



PRIME MINISTER

13 June 1974
PRESS STATMENT NO. 268

VISIT TO CANADA BY THE MINISTER FOR SERVICES AND PROPERTY

The Prime Minister, the Honourable E.G. Whitlam, Q.C., M.P., today announced that the Honourable F.M. Daly, M.P., Minister for Services and Property, will study the conduct of the Federal elections in Canada, where polling is to take place on 8 July.

Mr. Whitlam said that, in view of the great public interest in electoral administration following the recent Australian elections, the elections presented an excellent opportunity to study the Canadian system with the possibility of improving the Australian legislation.

Having regard to the period of three months required for the completion of the current Australian Senate elections, the Australian Government is particularly anxious to examine in depth the methods used and the time required for the finalisation of elections in Canada. To this end, Mr. Daly would visit several of the Provinces in addition to Ottawa.

He would also be looking at several other aspects of the Canadian electoral legislation and procedures whilst the election is in progress, including voting procedures, political party campaign expenditure and a limitation thereon, allocation of time on television and radio for the promulgation of election matter, the "blackout" period prior to the elections, and, newspaper advertising. These aspects of electoral legislation were particularly relevant in view of the electoral legislation which the Government proposed to introduce early in the next Session.

The Government is determined to improve the Australian Electoral system and will ensure that the Electoral Office is given adequate facilities to administer our elections efficiently. The structure, systems and facilities of the Australian Electoral Office are currently being examined and the Government proposes to engage a Management Consultancy firm to assist the Australian Electoral Office and the Board in this examination.

The Minister will be accompanied on his visit by Mr. F. Ley, Chief Australian Electoral Officer and Mr. I.F. Weise, Australian Electoral Officer for Queensland.