

GOVERNMENT/TRADE UNION SUMMIT IN CANBERRA IN  
JUNE. MR. FRASER EXPLAINS.

John Highfield reports.

FROM A.M. BROADCAST  
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HAMISH ROBERTSON: As you have no doubt heard there is to be a Government/Trade Union summit in Canberra next month. During the conference the latest economic papers from the Treasury, the Reserve Bank and Government Departments will be laid on the table for union scrutiny. The Prime Minister has also given an undertaking that secret ballot legislation will not be proclaimed until after the summit. In Canberra Mr. Fraser is talking to John Highfield.

JOHN HIGHFIELD: Prime Minister, why have you called the trade union movement to this conference.

MR. FRASER: It's not just the trade union movement. We also want to have talks with the employers. But the trade union movement is important in relation to what happens in Australia. Their attitude to wages policy has a great influence on inflation, on the well being of their own members. We, in the package that will be announced in detail by the Treasurer, are proposing measures relating to tax indexation, to family allowances which, we believe, represent real economic and social reforms. The Government has a significant and obviously a leading role to play in these particular matters, but as I emphasised last night all Australians have a responsibility for what happens to this country. The trade Union movement has a responsibility. It is essential in the modern day Australia for the Government to be able to talk with the trade union movement concerning matters of importance, to be able to talk with the employer organisations concerning matters of

MR. FRASER cont'd: importance and I am glad therefore that Mr. Hawke, on behalf of the trade union movement, has accepted wide ranging talks in which the economic advice available to us will be made available to himself and to his delegates, to his colleagues, and I would expect that trade union delegates and senior ministers, after the official briefings - if I can put it that way - would hold discussions concerning the future.

JOHN HIGHFIELD: There's bound to be some people say that this in fact is a climb down by the Government in the face of some pressures from the A.C.T.U.?

MR. FRASER: Oh I can't think so for a moment, because I offered the talks last night and Mr. Hawke accepted them today. How can that be a climb down by the Government?

JOHN HIGHFIELD: Well he made a fairly strong statement about the secret ballot legislation.

MR. FRASER: Oh but the secret ballot legislation will be going through the Parliament. The only thing that is happening in relation to that is that we've said we will not proclaim it until after the talks. If there can be a lessening of differences concerning the future of the economy as a result of those talks it's no price to pay to say that the legislation won't be proclaimed until after them.

JOHN HIGHFIELD: And possibly alter the legislation if a strong case is made by the unions?

MR. FRASER: Look, if a strong case can be made, of course we will listen to it. We will listen to that from anyone and I think we would be very foolish, you know, as a Government if we don't.