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PRIME MINISTER

17th June, 1976.

Speech given by the Prime Minister, at the Return Banquet - Japan.

It was quite soon after the Australian Elections that I decided to make this visit to your country.

I have long believed that the quality of the relationship between Australia and Japan is of enormous importance to both our countries.

Its importance, I believe, extends beyond our two countries to the western Pacific region as a whole.

For this reason my Government has placed considerable weight on consolidating that relationship, and as far as possible, dispelling uncertainties that might stand in the way of further broadening the links between us.

I have felt that my visit would give recognition to the extent of the relationship which has developed and help chart its future course.

I have particularly valued, Mr. Prime Minister, the opportunity to discuss with you the various matters which properly - and inevitably - arise in the growing relationship between Australia and Japan.

I have appreciated the frankness and scope of our discussions, and the further contribution I believe these discussions have made to mutual understanding.

Though we trace our cultural inheritance through different lines it is clear that Australia and Japan now have much in common:

- * Both Japan and Australia are democratic, industrialised, Island countries:
- * Both are nations which take pride in the extent and quality of their trade, and look to expand that trade:
- * Both are located in the Western Pacific, and both recognise interests in the peace and security of that region;
- * Both have a special treaty relationship with the United States, which we each approach with a strong recognition of the independent contribution we make to that relationship.

In a world suffering from disturbing forces of instability it is to these alliances that we look as the most important means of actively supplementing the efforts we make to protect our own security.

These shared concerns - arising from the common elements in our situation - have been very much in mind during our discussions.

We have, of course, been mainly concerned with matters particularly related to the Japan-Australia relationship.

The basic treaty has recognised the extent to which our interests have become complementary and our peoples interdependent.

- * It gives a new political dimension to Australia-Japan relations.
- * One indication of the importance we attach to this treaty is the fact that Japan is the only country with which we have concluded a treaty of friendship.

The mere existence of the treaty will not mean that no uncertainties or difficulties can arise between us:

- * In an economic relationship as extensive as ours, problems will inevitably develop from time to time:
- * The treaty will, however, provide a frame-work within which problems can be more easily solved.

Much of our discussion has dealt with matters arising from our commercial relationship.

- * We have discussed the question of assuring access to to each other's markets, and conditions for investment in Australia.

On both these issues I have made it clear that Australia will act fully within the spirit of the treaty we have just concluded.

Japan can be assured of fair and equitable treatment.

I think we have been able to dispel a number of doubts and pave the way for an even closer economic relationship.

Our discussions have not been limited to economic matters - neither in their content nor in their significance.

The treaty recognises the need for a broader relationship.

In our discussions we have reached agreement on the need for greater cultural and social exchanges.

Australia has taken action towards these ends through;

- * The establishment of the Australia - Japan foundation;
- * Regular exchange visits by parliamentary delegations;
- * Arrangements for the attachment of Japanese civil servants to the Australian Public Service;
- * Proposals for expanded cultural contacts, and
- * greater co-operation in science.

In our discussions on international issues we have similarly found accord.

This is not at all surprising. We share so many basic interests.

- * We both place a high value on our alliances. But we are not, for that reason, any less concerned to develop constructive and co-operative relations with all countries in the neighbourhood that are prepared to reciprocate.
- * We share an interest in the peaceful development of Asia and the Pacific.
- * We are both concerned that the pattern of relationships between countries in the area and the strategic balance there should be stable.
- * As nations for whom trade is so important, we both need reliable and secure access to the large consumer markets of the world.

Our discussions have taken place against this background of common interests.

There has also been another very important element - the generous hospitality and the unfailing kindness you have shown me during my visit.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation.

* The fact that the Japanese government has not yet

* reached an agreement with the United States on the

* arrangements for the transfer of Japanese civil servants
to the United States is a matter of great importance

* and proposals for expansion of trade relations, and

* greater cooperation in science.

In our discussions on this subject, however, we have similarly found
agreement.

This is not at all surprising, inasmuch as many basic interests

* We both have a deep interest in the alliance
and we are not, of course, concerned to
develop hostile relations and to improve relations with all
countries in the region of which we are prepared to
cooperate.

* We share an interest in the peaceful development of Asia
and the Pacific.

* We are both concerned to maintain the balance of relations
between countries in the region and the strategic balance
of the world.

* As nations of which we are so important, we both need
friendly and cooperative relations in the trade and economic markets
of the world.

Our discussions have taken place against the background of
common interests.

There has also been a very pleasant atmosphere - the generous
hospitality and the excellent arrangements you have shown me during
my visit.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation.