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**PRIME MINISTER**

EMBARGO: 6 pm Tuesday

PRESS STATEMENT NO. 559  
16 September 1975

AUSTRALIAN INDEPENDENCE GIFT TO PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The Prime Minister, Mr Whitlam, announced this evening that the gift from the Australian Government and people to mark the occasion of Papua New Guinea's independence would take the form of a national library building and associated books and equipment. Mr Whitlam who formally conveyed advice to this effect to the Papua New Guinea Government at a ceremony in Port Moresby this afternoon said that the gift accorded with the wishes of the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, Mr Somare, and his Government. The gift was estimated to cost up to \$2 million.

A site for the building had already been allocated in Port Moresby and Mr Whitlam said that he had proposed to Mr Somare that the development of the project proceed on the basis of co-operation and joint consultation in such matters as design, structure and library content, so that when completed it would truly reflect the wishes of the two countries and their people.

Mr Whitlam said he understood it was Papua New Guinea's intention that the library would serve the residents of other areas of Papua New Guinea as well as the capital and he expressed the hope that in this way the gift would benefit large numbers of people throughout Papua New Guinea.

CANBERRA, A.C.T.,  
PORT MORESBY

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