



PRIME MINISTER

HEAD OF STATE DEBATE

The government has commenced consideration of matters related to debate on Australia's head of state.

When these deliberations, which will involve consultation with the Coalition joint party room and State Premiers, have been concluded a statement will be made.

This is an important issue which requires careful consideration.

The government remains steadfast in its commitment to fully involve the Australian people in this issue which is of such fundamental importance to our system of government.

I note the comments made today by the Leader of the Opposition. The government seeks a constructive debate and will take into account the Opposition's latest position.

As I have said a number of times, if Australia were to become a republic then such a change should occur in circumstances which unite the Australian people and not divide them.

4 December 1996