PRIME MINISTER'S ELECTORATE TALK

SUNDAY, 9 MAY 1982
NEXT SATURDAY, I LEAVE AUSTRALIA FOR A SHORT BUT MOST IMPORTANT OVERSEAS VISIT.

I AM AFRAID IT WON'T BE VERY RELAXING; CROWDED INTO ABOUT 10 DAYS WILL BE VISITS TO THE UNITED STATES, JAPAN AND KOREA.

WHEN THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, MR BUSH, WAS IN AUSTRALIA A WEEK AGO, WE DISCUSSED MY FORTHCOMING MEETING WITH PRESIDENT REAGAN IN WASHINGTON.

IT IS ALWAYS IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN PERSONAL CONTACT WITH THE UNITED STATES LEADER, BUT IT IS PARTICULARLY APPROPRIATE AT THIS TIME.

NO DOUBT WE SHALL DISCUSS THE FALKLAND ISLANDS CRISIS

- NOT ONLY AS A REGRETTABLE CLASH BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND INVADING ARGENTINA

- NOR INDEED ONLY FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF THE RIGHT OF PEOPLE TO DETERMINE THEIR OWN FUTURE

- BUT ALSO BECAUSE IT COULD AFFECT SOUTH AMERICAN CONFIDENCE IN THE WEST AND THE NATO ALLIANCE AND THEREBY SET BACK UNITED STATES EFFORTS TO KEEP THE WHOLE SOUTH AMERICAN CONTINENT FIRMLY IN THE WESTERN CAMP.
HOWEVER, THE FALKLAND ISLANDS WILL NOT BE CENTRAL TO OUR DISCUSSIONS WHICH WILL BE CONDUCTED AGAINST A BACKGROUND OF SEVERE ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES IN THE WEST AND AGGRESSIVE SOVIET POLICIES AROUND THE WORLD.

I SHALL BE TALKING TO PRESIDENT REAGAN LARGELY ABOUT TWO SUMMIT MEETINGS DUE TO TAKE PLACE IN EUROPE NEXT MONTH.

ONE IS ECONOMIC AND THE OTHER STRATEGIC.

BOTH SUMMITS ARE OF FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE TO THE VERY SECURITY AND WELL-BEING OF WESTERN NATIONS.


IT IS THE LATEST IN A SERIES OF MEETINGS THAT HAVE BEEN HELD EVERY YEAR SINCE 1975 TO CONSIDER THE MAJOR ECONOMIC PROBLEMS CONFRONTING THE WEST.

INDEED THE CONCERNS OF THE LEADERS EXTEND TO THE ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN WESTERN COUNTRIES AND THE SOVIET BLOC.
3.

- BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
- AND BETWEEN ENERGY SUPPLYING COUNTRIES AND THE CONSUMERS.

THEREFORE, THIS IS OBVIOUSLY MORE THAN A REGULAR MEETING OF THE HEADS OF SEVEN GOVERNMENTS TO DISCUSS MUTUAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS.

IT IS A GATHERING WHICH IS CONCERNED WITH THE ECONOMIC FUTURE OF MANY NATIONS INCLUDING OUR OWN.

WE CANNOT BE INSULATED FROM WORLD ECONOMIC TRENDS, AND OUR POSITION AS A SIGNIFICANT TRADING NATION ONLY INCREASES OUR INTERDEPENDENCE WITH OTHER COUNTRIES.

ALTHOUGH AUSTRALIA IS NOT A MEMBER OF NATO, THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANISATION, WE ARE VITALLY INTERESTED IN THE SECOND SUMMIT IN EUROPE

- WHICH IS A SPECIAL MEETING OF NATO TO BE ATTENDED BY THE SAME LEADERS ATTENDING THE ECONOMIC SUMMIT, EXCEPT JAPAN
- TOGETHER WITH THE SMALLER WEST EUROPEAN NATO MEMBERS.
WHEREAS THE ECONOMIC SUMMIT IS NOW AN ANNUAL EVENT, THE NATO MEETING IS A SPECIAL MEETING REFLECTING

- CONCERN OVER THE WORLD STRATEGIC SITUATION

- AND THE NEED TO MAINTAIN NATO AS AN ANCHOR OF THE WESTERN ALLIANCE.

THE SOVIET UNION'S PROVOCATIVE POLICIES ARE CLEARLY ILLUSTRATED IN THE OCCUPATION OF AFGHANISTAN, THE REGRESSION IN POLAND, SOVIET BACKING FOR THE CONTINUING VIETNAMESE OCCUPATION OF KAMPUCHEA, AND THEIR DIRECT AND INDIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN PARTS OF CENTRAL AMERICA, AFRICA AND PARTS OF THE MIDDLE EAST.

IT IS IRONIC THAT, IN FREE SOCIETIES, THE VERY EXERCISING OF FREEDOM CAN LEAD TO CONCERN THAT THERE IS NOT A COMMON PURPOSE TO DEFEND THE DEMOCRATIC WAY OF LIFE.

IN AUSTRALIA, WE NEED TO KNOW THAT THE NATO MEMBERS HAVE A UNITY OF PURPOSE

- AND ARE RESOLVED TO A UNITY OF ACTION.

AT NEXT MONTH'S MEETING, NATO'S LEADERS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE THE FREE WORLD GREAT CONFIDENCE IN SHOWING THAT UNITY AND RESOLVE
I shall be discussing these matters with Mr Reagan and, in Japan, with the Prime Minister, Mr Suzuki before he attends the Versailles Summit.

Of course, Australia and Japan have mutual trading interests - together with concerns for the security of the East Asian and Pacific regions, and my talks with Mr Suzuki will cover these issues.

We think of Japan very much in economic terms.

However, Japan is an important element in the overall Western Alliance.

It is not too strong to say that Japan’s attitude and direction will bear heavily on the future of democracy in the world.

I am looking forward to my talks in Washington and Tokyo, as well as in Seoul, the capital of the Republic of Korea.

The Republic of Korea’s stability and security are important to Australia, both strategically and from a trading point of view.

Our two-way trade with Korea has grown to almost $1 billion a year.
AS A RELIABLE AND RESPONSIBLE MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY OF WESTERN NATIONS

- Australia is maintaining a strong, modern defence force designed to meet the threats and challenges of the times

- And is pursuing consistent economic policies to cope with the present world economic situation as it affects Australia.

We have a vested interest in next month's vital summit meetings and in my forthcoming discussions with the United States and Japanese leaders, we shall contribute to

- It will be my purpose to give prominence to our concerns and perspectives on the issues being considered.

We are meeting our obligations in strategic and economic terms.

We also have an obligation to maintain close contact with our larger friends and allies.

And we have a vested interest in next month's vital summit meetings.

Through my forthcoming discussions, Australia shall be participating constructively in the search for solutions to the major world problems of our times.