

FOR PRESS:

P.M.No. 14/1959

STATEMENT BY THE ACTING PRIME MINISTER, RT. HON. J. McEWEN.

The Federal Cabinet has not, as reported, approved a five-year plan for the development of Canberra at a cost of £55 million from 1st July next.

No decision in these terms has been made and the programme for governmental works and housing in Canberra will continue to be subject to the normal annual budget procedures.

Cabinet has given consideration to plans for the development of Canberra and has decided that, in addition to providing, at broadly the present level of expenditure, for the essential requirements such as engineering services and housing arising out of the planned transfer of Departments to Canberra and the normal growth of Canberra, it should be the objective to provide for the introduction of some features to develop the national character of the capital.

A programme of the order of £3 million, spread over the next five years, was envisaged for these special features. A specific decision by Cabinet would still be necessary before any particular project was commenced. Cabinet had authorised work on the Lakes Scheme to begin without delay.

CANBERRA, A.C.T.

1st May, 1959.