

THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT WAS GIVEN TO THE PRESS ON 6/1/1972 IN THE
NAME OF "A SPOKESMAN FOR THE PRIME MINISTER".

72/1 A



PRIME MINISTER

ACCESS TO COMMONWEALTH ARCHIVES

The recent release by the British Government, under its archives policy, of official records including Cabinet papers from the Second World War, has given rise to questions about access to Australian Government records, a spokesman for the Prime Minister said today.

The archives policy of the Commonwealth Government was reviewed in December 1970. A statement announcing the new policy was then made. In accordance with this policy, the general run of records is, with certain specific exceptions, subject to a "thirty year access" rule.

Cabinet papers because of their special nature were differentiated. Under the decisions taken in December 1970, the fifty year rule was retained for access to these papers and release was also to require the Prime Minister's approval and consultation with the Leader of the Opposition where such papers originated under a Labor Government.

The Prime Minister stated today that further consideration would be given to the policy of access to Government documents.

CANBERRA,
6 January, 1972