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SPEECH AT OUR LADY OF MERCY COLLEGE, BURRUMBER  
BY THE PRIME MINISTER, HON. E. G. WHITLAM, Q.C., M.P.,  
ON DECEMBER 1, 1974.

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YOUR EMINENCE, SISTER PAULINE, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN AND, ESPECIALLY, GIRLS.

YOU WILL PROBABLY KNOW THAT I HAVE RETURNED FROM CAMPAIGNING IN QUEENSLAND IN ORDER TO KEEP A LONG STANDING PROMISE TO MY COLLEAGUE RAY THORBURN, M.P. FOR COOK. IT WAS VERY TEMPTING TO STAY NORTH OF THE BRISBANE LINE, ESPECIALLY AS TODAY IS THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WORLD'S FIRST LABOR GOVERNMENT, A QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT, HELD UNDER A TREE AT BARCALDINE ON THE TROPIC OF CAPRICORN. I AM NOTHING IF NOT ALIVE TO THE LURE OF ANNIVERSARIES. THEY PROVIDE SPLENDID OPPORTUNITIES FOR SAYING ALL THOSE THINGS THERE IS NORMALLY LITTLE CALL FOR SAYING.

TODAY, OF COURSE, IS A VERY SPECIAL DAY FOR OUR LADY OF MERCY COLLEGE. I AM SURE IT WILL ENTER YOUR ANNALS AS A SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY ALONG WITH MORE SANCTIFIED FEAST DAYS. AT THE SAME TIME, TODAY IS A VERY SPECIAL DAY FOR ME.

IT IS TWO YEARS TODAY SINCE MY LAST DAY AS LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION IN THE AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT. IT IS TWO YEARS TOMORROW SINCE THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE RETURNED MY PARTY TO GOVERNMENT - THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN LABOR GOVERNMENT IN 23 YEARS. IN THE LAST FEW DAYS I HAVE INDULGED IN SOME NOSTALGIA IN VARIOUS RADIO AND TELEVISION INTERVIEWS. IN EACH INTERVIEW - AND I SHOULD NOTE IN PARTICULAR AT THIS GATHERING THE ONE I GAVE TO 2SM - ST MARY'S - IN SYDNEY - I WAS ASKED WHAT I CONSIDERED OUR GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT IN THOSE TWO SHORT BUT VERY FULL YEARS. IN EACH ANSWER I REPLIED UNHESITATINGLY: EDUCATION. I HAD BECOME THE MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THIS DISTRICT 25 YEARS AGO. IN MY FIRST YEAR IN PARLIAMENT I TWICE URGED THAT THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO TAKE THE SAME DEGREE OF INTEREST IN SCHOOL EDUCATION AS IT WAS ALREADY TAKING IN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION.

SO IT IS MOST APPROPRIATE THAT I SHOULD OPT OUT OF A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN TO COME HERE TODAY IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OPENING AND DEDICATION OF YOUR NEW LIBRARY BLOCK. THIS IS A TANGIBLE ILLUSTRATION OF MY BELIEF THAT LABOR'S OUTSTANDING MONUMENT WILL PROVE TO BE WHAT WE HAVE TRIED TO DO, WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED, IN THE EDUCATIONAL FIELD.

THERE HAS NEVER BEEN ANY QUALIFICATION ABOUT MY GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION.

IN MY POLICY SPEECH IN NOVEMBER 1972, JUST TWO YEARS AGO, I PROMISED THAT EDUCATION WOULD BE THE MOST RAPIDLY GROWING SECTOR OF PUBLIC SPENDING UNDER A LABOR GOVERNMENT. I SAID THEN: "EDUCATION SHOULD BE THE GREAT INSTRUMENT FOR THE PROMOTION OF EQUALITY." WE SAW EDUCATION AS THE PRIMARY INSTRUMENT FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR OUR PEOPLE AND PROMOTING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR CHILDREN. WE PROPOSED A NEW CHARTER FOR THE CHILDREN OF AUSTRALIA.

WITHIN A YEAR THAT CHARTER HAD BEEN PROCLAIMED, ITS MAIN PROMISES ENACTED, ITS ESSENTIAL FUNDS PROVIDED, ITS INSTITUTIONAL FORMS ESTABLISHED. ITS GREAT AND LASTING BENEFITS CONTINUE TO FLOW TO THE CHILDREN OF AUSTRALIA, ALL OVER AUSTRALIA.

MY OWN EXTENSIVE TRAVELLING THROUGH THE LENGTH AND BREADTH OF QUEENSLAND IN THE LAST FEW WEEKS HAS CONFIRMED ME IN MY RESOLUTION THAT CHILDREN EVERYWHERE IN AUSTRALIA ARE ENTITLED TO, AND SHOULD RECEIVE, AS EXCELLENT AN EDUCATION AS CHILDREN ANYWHERE IN AUSTRALIA.

IF YOU GO TO SCHOOL AT BURRANEER YOU SHOULD HAVE THE SAME GOOD OPPORTUNITIES AS IF YOU GO TO SCHOOL IN BRISBANE OR AT BURNIE IN TASMANIA OR AT BRIDGETOWN IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA. IF PARENTS ARE OBLIGED TO MOVE INTERSTATE TO PURSUE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, THEY SHOULD NOT HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THE QUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY AVAILABLE FOR THEIR SCHOOL CHILDREN.

I AM QUITE SURE THAT THE GREAT CATHOLIC TEACHING ORDERS WHICH HAVE DONE SO MUCH TO PROMOTE SCHOOLING IN THIS GREAT BUT STILL YOUNG COUNTRY OF OURS WOULD HAVE NO QUARREL WITH MY GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE TO PROMOTE THE INTERESTS OF THE CHILD IN RELATION TO THE TOTAL COMMUNITY. THE DEDICATED NUNS AND BROTHERS WHO LEFT ALL THAT WAS DEAR TO THEM IN IRELAND IN ORDER TO UNDERTAKE THE LONG INHOSPITABLE VOYAGE TO SMALL PARISH SCHOOLS THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA WERE VERY REAL EXPONENTS OF THE DESIRE TO GIVE PEOPLE - AND ESPECIALLY THE CHILDREN IN THEIR CARE - A PROPER CHANCE IN LIFE.

ONLY TWO WEEKS AGO I HAD THE VERY REAL PRIVILEGE OF ATTENDING A DINNER IN MELBOURNE IN HONOUR OF THAT CITY'S NEW CATHOLIC ARCHBISHOP, DR FRANK LITTLE. AN IMPRESSIVE AND CHARMING MAN, ARCHBISHOP LITTLE WAS, AMONGST OTHER MORE OBVIOUSLY EXALTED TITLES, PARISH PRIEST OF ST MONICA'S IN THE MELBOURNE SUBURB OF MOONEE PONDS WHEN HE WAS APPOINTED ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE. HE HAD ATTENDED ST MONICA'S SCHOOL AS A CHILD IN THAT PARISH. LIKE SO MANY OF THE HIERARCHY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA, HE HAS A VERY REAL APPRECIATION OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH HAVE FACED THE PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS IN THE PAST AND OF THEIR VERY REAL NEEDS IN TRYING TO COPE WITH THE DEMANDS PLACED ON THEM BY EXPANDING SCHOOL POPULATIONS AT A TIME OF INCREASING SOPHISTICATION IN THE TECHNOLOGY OF EDUCATION.

THE SAME PROBLEMS ARE AFFLICTING CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS. OUR LADY OF MERCY COLLEGE HAS A TOTAL ENROLMENT OF 496 GIRLS, ENCOMPASSING THE YEARS FROM FORM I TO SCHOOL CERTIFICATE. I UNDERSTAND THAT WHAT WOULD BE 5TH AND 6TH FORMS ARE EFFECTIVELY COMBINED AT DE LA SALLE AND THIS IS A SENSIBLE WAY OF ACCOMMODATING THE FINAL YEARS OF SECONDARY EDUCATION. BUT INCREASING COSTS MAKE THE PROSPECT OF RUNNING A SECONDARY SCHOOL OF ANY SIZE SOMETHING LESS THAN A SUNDAY-SCHOOL PICNIC. WE RECOGNISE THIS AND HAVE TAKEN SPECIAL MEASURES TO HELP.

I WAS, THEREFORE, DELIGHTED TO READ ARCHBISHOP CARROLL'S RECENT REMARKS PAYING TRIBUTE TO THAT ASPECT OF OUR APPROACH TO EDUCATION. HE WAS SPEAKING AT THE OPENING OF A NEW SCHOOL LIBRARY IN MARRICKVILLE. STRANGE HOW ATTRACTIVE LIBRARIES ARE TO US ALL, AND HOW LOQUACIOUS THEY MAKE ARCHBISHOPS AND PRIME MINISTERS ALIKE!

ARCHBISHOP CARROLL SAID: "UNDER THE MANY PRESSURES OF THE POST-WAR YEARS, CATHOLIC SCHOOLS HAVE BEEN THREATENED WITH WHOLESAL CLOSURE DUE TO MOUNTING FINANCIAL PROBLEMS.

"HOWEVER, WE ARE BOTH PLEASED AND PROUD TO RECORD THAT SUCCESSIVE GOVERNMENTS, STATE AND FEDERAL, HAVE ENABLED NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS TO SURVIVE AND PROSPER BY MAKING AVAILABLE GRANTS, FIRST FOR RECURRENT COSTS, THEN FOR CAPITAL, NOW ALSO FOR MANY SPECIAL PROGRAMS, SUCH AS FOR DISADVANTAGED AREAS, FOR TEACHER DEVELOPMENT, FOR LIBRARIES . . .".

A WEEK BEFORE, THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY REPORTED ON THE MOST RECENT MEETING OF THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC EDUCATION COUNCIL

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THE COUNCIL WAS KIND ENOUGH TO ADOPT THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS:-

"THE NCEC ACKNOWLEDGES AND APPRECIATES THE ACTION OF THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT IN MAKING SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS IN THE 1974 BUDGET, THEREBY INCREASING EDUCATIONAL FUNDS FOR 1974 AND 1975 TO OFFSET THE EFFECTS OF INFLATION ON THE VALUE OF GRANTS PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED, AND

"THE NCEC IS PLEASED TO SEE THAT THE AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS COMMISSION'S REPORT TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDS FOR PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY THE SCHOOLS COMMISSION, WHICH FOLLOWS LINES RECOMMENDED BY THE NCEC AND OTHER INTERESTED BODIES, WAS ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT."

NATURALLY, I AM DELIGHTED TO LEARN THAT OUR EDUCATION PROGRAM HAS SUCH RESPONSIBLE ENDORSEMENT FROM THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC EDUCATION COUNCIL.

BUT I WOULD BE LESS THAN FAIR TO THE COUNCIL AND THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY IF I DID NOT ALSO REFER TO ANOTHER COUNCIL RESOLUTION FROM THE SAME CANBERRA MEETING.

THE COUNCIL REGRETTED THAT THE AMOUNT ALLOWABLE IN CALCULATING INCOME TAX AS A DEDUCTION FROM INCOME FOR EDUCATION EXPENSES WAS "ABRUPTLY AND SEVERELY DIMINISHED".

THE COUNCIL BELIEVED THAT THIS ACTION WOULD HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE FINANCIAL CONDITION OF PARENTS WHO MAINTAIN CHILDREN IN NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS, PARTICULARLY AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL.

THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY ALSO STATED IN AN EDITORIAL IN THE SAME ISSUE:

"MR. WHITLAM'S DECISION NOT TO RESTORE THE STUDENT TAX CONCESSION MAY BE THE MOST DISASTROUS HE HAS EVER MADE.

"NO MATTER WHAT CLAIMS ARE MADE THAT INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS NOW RECEIVE 'STATE-AID', THE MERE FACT OF REDUCING THE TAX DEDUCTION HAS DEPRIVED THOSE SCHOOLS OF SOME FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND INSTEAD OF BRINGING THEIR PUPULS TO EQUITY WITH THOSE AT STATE SCHOOLS, IS TAKING THEM BACK TO OLD TIMES."



THE EDITORIAL GOES ON TO SAY THAT THE DECISION IS DISASTROUS TO PARENT TAX-PAYERS AND "THAT IT IS DISASTROUS ON PRINCIPLE BECAUSE IT RESTORES THE OLD PRACTICE OF DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION, TAXATION JUSTICE AND CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS."

HARSH WORDS INDEED ABOUT AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT WHICH HAS DONE MORE THAN ANY OTHER AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT IN HISTORY TO DO AWAY WITH DISCRIMINATION IN ALL ITS GUISES, TO ADHERE TO THE PRINCIPLE OF TAXATION JUSTICE AND TO ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO EXERCISE HIS OR HER RIGHTS AS A PERSON, CITIZEN OR OTHERWISE.

NOW, I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY MANY OF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT MY GOVERNMENT'S DECISION THAT THE FIGURE SHOULD COME DOWN FROM \$400 PER YEAR MAXIMUM DEDUCTION TO \$150 A YEAR MAXIMUM DEDUCTION. BUT I REFUTE ABSOLUTELY THE SUGGESTION OF THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY EDITORIAL THAT IT REPRESENTS A RETURN TO THE BAD OLD DAYS. NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH. I WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLAIN THAT DECISION TO YOU TODAY.

TO EXPLAIN PROPERLY, I MUST TAKE YOU BACK TO THE EARLY YEARS OF THE MENZIES REIGN WHEN THE DEDUCTION WAS FIRST INTRODUCED. IN 1952/53, THE DEDUCTION WAS \$100 WHICH WAS A NOT INCONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF MONEY THE YEAR THE QUEEN WAS CROWNED, THE YEAR MENZIES PROCLAIMED HER QUEEN OF AUSTRALIA, THE YEAR THEY CONQUERED EVEREST. BUT THAT WAS ALSO A TIME WHEN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON EDUCATION IN THE STATES WAS NON-EXISTENT. IT WAS VERY MUCH LATER INDEED THAT MENZIES - TO HIS ETERNAL CREDIT - FIRST GAVE COMMONWEALTH MONEY, THROUGH GRANTS, TO THE UNIVERSITIES. IT WAS EVEN BEFORE STATE AID. THE VERY LEAST THEY COULD DO WAS INSTITUTE A TAXATION DEDUCTION FOR SCHOOL EXPENDITURE.

IN 1952/53 SCHOOLS OTHER THAN THE FEW RICH, WELL-ENDOWED PRIVATE SCHOOLS, MOST OF THEM NON-CATHOLIC, WERE REALLY NOT THE KIND OF PLACE WHERE A THINKING PARENT OF TODAY WOULD WANT HIS OR HER CHILDREN TO SPEND WHAT ARE ALWAYS PAINTED AS THE HAPPIEST DAYS OF OUR LIVES.

WE HAD, MOST OF US, GONE TO SCHOOL AND LEFT SCHOOL WITHOUT MUCH COMPLAINT. WE HAD NOT BEEN LED TO EXPECT ANYTHING BETTER, SO WE DIDN'T. IF IT WAS GOOD ENOUGH FOR OUR PARENTS IT WAS GOOD ENOUGH FOR US. IF IT WAS GOOD ENOUGH FOR US THERE WAS NO REASON WHY IT SHOULDN'T BE GOOD ENOUGH FOR OUR CHILDREN. SOME PARENTS WERE ABLE TO AFFORD TO PAY TO MAKE IT BETTER; SOME WERE NOT, AND THAT WAS JUST BAD LUCK FOR THE CHILDREN.

FORTUNATELY, ALL THAT HAS CHANGED, CHANGED UTTERLY. AND I AM PROUD INDEED THAT ONE OF THE MAIN REASONS FOR THAT CHANGE IS THE OVERWHELMING BELIEF OF MY GOVERNMENT THAT IT IS ONLY THROUGH EQUALISING THE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES OF ALL CHILDREN IN AUSTRALIA THAT WE CAN FULFIL OUR OBLIGATIONS TO ANY CHILD IN AUSTRALIA.

I KNOW THIS AUDIENCE TODAY WILL SYMPATHISE WITH THAT CONTENTION. I KNOW YOU WILL NOT BEGRUDGE WHAT WE ARE GIVING IN BENEFITS TO CHILDREN LIVING IN ISOLATED AREAS OF AUSTRALIA. THE QUEENSLAND SITUATION HAS REMINDED ME VERY FORCIBLY OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THAT NEW EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT WE INTRODUCED LAST YEAR.

LAST FINANCIAL YEAR WE SPENT OVER \$8 MILLION TO HELP OVER 13,000 FAMILIES OR 19,000 INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN IN ISOLATED AREAS WHO UNTIL NOW HAVE SUFFERED CONSIDERABLE DEPRIVATION BECAUSE OF THE INADEQUACY OF FURTHER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN THEIR AREAS. I KNOW YOU WILL NOT BEGRUDGE WHAT WE ARE DOING - AT LAST - TO IMPROVE EDUCATION FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN, FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN, FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN, FOR AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN WHEREVER, WHOEVER, THEY MIGHT HAPPEN TO BE.

AND IN CASE YOU ARE WONDERING, I AM NOT REALLY GETTING OFF THE TRACK. THE POINT I AM TRYING TO MAKE IS THAT MY GOVERNMENT IS DOING FAR MORE FOR INDIVIDUAL AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLCHILDREN THAN ANYONE MIGHT HAVE DREAMED OF.

AND THAT'S NOT TO MENTION OUR CAPITAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, OR RECURRENT GRANTS, OR LIBRARY AND SCIENCE GRANTS, ALL OF WHICH ARE AVAILABLE - AND HAVE BEEN TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF - THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA. WHAT IT ALL ADDS UP TO IS AN ESTIMATED \$1,535 MILLION EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT THIS YEAR. AN INCREASE OF 344 PER CENT ON THE LAST FULL YEAR OF THE LIBERAL-COUNTRY PARTY GOVERNMENT WHICH SPENT A THEN RECORD OF \$346 MILLION ON EDUCATION IN 1971/72.

DIRECT EXPENDITURE ON NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS HAS RISEN FROM \$39 MILLION IN 1971/72 TO AN ESTIMATED \$126 MILLION IN 1974/75 - A RISE OF 223 PER CENT.

SO LET ME RETURN TO MY GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO REDUCE THE MAXIMUM TAXATION DEDUCTION FROM \$400 PER PUPIL TO \$150 PER PUPIL. IT WAS A DECISION THAT WAS NOT TAKEN LIGHTLY NOR WANTONLY. IT WAS A SOUND ECONOMIC DECISION ALBEIT AN UNPOPULAR ONE. NO GOVERNMENT THAT CUTS CONCESSIONS CAN EXPECT TO BE CHEERED IN THE STREETS, OR, IN THIS CASE, IN THE CHURCH SCHOOLS.

IT WAS A DECISION TAKEN IN LINE WITH MY GOVERNMENT'S GENERAL POLICY OF CUTTING OUT DISGUISED SUBSIDIES. WHICH IS WHAT THIS WAS.

IN SIMPLE FACT, TREASURY FIGURES INDICATE THAT TAX-PAYERS ON HIGHER INCOMES SAVE MORE THAN THOSE ON LOWER INCOMES AS A RESULT OF THE PROGRESSIVE TAX RATE SCALE. IN 1971/72 THE GREAT MAJORITY OF TAX-PAYERS WHOSE CHILDREN ATTENDED GOVERNMENT AND PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS DID NOT NORMALLY CLAIM AMOUNTS OF MORE THAN \$150 P.A. FOR EACH STUDENT CHILD.

THE AVERAGE DEDUCTION DID NOT REACH \$150 UNTIL NET INCOME REACHED \$9,000. IT CANNOT REASONABLY BE ASSUMED THAT PEOPLE EARNING \$9,000 IN 1974/75 WOULD SPEND MORE ON AVERAGE THAN \$150 PER CHILD. MY GOVERNMENT DECIDED THAT A CUT-OFF FIGURE OF \$150 REPRESENTED A REASONABLE COMPROMISE.

THE STATISTICS DEMONSTRATE THAT THE HIGHER A TAX-PAYERS'S INCOME, THE MORE LIKELY HE IS TO CLAIM LARGER DEDUCTIONS FOR EDUCATION EXPENSES.

THE PRESENT TAXATION SCALES ENSURE THAT WHERE TWO TAXPAYERS CLAIM THE SAME DEDUCTION, THE TAX-PAYER WITH THE HIGHER INCOME GAINS THE GREATER BENEFIT.

THE SYSTEM PRODUCES THE SITUATION THAT THE RICHER THE PARENT, THE MORE DOLLARS HE IS LIKELY TO CLAIM AND THE MORE HE GETS BACK OUT OF EACH DOLLAR HE CLAIMS.

IT HAS NEVER BEEN EXPECTED THAT CONCESSIONAL DEDUCTIONS ON EDUCATION OR ON ANYTHING ELSE WOULD COVER ALL SUCH EXPENDITURE OF A PERSONAL OR DOMESTIC NATURE. I REALISE THAT SOME PEOPLE HAVE COME TO REGARD THEM AS A RIGHT, BUT THEY ARE NO MORE THAN TAX CONCESSIONS, INTENDED TO TAKE SOME BURDEN FROM TAX-PAYERS. THEY ARE NOT IMMUTABLE THOUGH THEIR COSTS HAVE FREQUENTLY BEEN INVISIBLE.

THE REDUCTION FROM \$400 TO \$150 WILL RESULT IN A GAIN TO REVENUE IN A FULL YEAR OF \$30 MILLION. THAT'S NOT REALLY A GREAT DEAL OUT OF OUR TOTAL BUDGET. BUT IT DOES MEAN THAT \$30 MILLION HAS BEEN ADDED TO OUR DIRECT, VISIBLE, ACCOUNTABLE FUNDING OF EDUCATION AT ALL LEVELS. IT IS PART OF THIS YEAR'S RECORD EXPENDITURE OF \$1,535 MILLION, AND THIS \$30 MILLION WAS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WHEN WE WERE DRAWING UP THIS YEAR'S BUDGET. I REMIND YOU AGAIN THAT MY GOVERNMENT'S DIRECT EXPENDITURE ON NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS THIS YEAR WILL BE \$1.26 MILLION - AN INCREASE OF 223 PER CENT ON THAT OF 1971/72 WHEN THE \$400 DEDUCTION WITH \$30 MILLION APPLIED.

I DON'T EXPECT THAT I HAVE CONVERTED YOU, BUT I HAVE READ YOU A LITANY OF SOME OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN EDUCATION, OF WHICH I AM UNASHAMEDLY PROUD.

## I SPOKE EARLIER OF INEQUALITIES.

THE KARMEL COMMITTEE REPORT COMMENTED ON THE INEQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR GIRLS, AND IN JULY THIS YEAR IT WAS DECIDED TO UNDERTAKE A SPECIAL STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL CHANGE ON THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS. THIS WIDE RANGING STUDY WILL COVER SUCH AREAS AS ACHIEVEMENT, VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE, PARENT AND TEACHER ATTITUDES, TEACHER TRAINING, BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE, AND ANY OTHER MATTERS AFFECTING THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS. A FINAL REPORT WILL RECOMMEND PROGRAMS AND CHANGES TO CORRECT THE PRESENT IMBALANCE WHICH HAS RESTRICTED THE CAREERS AND LIFE-CHOICES OF TO WOMEN AND GIRLS.

MY GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT GIRLS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO CONSIDER THE WHOLE RANGE OF OCCUPATIONS OPEN TO THEM. THEY SHOULD BE MADE AWARE OF THE POSSIBILITIES AND MEANS OF ACHIEVING OCCUPATIONAL GOALS AND NOT MERELY INFORMED OF THE BARRIERS IN THEIR WAY.

GROWING FAMILIARITY WITH THE RANGE OF IDEAS AND INFORMATION AVAILABLE THROUGH YOUR NEW LIBRARY IS ONE WAY OF DISCOVERING THE POSSIBILITIES OPEN TO YOU.



A RECENT EVALUATION REPORT ON OUR LIBRARIES PROGRAM SUGGESTED THAT NEW FACILITIES WERE ENCOURAGING NEW PATTERNS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING.

THE REPORT STATED THAT "THESE NEW PATTERNS INCLUDE MORE INDIVIDUALISATION OF INSTRUCTION, MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE LEARNERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THEIR EDUCATION, TO BE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT IT AND TO BE MORE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN PROGRESS."

THAT AUGURS WELL FOR THIS NEW LIBRARY AND THE CONTRIBUTION IT CAN MAKE TO THE LIFE OF THE SCHOOL.

I AM QUITE SURE THAT ALL OF YOU - SIST PAULINE, STAFF AND GIRLS - WILL ENJOY DISCOVERING AND REAPING THE BENEFITS OF THIS NEW LEARNING CENTRE WITHIN OUR LADY OF MERCY COLLEGE.

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