



PRIME MINISTER

FOR PRESS

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COMMONWEALTH OMBUDSMAN APPOINTED

I am pleased to inform the House that the Government has appointed Professor J. E. Richardson, Robert Garran Professor of Law at the Australian National University, to the position of Commonwealth Ombudsman.

Professor Richardson's appointment will be for a period of seven years and he will take up his appointment as soon as arrangements can be made for his release from the University.

The Government is very pleased that Professor Richardson has agreed to accept the position of Commonwealth Ombudsman. Professor Richardson is a distinguished academic of high Australian and international standing who will bring to this office the qualities and experience which are necessary to perform this challenging role. He has administrative and public service experience as well as having had a close association with this Parliament. He was the Legal Secretary to the Constitution Review Committee of the Parliament from 1956 to 1959. Professor Richardson has been a Professor of Law at the Australian National University since 1962 and practised at the N.S.W. Bar in 1974 and 1975.

As Ombudsman, his task will be to investigate complaints and to initiate enquiries concerning administrative actions of departments and prescribed authorities and make reports regarding those investigations. The establishment of the Office is directed towards ensuring that departments and authorities are responsible, adaptive and sensitive to the needs of citizens.

I am sure that everyone will welcome Professor Richardson's appointment as the first holder of the Office of Commonwealth Ombudsman. My Government believes that Professor Richardson has the qualities, experience and capacity to successfully inaugurate and establish the office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman.