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PRIME MINISTER

Press Statement No. 242

30 April 1974

COMMITTEE ON INTEGRATION OF DATA SYSTEMS

The Prime Minister today released the Report prepared by the Committee on Integration of Data Systems.

The Prime Minister recalled that in December 1973 he had appointed a Committee to advise on the general principles and administrative arrangements which would enable the Government to integrate the various departmental data systems servicing related areas of its social and economic policies. The membership of the Committee comprised Professor L.F. Crisp (Chairman), Mr. B. Brogan, Mr. K.L. Brown, Mr. R. Jolly and Professor C.S. Wallace.

The Prime Minister outlined in brief some of the major recommendations put forward by the Committee. These included the recommendations that:

1. The Australian Bureau of Statistics should be established as a central statistical authority and be administratively autonomous with the Statistician having the status and power of a Permanent Head;
2. the Bureau should be responsible to, and the Statistician should make an annual report to Parliament through the Treasurer;
3. the Bureau's continuing program and planned priorities should be subject to annual scrutiny by a representative National Statistics Advisory Council which should have the duty of advising the Treasurer concerning them. The Council will include representatives of various groups, such as Trade Unionists, Employers, Universities and Civil Liberties organisations. The Chairman of the Council should be independent both of the Public Service and organised economic or social interests;
4. the membership and functions of the existing annual Conference of Federal and State Statisticians should be extended to improve it as a vehicle for articulation of State statistical needs and priorities;