



PRIME MINISTER

TRANSCRIPT OF DOORSTOP, YARRAMUNDI VISITORS' CENTRE,
CANBERRA, 19 NOVEMBER 1990

E & O E - PROOF ONLY

JOURNALIST: What do you think of Gough Whitlam's envoy,
... hostage envoy?

PM: Well I've got nothing to add in respect of the proposed Whitlam visit to what I've said on behalf of the Government in regard to all such visits and that is that the Government doesn't embrace them or condone them for the reason which has been accepted by all governments involved in the multinational forces seeking to impose United Nations sanctions. There is common ground that any such official involvement weakens the attempt of the international community to deal with the essential issue and that is the totally unacceptable annexation of Kuwait by Iraq and the fact that any hostages are maintained by Saddam Hussein. This playing with hostages, as the leadership of Iraq is doing, is repugnant. Having said that, I repeat what I've said before that if these individual missions do in fact achieve the release of some hostages then of course for those who are released and their families we welcome that. But the governments of the nations involved in this important attempt to maintain international law and adherence to international standards will not themselves be involved in such missions.

JOURNALIST: Isn't it a propaganda coup for Iraq to get Gough Whitlam to go, Prime Minister?

PM: Well they obviously - I mean it's perfectly clear that they are expressing great satisfaction in getting ex-Prime Ministers, whether it's from Japan, New Zealand, Australia, they are obviously seeking to extract political propaganda and mileage from it.

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