



# PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

SUNDAY, 8 JULY 1979

## ETHNIC LIAISON OFFICER SCHEME

The Prime Minister announced today that a report from the Public Service Board on the overall effectiveness of the Ethnic Liaison Officer Scheme had concluded that the Scheme was proving useful and the Government had therefore decided that the Scheme should continue.

The Scheme is a reflection of the Government's concern for the ethnic communities and its obligation to ensure that migrants enjoy their full rights and benefits. It was introduced in March 1978 following an undertaking made in my Election Policy Speech of 21 November 1977 that Ethnic Liaison Officers would be appointed to Departments and statutory authorities.

The Report from the Public Service Board concluded that the Scheme is more relevant to some Commonwealth organisations than others. Accordingly, the emphasis now will be to develop the Scheme in those organisations where that relevance is greatest. The Government has also established an Interdepartmental Working Group (drawn from Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, the Public Service Board and Prime Minister and Cabinet) to monitor the further development of the Scheme and provide a report towards the end of 1980.

Mr. Fraser announced that future responsibility for the Scheme's management and development had been placed under the Immigration and Ethnic Affairs portfolio.