM. Yes. I felt that there was a special relationship between the United States Administration and Australia. The feeling towards Australia was something rather special.

Q. Do you feel that they may take us for granted?

PM. I don't believe there is any risk of that at all.

Q. You've just come from the Pentagon. You met Mr. Laird. Could you tell us anything about your talks regarding the F-111?

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PM. They were designed to get full data on the intentions of the United States Air Force itself as to how long they would have their F-111s in operation, the logistic backing for the spare parts, as to performance, matters of that kind, in order to discover whether there was a chance of a problem arising. Not to discuss a problem which had arisen but to get further information in order to, as I say, be able to make sure that no problem is likely to arise.

Q. So at this stage it looks as though we would go ahead with our decision to. . . .

PM. Well, I want to go fully into all the data we've got. But I would say that at this stage it does look that way.

Q. Thank you, Sir.