



PRIME MINISTER

PRESS STATEMENT NO. 20

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TAMAR RIVER SEWERAGE CONTROL

The new Australian Government today took its first step against pollution by approving a grant to help clean up the Tamar River at Launceston.

The Government decided to give \$300,000 in the current financial year towards the cost of the first stage of a treatment plant for Launceston sewerage.

The Senate Select Committee on Water Pollution in 1970 singled out Tamar River pollution for mention in its report.

The committee said : "Raw effluent is discharged into the Tamar River, a practice which was aptly described by the Port Manager and Port Engineer, Port of Launceston Authority, Mr. J.K. Edwards, as 'primitive, obnoxious and beneath the standards acceptable to any present day community'."

The Premier of Tasmania, Mr. Reece, sought the grant today during talks in Canberra with the Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam, the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Barnard, and Mr. Frank Crean, M.P.

He sought the grant to enable the Launceston Corporation to proceed with the construction of a plant which would provide both primary and secondary treatment facilities.

This would enable the pollution load in the Tamar River to be reduced to a level which was acceptable from a public health and environmental point of view.

The Commonwealth grant indicates the new Government's desire to overcome pollution problems of the type being experienced in the Tamar River.

CANBERRA. A.C.T.