Minister for Education

20 February 1975

FINAL REPORT OF OPEN UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE

The Australian Minister for Education, Mr Kim Beazley, today tabled in the Parliament the final Report of the Open University Committee.

The Committee prepared the Report, "Open Tertiary Education in Australia", under the chairmanship of Professor Peter Karmel, Chairman of the Universities Commission.

The report has yet to be considered by the Government.

"I welcome the Report as a major contribution to the Australian Government's plans to increase accessibility to education," Mr Beazley said.

"The Australian Government has always accepted wholeheartedly the Committee's concept that barriers to access to tertiary education should be removed and that we should promote the 'opening-up' of tertiary education.

"We accept too that tertiary courses should be available to all Australians who have a reasonable prospect of coping with them, wherever they live and in whatever circumstances they are placed.

"A significant tradition of off-campus tertiary education already exists in some Australian institutions and this will provide a firm basis on which we might build.

"I am sure that administrators in universities and colleges will look very hard at ways to adopt and implement the Committee's ideas."

The Committee's major recommendations are:

- The establishment during 1975 of a National Institute of Open Tertiary Education as a statutory body with the general objective of expanding opportunities in tertiary education for all sections of the community.

- The development of a network of university and college off-campus courses, study centres and libraries, by existing or new institutions willing to assume a major commitment in such work; the new university at Albury-Wodonga should, from its inception, assume a special responsibility for the provision of open education.
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Investigation by the Universities Commission and the Commission on Advanced Education as to whether further assistance may be necessary for the support of educational services to part-time and external students in universities and colleges.

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THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS ARE SUMMARISED IN PAGES 97-100 OF THE REPORT