

PRIME MINISTER

FOR PRESS

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MR JUSTICE WOODWARD'S APPOINTMENT

The Prime Minister, Mr. Fraser, said today that it had become necessary, as a consequence of the dissolution of Parliament, to defer the arrangement for Mr. Justice Woodward to take over the control of the Australian Security Intelligence Organization.

Mr. Justice Woodward's appointment to head the Organization was to have commenced on 24 November, but this had been dependent on the passage of a Bill enabling him to retain his judicial status.

The Bill had not been passed before Parliament was dissolved and Mr. Justice Woodward, quite understandably, had to decline the appointment at this stage.

The Prime Minister said that his Government, if elected on 13 December, would reintroduce the Bill to enable Mr. Justice Woodward to accept the appointment that had been proposed.

Pending the passing of the Bill, Mr. F. J. Mahony, who has been acting as Director-General since 29 September, will continue in control of the Organization. He will be appointed to the position until 29 February 1976.