

78/13A

Commonwealth Heads of Government
Regional Meeting
Australia 1978

16 February, 1978.

CHOGRM COMMUNIQUE PRESS CONFERENCE

Introductory remarks by the Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Fraser, at a joint press conference with the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Mr. Ramphai, at the Hilton Hotel on 16 February, 1978.

Secretary-General, ladies and gentlemen, I hope you have had time to read the communique that was agreed this afternoon by the conference. I believe that the communique does contain new and promising decisions and that the discussions we have had over this last week both here and also at Bowral^{are} of very real significance for all the countries that have been represented throughout this week. The meeting has proved valuable. It has proved worthwhile and I think that is demonstrated very clearly by the attitude of all countries to the meeting, to the results, and by the determination that after the next full Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting we have already agreed to schedule a further meeting of this regional group. India has very kindly offered to host that particular meeting.

I believe that the discussions we have had and the continuing negotiations and consultations that will take place together with further meetings will lead to a better understanding of our common hopes and aspirations, a better understanding of each other's problems and difficulties. Quite clearly the meeting has demonstrated that there is a determination to act together to advance our common cause in a number of directions.

The exchange of views throughout the meeting has been always good humoured but it has been thoughtful, creative and sincere. That in itself has contributed enormously to the success of the meeting as a whole.

There are common area interests which have all been well considered as well as wider world problems that impinge^{on} this particular area.

In a number of areas firm decisions have been made and these are drawn together in the last page of the communique. In paragraph 44 you will see that there is to be a consultative group on trade; Australia will be responsible for convening that group. Trade there is to be interpreted in the broadest sense because when officials meet they will involve themselves not only with trade as such but with communications, transport and with any matter that might enable trade within the region to be expanded. From the body of the document you will see that the region is not only concerned with increasing trade between all the members of the region but also concerned at the MTN discussions and negotiations that will take place that there should be some positive result and that commodities should not be pushed aside, should not be ignored in those major international discussions and all governments have recognised the need for progress to be made in that particular direction.

An imaginative proposal put forward by India has led or will lead to the establishment of a consultative group on energy. I think we can all understand how important that can be and I believe will be. The groups will be serviced jointly by India and by Australia. It is in this area where common interests between the largest of us all and some of the smallest of us who are here that I think become apparent in a very tangible sense. For instance, the problems of getting the cheapest and most appropriate form of energy at the village level in India has many similarities with the problems of providing energy for the Island States of the Pacific. That demonstrates in plain and practical terms

how there can be a real similarity of interest between large nations and small.

Working groups will be established. One is to be led by Singapore, another by Malaysia on aspects of terrorism and drugs so that we may all examine those present mechanisms of cooperation which take place through international forums and to see also whether other aspects need to be pursued more vigorously by cooperation between us.

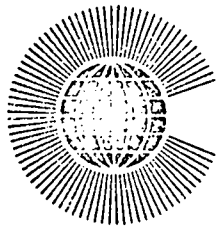
A proposal which has been put to the Secretary-General for examination and report by the Secretariat to see what services the Commonwealth as a Commonwealth might be able to better provide to small states is I believe a very useful one. Small states in the Pacific not only have the problems of distance and problems of development on a more acute scale than many other developing nations but they also have problems of adequate representation in international forums. That in itself can be a very expensive business to a small State and in the number of arenas in which a nation needs to have its interests protected it is sometimes very difficult for the very small States to achieve that. So there will be a number of aspects that the Secretariat will be examining and I am certain that they will be followed forward with vigour.

I have already mentioned that it is intended that the next meeting should be held at Delhi in 1980. I am sure that all countries represented here will look forward to that.

Other matters which are of importance were discussion in relation to the Common Fund. Australia's position, which I explained a day or two ago has been noted. The group has lent support to the Secretary-General's proposal that there should be a Ministerial meeting of Commonwealth countries to discuss the technical working report established as a result of the June meeting last year, because the main negotiating conference in relation to the Common Fund takes place in April of this year. So I hope that the commonwealth group can get together before that time. I also hope that the initiative of this meeting together with the position taken by Australia might help lead to a constructive breakthrough in negotiations which have been deadlocked over the last few months because we believe it is of importance that progress be made in relation to the Common Fund.

I would like to publicly thank the Heads of Governments and the delegations of all those who have visited with us during the course of this last week. I think everyone has wholeheartedly contributed to achieving a very constructive result out of a very useful few days' discussions.

I would like to ask the Secretary-General to say whatever he would like to say and then it would be over to you for questions.



Commonwealth Heads of Government
Regional Meeting

Australia 1978

16 February, 1978.

CHOGRM COMMUNIQUE PRESS CONFERENCE

Introductory remarks by the Commonwealth Secretary-General ,
Mr Shridath Ramphal, at a joint press conference with the
Australian Prime Minister, Mr Malcolm Fraser, at the Hilton
Hotel on 16 February, 1978.

MR. RAMPHAL: Thank you Prime Minister.

There isn't a great deal I wish to add. I believe that the meeting itself has vindicated the highest hopes we could possibly have had for it. When Mr. Fraser mooted the idea of a regional gathering of this kind at the Summit - which is what is important about a meeting of this kind, that it takes place at the Summit - when he mooted this in London last year it was obviously a point of departure in the ways in which we use the facilities of Commonwealth dialogue and consultation. As is natural on an occasion of that kind there is uncertainty, there is doubt, there is wonder, there is an appreciation of the potential of the occasion and it is only its practical out-turn that reveals and justifies it.

What has happened here in Sydney in the last four or five days has, I think, in every sense fully justified the faith that was put in it; not just by the members of this part of the Commonwealth but by all Commonwealth leaders when they welcomed these proposals last June. I think the great significance is that it has happened. The leadership of a very important segment of the world, about a third of the world has been brought together at the highest level for the first time in human history and that's a very important factor. It has been brought together not just because of geography and economics, but brought together because the leaders of the countries have been willing to use the Commonwealth connexion to bring it together. That in itself speaks volumes for their own confidence in that connexion and they have gone out of their way in the communiques as you will see to state that very clearly.

We have bridged, I believe, here in Sydney some very important gaps that have existed in relations in this part of the world and nothing is more significant about the occasion than the human relationships that have been established, the personal contacts that have been made between Presidents and Prime Ministers and the effect this is going to have on relations between countries in this part of the world hereafter, and on relations between this part of the world and the rest of the world.

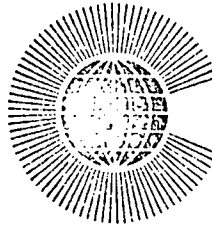
So what has happened here is of enormous significance. Mr. Fraser has already identified some of those practical issues on which decisions have been reached. They have not just been general accords. We have been able to develop the processes of follow-up action. We know precisely who will be doing what and what line of direction this will take and that's an important part of the development.

On the economic issues, I think this meeting can prove to have made an important advance in the international dialogue that is taking place. The recommendations that have come out of the meeting in relation to the Common Fund, and the Common Fund you must remember is at the very heart of the international dialogue between north and south, provide the best chance for international consensus that has existed for a long time. It will, I am sure, give heart to many people in many countries, developed and developing, that there still exists possibilities of finding a way towards agreement on the Common Fund.

Australia's very important decisions in relation to the fund, which are in keeping with the positions that the Prime Minister developed at the London meeting itself, when he launched initiative for the report on the Common Fund, those positions are going to be of great significance in a regional context and in an international context. I can only reiterate the hope he has expressed that other countries, countries in group B, developed countries, would follow this lead that has been given down the path to consensus, and the developing countries would themselves be responsive to it and match that kind of initiative with a readiness on their own part to find the way of accommodation.

If we can have begun to develop this here in a regional Commonwealth context, if we can carry it forward into wider Commonwealth context, there is no reason why we can't help to achieve the global consensus that is so important. I'd like finally just to add my own sense of satisfaction with the conclusions that have been reached about the need for us to find new and enlightened and effective ways of helping the small states within the Commonwealth. Many are here on your doorstep in Australia. There are others scattered around the Commonwealth. We have all helped to bring them to independence. They are facing very great difficulties in a world that is not kind to small and isolated communities. That this important group of 12 within the Commonwealth should have recognised collective responsibility to help them and to have invited me to put forward proposals for a wider Commonwealth consensus on the way we help them is a very significant advance here and something that I think will have enormous importance to the future of relations in this part of the world where so many of these states exist and will be coming to independence in the next few months.

THE PRIME MINISTER: Thank you very much. I think it is over to you.



Commonwealth Heads of Government
Regional Meeting

Australia 1978

16 February, 1978.

CHOGRM COMMUNIQUE CONFERENCE

Questions and answers during the joint press conference
by the Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Fraser, and the
Secretary-General, Mr. Ramphal, at the Hilton Hotel on
16 February, 1978.

Q: In relation to para. 34 your Department of Productivity is sending an overseas mission on textiles around the Pacific region with the aim of increasing Australia's productivity. I am asking now how this will help trade access as far as the countries in the region are concerned and to Australia and also, in fact, how can this not only protect but give encouragement to Australia's industry, textiles industry, help the regionalisation effort...

Mr. Fraser: I think this proposal in para. 34 needs looking at in its total context. The purpose of officials meeting will be to encourage the totalality of trade within the region. It is not, and not intended, to be just a mechanism in which everyone exports more to Australia but trade between other members of the region is also important and between all the members of the region and countries outside. There are a number of matters that officials will be able to report on which will be very significant.

I believe it is coming to be understood that imports from developing countries have been increasing at the rate of 40% a year for a number of years. No matter what the initial base may be, at that kind of accumulation the base starts to become quite large. In addition of course, you have the per capita imports of very sensitive items that come into Australia which I think are greater than for any other developed country, certainly greater than for any other group of countries for which I have seen figures.

Para. 34 does recognise the importance of a number of matters that are interrelated. The importance of markets outside for the countries of the region, markets outside which are very often barred to countries of the region because of non-tariff barriers. I think sometimes in the past there has been too much attention merely on the Australian market when after all that is a market of only 14 million people. Whatever you do about protection or don't do about protection in Australia a market of 14 million people just can't solve the trading problems of the whole region or of South East Asia. The capacity just isn't there. So para. 34 needs to be looked at in the wider context of a general promotion of trade and a general breaking down of barriers which move against the interests of all countries of the region. It also needs to be looked at against the background of the changing movements of trade over recent years where access to Australia by countries of the region and other developing countries has increased very greatly.

I don't think anyone has ever suggested that Australia should not have any textile industry and that is certainly not the government's position but there might have been some implication of that in the question.

Q: Can the Secretary-General tell us the obviously somewhat fine distinction between a consultative group and a working group?

S-G: Yes, we see the consultative group as being somewhat more of an institution having a indeterminate future, an important part of the mechanism of cooperation between the countries of the region. We see the working group very much in the nature of an ad hoc group whose future will be determined by the character of its work.

Q: Prime Minister, to what extent do you think the impact of the conference has suffered from the bombing that preceded it?

Mr. Fraser: I believe that as a result of that particular tragic happening all Heads of Government devoted themselves to the work of the conference with a greater commitment, a greater sense of purpose because they weren't going to allow an incident of that kind to divert them from the major and important purposes for which they had come here. So if there had been an impact, I think it was to enhance the quality of the discussions and the final outcome.

Q: Prime Minister it is now four days since that explosion. You have been getting reports from police and security people. Can you tell us what progress has been made in the investigation? If as seems to us very little progress has been made, what problems have been encountered? Does the whole episode show up deficiencies in Australia's police and security services and finally are you concerned that the explosion could damage Australia's chance of hosting the 1981 CHOGRM?

Mr. Fraser: As to last part, not at all, and as to the rest, could I suggest that we concentrate on questions in relation to the communique and the substance of that communique first. I would be very happy to answer any other questions at a later point but rather than having questions jump backwards and forwards from one subject to another, I think it would be better if we just make that distinction.

Q: Prime Minister, in para. 32 you referred to developed countries at the meeting. Which do you identify as the developed countries that were at this meeting?

Mr. Fraser: Australia and New Zealand would be the developed countries at the meeting. I don't know, other countries might want to classify themselves but I think that is fair enough.

Q: In your section on energy the question of atomic energy as an alternative seems not to be mentioned. Why is that, and is that a factor in the considerations that the committee will give?

Mr. Fraser: I don't think it is ruled out but the main thrust of what we were talking about was not at that level. That sort of energy is more for the great metropolis and for great industries with large energy requirements. One of the things that we did have very much in our mind was the energy requirements of the home use and the village industry use which is of quite a different character. It is there that I indicated a similarity of interests between India, for example, and some very small States. But the terms of reference of that particular consultative group I don't think are going to be restricted. On the needs for village purposes there was a background paper which Australia had prepared. That, together with the major Indian paper, will be referred to the group but at least in the initial stage I think we are all looking to the rather different purposes than that to which nuclear energy for peaceful purposes would be applied.

Q: Sir, section 25 on protectionism by industrialised countries - was this aimed at Australia and New Zealand?

Mr. Fraser: I didn't notice anything that was aimed at Australia and New Zealand and I think if you read Section 25 Heads of Government expressed their concern over rising protectionism of industrialised countries against manufactured goods which countries in the region were well equipped to supply. Well Australia joins in that expression of concern. You will note that it goes on especially also to point also to the damaging effects of non-tariff and other barriers in trade and agricultural products which are of major importance to regional countries, a matter which Australia has been emphasising for some considerable time. Through this paper there are a number of references to that particular aspect; and that means of trying to overcome those non-tariff barriers in trade and commodities which affect all the countries of this particular region, I think, virtually all, anyway, is really within the terms of reference of the consultative group on trade. There are expressions in the document about the importance of getting a breakthrough in this area at the major trade and negotiations taking place later this year. It is also recognised in this paper that those particular barriers on Australia's exports, to take our example for a moment, very much inhibit our capacity to provide a market for other industrialised goods in the region because those barriers limit the extent to which we can export those things we can do best and cheapest that therefore weakens the Australian economy. So there are a number of things interrelated here. I believe that we were discussing in proper terms objectives that we would all want to pursue. We also know that if we are to advance our common causes to the best possible extent that there is a need to take account of the particular views, the particular concerns, the particular problems of all member countries. I think that has been a characteristic of the Commonwealth as a whole and it was certainly a characteristic of this particular meeting.

Q: Prime Minister, in para. 41 on the special problems of small States, there doesn't seem to be any reference to the proposed unilateral declaration for 200 mile fishing zones or how on earth the smaller States are going to police those fishing zones. Was any consideration given to this?

MR. FRASER: That wasn't discussed at any great length. One might well ask how a number of other countries are going to police those zones too because if you really take a map and mark in that 200 mile zone for all countries in the world it does create a very great problem indeed. You will know for our own part the top level IDC has been instructed to report to the Australian Government on the problems involved in surveillance and what's needed in relation to it and report promptly. You are quite right to point to an area which does create very real problems but I don't think anyone could possibly suggest that there is going to be 24 hour surveillance over all of those areas. The cost of that would be astronomical and beyond the capacity of all of us.

Q: I was wondering why that was omitted in the communique, no reference to the fishing zone?

MR. FRASER: The Foreign Minister reminds me that the South Pacific forum is looking at this particular matter, but it wasn't a matter that was discussed at great length in these discussions. There is no inhibition on it being raised.

S.G. I don't think you should look on this as an omission. There were a number of issues, a number of matters which are regarded as being of vital interest to the small countries, this was one of them. There were others, for example, in relation to the international negotiations there, the multi-national trade negotiations in Geneva, the resumption of the negotiations on the second LOMOG convention which affect the interests of many countries here. They have not been enumerated but they are very much a part of the concerns and you will notice a reference to the need to help them, to meet their vital interests and pursue them.

MR. FRASER: In other words the Secretary-General has an unlimited charter in proposing what he thinks ought to be done.

Q: Mr. Prime Minister, para. 44, I notice that the country co-ordinating the consultative group on trade is one that doesn't want changes, the country co-ordinating the working group on terrorism won't send back plane hijackers to Vietnam and the country co-ordinating the working group on illicit drugs believes in whipping people for possession of a bit of "pot". How were those countries chosen and why?

MR. FRASER: I think there was a general consensus that those countries would be appropriate and would do the job. And I think the definition of the countries implicit in the question is not necessarily a completely accurate one.

S.G. Might I with more detachment say that the classifications you apply to those countries would not have been ones that would have been generally accepted at the conference.

We do not for example, regard Australia as a country that in international trade is unwilling to face the realities of change. In fact we believe that many of the policies that the Australian Government have become to initiate point in the direction of a willingness to approach in a systematic and constructive way the opening up of new avenues of change.

Q: As to para. 27: Sir, the brief and surprisingly mild reference to the EEC hardly reflects the Australian position. Were you not able to prevail on the other Heads of Government the need for a stronger stand against EEC trade barriers?

MR. FRASER: I think there are a number of references, you mentioned para. 27. I think the language is thoroughly appropriate for a communique from 12 Heads of Government. Para. 25 contains an implied reference which is pretty plain. Para. 26 certainly does. I think para. 27 does also and 34.- "recognising the access to major markets in the European community, North America and Japan were critical to the well-being of world trade. They also agreed that the consultative group would examine ways and means of persuading those major trading blocks to break down non-tariff barriers, which inhibited so many of the natural and economic exports from the region". I would hardly have thought that you could have got a more precise or explicit reference to a problem which concerns all of us and one which Australia has mentioned on a number of occasions.

Q: Mr. Prime Minister, when do you expect some concrete proposals and concrete decisions to emerge from the two consultative groups and the two working groups?

MR. FRASER: I think it is too early to say at this point. But for our part, and I'm sure for the other countries concerned the matters will be approached with energy and commitment. Some of the problems that the groups will be looking at are obviously difficult and some of them are not capable of any early solution. But let me only say that no time is going to be lost.

Q: Do you expect some action before the next Regional Heads of Government meeting?

MR. FRASER: Oh, in two years time, good heavens yes, yes. It doesn't wait for them to report back and there are other means of communication also which I hope, very much, will be employed. No, please, let nobody think that just because a meeting has been determined in two years time in Delhi that the reporting back happens then; long, long before that, or I'll be very disappointed.

Q: Prime Minister, in relation to the question that was asked on the EEC, do you feel that Australia's position has now been strengthened, its bargaining position has been strengthened, in relation to the absolute trade barriers that the issues impose and you've criticised?

MR. FRASER: I think, it is not only Australia's position, I think

commodity producers have had their positions strengthened because there are other aspects of this that also need to be taken into account I think and understood. Under the LOME convention, for example, there are many people who believe that the developing countries of Africa and the Caribbean gain some advantage in relation to that and some not insignificant advantage, but that the developing countries of the Indian sub-continent, South East Asia and the Pacific, while may be technically designed to be accommodated within that convention, were not gaining a great deal from it. That might be another aspect in a sense but it is related to the problem which has concerned us. The more discussion there is in world forums about the way the present policies of the EEC inhibit trade generally and prevent many countries from doing that which they can do best and most naturally. All countries are thereby strengthened in efforts to get a more rational result.

Q: Q.39. The communique mentions down the bottom to examine the possibilities for further regional co-operation. What are those possibilities?

MR. FRASER: Well this will come forward as a result of a working group. That's what it will be charged with doing. There are a number of international organisations and arrangements now in relation to these matters. Are these being pursued as vigorously as they should be? Are there additional measures that ought to be applied by all of us or by some of us which aren't embraced under present international arrangements? Again, there are no particular restrictions on what the working group might examine and recommend in relation to this.

Q: This subject of illicit drug trafficking. It is something that concerns us all. I am wondering why Indonesia was not invited to this conference in the first place?

MR. FRASER: It was restricted to members of the Commonwealth and that is the only reason.

Q: Para. 13 on the Indian Ocean - I am wondering what sort of practical steps you would like to see taken for the implementation of the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a ZOP.

MR. FRASER: One practical step would be a successful conclusion of negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States but which at the same time recognised and protected the rights of all states in and around the Indian Ocean. That is one step that could be taken.

Q: Not specifically on the text of the communique but on the balance in it, are you happy and do you think there is a general satisfaction of the extent to which the meeting was able to identify specifically regionally interests as opposed to world interests which occupy the greater part of the text?

MR. FRASER: I don't know that world interests really cover a greater part of the text because you've got a situation where there are many world issues which obviously have a very great impact on this particular region. The Common Fund discussions, that is a world matter, but nobody can say it is not a matter of great interest to the region. The meeting took a view on it and has proposed one or two matters which might help to break an impasse. We hope so. Therefore, in a number of areas the world issues flow over very much into the regional issues. I think that the balance of the document is not a bad one. We have addressed ourselves to very specific regional problems such as the question of small states in the Pacific. That again, if you like, has got world overtones because there are small states outside the Pacific that have, to a significant extent, the same problems. So you just can't look for rigid lines of demarcation. The conversations and discussion were very much related to the particular problems and interests of the countries that were represented.

Q: Prime Minister, para. 11 takes 66 words to dispose of the subject of terrorism. In view of the bombing outrage on Sunday night, would it not have been entirely proper to give more weight to the subject of terrorism in this communique?

MR. FRASER: I hope people are not going to judge the merit of what is done or not done by the number of words used to express a view or to state an objective and a conclusion. The meeting quite quickly came to the view that the conclusion that appears in the document and the working group relating to it was what they wanted and that it was the appropriate thing to do. With all the kindness of the world to a good friend, I really do believe that to measure quality by length is not necessarily the best way of doing it. Column inches. I was speaking in media terms.

Q: There is a reference here to ASEAN, in para. 8 and 9 Mr. Prime Minister. Would you foresee in the future, if not a state of competition, then an overlapping between ASEAN and this conference as a continuous event.

MR. FRASER: Certainly not competition, no. I think that what happens in this particular discussion contributes to the worth of other forums in which countries participate. Let me give one or two examples. Very useful work is undertaken in the Pacific Forum and the countries in the Pacific Forum are strongly represented at this meeting. But they were thus able to have their views known and heard amongst a wider group of countries that are not often at - normally not at that Pacific Forum. I think the fact they were here was one of the reasons why we have discussed and come to the conclusions we have had about the problems of small States. That would not have occurred if the Pacific Forum countries met only in the Pacific Forum and not in the wider community.

Quite obviously, the Commonwealth as a whole in many of its discussions overlapped matters that are discussed in the United Nations. But I believe the Commonwealth connection, the Commonwealth influence enables individual countries to play a more constructive role in the United Nations than if they weren't members of the Commonwealth. I would believe that is one of the reasons why many diverse countries from many parts of the world feel strongly about the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth tie.

Coming back more directly to your particular question, I see the work of this group as advancing the general interests of the whole area and of the region of the countries represented. Strengthening those countries, I would believe, is going to strengthen ASEAN. I certainly don't see any degree of competition. Australia supports ASEAN very strongly and wishes that Association every success. It is a very important one and I think

it has achieved notable results, I believe it will continue to do so. I am quite sure it would be the view of the 12 countries represented here during the course of this week to make quite sure that nothing it did cut across the purposes or view of ASEAN.

Q: Mr. Fraser, as a producing country, where does Australia stand with relationship to the philosophies of the new economic order and the north-south dialogue?

MR. FRASER: I think you have got to look at that by looking at Australia's attitude on the Common Fund which I have expressed quite clearly and plainly. We do believe in commodity arrangements, international commodity arrangements. We have participated in them on many occasions. We have tried to nudge developed countries that might sometimes have been reluctant to undertake sugar agreements or wheat agreements to do so.

Q: How do we nudge ourselves?

MR. FRASER: In relation to what?

Q: To that.

MR. FRASER: I think that we are ahead of the B group of countries. We are hoping that as a result of the initiatives Australia has taken and as a result of discussions that I hope will take place at the Ministerial level in relation to the Commonwealth's technical working group report on the Common Fund that when the negotiating conference resumes in April or May that it might get nearer to agreement than it was when it broke up last November.

There is no problem with Australia's philosophy in its relationship and support of these particular matters.

S.G. Mr. Prime Minister, may I add to that the role of the media in translating to the public an understanding of the aspirations of the international community in relation to the new international economic order and what is in it for Australia. That will be an enormous help to all that the government is trying to do at its level.

Q: May we ask the Secretary-General if he perceived a Sydney spirit and if so, how would he define it?

S.G. A Sydney spirit? You know, we talked about the spirit of Ottawa and we talked about the concord of Kingston. If it isn't too hackneyed I think really the best presentation is for us to think in terms of the Bridge of Sydney.

Q: Prime Minister, are a set number of millions going to be allocated in the budget for the next two years of research or are they going to have unlimited access to our funds?

MR. FRASER: Who?

Q: For all this research we are apparently going to finance in the second last paragraph. "Most of the Secretariat's work..." in section 44.

MR. FRASER: That's Secretariat work. That is follow up work which will be undertaken by the Secretariat. I would have thought the finance involved in that would be relatively modest. It needs to be understood if you are talking about energy that we already spend a good deal on energy research. We have made arrangements so that there will be greater funds and a levy on coal, for example, for additional coal research. I have no doubt that India spends a good deal on energy research. We have co-operative programmes with the Victorian Government and the German Government in relation to coal liquification, I would imagine that it would be up to this consultative group on energy to do its own work. I would imagine, however, that a good deal of its early work would be to pull all the related knowledge that we have, not only Australia and India but from other parts of the world together to see what is relevant to the countries of the region. If additional research or a changed orientation of research is necessary, then that certainly will be proposed. But I don't think you need be concerned that as a result of these decisions there is suddenly a large or unlimited call on Australian or any other exchequer. There isn't.

S.G. This is essentially work of co-ordination, trying to ensure that if I can follow through the Bridge of Sydney isn't just an edifice structure that is erected but in fact that we use it.

Q: Your expressions earlier in the conference of pessimism on the world economy and disappointment in US budgetary policies were widely reported and some sections of the press criticised. How did you want them to be understood or interpreted?

MR. FRASER: Precisely in the terms in which I used the terms. If a plain meaning of the language could be used rather than looking for some hidden interpretation sometimes there would be a better understanding on that score.

The words speak for themselves. I have not seen all the interpretations, so I can't judge that. But I think it is an odd circumstance that you sometimes get a position in Australia where people say you have got to be independent, you mustn't just quietly accept what other people of great powers say - and then if something is said that in the mildest and most friendly terms offers a point of view that is different from that of one of the major powers, there is immediately criticism of it. "You shouldn't have done that" impliedly meaning that it might give offence. I am quite certain that what was said would not give offence. I am also quite certain that there are occas-

ions when Australia does need to speak her view aloud. Australia will do so but I hope always it can be regarded that we do so in proper and reasonable terms.

- Q: Prime Minister, given the urgency of the drug problem, what priority would you like to see the working committee on drugs give to addressing that particular situation. Indeed, would you not like to see them report back within some specific time span rather than the rather vague terms set out in the communique?
- MR. FRASER: When you do something like this involving a number of countries, I think you have got to leave the matter reasonably broad because you are not quite sure where the examination will go or where it will need to go. I am quite certain that the people concerned won't waste any time in getting down to their examination and report. But it is not always easy at the outset to define the size of the task.
- Q: In para. 39 you said "They welcomed efforts to suppress the traffic". Can you tell me what efforts you believe are being made already?
- MR. FRASER: In general terms but quite plainly national governments have efforts in their own boundaries and in their own countries to suppress traffic. You will have noted in Australia in recent time some very considerable hauls of drugs that had been imported.
- Q: Is it your view that any countries in the regions are not carrying out those efforts to the best of their ability?
- MR. FRASER: I think there is a general recognition that this is an important problem. We all need to examine what we are doing and what we are doing in relation to international arrangements to make quite certain that nothing that ought to be done is left undone. I believe that is a very proper examination for governments to undertake. Again I would hope that it is possible for countries to get together to undertake that kind of examination without suggestions that one particular country is not doing everything it ought. People have approached this with a feeling of goodwill, recognising it as a major national and international problem.
- Q: Prime Minister, it has been four days since the bomb explosion outside this building, you have been getting police and security reports. Can you tell us what progress has been made in the investigation. If, as seems to us, very little progress has been made, can you tell us what the problems are, and what is being done to overcome them, and hasn't the whole episode shown up a deficiency in our police and security services?

MR. FRASER: I think that the first parts of those questions relate to the nature of any investigations that are being undertaken by those professionally charged with that kind of investigation. I haven't got particular information about that. If I had, I don't think it would be proper to do it because giving information about examinations of that kind could well prejudice further examinations.

Quite clearly, I think, as a result of what has happened we need to review the circumstances of the past week. We had gone to very significant lengths between the state authorities and the commonwealth authorities to make sure that the liaison arrangements were good. I believe they were and are. We did in relation to this meeting undertake more stringent security arrangements than Australia had in her history. Due to the tragedy that occurred, those arrangements were immediately reviewed and additional measures put in train. On all future occasions Australia has to recognise and understand that these things can happen here because they have.

Therefore with major international conferences, we clearly need to plan in relation to maximum security. There will be consultations in the future between the States and the Commonwealth. I had indicated on an earlier occasion that I would be approaching the States in relation to consultations about formal agreements between State special branches and ASIO. I now believe that those discussions ought to take into account the physical arrangements again to make sure that they are as good as we can make them between State police forces and the Commonwealth's own instrumentalities.

Q: The Executive order which authorised the use of the Defence Force declared that this order shall continue in force until revoked. Can you give an assurance that that order will be revoked once the last visiting Head of Government leaves Australia, and if not when will it be revoked?

MR. FRASER: The requisition which was related to a couple of days at Bowral has already been cancelled. The Foreign Minister cancelled that at 2 o'clock today. I would expect it won't be very long before the Executive Council authority is also cancelled.

Q: Sir, if I could just follow my question. Are we right in interpreting what you said as meaning that you still have no idea who planted that bomb?

Mr. Fraser: No, I don't know.

Q: Do the police have any clues? Are they following any particular line?

Mr. Fraser: I haven't had a full briefing about all the avenues being pursued by the police at the present time. One thing I would be convinced about is that the authorities would be using every avenue available to them to find who or what organisation put the bomb outside this hotel. When they have matters to report I am quite certain they will.

Q: On the same subject, very briefly, are you now planning for possible emergencies when Parliament sits or in local VIP context in view of that bomb explosion?

Mr. Fraser: There is very plainly a need to look at security arrangements inside Parliament House itself. From your own knowledge of Parliament House I think you would understand that.

Q: Mr. Prime Minister, this is the first time the armed forces have been used to protect the civil authority. Could I ask you whether you believe this means that in future the armed forces should receive a special type of new training which might equip them more for this particular purpose?

Mr. Fraser: Using the broad term, aid for the civil power, has always potentially been one of the Army's responsibilities because the law - and it is not a new law - has always allowed for it. The Army people were well equipped for the task which was entrusted to them over the last couple of days. This was basically making sure that a reasonably long stretch of road was going to be secure, the bridges and culverts were secure, that bombs couldn't have been planted under a culvert and detonated. I am quite certain that the Army is well equipped for that.

Q: You spoke earlier of the question of liaison. Do you think in this case security suffered because of liaison and because divided responsibility and in future will there be one authority in charge?

Mr. Fraser: In Australia, because of the Commonwealth state relationship, because of different constitutional responsibilities, we have the circumstance in which things have to be done by liaison. One of the things which I am sure Neville Wran and myself would want to examine, is to make sure that liaison and the mechanisms to govern any particular situation are as best devised as possibly can be. You can't get away from the fact that the states have their own police force, the Commonwealth

again has its own instrumentalities and in emergencies such as the kind which we had earlier this week there is an absolute necessity for them to co-operate. I believe they do. I would like, incidentally, to pay a tribute to Neville Wran for the full support that he and the instruments of the state government have given this conference. When the initial news of the bomb outrage came through I rang him and told him of the incident. He was down here very quickly, and again early the following morning. He had made it very plain that his attitude was the same as mine - that we must both co-operate to make sure that maximum security was provided for the conference in the Hilton Hotel and for the movement to Bowral and for our guests while they were at Bowral. I believe that the co-operation between the State and the Commonwealth in relation to that has been good. I am quite sure that his own attitude significantly contributed to it.

Q: Mr. Fraser, does the Commonwealth plan to send any police officers overseas to study anti-terrorism tactics?

Mr. Fraser: There is training in relation to that undertaken in Australia. If it was believed that officers needed to go overseas, well then I am sure that would be done. I think you must appreciate that government determines that certain things need to be done, certain objectives attained. There is a trust in those responsible for the carrying out of that instruction and decision, that they will do it in a way that's constructive, adequate and proper.

Q: Sir, is that training available to State police and if so, why was a state policeman placed in charge of security here who had not undergone such training?

Mr. Fraser: I was answering the question in relation to a different matter, that is the question of international terrorism, which is of specific Commonwealth responsibility. It was under that particular responsibility that the call-out was in fact authorised. It could equally well have been authorised by - and Neville Wran had indicated that either course was satisfactory so far as he is concerned - as aid to the civil power. But in all the circumstances it was felt that the course that was taken was the better one. That is the particular responsibility of the Commonwealth's and the training that is encompassed is by the Commonwealth. I have indicated that there will be an examination as a result of this of the co-operative arrangements that exist between the states and the Commonwealth. I am quite certain that Neville Wran and myself will both want that. We will want to satisfy ourselves that our own people are doing everything possible and everything necessary in the light of the somewhat different circumstances into which that event took Australia.

Q: What has been the total cost of the conference and the security that has gone into it?

Mr. Fraser: The conference estimates earlier given to me were round about half a million but I wouldn't be surprised if it is noticeably

above that figure. But let me also say that, in terms of the cost to the Commonwealth and the result, I believe that it is very well worth while. Every cent, has given its value in terms of the results of the conference. I haven't got estimates of the costs of the security operation but, again, I believe that it would have been the general wish of the overwhelming majority of Australians to make sure that we did everything that we could to ensure the security of the conference of its members and of the delegations. After the bomb explosion quite plainly if there was a doubt about whether a particular thing ought to be done or not the decision was made to do it, if it was an additional security item.

S.G.:

Before we respond to the Prime Minister for Fiji I think I would be lacking in my candor with you if I didn't say just two things on this question, without in any way presuming to interfere in the domestic aspects of it. The first is that, particularly for those heads of government and their Ministers, people like myself who live and work in an international environment, we are very conscious all the time that events of this kind happen, not because of deficiencies in security arrangements, but despite them. There was an overwhelming feeling on the part of all the heads of government who were here that immense precautions had been taken and a great deal of care had been lavished on adequacy of security arrangements. I think it is fair to say that no head of government, and you all have access to them and you will know of your own conversations with them how real this is, that at no stage in this meeting in their stay in Australia has any head of government or any senior official or Minister of government felt a sense of insecurity, whether we were here in Sydney or in Bowral, everyone felt that everything possible was being done and that you were in a happy and friendly land which like all other countries in the world are prone from time to time to acts of madness and lunacy which we have got to live with.

Q:

Prime Minister, do the heads of government feel that the bombing may not have occurred if the Indian Prime Minister was not here and if the conference is ended why are many heads of government staying in the country for days?

Mr. Fraser:

They have different interests in Australia and I am delighted that they are staying here to pursue those interests. One of things which I am sure has been conveyed to them is that I hope that they will be able to enjoy some time in Australia and not merely be here for the strict time of the conference. One president - I don't know the individual movements and when each head of government is moving out - at least one has relatives in Australia, as I think you know, and others have interests here. One I know wishes to visit a particular farming enterprise because it is not unrelated to an enterprise that I think he wants to see introduced into his own country.

I am delighted that heads of government, those that can, are staying here a little longer and now that the conference is over don't feel impelled to move out of Australia forthwith.

Thank you very much.