



## PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

6 May 1983

The Prime Minister made the following statement at the start of a Media Conference today:

The urgent and decisive action that the Government found it necessary to take - including going to the High Court at 11.15 last night - does not reflect merely a concern on behalf of the Government that classified documents have improperly come into the possession of the National Times. This is not a Government that would take such action simply out of annoyance or embarrassment. The fact is that the allegations made to this stage already go to the gravest issues of Australia's international relationships and domestic security considerations.

While not in any way conceding that all the allegations in the article are accurate, some of them are. In these terms, Mr. Tohey's statement that he has "tens of thousands of pages of classified documents" is not something this Government can simply ignore. The Government, which has the interest of this country as its major obligation, clearly had an overwhelming responsibility to take the action it did.

We acknowledge and appreciate the positive attitude of Mr. Peacock, whom I briefed at length on this matter last night. In the circumstances, I know that it will be understood why I am at this stage unable to comment on matters of detail:

- first, in accordance with what has been the bipartisan position in Australian politics, I will neither confirm nor deny any of the specific allegations in the article;
- second, the issues will be before the High Court on Tuesday.

In the light of all these circumstances, the Government is also taking all appropriate action to establish the source or sources of the material referred to in the article.