



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

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ELECTORATE TALK

This year's meeting of the ANZUS partners, which starts tomorrow in Canberra, marks the 30th anniversary of the ANZUS Treaty. These meetings are a valuable way of focussing our perceptions of current developments in the Asia Pacific region as well as the global situation. They also remind us of the close links which exist between Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

ANZUS is strongly supported by the vast majority of Australians. It has stood the test of time, and it is profoundly realistic in relation to Australia's strategic situation in the 1980s. ANZUS protects Australia's vital interests; it secures Australia's sovereignty and independence; it demonstrates our willingness to play our part in achieving security for our region.

We live in an unpredictable world. Dangers can come out of apparently clear skies, as the Falklands crisis showed so plainly. If problems ever arose in our part of the world which we thought might become greater than we could master on our own account, it is the ANZUS Treaty which would stand as the guarantor of Australia's security, through the support of our alliance partners.

The ANZUS Treaty itself has two main parts. It requires its members to take action, both jointly and separately, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, to maintain their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack. Because of this emphasis on the importance of self-help, the expectation that the other partners will join in at a time of need is clearly bound up with each party taking measures on its own behalf to maintain its own security. In the second place, ANZUS provides for the alliance partners to consult together in times of emergency, if any of them sees threats in the Pacific to their territorial integrity, their political independence or their security.

The Australian Government is committed to building a strong and self-reliant defence force for Australia, designed to meet a wide range of possible contingencies in the years ahead. At the same time we are committed to firm alliance relationships, based on the closest co-operation. Australia and the United

States have long been involved in co-operation across a wide range of common concerns, and that is a continuing process. It is important to realize that ANZUS does not only operate in emergencies or extreme situations, it has a day to day relevance, as the basis of a working partnership.

We see the partnership at work in joint exercises in the arrangements for B-52s to stage through Darwin, and in the visits of US naval ships to our ports. There have been more than 330 visits to Australian ports by US naval ships in the last 10 years. The capacity for all United States ships without distinction to come to our ports is plainly valued by the United States. It contributes to strategic deterrence and it provides the kind of support that Australia would obviously want to give to allies. We also see the day-to-day partnership at work in Australia's access to US training schemes and technology and in the agreements which successive Australian Governments have entered into with the United States on joint facilities.

One of the strengths of alliances and alliance arrangements between free countries is that their terms and provisions need to be acceptable to all parties, and in making particular arrangements on matters such as joint facilities, and B-52s staging through Darwin and conducting low level navigation flights over northern Australia, the Government has made sure of preserving absolutely Australia's own sovereignty and independence.

I want to refer particularly to the joint facilities at Pine Gap and Nurrungar, and to the naval communications station at North-West Cape. Pine Gap and Nurrungar are joint facilities concerned with defence space research and communications, together they form an important component of the alliance between Australia and the United States, and as joint facilities Australia has full access to all information passing through them.

The North-West Cape Communications Station is a relay facility. It does not initiate messages, but serves as one of the many channels through which the US transmits messages to its forces. One of its functions is a part of the nuclear deterrence system. It is a way of ensuring that information could always be transmitted to submarines, even underwater, in the Indian Ocean, and the effective deployment of deterrence is important to Australia's security as it is to the security of all western countries. The North-West Cape facility, as a joint facility, is used by Australia to transmit messages to our ships. I for one would not have any overseas government interfering in the messages we could send. And if we would not accept that for our messages, how could we expect to dictate to the United States what messages it might transmit through these facilities?

Beyond its day-to-day relevance, ANZUS also has a wider significance, for ANZUS is an important part of the web of alliances and treaty arrangements which constitute the entire Western Alliance. In the present world environment, the western countries need to demonstrate a greater resolve and commitment than ever in order to achieve world peace and security, in order to preserve the freedom and the way of life which we want to pass to our children.

A strong, stable ANZUS has a significant role to play in demonstrating the commitment and resolve that are so necessary. As a nation, Australia stands fully behind ANZUS, in support of these objectives.

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