



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

THURSDAY OCTOBER 14 1982

OPENING ADDRESS AT CHOGRM III, SUVA

I AM VERY PLEASED TO HAVE THE HONOUR TO RESPOND TO THE GRACIOUS WELCOME THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN US THIS MORNING. IT IS A TYPICALLY WARM FIJIAN PACIFIC WELCOME AND ONE THAT CHARACTERISES THE FRIENDSHIP AND THE WARMTH OF THE PACIFIC HOSPITALITY AND FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN PEOPLE WHO KNOW EACH OTHER.

I WOULD LIKE TO SAY I AM ESPECIALLY GLAD TO SEE THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES, OUR NEWEST MEMBER, IN REPRESENTED HERE FOR THE FIRST TIME. THEIR REPRESENTATION STRENGTHENS SMALL ISLAND REPRESENTATION WHICH IS A CHARACTERISTIC OF THIS AND EARLIER MEETINGS.

THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT REGIONAL MEETING GIVES SMALL ISLAND STATES A MAJOR ROLE AND THAT IS ONE OF ITS SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS PERHAPS UNLIKE ALMOST ANY OTHER INTERNATIONAL FORUM. IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD IN A WAY WHICH CAN BE SUBSTANTIAL AND I HOPE USEFUL AND PRACTICAL. AUSTRALIA BELIEVES IN THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT REGIONAL MEETINGS AND BELIEVES THAT THOSE MEETINGS ARE OF IMPORTANCE FOR OTHER REASONS. THERE IS A COMMON ASSOCIATION, THERE ARE COMMON BELIEFS AMONGST ALL OF US WHICH GIVES US A COMMON PURPOSE AND PROVIDES A BASIS FOR FRANK AND PLAIN DIALOGUE ON PROBLEMS THAT WE OFTEN SHARE THAT ENABLES US TO SEARCH EACH OTHERS' MINDS IN REACHING FOR SOLUTIONS.

THE COMMONWEALTH ITSELF HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT IT IS A FLEXIBLE ORGANISATION, ONE THAT DOES WORK BY CONSENSUS, THAT IS NOT IDEOLOGICAL. ONE OF ITS GREAT CHARACTERISTICS IS THAT REPRESENTATIVES WITH VERY DIFFERING POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES CAN SIT DOWN TOGETHER AND SEEK COMMON SOLUTIONS TO PRACTICAL PROBLEMS. IT IS DOUBTFUL IF THERE IS ANY OTHER WORLD FORUM WHICH ENABLES THAT TO TAKE PLACE IN THE SAME WAY. SO FAR AS THIS REGIONAL MEETING IS CONCERNED, ITS COMPARATIVE SMALLNESS AND THE COMMON ASIA-PACIFIC INTERESTS, PROVIDE US I BELIEVE, WITH AN ADDED ADVANTAGE.

WE HAVE PRODUCED SOME PRACTICAL RESULTS. THE WORKING STUDY GROUPS IN TRADE, ENERGY AND IN INDUSTRY HAVE BEEN USEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS IN CO-OPERATION BETWEEN US. THIS THIRD COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT REGIONAL MEETING WILL PROVIDE A FURTHER OPPORTUNITY TO EXAMINE ISSUES OF SOME IMPORTANCE, THE LAW OF THE SEA CONVENTION, THE ATTITUDE TAKEN BY SOME MAJOR STATES, NOTABLY BY THE UNITED

STATES, OFFERS US AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THE PRESENT IMPASSE IN THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE WHICH MUST REGAIN MOMENTUM. IT IS A MATTER OF GREAT REGRET THAT THE GLOBAL NEGOTIATIONS APPEAR TO BE STALLED DESPITE THE IMPETUS PROVIDED AT MELBOURNE LAST YEAR, AT CANCUN AND AT VERSAILLES. IT PROVIDED US WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY THE REPORT ON OBSTACLES TO NORTH-SOUTH NEGOTIATIONS, TO SEE IF THERE IS ANY INDICATION THERE AS TO WHY IT IS SO DIFFICULT TO MAKE PROGRESS.

THERE ARE OTHER COMMONWEALTH INITIATIVES THAT CAN BE TAKEN FURTHER IN THE NEXT TWO OR THREE DAYS. THE CAIRNCROSS REPORT ON THE IMPACT OF PROTECTION ON DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IS ONE OF GREAT SIGNIFICANCE TO A LARGE NUMBER OF OUR PRESENT MEMBERS, AND THE COMMONWEALTH FINANCE MINISTERS MEETING COMMUNIQUE WHICH INCLUDES THE PROPOSED STUDY AT INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS, TO WHICH MR MULDOON HAS PAID A VERY SPECIAL INTEREST.

THIS MEETING COMES AT A DIFFICULT TIME. THERE IS GLOBAL POLITICAL INSTABILITY OF A KIND THAT WE HAVE NOT SEEN FOR A VERY LONG WHILE. THE WORLD ECONOMY REMAINS DEPRESSED AND DESPITE SOME WHO SEEM TO INDICATE HOPEFUL SIGNS IN THE UNITED STATES, THERE ARE PROSPECTS OF CONTINUING RECESSION, NOT NECESSARILY FOR MONTHS, BUT MAYBE FOR PERIODS MUCH LONGER THAN THAT. TRADE LIBERALISATION AGAINST THAT BACKGROUND BECOMES A MATTER OF MAJOR CONCERN AND MAYBE THE ONLY WAY TO GENERATE GROWTH WITHIN THE DEVELOPED WORLD AND BETWEEN THE DEVELOPED AND THE DEVELOPING WORLD. THERE IS A NEED TO ACT TOGETHER TO FIGHT PROTECTIONISM.

AUSTRALIA SOME TIME AGO ADVANCED CERTAIN INITIATIVES, A FREEZE ON PROTECTION, A FREEZE AND A REDUCTION ON EXPORT SUBSIDIES, AND ULTIMATELY MULTILATERAL CUTS IN PRESENT LEVELS OF PROTECTION. PROPOSALS SUCH AS THAT HAVE TO BE MULTILATERAL. THEY ARE NOT ONES EVEN THE LARGEST POWER COULD ACCOMMODATE ALONE. THE FORTHCOMING MINISTERIAL MEETING OF GATT WILL BE OF SIGNIFICANCE TO SEE IF ANY PROGRESS CAN BE MADE. THERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY HERE FOR US TO DISCUSS THESE MATTERS AND TO PROVIDE SOME FURTHER IMPETUS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST NOT JUST EXISTING LEVELS OF PROTECTION, BUT INCREASING LEVELS OF PROTECTION.

WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO THE DISCUSSIONS HERE TODAY. THERE ARE MANY MATTERS OF IMPORTANCE BEFORE US, BUT ABOVE ALL, IF THIS MEETING CAN DO SOMETHING TO HELP PROVIDE THE DETERMINATION, THE CONVICTION, AND THE WILL WHICH IS SO SORELY NEEDED NOT JUST AMONGST OUR PRESENT MEMBERS, BUT AMONGST THE WIDER WORLD, THEN THAT IN ITSELF WOULD HAVE BEEN WORTHWHILE, BECAUSE SOMETIMES IT IS POSSIBLE TO SEE THE DIRECTIONS THAT OUGHT TO BE TAKEN, BUT AT THE SAME TIME, TO LACK THE COURAGE AND DETERMINATION TO TAKE THE INITIAL FIRST STEP. ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS THAT WE COULD ACHIEVE IS TO HELP PROVIDE THAT IMPETUS, HELP PROVIDE THAT SENSE OF DIRECTION AND HELP PROVIDE THE DETERMINATION WHICH WILL ENABLE PERHAPS OTHERS, WHO MAY BE LARGER AND MORE POWERFUL THAN ANY OF US HERE, TO TAKE STEPS AND DIRECTIONS THAT WOULD HELP THE WORLD GET OUT OF THE PRESENT RECESSION AND PRESENT DIFFICULTIES.

YOUR EXCELLENCY, THE PRIME MINISTER RATU NARA, THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED FOR THE GENEROSITY OF YOUR WELCOME. THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED FOR THE HOSPITALITY THAT YOU HAVE ALREADY EXTENDED TO SU. IT WAS A TYPICALLY WARM AND GENEROUS WELCOME AND ONE WHICH I VALUE GREATLY AND I AM SURE WE ALL DO.