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**Title:**

Statement: Royal Commission on the Non-Medical Use of Drugs

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# STATEMENT

from the Premier

Date...December...30,...1976

Embargo.....

State Administration Centre,  
Victoria Square, Adelaide,  
South Australia 5001  
227 2688

The Acting Premier, Mr. Corcoran, today announced the Membership and Terms of Reference for the Royal Commission on the Non-Medical use of drugs.

"The members of the commission will be Professor Ronald Sackville (Chairman), Dr. Earle Hackett and Dr. Richard Nies. Counsel assisting the Royal Commission will be Mr. Denis Muirhead and the secretary will be Mr. J. Guscott.

"The Royal Commission is expected to hold its first meeting in mid-January, shortly after Professor Sackville returns from overseas.

"The Government is concerned at the whole question of the use and abuse of drugs, which is a serious problem for all Industrial Societies," Mr. Corcoran said.

"The Royal Commission will be a very wide ranging enquiry into all aspects of drug use and misuse.

"The Commissioners' report will be a valuable document for Australia.

"We expect this enquiry to break valuable new ground and that it will keep all South Australians informed of the many facets of this issue."

## Members

- (1) Professor Ronald Sackville, LL.B.(Melb.), LL.M.(Yale),  
Professor of Law, University of New South Wales. (Chairman)

Professor Sackville entered the University of New South Wales three years ago as the University's youngest professor. He served as a Commissioner on the Henderson Commission of Inquiry into Poverty and wrote the report on 'Law and Poverty'.

OVER PAGE ...

- (2) William Earle Reginald Hackett, M.A., M.D., B.Ch.(Dublin), F.R.C.P.A., F.R.A.C.P., F.A.C.M.A., Deputy Director, Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science.

Dr. Hackett is a prominent pathologist, and is well known for the many public positions he has held including, until recently Acting Chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Commission. He is at present Chairman of the Art Gallery Board and the South Australian Craft Authority.

- (3) Richard Allen Nies, Ph.D., Head of the School of Social Studies, South Australian Institute of Technology.

Dr. Nies has been with the Institute's School of Social Studies for five years. Previously he was with the School of Sociology at the University of New South Wales. He is Chairman of COPE, Vice President of the Marriage Guidance Council and is a member of the Community Welfare Advisory Committee Inquiring into the Treatment and Assessment of Juvenile Offenders.

Mr. Denis Muirhead, a distinguished Solicitor now practising in London, will be Counsel assisting the Commission.

Mr. Muirhead, an ex South Australian, was admitted to the bar in South Australia. He has had extensive experience in cases involving the law concerning drugs.

Mr. J. Guscott, Deputy Electoral Commissioner will be Secretary to the Royal Commission.

#### Terms of Reference

To make enquiry into the factors underlying or relating to the non-medical use of narcotic, analgesic, sedative and psychotropic drugs or substances of dependence, not including nicotine or alcohol and in particular,

- (1) to marshal from available sources in South Australia, Australia and abroad information concerning such drugs or substances and their use;
- (2) to enquire into and report on current scientific, medical, social and other knowledge on the effects of such drugs or substances;
- (3) to enquire into and report on the extent and character of the use or abuse of such drugs or substances in South Australia, the types of persons engaging in such use or abuse, sources of supply, and the medical, social and economic factors underlying or associated with such practices;

OVER PAGE ...

- (4) to enquire into and report on the effects of the existing law and its administration in relation to the use of such drugs or substances in South Australia;
- (5) to enquire into and report on the provision of educational, preventive, treatment and rehabilitation programmes in South Australia for persons using or abusing such drugs or substances; and
- (6) to recommend such changes to the law in relation to the use and abuse of such drugs and the provision of such education, preventive, treatment and rehabilitation programmes as thought appropriate.



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