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PRIME MINISTER

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JOURNALIST: To start off with, can you give us - what has happened in the trip?

NAMALIU: The trip has been quite successful as far as I'm concerned and, I'm sure, the people of those provinces in particular that have hosted the visit - Western Highlands, Enga, Madang and East New Britain. The only thing that they've expressed is that the visit was not long enough. But however it did provide a very good opportunity for the Prime Minister and Mrs Hawke and their party to see a little bit of the country and get an appreciation of our problems, opportunities, as well as the changes and progress that we've made.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister Hawke, ... need to dispell the ... patronising image of the father and son relationship between Australia and Papua New Guinea. Can you elaborate on that?

PM: Yes I can. I think too often there's been an unstated assumption within Australia and perhaps to some extent here and other places that there was still some sort of colonial relationship and that it wasn't a relationship between two sovereign independent nations. The major part of my message was to emphasise the fact that Papua New Guinea is a sovereign independent nation and that we recognise and understand that and respect it. That there is a long-standing relationship of friendship between our two countries which I think will never be broken and that what Australia is about is to try and ensure that the assistance we give is increasingly channelled in a way which is going to increase the capacity of Papua New Guinea to deal with the problems and the challenges which confront it. I must say I'm very pleased that as I've moved around Papua New Guinea that there is a mutuality and understanding about these truths. Speaking for myself, this few days has been a marvellous experience. It's the first time for twenty-five years that I've been to these other parts of Papua New Guinea. For me it was a renewal experience. I now more clearly understand the great resources and opportunities that the nation has got. I'm sure that there is an understanding of the things that have to be

done. As I say, Australia stands ready to do what we can to assist. I couldn't conclude those observations without expressing not only my gratitude but the gratitude of all those that have travelled with me, Rabbie, for the just indescribable warmth and extent of the reception that we've received. It's something that we'll remember forever.

JOURNALIST: What is your message to the people of PNG?

PM: My simple message for the people of Papua New Guinea is this. To remember that you are one nation, as I've put it. The unity of this nation is important to be emphasised. Province working with province, islands with mainland, coast with highlands, highlands with the coast. You've got enormous natural resources, great resources are the people. You must remember that fifteen years ago the leaders of that time thought of this as one nation and demanded their independence. They received it. And now, this generation of Papua New Guineans has to work together as one people. If you do that with a sense of nationhood you've got the capacities to become a great country.

JOURNALIST: Is there fear within yourself as to the country being broken up in terms of Bougainville, in terms of trouble fighting, in terms ... certain things?

PM: I think we must be honest with one another and certainly your leadership, not only the Prime Minister but others to whom I've spoken, you must be honest and recognise that there are the possibilities for tension and Bougainville has demonstrated that there are some people who want to break up this nation. Now you can't do that and hope to grow and prosper because if you look over your period there have in the past been some areas that have been the more important in economic terms with their agricultural contribution. There are other areas which are developing in terms of their capacity to make a contribution through their mineral wealth. But the way for Papua New Guinea is to blend the resources of all its parts because if each part tries to go its own way that's the path of weakness. The path of strength is to blend together the various resources of people and material resources and all its parts. In that way you will become a strong nation able to fulfil the ambitions of your young people for education and employment and growth. It's only by working together in that way that you can do these things.

JOURNALIST: In relation to aid to Papua New Guinea, could there be a change in the ... of Australia ...?

PM: Yes. That's a common position between the leadership of Papua New Guinea and ourselves that we must change the balance away from the flat budgetary aid and into project aid. That's agreed between us. We must agree on the projects areas as being the sorts of issues

like economic infrastructure, capacity for dealing with law and order issues, channel the assistance into those areas which is going to assist Papua New Guinea itself to deal with these problems and challenges.

JOURNALIST: What is Australia's preference?

PM: Our preference is those issues, those areas which we can agree together are most likely to be of assistance. I mean, quite clearly, economic infrastructure is going to be continuously important, quite clearly the development of the facility to deal with law and order issues. That's going to be important. Now without being exhaustive, those two areas are very important.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, the Defence Force Co-operation Agreement between Papua New Guinea and Australia has never been reviewed since it was signed in 1975. If PNG ... PNG has been too reliant on Australia for equipment and training, if PNG asked Australia to use that military aid to buy equipment say from Taiwan or Israel which we are getting much closer to now, would that be allowed?

PM: Let's just go back. We've now in the period since independence put about half a billion dollars into the PNGDF. This is an area that Rabbie and I and Ben Sabumei in particular have been talking about as recently as on the trip back on the Hercules from Rabaul. Here again there is absolutely common ground between us and that is that what the Government and future governments of Papua New Guinea are going to want is a defence force which knows what its various functions and missions are. It would be silly to assume that the purposes, role and function and missions of the defence forces of Papua New Guinea are simply a replication of those of the Australian defence forces. They're not. So what we're going to be doing in Australia and it will be done here is to review our thinking of what those roles are, from our point of view not to tell Papua New Guinea what they are but to get our thinking developed. Rabbie and his people will be doing that. And then we will later on this year in the light of our own thinking and the thinking of our friends here, having tried to get some common ground about roles and missions and functions, then work out what's the best way in terms of Australian assistance that we can meet the perception of roles into the future. Now we are - this is not Australia imposing its thinking. We have discussed this through and we are thinking exactly the same way. Now coming against that background to the specifics of your question, let me make this point first of all. We understand that Papua New Guinea is looking not only to Australia in the development of it's thinking about the PNGDF. We don't resist that. We don't find that objectionable in any way. We welcome it. It makes sense that you shouldn't look just to Australia. The next point about equipment. In the end Papua New Guinea has to make its own decisions. It goes back to the foundational point I

made, that is that Papua New Guinea is an independent sovereign nation. It will make its decisions about sourcing of equipment and so on. It would be very likely that given the nature of the relationship between us that those decisions would take into account to a considerable extent what's most likely to be able to assist the process of co-operation between us. That doesn't mean that everything that is going to be purchased by Papua New Guinea is either sourced from Australia or the sources from which we ...

JOURNALIST: Could you explain \$20 million ... help ... defence force, in the context of what you have said.

PM: The most recent decisions you mean?

JOURNALIST: Yes.

PM: What we were approached about was not just what had arisen out of Bougainville. I mean what you should understand, it was not just a reaction to that. But the thinking of the Government of Papua New Guinea was that they needed to increase their forces. So we agreed with them. In particular therefore the assistance we've been looking at now is in terms of helping with the training and equipment of that additional - is it 450 - about 450 new recruits that it covers. That's where the major part of that additional assistance is going.

JOURNALIST: Just on that point about the Australian expertise and its applicability to the PNGDF, it seems that one of the problems confronting PNG is internal security matters as opposed to external.

PM: That's right.

JOURNALIST: The ADF is an organisation built for external threats. Where does Australia get the expertise to help PNG address internal security problems?

PM: It doesn't - I mean if you've got ... Let me answer that question by saying this. When we use the phrase internal security it's a shorthand term. Internal security just doesn't cover one thing. Without being exhaustive, if you think about internal security you will think about issues like Bougainville for instance. You will think about things like for instance mine security, for example. In regard to issues like that it's quite clear from the experience and training that the Australian defence forces have that they can provide advice and training for things like that. It won't be the case, and conceptually it's not the case that just because the Australian defence forces have an external orientation that the sort of training that they have for that is not going to equip them to be of assistance to the defence forces of Papua New Guinea. But the important thing that we've agreed is that we should both sit down separately for a start and review where we've

been, the sorts of things we've done to try and get a common thinking about the future role of the PNGDF and then see from our experience what's the best way that we can help. There are issues, as Rabbie has said himself, issues of leadership and basic planning skills. Those sorts of considerations are relevant to any aspect of internal security. Obviously we can help in those sorts of things. Rabbie, would you like to add anything to that question?

NAMALIU: I think that Bob has pretty well covered most of the areas that would be defined under that term. The role of the defence force in this country is changing, has changed. That's why we have decided that we should look at reviewing the roles of the defence force both in terms of the experience that we've had and their own particular experience in terms of situations like Bougainville. But also in terms generally of their roles in national development. It is in that context that we believe that we have and will have requirements for assistance in those specific areas like in terms of training, in terms of support for various levels of leadership within the defence force as well as, I suppose, the development of approaches as to how new roles should be approached as far as the future is concerned of the defence force in this country.

JOURNALIST: What part will Australia play in that role?

PM: Sorry?

JOURNALIST: Will it be significant or will it be ... I'm asking because ... specific...?

NAMALIU: As we have indicated, those are the things that we will be having further discussions on. As the Prime Minister has indicated, they will on their part be reviewing their own position. Similarly on our part we will be doing a similar review of our own position before we can get together again and come to discussing specific issues.

PM: To be specific, I've got my Minister for Defence reviewing the Defence Co-operation program and our part in that. That review will then come to Cabinet. We will consider it. So that I and the Minister for Defence ... that we'll be then well placed to have thought about where we've been, what we're doing and our concepts of what the future role of the PNGDF may be in this country and what's the best way we can help. As I said, Papua New Guinea, at the same time as we're doing our thinking in the weeks ahead, they will be doing it. So that will mean when we start, say at the end of October or in November, addressing these issues we'll be in a position to come to agreements about the roles and functions

JOURNALIST: Is it possible that police training could come under the Defence Co-operation program?

PM: We've discussed that and I'd just like to say these things and I'm sure Rabbie would like to make his comments. I think it's right to say that we agree that as far as you can see into the future there will be two separate ... PNGDF and there will be the police. But I think we both agree that there will be a complementarity of their roles in many respects and that it may be that you can get a degree of integration in regard to procurement issues perhaps and some elements of training. So in our thinking about the PNGDF we'd be thinking about that side as well.

JOURNALIST: ... on Bougainville, what is the Government's stand now that the suspended provincial government that's refused to recognise the administrator that you appointed.

NAMALIU: The administrator is appointed under our constitution under the ... law of provincial government. As far as we are concerned, he is the administrator of the province.

JOURNALIST: ... control of the situation again. Is that true?

NAMALIU: I think it is more likely to - that description is more apt for the BRA leadership than it is for the position ...

JOURNALIST: You are not dealing with the BRA.

NAMALIU: That's right.

JOURNALIST: Are you dealing with them?

NAMALIU: The BRA?

JOURNALIST: Yes.

NAMALIU: Well as you know, there are leaders who have been involved in the negotiations which resulted in the Accord that belong to the BRA. There are those that belong to the self-styled ... government of the republic of the North Solomons. There are those that come from the community generally. So they are the leaders that we were dealing with. They were Bougainville leaders and we would like to regard them as that rather than belonging to a specific group like the BRA.

JOURNALIST: Who are they ...?

NAMALIU: You know who they are. You know Mr Kabui, you know Bishop Singkai, you know Mr Peter - sorry, not Peter, but you know the other people involved. It includes people who are very close to Mr Ona. But Mr Kabui is there, Bishop Singkai is there, Bishop Zali is

there. These are all very very prominent leaders within the province.

JOURNALIST: The next round of talks is not far away.

NAMALIU: That's right.

JOURNALIST: Is there pressure?

NAMALIU: As far as we're concerned the talks are still on. There's nothing to suggest at this time that the talks will not continue despite, you know, the statement that we all read about yesterday.

JOURNALIST: Do you think it's realistic Prime Minister to talk about a complete phasing out of Australian budgetary aid by the year 2000?

NAMALIU: I think it can be achieved. It's achievable provided of course that we continue to have discussions on these matters. ... We have a fairly clear perception and that's what we agreed on, on the principle itself. We believe that we can achieve that by that year.

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