

**Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio**

**Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet**

**Budget Estimates Hearings 2006-2007, 22-23 May 2006**

**Question: PM 6**

**Outcome 1, Output 3.1**

**Topic: UN Oil-For-Food Programme investigation**

**Hansard Page: F&PA 89:**

**Senator Faulkner asked: Are we aware whether the Prime Minister had any contact with Mr Thawley about the investigation?**

**Mr Lewis—I am not able to answer that.**

**Senator FAULKNER—Why not?**

**Mr Lewis—It is a matter that I think is probably before the commission.**

**Senator FAULKNER—Come off it! This is a matter—**

**Mr Lewis—I am not able to answer that question—**

**Senator FAULKNER—The reason I am asking these questions is that there can be no argument about this particular issue being before Cole. It is not. I am talking about the US Senate inquiry. That Senate investigation is not a matter that is before Cole in any way, shape or form, and everybody knows it, so let us try to answer the substantive question.**

**Mr Lewis—I am not able to answer that. I do not know the answer.**

**Senator ROBERT RAY—Now how about uttering the other words: ‘And out of respect for the committee, I will take it on notice and give you an answer.’**

**Mr Lewis—I will take it on notice. I do not know the answer.**

**Answer:**

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet has no record or awareness of any contact between the Prime Minister and Ambassador Thawley about the US Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations inquiry into the UN Oil-For-Food Programme.