

EDITORIAL

THE DISCOURTESY OF SMOS

Readers of this journal will know that early in 1974 advertisements appeared in the press calling for applications for the new position of Director-General of the Australian Archives. The decision to make this appointment arose from the Government's acceptance of the W. Kaye Lamb report, which recommended the up-grading of the Australian Archives. The position was advertised at Level 4, Second Division, rates.

In May 1974 some of the applicants were interviewed. Nothing happened, except that rumours flowed rather freely throughout the public service and archival streams of Australia. Those who had applied were not told whether or not an appointment had been made, or would be made. Even those on the "short list" were given no advice whatever on the outcome of their applications. They may well have included reasonably senior people, living in places other than Canberra, who had important business commitments to make, or not to make, and who had some expectation, though a slight one, of being offered the position of Director-General. The Department of the Special Minister of State (SMOS) said not a word.

Almost a year after the first applications were being submitted, SMOS wrote to at least one of the applicants, telling him that the position would be re-advertised, and asking if he would like to be reconsidered. The advertisement appeared in the press, but there was no accompanying apology or explanation for the delay.