

from the Press Office

SUMMARY OF "P.M."

The Opposition today called for the resignation of the Attorney-General, the Minister for Social Security and the Minister for Administrative Services, for failing in their Ministerial responsibilities in the controversial Greek conspiracy case. Intense questioning by the Opposition centred on two issues - allegations of illegal phone tapping and the offer of a \$200,000 reward to an informer. Senator Guilfoyle today read a three page statement from her Director General which categorically denied that he or the Department had done anything to endorse, facilitate or authorise payment of a reward and that no consideration had been given to an amount of \$200,000. Mr Lionel Bowen interviewed. Says he wants three heads of this issue because there are three Ministers who either do not know what their departments have done or are not prepared to find out and in one outstanding case, there is a Minister who says he does not know what the law is. Mr Bowen questions the propriety of offering sums of money, for which they are responsible, as reward money. On the question of ministerial responsibility, professor of law at Latrobe University believes the concept is more blurred than it used to be but since the days of the Whitlam government ministers are now less likely to 'carry the can' and accept responsibility for any inaccurate advice they may receive from their departmental heads.

Detective Chief Inspector Thomas was again questioned today about the involvement of the government in the proposed payment of money to the police informer and about his dealings with government departments. When asked who was to decide what payment should be made to the informer, he replied, "The Cabinet". Before this disclosure it had been assumed from documents tendered in court that this decision would be made by the Commonwealth Police who had carried out negotiations with Mr Marcus before the investigations were properly launched in 1977. After this was made public, Inspector Thomas was questioned on what criteria would have to be satisfied before the informer was actually paid by the cabinet. Thomas agreed that he had written a confidential report in which it was stated that the Police Commissioner had agreed that the payment of \$200,000 could 'well be a proper amount if certain conditions were met'. Thomas conceded during cross examination that he personally had destroyed documents relating to discussions with Mr Marcus in 1977, well before the publicised raids and arrests and afterwards. He said he had done so to maintain confidentiality essential to relations between the police and their informers.

A report tabled in Federal Parliament blasts both the Commonwealth Police and State police forces for a serious failure to co-operate and co-ordinate with each other. The report on Australia's capability against terrorism was prepared by Mr Justice Hope and was specially commissioned by Mr Fraser after the Hilton bombing. In his report he also criticised the development of the State police paramilitary forces arguing that capability in that field should best be left with the defence forces.

Wild storms cut a corridor of devastation costing millions of dollars across South Australia last night.

There was an outcry in Australia when Australian aid destined for East Timor was being held up in the docks in Djakarta. Now the tables have been turned because Red Cross workers in Indonesia say that

urgently food supplies for East Timor are being held up by shipping delays in Australia.

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