



## PRIME MINISTER

23 August 1974

PRESS STATEMENT NO. 309

### APPOINTMENTS APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The Prime Minister announced today the appointment of Sir John Bunting, at present the Secretary to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, as High Commissioner for Australia in the United Kingdom as from 1 February 1975. The two-year term of the present High Commissioner, the Hon. J.I. Armstrong, which expires on 14 December 1974, has been extended to 31 January 1975.

Mr Whitlam announced that Mr J.L. Menadue, who is at present a senior executive of the News Limited group of companies, will succeed Sir John Bunting as Permanent Head of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet on 1 February 1975.

The Prime Minister said that Sir John Bunting will be the first non-political High Commissioner to the United Kingdom. His association and standing with the Queen's Household, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the British Civil Service make his appointment especially suitable and significant. In addition, his long experience as a Departmental Head and as Secretary to Cabinet will be important qualities in the office of High Commissioner and the administration of Australia House. Australia House had been administered by the Prime Minister's Department until last year, when it was transferred to the Department of Foreign Affairs. In 1959 the previous Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department, Sir Allen Brown, was appointed by Sir Robert Menzies as Deputy High Commissioner in London.

The Prime Minister said that Sir John was appointed Head of the Prime Minister's Department in 1959 when he was 40 years of age and that he is one of the most distinguished public servants Australia has known. His loyalty, integrity, diligence and dedication have made him a leader and example among all public servants. He said that his Government was indebted to Sir John for his untiring assistance at the time of the change of government in 1972 and in many of the initiatives subsequently taken by the Government.

The Prime Minister paid a tribute to Mr John Armstrong's service as High Commissioner in London. It has crowned a long and distinguished public career. He has represented Australia with much success and personal credit.

The Prime Minister said it was also a decision of the Government that the consequential vacancy in the position of Secretary to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet would, on this occasion, be filled by a senior executive from the private sector. Mr Menadue is now 39 years old. After graduating from the University of Adelaide, he joined the Bureau of Statistics in 1957 and transferred to the Treasury in 1959. He became Mr Whitlam's Private Secretary in 1960. He left Mr Whitlam's staff in 1967 to join the Murdoch organisation. He has been a member of the Australian Council for the Arts since its inception last year.

In order to facilitate a smooth transition in the Department, the Public Service Board had agreed with the Government that a position of Secretary Designate should be created and filled by Mr Menadue, and the Governor-General had approved the Board's recommendation. Mr Whitlam said that Mr Menadue will take up his position on 23 September, 1974.

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CANBERRA. A.C.T.