



**PRIME MINISTER**

FOR MEDIA

THURSDAY, 5 JULY 1979

SOUTH PACIFIC ARTS FESTIVAL

The Prime Minister announced today that the Australian Government would provide \$200,000 to the South Pacific Commission as its contribution towards the South Pacific Arts Festival.

The Festival, the third to be staged, will be held in Port Moresby from 29 June to 12 July 1980.

Previous Festivals were held in Fiji in 1972 and Rotorua, New Zealand, in 1976.

The purpose of the Festivals is to foster and celebrate the rich and diverse cultures of the South Pacific region. Australia recognises the value of such Festivals as one of the most important cultural initiatives in the region, and has actively supported and participated in the previous Festivals.

Australia's contribution is intended to assist with both the costs of staging the Festival and transporting participants, and to help ensure the success of the occasion. The grant will be reviewed when the final costs of the Festival are known to see if there is any additional assistance which could be provided.

The Prime Minister said it was also an expression of our continuing and expanding interest and involvement in the South Pacific region.

Australia will also be contributing by sending performers and other participants to the 1980 Festival.