



PRIME MINISTER

TRANSCRIPT OF DOORSTOP, RESIDENCE OF THE AMBASSADOR OF
THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, CANBERRA
3 OCTOBER 1990

E & OE - PROOF ONLY

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, what does unification mean to Germans living in Australia?

PM: I imagine it's a source of great pride for them. It should be. As it is for the 78 million people in Germany. It's important for them. Very important for Europe. Important for the world.

JOURNALIST: Is it something we should fear?

PM: No, no. As I said in my speech, I was, I think, one of the first to say when the changes occurred in East Germany that the reunification of Germany was both inevitable and proper. Of course there's nothing to fear about it. The German leadership and the German people I think are totally sincere in acknowledging the past and responsibilities to the past and they have a total commitment I believe to working for peace in their immediate region and globally. Certainly that's the direct tenor of the letter that I've received today from my friend Helmut Kohl.

JOURNALIST: Prime Minister, do you expect Mr Keating to be your Treasurer going to the next election?

PM: You know, one of the funny things about you mob here is that you get down on a corner and you go beat, beat, beat, beat, let's beat up something. And then you expect me to add something to your beat. You go away in your corner and beat, beat, beat.

JOURNALIST: This afternoon -

PM: ... what that adds to is I don't deign to give any credit to your - well I won't use the word I was going to because it could be misinterpreted - your self beat-ups. I mean if you want to do that, you do it, but don't expect me to take you seriously.

JOURNALIST: In about an hour's time Mr Murdoch is expected to announce the closure of most of his Melbourne and Sydney papers and replace them with just one 24 hour, seven day a week paper. Is that a good development for the media in this country?

PM: Well for some of those who might be rationalised out of a job I suppose they would have a particular view about it that it wouldn't be good for them. But it seems to me that it has the possibility of benefit for people.

JOURNALIST: In what way?

PM: Well I mean you'll have certain rationalisation of resources. You'll probably have the capacity for more editions of papers. So I don't tend to be an expert on these things. I mean I'm sure many of you are. But it will probably mean a loss of jobs for some people but as far as the community generally is concerned they probably will get a better service.

JOURNALIST: You don't think the contraction of the range of opinions will be damaging?

PM: Well, you know, if I look at the sort of opinions that come out of the Telegraph and the Mirror and out of the Sun and the Herald and the two city papers down there, I don't sort of perceive an enormous divergence of opinion in the past.

JOURNALIST: What will be your response to the NFF's request to ease monetary policy?

PM: Let's see them first, let's see them first.

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