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PRIME MINISTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE,  
BONN, 17 JANUARY, 1975

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Ladies and Gentlemen; On behalf of the Chairman of the Bundespressekonferenz and on behalf of the Federal Press Office, it is my personal honour and my privilege to present to you, the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Whitlam.

Mr. Whitlam:

- Q. Did you have an appointment with Mr. Brezhnev in Moscow? If you did, could you say what was discussed? If not, were you given any explanation why not?
- A. No appointment with Mr. Brezhnev had been arranged. Each day there was a message given to me from Mr. Brezhnev. I was told on the second day that he had a cold and was out of town.
- Q. Following your talks with the Soviet leaders, what prospects do you feel there are for a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean?
- A. The Soviet leaders state that they would like a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. They also add that they would like a zone of peace in every one of the world's oceans. You will know that Australia and, I believe, every other country around the Indian Ocean has voted at the United Nations General Assembly in favour of such proposals which have come, originally, from Sri Lanka and Malaysia, and more recently from Pakistan and Iran. There might have been other sources as well.
- Q. Inaudible question but referred to the Prime Minister's attitude to the United States' use of Diego Garcia as a base in the Indian Ocean?
- A. Australia, like every other country bordering the Indian Ocean or situated in the Indian Ocean, has objected to the development of Diego Garcia. Australia and, I believe, every other country in the Indian Ocean and around it, has deplored the possibility of an increase in forces by the two Super Powers - the United States and the Soviet Union. They have all sought to eliminate any possibility of confrontation between them. Some of you mightn't be aware that I was asked a question previously on this by an Australian correspondent who would have had the text. But, of course, the correspondent who just asked this question and others too might not have the text of the Communique which Mr. Kosygin and I issued yesterday on this subject. It states: "Both sides express their readiness to participate together with all interested States on an equal basis in seeking a favourable solution to the problem of making the Indian Ocean an area of peace in accordance with the principles of international law."

- Q. Do you believe the assurances given to you by Mr. Kosygin, that Russia does not have any bases in the Indian Ocean?
- A. Mr. Kosygin did state that and I have no comment to make on it.
- Q. This morning you had a talk with the Federal Chancellor. Did you discuss economic problems and particularly the question of Australia's supply of uranium to the Federal Republic of Germany?
- A. The Bundeskanzler and I discussed many economic matters. Obviously, Germany's economic experience is of great significance to any western country because the Federal Republic's success has been by far the greatest, economically, of all western countries. We did discuss the supply of uranium to European countries. Also, of course, we discussed the supply of beef to European countries. We discussed the general question of what commodities, primary and mineral, can be supplied by Australia to European countries and the general terms on which such supplies could take place. This was the seventh visit that my colleagues and I have made to member countries of the European Economic Community. In each case we have found some embarrassment over the fact that the Community, pursuant to the C.A.P., has cut off imports of meat from Australia. Nobody has justified that exclusion of Australian meat from the European Market. It is true, we haven't visited Denmark and Luxembourg. We don't know their views. It is possible that Luxembourg and Denmark control the C.A.P. In every country, however, we did find a very great interest in the supply of uranium and coal because the Community requires energy sources. Australia has considerable energy sources. Australians, quite legitimately I believe, want to develop those energy sources as far as possible in their own country. So, quite clearly, there were many matters that we were able to discuss; the Bundeskanzler and I. We didn't get around to another subject which I suppose would be of interest here. I'm told there is not enough sugar available for consumption in the Community. Australia would be able to supply sugar to the Community. But, in this case, the Community says: "Oh no, we'll increase the production of our own sugar." The wonders of the C.A.P. never cease to amaze me.
- Q. While you were in Moscow, Prime Minister, the trade Agreement between the U.S. and the Soviet Union was cancelled by the Soviet Union. Would you consider this to be a fundamental change of course on the part of Soviet policy or would you consider this to be a kind of temporary embarrassment?
- A. I do not believe that this represents any fundamental change of course by the Soviet Union at all. The whole of this question was discussed with us by Mr. Kosygin on Tuesday afternoon. He stressed both before, during, and after the discussions of this item, that the Soviet Union was committed to reinforcing the policy of detente with United States and, in fact, between all countries. I am confident that

that is settled Soviet policy. At the same time, it was quite clear to us that the Soviet Union would not accept the Jackson Amendment which the United States Senate attached to the Administration Agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union. To use an Australian phrase; it was clear to us last Tuesday afternoon, that the Soviet Union would not cop this amendment.

Q. During your discussions with Herr Schmidt this morning, were any other problems discussed?

A. There were some political or diplomatic matters which we discussed of interest to our two countries, of course.

Q. Did you get the impression that reports of Mr. Brezhnev's illness were a sign of a power realignment in the Kremlin were inaccurate, or did you see some signs indicating that they were correct?

A. I am not going to speculate on such matters. I've already told you all I know.

Q. As a result of your visit to West Germany, will we now see increased uranium exports to West Germany?

A. We've never made any exports to West Germany yet and I don't believe that West Germany has sought to buy any uranium. But, in March or maybe at the end of February, there will be a visit by British and very likely associated Dutch and German officials to Australia to discuss this question of enrichment of Australian uranium in Australia. This is pursuant to an arrangement which was made between Australia and Japan in November for a feasibility study into this very question.

I have just been reminded by our Staatssekretär für Mineralien und Energie that there have been some approaches by German companies to buy uranium from Australia. But no sales have been made. That is, no contracts were made under the earlier Australian Government or by the present Government.

Q. Prime Minister, Bonn marks the end of your European visit. Summing up, Sir, what do you think you have achieved in the various countries? Has there been one point of interest that European Leaders collectively have had in Australia?

A. This has been my first visit to the Federal Republic as Prime Minister and, except for a visit I made some 20 months ago to Britain, it has been the first visit I have made as Prime Minister to ten European countries. My colleague, Mr. Lionel Bowen, who, as you know, is the Minister assisting the Prime Minister, also visited Malta while I had to go back to Australia in connection with the Darwin cyclone disaster. In the eleven countries we have visited, there has been a more comprehensive and thorough presentation of the Australian point of view than has ever taken place at any time in the past. It is very clear to us in each

country that by making a comprehensive visit of this character the interest in every country was enhanced in every case. There was anticipation and review of what we had done already in the earlier visits or that we would be doing in the visits which still had to take place. There can be no question that by making a comprehensive visit of this character at Head of Government level, one achieves a concentration of interest in every country visited. In every case, of course, we have visited the Head of State, the Head of Government, and senior Ministers and senior Secretary-Generals and Director-Generals, and it is quite clear to us that Australia means more, it's more significant, to each of these countries than was the case before. We are, of course, very appreciative of the reception we have had in each case, but we believe Australia now is known and understood better than had ever been the case before.

"Thank you very much, Prime Minister."

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