



PRIME MINISTER

Press Statement No. 335

30 September 1974

**ROYAL COMMISSION ON AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION -
SUBMISSIONS BY PUBLIC SERVANTS**

In reply to recent representations about public servants rights to make submissions to the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration, the Prime Minister has informed his correspondents that the Government itself and the Commission are anxious that individual public servants should be given every possible encouragement to come forward with their views.

Mr. Whitlam said: "The Royal Commission was established in pursuit of the Government's aim of improving Australian Government Administration and the Government believes that any submissions individual public servants may wish to make to that end are to be regarded as being in pursuance of their official duties. The Government therefore would not wish any obstacle to be placed in the way of Public Servants making submissions drawing on information acquired in the course of their duty except insofar as this might infringe the confidentiality of personal or business information provided to the Australian Taxation Office, Australian Bureau of Statistics etc. The Royal Commission has stated that it would not be necessary for Public Servants to produce copies of official documents to which they refer but that where it felt it necessary the Commission would ask for documents referred to."

Mr. Whitlam also said that he was ensuring that advice on the Government's attitude towards disclosure of information to the Royal Commission is being made known to the Chief Officers of all Departments and to others concerned.

The Prime Minister said the Government considers that restrictions on freedom of expression of Public Servants and former Public Servants should be reduced to the minimum necessary for the conduct of affairs of state and that Public Servants should have maximum possible freedom to exercise civil and political rights enjoyed by other citizens.

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