

**POST-CABINET PRESS CONFERENCE: MONDAY, 28 MARCH  
HANSARD TRANSCRIPT**

**PM:** Kia ora koutou katoa; good afternoon everyone. Firstly, today, I want to acknowledge the sad passing of Dame Temuranga “June” Batley-Jackson. June has been described as formidable, fearless, and no-nonsense; an advocate for urban Māori; and mum of Cabinet Minister Willie Jackson, who will take this week to be with whānau. Our thoughts are with you and all of your family at this very sad time.

This week, the Government has two key areas of focus. The first is to provide extra support for families doing it tough. On 1 April, the majority of families in New Zealand will see their incomes go up as we increase New Zealand’s superannuation, the Working for Families Tax Credit, benefits, student allowances, and wages. The second focus for this week is the launch of our winter flu campaign on Friday. Sitting at the heart of our COVID-19 winter plan, we’ve supported Pharmac to secure 2 million flu jabs—40 percent more than previous years—as we prepare ourselves for the first time in two years against the arrival of Northern Hemisphere winter flu bugs.

Turning now to Cabinet’s decisions today. I can announce further support for Ukraine in its defence against Russia’s invasion. Today, Cabinet has confirmed an immediate deployment of nine New Zealand Defence Force personnel to the United Kingdom and Belgium, to support our partners in intelligence and engagement work for the next three months. Seven New Zealand Defence Force intelligence analysts will go to the United Kingdom to assist with the heightened demand for intelligence assessments. Some of our people directly support intelligence work on the Ukraine war, and some will join existing teams focused on other parts of the world in order to free-up capability within the UK teams. Two other officers will deploy to the UK and Belgium, to enhance our engagement with an understanding of partner activities related to Ukraine. One will work with the existing defence attaché and New Zealand military representative to NATO, and one will work within the UK’s permanent joint headquarters. We’ve sent in the past defence intelligence personnel to active deployments overseas, such as in Afghanistan. They’re an integral part of any defence commitment. We also regularly have exchanges with other defence intelligence agencies such as the UK.

Today, Cabinet has also approved use of the Defence Force’s open-source intelligence capabilities for three months, to support the UK and other European partners. Taking advantage of the time zone difference to help with key tasks during their night time, and our day time. This of course follows on from the New Zealand Government’s support of \$5 million announced last week for non-lethal military assistance, and provision of defence equipment like body armour and helmets, which I’ve been informed will be dispatched from Ōhākea, heading to Australia tomorrow, then onwards to Ukraine this week.

In addition to that kit, New Zealand has secured communications equipment to provide to Ukraine, and I’d like to acknowledge Tait Communications which has made it possible for us to respond to this specific request. This will come from the \$5 million contribution announced last week, with the remainder of the money going to the NATO trust fund for Ukraine. This equipment will be shipped as soon as possible, and likely in the first week of April.

This military support is in addition to the humanitarian support provided to the Red Cross, and the establishment of a Special Ukraine Visa for family members of Ukrainians in New Zealand, for which 264 applications have been made, and 46 visas have been issued. And of course through the Russia Sanctions Act we’ve already designated over 460 individuals and entities, and we’ll be announcing more targets in the coming days, weeks, and, we expect, months. We know that sanctions globally have been making it harder for the Russian regime to fund its war. The ruble has collapsed in value, and Russia is on its way out from being in the top 20 economies in the world. New Zealand is playing its part.

Before I conclude, I do just want to acknowledge that in real time, we’ve had a very significant event at the Oscars, only moments before I came down. Can I congratulate Dame Jane

Campion on her win, and thank her for once again putting New Zealand on the world stage, displaying just how beautiful our country is with her talent, her skills, and her storytelling. It's a phenomenal outcome, and I know we're all very proud of her. OK, happy to take questions.

**Media:** Just while you are mentioning Jane Campion, what significance does that win have for us her in New Zealand?

**PM:** I don't think we can underestimate the impact of being recognised at events such as this, and, you know, Dame Jane to be there again, not once but twice at this level, is just phenomenal. It speaks to her skill, her talent; but she has used that to put New Zealand on the world stage. And we just cannot underestimate the impact of that.

**Media:** How is New Zealand going to leverage off this?

**PM:** We already have members of the New Zealand Film Commission in the United States as we speak. I mean, the number of nominations *The Power of the Dog* has received meant that this was the absolute time to be there; to be talking to studios around the potential to attract additional productions into New Zealand. We know that film and the screen industry contributes a significant amount to the New Zealand economy; now is the time to be leveraging off the wonderful success of a very important New Zealander.

**Media:** Prime Minister, did you today discuss the Māori situation that a Cabinet paper was going to—

**PM:** No, in fact as you may well be aware, the *Herald* story that I believe you're referring to was corrected on that front. That was not due to come to Cabinet today.

**Media:** When is it going to Cabinet?

**PM:** As I believe Minister Jackson's office clarified at the time, there is a report back on consultation due at Cabinet committee this week. So, again, not quite as has been reported.

**Media:** With the nine people who are going to be posted overseas for intelligence, that doesn't sound like a lot of people, but is it quite a large chunk for New Zealand, to be—

**PM:** Look, this is very much in keeping with similar deployments of this nature, in other situations where we are contributing highly skilled analysts to undertake roles that, in some cases, two of those individuals will enable other personnel from within the UK to be freed up, for Ukraine-specific tasking. Five of those intelligence analysts will be specifically involved in looking at, for instance, satellite imagery, analysing information in real time. That then passes through the UK and directly support of the efforts in Ukraine for the army in Ukraine.

**Media:** And is there any chance that intelligence mission creeps into boots on the ground over there?

**PM:** Yeah, I mean, look, this—the imagery in particular, and the satellite imagery and the intelligence that's drawn from that, certainly will form, no doubt, the basis of decision-making by the army on the ground in real time. So whilst we are a third party, providing intelligence analysts through the UK, that then does contribute directly to the effort by Ukraine to defend their homeland.

**Media:** Sorry, my question is more around us sending troops—

**PM:** Oh, sorry.

**Media:** Is there any chance that—are we creeping closer to putting boots on the ground?

**PM:** No, and nor are other countries in that position. But what we are doing is very much in keeping with other countries' contribution.

**Media:** So this intelligence—could that be used to inform lethal operations on the ground, and if so how do you sort of square that with the reservations around providing lethal weapons?

**PM:** We haven't taken that off the table, but it's not unusual for New Zealand to make a contribution to intelligence analysts in this way—that's been undertaken in the past. Here, we

are a third party, we're working alongside our defence partners in the UK to provide that capability.

Here, though, obviously this is about making sure that there is support for Ukraine to undertake its own operation, to defend themselves and their homeland against the invasion by Russia. That includes real-time information, and that's what our people will be supporting them with. I do have the CDF available afterwards if there are more detailed questions.

**Media:** Prime Minister, just on Dame June Jackson again, did you have an opportunity to meet her? She was a formidable woman—

**PM:** Yes.

**Media:** —and particularly her time on the Parole Board as well. Did you have—

**PM:** Much of Dame June's activity pre-dates my role in this office. So Dame June's activity on the Parole Board, or certainly in support of her marae, I didn't have that same contact that I otherwise would have had I been around probably 10 years earlier, perhaps.

**Media:** And so with—

**PM:** Yes, sorry, go on.

**Media:** So with the vaccination, flu—sorry, I didn't mean to move you on—

**PM:** No, no, that's fine. Do you know what, though, regardless, I knew of her legacy. I knew of what she'd achieved. I knew that she was still playing a role with whānau even, and, despite having stood down from some of those more public and CEO roles, I know the impact that she left.

**Media:** Prime Minister, are—

**PM:** Sorry, I'll let you finish your next question.

**Media:** Just on vaccinations, particularly around flu vaccinations, the strategy for Māori then, with us having to cope with trying to up our vaccinations for COVID as well—

**PM:** Yeah, and you'll see from Minister Little—when he speaks in a bit more detail to that campaign, you'll see there'll be a particular focus there on trying to up our vaccination rates in communities where we have not successfully seen high rates of flu vaccine before. And so that will be a particular focus of this campaign, yeah.

**Media:** Prime Minister, have you set a date for the Tauranga by-election yet?

**PM:** No, not yet. So part of the reason why is I received an initial piece of information and I just had, over the weekend, one additional question that I've asked of the Electoral Commission in terms of timing. So once I get that back, I imagine that I should be able to make announcements in fairly short order.

**Media:** What's that question you asked?

**PM:** Just a question around timing options. So they'll present me with a range of different dates. I've just asked a couple of questions around some of those dates and preferences, and so on.

**Media:** Have you given your indication as to what your preference would be?

**PM:** No, no, not at this stage. I'll do that in very short order. This is very much a straight bat. The Electoral Commission tell us what's possible, tell us what they think the implications will be for different events that are on at that time and so on, early voting impacts, so it's really a logistical question I'm asking.

**Media:** Do you think you can win it?

**PM:** We've been very clear: this is a seat that hasn't been held by Labour since the 1930s, so we don't expect there to be a change in that fairly strong record in one direction.

**Media:** Does the current COVID situation weigh into the decision on a date for the by-election?

**PM:** Does the current COVID situation—ah, look, only to the extent that the Electoral Commission wants to make sure that, regardless of the settings that you have at the time, they can maintain social distancing and try and ensure they don't have a lot of congestion. So that might impact the amount of advance voting they have, and so on; so not markedly. They know that they're able to hold them in red settings. They just want to think about how they can do it in a way that's safe.

**Media:** Just on a totally different topic, the Government won't be giving out as many carbon credits to the Tīwai smelter this year and for future years. Do you have an expectation that that decision will affect their ability to stay here longer than 2024?

**PM:** There's a lot of water to go under the bridge and, for Tīwai and for the community around it, they have gone through this process many times before where expectations are raised and then decisions change. We have to make sure that we have contingency regardless of what happens.

**Media:** How concerned are you about Chinese war ships being allowed in the Pacific?

**PM:** Yeah, you will have heard me speak to this a little bit already. I'm deeply concerned by the developments that we're hearing and seeing in the Pacific, based on what's been reported around the Solomon Islands. Look, New Zealand has long expressed an opinion that we do not want to see the militarisation of the Pacific, that we believe we can support one another with defence and security needs as they arise, and New Zealand has a history of doing that in the Solomon Islands. We are raising those concerns directly, we have done previously, and will continue to do so. We are in the Solomon currently; we have been for a number of years. In my mind, there's no need for this expansion that we're seeing.

**Media:** So what more can we do?

**PM:** We can, of course, continue to bilaterally raise the concerns that we have. We can also work as a Pacific Island family through the Pacific Islands Forum to raise the voice of all countries in the region around what we want to see happening in the Pacific. This is our backyard.

**Media:** What about the criticism that's been levelled at your Government that you haven't been as involved in the Pacific as, say, the previous foreign Minister was?

**PM:** I think we should probably just point out where that criticism is coming from, and it's from the previous foreign Minister and, obviously, I totally disagree. The accusation is made that we haven't visited the Pacific. That is, frankly—as most of our Pacific Island neighbours have had their borders closed through the duration of COVID. But we have demonstrated the partnerships are strong through, for instance, the significant programme through COVID of economic support, vaccination support, and, in fact, whilst we haven't been able to meet face to face, we have been there hand in hand working together through this health and economic crisis.

**Media:** Prime Minister, a Wellington family were told after their mother died that Kāinga Ora was going to kick them out of their house within 28 days. They've backtracked a little, but essentially the family have been told they have to move on immediately because the house—they no longer need an accessible bathroom—that the mother needed the accessible bathroom. Is that good enough from—

**PM:** Yeah, so, look, I have seen that there was some—that Kāinga Ora sought to clarify with some of the original reporting that they had reached out to the family and offered to support them to find alternative accommodation because, you're right, it was an accessible home and that there was a need within their existing waitlist of individuals. Because accessible homes—we are trying to build more, but of course, we do have a limited number

that can meet the needs of some of our community who have those needs. So the understanding I've been provided is that they have reached out to support the family to find alternate accommodation. They have not been removed; there was notice given that they would need to work through that process with family, and they do need to do that sensitively. Obviously, they're suffering grief and loss at the same time as Kāinga Ora are trying to support them for what will be a disruption in their lives.

**Media:** Is that good enough, though, that it took media attention for this kind of new process to start, but—

**PM:** I can only—

**Media:** —there was a letter saying, "Get out of there."

**PM:** I can only refer here, Henry, to what I've been told, which is that they scheduled a meeting on 8 March, two weeks following the sad passing of their family member, to try and talk about housing options. So it's not that people have been evicted, but they have given them notice, that they do have need, and they want to support them as quickly as they can. But I'm happy to make sure that you've got the same information I've been given.

**Media:** What conversations have been had between New Zealand and the Solomons since these reports came out about China?

**PM:** So, keeping in mind that this has been an issue to differing degrees since the end of last year. Because, over the course of that time, we've had, within the Solomons, members of the police force who have been present alongside us—an Australian and New Zealand presence. So this is something that I raised with the Prime Minister directly—the Solomon Islands Prime Minister—at the end of last year. We had a conversation right before Christmas around this issue. We have also raised it with our counterparts at officials level, and I believe at ambassador level we're seeking to raise it directly also with China.

**Media:** What was the message?

**PM:** Simply, the concerns that we have around the militarisation of the Pacific.

**Media:** What did they say when you raised these concerns?

**PM:** Well, look, I can't speak to the response of conversations that have happened in more recent days. When it comes to my interaction with the Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands, I think there was an acknowledgement of the concerns but also assurances around relationships and the security arrangements that they will be entering into. But obviously, we're not satisfied by that.

**Media:** Have any representations been made to China?

**PM:** Yes. As I just said, I understand MFAT have invited a conversation with the ambassador here.

**Media:** It's been two weeks since you announced the petrol relief and road-user charges. There's still quite a few unanswered questions around the road-user charge aspect in terms of what you would do around putting a cap on it so that you don't basically have people speculating and buying a whole heap—

**PM:** It is fair to say it is more complex. That is true.

**Media:** And the retrospective element as well for people who are in a position where they need to buy, in effect, because they're running out and it doesn't fit into that three-month period that you have allocated, which is not until late April now. Why is it taking so long? Were officials not aware that this was in the mix and they're just kind of—

**PM:** No, it's much more complex, RUC, and we even spoke to that at the time: that we would try and make sure that, as much as possible it, was equitable. But when you have, you know, over 100 different designations within those regulations for RUC rates, it was always going to be more complex. And there're exactly the issues that you raised over bulk purchasing—people who might be needing to purchase within a designated time frame when

the charge isn't made 'till a week later. So it hasn't been as straightforward, but we have still moved to act as quickly and as fairly as possible. I can take some of your more specific questions away—I believe some of them we could answer.

**Media:** Because the 85 classes part has been sorted—that came out from Michael Wood last week, but it's more around the other stuff. And is it a case of you're going to have to make legislative changes around saying that people can only buy up so much, for example? Is that the slow bit here?

**PM:** I wouldn't want to say that that's been the only issue, because there have been a number of technical issues that have made it complex. But, if you wouldn't mind, I wouldn't mind seeing where we've got to in finalising the details around the bulk purchasing element.

**Media:** Can you just confirm if NZTA and Ministry of Transport, how much they were aware, I guess, before you made that announcement two weeks ago?

**PM:** Oh, of course. These were all issues that we knew we'd have to resolve. But it is fair to say that as we saw those price increases moving, the big focus immediately was: what is the best mechanism to deliver a discount at the pump? Excise provides for the vast majority of New Zealand that immediate response. We wanted to be fair and ensure we were doing the same for diesel—so using the road-user charges to do that. We knew that came with complexities and would not be as quick, but we are seeking for people to have the same relative benefit or relief—for want of a better word—at the pump as a result.

Yeah, Thomas.

**Media:** Were you surprised by the scope of that draft—the seemingly draft security arrangement between the Solomon Islands and China, or were you aware of what they were trying to do—

**PM:** I don't know if I would—yeah, so look, certainly, as I say, from the end of last year, you could see the Solomons entering into arrangements that were beyond what we had seen before, and, as I've referenced, there's already an in-country presence. There's already training being undertaken. So this is an additional—what has been reported has an additional layer to that and mirrors existing arrangements and is incredibly disruptive to the region. New Zealand will not be the only country who holds a strong view on this issue.

**Media:** If you were to see a lot more Chinese police officers in the Solomon Islands, or even their military staff, would New Zealand look to withdraw our contribution? We've got soldiers there currently, police officers there currently—

**PM:** Yeah—

**Media:** —and that might—

**PM:** —and our presence there has been longstanding, and I think this is the really important point. We were working very hard to support our Pacific neighbours and our Pacific family to respond to whatever security, defence training, or capability arrangements that they may have needed support for, and we have done that for years. So the question that has to be asked is: what gaps remained that weren't being fulfilled? I can't see any, and so that then raises a question over what the intention is with these arrangements.

**Media:** So if there were to be a greater number of Chinese military or police staff there, would you want to withdraw New Zealand staff?

**PM:** That's not a decision we've taken, and, look, I really question whether or not it enhances or benefits anyone if we simply say that we don't have a role to play. We do and we have done, and so I'm not sure I'd want to cede that point at this stage.

Do you mind if I just come down the back—Claire.

**Media:** There's been a fair bit of chatter on social media about the protesters returning to Parliament. Have you had any information on that, and are you concerned about it?

**PM:** No, I have not, and, look, anything that potentially impacts on Wellingtonians of course, you know, we should all be concerned about. But I haven't received any official advice or information on that. I would point out to them that the basis on which they protested, if they want to come and protest, against, for instance, health workers still needing to be vaccinated, I'm not sure if people would necessarily agree with that position.

Forgive me, I don't have your name.

**Media:** It's Lucy—

**PM:** Lucy—sorry, Lucy.

**Media:** Are you concerned that we might see similar agreements between China and other Pacific countries—

**PM:** No.

**Media:** —like Vanuatu?

**PM:** No, not necessarily—no, I wouldn't make any assumptions. These—you know, and we do need to acknowledge this is a sovereign nation making a decision around its own security relationships, but we shouldn't simply draw an assumption that because one has, that that immediately means other sovereign nations will make similar decisions.

**Media:** But is there a risk?

**PM:** Well, look, I also—I wouldn't want to talk in absolutes, because these are decisions made by sovereign nations. We can't predetermine any nation's future decision-making. However, I would say that amongst the Pacific nations, we have worked very hard collectively together to make sure that we are meeting one another's needs within the region.

Justin.

**Media:** Kiwibank is predicting an innate loss of 20,000 residents over this coming year. It would be the worst emigration in a decade—

**PM:** Sorry, what was the first part of—

**Media:** Kiwibank is projecting that there'll be a loss of 20,000 residents this year—more people will leave than will move to New Zealand. They're saying it'll be the worst emigration in a decade. Is there anything the Government can do about that, and are you concerned that that'll worsen labour shortages?

**PM:** So, you know, one of the things that we're facing at the moment is, for instance, some of those crucial areas like, for instance, tourism, who are facing immediate employment needs, and one of the traditional areas we've often filled some of those needs have been working holiday visas—the same thing: that we may see some New Zealanders go who have put off or postponed their travel for their traditional OE for some time may likewise do the same. One thing we can do to support more incoming travellers such as working holiday visa holders is with the issuing of those visas quickly. Immigration New Zealand identified there were almost 20,000 individuals who did not take up their working holiday visas because of our closed borders. They worked to reissue those 12-month visas to try and expedite people coming in. They've been eligible to do so from March. They're equally working on campaigns to attract working holiday visa holders into New Zealand. So, yes, we may well see New Zealanders travel. We may well see them engage in what we often have. The trick will be making sure that we're equally filling those skills gaps that we have with highly skilled critical workers and also those who support industries like tourism.

**Media:** Prime Minister, what are you hoping that the foreign Minister's talks with your Fijian counterpart, Frank Bainimarama, might achieve—especially in relation with the Solomons?

**PM:** So firstly, this is a critical relationship for us and a really strong one. It was the last visit—alongside Australia—that I was able to make before borders and travel were essentially concluded, and so being able to return and really prioritise those visits into Fiji, and also our defence Minister doing the same, is really important to us. I imagine amongst the talks will

be, yes, domestic issues, Fiji's upcoming elections, but also Pacific matters. As you'd expect, we'll be interested in just generally the focus of the Pacific Island Forum on big, critical issues for the Pacific, like climate change and, equally, I imagine, security arrangements.

**Media:** Cause Fiji did appear to be pivoting more towards China with Bainimarama's Look North policy—how confident are you that New Zealand and Fiji are sufficiently aligned, particularly on issues like a possible China—

**PM:** Our relationships are very, very strong. I would never speak on behalf of the Prime Minister's foreign policy. Obviously, that is a matter for them as a sovereign nation. However, I consider us to be very, very strong, close working partners.

**Media:** Just on a slightly different topic, since last weekend, unvaccinated citizens have not had to enter MIQ or self-isolate, but New Zealand permanent residents still need to be vaccinated to travel here. Why is that so and when might that requirement change?

**PM:** Yes, and so we are giving some thought and consideration to whether or not what is currently an exemption for citizens whether or not that should be extended to permanent residents. The public health risk assessment was very much around the citizens solely, so we need to undertake a bit of analysis over the impact of it being extended.

**Media:** Is that fair, though, on permanent residents, who in many aspects of life have the same rights as citizens?

**PM:** Well, of course, for citizens, there are additional obligations that New Zealand has, but as I say, we are looking at the public health assessment around extending it to permanent residents. Yeah, Amelia, and then I'll come back to Sam.

**Media:** A 43,000 strong petition calling for the Government to publically fund cystic fibrosis drug Trikafta has been presented to Shanahan Halbert in Auckland, today; what's the Government doing to give Kiwis access to this life-saving drug?

**PM:** Yeah, well, for starters, I would say that, you know, we've absolutely recognised, firstly, the important role that Pharmac plays and the important impact that an increase in Pharmac funding has, and so we have significantly increased Pharmac's budget, and the reason for that is because they're ultimately the decision makers. You know, I've been in Opposition in politics, and I've been in Government. I know the amount of pressure that there is on politicians around the funding of specific drugs, and understandably. In many cases these are life-altering drugs, but these should always be decisions that aren't made by politicians but are made by those that have the clinical experience and that can look across the wide ambit of need that we have in New Zealand. In this one particular area, I would just say that Pharmac is in charge of the decision making over where certain drugs are able to be used for certain age groups, and there's a bit of a difference at the moment between New Zealand and Australia, but that's obviously not something that we're involved in.

**Media:** Our deployment to the Solomon Islands after the riots last year, that's due to finish this week on Thursday; has there been any discussion about extending that? The potential for unrest would seem to be high, now that this security agreement's come to light, the Parliament's just come back. Are you looking at extending it? Have the Solomons expressed any desire for us to extend?

**PM:** I'd need to go and just do a double check on dates, there, Sam, if you wouldn't mind, but I'm happy to come back to you. You know that we did extend our wider presence over the holiday period at the beginning of the year that enabled some rotation for our Australian counterparts, but I'd just need to look at what the final decision on the remaining individuals that we have there.

**Media:** Prime Minister, it's nearly been a year since you announced the public sector pay guidance to keep a lid on rising wages. Since that time, inflation's gone a bit nuts; have you thought about reconsidering that guidance in light of that?



**PM:** I might leave that for Minister Hipkins to speak to, if I may. Of course we're aware of the changing circumstances since the time that that guidance was raised.

**Media:** So it might be possible to reconsider that, given the changing circumstances?

**PM:** Look, there's absolute acknowledgment of the changing circumstances that we're experiencing across the board, and you'll see that from our response, but when it comes to wider guidance, very careful about what I say. So I'll just leave that to Minister Hipkins.

**Media:** Sorry, can I just go back to your answer on Trikafta? Pharmac has already approved Trikafta for its "Options for Investment" list, and therefore it's just sitting there waiting to be funded. So, then, doesn't the decision lie with Government to give them more funding?

**PM:** Sorry, just to be specific, what I was implying there, from some of what's been raised with me recently, is about the age bands. So, for instance, at the moment, there isn't yet a decision on the access to this drug by younger users, relative to other countries. So that's not a decision we make. Also, the sequencing of decisions isn't something we also deal with. So we have increased Pharmac funding; they make a decision over the drugs they prioritise first. They've done that. This particular drug is on their list but hasn't come off first in that funding extension that they have received over several budgets.

**Media:** This kind of applies to both Trikafta and other medicines that Kiwis have been waiting years and years and years for the Government to fund. They see the COVID-19 vaccines and the COVID-19 antivirals being funded really, really quickly, and I guess they don't feel that that's fair.

**PM:** So, look, here is where the role for Pharmac is incredibly difficult. You'll see that, even when we increase their budget significantly, in amongst life-changing drugs will often then be alongside them over-the-counter drugs that New Zealanders use on a regular basis, for often what are not life-threatening illnesses. These are the decisions that Pharmac, ultimately, have to make, and they're very difficult ones. So they determine what's top of the list; what gets funded next. As a result of our increase in funding, we have seen new cancer drugs funded, but there continues to be a long list of additional drugs that, of course, will be on any such list by Pharmac. OK, anything else? All right, looks like we can all finish.

**Media:** Did you see the Will Smith slap?

**PM:** I didn't see it. I've seen commentary and the odd image. I'll leave it to others to commentate on. Thanks, everyone. The CDF—if anyone has just background questions that they wish to ask, the CDF is available.

### **conclusion of press conference**