

NEWS CONFERENCE WITH VICE PRESIDENT BUSH.

---

Prime Minister

We welcomed the opportunity for discussions with Vice President Bush and also the emphasis that the President has placed on consultations not only with Australia but with countries in the western Pacific, and the Vice President has been taking in Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand and going back through China at a time when there is so much interest and attention being focused on the Western Alliance and European affairs. It is certainly good to know that discussions with Pacific countries are given the proper place. We have had very useful discussions this morning, there is no need to say that they have been warm and friendly discussions, because that would be expected, and there are a great many issues in which there is a real measure of agreement between the United States and Australia. We have discussed matters that have arisen during the Vice President's visit, problems with the Western Alliance, prospects for the United States economy, the Australian economy and obviously we have also discussed the Falkland Islands and the problems there. This is just to say publicly how much we welcome you and Mrs Bush and your party being here.

Vice President Bush

I would like to thank you and members of your Cabinet. We had a long fruitful meeting, frank discussions and in our view and I know I speak here, with confidence, for the President, which I normally don't do, but on this subject I will, he has great confidence that the Prime Minister is taking the problems of mutual concern, the relationship between our countries is strong and viable, where problems exist we can sit in there and talk about them very frankly across the table with no holds barred and that is exactly the way it should be. So I am just grateful to the Prime Minister for all of his personal time and the time of his various Ministers who have accorded us on this quick visit. The other thing I want to say is that our President has invited the Prime Minister to meet with him in Washington DC on May 17. The Prime Minister agreeing to this and I think your last visit I noted was on June 30, so it is most timely and the President is looking forward to an opportunity to exchange views with Prime Minister Fraser.

Question

Does that obviously mean you will miss the Federal Council of your Party, is that important?

Prime Minister

No I will not be missing the Federal Council of my Party, but I obviously will value the opportunity to continue discussions on some of the aspects we were talking about this morning, with the President, especially so when it comes at a critical time before the various meetings taking place in Europe in June. While we are not a participant of those meetings we are obviously affected by their final outcomes, just as all countries will be affected by them so I value that opportunity very much indeed.