

MR. E.C.A. BROWN

Statement by the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. R.G. Menzies

On 27th September, 1961 the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs, in pursuance of Section 56 of the Public Service Act, charged Edward Charles Alfred Brown, Director of Posts and Telegraphs in Queensland with the following offences:

- (1) That between 28th July and 31st July, 1961 Mr. Brown was guilty of improper conduct in using for other than official purposes a motor car belonging to the Postmaster-General's Department.
- (2) That between 6th August and 8th August, 1961 Mr. Brown was guilty of improper conduct in that he sought the assistance of Colin Douglas Manley, Chief Investigation Officer of the Postmaster-General's Department in Queensland in fabricating reasons to justify the use by him between 28th July and 31st July of the motor car and
- (3) That between 6th August and 15th September, 1961 he was guilty of improper conduct in that having been asked for an explanation of the use by him between 28th July and 31st July of a motor car belonging to the Postmaster-General's Department he made false and misleading statements.

On 27th September the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs suspended Mr. Brown and notified the Public Service Board of the charges and suspension.

Mr. Brown in writing admitted the truth of the charges, and subsequently was given the opportunity of placing before the Public Service Board matters which he considered to be relevant to the recommendation the Board was required, under the Public Service Act, to make to the Governor-General. A similar opportunity was given to the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs who had, on 11th October, forwarded a written submission on the matter to the Public Service Board.

Until the time when the charges were laid Mr. Brown had a satisfactory record of service with the Commonwealth.

The Public Service Board, having completed elaborate inquiries into all matters concerning the charges, has found that Mr. Brown abused the authority vested in him as Director of Posts and Telegraphs, Queensland, and has betrayed the trust and confidence which a Permanent Head must place in a senior officer.

The Board noted that these are serious breaches of the standard of conduct expected of a senior officer and on 26th October recommended to the Governor-General that he be:

- (1) removed from the office of Director of Posts and Telegraphs, Second Division, Queensland in which position he received a salary of £3,650 per annum
- (2) reduced to an office of Engineer, Class 4, salary scale £2,748 - £2,878 per annum, Third Division, Engineering Division, Central Office, Postmaster-General's Department, Melbourne
- (3) paid salary at the rate of £2,878 per annum (subject to the variations in salary prescribed by regulation 106A of the Public Service regulations)

An Order in these terms was made by the Governor-General in Council today and the decisions will take effect from today.

CANBERRA, 2nd November, 1961.