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NATIONAL BROADCAST NO. 3

BY THE PRIME MINISTER, MR. HAROLD HOLT

Education is important to every Australian and vital to the nation. Under the Federal Constitution education is listed as a responsibility of the States, but, a share of responsibility has been taken by a number of authorities and each has its part to play.

In recent years the Commonwealth Government has come into the picture in a more direct fashion. It has, for a much longer time, helped the States by the growing size of the general grants made from Commonwealth revenues. These are made available to the States each year, without any strings attached. They are the largest source of State revenue.

In the last Budget introduced by a Labor Government, the grant was \$141 million. Last year it was \$757 millions, and this year it will be \$817 millions. A factor in determining the size of the grant to each State is the growth in that State's population. Since most of the population increase consists of children, the States automatically gain more finance each year for education.

The States have substantially increased their own expenditure on education. This has risen from \$92 millions in 1950-51 to \$594 millions in 1965-66 - more than a six-fold increase.

Education is the biggest item in the Budget of any State, and accounts for approximately one-third of that State's expenditure.

But the Commonwealth, in addition to providing increasing general revenue for the States, has greatly increased its own expenditure on specific forms of education.

In 1960-61, we spent \$49.7 millions. Last year this had grown to \$125.2 millions. This year it will be \$155.8 millions.

Included in this total are grants to the States for universities which take up about one-third of the total. Nearly \$20 millions will go to the Australian National University and more than \$25 millions for assistance to Australian students, mainly through Commonwealth Scholarships. The remainder is made up with such items as grants for technical schools, grants for science facilities, research projects, colleges of advanced education and international aid, which enable many students from overseas to have the benefit of education in Australia.

When we came into office there were 30,000 students at our universities and university colleges. Today there are 92,000 - the number has trebled in seventeen years

while the population has increased by less than half. In our first year, full-time teaching and research staff at the universities was 1,296 - one for every twenty-four students. Today there are 5,600 - or one for every sixteen students. Ours was the first Government to introduce special tax allowances to parents for education expenses.

This impressive record is surely proof of our sincere desire to do what we can in this field.

We now propose further assistance to education. Here are some highlights -

\$8 million a year over the next three financial years for the construction and equipment of new colleges for teacher training throughout Australia. At least ten per cent of the places at these colleges are to be reserved for teachers not bonded to State Education Departments.

We intend to double the amount available to independent schools for science laboratories.

So important has the Commonwealth's provision for education become, and so highly do we desire an education system adequate for the strength and welfare of the nation, that we will establish, for the first time in Federal history, a Commonwealth Ministry of Education and Science.

(This talk will be broadcast by the A.S.C. inter-state network at 7.15 p.m. - Tuesday, 15th November, 1966)