



## PRIME MINISTER

10 June 1974  
PRESS STATEMENT NO. 263

### NITROGENOUS FERTILISERS SUBSIDY

The Prime Minister, Mr E.G. Whitlam, Q.C., M.P., announced today that legislation extending the Nitrogenous Fertilisers Subsidy Act until 31 December 1975 would be introduced into Parliament later this year. Mr Whitlam said that this action was in accordance with the Government's commitment to continue the present subsidy pending a report on the matter from the Industries Assistance Commission.

Mr Whitlam said that under the Industries Assistance Commission Act, assistance could not be continued beyond 31 December 1975 in the absence of a report from the Commission.

Mr Whitlam said the Industries Assistance Commission had been asked to advise on the amount and duration of any subsidy and the consequences of limiting any such assistance to a maximum tonnage per farmer.

Under the present subsidy scheme the subsidy is paid at the rate of \$78.74 per tonne of contained nitrogen. It is paid on nitrogenous fertilisers manufactured and sold for use in Australia and in certain circumstances on imported nitrogenous fertilisers, provided the full benefit is passed on to the user. Subsidy payments in 1972/73 amounted to \$13.1 million.

The Government recognised the regional importance of nitrogenous fertilisers to sugar producers, horticulture and sections of other rural industries.

Mr Whitlam said that the Government's decision on assistance beyond 31 December 1975 would be taken after receiving the Commission's report which has been requested by September 1975.

CANBERRA. A.C.T.