



## **PRIME MINISTER**

107/93

### **STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON PJ KEATING, MP MABO NEGOTIATIONS**

Reports this morning that the Federal Government has yielded to State pressure and made significant concessions on the draft Mabo legislation are untrue.

The Commonwealth is still involved in discussions with the States but has already informed them that any proposals to water down the principles on which the legislation has been based would be rejected.

Officials have not been instructed to "get a deal with the States". In fact, officials were requested to tell the States that many of their proposals have been flatly refused, although we are prepared to discuss others which do not water down the principles of the legislation.

I have always said it would be preferable to get agreement with the States, in order to achieve a national approach in dealing with native title, certainty of land management and, importantly, justice for Aboriginal people.

But I have made it clear again this week that if the States do not accept our principles, and the notion that any State processes to deal with native title must be established and operated in accordance with our standards and guidelines, then the Commonwealth is prepared to itself operate the system outlined in the legislation.

CANBERRA,  
1 OCTOBER, 1993