

Remarks at Business Leaders Reception – APEC

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you very much Craig. His Excellency Ngoc Anh, Minister for Science and Technology, representing the Prime Minister, Steven Ciobo, our Trade Minister, provincial leaders, Vice Ministers, ladies and gentlemen.

We all understand the extraordinary economic progress that has been made in Vietnam.

Over the last 30 years Vietnam has developed into a dynamic, middle-income country with one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

It's projected to become one of the world's 20 largest economies within the next 30 years.

This economic success has not been the result of an accident or luck.

It has been the result of deep structural reform and a decision by leaders like the Minister here and his colleagues to open up the economy to international trade and investment.

Now, those are not easy reforms anywhere and I want to commend the Vietnamese leadership for their sustained commitment.

Vietnam's hosting of APEC 2017 is a great opportunity to share this economic success story.

To demonstrate the power of free trade and opening up to the global economy and help to counter the often very vocal advocates of protectionism.

In 2018, Australia and Vietnam will celebrate our 45th anniversary of diplomatic relations.

Over this period, our economic futures have become increasingly entwined.

We are important economic partners and our people-to-people links continue to grow.

The number of Australian companies here tonight with an interest in Vietnam, is ample testament to that and businesses from all economies play a very active role in influencing APEC's agenda.

And of course we must recognise too, that Australia, the most successful multicultural society in the world – well, I can claim that, I am biased, I'm the Prime Minister, but it is true, I'll state the case for that – but there are 300,000 Australians of Vietnamese origin. That represents one of the great strengths in the relationship.

The diversity of our Australian community, its multicultural nature, is one of our greatest assets. We are very proud of our resources, Minister, all of the iron ore and coal and other precious things under the ground, but our best assets – like yours – are the people walking on top of the ground rather than what might be found under it.

As I said in my speech in Perth last weekend, prosperity is a choice; open markets do not happen by themselves. They are choices we must make together.

So we will continue to work together, not just to deepen our bilateral relationship, but also to progress further the economic integration in our region, through forums like APEC and trade agreements like the Trans Pacific Partnership.

The TPP creates rules of the road to match the new economic world in which we're living. It aims at old hidden trade barriers like corruption and new ones like data protectionism. It works to level the playing field for non-state companies and is designed to defend and extend the freedom to explore, share and capitalise on new ideas. Minister, I was delighted when I came in and you introduced me to a line-up of Vietnamese innovators. It's good to see that you're as passionate about innovation as we are in Australia.

Now over the same period, our economic relationship with Vietnam has experienced a transformation. It's no longer a donor-recipient aid relationship, it's a true economic partnership. Vietnam's middle class is expected to reach 33 million people by 2020 and Australian businesses are already seeing the benefits of that transformation.

Our universities have become a top choice for Vietnamese students, there are more than 20,000 Vietnamese students studying in Australia. Vietnam is the fourth biggest source country for international students for Australia.

Vietnam is our sixth largest market for agricultural products.

Vietnamese consumers are placing increasing importance on fresh and safe food and Australian farmers have a reputation for delivering just that.

More than 75 per cent of the bread used for Vietnam's signature dish banh mi, for example, comes from Australian wheat. So, a taste of Australia every day in traditional Vietnamese food.

[Laughter]

And of course, trade goes two ways. Vietnam is also benefitting from our growing trade relationship with Vietnamese dragon fruit, lychees and mangoes now readily available to Australian consumers.

The important thing to remember though is that the economic relationship goes beyond simply the trade of physical goods. We're laying the foundations for long-term economic growth and the days of relying purely on injections of labour and capital for growth, are behind us.

We need to drive productivity by sharing new ideas and new technologies.

Our innovation partnership is helping Vietnam and Australia prepare for this future.

We're helping Vietnam deliver new forecasting methods to understand the influence of regional mega-trends on its economy and society, drawing on the research of Australia's world leading scientific organisation, the CSIRO.

Our universities are equipping Vietnamese students with the skills and experience to compete in the 21st century economy, building relationships through collaborative centres such as RMIT Vietnam's new Centre of Digital Excellence.

We'll also help strengthen connections between industry and research organisations in Australia and Vietnam to ensure that research is relevant and can be transferred quickly from the laboratory to farms or the factory floor. A great example is the collaboration between CSIRO and Viet UC Seafood who are both here tonight.

CSIRO have supported Viet UC with new feed technologies, helping Viet UC sell bigger and higher quality prawns. I think we're all in favour of that.

[Laughter]

In fact with Christmas coming, the price of prawns is rising. It's one of the few things politicians don't get blamed for, the rising price of prawns, at least in Australia, perhaps they do in Vietnam.

Anyway, the important thing is that our futures are linked. They depend on free trade. They depend on investment. They depend on innovation. They depend on us working together and as we know, they depend on strong regional security and stability, issues that are more a matter for the East Asia Summit than for APEC, which is an economic conference. But it's wonderful to be here. I want to congratulate you on the enterprise and initiative you're showing as we continue to build and build upon an already strong Australian and Vietnamese economic relationship.

But above all, that relationship is built on people; all of us here and hundreds of thousands of others.

It will continue to deliver as long as we are committed to free trade, investment, open markets; allowing people to use their enterprise and initiative to get ahead and bring us all ahead as our economies grow together.

[Applause]

[ENDS]

Doorstop at APEC

PRIME MINISTER:

Welcome to Da Nang, and welcome to APEC.

You know, our prosperity is built on two foundations of free trade and open markets, which is what APEC is all about – it is an economic forum. And of course, national security, regional security, which is what the East Asia Summit is all about.

So here in Da Nang we will be talking about trade and opening up greater opportunities for Australian exporters.

Tomorrow, I will be signing a new free trade agreement with Peru, offering enormous, new opportunities for Australian agriculture and of course service exports as well. That's a very big opportunity for a very rapidly growing economy in South America.

And of course we will be seeking to take forward the TPP-11.

If we are able to conclude the Trans-Pacific Partnership with 11 countries, not obviously the United States since the Trump Administration decided to pull out, that would bring together economies with a collective GDP of about \$10 trillion. So that is a huge market.

It is the equivalent of entering into, across the 11 TPP countries, 19 new free trade agreements, offering very substantial new opportunities for Australian exporters, raising the level of market access in agriculture, in all manner of physical goods and of course in an unprecedented way in services.

Free trade means more jobs, more prosperity in Australia. That's why we back it so strongly.

And, of course, from the East Asia Summit point of view, the key focuses in the region are counter-terrorism. Of course, we are meeting in Manila where the government and the Armed Forces of the Philippines, with Australian assistance, has been battling an ISIL insurgency in the southern Philippines.

And then there is the looming challenge from North Korea, and its reckless and dangerous threats of nuclear war.

So there is a lot to talk about. A lot to resolve.

It is vitally important we continue to galvanise a concerted effort behind strong regional security and the free trade and open markets, that that is then enabled by that security to deliver the prosperity that Australians deserve.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, while you will be here to speak trade and security, even in transit here today your office was wrestling to the ground some kind of agreement with Bill Shorten on dual-citizenship. Will you be trying to simultaneously land such an agreement while engaging in these talks here?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, multitasking is the occupational objective of prime ministers.

The position that we presented on Monday was a very reasonable one. One that would enable, set up a process that would enable this issue of citizenship to be resolved. For there to be a full declaration of all the relevant information by members and senators. Some time for the House and the Senate to consider it. And then some time for the House and the Senate to determine which members and senators, if any, should be referred to the High Court.

As you know, we had a meeting with Mr Shorten yesterday. Again, he didn't bring any particular amendments or counter-proposals.

JOURNALIST:

He has now though-

PRIME MINISTER:

Yes, he sent me a letter today and I received that and I responded to it in some detail. And I hope that we can reach an agreement.

But, look, if we can't, we will present our resolution in both the House and the Senate.

The reality is the differences are that we are not that far apart.

The important thing is there is full disclosure and that that is done in a way that enables the House and the Senate to form a judgment as to whether to refer people.

JOURNALIST:

Should you can't reach an agreement with Bill Shorten will you be looking to send his suspicious MPs to the High Court? And if you do that, how will that be different to the witch hunt you talked about two days ago?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, it is very straightforward.

I was disappointed that Mr Shorten asked me to agree not to refer MP's of his to the High Court, even though they were admittedly British citizens at the time they nominated for Parliament. I mean, the Constitution says you should only be an Australian citizen.

So these were not people that didn't know they were British citizens, these were people who knew they were British citizens but hadn't got their

paperwork done in time to cease to be British citizens at the time they nominated.

Now, look, they have got arguments to present when they get to the High Court, as I am sure they all will.

JOURNALIST:

You don't think they've-

PRIME MINISTER:

But, look, let's be clear about this, we referred our own people to the High Court when we had advice that they weren't in breach.

Now, when you've got people that were on their own admission UK citizens at the time they nominated and said that they were in compliance with the Constitution, it really is a bit rich of Mr Shorten to say to me that the government shouldn't vote to refer them.

JOURNALIST:

Do you think he is doing the dodgy?

PRIME MINISTER:

I will be very clear about this – we will vote to refer to the High Court anybody, whether they are on the government side, the Labor side or on the crossbenches, if there are substantial grounds to believe they are not in compliance with the Constitution. To ask me to do anything else is quite unworthy.

And I'm disappointed that he made that request and that he even thought that was a proper thing to do.

The principle that we have to uphold is compliance with the Constitution. The court has delivered a judgment. It is very strict, it is very severe, it is very literal. It wasn't the outcome we sought, as you know, but that's it, they have laid down the law and now our job is to comply with it and that's what I'm committed to ensuring everyone does.

Thanks very much.

[ENDS]

[Television interview with Karl](#)

Stefanovic – The Today Show

KARL STEFANOVIC:

The Prime Minister joins us now. PM, good morning to you.

PRIME MINISTER:

Good morning Karl. Good to be with you.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Are you going to pony up?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, I think Bill Shorten has got to pony up and be fair dinkum.

You know, we put out on Monday a proposed resolution which would set out all of the disclosures that people had to make and the assurances they had to give. And I set it out there.

Bill had said he wanted to be bipartisan. I sent it to him and I said alright, here it is, you tell me what you think about it.

We had a meeting yesterday, Karl. He came to the meeting. He did not propose one amendment. He had no detailed comments to make, no changes to make.

I sat there with my iPad for two hours with him and I could not get him to specify what changes he wanted.

He said he had to get more advice. He had to consult someone. I thought he was the Leader of the Opposition.

Anyway, he was there with Penny Wong. Between them they could not come up with any amendments.

Now, they've said they are going to do that and go away and come back but you know, time is moving on.

What he has got to do is decide whether he is fair dinkum, whether he wants to resolve this problem or exploit it.

He has got to decide whether he wants to be part of the solution or continue to be part of the problem.

What I want to do is before Christmas, before the end of the year do the following – I want everyone to make full disclosures of all the relevant material. You know, where their parents were born and so forth. If they have been a citizen of another country, how they renounced that citizenship or how it otherwise came to an end. Provide that evidence. I want all that to be done.

The Parliament has then got to have some time consider it and then the Parliament has got to decide who, if any, to refer to the High Court.

That's what we have got to get done.

But the sooner Shorten is fair dinkum and produces what he proposes, and which we will obviously consider in good faith, the sooner we can get the matter resolved.

I took him at his word about being bipartisan.

If he had been genuine, he would have come to the meeting and said thanks for your proposal, here are the amendments I propose. We would have gone through them in a business-like way and we would have come out of it with something that was agreed but he didn't have anything to say.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

I tell you what, he has come out in a media since – you must feel like a chump the way he has treated you?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, no, I just think the people that he is treating as chumps are the Australian people.

He has got to decide whether he wants to be part of the solution or part of the problem.

Now, this is a man who stood up and said we need to be bipartisan.

I have presented, on Monday, after a Cabinet meeting, a detailed set of disclosures. Everyone has got them.

He has had them since Monday. I invited him for his comments and reaction. We scheduled a meeting.

If he was fair dinkum he would have come to the meeting and said, 'Okay, Clause F, I think we should add this or delete that. Clause G, add this, delete that'. That's what business-like people will do.

He did not do that.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Okay.

PRIME MINISTER:

And that's why it was disappointing. He said he is going to do it, like he was talking breezily this morning about: 'Oh, over the next few days'.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Yeah.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, do you know what? The Senate is meeting on Monday and the Senate is going to pass a resolution to deal with this on Monday and at this stage we don't know, it is only days away and we don't know where Labor stands.

If he is fair dinkum and he wants to resolve the issue he should have some detailed amendments to our resolution in front of us and then we can work out where we can make agreement.

But in principle full disclosure, complete transparency, everything done and dealt with before Christmas.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Alright.

PRIME MINISTER:

That's my goal.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Alright. Enough of Bill Shorten because after all, he is the Opposition Leader.

PRIME MINISTER:

Correct – that's right.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Boy oh boy are you under the pump at the moment!

(Laughter)

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, I am a good man in a crisis, Karl. You know, everyone else gets frenzied, particularly in the media. I'm very calm.

The High Court has presented us with a big challenge. They have said that it doesn't matter whether you know about it or not, if you have got dual-citizenship you are out. Okay?

Now, we took a different approach to the High Court. We said – we argued that if you are born in Australia then foreign citizenship by descent, you know, through your parents et cetera, should not disqualify you unless you have accepted it or acknowledged it or unless you knew about it and didn't do anything to renounce it.

Anyway, they rejected it. They have taken a very strict literalist view.

There is now a genuine, in the media, there is an extraordinary witch-hunt going on.

I mean, I think the attacks on Josh Frydenberg are un-Australian.

You know, the suggestion, for example – think about this – Josh Frydenberg's mother was born in the Budapest ghetto in 1943. She had been stripped of her citizenship by the Hungarian fascist because she was a Jew. The only reason they didn't push her into the gas chamber was because the Russian Army arrived and when Hitler was defeated and stopped them.

And you have got people out in the media saying Josh Frydenberg is a citizen of the country that would have gassed his mother had the war not come to an end when it did.

Three-quarters of the Jews of Hungary were sent into the gas chambers-

KARL STEFANOVIC:

This is the problem-

PRIME MINISTER:

With the connivance and support and participation of the Hungarian government at the time.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

This is the problem. With the greatest respect, PM.

PRIME MINISTER:

We have just got to get the facts out on the table and deal with them in a responsible way.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

PM, with the greatest respect, this is part of the problem here – you are getting bogged down in the minutia of something when you should be getting on with running the country. Are you going to survive this?

PRIME MINISTER:

I can assure you that's what I'm doing. I'm going to APEC today. We are talking about trade. We are talking about opening up more markets for Australia.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Are you going to survive this?

PRIME MINISTER:

We are going to be signing new free trade agreements.

What we are doing is getting on with the job.

Dealing with the North Korean threat.

Dealing with terrorism in Southeast Asia, particularly in the Philippines.

We are meeting with the President of the Philippines. Meeting with President Trump. Meeting with those leaders.

It is vitally important that that work is done just as it is important that we get on with the job of reducing company tax.

You know we have seen, despite all of the frenzy in the media – and there has been plenty of frenzy – what we have seen is the creation in the last year of 371,500 jobs, 85 per cent of them full-time.

We have had the longest run of job creation, monthly job creation, Karl, in 23 years.

I went to the last election talking about jobs and growth and we're delivering them.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

PM, with the greatest respect you are waffling this morning. You are waffling.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, Karl, you have got a job. If you are looking for a job and you need a job and you have got one because of the strong economic leadership we have provided you may think it is waffling but if you have been unemployed and you are getting a chance to get ahead, you would think that's pretty, you would say you are being very patronising.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Okay – this is what I want.

PRIME MINISTER:

Saying young people jobs is waffle!

KARL STEFANOVIC:

This is the real you. This is what we want.

PRIME MINISTER:

No, no, well this is, and it is, mate, and Karl, is it the real you to patronise people who are out of work and are getting a chance to get ahead?

KARL STEFANOVIC:

I'm not, I'm not patronising.

PRIME MINISTER:

I don't think it is. I think you're a fair dinkum Aussie. I think you've got compassion. And I think you know that my job is to ensure that more Australians have the chance to get ahead and realise their dreams and that's what I'm doing.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

OK, this is what we want to see.

PRIME MINISTER:

I'm not going to be distracted by the frenzy. I'm not distracted by the frenzy.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

The perception is, PM, the perception is-

PRIME MINISTER:

I'm resolving the problems.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Okay.

PRIME MINISTER:

Resolving the problems and delivering.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

The perception is you are supposed to be running the country but it looks like you can't even run your own party.

PRIME MINISTER:

Karl, that's nonsense. The party – look at all of the big issues we have dealt with recently.

The same-sex marriage issue. The postal survey – total support. It has gone out there. 80 per cent or thereabouts of Australians have participated in it and we will know the result next week.

The National Energy Guarantee, that has overwhelming support in our party. It is out there. That will have the result of bringing down wholesale power prices by 20-25 per cent over the next decade through to 2030.

That is the practical political economic leadership that Australians want.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Yeah.

PRIME MINISTER:

And that's what I'm delivering.

Now, we have this issue with citizenship. We will resolve it. We will resolve it. That's my commitment.

But the issue for Australians is, can I get a job? Can my kids get a job? Will my business get ahead? Can I start a business? Can I afford to pay the power bills? Will the lights stay on when I do pay the power bills?

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Yes.

PRIME MINISTER:

Those are the big questions and that's what I'm providing the answers to.

KARL STEFANOVIC:

Okay, let's hope that you can go and do that, PM. I think Australia just wants to be led and more importantly, they want to be led well. Thanks for your time today. Appreciate it.

PRIME MINISTER:

Thanks a lot Karl.

[ENDS]

[Television interview with Samantha Armytage – Sunrise](#)

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

I'm joined by Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull. Prime Minister, welcome. Thanks for your time. Let's start with your thoughts on that – whatever you think of Sam Dastyari, what do you make of that?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, there is no place for racial vilification in Australia.

We are the most successful multicultural society in the world and that is because it's built, our society is built on a foundation of mutual respect and so we should have zero tolerance for racism and racial, racist abuse like that.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

Should he be pressing charges today?

PRIME MINISTER:

That is a matter for him. I heard him interviewed a moment ago and I think he said he wasn't going to but that is really a matter for him to do that.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

Alright, let's talk about the citizenship debacle now.

PRIME MINISTER:

Right.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

You knew this was coming.

PRIME MINISTER:

Yes.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

You and the Opposition Leader met yesterday. You had a two-hour meeting. There was no resolution following that. We had Bill Shorten on the show a little earlier, let's hear what he had to say.

BILL SHORTEN MP, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION – RECORDING:

I think MP's do need to demonstrate what steps they've taken to renounce foreign citizenship. It is the Constitution. The High Court set a very clear test. So, we didn't get there yesterday. But I am confident that in coming days we can.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

This is a circus. What is the outcome here?

PRIME MINISTER:

Let me just say, Bill Shorten is not being fair dinkum here. Let's be quite clear about that.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

So is he lying, from the meeting yesterday?

PRIME MINISTER:

He's not being fair dinkum. He wants to exploit this issue. He wants to prolong it. He does not want to resolve it.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

Do you feel like he didn't come to the table yesterday honestly to sort this out?

PRIME MINISTER:

Correct. He certainly didn't come to sort it out.

Let me tell you what happened – on Monday I had a Cabinet meeting and after the Cabinet meeting I presented a draft resolution for the matters that MPs should disclose.

So they would be required to disclose to say that they were a citizen at the time, only a citizen of Australia at the time they nominated, they were still only a citizen of Australia, disclose where they were born, their parents-

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

And your senior Cabinet Ministers overruled that? They said that they did not want that-

PRIME MINISTER:

No, no – the Cabinet totally supports what I am doing but just let me finish.

So, I set out a very clear plan of disclosure. So, I was saying, that if you are an MP, for example, and you had been a citizen of another country like a number, many MP's actually, if you had been born somewhere else for example, what had you done to end that foreign citizenship, where is the evidence of your renunciation or did it cease for some other reason.

Literally, full transparency. Now, that's what I set out. I did that on Monday.

Bill Shorten has been out there saying: 'Oh we want bipartisanship. I call on the Prime Minister to work with me' – all of this stuff. Terrific.

So we have a meeting. Does he come with a set of amendments? If I had been in his position, I would have come with a set of amendments and said I want to change this, this, this.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

And you did that?

PRIME MINISTER:

He had nothing! He had no changes to propose, no wording. We met for two hours. He could not clarify or articulate the changes that he wanted. Now either-

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

So is he stalling?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, either he doesn't know what he wants – he's either confused or he is stalling.

Now I want to get this resolved. This is what I want to achieve. This is the test of leaders – whether you want to be part of the solution, or part of the problem.

Now what I want to do Sam-

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

You are the Prime Minister though.

PRIME MINISTER:

That is true.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

This is up to you and the public is sick of it. And this could bring down your government. If you lose two or three of your people, you guys could be gone.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well at this rate, we already know there are several Labor MP's who have conceded that they were British citizens at the time they nominated.

This is a problem. This is affecting all parties.

Let me just be clear what I want to achieve because it is very important that Australians understand my objective. We need to have full disclosure. We need to have it out there – just let me go on – we need to give the Parliament the time, it does not have to be weeks but a few days to read those disclosures, consider them and then Parliament has to discuss them and decide who, if any to refer to the High Court.

And I want to get all of that done before the end of the year so the sooner we can settle a bipartisan agreement on the terms of the disclosure, on the resolution, the better.

I am really disappointed that Bill Shorten did not come to the meeting yesterday with a set of amendments.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

Yes. Yes.

PRIME MINISTER:

It was not a business-like approach on his part.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

Why not just have an audit? Hit this on its head. Get it done before Christmas. Sort it out.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, you see, it depends what you mean by an audit. If you mean an audit as in-

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

Well-

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, you tell me what you mean by an audit?

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

Someone coming in independently to investigate, to go through where everybody's grandparents came from, where their parents came from and where they come from, where their citizenship sits.

PRIME MINISTER:

Sam, the problem with that is that that would take a long time.

Secondly, the views of the auditor, let's say it was a retired judge for example are not going to determine the matter.

The best way to deal with this is to remember-

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

Would you not then have a list of who is in and who is out? I mean, we've seen the High Court precedent here.

PRIME MINISTER:

Yes, we have, but just let me finish – what every single senator and member has a responsibility to ensure that they are compliance with the Constitution.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

But a lot of them got it wrong.

PRIME MINISTER:

The High Court has given a very tough literal interpretation of the Constitution. We've got that. We had that ten days or so ago.

What we need to do now is get full disclosure and I absolutely support that, and I have produced a model for that and then it is only the Parliament that can then refer people to the High Court.

So you get all of the cards on the table. Everybody discloses their parentage and, you know, if they had been a citizen of another country, how they got rid of that citizenship.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

What a mess. Did you ever see this coming? When again everyday Australians are like just govern the country and we're all talking about this.

PRIME MINISTER:

Sam, let me be clear – the case we took to the High Court was a common sense approach.

We said to the High Court that if you are born an Australian, born in Australia, foreign citizenship by descent through your parents or grandparents or whatever should not disqualify you unless you have accepted or acknowledged it or you have known about it and have done nothing to get rid of it.

That would pass the pub test. That would pass the test at the bar of the pub but it did not pass the test at the bar of the High Court. And so we have to live with the High Court decision.

The High Court has said that knowledge is immaterial. So they have said even if you don't know, or had no reason to know that you are a foreign citizen you are disqualified.

So it is a very, very severe literal reading.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

And something needs to change and whether it's the Constitution or not, that is probably a discussion for another day.

PRIME MINISTER:

Sam, look, right now I want all Australians to understand that I am committed to ensuring that before Christmas we have full disclosure, the Parliament considers it and any MP's or senators that need to be referred to the High Court are referred. That is what I want to do.

But, look, we will move these motions in the Senate and the House regardless of what – if the opposition is not prepared to be constructive then we will

move them and we will see what happens.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

Alright.

PRIME MINISTER:

See, the advantage of, what I was trying to do with Shorten, bluntly, was, he'd said he'd wanted to be bipartisan. That means being constructive. So if I put a draft out there, a constructive approach, to say thanks for the draft, here are my amendments. He has not done that.

The sooner we can settle this, the sooner people will know precisely what they've got to comply with.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

Yes – Prime Minister, we all look forward to that day. We really do.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, a few more than me.

(Laughter)

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

Well only just head there is seven weeks 'til Christmas – so good luck getting that sorted.

PRIME MINISTER:

Yeah and we were debating how many shopping days that was.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

42 in the old days.

PRIME MINISTER:

In the old days, that's right.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

Prime Minister, thank you for your time. Good luck with it.

PRIME MINISTER:

And we were also talking about the price of prawns too!

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

They are going up! What are you doing to do about that?!

(Laughter)

PRIME MINISTER:

You think I should lay off the prawns?

(Laughter)

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

We don't blame you for the prawn prices. That is about the only thing we don't blame you for.

(Laughter)

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, that's true. That's only you because you have a kind and forgiving nature.

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

Prime Minister, stop. Flattery will get you everywhere.

PRIME MINISTER:

I'm sure Bill Shorten blames me for the prawn prices.

(Laughter)

SAMANTHA ARMYTAGE:

Oh, we have to go now, but thank you for your time. We appreciate it.

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you.

[ENDS]

[APEC and the East Asia Summit](#)

Today I will travel to Vietnam and the Philippines for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders' Summit and the East Asia Summit (EAS). I will make a bilateral visit to Hong Kong between the two Summits.

I will use these visits to advance economic opportunity and regional security for the benefit of all Australians.

The Asia-Pacific region has benefited enormously from open trade and investment. In just over two decades, the per capita GDP of APEC economies has nearly tripled.

The APEC meeting in Da Nang on 10-11 November will be an important opportunity to explore ways of growing trade, generating jobs and fuelling economic growth.

While at APEC I will participate in a Summit meeting of TPP-11 countries and hope we can secure an outcome on TPP-11 that will bring significant benefits to Australian businesses.

At the APEC CEO Summit, I will lead a discussion on the importance of technology and innovation in driving economic opportunities for the region.

On 12 November, I will travel to Hong Kong for my first meeting with Chief Executive Carrie Lam. We will discuss the Australia-Hong Kong Free Trade Agreement negotiations and I will meet key Hong Kong innovators and investors, Australian industry leaders and community groups. Hong Kong is an important economic partner for Australia as our fifth largest source of foreign direct investment and eighth largest destination for Australian exports. Hong Kong is Australia's largest commercial base in Asia and is home to the second largest concentration of Australians overseas after London.

On 14 November, I will attend the EAS in Manila. Convened by ASEAN, the EAS is the region's premier forum for strategic and security issues. While in Manila, I will also meet with leaders to progress the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership which could deliver significant gains for Australia.

EAS leaders will have a frank discussion about regional security issues – particularly the unacceptable threat posed by North Korea, but also maritime security and terrorism.

I will update ASEAN Leaders on preparations for the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit that will be held in Sydney next March. This important event will further strengthen our contribution to regional prosperity and security.

At both APEC and the EAS I look forward to meeting many of my counterparts to advance Australia's economic and strategic interests.