

PREMIERS' CONFERENCE

OPENING STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER

22 JUNE 1972

A large number of items have been listed for consideration at this Conference, and there is also a full quota of Loan Council business to be transacted.

It is our hope - and I presume that it would also be the hope of the Premiers - that, while giving the matters before us the attention their importance warrants, we will be able to conduct our discussions on them expeditiously, and with mutually satisfactory results.

The central object of our attention will, of course, be the general financial position and prospects of the States.

The extensive information which your Treasuries have provided to the Commonwealth Treasury has helped considerably towards our understanding of your position, both as regards your revenue budgets and as regards borrowing programmes, and the problems confronting you. We appreciate that co-operation. For our part, we want to do what we can within the limits that our own budgetary requirements impose upon us to help you with your problems.

I suggest that we should move straight to discussion on the States' finances generally, and that this discussion be carried forward in private session where you could tell us anything you might wish to say in confidence to supplement the information and advice already available to us.

By approaching the main matters before us in this way and first reaching general understandings on them, we would then be well placed to make good progress with the many other particular items listed for consideration both in Premiers' Conference and Loan Council.

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