

The Prime Minister today commented on representations made by Service Station proprietors concerning problems in the petrol market.

The Service Station proprietors have described how they are facing price discrimination and the serious problem it is causing them.

The Prime Minister commented that he had real sympathy for the members of the industry and for this reason the Government had recently set up an Oil Industry Marketing Consultative Committee to explore the means by which the problems can be overcome.

He mentioned that the Fourth Report of the Royal Commission on Petroleum had made certain recommendations to relieve the problems but its recommendations had raised some difficult questions including those relating to Commonwealth-State powers.

However, Mr. Fraser said that as soon as possible after the next meeting of the Consultative Committee, scheduled for mid December, he would take steps to bring together suppliers and retailers in conference under the auspices of the Government to examine with the industry how more equitable distribution and marketing policies could be developed.

The Government wished to relieve distributors of the burdens that have recently been placed on them.