



PRIME MINISTER

TRANSCRIPT PRESS CONFERENCE - STATE GUEST HOUSE, PEKING 8 FEB, 84

TO PRIME MINISTER'S PRESS OFFICE, PARLIAMENT HOUSE, CANBERRA
E. AND O.E. - PROOF ONLY.

P.M.: LET ME SAY THAT I FOUND THE TALKS WITH PREMIER ZHAO AS I EXPECTED EXTRAORDINARILY USEFUL AS I FOUND THEM IN CANBERRA. HE IS I BELIEVE AN OUTSTANDING LEADER, ARTICULATE AND COMMUNICATIVE AND ONE WITH WHOM IT IS POSSIBLE TO HAVE VERY USEFUL AND DIRECT INTER-CHANGE OF THOUGHTS. TODAY'S SESSION COVERED INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND AS YOU KNOW TOMORROW WE WILL BE GOING ON TO DISCUSS REGIONAL AND BILATERAL MATTERS.

AT THE OUTSET I CONVEYED TO THE PREMIER BY WAY OF SETTING THE CONTEXT THAT IF YOU LOOK AT AUSTRALIA'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE LAST DECADE, PROBABLY THE OUTSTANDING FEATURE OF IT HAS BEEN THE TRANSLATION OF CHINA IN THAT RELATIONSHIP FROM A SYMBOLIC AND DIVISIVE ISSUE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 70'S TO A POSITION WHERE CHINA IS NOW A MAJOR PARTNER OF AUSTRALIA IN THE ECONOMIC AND TRADING SENSE AND POLITICALLY A COUNTRY WITH WHOM WE SHARE A WIDE NUMBER OF COMMON BASIC PERCEPTIONS.

IN THAT OPENING CONTEXT I TALKED WITH THE PREMIER ABOUT THE FACT THAT SINCE WE LAST MET IN APRIL OF 1983, THE WORLD IS A LESS STABLE AND SECURE PLACE AND THAT THE TENSIONS INVOLVED AND RIVALRY BETWEEN THE TWO SUPERPOWERS HAS INCREASED AND IS REFLECTED SADLY IN THE SUSPENSION OF THE INF TALKS AND IN REGARD TO START NO DATE HAVING BEEN SET FOR THE RESUMPTION. AND I PUT TO THAT PREMIER THAT THIS WAS A MATTER OF GREAT CONCERN TO AUSTRALIA BECAUSE AS CENTRAL TO OUR POSITION IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS IS OUR PURSUIT OF THE ISSUE OF ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT.

I SPENT A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF TIME ON THIS ISSUE AND SAID THAT OUR CONCERNS WERE IN THE ARE OF NUCLEAR TESTING AND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION. MAY I SAY ON THE QUESTION OF NUCLEAR TESTING I CONVEYED TO THE PREMIER OUR STRONG HOPE THAT CHINA WHICH HAS NOW NOT TESTED IN THE ATMOSPHERE SINCE THE LATTER PART OF 1980 WOULD NOT RESUME ATMOSPHERIC NUCLEAR TESTING.

IN THE AREA OF NON-PROLIFERATION I PUT THE VIEW TO THE PREMIER THAT WHILE WE UNDERSTOOD THAT THEY HAD SOME DIFFERENCES WITH US ON THE QUESTION OF THE NPT, THERE WERE CERTAIN BASIC ISSUES THAT I WANTED TO BE. AND THAT WAS THAT WE UNDERSTOOD AND UNDERSTAND THAT THE LOGICAL BASIS OF THE EMERGENCE OF THE NPT WAS, IF YOU LIKE, THE BARGAIN CONCEPT THAT ON THE BASIS OF THE TWO SUPERPOWERS NOT ENGAGING IN VERTICAL PROLIFERATION THERE WOULD BE AN ACCEPTANCE ON THE PART OF THE OTHER NATIONS OF THE WORLD THAT THEY SHOULD NOT THEMSELVES BECOME INVOLVED IN THE NON-PEACEFUL USE OF ACQUISITION OF NUCLEAR CAPACITY.

HAVING SAID THAT THAT OF COURSE WAS THE CONCEPTUAL LOGICAL BASIS OF THE NPT, I PUT TO THE PREMIER THAT THE FACT THAT, IF YOU LIKE, THE BARGAIN HAD NOT BEEN ADHERED TO BY THE TWO SUPERPOWERS AND THAT THEREIN LAY A GREAT RISK TO THE WORLD ... A POSSIBLE OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES. AND THAT DID NOT OF ITSELF CONSTITUTE ANY REASON LOGICALLY OR ON ANY OTHER GROUNDS FOR NOT BEING CONCERNED WITH THE HORIZONTAL RISK. AND I PUT TO HIM BOTH IN OPENING AND IN LATER STAGES THAT WE HAVE A PERCEPTION THAT IN THE YEARS AHEAD THE RISK TO THE WORLD, POTENTIAL RISK TO THE WORLD, OF THE ACQUISITION AND POTENTIAL USE OF BELIGERENT NUCLEAR CAPACITY IS SOMETHING OF GREAT CONCERN TO US.

THIS DISCUSSION OCCUPIED A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF TIME IN MY EXPOSITION AND THE PREMIER'S RESPONSE AND LATER A REJOINDER OF MINE. BUT I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO SAY, AS I PUT TO THE PREMIER, THAT WE WELCOME THE SIGNS EVIDENT IN RECENT TIME INCLUDING PARTICULARLY OBSERVATIONS MADE BY THE PREMIER IN WASHINGTON AND REPEATED AGAIN IN DISCUSSIONS WITH ME, SIGNS OF AN INCREASING DEGREE OF CONVERGENCE OF CONCERN BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES ON THESE ISSUES. AND INDEED WE'VE WELCOMED THE VERY RECENT INDICATIONS WE'VE RECEIVED, JUST WITHIN THE LAST 48 HOURS FROM THE CHINESE DELEGATION ON THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT OF THEIR DESIRE TO CO-OPERATE CLOSELY WITH US IN THAT PARTICULAR FORUM.

I WON'T GO INTO ANY MORE DETAILS ON THAT ... BUT I WANT TO MAKE THE BASIC POINTS TO YOU. FIRSTLY, THAT THE QUESTION OF ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT, PARTICULARLY IN THE NUCLEAR FIELD OF COURSE, OCCUPIED A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF OUR TIME.

AND SECONDLY, THAT WHILE THERE ARE SOME DIFFERENCES BETWEEN US IN THE MECHANICS, IF YOU LIKE, IN THE APPROACH PARTICULARLY IN REGARD TO THE NPT WHICH AS YOU KNOW CHINA HAS NOT ADHERED TO - NEVERTHELESS WE WELCOME THE CONVERGENCY OF OBJECTIVES AND THE INCREASING SIGNS OF A CAPACITY FOR CO-OPERATION BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES IN THIS AREA.

FROM THOSE BROAD ISSUES I WENT TO A NUMBER OF PARTICULAR ASPECTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE. I WELCOMED THE STRENGTHENING OF RELATIONS BETWEEN CHINA AND THE UNITED STATES REFLECTED IN THE RECENT A VERY SUCCESSFUL VISIT OF THE PREMIER TO THE UNITED STATES. AND WE WERE GRATEFUL THAT WE WERE ABLE TO PLAY SOME PART FOLLOWING OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PREMIER LAST YEAR IN CONVEYING CERTAIN CONCERNS OF THE CHINESE TO THE UNITED STATES. IN TURN THE PREMIER EXPRESSED GRATIFICATION TO US FOR THAT.

IN THE AREA OF NORTH EAST ASIA WE EXPRESSED TODAY OUR CONCERN THAT I HAVE EXPRESSED IN AUSTRALIA AND EARLIER ON IN THIS VISIT ON THE EXTENSION OF SOVIET OFFENSIVE CAPACITY WITHIN THE REGION AND TARGETTED ON THE REGION. AND I EXPRESSED AGAIN OUR CONCERN THAT THE DISCUSSIONS IN EUROPE IF AND WHEN THEY RESUME IN THE INF AREA WOULD NOT IN ANY SENSE BE SATISFACTORY IF THE SOVIET DEPLOYMENT WERE TO BE CHANGED FROM TARGETTING ON EUROPE TO THIS REGION. IT WAS IN THIS CONTEXT OF TALKING ABOUT THE ADDED TENSION IN THE REGION OF NORTH EAST ASIA THAT I WENT TO THE QUESTION OF THE KOREAN PENINSULA. I EXPRESSED OUR CONCERN TO THE PREMIER THAT THIS REMAINED A POTENTIAL TROUBLE POINT FOR WORLD PEACE. I PUT TO HIM THE REALITIES, THE UNAVOIDABLE REALITIES, THAT THERE ARE TWO GOVERNMENTS, TWO DISTINCT ENTITIES ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA - THAT HAS TO BE RECOGNISED, ANBM

THAT THE ESSENCE OF GETTING A RESOLUTION OF THIS POTENTIAL CONFLICT IS THE NECESSITY FOR DIRECT DIALOGUE BETWEEN THOSE TWO ENTITIES. I EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE CONCEPT OF TRIPARTITE TALKS ADVANCED RECENTLY BY THE DPRK WAS NOT, FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, ACCEPTABLE TO THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA. AND I EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD LIKE CHINA AND AUSTRALIA, EACH IN THEIR WAYS WITH CONTACTS WITH ON THE ONE HAND THE DPRK AND OURSELVES WITH THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA, THAT WE MAY BE ABLE TO PLAY SOME PART IN PRODUCING A SITUATION, WHETHER IT BE IN A QUADRIPARTITE OR EVEN IN A LARGER FRAMEWORK, WHERE A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO ENTITIES COULD TAKE PLACE I CAN SAY THAT THERE WAS AGREEMENT, A CONGENIAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN US OF THE POTENTIAL DANGER AND OF THE NEED TO SECURE A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THOSE TWO COUNTRIES.

I DID RAISE WITH THE PREMIER THE QUESTION OF NAMIBIA AND I DID THIS PARTICULARLY BECAUSE WHEN HE'D BEEN TO AUSTRALIA HE HAD RAISED THE ISSUE WITH ME. I WAS ABLE TO REPORT TO THE PREMIER THE VERY USEFUL DISCUSSIONS I'D WITH SAM NJOMO, THE LEADER OF SWAPO, WHEN I WAS IN DELHI AND INDICATED TO THE PREMIER OUR VIEW THAT THE QUESTION OF LINKAGE WAS NOT WE BELIEVE SOMETHING THAT WAS PRODUCTIVELY CAPABLE OF BEING PURSUED - THAT THERE WAS A NEED, WE BELIEVE, FOR DIRECT TALKS WITH THE FRONT LINE STATES AND INDEED DIALOGUE WITH SWAPO. THAT I HAD FOLLOWING MY TALKS WITH NJOMO AND MY CONVICTION OUT OF THOSE TALKS THAT THERE WOULD BE NO INTENTION ON THE PART OF A FREE NAMIBIA TO BE A SITE FOR SOVIET BASES, OR THERE WOULD NOT BE AN UNWELCOMING ATTITUDE TO FOREIGN INVESTMENT. THAT HAVING RECEIVED THOSE ASSURANCES FROM HIM I CONVEYED THOSE VIEWS TO THE UNITED STATES AND THAT I HOPED THAT THERE COULD BE FOLLOWING THOSE EVENTS SOME LOOSENING UP OF THE SITUATION IN THAT AREA.

I INDICATED TO THE PREMIER THAT IN FACT THERE DID SEEM TO BE SOME SLIGHT EVIDENCE OF MOVING TO THAT DIRECTION WHICH WE WELCOMED. AND THE PREMIER EXPRESSED HIS GRATITUDE FOR WHAT WE'VE DONE IN THAT AREA AND HIS FEELINGS OF WHAT WAS OCCURRING.

WITHOUT THE MATTER BEING DEVELOPED IN ANY WAY I SIMPLY INDICATED TO THE PREMIER ALSO THAT WE STILL REGARDED THE MIDDLE EAST AS THEY DID - AS AN AREA OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT TO ALL THE REST OF THE WORLD AND INDICATED OUR GREAT CONCERN WITH THE INCREASING TRAGEDY OF LEBANON. WE DID NOT PURSUE THAT - I MERELY INDICATED THAT IF WE WERE, AS HE'D ASKED ME TO GIVE A CONSPECTUS OF OUR VIEWS ON THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION, I OBVIOUSLY HAD TO REFER TO THAT, BUT WE DIDN'T PURSUE THE DISCUSSION FURTHER.

FINALLY, I INDICATED TO HIM THAT IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT IF ONE WAS TALKING ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION YOU COULDN'T JUST REFER TO THE POLITICS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION. ONE HAD TO REFER TO INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS THAT HAD BEEN PERLEXING AND BEDEVILLING THE WORLD IN RECENT YEARS. I INDICATED TO HIM THAT IT WAS PROBABLY APPROPRIATE THAT WE PICK UP AN ISSUE AND THE INITIATIVES THAT WE HAD BEEN TAKING IN REGARD TO INTERNATIONAL TRADE LIBERALISATION AND A REGIONAL APPROACH TO THAT. TOMORROW WE HAVE AGREED THAT WE WILL DO THAT.

WELL LADIES AND GENTLEMEN THOSE ARE THE ISSUES, THE SORTS OF THINGS THAT I PUT, SOME BROAD INDICATION OF THE RESPONSES OF THE PREMIER. I WOULD REPEAT AGAIN THAT IT WAS A DIALOGUE BETWEEN TWO VERY FRIENDLY NATIONS AND I REPEAT THAT AT THE END OF THE THREE HOURS I HAD WITH PREMIER ZHAO I AM EVEN MORE STRENGTHENED AND CONFIRMED IN MY VIEW THAT YOU KNOW I'VE EXPRESSED TO YOU BEFORE, THAT AUSTRALIA INDEED DOES HAVE EXTRAORDINARILY GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA, THAT IT IS A RELATIONSHIP OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO US BILATERALLY, TO EACH OF US, AND IMPORTANTLY WE DO SHARE COMMON PERCEPTIONS IN REGARD TO I THINK THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES OF CONCERN IN THE WORLD TODAY. WHERE THERE ARE DIFFERENCES THAT DO EXIST, THERE ARE AGREED POINTS OF DEPARTURE AND COMMON OBJECTIVES BETWEEN US.

JOURNALIST: HOW DID PREMIER ZHAO REACT WHEN YOU EXPRESSED ...

P.M.: THERE WAS NO SPECIFIC RESPONSE TO THAT BUT I MAY SAY THAT HE RECEIVED THE OBSERVATION CONGENIALLY. WE GOT NO PROMISES OR INDICATIONS, I SUPPOSE IT WAS A BIT TOO MUCH TO EXPECT THAT YOU WOULD HAVE GOT SPECIFIC INDICATIONS. BUT ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT I PUT OUR CONCERN STRONGLY TO THE PRESIDENT.

JOURNALIST: PRIME MINISTER, WAS THERE ANY DISCUSSION ON KAMPUCHEA?

P.M.: NO, WE DELIBERATELY DID NOT GO TO THAT TODAY. THAT WILL BE A MATTER TO BE EMBRACED WITHIN REGIONAL ISSUES TOMORROW.

JOURNALIST: WHAT WAS HIS RESPONSE TO YOUR CONVEYANCE TO HIM OF THE ROK'S REQUEST FOR WARMER RELATIONS WITH THE CHINESE ...

P.M.: WELL, LET ME MAKE IT CLEAR - YOU REFER TO MY CONVEYING OF THEIR REQUEST. THE WAY IN WHICH THIS OCCURRED WAS THAT I EXPRESSED OUR CONCERN, AUSTRALIA'S CONCERN, ABOUT THE POTENTIAL FOR A WIDER CONFLICT AND ARISING OUT OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA, AND IN THAT CONTEXT I INDICATED THAT I BELIEVED THAT ONE OF THE OPTIMISTIC FEATURES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE LAST FEW YEARS HAVE BEEN THE WAY IN WHICH CHINA HAD OPENED UP ITS RELATIONS WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD IN GENERAL, AND PERHAPS MOST PARTICULARLY WITH THE UNITED STATES. AND I EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT AGAINST THE SITUATION WHERE CURRENTLY THEY DID NOT HAVE FORMAL RELATIONS WITH THE ROK THAT THEY WOULD SEE THEIR WAY CLEAR TO DO THAT. AND IN THAT CONTEXT I WAS ABLE TO SAY TO THEM THAT IT WAS CLEARLY THE WISH OF THE ROK THAT THAT SHOULD HAPPEN. NOW THE PREMIER KEENLY OBSERVED WHAT I HAD TO SAY ON THAT - IT WAS CLEARLY A MATTER OF INTEREST TO HIM. AND ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT TIME WILL TELL WHAT THE RESPONSE WILL BE.

JOURNALIST: DID YOU MAKE ... ABOUT ALL NATIONS SIGNING THE NPT ...

P.M.: THE WAY I PUT IT WAS THAT TO USE THE LANGUAGE OF OUR AMERICAN FRIENDS, THE NPT IS THE ONLY GAME IN TOWN. AND THAT WE THOUGHT IT APPROPRIATE THAT THAT BEING THE ONLY AVENUE IN THE FORMAL SENSE, THAT IT SHOULD BE PURSUED AND THAT WE INTEND TO PURSUE IT. AND PARTICULARLY I EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT WHILE CHINA, BECAUSE IT AT THIS STAGE REGARDED THE NPT AS SOMEWHAT DISCRIMINATORY AND IT HAD NOT ITSELF BECOME AN ADHERENT SIGNATORY, NEVERTHELESS I EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT IT WOULD NOT IN ANY WAY GIVE SUPPORT TO THE NPT ADVERSARY STATES THAT ONE CAN IDENTIFY IN THE WORLD TODAY.

JOURNALIST: PRIME MINISTER DO YOU HAVE ANY REACTION TO THE EVENTS IN THE LEBANON IN THE LAST 24 HOURS OR 48 HOURS.

P.M.: YES, YOU KNOW THAT I'VE EXPRESSED IN THE PARLIAMENT AND ELSEWHERE A SENSE OF GREAT TRAGEDY ABOUT THE LEBANON. I'VE DONE THAT FOR SOME CONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF TIME NOW AND EXPRESSED SOME SENSE OF PESSIMISM. AND ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT THE RECENT EVENTS CLEARLY CONFIRM THOSE VIEWS THAT I'VE EXPRESSED BEFORE. THERE IS LITTLE THAT AUSTRALIA CAN DO TO ALTER THE COURSE OF EVENTS. I WOULD SIMPLY ON BEHALF OF AUSTRALIA EXPRESS THE PLEA TO EVERYONE CONCERNED, THAT IS THE COUNTRIES BORDERING LEBANON AND THE FACTIONS WITHIN LEBANON ITSELF, THAT THEY SHOULD BE CONSCIOUS OF THE HORRENDOUS LOSS OF LIFE THAT HAS BEEN SUFFERED IN THAT COUNTRY PARTICULARLY SINCE '75. AND ISSUE A PLEA TO ALL NATIONS AND THE FACTIONS CONCERNED TO TRY AND FIND A WAY TO A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS IN THAT TRAGICALLY SCARRED COUNTRY.

JOURNALIST: DO YOU BELIEVE THE AMERICAN TROOPS SHOULD STAY THERE?

P.M.: I'M NOT HERE TO PUBLICLY ADVISED THE UNITED STATES ON ITS POLICY IN REGARD TO THE LEBANON.

JOURNALIST: AUSTRALIAN DIPLOMATS ARE CLEARLY IN SOME DANGER THERE. WOULD YOU CONSIDER WITHDRAWING THEM.

P.M.: I BELIEVE THAT THAT'S A MATTER WHICH IS CURRENTLY UNDER CONSIDERATION IN OUR APPROPRIATE QUARTERS. I DON'T THINK ANYTHING IS ADVANCED BY ME GOING BEYOND THAT. IT IS A MATTER WHICH IS UNDER CONSIDERATION.

JOURNALIST: DO YOU KNOW OF THEIR SAFETY, PRIME MINISTER?

P.M.: ALL I'VE BEEN TOLD THIS MORNING, YOU WILL APPRECIATE THAT WE'VE BEEN PREPARING FOR AND THEN GOING INTO THE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PREMIER, THAT WHAT WAS CONVEYED TO ME WAS THAT WHEN THE SHELL WENT INTO THE CHANCERY, NO-ONE WAS INJURED. SO I HAVEN'T BEEN INFORMED OF ANY CASUALTY AND, AS I SAY, INDICATIONS ARE TO ME THAT CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO THE APPROPRIATE STEPS THAT NEED TO BE TAKEN TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF OUR PERSONNEL.

JOURNALIST: JUST GOING BACK TO THIS DISARMAMENT QUESTION. WAS THERE ANY DISCUSSION OF PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU'S INITIATIVE.

P.M.: YES IS DID RECEIVE REFERENCE. THE PREMIER REFERRED TO THE FACT THAT PIERRE HAD COME HERE IN NOVEMBER OF THE LATTER PART OF THE CHOGM MEETING. THE PREMIER INDICATED WITH REFERENCE TO THAT INITIATIVE THE BASIC POSITION OF CHINA WHICH IS THAT THERE SHOULD BE AS A FIRST STEP ACTION BY THE TWO SUPERPOWERS TO REDUCE TO STOP ANY FURTHER TESTING OR INCREASED SOPHISTICATED OF ON ADDITION TO THE STOCKPILE OF THE SUPERPOWERS AND THAT THERE SHOULD BE A MOVE IMMEDIATELY BY THE SUPERPOWERS TO A 50 PERCENT REDUCTION OF THEIR ARSENALS. AND THEN IN THAT CONTEXT A CONFERENCE OF ALL THE POWERS CONCERNED. AND CLEARLY THAT APPROACH OF THE CHINESE IS NOT CONSISTENT WITH THE TRUDEAU APPROACH WHICH CALLS FOR THE IMMEDIATE CONFERENCE OF THE FIVE NUCLEAR POWERS.

JOURNALIST: ...AND TOMORROW, WHAT WILL YOU BE COVERING ... TRADE?

P.M.: WE'LL BE REVIEWING THE ECONOMIC, TRADING AND CULTURAL AND OTHER ASPECTS OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS, TO SEE JUST WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED SINCE OUR MEETING IN APRIL. AND THERE HAS BEEN VERY CONSIDERABLE ACHIEVEMENT AND THEN THERE ARE CERTAIN SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR STRENGTHENING RELATIONS. AND I'LL MEET WITH YOU AFTER THE SESSION TOMORROW AND TELL YOU.