



PRIME MINISTER

E. & O.E. - PROOF ONLY

TRANSCRIPT OF PRESS CONFERENCE, AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION,
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JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, how would you assess the concept of Pierre Trudeau going to China now, given the fact that America and the Soviet Union have virtually cut off relations, particularly over the NIF?

PM: They haven't cut off relations. In respect of one area of discussions there has been a walk out on the NIF talks and that specifically related to the decision in regard to the Pershing and Cruise missiles. I think it's a good initiative. The heads of Commonwealth Governments have welcomed it. I think any attempt to open up discussions between the five nuclear powers makes sense and I see in this morning's press that the Soviets have indicated a preparedness to talk with him and he now has the support of the Commonwealth Heads of Government. If there is anything we can do to assist in that process, we will.

JOURNALIST: Has it taken on a greater importance in the last couple of days? Earlier on you described it as very ambitious.

PM: Well it is still ambitious and Pierre recognises himself that it is ambitious. He is not saying that it will succeed. We will take the view that when you look at the issue involved - that is the question of whether we are going to have nuclear war or not - the possible destruction of human civilisation as we know it - then I think any effort is worthwhile.

JOURNALIST: Mr. Hawke, the Goa declaration - is that just mere platitudes, or what can it achieve?

PM: Well, may I say just before going to the Goa declaration - specifically the actual Goa declaration dealing with international security matters generally is only one of the elements of the meeting at Goa and I guess in some senses you could say the least productive because it is a very general sort of statement. My main area of disappointment with the Goa declaration is the very passing, and by implication, reference to horizontal proliferation. There is an emphasis upon the issues of vertical proliferation by the major powers like the nuclear powers and I believe not sufficient attention is given to the - at least in my judgement - equal problem of the spread of nuclear weapons, but in the other areas of Cyprus and Grenada I think the Goa weekend has been particularly productive.

JOURNALIST: send weapons to other Heads of Government and if so which ones, Mr. Hawke?

PM: I made it in the discussions. When we were trying to finalise the communique I made the point there - and I was joined in it by Pierre Trudeau in particular - that there wasn't sufficient spelling out of the question of horizontal proliferation and the dangers involved in that. What is there is as far as we were able to go.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, why did you sign the document if you were so disappointed in it.

PM: I think it is an overstatement to say I am disappointed in it. What you've got to realize

JOURNALIST: They were your words, Sir.

PM: Well, disappointed about one particular issue, I said. I didn't talk about the document as a whole. You've got to understand that you are dealing with a range of people that cover aligned and non-aligned countries, developed and developing countries and from all the regions. Now, you are rather unreal if you start off in a context like that thinking that you're going to get great unanimity on every issue and I tend to think that given the composition of the meeting it went just about as far as it could go. My particular disappointment, however, as I say, is that I think there could with some degree of realism be more reference to the dangers posed to the future of the world by the possibility of the wider spread of nuclear weapons and I said that at the meeting and I repeat it now.

JOURNALIST: Mr. Hawke, this meeting has involved a heck of a lot of time and a heck of a lot of money. Are these meetings really worth it?

PM: I think so, but I think there is an argument for reducing the period of the meetings. I believe that if more preparations were done before the meeting - that is with documents being circulated - more specific documents being circulated. See, we had no specific documents before we got here. I think if that sort of thing were done, you could concertina the period. I believe that the meetings are worthwhile in two or three direct ways. Let me make it clear. The opportunity - this is particularly so for me on the first occasion - of getting to know personally and quite intimately a range of leaders from all over the world is very useful. You can conduct sensible discussions with them in an environment like this which would be difficult elsewhere and in matters of particular importance to Australia. Secondly, I think on particular issues this meeting has been very useful and I cite Grenada. I don't think before you got here you would have expected, given the divergent views, from within the Caribbean states and certainly given the strength in the views of the African countries against the action that took place, that you would have expected to get a joint communique in such mild terms as far as the past was concerned and constructive as far as the future. Secondly, in regard to

Cyprus, I think the establishment of the working group of five nations including Australia, to work in association with the United Nations, does add some hope to the resolution of that issue, which of course is of particular interest to so many of us in Australia. So yes, I'm sorry for the length of the answer, but I think in those general terms and in regard to specific issues with which we've dealt, the meeting has been worthwhile. It has demonstrated the utility of the Commonwealth as an institution and of meetings within it. I repeat I think there is a case for shortening the meetings and a way of doing that is by more intensive preparatory work.

JOURNALIST: Mr. Hawke, have you been informed of the Victorian conference decision on uranium and do you believe that this is likely to undermine your own Government's uranium stance?

PM: I'm not going to talk about those domestic issues here. I have read the cables.

JOURANLIST: What was your response after you read them?

PM: Well I say I'll wait till I get back to Australia to discuss these, but I think you can see by my demeanour that I'm not terribly upset.

JOURNALIST: You're still fairly relaxed about uranium then.

PM: I don't think one should ever be relaxed about an issue like this. I repeat. You can see I don't look to be shedding any weight or sweating at the forehead or anything like that.

JOURNALIST: Inaudible

PM: Come on, I'm not going into any detailed discussion about that. I can assure you that when I'm back in Australia I'll be prepared to talk about it.

JOURNALIST: Mr. Hawke, which countries resisted being more specific on horizontal proliferation and what were the main reasons they gave?

PM: Well, there were not reasons spelt out. I think it's fair to say that India has a fairly strong position about this and about the NPT, but I don't think it's useful to go into specifics further than that about individual countries.

JOURNALIST: Do you think there might be a slight touch of hypocrisy about some of the Commonwealth nations that have come to the nuclear issue - that is they want the super powers to scale down nuclear proliferation yet they want to retain their own right to develop nuclear arms?

PM: Well, I'm not using the word hypocrisy, but if you look at the NPT it is based - as they put it - on a contract. The contract is that the powers that have a nuclear capacity will not proceed with further development and on that basis the non-possessors will not seek to acquire and the argument of the non-possessors is that those who have got it haven't kept to their part of the bargain, therefore, they are entitled not to keep to theirs. Now, putting it in simpler terms that is

the exposition. Now, I think it is inadequate to approach it in that way. I simply make the point that while we've had an extraordinarily troubled world for the last nearly 40 years when the world experienced the use of an atomic weapon, the balances that operate between the powers that have nuclear capacity and weaponry has operated to prevent its use. I am hopeful that the considerations involved in that would continue to produce that result. Now, I am much more apprehensive for the future of the world where more powers had nuclear weaponry. Now I don't need to name the powers involved, but I would think that the considerations which have operated, produced an absence of nuclear war between the majors, that those considerations are far less likely to apply when you do have a spread of nuclear weaponry and that is why I took the view and continue to hold the view that we should be at least as concerned about that issue.

JOURNALIST: Sir, bearing in mind your preference for shorter CHOGMs, do you think there is a need for the regional meeting?

PM: Well, Australia has expressed some doubt about those. It looks as though - the matter is still to be discussed - but, as I understand it, Michael Somare is going to be opening his new Parliament House next year and everyone who would be going to CHOGRM where it was supposed to be in New Guinea, would be there for that and I think there may be some attempt to bring the two things together - have the people gathered together there for the opening and a short meeting in regard to CHOGRM. Now, that may make sense on this occasion, but I think we ought to direct attention to the question of the necessity or otherwise for the sort of regularity into the future. I have my doubts about that.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, how would you describe the state of play now between the Soviet Union and the United States? Would you describe it as dangerous or getting more dangerous?

PM: Well, I think it is fair to say that there has been an escalation of dangerous rhetoric and yes, I think it is fair to say that the position between the two major super powers is potentially more dangerous than it has been for some time, but I don't want to exaggerate that. The first Soviet indicated that if the United States, in cooperation with its European allies, went ahead by the end of 1983 with the station of the Cruise and Pershing missiles, then that they would withdraw. Now, having said so consistently and frequently that they would do that, it seemed to me inevitable that they would do it. I have the view that after a period of time the talks will resume. There is no suggestion that they are going to cut out communication and dialogue in other areas and so it is a pity that the breakdown in the NIF talks has taken place, but I don't despair about that.

JOURNALIST: Mr. Hawke what was your talks with Mr. Trudeau about yesterday?

PM: Well, there is a matter of this group of parliamentarians - I don't know what they were actually called - some groups from the United States came to see me earlier in the year and they've

got some concept about parliamentarians for international peace - I don't think that is the exact title of it - and he was asking me all about that and we had a fairly common view about it - that the concept sounded OK, but perhaps there were more immediate and practical things that we should be concerned with, but we weren't trying to completely douse them with cold water.

JOURNALIST: Did you talk about Peking?

PM: Yes, I did have a talk with Mr. Trudeau about his visit to Peking. I wished him well and asked him to convey my best wishes to Premier Zhao, who I will be meeting myself within a matter of a few weeks.
