



## PRIME MINISTER

SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER AT THE FIJIAN WELCOMING CEREMONY

29 AUGUST 1984

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PRIME MINISTER . . . .

MAY I SAY AT THE OUTSET PRIME MINISTER HOW VERY MUCH I APPRECIATE THE FINE WELCOME WHICH HAS GREETED ME HERE TODAY. THE SOUTH PACIFIC HAS A WELL-REGARDED REPUTATION FOR MAKING THE TRAVELLER FEEL WELCOME, AND THE PEOPLE OF FIJI ARE NO EXCEPTION. THE SPLENDOUR OF THIS CEREMONY IS A TRIBUTE TO THE WARM-HEARTED GENEROSITY OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS GREAT ISLAND NATION.

I AM PARTICULARLY HONOURED BY THE PRESENTATION OF THIS FINE TABUA.

I WOULD PARTICULARLY LIKE TO THANK THE SCHOOL PUPILS OF RATU KADAVU LEVU AND ADI CAKOBAU. I AM VERY IMPRESSED THAT BY THEIR PARTICIPATION OF THIS FINE AND DIGNIFIED CEREMONY TODAY THEY ARE ENSURING THE CONTINUATION OF THEIR CULTURAL IDENTITY.

THESE CEREMONIES IN WHICH I HAVE BEEN PLEASED TO PARTICIPATE TODAY ARE A PART OF YOUR NATION'S HERITAGE - A PROUD TRADITION STRETCHING BACK ACROSS MANY GENERATIONS. THE EFFORT YOU HAVE MADE TO PRESERVE YOUR HERITAGE IN MODERN FIJIAN SOCIETY HAS BEEN WELL REWARDED AND I THANK YOU AGAIN.

IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO BE WITH YOU HERE IN SUVA TODAY.

IT IS ALMOST A YEAR AGO THAT I HAD THE HONOUR OF WELCOMING YOU, MR PRIME MINISTER, TO AUSTRALIA FOR THE CANBERRA SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM.

I AM ESPECIALLY PLEASED THAT I AM IN FIJI VIRTUALLY WITHIN THE YEAR.

MR PRIME MINISTER, WE HAVE BOTH JUST COME FROM TUVALU WHERE WE BOTH ENJOYED THE WARMTH OF HOSPITALITY OF THE TUVALUAN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE.

NOW I HAVE THE IMMENSE PLEASURE OF EXPERIENCING FIJI'S.

IN TUVALU WE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS A WIDE AND VARIED RANGE OF SUBJECTS OF IMPORTANCE TO THE REGION. I LOOK FORWARD TO THE RESUMPTION OF OUR TALKS THIS AFTERNOON.

WE IN AUSTRALIA BELIEVE THAT OUR FUTURE LIES WITH THE ASIA/PACIFIC REGION.

WE FULLY RECOGNISE THAT WE HAVE A GREAT DEAL TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE REGION AND WILL VERY LIKELY BE SUBSTANTIALLY AFFECTED BY REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS. IT IS VERY MUCH IN THE INTERESTS OF ALL OF US WITHIN THE REGION THAT WE CONSOLIDATE THE CONDITIONS OF EFFECTIVE REGIONAL CO-OPERATION. THE TASK OF IDENTIFYING REGIONAL SOLUTIONS TO REGIONAL PROBLEMS IS AMONG OUR MOST IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITIES.

AS WAS VERY APPARENT AT OUR LATEST MEETING IN TUVALU, THE SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM GIVES THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS IN A FRIENDLY AND INFORMAL WAY, MATTERS OF MUTUAL CONCERN. IT ENABLES US TO REACH A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHER'S POSITION ON THE WHOLE SPECTRUM OF ISSUES RANGING FROM SECURITY CONCERNS TO SOCIAL WELFARE. IT ALSO PRESENTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS A VIEW OF DEVELOPMENTS WHICH DIRECTLY AFFECT US ALL.

I THOUGHT THE EXPRESSION OF GRAVE CONCERN BY ALL THE SOUTH PACIFIC LEADERS AT THE PERSISTENCE BY THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT IN THEIR PROGRAM OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTING IN THE PACIFIC - DESPITE THE LONG-STANDING PROTESTS OF THE GOVERNMENTS AND PEOPLES OF THE REGION - WAS A MOST VISIBLE DEMONSTRATION OF A SHARED, DEEPLY FELT REGIONAL ANXIETY.

IT IS SIMPLY NOT ACCEPTABLE TO US, THE COUNTRIES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC, THAT THE FRENCH SHOULD BE USING THE SOUTH PACIFIC - OUR OWN PRECIOUS ENVIRONMENT - IN THEIR EFFORTS TO PERFECT WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION.

AUSTRALIA, FOR ITS PART, HAS SUSPENDED SHIPMENTS OF URANIUM TO FRANCE AS EVIDENCE OF OUR CONTINUED CONCERN OVER THIS TESTING.

EXTENSIVE AND IMPORTANT DISCUSSIONS ALSO TOOK PLACE AT THE FORUM ON THE CONCEPT OF A SOUTH PACIFIC NUCLEAR FREE ZONE. THERE HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS.

THE DECISION TO ESTABLISH A WORKING GROUP TO TAKE FURTHER THE DRAFT SET OF PRINCIPLES ON SUCH A ZONE AND TO REPORT TO FORUM GOVERNMENTS IS A VERY USEFUL STEP FORWARD.

IT WILL ENABLE FURTHER ELABORATION OF THE CONCEPT ON THE BASIS OF CONSENSUS BETWEEN COUNTRIES. IN THIS WAY THE INTERESTS OF ALL WILL BE FULLY REPRESENTED IN THE PROPOSALS. MOST IMPORTANTLY IT SHOULD PRODUCE A CONCRETE AND REALISTIC PROPOSAL WHICH CAN BE PRESENTED CONFIDENTLY TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AT LARGE.

IT IS MY PROFOUND CONVICTION THAT WE, THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION, MUST DO WHAT WE CAN, USE WHAT INFLUENCE WE HAVE, TO REDUCE THE DREADFUL THREAT OF NUCLEAR WAR.

WE CANNOT LEAVE IT TO THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES ALONE TO DETERMINE ALL ACTION IN THESE AREAS. WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY BEFORE OUR PEOPLE TO BE HEARD ON THESE FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES.

MY GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN ITS FULL SUPPORT FOR THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY. THAT TREATY, IN OUR VIEW, IS THE MOST IMPORTANT MULTILATERAL NON-PROLIFERATION AND ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENT IN EXISTENCE. NATIONALLY WE ARE DOING EVERYTHING IN OUR POWER TO STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL ADHERENCE TO THE TREATY.

CERTAINLY AUSTRALIA REJECTS CATEGORICALLY ANY NUCLEAR WEAPONS OPTION FOR ITSELF.

THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY ALSO SPECIFICALLY AFFIRMS THE RIGHT OF ALL COUNTRIES TO USE NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES. IT REQUIRES THOSE COUNTRIES IN A POSITION TO DO SO TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR ENERGY IN MEMBER COUNTRIES WHICH WISH TO USE THIS SOURCE OF ENERGY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES.

ACCORDINGLY, UNDER THE TREATY, AUSTRALIA HAS A DOUBLE OBLIGATION:

- TO WORK TOWARD DISARMAMENT, AND TO SHARE RELEVANT RESOURCES WITH THOSE COMMITTED TO THE USE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES.

OUR POSITION AS A MAJOR URANIUM PRODUCER IS VERY RELEVANT IN THIS REGARD.

IT WOULD BE EASY TO TAKE THE SOFT OPTION, SELECTIVELY, TO ADOPT A PASSIVE ATTITUDE TO THOSE OBLIGATIONS OF THE TREATY WHICH MIGHT BE DIFFICULT TO SHOULDER.

WE WILL NOT DO SO.

ONLY THROUGH CONSISTENT AND DETERMINED EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN THE TREATY IN ALL ITS ASPECTS ARE WE LIKELY TO ENSURE THAT THE SPREAD OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IS PREVENTED.

IT IS OUR PARTICULAR HOPE THAT ALL THE COUNTRIES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC, THROUGH THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY AND THE SOUTH PACIFIC NUCLEAR FREE ZONE, WILL MAINTAIN THE SOUTH PACIFIC AS AN AREA WHERE NEIGHBOURS CAN LIVE TOGETHER IN PEACE AND HARMONY.

IN OUR SHARED REGIONAL PURSUIT OF THESE GOALS, FORMAL AND INFORMAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS, PARTICULARLY THE ANZUS ALLIANCE, MUST CONTINUE NOW, AS IN THE PAST, TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE.

THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT IS OF THE VIEW, AND I KNOW THAT THIS VIEW IS SHARED BY FIJI, THAT IT IS VITAL IN OUR EFFORTS TO ENHANCE FURTHER THE SECURITY AND STABILITY OF THE REGION, THAT WE NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE FACTORS WHICH HAVE WORKED TO OUR COLLECTIVE ADVANTAGE FOR NEARLY FOUR DECADES.

IN THIS REGARD I CAN CLEARLY STATE THAT AUSTRALIA WILL CONTINUE TO WELCOME SHIP VISITS BY OUR ALLIES. I AM PLEASED, MR PRIME MINISTER, THAT FIJI SHARES THE SAME VIEW.

WE NEED TO PRESS FOR A MORE OPEN AND EQUITABLE INTERNATIONAL TRADING SYSTEM IN WHICH THE MAJOR TRADING COUNTRIES WILL ALLOW US LESS RESTRICTED ACCESS TO THEIR MARKETS, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES.

I KNOW THAT FIJI HAS A PARTICULAR INTEREST HERE IN THE SUGAR TRADE, AND I AM SURE THAT FOR YOU, AS FOR US, THE COLLAPSE OF THE INTERNATIONAL SUGAR AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS SOME WEEKS AGO HAS CAUSED CONCERN.

AS A NEW ROUND OF MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS MIGHT BE STARTED BEFORE MUCH LONGER, WE IN THE REGION SHOULD, AS I SUGGESTED LAST YEAR, BE CONSIDERING HOW WE MIGHT REGISTER MOST EFFECTIVELY IN THE MINDS OF THE MAJOR TRADING NATIONS THE INTERESTS WHICH WE SHARE AS COUNTRIES OF THE REGION.

TOO OFTEN IN THE PAST OUR CONCERNS HAVE BEEN PUSHED ASIDE.

AUSTRALIA WILL SUPPORT A NEW ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS ONLY IF IT SERIOUSLY AND EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSES OUR SPECIAL CONCERNS AND THE CONCERNS OF OUR NEIGHBOURS.

WE CONSIDER IT TO BE OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE TO THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION THAT THE PROTECTIONIST TRENDS OF THE RECENT YEARS OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RECESSION BE REVERSED.

AUSTRALIA HAS, I BELIEVE, A PARTICULAR ROLE TO PLAY IN CONTRIBUTING TO THE ECONOMIC GROWTH OF THE REGION. AS A PARTNER IN DEVELOPMENT WE CAN HELP STIMULATE ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENHANCE TRADE PROSPECTS AND ENCOURAGE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE REGION.

TO THIS END WE HAVE GIVEN THE REGION THE HIGHEST PRIORITY IN OUR OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. WE ARE COMMITTED TO PROVIDING \$300 MILLION IN AID TO THE SOUTH PACIFIC IN THE 5 YEAR PERIOD TO 1987/88. INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY PROGRAMS ARE BEING DEVELOPED ACCORDING TO PRIORITIES SET BY RESPECTIVE NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS AND ADMINISTERED WITH THE GREATEST POSSIBLE FLEXIBILITY.

UNDER OUR DEFENCE CO-OPERATION PROGRAM, WE PROVIDE MILITARY AS WELL AS POLICE TRAINING.

TO ASSIST IN ECONOMIC GROWTH WE HAVE PROVIDED ENLARGED TRADING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRODUCTS OF THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION THROUGH THE SPARTECA TRADE AGREEMENT. WE ARE AWARE THAT SOME COUNTRIES, INCLUDING FIJI, ARE NOT HAPPY WITH ASPECTS OF THE OPERATION OF SPARTECA, ESPECIALLY IN THE RULES OF ORIGIN PROVISIONS AND ALSO WITH APPAREL. WE HAVE THEREFORE ESTABLISHED WORKING GROUPS AIMED AT RESOLVING THESE DIFFICULTIES AND WILL EXTEND FOR A FURTHER YEAR THE "SEED" QUOTA FOR APPAREL.

AT THE AUSTRALIAN MARKETING END WE HAVE ALSO ASSISTED THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC TRADE COMMISSIONER IN SYDNEY AND HAVE EXTENDED A RANGE OF MARKETING ADVISORY SERVICES TO ASSIST ISLAND PRODUCERS TO DEVELOP AN AUSTRALIAN MARKET.

FIJI HAS A TRADE IMBALANCE WITH AUSTRALIA BROUGHT ABOUT IN PART BY YOUR IMPORTS OF FUEL AND FUEL PRODUCTS. BECAUSE OF THIS FACTOR, A TRADE IMBALANCE IS VIRTUALLY INEVITABLE: AUSTRALIA TOO RUNS A BILATERAL TRADE IMBALANCE WITH THOSE NATIONS FROM WHOM WE SOURCE THE BULK OF OUR OIL IMPORTS.



IT IS PLEASING, HOWEVER, TO SEE THAT YOUR EXPORTS TO AUSTRALIA HAVE INCREASED BY OVER 50 PER CENT IN THE LAST TWO YEARS AND THAT EFFORTS TO REDUCE THE IMBALANCE ARE CONTINUING ON BOTH SIDES.

A FURTHER ASPECT OF FIJI'S BALANCE OF PAYMENTS SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WHEN ASSESSING BILATERAL PAYMENTS BETWEEN NATIONS IN THE INVISIBLES ACCOUNT. ONE OF THE MAJOR ITEMS IN THIS ACCOUNT IS EARNINGS FROM TOURISM. AUSTRALIAN TOURISTS CONTRIBUTE VERY SIGNIFICANTLY TO FIJI'S EARNINGS.

THE CO-OPERATION BETWEEN OUR AIRLINES QANTAS AND AIR PACIFIC IN JOINTLY PROMOTING FIJI AND THE REGION AS A HOLIDAY DESTINATION FOR AUSTRALIANS HAS BEEN A MAJOR SUCCESS, AND I HAVE EVERY EXPECTATION THAT FIJI WILL CONTINUE TO BE A MUCH SOUGHT-AFTER OVERSEAS HOLIDAY DESTINATION FOR AUSTRALIANS.

IT IS YET ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF HOW MUTUAL CO-OPERATION TO ACHIEVE A COMMON OBJECTIVE CAN BENEFIT BOTH OUR COUNTRIES.

MR PRIME MINISTER

AUSTRALIA AND FIJI SHARE MANY COMMON OBJECTIVES AND ASPIRATIONS.

WE ARE BOTH PART OF A REGION WHICH WE WISH TO SEE CONTINUE AS AN AREA OF PEACE, PROSPERITY AND POLITICAL STABILITY.

WE HAVE A PARTNERSHIP BASED ON MUTUAL RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING. IT IS A PARTNERSHIP WHICH CAN IN THE FUTURE ONLY DEVELOP TO OUR MUTUAL ADVANTAGE AND TO THE ADVANTAGE OF OUR REGION.

I CAN ASSURE YOU AUSTRALIA REGARDS THIS COMMITMENT AS AMONG ITS MOST IMPORTANT. WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO ASSURE THE MAINTENANCE OF CONDITIONS THAT WILL ALLOW THIS PARTNERSHIP TO FLOURISH.

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