

## INTERVIEW WITH PETER HARVEY

Question:

Prime Minister, do you think the demonstration against you was organised?

Prime Minister:

Yes, it had to be organised, You wouldn't have had that many people there if it wasn't.

Question:

By whom?

Prime Minister:

Well, it is very hard to know, I think. I have asked for a report which I haven't yet had to date, but the Fitzroy City Council passed a resolution some days ago, deploring the fact that I had been asked to open this old people's nursing home. One of the councillors has clearly been making speeches saying he expects a large number of people to attend, that he couldn't guarantee that it would be peaceful. Mr Innes and other Labor Party people boycotted the opening which is most unusual for an apolitical function of that kind. Mr Innes had originally accepted, but then he withdrew, as I understand, around about the time the council passed its resolution.

Question:

For anybody who has seen the television news tape of the demonstration, it is pretty obvious it was more than your ordinary, run of the mill demo which I think you would expect and take in good part. It struck me as being fairly savage. How did affect you?

Prime Minister:

Well, it was savage, and I think it was very difficult for the police who I believe did a very good job in the circumstances. People had not been expecting a noisy demonstration, or a violent one, and because of that, what was to be an outdoor ceremony, was transferred so that it took place inside the church. But there was enormous distress caused to the aged and the elderly, the patients in this particular nursing home who suddenly found the environment in which they were living turned into a most disruptive one with noise and abuse and missiles being hurled. I understand that the whole of the area looked a shambles this morning as a result of this and as a result of the activities yesterday. I don't understand that mentality of people who want to turn the opening of a nursing home into something of this kind because, the Commonwealth is spending, or has committed, well over \$400 million. Money has been spent over the last few years, the programme goes on over the next two or three. These nursing homes have been built all over the country, homes for elderly people. It is the first such home in Fitzroy. We have done it, this Government has provided it because of our concern, and I would have thought it something that everyone would want to applaud.

Question:

You are concerned about the elderly folk. Do you think now there is an obligation on you to avoid situations like that?

Prime Minister:

No, I don't. I really don't you can't have the circumstance in which a Prime Minister gets driven off a university campus or out of certain suburbs. We can't have a country in which Prime Ministers can only walk in certain parts. As Prime Minister, I represent everyone, no matter where they come from, the Government's task is to govern for the whole country, not just for those who voted Liberal, or those who who might be regarded as our supporters. This is one country. This is one nation, and while I will be looking at my programme to see in what places Tamie should or shouldn't come with me, I'm never going to not go into a certain place because somebody like this particular city council might pass a resolution, or somebody else might organise a demonstration. I don't think the people of Australia would want me to. I don't think they would expect that of their Prime Minister.

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