



PRIME MINISTER

TRANSCRIPT OF DOORSTOP, AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCE,
CANBERRA, 29 AUGUST 1990

E & O E - PROOF ONLY

JOURNALIST: Can you confirm that Saddam Hussein will release all women and children -

PM: I can't confirm it. We have no confirmation from it yet. As far as we're concerned it's still a report but I express the hope that the report is true.

JOURNALIST: How many Australians are held that you think could be released under these circumstances?

PM: Well you can't put a precise number on it because he's apparently limited the purported proposal to women and children. But it's, you know, you would think over a hundred.

JOURNALIST: ... is true, does it alter your perception of Saddam Hussein? Does it make him a nice guy?

PM: No.

JOURNALIST: What do you think of the offer?

PM: It's a totally bizarre situation with which we've been dealing and this is another element in a bizarre situation. Most of them have had no redeeming features. This at least - if it's true and as I say I can't confirm it yet - offers some hope for people who deserve hope.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, will Cabinet be making a decision on Telecom before the special conference?

PM: That's a matter for internal decision.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, what does yesterday's decision on the Commonwealth Bank mean to the special conference ...?

PM: It means different things for different people and for me it confirms the logic of what I've been talking about. I've got to go now.

JOURNALIST: ... win on Ansett and Qantas and Telecom since you've had a win on this one, on the Commonwealth Bank?

PM: Life is not as simple as that.

ends