



PRIME MINISTER

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION APPOINTMENTS

I am pleased to announce that today Cabinet has approved the appointment of the Rt Hon Ian Sinclair as Chairman of the Constitutional Convention and the Hon Barry Jones AO as Deputy Chairman.

The Convention in December will be an important milestone in the development of our nation and it fulfils the first step of the Government's commitment to have the issue of whether or not Australians wish to move to a Republic fully debated.

Both Mr Sinclair and Mr Jones have had long and distinguished careers in the Parliament and in service to the community. They bring a practical knowledge of government and procedures to the Chairmanship of the Convention.

Neither will have a vote at the Convention.

They will have the respect of participants at the Convention to ensure it stays focussed on the main agenda and that the debate remains balanced and constructive.

Mr Sinclair was elected to the NSW Legislative Council in 1961 and then as the Federal Member for New England in 1963. He has held a host of Federal Ministerial portfolios including Defence, Primary Industry, Social Services, and Transport and has earned respect as a contributor to the parliamentary committee system.

He is a former Leader of the Federal National Party and is the "Father of the House" in the Federal Parliament.

Mr Barry Jones was elected to the Victorian Legislative Assembly in 1972 and then to the Federal seat of Lalor in 1977. He too has held a number of Ministerial portfolios including Science, Technology, Small Business and Customs. He has had more than 20 years of involvement in a number of parliamentary committees.

Mr Jones is a former Federal President of the Australian Labor Party and has written several books on a range of subjects.

I am pleased that Mr Sinclair and Mr Jones have accepted appointment to these important positions. I am sure they will carry out their duties in a fair and balanced manner.

10 June 1997