

FOR PRESS:



P. M. No. 82/1968

F-111's: INFORMATION ON PURCHASE ARRANGEMENTS

Statement by the Prime Minister, Mr. John Gorton

(Commenting on Senator Gair's Press Statement)

I have made it clear that the Government wishes to provide the Parliament with information on the arrangements made to purchase F-111's - I have also stated that we will not provide information which has a security content or which is confidential between our Government and another Government should that Government object to such confidential information being made public.

Last night Senator Gair joined with the A. L. P. in the Senate in demanding, in effect, that such confidential documents should be made public whether or not the Government of the U. S. A. agreed and whether or not this disclosure would adversely affect our relationship with that Government now and in the future.

I regard this as quite irresponsible and can assure Senator Gair that whatever resolution he may move and whether or not the A. L. P. support him, information in this category will not be made public by this Government under any circumstances.

Meanwhile arrangements have been made for Australia and the United States to examine the documents relating to purchase arrangements to determine what can, by agreement, be disclosed.

CANBERRA
18 September 1968