



PRIME MINISTER

TRANSCRIPT OF NEWS CONFERENCE, RAAF BASE FAIRBAIRN, 21 SEPTEMBER 1990

E & O E - PROOF ONLY

JOURNALIST: ... Mr Keating's attack on Nobby Clark?

PM: I haven't really caught up with all that. I've been away doing other things.

JOURNALIST: ... call the NAB insolvent and then corrected himself yesterday.

PM: I'm sure he's looked after himself well. I haven't had a chance to read it all but I don't think that's the most important thing that's happened this week.

JOURNALIST: Are you confident that special conference will accept Cabinet resolutions on Monday?

PM: I think it's shaping up pretty well, thanks.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, is it good for public confidence in our financial sector for the Treasurer to be calling one of our major banks insolvent?

PM: I haven't seen the financial system collapse as a result.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, Mr McLean the other day described the Government as diseased and said on Monday it needed a good dose of medicine. Are you confident he can't persuade centre left to that view?

PM: I would think that would be the case, yes.

JOURNALIST: What's your reaction to the claim that there was an assassination plot against you in 1988?

PM: I didn't lose a moments sleep. I think there was a little bit of hyperbole going on there.

JOURNALIST: Are you confident you'll get ACTU support this afternoon for the resolutions?

PM: I'm fairly confident about the outcome on Monday and all that will lead up to it.

JOURNALIST: Will you be participating in those talks with the ACTU this afternoon?

PM: Well I don't know. I'm available if necessary.

JOURNALIST: The Service Station Association has predicted that petrol could be \$1.00 at the end of the year and they've asked to reduce the fuel excise. Is that something the Government would consider?

PM: I'll have a look at all these things when I get back. I just don't speculate on a speculation.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, did you telephone special conference delegates and suggest that if they didn't accept this resolution the Government would be in trouble?

PM: I've had a number of telephone conversations both before I left and there was some talk on the phone while I was away. I've covered a range of issues in those conversations, all of which are calculated to get the right outcome on Monday.

JOURNALIST: Would the Government be in trouble if the Caucus doesn't accept the resolution?

PM: I don't, you know, I don't contemplate our position not being accepted.

JOURNALIST: Mr Tuckey, the person who's been responsible for insulting a lot of your Members, has yesterday broken down in Parliament himself. Your reaction to that?

PM: I hadn't heard that and if he has I'm sorry to hear it. Politics is a tough game and very, very tough and if any Member has been hurt to a point where it has that impact, I don't get any pleasure out of that.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, are you concerned that you may have upset South East Asian nations by calling on Japan to play a more strategic role in the region?

PM: I wouldn't have upset South East Asian nations. I believe I have very good relations with all of them and they would understand exactly the whole context of the observations I've made.

JOURNALIST: Is it the case though that you'd like to kind of play a super powers role in ...?

PM: No, no, no, no. What I've said is that one of the facts which distinguishes the end of the 20th century from the immediate post-war period is that Japan is an economic giant, an economic super power and it is inevitable and appropriate that in the political world there should be some reflection of that and that is a view which I notice is shared by Europeans and others and

it's inevitable that there will be some adjustments. I haven't attempted in any way to prescribe what those adjustments should be. But I know that just as sure as we are of any fact in life is that will happen and it's appropriate that it be done in a way which the members of the United Nations are happy with and in a way which involves a considerable amount of discussion. But it will happen, ok.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, just on the Raiders.

PM: Last one, yes. You look as though you were there right from when I left.

JOURNALIST: Who's going to win tomorrow in Sydney?

PM: The Raiders.

JOURNALIST: The Raiders?

PM: On Sunday. I mean they haven't changed it, have they?

JOURNALIST: By how many points?

PM: Well I've got to ... about 6, about 6.

JOURNALIST: Don't you think it would be nice to see the Panther's win for the first time though?

PM: Well I understand yes, it would be nice for them. It would be good for the region and it's a great region that they're representing. But you know, I'm a fairly strong supporter of the Raiders and all my friends in Penrith will understand that. I just hope that it's a good, tough game and I'm sure it will be. Thanks.

ends