



## PRIME MINISTER

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E & OE - PROOF ONLY

JOURNALIST: Can the RAAF be brought in to solve the pilots' dispute?

PM: Well you know when - ... of conflict that you shouldn't signal your shots. I'm wanting to make it clear. I don't want war. I want peace. I want the pilots to understand they're no different to you people, ordinary workers, that they should be within the system. That's what I want them to do. I hope that that's what they'll do. But what I'm saying is if they want war then there will be war. We're not going to lose this one. I'm not going to be disclosing what we're going to be doing other than to say these things. Firstly that we will be fully behind the airline operators in any action they take to institute legal processes, punitive legal processes against individual pilots and their organisation. Secondly we'll do everything we possibly can to provide skeletal services. We can't substitute for existing services. We'll do everything we can to provide some sort of emergency service situation and something beyond that. I'm not going into any details.

JOURNALIST: The reports are out that the RAAF is being prepared. What do you say to those ...?

PM: I've seen lots of reports about lots of things in my life. Some are true, some are not.

JOURNALIST: Are you looking at this as the sort of thing to lead up to an election, a power struggle?

PM: Don't be silly, of course not. Don't, don't - that really is a very, with respect, I don't want to be rude to you but that is a very silly question. This is something that the pilots have apparently been leading up to and my position is simply that if they're going to do it, whenever it is, whether it's at the start of a term of government or at the end of it or in the middle of it, they're not going to win it. It's got nothing to do with an election at all.

JOURNALIST: So what is your warning to the pilots?

PM: I've given it. That is that they operate within, they have operated within a conciliation and arbitration system. That is a system which confers rights and imposes obligations. We want them to stay within it because they are essentially no different from other wage and salary earners in this country. For God's sake let them demystify themselves. The fact that they fly an aeroplane doesn't make them different from other wage and salary earners. If they think they're going to be different and get outside the system, my message to them is that they will cop every instrument of punishment and retribution and reaction that the operators bring against them.

JOURNALIST: Can you give us any insight as to what you mean by war?

PM: Well, it's conflict. That is, they have said alright here is an orderly system within which relations between employees and employers operates. There are rules and regulations and constitutions and institutions, including the Commission, which handle the relationships between people. They say we don't want anything of that. They don't want to be part of it, we're different to everyone else, we're going to go outside. If they go outside this means that all the processes of the law, which can include common law action and other things which will involve action by the airlines against individual pilots for penalties and damages, very significant financial impositions upon them. That's what's on.

JOURNALIST: Four o'clock is the deadline. It's getting pretty serious.

PM: My number one message to each and every one of those pilots and to the Federation is this. Please don't ... provoke conflict. Don't delude yourselves that because you've learnt to fly an aeroplane, which is not the most difficult thing to do in the world - the Prime Minister learnt to do it when he was a young fellow - it's not the most difficult thing in the world to do. It doesn't make you someone different. You're already on average on \$80,000 a year. You're in a situation where the previous president of your organisation has said, and let me quote what he said, Captain Tony Fitzsimmons, 'there is no other pilots' group in the world that enjoys your overall pay structure'. You're already in a privileged position. You are not going to break the wages system in this country and get another 30%. That's the message.

JOURNALIST: Can you say whether the RAAF has been consulted?

PM: I have nothing to say in that area.

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