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**Title:**  
Speech to the Apex District Convention at Keith

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SPEECH OF THE HON. THE PREMIER TO THE APEX DISTRICT CONVENTION  
AT KEITH, ON SATURDAY, 17TH JUNE, 1967.

The poverty of the average citizens in Asian countries is, as compared with the standard of living of the average citizen in Australia, appalling. Whereas the average income per head of population in Australia is in excess of \$1,000 per year, in India it is about \$60 per year, in Pakistan even less and in Malaya less than \$180 per year. In addition, in Australia the standard of nutrition is amongst the highest in the world, whereas in India, Pakistan and Malaya, in many cases the standard intake of food is at less than malnutrition level. Morally, then, we should be bound to do something about these areas. We must remember the fact that in most Asian areas, there is a population explosion due to improvements in health standards without the literacy and education necessary for family planning.

Australia is one of the wealthiest countries in the world and it has been widely recommended that we should increase our aid to under-developed countries to an amount at least of 1% of our national income. France spends more than 1% of its national income in aid to under-developed countries and we are spending very much less than the United States and Great Britain proportionately. Approximately .6% of our national income goes to aid to under-developed countries, but a very large proportion of this goes to Papua-New Guinea. We cannot take credit for the entire amount spent in Papua-New Guinea as aid to under-developed countries, for in relation to this area we are one of the oldest colonial powers in the world, and up to the last war gave woefully inadequate sums for the development of the Papua-New Guinea area. What we are spending now is only beginning to catch up on neglect of the past. It has been objected that as a developing and necessarily capital importing country we can't afford to give grants overseas. We do not, as a developing country, need capital imports except where this brings us technological improvement. But the kind of capital

import we have had in large measure recently (which is simply taking over existing assets in Australia without any technological improvement) is not assisting our economy, but facing it with greater problems. We could both provide for necessary capital expansion and provide for overseas aid if we restricted capital imports to those areas where we gained technological improvement from the import and imposed internally in Australia a capital issues control to ensure that Australia's investment capacity was channelled to necessary basic development.

It is true that there are gaps in our welfare programmes in Australia and we need to do more in this area. Particularly we need to spend more in the area of education. People have objected that we should do this before we increase overseas aid. I do not believe it is a question of one or the other. We should do all these things, for overseas aid is not merely a moral obligation on us. If Australia's economy is to continue to expand, we have to have markets in Asia. We will only get effective economic demand for our products if the material standards of Asian peoples are improved. Therefore, an increase in aid to under-developed countries is not merely a moral obligation, it is for us a sound business proposition.

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