



## PRIME MINISTER

TRANSCRIPT OF PRESS CONFERENCE, KING DAVID HOTEL, JERUSALEM  
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E & O E - PROOF ONLY

JOURNALIST: Why do you support the concept of the Palestinian

PM: I think it would repay you to see exactly what I said before you frame the question. What I said is that Australia supports the rights of the Palestinians to self-determination including should it be their choice to a state of their own and I also said from discussions that I have had since I left Canberra, those discussions that I held in Jordan, it seemed to me that it was the view of those involved that the most likely outcome would be processes that could be put underway would be confederation with the state of Jordan. So the important point is the right of a people to self-determination. And I think one has got to include within that right the concept of that possibility that I say on the best information available to me that the exercise of that process, it seems to me, would be most likely to be a confederation with Jordan.

JOURNALIST: What will you be ... taking back to Australia from this visit to Israel?

PM: The visit to Israel of course will not be something in isolation. It will be a part of a total itinerary. And so I make the point that the impressions I have from Israel will be part of a total mosaic of impressions, if you like. As far as I can isolate Israel it will be this that I am obviously impressed with the physical development that has taken place since I was last here in 1980. Also, there is the impression I have, hard to quantify, that there is a growing realisation that Israel is living in an environment markedly different than that which characterised my earlier visits beginning in 1971. There is an important point involved here. When I first came in 1971 and through the 1970s, Israel had the belief and on the evidence the justified belief that its neighbours sought its elimination. And that informed the thinking of Israel, it informed its attitudes to how it should regard the occupied territories. It informed its attitude to what should be the position or status with its neighbouring states. In 1987 the situation has changed in that the world, as I said last night, has come to understand and accept, some albeit reluctantly, but nevertheless the world accepts now that Israel is not going to disappear. Israel is a continuing part of the Middle East scene. And therefore, the attitude of the 70s which were based upon having to belligerently fight against the position which said we are going to obliterate Israel. It is now different. There is a greater obligation to investigate the processes of discussion with neighbouring states who do accept the right of Israel to exist. It is obviously difficult to quantify that sort of thing. But nevertheless that is the considerable impression that I have and I think the obligation upon Israel and upon

PM cont: everyone is to build upon that changed tractual situation the acceptance of ISrael's right to exist behind secure and recognised boundaries. It is going to be complex, difficult and I think a prolonged process. But it must, I think, and is beginning to inform Israel in its attitude to its neighbours and it must also inform its attitudes towards the occupied territories.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke did you receive the impression in Jordan that King Hussein was interested in meeting ...

PM: In the United States?

JOURNALIST: Or anywhere?

PM: No, I wasn't given the impression that King Hussein was wishing to meet them in the United States or anywhere at this point in the immediate period that you referred to. But I had the overwhelming impression that King Hussein was unqualifiedly committed to pursuing the processes for a peaceful resolution of the Israeli/Arab dispute. There is simply no question about the commitment of King Hussein to that goal, that objective, and it is therefore important that Israel and others seek to build upon that fact. And if the building blocks, the initial building blocks, are created then it is inevitable that the sort of meeting that you refer to will take place.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, when you set out on this visit did you hope that Israel might demonstrate a more flexible attitude ...

PM: I haven't finished my discussions in Israel yet. I have this evening to have lengthy discussions with the Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Shimon Peres and I meet again with Prime Minister Shamir tomorrow morning before I leave Israel. So I am not forming any final conclusions before I have completed those meetings.

JOURNALIST: What role do you see for the PLO in the negotiations ... and secondly why has the Australian Government refused to allow ...

PM: Let's pick up the last one first and could be easily disposed of. I had a brief discussion with the Foreign Minister about that question before I left and his views, subsequently explained in more detail, is that he has had very short notice from the United Nations about this meeting and it was his view, which I accepted, that it was not appropriate this time that the meeting should. And he made the point that no question of applications in regard to any individuals had been made in the circumstances of that brief period to which I refer. And so that issue was simply not on the agenda, it is not significant.

PM cont: Now let me go to the first part of your question which is very important. Your question for those who may not have heard it was if I get it correctly was "what role do I see for the PLO in the negotiation process". That is a very important question. Let me first of all put to you what the position of my Government has been. That is that we, as a Government, would not recognise the PLO in the formal sense of recognition while it continues not to recognise the right of Israel to exist that did not mean that there were not contacts between representatives of the Australian Government and PLO in various diplomatic positions and postings and functions around the world. And we said in that same context quite obviously the capacity of the PLO to have a role in these processes would be the greater should it recognise the existence of Israel and the right of Israel to exist. If I may take the opportunity of that question which is I think is a fundamental question of developing this point which to some extent arose from the very useful discussions I had this morning with a number of Palestinians. Those that I met were Mayor Freij of Bethlehem, Dr Ghazaleh from Gaza, Mr Kuttas from Jerusalem and Mr Nuseibeh also from Jerusalem. This question, of course, arose in those discussions. The point I made, which I think is of critical relevance, is this that the attitude of both sides, if you like ... Israel and the PLO, to inform out of the situations of the past by definition. But the realities in '87 are different but what we cannot seem to get is a statement from both sides which in words puts what I think they believe the facts to be. I believe that the PLO understand, not merely that Israel exists but that it is going to continue to exist as an independent and viable state in this region. I believe it understands that but it hasn't in a formal sense said so. On the other side, I think that Israel knows that whether they like it or not in a broadly representative sense not merely of the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza but given the Palestinians' diaspora that there is no organisation more than the PLO which can speak for that Palestinian diaspora. So the important thing seems to me to be to get the two sides to say what they in fact recognise. And it seems to me if that could be done then this large primary hurdle could be overcome that is that there can't be discussions with the PLO, that they can't be part of the process. If the realities in the minds could be translated into the words then it seems to me the way is clear for the PLO to be part of the processes of the discussions.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke ... Palestinians ... although Australia might not be able to play a role in the macro sense ... there may be a role for you ... and if so how do you feel about it?

PM: There was a view I think it is fair to say that Australia perhaps could play some role in the broader issue and as well in the particular issue to which you refer. And to what my response is as it has been from the beginning, we haven't come to be a broker, we haven't come to be a mediator and we don't put ourselves in that position now. Simply, that I have said that if there are things that we can do then we stand ready to do it. Already to this point what I have attempted to do is to convey as strongly as I can to the Israeli leadership the firm impressions I have about the attitude of the King and the leadership in Jordan. I have done that. I will certainly in the discussions I am still to have

PM cont: here in Israel put some of the things I have adumbrated here to you in this conference. I will do that in more detail. And when I come back from Switzerland to Egypt I will put the same sorts of things there and anything that comes out of my discussions with the Israeli leadership. I repeat I don't want to exaggerate what may be involved in that and what may come from it but it just seems to me that anyone who is in the position and we, for better or worse, are in the position, but anyone who is the position to convey information to try and clarify attitudes, to open up possibilities should do that. That is what I will do.

JOURNALIST: ~~Mr Hawke, in relation to the particular subject ... Jordanians ... on exactly this matter that the Israelis will have to change some of their views ... have to change?~~

PM: I have already canvassed basically in the answer I gave before. Very briefly let me emphasise the points. The attitude of the Israelis as of today has necessarily been informed by the historical past. That historical past was to a large extent characterised by a non-acceptance of Israel's right to exist by the Arab states and by the PLO. As I have tried to say, I think the realities now are different. But whether it is reluctantly or not, nevertheless, there is an acceptance of Israel's right to exist. Israel needs, if you like, to be reassured but to accept that fact and from that new fact itself be prepared to accelerate the processes of discussion.

JOURNALIST: ... any kind of expressed ... message from King Hussein to Mr Shamir ... confederation rather than federation.

PM: In answer to the first question. I didn't bring a specific message in terms of the proposal. But what I was asked to bring and did bring was a clear enunciation of the Jordanian attitude and commitment. And that I have done. And secondly, no the concept of confederation in the sense that you mention was not mentioned. It was not put. It was in terms of a federation of West Bank/East Bank.

JOURNALIST: ... PLO ... Israel has a right to exist ...  
(inaudible)

PM: I can combine those two questions into one. They are really two parts of the one question. I don't say this with any intention of being rude. If you had the opportunity of listening to all I have said and read what I have said - what I have put is that there can't be a legitimate expectation of Israel to proceed to any commitment of the sort that I have talked about with the PLO unless there is a clear recognition by the PLO of Israel's right to exist. That is the formulation that I have put. So your hypothetical question is not relevant to me because the position I have put is based upon the need for the PLO to recognise Israel's right to exist. And it is important to understand the reciprocal of that. The reciprocal of that is that the PLO recognises Israel's right to exist then it seems to me there is a corresponding obligation on Israel to treat with the PLO as part of the negotiating process.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, what approaches has the Israel Government made to you ... Soviet Jewry ...

PM: Mr Shamir asked me to continue the efforts that I and my Government and Bill Hayden, my Foreign Minister, have made on behalf both on the requests of the Refuseniks and also of the conditons for Soviet Jewry within the Soviet Union. And I, of course, said to him that I would do that. And I have just recently before coming to this conference had the very moving experience of meeting with representatives of the group who call themselves the Mothers of the Refuseniks who have given me the most moving and indeed tragic stories concerning their next of kin, their children, who want to leave the Soviet Union and come to join them here. And if one had needed, which in a sense I didn't, any added incentive then meeting these women would have provided it. And I have also indicated to them that I would continue to press the case in general and in this case that I refer to their particular case.

JOURNALIST: How do you see a situation where a representative of the Australian Government might meet with PLO officers to convey the views that you have ... in this news conference.

PM: The position of the Government as publicly expressed and put by me and which I repeat is that we wouldn't be engaging in a process which involved formal recognition of the PLO unless and until there was that recognition by the PLO of Israel's right to exist. Obviously, this is a matter that have talked about with the people I met this morning. It was the sort of thing that informed part of my discussions before I leave Israel, that is trying to get this reciprocal recognition, that is recognition by the PLO of Israel and its right to exist. And in a sense contemporaneously to that, an acceptance of the obligation on the part of Israel to deal with the PLO in the circumstances that the PLO recognise Israel. And of course, in that context it could be a situation if the people wanted it could be appropriate in those circumstances for representatives of the Australian Government to meet with the PLO.

JOURNALIST: Did you read the recommendations of the Menzies Report ... and what is your attitude to its implementation.

PM: I have had that question put to me before but I am quite happy to answer it again. Yes, I have seen the recommendations of the Menzies Report. But I make these points. I don't run a dictatorship in Australia. What the processes are there is that the Government, the Cabinet, will consider the Menzies Report and the light of consideration of the Cabinet the decision will be made as to how we will give effect to those recommendations. And that process will be undertaken quite quickly.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, how will you go about pressing the particular cases that were raised with you by the Mothers of the Refuseniks.

PM: There will be two categories of approach. There was at least one of the circumstances that was raised which had a sense of absolute immediacy in that one of the women there has a mother who is dying of cancer in the Soviet Union and is seeking an entry visa - it is the

PM cont: other way round - to the Soviet Union to be able to see and be with her mother before she dies. Now obviously in that case I will try and accelerate an immediate representation of that case. In regard to the others, it will probably take a little bit more time as to how it is best to make that representation within the broader framework of our contacts with the Soviet Union.

JOURNALIST: ... economic relations ... direct air links ...

PM: On the air links, the position is very simply this that this matter has been raised more recently in Australia. It was raised during the visit of the President, Mr Herzog, and I put to him and I have said this again to Mr Shamir and his Ministers yesterday that in Australia we have an arms length relationship between Qantas, our national airline, and the Government. And I have indicated to Qantas that if the proposal was put to them that they should consider in the normal terms that the question of air links with any country was considered. And that is what can happen. We have put no bar upon Qantas considering it in commercial terms. On the second question of a free trade area. This was not raised in the discussions yesterday I see that it has received some currency in the press. But we were more practical in an immediate sense in our discussions yesterday what we agreed was that there could be - to the mutual benefit of Israel and Australia - greater cooperation in economic areas, and technology. And so we have set up a working party. We have agreed to the establishment of a working party between our two countries to examine the possibilities of further cooperation in the economic and the trading areas. As well, of course, you will recall that yesterday our Ambassador and the Minister here signed, in the presence of Mr Shamir and myself, a memorandum of understanding which provides for greater cooperation in the civil technological and science area, particularly for economic and social purposes.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, in your discussions this morning with the Palestinians ... oppressed ... what steps are there that your Government can take to address any human rights violations ...

PM: On the first point, yes there were propositions put to me about oppression. Secondly, I said to them alright you give us the details of these things and we will be prepared to put those details to the Israeli authorities and we will be pleased to hear what they have to say about them.

JOURNALIST: Do you plan to fund any development projects in the West Bank and Gaza and secondly what is your view on the ...

PM: On the first point... What I said to the King and the Prime Minister of Jordan was that firstly I responded positively to their request that we should give moral and political support to the West Bank economic development. I gave that immediately because it is within my capacity as Prime Minister to make the decision on that in principle and to convey that to them. I did. They said that they would appreciate material support. On that point I said to them that I would convey that request back to my Ministers and we will give consideration as to how we may be able to give some assistance to that West Bank economic development plan. I think it would be appropriate

PM cont: to give some assistance. It will be a matter for discussion with my Ministers. On the second question about the settlements, we have made our position clear on that and it follows that we would be opposed to new settlements.

JOURNALIST: ... Lebanon ... (inaudible question) -

PM: Not only for that reason but it certainly gives added weight to our thinking.

JOURNALIST: - have you spoken to any of the ... Lebanon ...

PM: ~~I haven't been to South Lebanon. If there is one thing that is a totally open book here is my itinerary and I haven't been to south Lebanon.~~

JOURNALIST: ... inaudible question ...

PM: I don't, with respect, need any instruction on my moral or political obligations in regard to Lebanon. I have from before I was in government and certainly since I have been in government made the position of my Government crystal clear in regard to Lebanon. Let me repeat that position so there can be no doubt about it. Before putting the position it is based upon our perception that the position in Lebanon is one of total tragedy. It is arguably the most tragic situation in the Middle East. And it is a tragedy because it is compounded by two features. First we have the interconfessional rivalries and bitterness and fighting and killing within Lebanon. You have that interconfessional tragedy. And superimposed, secondly, upon that interconfessional tragedy you have the intrusion of international forces and international rivalry and that is truly a gruesome mixture. And those who suffer and suffer in horrendous dimensions - the casualties are enormous - are the civilian population. So it is on that analysis the position of the Australian Government has been this that the authority of the government of Lebanon should be allowed to extend throughout its territory and that all foreign forces not in Lebanon at the express request of the government of Lebanon should be withdrawn. That is the objective and that is the policy of my Government.

JOURNALIST: What sort of broad time frame you might have in mind ... proposal ... PLO and Israel ... do you think from the attitude ... or do you think it is the start of a very long process that you are talking about?

PM: Mike, obviously what one would hope for and desire is that this sort of process could be very quick. I guess, realistically, given the history of this matter that you can't put a short timetable on it. All I can say is that I think the facts are clear. There are many complexities about the Middle East situation. And I have been associated with it, I have studied it closely now for getting on for 20 years, and there are many things that are complex. But the facts on this particular aspect are clear. And I repeat that I think that in fact the PLO recognise the state of Israel is here and is going to continue to be here. On the other hand, I think it is clear that the Israeli Government understands the fact that the PLO is the only broad organisation that can speak with some authority.

PM cont: Now the question is of trying, as I said, I don't want to go on again in detail, but the question is translating what I think are the facts into an expression of public acknowledgement of those facts. It shouldn't, one would believe, take long for that to be done. But I can't say whether it will.

JOURNALIST: Do you have any idea on how it might be done?

PM: In this sort of area those sort of things can only emerge through discussions, negotiations, with people of good will and integrity trying to persuade people to that sort of position. And as I say, without overstating my role and Australia's role we would be trying to convey to those concerned that that is a sensible outcome.

JOURNALIST: ... inaudible question ...

PM: You don't need to wave your pen at me. I am quite capable of understanding any point that you are trying to make without ... I do happen to know a fair bit about the facts. I do happen to know about the provision in the covenant and I think it is a repulsive provision. And I am on record for some 16 years of saying that so I don't need to establish my credentials to you with or without pen waving here. I know it and I have said it publicly. What I am trying to say is that I believe the fact may be reluctantly arrived at but I believe the fact is that the PLO knows now, in 1987, that Israel is here, it is going to continue to exist. It is not going to disappear. And it has to conduct itself on the basis of that fact. What needs to be done in the interests both of Israel and of the Palestinians is that that understanding, however reluctantly arrived at, needs to be put publicly so that there is a clear statement from the PLO that that now in 1987 is their position.

JOURNALIST: ... inaudible question ...

PM: All I am saying is that I will try and convey that position, that understanding on my part of what seems to me to be a necessary and eminently sensible first step. There is the difference between being prepared to convey that and say it both publicly and privately and anointing oneself as a mediator. And I refuse to do the latter. I repeat that if, as a result in any way of the involvement that I have to this point, that those concerned would see that there is some further role then we would accept that responsibility.

JOURNALIST: ... former Nazi war criminals ...

PM: I have already answered that question. It is a question of judgment as to whether I really answered it or not. I will simply say that the question I was asked before was about the Menzies Report. So in case you don't understand that I have answered the question let me put to you again the facts so that you appreciate that I have answered. My Foreign Minister, Bill Hayden, was given the list in the United States. He brought that back. We then immediately took action to appoint an investigator, Mr Andrew Menzies, as to the recommendations to the Government as to what we should do. We have received the report of Mr Menzies. I have said in answer to the previous question that we will as a Government consider that report and make the decisions in the light of that



PM cont: report. I repeat I have answered the question.

JOURNALIST: ... that Mr Shamir is a flexible enough leader ... could talk to the PLO in the terms taht you are discussing today?

PM: Good try, Greg, but you know that since I have been Prime Minister I have not in my own country and certainly not when I am a visitor to another country made observations about the leadership of that country. And I don't intend to depart from that practice. I am going to be having further discussions with Mr Shamir tomorrow. ~~As I say, I will be having discussions with Mr Peres today.~~ And it is my hope that out of the discussions that I have there will be the indications of the sort preparedness to proceed down the sorts of paths that I think are appropriate. and I will be putting that position both to Mr Peres and Mr Shamir.

JOURNALIST: ... United States, West Germany and France, all of which have ...

PM: Let me make these points. You put the United States and West Germany and France in the same category of relationship with Australia. I would like to think it was true. But on the part of France, at least, there doesn't seem to be the same warmth towards Australia as there is certainly form the United States. That may diminish in a week or so's time when we beat them in the yacht race or on the part of West Germany. It is a rather peripheral introduction to a reply. Firstly, let me make this point. The Government of Australia is totally opposed to the tactic and practice of terrorism. It cannot under any circumstances be a legitimate use of the pursuit of policy by any nation or any group, it must always be counterproductive. Now that should make it clear what I think about what happened. And I repeat, I take this opportunity of repeating, our abhorrence at the tactics. We will continue, as a Government, to say that. I believe that clearly in this region the tactic of terror is a by-product of this overall dispute here and the Iran/Iraq dispute. And so if in this region you are going to create the conditions for the removal of this tactic and practice of terror you have to attempt to solve the basic problem. And what I have been concerned about in my discussions in Jordan and here in Israel and I will be in Egypt is to try and talk about that basic Israeli/Arab dispute. To try in whatever small way we may be able to to help the processes of resolving that dispute. If you can resolve that dispute you will have done the most effective - and when I say if you I am not saying me, I mean if you and everyone involved - if that dispute can be resolved then you will have done the best thing you can to remove the circumstances within which these things will be done. And of course in all our discussions about the Israeli/Arab dispute we should not forget the great tragedy of the conflict between Iran and Iraq. It has been going for seven years - a million dead, young children - for what purpose, nothing. And again, there is an obligation upon all nations and people of good will to try and help those who are about trying to end that dispute. It is only when you remove the fundamental disputes as far as you can that you are going to have the best of bases for optimism about the end of terrorism.

JOURNALIST: ... inaudible question on Lebanon ...

PM: Just before you proceed I hope you will recall that that was not all I said. I said there were two factors involved. I said there was the interconfessional conflict. And I said there was the intrusion into the Lebanon of the international conflict.

JOURNALIST: ... inaudible continuation of same question on Lebanon ...

PM: I have heard your statement come question and I simply say this. If you are looking at the question of the interests of Israel you have got to, I think sensibly, ask yourself the question are the interests of Israel going to be served indefinitely into the future by a situation which they are going to have within their borders a population which if they continue to have it within their borders in its entirety is likely by the turn of the century or into the next century to have the Jews as a minority in their country, I wonder and I say I don't have to to you to establish my credentials as a friend of Israel. I think it is a legitimate question to ask and I know that very many of my Israeli friends are asking the question - is it going to be in the interests of Israel to have a situation by the end of the century or into the beginning of the next to be a minority in their own land.

ENDS