

HELP US STAY, NATIVES BEG QUEEN

CANBERRA. — Aborigines have appealed to the Queen to help them stay in their "embassy" opposite Parliament House.

The Government plans to introduce an ordinance to remove the embassy.

The embassy's spokesman (Mr. John Newfong), in a nine-page letter to the Queen, asks her to direct the Governor-General (Sir Paul Hasluck) "to reserve the promulgation of it for Your Majesty's pleasure."

A Tasmanian Labor senator (Senator Justin O'Byrne), sent the letter by express airmail at the weekend.

A Labor member of the British Parliament (Mr. Russell Kerr), is delivering the letter to Buckingham Palace.

The letter is the latest in a series of moves to prevent the removal of the embassy.

Mr. Newfong has also written to several Commonwealth Prime Ministers, including African Prime Ministers, Mrs. Gandhi of India, and Mr. Trudeau of Canada.

He has asked them to contact the Queen in support of the Aborigines.

Mr. Newfong said letters had also been sent to some of the British aristocracy.

If these measures failed, the Aborigines would challenge the ordinance in the High Court, he said.

Yesterday, Mr. Newfong and two members of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, Mr. J. McGinness and Mr. C. Dixon, met the Minister for the Interior (Mr. Hunt) and the Secretary of the Department of the Interior (Mr. G. Warwick-Smith).

The meeting discussed the possibility of the council or some other Aboriginal organisation getting a lease of land in the A.C.T.

But both the Aborigines and Mr. Hunt made it clear that the possibility of a lease was a separate issue to the future of the Aboriginal embassy.

Mr. Hunt said that the Government had no intention of departing from its stated intention of introducing the amended ordinance.

"The amending of the ordinance will not in any way prevent expressions of opinion or the right of peaceful assembly," Mr. Hunt said.

"The Government cannot allow a situation to continue where unoccupied land or unleased land in the city remains vulnerable to unauthorised camping," he added.