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File 31-5-96

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Premier of New South Wales
Australia

Mr and Mrs Gustin (Mamma Lena)
4 Hampton Street
FAIRFIELD NSW 2165

Dear Mr & Mrs Gustin

On 22 September, 1995, I met with representatives of the Italian Community. At the meeting, I undertook to refer a number of issues to the relevant Government Ministers and I now pass on their responses.

Health Issues

With regard to the need for more Italian interpreters in South Western Area Health Service, I am advised by the Minister for Health that additional funding for interpreters for this area has been allocated. This will allow the service to be increased to Italian speakers.

Regarding funding inequities for different regions, the Minister for Health has advised that these will be addressed through a new Resource Distribution Formula which will determine budgets for Area and District Health Services based on the needs of the local population. It is expected that once this policy is fully implemented in 1999, South Western Sydney will benefit as it is the major growth area in NSW.

If you have any further inquiries on these health matters please contact Ms Edith Kearns, Area Director, Nursing Services, South Western Sydney Area Health Service on telephone (02) 828 5773.

Aged Care Issues

I have written to all NSW Government Ministers asking their agencies to identify sites suitable for an aged care village in Sydney's Inner West. As a result, three possible sites have been identified. The details of these sites have been forwarded to Father Nevio of the Scalabrini Nursing Homes.



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Education Issues

I am advised by the Minister for Education that an agreement has been reached between the Department of School Education and the insertion class providers. The agreement has resulted in the progressive consolidation of Insertion Class programs in Years 3 to 6 to achieve continuity to high schools where the language is offered from Years 7 to 10. Program hours will be increased from 1 to 1.5 hours. Regrettably, no additional funding is available at this stage.

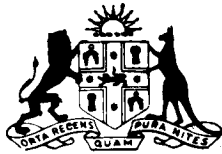
I am also pleased to advise that, in line with its pre-election commitment, the NSW Government is implementing a policy to provide Ethnic Schools with free access to Department of School Education premises.

Representation on Government Boards and Committees

As I indicated at our meeting, the Government is committed to increasing the participation of people of a non-English speaking background on boards, committees and other decision making bodies. In order to facilitate this, I have established a special register for people of a non-English speaking background. I attach a nomination form and encourage members of the Italian community to apply. Additional forms are available from the Public Employment Office Registers, GPO Box 5341, Sydney, NSW, 2001 or telephone (02) 228 3533.

Communication Issues

The former Federal Minister for Communication has advised that it is not appropriate to include Sydney Italian community service announcements for Wollongong in programs that are broadcast nationally and a study in February 1995 found both Sydney and National SBS programs are received reasonably well in most areas of Wollongong. Furthermore, if the power output of the Wollongong transmitter is increased it may cause interference to another AM service operating on the same frequency.



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Lastly, I would like to remind you that the Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW is there to assist ethnic community members to address their issues of concern. Should you have any further queries, I recommend you contact, in the first instance, Ms Patricia Giannotto at the Commission on telephone (02) 716 2293.

I trust that this information is of assistance.

I look forward to future opportunities to discuss with you the concerns and issues affecting the Italian Community in NSW.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Carr'.

Bob Carr
Premier
Minister for Ethnic Affairs
Minister for the Arts