

25 January 1973

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER

ABORIGINAL EMBASSY

The Government has decided not to proceed with any of the remaining charges arising out of the removal of the Aboriginal Embassy from the front of Parliament House last July.

In addition, no action will be taken to collect fines imposed for offences during the demonstrations which were not paid by December 2 last year.

The Government has also decided to pay compensation to any policeman who was injured while the Embassy was being removed. The police were carrying out their duty in accordance with the policy of the then Government.

In the demonstrations of July 20 and July 23 last year, 26 people were arrested on charges under the Police Offences Ordinance of the Australian Capital Territory and the Crimes Act (N.S.W.) as applicable in the A.C.T.

Seventeen of those arrested were dealt with before December 2 and three of those convicted have appeals pending before the Supreme Court of the Australian Capital Territory. In the Supreme Court on these appeal cases and in the remaining matters in the Court of Petty Sessions, the prosecution will offer no evidence to substantiate the charges.

CANBERRA. A.C.T.