

From the Press Office

SUMMARY OF ABC'S "P.M."

The Australia Council has announced a major inquiry into opera in Australia. It follows a series of upheavals in the Australian Opera with its latest General Manager, Mr. Peter Hemmings, leaving the country last night having served only two years of a three year engagement.

There is still confusion over reports earlier today that the Soviet President, Mr. Breshnev is critically ill or even dead. Breshnev has dominated Soviet politics. Krushov's demise and the West has been concerned for some time at what effect his death might have on Soviet foreign policy. Interview with Geoffrey Dukes, Research Fellow at ANU.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Fraser, today foreshadowed that the Commonwealth Government would investigate ways of blocking State unions who applied for Federal awards as a counter against State de-registration. The Prime Minister was speaking at a brief press conference after a meeting in Canberra today of State Liberal leaders. Mr. Fraser also launched into a strong political attack on the Opposition. Excerpt from press conference (transcript held in Press Office).

The biggest demonstration yet in Tasmania's history was held in Hobart today when 2,000 people gathered to protest against the Tasmanian Hydro-Electric Commission's plans to flood the Franklin and Gordon Rivers in Tasmania's southeast. The protest was organised by the Tasmanian Wilderness Society. Interview with the Society's President, Bob Brown.

A voluntary adoption agency in N.S.W. called Jigsaw, which claims to help adopted children locate their natural parents, has come under fire from the State Minister for Youth and Community Services, Mr. Jackson. Mr. Jackson said his Department had been flooded with complaints from people who have had contact with the organisation and that they had been subjected to harrasment and invasion of privacy. President of Jigsaw, Lorraine Carrol, interviewed. One man who has been associated with Jigsaw is Noel Turney, an announcer with a Sydney commercial television station who was with the organisation as its publicity officer and who left because he was disturbed by the organisation's activities: interviewed.

There were reports today that the Church of England has been shocked by the recommendation of a church committee on homosexuality. The Committee has virtually sanctioned the homosexual relationship. Editor of The Church Scene in Melbourne, Gerard Davis, interviewed.