

DOORSTOP INTERVIEW

CANBERRA

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Prime Minister

It's been a very difficult evening. It's been a very difficult evening for Ian Sinclair. He has had the best interests of the Government very much in mind and that is appreciated by Doug Anthony and myself -- by all his colleagues. He believed that the action that he has taken is in the best interests of the Government and I haven't the slightest doubt that that was foremost in his mind. We need to remember, I think, that the N.S.W. Government has published a report which has left very much up in the air. It makes charges, it makes allegations, it comes to conclusions, in a sense, and as I am advised it is not a document that could be used as evidence in law and the N.S.W. Government needs to take action so that the matter can be finally determined one way or another. I am sure Ian Sinclair would want that action taken, because he would want the opportunity to clear himself. Now, that can't happen - or it is very difficult to see how it can happen - unless the N.S.W. Government does what it ought, and that is allow the processes to unfold so that the matters in Mr. Finnane's Report can be truly and properly tested.

Question

Mr. Sinclair spoke to you tonight. Did he agree with the decision that he should resign?

Prime Minister

It was his decision, didn't you read his letter?

Question

Did you agree that he should resign.

Prime Minister

Of course I did, because there was no argument about that. He believed that that was in the best interests for the Government as a whole. I've got no doubt that that was the consideration foremost in his own mind. There was discussion between Mr. Sinclair, Mr. Anthony, Mr. Lynch and myself. Mr. Nixon was there. There was no disagreement, but the decision was very clear Mr. Sinclair's own, and as my letter has shown, with great regret - again in the interests of the Government - I will be making certain recommendations to the Governor-General in the morning.

Question

Is there any effect on the Coalition because of the resignation?

Prime Minister

No, none at all.