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Title:
State Government and South Australian Exports

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STATE GOVERNMENT AND SOUTH AUSTRALIAN EXPORTS.

24.8.72

In the two and a half years since being returned to office the State Government has pursued a vigorous programme of assistance to South Australian industries to stimulate export sales.

Increased exports are one of the obvious ways in which we can broaden and diversify our industrial base, and so provide greater prosperity and more stable employment for our citizens.

This was why, in 1970, we appointed a number of efficient South Australian trade representatives to service the needs of exporters to South East Asia, the Far East, to Pacific Islands, United Kingdom, Europe and the Middle East.

It grew out of our recognition that while the Commonwealth Government provided a valuable service to exporters it, necessarily, had to be national in scope and that we need something specifically South Australian oriented to alert our manufacturers to export potential, and to provide back up services in winning orders.

We believed that the Government had a responsibility, too, to ensure that a maximum export effort was mounted on behalf of those firms not only already engaged in export, but to provide initial assistance and field work for the many other companies considering the prospects of overseas markets.

It was also realized that international markets were becoming increasingly competitive and costly to develop in the early stages in terms of human resources and finance, which often acted as a deterrent to taking the preliminary steps outside domestic markets.

Nobody can be given too much assistance in the sometimes complex foreign marketing procedures, but once the initial fears are overcome a very worthwhile contribution can be made, and has been made, to a company's and the State's prosperity.

These overseas sales can be won with only marginally more effort than it takes to develop interstate markets.

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With this background of objectives the Government decided that export priority would be given to Asia and Europe with the appointment in early 1971 of two roving trade officers.

Mr. Stanley Timbs went to the Agent General's Office from where Europe and Middle East areas are serviced, and Mr. John MacDonald was based in the Premier's Department, from where frequent visits are made to Asia on behalf of South Australian firms requiring marketing research, specific trade information, joint venture possibilities, new product research and developments, and following up contacts.

Mr. Ray C. Taylor, the South Australian Government's Agent General in London is responsible for product marketing in the United Kingdom and Europe.

Additionally several official South East Asian Trade Representatives have been appointed, who are private businessmen available to South Australian businessmen for preliminary assistance and personal introductions to their respective markets.

These representatives have been appointed in what are considered to be three difficult but challenging markets, Indonesia, Malaysia and Japan.

They work as an extension of the facilities available through the Australian Trade Commissioners in their countries. The agents' services are available to anyone visiting these places and they have already been proven of great value to businessmen not familiar with these particular territories.

The need for concentrated and continuing export efforts is shown by a recent statement from the President of the Wellington Manufacturers Association after a visit to Suva "that New Zealand could stage a successful takeover in the Australian dominated Fiji market."

If this is how our competitors are thinking, it is obvious that we will have to become even more export orientated in the future.

The export services provided to South Australian industries by the South Australian Government are unique in Australia.

Both the Western Australian and New South Wales Governments have appointed resident trade representatives in Tokyo but their activities are basically confined to Japan.

All States organise overseas trade missions periodically, but South Australia is the only State that maintains a flexible and constant personalized trade service between South Australian industries and its export markets.

To further develop our Asian interests and activities the Department of the Premier and of Development is holding a trade seminar during September to coincide with the Export Development Council meeting. We have invited our South East Asian Trade Representatives to Adelaide during this time - 11th to 15th September.

The seminar will provide a further opportunity for contact between South Australian businessmen and our trade representatives and, hopefully, to more export orders.

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