

Press Conference with the Attorney-General, Senator the Hon. George Brandis QC and the Acting Commissioner of the Australian Federal Police, Mr Michael Phelan APM

PRIME MINISTER:

Well good morning. It's great to be here at the AFP Digital Forensics Lab here in Sydney with the Attorney-General and the acting AFP commissioner Michael Phelan.

We have been talking today about the challenges that we face in ensuring that the rule of law applies online as well as offline. We've been talking about the challenges that some of the great specialists here at the AFP face when they seek to get over the barriers that encryption places in the way of them finding out what terrorists are plotting, what drug traffickers are up to, what people who are exploiting children online are planning.

We need to ensure that the internet is not used as a dark place for bad people to hide their criminal activities from the law.

The Australian Federal Police must have the powers – as do all our other intelligence and law enforcement agencies – to enforce the law online as well as offline.

Now, in Hamburg at the G20, this issue was brought to the forefront by Australia with the world's 20 leading economies and you saw a unanimous statement from the G20 reiterating that we expect the rule of law to apply online as well as offline.

Now one of the big challenges we face is that of encryption. Increasingly communications across the internet, whether it's messaging applications or voice applications, are encrypted end-to-end. That means that while they can be intercepted, they can't be read, they can't be interpreted other than with considerable difficulty.

So what we're seeking to do, working with the other leading economies in the world, is to ensure that the brilliant tech companies in Silicon Valley and their emulators, bring their brilliance to bear to assist the rule of law. To enable us to be able – not through back doors or any sort of untoward means – but legitimately, appropriately, with the force of law, in the usual way that applies in the offline world, enable our law enforcement agencies to have access to these communications so that they can keep us safe.

As the Attorney-General will describe in a moment, we are already leading the

way here in Australia with new legislative priorities that will ensure that internet companies, like the telcos at the moment, will have the obligation to assist the police with getting access to communications and information data that they are lawfully entitled to, in accordance with an appropriate warrant or court order. And also, to give the Australian Federal Police the ability that ASIO currently has to remotely, again in accordance with a lawful order, to remotely monitor computer networks and devices.

These are vitally important reforms to keep Australians safe.

So whether it is in Hamburg at the G20 or at the meeting of the Five Eyes, the closest intelligence cooperation among the five leading countries, Australia, the United States, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Canada. In that context where the Attorney-General has been, whether it is there or at the G20 or here at home, we are doing everything we can, every day, to keep Australians safe.

I'll ask the Attorney to say a little bit more about the legislation.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL:

Thank you very much indeed, Prime Minister.

As the Prime Minister has said, we intend to work with the companies in order to address what is potentially the greatest degradation of intelligence and law enforcement capability that we have seen in our lifetimes.

What we are doing – and I want to emphasise this – is not changing any existing legal principle.

It has always been accepted that in appropriate cases, under warrant, there can be lawful surveillance of private communications.

It has always been accepted that in appropriate circumstances there is a compellable obligation on citizens, including corporate citizens, to cooperate with law enforcement authorities in order to resolve or prevent crime.

What we are doing, is bringing those existing legal obligations up to date. We are contemporising them. The existing law was written before the advent of social media, before the growth in very recent years of encryption of communications to a point at which it is now effectively ubiquitous. So in order to address the new technological developments, we are contemporising existing, well-established legal principles.

In the spring sittings of Parliament, the Government will be bringing forward legislation, which will in particular impose an obligation upon device manufacturers and upon service providers to provide appropriate assistance to intelligence and law enforcement on a warranted basis, where it is necessary to interdict or in the case of a crime that may have been committed, it is necessary to investigate and prosecute serious crime, whether it be counter terrorism, whether it be serious organised crime, whether it be for example, the operation of paedophile networks.

It is vitally important that the development of technology does not leave the law behind. So as the Prime Minister has said, working with our international partners, in particular with our Five Eyes intelligence partners and with the broader global community as the Prime Minister did last week, and if I may say so, showed international leadership on this issue, we will address this problem so as to keep our people safe. We will work with the corporate sector, we will engage them. It is an aspect of corporate social responsibility, which we will expect them to observe. But we'll also ensure that the appropriate legal powers, if need be, as a last resort, coercive powers of the kind that recently were introduced into the United Kingdom under the Investigatory Powers Act, or as long ago as 2013 were introduced in New Zealand under their Telecommunications Act, are available to Australian intelligence and law enforcement authorities as well.

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you. Michael, do you want to add a bit about encryption?

ACTING COMMISSIONER OF THE AFP, MICHAEL PHELAN:

Certainly, thank you very much, Prime Minister. Certainly on behalf of the Australian Federal Police and all law enforcement agencies and indeed intelligence agencies, we welcome these reforms.

The vast majority of our investigations, indeed 65 per cent of our serious and organised crime investigations, counterterrorism investigations, major paedophile investigations, now involve some sort of encryption. Whether that's encryption of the phones, whether it's encryption of computers that we seize or whether or not it's traffic that goes between conversations over the internet. Then that's the sort of thing that we need to get behind.

At the end of the day, what has happened here is legislation has not yet kept pace with technology.

If you look at when I first became a police officer, it was quite simple. The phones that we intercepted were one house phone to another fixed phone. Quite simple. Traffic, anybody could listen to it. Now, those same pieces of legislation are designed to try and help us intercept encrypted applications that some of you don't even know are encrypted and to be able to get that material.

So we seize the material still and we get to see it, lawfully, but it's just not 'there'. We can't view it.

So what we're advocating here, certainly on behalf of all of us, is no change to what we're able to lawfully intercept, just now giving us the power to be able to see that material. It's not only serious and organised crime investigations, but national security investigations as well. We have seen a rapid growth in the amount of encrypted traffic from around 3 per cent a couple of years ago to now over 55, 60 per cent of all traffic is encrypted.

We welcome the fact that the legislation will keep pace with the technology.

Thank you.

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you very much, do you have some questions?

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, what method do you propose that these big tech companies should use to actually provide this encrypted information?

PRIME MINISTER:

The legislation will require them to provide assistance, it's modelled on the UK legislation. So what they will have to do is to provide assistance to the police to enable them to have access to the information pursuant to a warrant. Look, I'm not suggesting this is not without some difficulty. As I have said, you would have heard me say when I was in Europe, that there is a culture particularly in the United States, a very libertarian culture, which is quite anti-government in the tech sector. Now, the reality is however, that these encrypted messaging applications and voice applications are being used – obviously by all of us – but they're also being used by people who seek to do us harm. They're being used by terrorists, they're being used by drug traffickers, they're being used by paedophile rings.

Now what the G20 agreed at our initiative, at Australia's initiative, is that we need to say with one voice to Silicon Valley and its emulators: "Alright you've devised these great platforms, now you've got to help us to ensure that the rule of law prevails and that they're not exploited by those who want to hide from the law as they plan to do us harm".

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, in some of these messaging platforms you've got keys – a sender has a key and the receiver has a key – but actually the companies don't keep the keys for themselves-

PRIME MINISTER:

That's what end-to-end encryption is, yeah.

JOURNALIST:

Are you asking Facebook and Apple to now keep a copy of the keys that they give out to their customers?

PRIME MINISTER:

I'm not a cryptographer, but what we're seeking to do is to secure their assistance. They have to face up to their responsibility. They can't just wash their hands of it and say: "It's got nothing to do with us". So we need, what we need to do is to secure their cooperation and this is an issue that all of the countries of the G20 recognised.

You know, many of these big messaging platforms are hosted in the United States, WhatsApp is probably the best known but of course Telegram is another one that is very popular, is hosted in Berlin so I discussed that with Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin, in Hamburg when I was there at the G20.

The bottom line is we have got a situation where you have gone from the law enforcement agencies, police, the security services being able lawfully to intercept communications and lawfully have access to communications, and no-one's argued about that. That's been the case forever. Now, because of this end-to-end encryption, all of that information, all of that data, that communication being effectively dark to the reach of the law. That's not acceptable. We are a society, a democracy, under the rule of law, and the law must prevail online as well as offline.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, you say it's not a backdoor – you say you're not proposing a backdoor and so how exactly do you suggest that the companies do this?

PRIME MINISTER:

That's a matter for them. But –

JOURNALIST:

What is your understanding a backdoor is?

PRIME MINISTER:

Do you want me to tell you what a backdoor is?

JOURNALIST:

Yes.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well a backdoor is typically a flaw in a software program that perhaps the developer of the software program is not aware of and that somebody who knows about it, can exploit. You know, if there are flaws in software programs, obviously that's why you get updates on your phone and your computer all the time.

We're not talking about that. We're talking about lawful access. If you look at the communique from the G20, it's talking about lawful authorised access which is done in accordance with the law.

JOURNALIST:

You mentioned that a backdoor was a flaw, that perhaps the developer wasn't aware of. What if, say, WhatsApp did put in a backdoor, you know, that they deliberately put in, that they were aware of so they could provide –

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, I'm not going to speculate about that.

What we're talking about is lawful access. What we're talking about is the rule of law continuing to prevail in the online world as it has in the past, in the pre-encrypted, in the world when telecoms were not encrypted, were not end-to-end encrypted.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, you say you want these tech companies to cooperate and work with you. What if they don't? Can you force them to?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, this is where we need the international cooperation that George was talking about earlier. In fact, when I was in London just a few days ago, I was meeting with the Home Secretary Amber Rudd, who had been meeting with the other Five Eyes security ministers and she'll be travelling to Silicon Valley with her American counterpart to raise these very issues.

Look, I'm not suggesting this is an easy nut to crack. But the fact is we've got a problem. We have got a real problem that our law enforcement agencies are increasingly unable to find out what terrorists and drug traffickers and paedophile rings are up to because of the very high levels of encryption.

What we need is the cooperation, where we can compel it we will, but we will need the cooperation from the tech companies to provide access in accordance with the law.

JOURNALIST:

Won't the laws of mathematics trump the laws of Australia? And aren't you also forcing everyone to decentralised systems as a result?

PRIME MINISTER:

The laws of Australia prevail in Australia, I can assure you of that. The laws of mathematics are very commendable but the only law that applies in Australia is the law of Australia.

JOURNALIST:

What about companies that are not operating in Australia, Prime Minister?

PRIME MINISTER:

That was the point I just answered.

JOURNALIST:

I know, but say a company outside of the G20 or if these terrorist groups use their own end-to-end encryption systems, what can you do about that?

PRIME MINISTER:

Again, I'm not suggesting this is a problem susceptible to one quick fix.

But it is a very big issue and you have to tackle it and you have to show leadership.

Now, I have shown leadership on Australia's behalf at the G20. George has shown leadership among the Five Eyes on Australia's behalf. What we have to do is to work together as a global community to ensure that the rule of law prevails online as well as offline.

JOURNALIST:

What if Facebook and Apple just say no? What if they defy the Government in this space because you're asking for an obligation? Would you go as far to say as you'll ban iMessage and ban WhatsApp?

PRIME MINISTER:

I'm not going to get into hypotheticals. The important thing is to recognise the challenge and to call on those companies to provide the assistance. I am sure they know morally they should. Morally they should.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, it's not a hypothetical. Apple has in the past flagged it does uphold the privacy above almost everything else, we saw with the San Bernardino case. So why do you think they are suddenly going to change now because you've asked them?

PRIME MINISTER:

Again, this is a major challenge to our law enforcement ability, our law enforcement agencies' ability to keep our citizens safe.

What we are doing is everything we can within the parameters of our domestic Australian legal ability and internationally, working with other nations to ensure that we leave no stone unturned in our efforts to keep Australians safe. That's my job. That's the Attorney-General's job. That's the Commissioner's job. To keep Australians safe.

We will do everything we can online, as we do offline to keep Australians safe from those who seek to do us harm. Whether they are terrorists or drug traffickers or paedophile rings or criminals of any kind, we are a society governed by the rule of law and it must prevail. The rule of law must prevail online as it does offline.

JOURNALIST:

Isn't it the case without the cooperation of these tech companies, these legal changes will essentially be ineffective? They won't mean anything?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I disagree with you there. The reality is we need to ensure that we have, of course, the cooperation of technology companies but we also need to recognise that we live in a society governed by the rule of law and the law applies to technology companies as it does to everybody else.

So this is a question of whether you want the rule of law to prevail or whether you want the internet to be used as a place, because of encryption technologies, criminals can hide from justice, criminals can hide from those whose job it is, like the men and women of the AFP we've seen today, who's job it is to keep us safe.

Thank you all very much.

[ENDS]

[Interview with David Koch, Sunrise – Seven Network](#)

DAVID KOCH:

Prime Minister, welcome.

PRIME MINISTER:

Good morning.

DAVID KOCH:

Are people going to die this winter because of rising energy costs?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well, Kochie, I absolutely hope not. I can assure you we are doing everything we can to bring downward pressure on energy prices. My government is taking the unprecedented action of limiting exports of gas from the east coast of Australia to ensure that there is adequate gas supply in the market, because the principal reason for the recent increase in energy prices has been the big increase of the price of gas and that has been driven by a shortage because more of the gas is being exported and there is not a mark now for the domestic market.

DAVID KOCH:

Okay, because the average Australian will be saying we are one of the biggest energy exporters in the world of coal, gas, uranium. So you are saying we got ahead of ourselves and we have actually sold more than we should have-

PRIME MINISTER:

Yes.

DAVID KOCH:

And not keeping enough back here?

PRIME MINISTER:

Look, I always say you have got to take a practical approach to energy. You know there has been too much politics, too much ideology, I'm focussed on economics and engineering. Now what has happened is the previous Labor government, both in Queensland and nationally, federally allowed this big export gas operation to commence from the east coast in Queensland, without paying any attention to the amount of gas that was needed to be retained for the domestic market.

Now, I am cleaning up that mess. I'm taking this unprecedented action – it is very heavy-handed – to restrict gas exports to such an extent as to ensure that we have enough gas for our domestic market.

DAVID KOCH:

Okay, so how will that effect prices? Will this measure drop prices 10 per cent or five per cent?

PRIME MINISTER:

I can't predict how much it will impact on residential-

DAVID KOCH:

Will it come down?

PRIME MINISTER:

It will certainly put downward pressure on energy prices because what is happening is that the price of gas is setting the price of electricity, and of course gas of course is a big part of our energy sources directly when we use gas for heating and cooking and so forth.

There has been a real failure of policy and I am cleaning that up, I'm dealing with it. I am taking some tough, strong measures, unprecedented measures so Australians know that I am getting onto that problem and dealing with it.

DAVID KOCH:

That's great news. Craig Kelly though – coming out and saying more people are going to die. The Greens say that's scaremongering and that you should sack him.

PRIME MINISTER:

Look, everyone is entitled to their opinion. Clearly people who cannot afford to keep themselves warm, particularly if they are old, during the winter obviously face real challenges. What I would just say is that I recognise, we understand household energy costs, power bills have doubled over the last 10 years for the average household, that is being driven by a number of factors but the most recent rises have been driven by the price of gas.

Now, I am taking immediate action to deal with gas supply right now.

DAVID KOCH:

Good.

PRIME MINISTER:

And longer term, we are putting in case the big infrastructure like Snowy Hydro 2.0 that is going to provide energy security in the future but that will take five or six years to build.

DAVID KOCH:

Sure.

PRIME MINISTER:

That is not going to be ready in the next month.

DAVID KOCH:

In the meantime cheaper gas hopefully and that will flow through to lower prices.

PRIME MINISTER:

To bringing gas prices down. They are already coming down. They are already coming down but we have got to bring them down to a fair, global price so that we are not – historically, you know, until recently, we were paying more for our gas in Australia than the customers of our gas were paying for it in Japan.

DAVID KOCH:

I know. Ridiculous.

PRIME MINISTER:

That is how bad the market had got and I'm fixing it. I'm dealing with it with tough measures. A lot of people have criticised and said they are too heavy-handed, but I will stop, you know there is nothing that will stand in my way in delivering a fair energy outcome for Australians – whatever it takes. That's what we need to do.

DAVID KOCH:

Good. Love the tough talk.

You are also today announcing major tech companies will be forced to hand over encrypted messages of terrorists. Are you expecting a fight to get that through because civil libertarians are saying how do we make sure that there is a line in the sand with just terrorists and not the average Australian?

PRIME MINISTER:

We have the right now to get the cooperation from the telephone companies, from the telcos. What we don't have is the legal right to get that sort of cooperation from the internet companies like Facebook, or WhatsApp or Telegram and so forth, and Google.

So what we've got to do is modernise our laws. We cannot allow the internet to be used as a place for terrorists and child molesters and people who peddle child pornography and drug traffickers to hide in the dark. Those dark places online must be illuminated by the law.

DAVID KOCH:

Yep.

PRIME MINISTER:

I'm not talking about giving intelligence agencies backdoors or anything underhand. This is simply saying the rule of law must prevail online as it does off-line.

DAVID KOCH:

Are you getting push back from the tech companies?

PRIME MINISTER:

In America, Kochie, there is a very strong libertarian sort of anti-government sense. It is quite different to other countries, and they don't – remember that case with the Apple phone, the San Bernardino terrorist, and Apple wouldn't unlock the phone? Now the FBI managed to get it unlocked otherwise.

But you know, really the message we secured from the G20 and Australia took the lead in this, we had a united, unanimous communique on counter-terrorism. And what we had said is the rule of law must prevail online as well as offline and we expect those big internet companies to ensure that their platforms – wonderful and magnificent, ingenious though they are – cannot be used by people to hide their plots to commit acts of terrorism or commit criminal acts of a kind we have discussed.

DAVID KOCH:

Okay. Well you know all about it – you helped to setup the first internet company here in Australia, OzEmail-

PRIME MINISTER:

Well one of the first big ones, yep, that's right.

DAVID KOCH:

Yep, okay.

Big moves in the United States to impeach Donald Trump, the American President, has found a supporter in John Howard. Take a look.

HON JOHN HOWARD OM AC – RECORDING:

The style of President Trump is unusual, it's different, there's no point in saying otherwise. But that should not blind us to the substance of his Presidency. And he has done a number of things as President that I think are very praiseworthy.

DAVID KOCH:

You have just come back from the G20, spent a bit of time with Donald Trump, rode in the Beast-

PRIME MINISTER:

In the Beast, that's right! Yes.

DAVID KOCH:

I'll ask you about that.

PRIME MINISTER:

Yes, Lucy and I and Melania and Donald in the Beast.

DAVID KOCH:

What do you think about him? He seems quite awkward and is this threat of impeachment a reality?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I can't comment on the US domestic politics but all of my dealings with him have been very frank, very informal, he is a businessman. We had a very good discussion you know in his SCIF – the Secure Communications Information Facility, which is like a large steel broom cupboard that presidents have there.

DAVID KOCH:

What?

PRIME MINISTER:

I'm serious.

DAVID KOCH:

Really?

PRIME MINISTER:

Yeah.

DAVID KOCH:

Like Maxwell Smart has a cone of silence – he has this room?

PRIME MINISTER:

Yep. It is like a small room, steel room and we had a meeting with, a very informal meeting with the President, myself, President Macron of France, Theresa May, Mathias Cormann-

DAVID KOCH:

All in the steel room together?

PRIME MINISTER:

Yeah – Gary Cohn – all in this steel room.

We went through a whole range of issues – some trade issues, some issues about the communique. He is a very practical businessman.

DAVID KOCH:

Right.

PRIME MINISTER:

I find him very easy to deal with. He is very frank, very straightforward. I am a guy that has been in business most of my life, so has he. We may not agree all the time, obviously, but nonetheless I find him easy to deal with.

DAVID KOCH:

Okay.

PRIME MINISTER:

You know easy in the sense of being frank and forthright and practical.

DAVID KOCH:

You know where you stand.

PRIME MINISTER:

You know where you stand. Yeah, that's it.

DAVID KOCH:

Okay. Thanks for joining us, good luck with reducing power prices.

PRIME MINISTER:

That's the goal, that is the goal.

DAVID KOCH:

We need that. We'll keep watching.

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you.

[ENDS]

Press Conference – London

PRIME MINISTER:

Well it's been a very successful visit to the G20, to France and to the United Kingdom.

At the G20 we were able to secure unanimous support for a strong statement on counter-terrorism and in particular on ensuring that there will not be ungoverned spaces online. That the rule of law will prevail online and offline. A very strong commitment.

One of the leaders said at the meetings: "We've been talking about this for years. Now we're actually coming to an agreement, bringing it to a head so that there is a clear signal from the leaders of the largest 20 economies." So that was a great achievement for us. We led that initiative and I'm very glad that we were able to deliver it.

We saw strong outcomes on other measures, on other issues too. It was also a great opportunity to meet with other leaders and secure strong commitments on trade in particular. As you saw, we had a very good meeting with President Widodo, President Jokowi of Indonesia. He gave his commitment to concluding an Australia-Indonesia trade agreement by the end of the year. That's a very strong commitment, strong leadership on his part.

And of course we're working to get a free trade agreement with the European Union and you saw that we had a meeting with the President of the Commission and the European Council, Donald Tusk and Jean-Claude Juncker. They made a

commitment too, as indeed supported by other European leaders like Chancellor Merkel, President Macron and others, to get that agreement settled before Britain leaves the EU sometime in 2019.

So you can see that we're moving. We've got our skates on and we're getting things done, getting the initiative, the momentum going on all of these matters.

We were able to have a very, very long period of time, both on the plane from Hamburg to Paris and then of course the *Élysée Palace*, to get to know the new President of France, President Macron. Really a fantastic opportunity as you can see. He is a very warm and generous host and a great meeting. Really a great opportunity and understanding to have with him at this early stage in his Presidency.

Of course we were then able to go to Cherbourg and to see the work that is being done there on our future submarine program, and open the Australian Future Submarine Project office there. To see that strong collaboration between France and Australia, you saw how warm and committed to the project was the President Macron and also the Minister for the Armed Forces, Florence Parly.

Then we came here to the UK and of course the focus of the visit with the government has been continuing our work in the fight against terrorism. It was very moving to visit, with Prime Minister May, the London Bridge and the Borough Market.

To see where those brave young Australian women were killed.

To see the men, the police officers that sought to revive them.

To look at and admire the resilience of that community and the determination of the British people and of course all the Australians that are part of this community, not to be cowed by terrorism; to stand up, defy them and defeat them as we are doing in the field and as the Metropolitan Police did in the Borough Market where we stood.

Then we were able to have very detailed, in depth meetings with the British intelligence community. Our intelligence relationship with the UK is one of absolute trust. It could not be more intimate and it's always good to meet with the UK intelligence community, the leaders of MI5, MI6, GCHQ and others. To learn how we are working closer and closer together all the time to counter the terrorists, to defeat them as we defy them.

As you know we had a very good meeting with Prime Minister May at Number 10, a fine lunch cooked by Skye Gyngell, my old mentor Bruce's daughter which is very touching. Then we were able to talk about another free trade agreement which will be the free trade agreement we have with the United Kingdom which we aim to enter into as quickly as we can, as soon as Britain is free to deal with us.

So its been a very good and productive visit and this afternoon, I look forward to an audience with her Majesty the Queen. Then we'll be returning

home to Australia.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, what's your understanding of which royal will open the Commonwealth Games next year? Will it be the Queen or one of her representatives?

PRIME MINISTER:

I can't advise you on that but I may be better informed this afternoon.

JOURNALIST:

What do you intend to discuss with the Queen?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well the discussions as you know are always confidential, but I'm sure her Majesty would be keen to learn about what the major issues are and developments in Australia. I obviously look forward to her advice and wisdom. She has after all known and advised many, many Prime Ministers.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister, all those years ago when you led the republican campaign on the referendum, did you ever think in 2017, you would be going to Buckingham Palace as Prime Minister to visit the Queen?

PRIME MINISTER:

No I don't think I did imagine that David. But as I said last night, you know, politics is full of unpredictable events. All I can say is that many, I would say most Australian republicans, are Elizabethans as well.

JOURNALIST:

Soon after you became Prime Minister you indicated your support for the release of the letters that have been marked personal between the former Governor General Kerr and the Queen relating to the dismissal. Is that something that you still support, the release of them, and will you raise that with the Queen today?

PRIME MINISTER:

You'll forgive me if I'll be discrete about that matter.

JOURNALIST:

The first part of my question? Do you still support the release of those letters?

PRIME MINISTER:

Let me leave that, given I'll be meeting with her Majesty shortly, I don't want to say anything that could be interpreted as suggesting what we will be discussing. Certainly after the meeting we won't be going into what has been discussed.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister can I ask you, if the Queen were to seek your counsel on how long you think it will be before Australia is a Republic, what counsel would you give her?

PRIME MINISTER:

Again, thank you, I think my views on that are very well known.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister on the innovation roundtable this morning, did you get any concrete ideas out of that as to what, any policy adjustments?

PRIME MINISTER:

Yeah look, thanks that's a good question.

There is a lot of concern in the British educational community about the consequences of Brexit. You know, there are a lot of collaborative research programmes and funding through the European Union. While there is already a lot of collaboration with Australia, they are looking forward to do more.

So I think while obviously the decision to leave the EU is a matter for the British people – and it's a decision that they've taken – you can see, whether it is on the trade front, or on the education, research and innovation front, British people and leaders are looking to do more with Australia.

So that may be a, you know, a silver lining at least from our point of view, in respect of the Brexit decision.

JOURNALIST:

Do you think the Australia-Britain FTA may have some sections in place to allay some of those concerns?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well it could, but I'd say that I think we can do more on the research and collaboration side with perhaps more fellowships going in each direction. We could do more of that now. I don't think there is any limitation under the EU rules on that front.

So I think what you're seeing is, Britain has naturally been part of the European Union for a long time. They've been very focused on their role in Britain, or their role in Europe I should say. But you can see that now

Britain is looking more widely afield.

Britain has always been a global power while part of the European Union, but I believe they will become more so because they need to obviously have more relations, more connections all around the world. That's what I was talking about yesterday at Number 10, you know a lot of people in this country frankly are very downcast about the Brexit decision, they think it was a mistake.

I don't comment on that, it's their decision. But the point I was making at Number 10 was, British people should see this from an optimistic point of view. They should be able to say: "Well we've made that decision, we are a global power, we are part of a global economy, there is a world elsewhere beyond Europe and we should embrace it". I think Australia is a big part of it.

JOURNALIST:

Prime Minister we know that you can't tell us about what you're going to talk her about, but you are a student of history, can you reflect on the Queen, she's been Queen longer than any of us have been alive. And your friend across the channel Emmanuel Macron has pointed out the fact that he believes the French people mourn the loss of the King in their society, still. So can you reflect on the Queen and her role in the UK's life and Australia's life?

PRIME MINISTER:

Well you know her ancestors also had the title of Queen of France too, but I'm not sure – I don't think President Macron is thinking about that.

Look, the Queen has embodied selfless public service, dignity, wisdom, leadership for longer and more magnificently than anyone alive today. There is no doubt about that. She has been a remarkable leader of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth. She has been our head of state for all of that time and I'll be very honoured to meet her, as Australia's Prime Minister and to share my thoughts about Australia and hear what she has to say.

So I'm really looking forward to it. As I say even republicans like myself can be, and in my case are very strong Elizabethans.

JOURNALIST:

A newspaper report in Australia is suggesting that your Government is considering new emissions standards that would have the effect of raising the cost of the average new vehicle by about \$5,000. Can you tell us, is that report right? And if not-

PRIME MINISTER:

Well I haven't seen the report. Certainly no decisions have been made in that regard at all, but I haven't seen the report.

JOURNALIST:

Your speech last night has provoked some anger among conservatives back home in Australia.

PRIME MINISTER:

Really? I saw Eric Abetz said it was a magnificent speech.

JOURNALIST:

Well Alan Jones's rant, or Cory Bernardi or Pauline Hanson reacting saying that the Liberal Party is not the home for conservatives in Australia, have they misunderstood your message?

PRIME MINISTER:

I am proud to lead the party Robert Menzies founded.

And as the Prime Minister and leader of the Liberal Party I stand on the same political ground, with the same political principles with which he founded our great party, so many years ago.

As I said last night, the most fundamental standard of our party is a commitment to individual freedom. Not just freedom for unions and big businesses, but freedom for the men and women Menzies called 'the Forgotten People'. Freedom for the people that Edmund Burke called the little platoons, the small platoons.

That commitment to freedom is what distinguishes us from the Labor Party.

We combine conservative and liberal traditions, as I said in my speech.

We stand at the sensible centre, as Tony Abbott said.

We are a broad church, as John Howard said.

But as Menzies set out when he founded our party, we are a party that is committed to freedom.

My speech last night was about freedom and the way it is not threatened by strong security, it is enabled by security. That security which my Government delivers through strong laws, strong agencies, strong values, that was the speech, that was the content of my speech last night about how freedom – our fundamental value – is protected by the security we deliver for the Australian people.

Thank you all very much and have a good flight home.

[ENDS]

Remarks at Education Roundtable

PROFESSOR BYRNE:

Welcome, the Prime Minister of Australia, to our university campus in central London. Malcolm Turnbull I know from my many years in Australia, is an absolute leader, a champion for innovation. He has connections with the UK – he was here as a Rhodes Scholar – and deep friendships. I think he'd appreciate as much as any of us that this is an unbridled opportunity to build on long, deep friendships and really strengthen the relationships in education, in research, not only around universities but more broadly between our two countries going ahead.

So Prime Minister welcome. It's wonderful to see you here. Perhaps I can invite you to say a few words and I'll invite my colleagues to introduce themselves.

PRIME MINISTER:

Very good well thank you very much. Thank you for inviting me here today. The ties between Australia and UK universities of course, are about as intimate as they possibly could be. My old university, Sydney University was built to imitate, if you like, or recreate the spirit of Oxford and Cambridge. It's motto, *Sidere mens eadem mutato* – the same mind under different stars – gives you an indication of the closeness of the relationship.

We all understand the closeness of the connections over so many years but let me get down to business. The most important thing I'd like to hear from you about, is about innovation and research and development.

We have a big innovation and science agenda in Australia. Innovation is the key to productivity. It's absolutely essential. Our agenda is going well, we are seeing stronger investment in venture capital and startups, actually quite considerable strengthening there.

But one thing we do not do well enough in Australia, and you do much better than we do – and I'd like to hear from you, why you think that's so – is that we don't have enough collaboration between primary research and universities and industry.

In other words, we are not commercialising enough of our IP. In fact we were talking about it only at breakfast this morning Alexander with some of the CEO's – now we've changed the research grant rules to give priority to or encouragement to that type of collaboration but given how close we are culturally and in every respect, with the UK, why are you – we believe that you're doing it better than us, and how can we improve it. Because we want to make more of those great, Australian ideas and intellectual property turn into great Australian businesses and Australian jobs.

[ENDS]

Remarks at meeting with AstraZeneca CEO, Mr Pascal Soriot

PRIME MINISTER:

Thank you Mr Soriot, Chief Executive of AstraZeneca. You're the leading manufacturer of pharmaceuticals in Australia and so committed to the excellence of your team in Australia and the big export business you've built out of Australia in this pharmaceutical industry. In advanced manufacturing, you're investing another \$100 million to expand your plant in Sydney.

That is great news. Congratulations, thank you. Now tell us all about it.

MR PASCAL SORIOT, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, ASTRAZENECA:

Yeah thank you Prime Minister, it's been a great pleasure to announce this \$100 million investment in Australia.

That comes on the back of another \$100 million we've invested in the last few years in this facility. That is really a centre of excellence for us, for the manufacture of inhaler products for the treatment of asthma and COPD.

We intend through this incremental investment, we intend to generate about \$2.6 billion of exports out of Australia to a great variety of markets including China. And these products are growing very very rapidly and we expect to generate even more investments in jobs in Australia over the next few years.

And I was saying a few minutes ago, it really pleases me particularly to make this investment because despite my accent I am an Australian by adoption. My children, my family live there and I plan to retire to Australia. So it's really a very pleasing investment for me to be able to announce today.

We have a tremendous team there, they've done a tremendous job. It's really high quality manufacturing, really specialised manufacturing in the pharmaceutical industry and it's our centre of excellence for the world.

PRIME MINISTER:

Well thank you Pascal, good luck and I hope it's many years before you retire. You look very young and vigorous.

[ENDS]