

COMMONWEALTH POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS

Statement by the Prime Minister,
The Rt. Hon. Sir Robert Menzies.

The Commonwealth in 1959 began a scheme of postgraduate awards designed to encourage the training of research workers in Australian universities. The scheme is administered by the Commonwealth Scholarships Board in co-operation with the universities. In each of the first three years 100 awards were available. In 1962 the Commonwealth Scholarships Board advised that the quality of applicants was such that an increase in the number was warranted. As a result 125 awards were made in 1962.

Following a further review by the Commonwealth Scholarships Board, the Government has authorised the Board to offer additional awards this year and in future years. It is expected that by 1964 the quality of candidates will justify more than 200 awards yearly.

The availability of so many qualified young graduates is an indication of the level of work of our Australian universities as well as of the quality of the students. The fact that universities are able to provide post-graduate training for these increasing numbers of Commonwealth Scholarship award holders, as well as for Australian and overseas students holding other awards, is evidence of the development in the past few years of advanced studies in this country.

This is gratifying because it is from persons undertaking this advanced training that we will recruit not only the future research workers of the Commonwealth, but also many members of the larger teaching staffs in our universities, technical colleges, teachers colleges and other institutions of higher education.

The Government has also examined a report of the Scholarships Board on the operation of the Commonwealth Scholarship Scheme. Under this scheme, since 1961 some 4,000 open entrance awards have been available annually and in addition the Board is authorised to offer later years awards to students who have successfully started university studies.

The rising standard of applicants for Commonwealth scholarships was noted, as well as the success of the Scheme in encouraging able students to undertake university studies. No immediate changes in this Scheme are proposed, but another review will be made later this year.

CANBERRA
May 8, 1963