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PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

19 JUNE 1988

A major exhibition of Egyptian antiquities, Gold of the Pharaohs, will come to Australia this year.

The exhibition will be in Australia for 10 months under the auspices of the International Cultural Corporation of Australia, and will be seen in four cities.

The Egyptian Government has agreed to send the exhibition to Australia in 1988 as a gesture of goodwill for Australia's Bicentenary. It is the first major exhibition of Egyptian antiquities to come to Australia and one of the largest ever to leave Egypt. Agreement in principle to a tour was announced during my visit to Egypt in February 1987.

The exhibition from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo includes treasures and jewellery from the tombs of the rulers of the great Egyptian civilization of 3000 years ago. It includes many objects from the famous excavations at Tanis, the Pharaonic capital in the Nile Delta. The centrepiece is a gold burial mask. There are also gold ornaments inlaid with precious stones, gold toe and finger covers and a monumental granite sarcophagus of the Pharaoh himself.

Gold of the Pharaohs will open in Brisbane in August and then be displayed in Perth, Sydney and Melbourne. I am delighted that the itinerary will give many many thousands of Australians the opportunity to see, enjoy and appreciate the majestic achievements of one of the greatest civilizations of the ancient world.

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