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The policy statements issued by the Liberal Party and the National Country Party before the 1975 elections stressed the importance of communication between Government, employees and employers.

We said that employers and employees should be encouraged to cooperate continually with each other on issues such as the working environment, industrial safety, and technology changes, and to develop a spirit of employee involvement.

It was our view that employers and employees should establish continuing consultative machinery of their own choosing, designed to further communication and discussion and an understanding of the common interests of employees and employers. We believed such discussions should be concerned with issues local to a particular establishment - matters concerned with wider union issues being conducted by the unions and industries involved.

Many employers and employees already engage in discussions of the kind mentioned. The Government hopes, however, that communications between employers and employees will continue to improve, with arrangements of the kind envisaged in our policy statements being more widespread and established.

I have recently arranged a survey of the consultative machinery which exists at the moment in areas of Commonwealth employment. I am pleased to report that in addition to the service-wide consultation which takes place through the Joint Council,

many public service departments and statutory authorities have well developed formal and informal machinery established, and operating successfully, e.g.

Joint Consultative Councils and Committees

Management Service Advisory Committees

Staff Development Advisory Committees

Industrial Relations Units.

Welfare Officers

Joint Management/Union Committee meetings and review groups

Safety Committees

Union Liaison Committees

Staff Councils

Senior Management field visits

Regular ad hoc staff/management meetings and discussions take place where no formal machinery exists

Staff circulars and bulletins

The Government, as an employer, is furthering its policy by encouraging the establishment of appropriate consultative machinery, where it does not already exist, and by supporting the appropriate development and expansion of existing machinery both service-wide and in the various individual areas of Commonwealth employment.