

F76/94



## PRIME MINISTER

FOR PRESS

20 May 1976

### CHILD CARE

In 1972 the LCP Government took the first steps at the Federal level to assist in the provision of adequate facilities for child care by introducing the Child Care Act 1972-73. The Government recognises the importance of children's services and strongly supports their continuation in co-operation with State Governments, local government, and community organisations and groups.

\$73.3 million will be allocated for this purpose in 1976/77, a reduction of \$5.8 million from the Department's forward estimate. In real terms this figure is about the same as the estimated amount expended on children's services in 1975/76. The important point is the priority the Government is giving to the provision of child care within the overall Program.

Over the past three years pre-school education has had a considerable boost through the provision of substantial Commonwealth funds. Approximately 75% of Commonwealth expenditure on children's services has gone to pre-schools in the States.

Many children from needy families however have been not only without the advantages of pre-school education but too often without the benefits of basic, adequate care. It is essential to concentrate the Government's resources in areas of greatest need, and the Government wishes to give greater emphasis to child care for children of needy families in the development of the Children's Services Program.

We expect this new emphasis in the Program will be generally welcome. In our negotiations with the States we will be examining means for meeting this priority within the level of funds provided.

#### SUPPORT FOR THE ARTS

The Government's intention is to continue actively to support the arts in Australia.

The total bids for 1976/77 for the Australia Council, the Australian National Gallery, the Australian Film Commission and the Film and Television School amounted to \$40.5 million. The Government will provide \$33.8 million and this compares with a total original appropriation of \$40.6 million for the current year. Unnecessary expenditure has been eliminated, but no important or worthwhile programs should suffer.

The Australia Council's bid for 1976/77 has been reduced from \$22.8 million to \$19.4 million, exclusive of administration, and this compares with the 1975/76 appropriation of \$23.7 million including administration. Major programs are expected to continue.

The Australian National Gallery's bid has been reduced from \$4.7 million to \$3.5 million. In 1975/76 the appropriation was \$5.8 million but the Government was able to hold expenditure to \$2.6 million. Emphasis will continue to be given to collecting Australian art, and the amount provided in this area will be increased.

The Government intends to encourage Australian film and television, but the Australian Film Commission's bid of \$8.8 million has been cut to \$7.4 million, slightly above the \$7.0 million provided this year.

The Film and Television School sought \$4.2 million which has been reduced to \$3.5 million. The appropriation for 1975/76 was \$4.1 million.