



PRIME MINISTER

PRESS STATEMENT NO. 390

28 November 1974

PRICES JUSTIFICATION TRIBUNAL PRICES OF IMPORTED GOODS

The Prime Minister, Mr Whitlam, announced today that the Prices Justification Tribunal had begun to conduct field surveys to check the prices of imported goods on sale at retail stores.

Mr Whitlam said that these prices would be checked back against the landed prices of goods. These figures would be supplied by the Department of Customs and Excise.

Where appropriate, discussions would be held with the companies concerned in relation to any markups considered to be excessive.

Mr Whitlam said that the membership and staff of the Tribunal were being expanded to provide for these operations. A new retail branch had been established, he said, and a member with specific responsibilities in the retail area would commence duty on 2 January 1975. In the meantime, work was going ahead in this area.

Mr Whitlam recalled that in his Second Reading Speech on the Prices Justification Bill he had said:

"The Tribunal will employ additional powers, particularly, but not exclusively, in actively enquiring into and reporting upon both retail prices and the prices of imported goods. For these purposes, we shall provide a modest expansion of the Tribunal's staff and will ensure that the Tribunal is backed by the collaboration of other departments and agencies. Steps have already been taken to this end in conjunction with the Department of Overseas Trade, the Department of Customs and Excise and the Australian Bureau of Statistics."

CANBERRA. A.C.T.