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Title:

Statement: Proposed deep-sea fishing project in South Australia

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STATEMENT

from the Premier

Date..... August 18, 1976.
Embargo.....

State Administration Centre,
Victoria Square, Adelaide,
South Australia 5001
228 4811

PROPOSED DEEP-SEA FISHING PROJECT IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

The proposal originated from discussions which I had with the Polish Consul. Correspondence then proceeded with Poland, the fishermen and the fishing co-operative and discussions were held with SAFCOL. The proposal was that a deep sea trawling vessel which the Polish have developed and with which they have great expertise should be supplied to South Australia. That is, it would fish in deep sea waters beyond the Continental Shelf not trespassing on any of our presently used fisheries, and if a fishing resource, as expected, was properly established that a joint venture would occur with SAFCOL in processing fish in South Australia for sale by SAFCOL. Training would be given to South Australian fishermen for this trawler and if the venture developed successfully it could lead to the establishment of a fleet of ships built in South Australia.

This programme was furthered by my visit to Poland where I had talks with their Ministry and Mr. Davies had talks with Mr. Dalmor and signed a letter of intent and investigated some further processes which might become available to us through this joint venture, such as the establishment of a fish protein plant. Immediately on my return from overseas a Polish trade mission came to South Australia, having discussed the proposals for this venture in Canberra and substantial agreement on the proposals was reached. This would provide that the Poles would bring the trawler to waters off South Australia and proceed to a survey of the fishing resources. All fish derived from this would be processed by SAFCOL, that payment for the very considerable expense of the survey could be taken in fish or in return for it. The only requirement then to proceed with this venture was the approval of the Commonwealth Government. I wrote to the Prime Minister and have only just received a reply from him. He raises a number of questions of policy and indicates that the Commonwealth Government are not happy to proceed with a policy decision in this matter until the proposals relating to the Law of the Sea, the exclusive rights of the sea for 200 miles, are finally determined.

We are at the moment examining this very discouraging reply in order to make further submissions to the Federal Government. It could be a venture of great benefit to South Australia, it could provide us with the technology required to extend our use of fishing resources with effective control of the product in our own hands.