

ESTABLISHMENT OF A JOINT AUSTRALIAN-AMERICAN  
EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

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

The Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies, announced today that the Governments of the United States and Australia have agreed to establish a joint Australian-American Educational Foundation.

It will succeed and be modelled upon the Fulbright Scheme.

Beginning with the present financial year, the two countries will contribute equally to provide an annual budget not exceeding £180,000 to finance the exchanges between the United States and Australia.

The Prime Minister recalled that the Fulbright Programme came into being in 1949 as one of the elements in the settlement of Australia's debt to the United States under the final accounting of the war time lend-lease and reciprocal lend-lease arrangements. At that time, the United States generously agreed to apply part of the money it received in settlement of these debts to financing the United States Educational Foundation in Australia. As a result, a Trust Fund equivalent in Australian pounds to five million dollars was set up. This Fund together with interest has since been used by the Foundation to finance the Fulbright Programme of educational exchanges between the United States and Australia. It is now nearly exhausted and the two Governments, conscious of the great value that has been derived from the Fulbright Programme, and of the desirability of continuing with something similar, readily agreed to establish as equal partners a scheme to succeed it.

Under the Fulbright Programme, Australians have received travel grants to enable them to visit the United States where they have taken up awards and posts made available by American institutions. Some of them have been lecturers and research scholars and others have been post-graduate students. The scheme has also provided travel grants to enable Australian teachers to exchange with American teachers. Under the Fulbright Programme also, United States citizens in similar categories have been assisted to visit Australia by the provision of travel grants and allowances.

The new Foundation will be controlled by a joint Australian-American Board of Directors, which will be established in Australia.

The Prime Minister said that he had every confidence that under the new arrangements the educational exchange programme would at least match the great success of the present programme. The money available annually to the new Foundation will be above the annual expenditure in any year by the United States Educational Foundation in Australia.

The Prime Minister added that this was only a preliminary announcement corresponding with one being made in Washington at this time by the United States Government. In due course there would be more detailed announcements of the terms of the agreement, and of the membership of the Board of Directors of the Australian-American Educational Foundation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION :

Since 1949, when the Fulbright Programme was established, 1396 academic grantees have been exchanged between the two countries: 801 Australians and 595 Americans.

Categories of grants made to Australians were :

University study	373
Teachers	132
Professors and Research scholars	296

Corresponding figures for Americans were :

University study	243
Teachers	88
Professors and Research scholars	264