



10

PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

14 September 1984

Mr Peacock's increasing desperation to save his political hide has panicked him into the most irrational behaviour in contemporary political history.

The current spate of public allegations against me by Mr Peacock is clearly defamatory.

Despite opportunities in the Parliament, as recently as yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition has not produced a shred of evidence to support these reckless charges.

While the allegations are without foundation they cannot be ignored.

Naturally I will have Mr Peacock's statements considered.

But I am placed in an impossible dilemma.

If legal action was taken to protect my name and reputation, then I would be open to charges that I was trying to stifle political debate.

The alternative is to stand back and allow him to continue to defame me with baseless accusations.

I hope that Mr Peacock will rise above the gutter politics he has been practising in recent days.

The Leader of the Opposition would be better advised to address the economic and social issues of fundamental importance to all Australians.