

22 December 1972

CRAFTS INQUIRY

The Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam, has decided to expand the membership of the Committee of Inquiry into the Crafts to include practising craftsmen and representatives of crafts in education and industry.

Mr. Whitlam said the Government would take steps to expedite the work of the committee which was established more than twelve months ago.

The committee will appoint professional assistants to help prepare its report to the Government.

The findings of the committee will have an important bearing on new developments in the crafts field.

The Prime Minister has invited four new members to join the committee. The present members of the Committee are:-

Mr. K. Bonython (Chairman)	Art dealer and member of the Australian Council for the Arts.
Mr. E. Westbrook	Director of the National Gallery of Victoria and member of the Industrial design Council of Australia.
Mr. J. Mollison	Director of the Australian National Gallery.
Mr. F. McCarthy	Former Principal of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.
Mr. C. Last	Sculptor and member of the Commonwealth Art Advisory Board.

The new members will be:-

Mr. W.H. Tozer	Senior Lecturer, Melbourne College of Education. President of the Victorian Craft Association. Goldsmith.
Mr. R.J. Richards	Curator of the historical section and applied arts, Art Gallery of South Australia. Member of the South Australian Government's steering committee on design and craft-based industries.

Mr. Ian Templeman

Director of the Fremantle Arts
Centre and former Federal
Secretary of the Australian
Society for Education through Art..

Mrs Marea Gazzard

One of Australia's leading potters
who is Vice-President of the
Asian Division of the World
Craft Council.

Mr. Whitlam said the Committee of Inquiry would present to the Government at the earliest possible date a report on the present situation of craftsmen and crafts organisations in Australia, on ways in which they might be assisted, and on ways of extending interest and activity in the crafts throughout the community.

In this respect it was essential to have on the Committee people with special knowledge of the crafts and their place in education, their role in leisure and their uses in industry.

In giving high priority to action of the crafts, the Government acknowledges the special pleasure which the crafts bring to thousands of Australians. There is at present a great revival of interest in weaving, and pottery, leather and metalwork, carving and glasswork and other craft forms. Many young people who seek beyond the pressures and products of modern urban life a more personal and satisfying life style are particularly attracted by them. Their combination of creative ideas and technical skills suggests further links to people whose working background gives them a special knowledge of handling materials and applying techniques. The trade unions in their earliest form grew out of the guilds of craftsmen who in past centuries took a special pride in their work and its standards.

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