



PRIME MINISTER

FOR PRESS

11 SEPTEMBER, 1978

The Prime Minister sent the following message today to the Premier of N.S.W.:

"My Dear Premier:

Thank you for your Telex of 1 September 1978 proposing the establishment of a National Inquiry into the consequences of new technology upon industries and employment.

I am informed that on the same day, Mr. Hills also wrote to the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations proposing that the industrial relations aspects of automation and technological change should be considered by the Labour Ministers at their meeting last Friday.

My Government recognises that there can be significant economic and social consequences from the introduction of new technology. Equally, there can be important consequences if it is not introduced. Our concern to ensure these matters were given appropriate recognition and consideration in the formulation and implementation of Commonwealth Government policy is evidenced by the creation of a Department of Productivity in November, 1976.

As you know, the Government has also established an inter-departmental committee to consider and report back to it, as a matter of urgency, on the impact and implications of new technology in industry. Mr. Street would have been referring to this at the Ministers of Labour Meeting but, in the light of Mr. Hills request, the matter was formally included on the agenda.

My Government would wish to await the report of the Committee as set up before making any decision concerning any broad based national inquiry into the consequences of new technology upon industries and employment. However, I need hardly add that it will take particular note of views which may be expressed by the States."