



PRIME MINISTER

COMMENTS TO THE PRESS ON ARRIVAL
AT MANILA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
11 A.M. FRIDAY 25 MAY, 1986

Thank you Mr Vice-President. I would like to say on behalf of myself, my wife and those travelling with me, how very pleased we are to be here today. We thought it appropriate on this visit overseas that we should come to the Philippines because we in Australia attach very great importance, not only to our relations with this Country, but also to the importance of the Philippines as a leader of the ASEAN group and for its significance in the region as a whole. We were amongst the first, I believe, to indicate our total support for the new government of President Aquino and we had a visit here very early by our Foreign Minister, Bill Hayden. We have indicated a 50% increase in our aid to the Philippines and, by my visit here, I hope that the Government and the people of the Philippines will understand both the interest in and the commitment of the people of Australia in trying to assist the Government and the people of the Philippines in the very great tasks that now confront them in lifting the social and economic positions of the people of this Country. We do not overestimate the capacity that we have as one country, Australia, to help in this regard and I want to give you the assurance that we will do all that is within our power to help you because we believe that the tasks that confront the new Government are of very, very significant dimensions, that it is going to require the co-operation of all elements within the Philippines and the co-operation of the countries and the international institutions that have the interests of this region at heart. Therefore, I hope that you will see this visit by me as part of our commitment to the great purposes which now confront you in this Country.

Thank you very much indeed.