



9.

## PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

15 FEBRUARY 1988

The Government will amend the Australian Bicentennial Authority Act early in the Autumn Sittings of Parliament to ensure that the Australian Bicentennial Authority (ABA) is subject to the Freedom of Information (FOI), Ombudsman and Archives Acts.

Recent Opposition allegations that the Government is attempting to hide something by exempting the ABA from the coverage of the FOI Act are completely without foundation. The simple fact is that a regulation was passed last December which arose from an Attorney-General's Department opinion that an earlier regulation subjecting the ABA to the FOI Act was invalid.

The Government has decided to put the entire matter beyond doubt once and for all, by amending the ABA Act specifically to bring the ABA under the FOI, Ombudsman and Archives Acts. This course has the full support of the Authority which has not sought exemption from these Acts. It has responded and will continue to respond to requests as though the FOI Act applied.

004416