



PRIME MINISTER

E. & O.E. - PROOF ONLY

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JOURNALIST: the Costigan Report from Mr Peacock if he doesn't guarantee not to reveal confidential details?

PM: Let me say, Peter. What I've done is, I've written to Mr Peacock indicating of course that we would make the report fully available to him, but the strict confidentiality must be respected. And the reasons for that are obvious. I will just put it very briefly. It is in respect of any on-going prosecutions that may be involved - they must not be prejudiced. And secondly, the civil liberties of people who may be named, who may not in fact have any charges against them. And so I am waiting on the reply from Mr Peacock to that letter. And he must be prepared to accept those conditions of strictest confidentiality. I don't think there is anyone in Australia of any political persuasion who would possibly disagree with that.

JOURNALIST: Earlier on, Prime Minister, Mr Peacock was giving indications that he was going to release sections of the Report (inaudible)>

PM: (inaudible) is doing that, I started to wonder whether the public for Mr Peacock could go any lower than it is, but I am sure that if he were to do that, it would. This is not an issue that is politically advantage - it is You must respect the public interest in the two ways that I have said. Firstly, we are concerned, and I would assume Mr Peacock was, that every possibility of people who should be pursued according to the criminal processes should be undertaken and without prejudice. There must be nothing, at least which would inhibit those processes. And secondly we should all feel a concern for the rights of individuals. Now, to get political advantage and prejudice those two basic considerations, then the people will make their judgement. As far as Mr Kennett is concerned, that is a matter for arrangement between Mr Cain, the Premier of Victoria, and the Leader of the Opposition. And if Mr Peacock is going to try and play politics on this, he will pay the price. He doesn't seem to learn quickly enough that there are standards of behaviour that the people of Australia expect from their political leaders.

JOURNALIST: Inaudible

PM: I think that that is not only a hypothetical question, but it is just not fair to speculate on that. I trust that he will have the good sense to understand the necessity of abiding by those conditions.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, will you concede that there are now big differences between the position of your Government and the ACTU over the productivity increase and indirect taxes?

PM: No, I not only do not, but I think if you contain your patience, you will find that later this afternoon there will be a statement issued by the ACTU which will make it quite clear that that is not the case.

JOURNALIST: Inaudible.

PM: Just a minute, I can't let that one go

JOURNALIST: That you have been putting pressure on

PM: No, I don't put pressure on the ACTU.

JOURNALIST: Have you spoken to Mr Dolan?

PM: No, I have not spoken to Mr Dolan.

JOURNALIST: On the Costigan matter. In one sense you are criticising Mr Peacock before

PM: No, no, I am not. Now, let's be quite clear on this. There have been propositions put to me that Mr Peacock has himself been making statements as to what he would do. I am responding to those. He has been saying he would release the document, he wouldn't abide by this, he would make it available to the public. That is what I am responding to.

JOURNALIST: What is the wording of the conditions you put in that letter?

PM: I haven't got the document in front of me, but it seems to me it was that he would have the whole document made available to him, unexpurgated, but that the strictest condition of confidentiality must be adhered to. That is the essence of what I said.

JOURNALIST: Inaudible.

PM: I haven't spoken to Mr Crean. I have spoken to Mr Kelty.

JOURNALIST: Mr Trimbole.

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PM: No, this is something which is within the proper processes of the law and I hope that those processes are pursued to conclusion.

JOURNALIST: Mr Hawke, (inaudible)

PM: I think you should see the statement which I understand will be made by the ACTU. Once you see that and hear what I have to say later on the, you will see that the position I am putting to you is justified.

JOURNALIST: Do you have the Costigan Report yet?

PM: I don't have it yet, but my office has it, as I understand. I haven't seen it yet.
