



## PRIME MINISTER

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH HATSUHISA TAKASHIMA, NHK  
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TAKASHIMA: Prime Minister, thank you very much for your time.

PM: My pleasure.

TAKASHIMA: Firstly I'd like to ask your view on the Middle East and the Gulf situation. Australia has sent two frigates there and actively participating in the naval blockade. How effective would you see the naval blockade against Iraq is now?

PM: It's very effective. Firstly there is no oil getting out of Iraq. The pipelines are closed and no tankers are getting out. So the naval blockade is very effective indeed. We trust that it will have the effect which we want it to of peacefully bringing the leadership of Iraq to its senses.

TAKASHIMA: So far Saddam Hussein hasn't shown any sign of pulling out his forces from Kuwait or releasing all the hostages from his country.

PM: No, to this point that is true. There hasn't been what you would expect to be a rational response to the facts. Any rational assessment should lead the leadership of Iraq to understand these things. Firstly that almost universally the world has condemned the attempt to annex Kuwait. Secondly, and which follows from the first, the belief that Iraqi forces should withdraw. And thirdly that the way events have developed are such that Iraq simply cannot win its objectives. I would put the fourth point which we have hoped would've been conveyed and understood by Iraq, that if the leadership of Iraq believes that they have some legitimate grievances against Kuwait, be they territorial or any other form, then there exists within the international framework mechanisms like the International Court of Justice where those grievances, if they believe they exist, can be peacefully settled.

TAKASHIMA: Would you think that some additional measures would be necessary to let Saddam Hussein realise those points you have just raised?

PM: Well we hope that nothing more will be required. Certainly I know that not only is it the attitude of Australia but I know that it is the attitude for instance of the United States and of the Western European powers that they don't want to take any additional measures of force. We're all committed to a peaceful resolution of this matter. But I don't think there is very much more that the world can do to convey the messages that I have put to you as being the messages that the world wants to convey to Saddam Hussein.

TAKASHIMA: This is rather hypothetical but still possible situation that if the United Nations Security Council decides to put some more pressure against Iraq by using additional measures, then what would the Australian Government do to contribute to the additional measures?

PM: We have, from the very beginning, not only made our own decisions but we have continuously expressed the view that we want to have a position where the United Nations is endorsing action that's taken. And of course Resolution 665 of the Security Council gave that sort of cover. Now being ardent supporters of the United Nations, if it were to make a decision that further action was required, Australia would be supportive of that.

TAKASHIMA: Now let me turn to the Japanese contribution and your view on that. You have once mentioned the possibility of the Japanese Government sending mine sweepers to the area. Do you still have the idea, or what -

PM: Let me make it clear. I didn't raise the question of mine sweepers. There had been speculation in the media in my country and around the world, there had been some speculation that the Japanese may be thinking of that. Now I want to make these points clear. My fundamental point is that what Japan does is a matter for Japan. The second point I make is that I appreciate the significant contributions that Japan has already made - two billion dollars in support for forces that have been deployed and two billion dollars in very highly concessional loans for Jordan, Egypt and Turkey and a medical team of some one hundred. Those are very significant contributions. The third point I make is that, and that I wanted to convey to Japan, having said that their decisions are a matter for Japan, I'd simply said if, and knowing that this is a sensitive matter in Japan whether there should be any sort of military contribution, I simply said that if Japan makes the decision, were to make that decision then from Australia's point of view we would understand that. But my pre-eminent point is what Japan does is a matter for Japan.

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TAKASHIMA: You used the word understand. But is there any special sentiment within the Australian people about the Japanese involvement militarily or whatever fashion to the peacekeeping effort of that sort?

PM: We understand the sensitivities that exist within Japan on this question. We know that it is a matter of significant debate within Japan. It would be presumptuous for me as Prime Minister or the Australian people to attempt to intervene in what is quintessentially a matter for Japan. I simply want it understood that we a) believe that Japan must make its own decision, but b) we will accept and understand the decision that Japan makes. But it's very important that Japan understands that. It's not for me or for Australia to tell Japan, or attempt to tell Japan what to do.

TAKASHIMA: There are some possible sequences like Cambodian peace-keeping ... future or near future. So do you mean that Australia would have no objection if Japan decides by itself to participate ... peace-keeping ...?

PM: I do mean that. I do mean that. You see Australia has had now quite a deal of experience in peace-keeping forces under the umbrella of the United Nations. Our most recent experience of course has been in Namibia. I would like to preface my answer in regard to Cambodia which you raised by saying how much we in Australia appreciate the contribution that Japan has made to the process of trying to reach a resolution of the tragedy of Cambodia. Indeed the Tokyo meeting was an important part of that prolonged process. As you know, Australia has played a very significant role in the final process that was adopted by the Permanent Five of the United Nations. Now I have made it clear as far as Australia is concerned that, if as that implementation of that plan develops, that there will be a significant United Nations peace-keeping presence in Cambodia then Australia will play its part. If Japan makes the decision that it would wish to be part of that process, we would welcome it.

TAKASHIMA: Would you raise that question during the meeting, your meeting with Prime Minister Kaifu, which is on the 20th I believe?

PM: Yes, well with respect I don't want to pre-empt by public observation what I will be discussing with the Prime Minister, as you'll appreciate. He is entitled to hear from me directly whatever it is that I have to say.

TAKASHIMA: The next question is a bit broader one. The Russian foreign minister, Mr Shevadnaze when he visited Vladivostock recently, proposed having an all-Asian and Pacific foreign ministers meeting in two years' time in Vladivostock to establish a new framework of security and

PM: I think these things need to be said. Firstly Australia has not only welcomed but has been a part of the process whereby the atmosphere and the relationships between the superpowers has changed from one of antagonism to a constructive relationship which has been important a) not only in getting that better relationship between the superpowers but b) as you'll appreciate, as being significant in assisting in the resolution of regional conflicts, for example Namibia that I referred to before. That would not have happened if it hadn't been for the relaxation of tension between the superpowers. So Australia's position has been one and will always be one of trying to get an atmosphere of constructive negotiations. Now having said that, we welcome the attitude of the Soviet Union of saying well what we have achieved in Europe we would like to see reflected also in an improved relationship in this region. But I think it's too early to be absolutely precise about a formula. We understand, if I may so, in particular the sensitivities of Japan. You have a particular long-running issue of dispute with the Soviet Union in regard to the islands. It would be presumptuous for me to say to Japan what should be the framework within which for instance you would wish to resolve your particular issues of dispute with the Soviet Union. So I don't want at this point to put a big tick against a particular structure. But I do want to put a very big tick against the concept of constructive dialogue and discussion. But at all points as far as Australia is concerned we will be involved in discussions with our friends, including Japan, as to what our attitude should be.

TAKASHIMA: About the relations between our two countries, Japan and Australia, especially in economic terms. There are several frictions and some sort of dispute of Japanese buying up Australian land and real estate and so forth. How much are you satisfied with the Japanese-Australian relations especially in economic terms?

PM: Let me say generally speaking the relationship between Japan and Australia in economic and commercial terms is good. I would say probably better than it's ever been. In significant measure this has been a reflection of the liberalisation policy of Japan in regard to imports. We are now, not only in regard to our traditional area of imports but also in regard to manufactured imports there's been a significant increase. We think there are more things to be done. But the actual relationship is good and we have as a measure of the importance of our trade, it's been in the last year about \$23 billion. So it's significant and it's improving. Now let me go specifically to the question you raise about Japanese investment in Australia. The first point I want to make is that we welcome Japanese investment in Australia. I take this opportunity on your

program of saying to the people of Japan that if they see expressions from Australia from some small groups of resentment and opposition, that does not represent the attitude of the Australian Government or the Australian people as a whole. We regard Japan as an important economic partner, not only a trading partner but also in the area of economic enterprise in Australia. Having said that, let me make this point, that in the last year Japanese investment in Australia was at the order of just over \$9 billion. Now 92 per cent, 92 per cent of that investment was in real estate and tourism. Now we welcome investment in real estate and in tourism but what I want to see is a diversification of Japanese investment so that we get more investment into manufacturing. The big challenge confronting Australia is that we diversify our economy, we will continue to rely to a very large extent on our agriculture production and our exports of minerals. But we want also to get a larger manufacturing base within which science and technology based industries will become stronger. We have the position in Australia that we have a very strong scientific base but we haven't been clever and successful in commercialising, if I can put it that way, our basic research. Where we think there is great scope for increased economic co-operation is in that area. So we would like to see that diversification of Japanese investment.

**TAKASHIMA:** Prime Minister you mentioned the diversification of Australian industry, and you specifically mentioned about the science and technology. What is actually the specific, specialised field or area of science and technology you are envisaging as a possible area in which Japan and Australia can work together?

**PM:** I don't want to be exclusive or exhaustive. But for instance one area in which we have developed a considerable degree of expertise, as certainly has Japan, is in the area of telecommunications and information technology. So we think there is considerable scope for co-operation there. Another area is food processing which is not something that is normally associated with science and technology. But in this world today the ways in which we can most effectively add value to our basic materials is something that's important. So that would go into the areas of food and wool and textiles, those areas. I think another very important area is in the area of environmentally benign technologies and one example there is, for instance, there has been co-operation between Japan and Australia in the area of developing brown coal and getting clean coal technologies. Down in our La Trobe Valley I think now something up to about a half a billion dollars has been spent in that area. Now, increasingly in your country and mine and around the world people are going to demand more environmentally benign technologies, and I think that's an area in particular where the opportunities for co-operation between us are tremendous.

TAKASHIMA: Finally, the reason why you are here is to attract Melbourne as a possible venue for the 1996 Olympics. How confident are you to make the successful bid for that?

PM: I'm not brash about it and we haven't come here to knock other bidders. I think that the International Olympic Committee is in the fortunate position of having a number of cities with good qualifications. I simply want to say in regard to Melbourne's bid that I think intrinsically - by which I mean the quality of facilities, the centrality and co-location of facilities, the existence of all the important infrastructure of transport and communications, also the commitment of all levels of government and a sports-mad city as Melbourne is, and also in terms of security, and also in terms of a clean environment - I think when you take all those intrinsics, that Melbourne has the best case. We hope that by this time tomorrow night that that's the way it will pan out. Anyway, we'll be giving it our best shot.

TAKASHIMA: Thank you very much Prime Minister.

PM: Thank you.

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