

65/047

FOR PRESS :

P.M. No. 31/1965

PREMIERS' CONFERENCE

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

Arrangements have been made with the State Premiers for a Premiers' Conference to be held in Canberra on 22nd and 23rd April.

When the present arrangements for Commonwealth financial assistance to the States were worked out in 1959, it was generally accepted that, unless there were some major change in circumstances, those arrangements would carry on for six years. That period will come to an end with this financial year and the forthcoming Conference between the Commonwealth and the States will consider arrangements for the ensuing period.

This is a large and complex subject and it will be necessary to go into its various aspects thoroughly in the light of past experience and future prospects. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the matter generally so that the main issues may be identified and to enable State or Commonwealth representatives to bring forward for consideration any proposals for changes in the current arrangements. A further meeting to settle new arrangements in detail will, I expect, be necessary later, and this is likely to take place early in June.

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CANBERRA,

11th March, 1965.