



**PRIME MINISTER**

TRANSCRIPT OF COMMENTS MADE BY PRIME MINISTER AT DINNER HOSTED BY VICE PRESIDENT LAUREL.  
MANILA 25 May 1986 E & O E - PROOF ONLY

PM : YOUR EXCELLENCY VICE PRESIDENT LAUREL, MINISTERS, CHIEF JUSTICE, AMBASSADOR FERNANDEZ, OTHER MINISTERS, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I THANK YOU MR VICE PRESIDENT FOR THE WARMTH OF YOUR WELCOME HERE TONIGHT AND UPON OUR ARRIVAL. THERE'S NO QUESTION THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES HAVE NOW OPENED A NEW CHAPTER IN YOUR HISTORY. I BELIEVE THAT WE HAVE NOW OPENED, IMPORTANTLY, A NEW CHAPTER IN RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO PEOPLES. I HOPE THAT YOU WILL ACCEPT THAT MY VISIT HERE TODAY AND THE VISITING TOMORROW WITH THE PRESIDENT IS A SOLEMN, SERIOUS RECOGNITION AND SYMBOLISATION OF THAT NEW CHAPTER IN OUR RELATIONS.

2. YOU RIGHTLY REFER TO THE FACT THAT THIS IS DELIBERATELY MY FIRST VISIT TO THIS COUNTRY. I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY DURING THE 1970'S IN A POSITION I PREVIOUSLY HELD TO ACCEPT INVITATIONS TO VISIT BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT I WAS NOT AGAINST VISITING OTHER COUNTRIES. I VISITED MANY, BUT I ALWAYS FOUND A REASON FOR NOT COMING AND IT WAS FOR THAT REASON THAT ON MY FIRST VISIT OVERSEAS IN THIS REGION AT THIS OCCASION, I REGARD IT AS APPROPRIATE NOT ONLY IN A PERSONAL SENSE BUT ON BEHALF OF MY GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA THAT I SHOULD COME HERE SO THAT YOU WOULD UNDERSTAND THAT WE DO SEE THIS AS A NEW OPENING, A NEW CHAPTER IN OUR RELATIONS.

3. IT'S BEEN A PLEASURE, SIR, TO TALK WITH YOU. WE'VE ALREADY CUTTED ED DOWN TO THE BUSINESS OF DISCUSSIONS. WE'VE HAD NEARLY AN HOUR BY AN INTERCHANGE OF VIEWS AND I HOPE THAT AS WELL AS BEING ABLE ON MY PART TO RECEIVED FROM YOU INSIGHTS OF YOUR PERCEPTIONS OF THE TASKS THAT CONFRONT YOU, THE MANNER IN WHICH YOU PROPOSE TO MEET THEM, THAT WE MAY IN SOME SMALL WAY ALREADY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO BE OF ASSISTANCE TO YOU. I'VE BEEN PLEASSED TO MEET WITH YOU AND I AM LOOKING FORWARD FAIRLY TO MEETING YOUR PRESIDENT AGAIN TOMORROW.

4. I MUST SAY TO YOUR VICE PRESIDENT, THAT WE IN AUSTRALIA HAD A LITTLE MORE THAN AN UNLIMITED OPPORTUNITY OF WATCHING THE UNFOLDING OF EVENTS HERE EARLIER THIS YEAR. WE HAD OUR TELEVISION PEOPLE HERE AND THERE WAS NOT SIMPLY DAILY BUT ON AN HOURLY BASIS A GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF WHAT WAS HAPPENING AND THAT FACT OF AN ESSENTIALLY PEACEFUL REVOLUTION CAPTURED OUR IMAGINATION. I THINK IT IS A TRIBUTE TO THE CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY THAT IN THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH IN SO MANY OTHER COUNTRIES COULD HAVE GIVEN RISE TO MASSIVE BLOODSHED, WIDESPREAD CIVIL WAR, THAT YOUR CHARACTER OF YOUR PEOPLE WAS SUCH THAT IN THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES, YOU WERE ESSENTIALLY PEACEFULLY ABLE TO EFFECT THIS TRANSITION.

5. AS YOU HAVE SAID MY GOVERNMENT MOVED PROMPTLY TO RECOGNISE AND SUPPORT THE NEW GOVERNMENT AND MR HAYDEN, MY FOREIGN MINISTER, CAME HERE AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY AND WAS ONE, I THINK, OF THE FIRST TO VISIT YOU. I WANT, ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA, TO REAFFIRM TO YOU HERE AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY, OUR SUPPORT FOR THE TASK OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL REFORM AND ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION WHICH IS BEFORE YOU. I SAY THAT, MR VICE PRESIDENT:

AS A FRIEND OF THE PHILIPPINES, AND AS ONE OF YOUR CONCERNED REGIONAL NEIGHBOURS, BECAUSE NOT ONLY DO WE SEE THESE TASKS AS IMPORTANT TO THE PEOPLE OF THIS GREAT COUNTRY, BECAUSE SOUTH-EAST ASIAN STABILITY AND PROSPERITY IS VITALLY IMPORTANT TO ALL OF US.

4. WE KNOW, MR VICE PRESIDENT, THAT YOU HAVE INHERITED ALMOST UNMEASURABLY DIFFICULT PROBLEMS AND YOU HAVE CONVEYED TO ME IN THE DISCUSSIONS THAT WE'VE ALREADY HAD THAT YOU ARE STILL ENGAGED IN THE TASK OF TRYING TO DETERMINE THE EXTENT OF THE PLUNDERING WHICH HAS TAKEN PLACE ON THE LIMITED RESOURCES OF THIS COUNTRY BY THE DEPOSED GOVERNMENT'S HEAD. BUT AS DIFFICULT AS THOSE PROBLEMS ARE AS IMMEASURABLE AS THE DIFFICULTIES THAT CONFRONT YOU WE KNOW THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF WHICH YOU ARE SUCH AN IMPORTANT MEMBER HAS THE COMMITMENT AND IS PREPARED TO MAKE A SUSTAINED EFFORT TO TACKLE THOSE PROBLEMS, AND I HOPE THAT YOU WILL ACCEPT THAT THE 50 PERCENT INCREASE IN OUR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE IS AN EARNEST OF OUR COMMITMENT TO ASSIST YOU IN THIS TASK. WE KNOW THAT WHILE THAT 50 PERCENT INCREASE IS NOT AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF MONEY WHEN SET AGAINST THE EXTENSIONS OF THE PROBLEMS THAT CONFRONT YOU BUT I HOPE THAT YOU WILL UNDERSTAND THAT THAT 50 PERCENT INCREASE IS IN VERY REAL TERMS A MEASURE OF THE IMPORTANCE THAT WE ATTACH TO THE TASK BEFORE YOU.

5. WE WISH YOU, YOUR GOVERNMENT AND PRESIDENT AQUINO EVERY SUCCESS IN THOSE TASKS, SUCCESS IN IMPROVING THE LIVES OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY IN THE MOST RESPONSIBILITY. WE WISH YOU EVERY SUCCESS IN DEVELOPING ACTIVE BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH COUNTRIES IN THIS REGION AND ESPECIALLY AT A MOMENT YOU COME TO THIS TASK, MR VICE PRESIDENT, WE WISH YOUR GOVERNMENT TO YOU TO THIS TASK, I BELIEVE, WITH A VERY VERY GREAT SPIRIT OF GOODWILL. THE GOODWILL OF THE PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA, THE GOODWILL OF THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS REGION AND, INDEED, THE WIDE WORLD.

6. THERE CAN, I BELIEVE, HAVE BEEN NO OTHER MOMENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THIS COUNTRY WHEN BOTH SUCH A GREAT CHALLENGE, AND IF I MAY SAY SO, SUCH AN ANNOYING RESPONSIBILITY HAS BEEN IMPOSED ON A SMALL GROUP OF PEOPLE AS IT NOW LIES UPON YOU. WE RECOGNISE THE NATURE OF THAT CHALLENGE, WE SALUTE YOUR COMMITMENT AND WISH YOU WELL.

7. IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, AND FOR THOSE REASONS, MR VICE PRESIDENT I WOULD ASK YOU TO BE UNDERSTANDING AND JOIN ME IN A TOAST TO VICE PRESIDENT LAUREL, PRESIDENT CORAZON AQUINO, TO THE PHILIPPINE PEOPLE AND TO AUSTRALIAN-PHILIPPINE RELATIONS.