



PRIME MINISTER

TRANSCRIPT OF NEWS CONFERENCE, PARRAMATTA LEAGUES CLUB,
PARRAMATTA - 9 OCTOBER 1989

E & OE - PROOF ONLY

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, why was it necessary to ring Sir Arvi Parbo ... comments this morning?

PM: It wasn't necessary. I thought it a reasonable thing to do because I didn't want there to be an unnecessary personal interchange between Sir Arvi and myself on the question of the telephone call. I must say I am indebted to Sir Arvi for the fact that he has indicated that my account of what happened in regard to the telephone call is accurate and that there had been a misinterpretation by the media of what he had to say about it. It's best that that be clarified and it has been.

JOURNALIST: Well in fact he said you got a bit carried away.

PM: That is another question. He said I had but he did not dispute the accuracy of my account of what had happened in regard to the telephone call. And however much you may want to deflect from the point I was concerned, that is the misinterpretation of your friends in the media, he made it quite clear that they had misinterpreted. They had.

JOURNALIST: Do you think it's an especially edifying sight Prime Minister to see the Prime Minister and the Chairman of BHP slanging it out?

PM: I would have thought, if you could disentangle yourself from your prejudices, which I know is difficult in your case, that in fact what my telephone call was about was to ensure that if there has to be an argument between Sir Arvi and myself there is no doubt there can be, in regard to the basic issue of Coronation Hill, that that be disentangled from a misinterpretation of your friends in the media. Now I know, as I say you have difficulty in taking that point, but the fact that you have difficulty worries me not at all.

JOURNALIST: But shouldn't ... been misinterpreted Prime Minister, shouldn't he have rung up on his own accord without ...

PM: I'm not here to say what Sir Arvi should have done. I am unqualified in my gratitude to Sir Arvi for when I rang him. He said your account Prime Minister is correct and there has been a misinterpretation by the media. Now we can go on and on and on. That basic point you will not avoid. I repeat it, that my interpretation about what happened on the telephone call is correct and the media, as is often the case, were prepared in the first case not to do their homework. There was a statement which they interpreted. I would've thought that common good sense, common good sense would've suggested that after Sir Arvi had made his statement, before racing off to misinterpret, common good sense would've suggested ... ring the Prime Minister's office. You find out from Sir Arvi's statement now that if you had done that there wouldn't have been the misinterpretation.

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