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Title:
Speech to the South Australian Seedgrowers' Co-operative Seminar

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SPEECH BY THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN, TO THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SEEDGROWERS' CO-OPERATIVE SEMINAR.

26/11/71.

MR. BROOKMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I WELCOME THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK AT YOUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND SEMINAR. SINCE ITS INAUGURATION IN 1964 YOUR ORGANISATION HAS ESTABLISHED ITSELF AS ONE OF THE LIVELIEST AND MOST VIGOROUS CO-OPERATIVES IN THE COUNTRY. I'D LIKE TO PLACE FORMALLY ON RECORD THE STATE GOVERNMENT'S APPRECIATION OF THE EXTREMELY VALUABLE WORK THE SEEDGROWERS' CO-OPERATIVE HAS DONE IN THE PROMOTION OF ORDERLY MARKETING AND THE MUTUAL PROSPERITY OF YOUR MEMBERS.

WE AS A GOVERNMENT WANT TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO FOSTER A CO-OPERATIVE SPIRIT IN THE RURAL AREAS. THIS IS DESIRABLE AT ANY TIME. BUT, DURING THE PRESENT PERIOD OF RURAL ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION, IT IS ESSENTIAL. THE WORK YOU HAVE DONE OVER SEVEN YEARS OF OPERATION IS A MOST DRAMATIC ILLUSTRATION OF THE BENEFITS THAT CAN COME FROM SUCH AN ATTITUDE.

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IT'S A RECORD OF WHICH YOU CAN FEEL, RIGHTLY PROUD. I THINK YOU'VE REASONS FOR SPECIAL PRIDE IN THE WAY IN WHICH YOU'VE BUILT UP EXPORT SALES OVER THAT PERIOD TO THE POINT WHERE THEY NOW ACCOUNT FOR MORE THAN HALF YOUR TOTAL SALES. EXPORTS - THE CREATION OF NEW MARKETS AND THE EXPANSION OF EXISTING ONES - ARE A VITAL CONCERN OF MY GOVERNMENT. WE BELIEVE THAT IF WE ARE TO DEVELOP TO THE FULL SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S POTENTIAL WE MUST AGGRESSIVELY SEEK OUT AND HOLD THESE MARKETS. THIS IS AS TRUE OF PRIMARY INDUSTRY AS IT IS OF SECONDARY INDUSTRY AND I'M GLAD THAT I WAS ABLE, DURING MY RECENT VISIT TO LONDON TO PUT FORWARD A POTENTIAL SHOPPING LIST OF YOUR PRODUCTS IN CONVERSATIONS WITH OFFICIALS OF THE CHINESE EMBASSY THERE. I HOPE THAT, FROM THIS, WE MAY IN FUTURE OBTAIN ANOTHER OUTLET FOR YOUR PRODUCTS.

EVIDENCE OF THE SUCCESS YOU'VE BEEN ABLE TO ACHIEVE THROUGH A DYNAMIC APPROACH TO OVERSEAS MARKETING CAN BE SEEN FROM THE DRAMATIC INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF VARIETIES OF CERTIFIED PASTURE SEEDS EXPORTED AND IN THE FACT THAT LAST YEAR YOUR EXPORTS WENT TO FOURTEEN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES..

AUSTRALIA IS IN A FORTUNATE POSITION AS FAR AS SEED EXPORTS TO THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE ARE CONCERNED WITH THE NATURAL SUMMER-WINTER DISTINCTION CONFERRING AN ADVANTAGE ON GROWERS HERE. BUT THERE'S NO USE HAVING THE GOODS TO GET TO MARKET IF YOU DON'T, IN FACT, GET THEM THERE. YOUR MANAGEMENT HAS CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED BOTH ITS CAPACITY AND WILLINGNESS TO DO THE JOB. THE POINT I WANT TO UNDERLINE IS THAT THE VARIOUS STATE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, THE AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT AND OUR REPRESENTATIVES IN LONDON, EUROPE AND ELSEWHERE, ARE ANXIOUS TO DO ALL THEY CAN TO SUPPLEMENT YOUR EFFORTS. IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM - OR FORESEE A POTENTIAL - DON'T HESITATE TO COME AND SEE US.

IF ANY DISCUSSION OF EXPORT SALES - AND, AS I'VE SAID, EXPANSION OF EXPORTS IS VITAL TO OUR FUTURE WELLBEING - WE MUST HAVE REGARD TO THE WIDER PICTURE; WE MUST APPRECIATE WHAT KIND OF WORLD IT IS IN WHICH WE TRADE AND WHAT OUR PLACE IS IN IT.

IT IS, IN A WORD, A HUNGRY WORLD. AND IF SOMETHING IS NOT DONE VERY SOON IT COULD EASILY EXPLODE INTO AN ANGRY WORLD. TONIGHT LITERALLY MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WILL GO TO SLEEP HUNGRY. TONIGHT THERE WILL BE A VERY REAL THREAT OF WAR ON THE INDIAN SUB-CONTINENT WITH HUNGER, FAR, FAR MORE THAN COMMUNAL FACTIONALISM, AS ITS ROOT CAUSE. DECENCY DEMANDS THAT WE SHOULD DO SOMETHING. COMMONSENSE DEMANDS THAT WE - THE FAT AMONGST THE LEAN - SHOULD DO SOMETHING.

I BELIEVE THAT WITHIN THE NEXT CENTURY PEOPLE WILL LOOK BACK ON THIS AGE WHICH SEES THE IMPOSITION OF FOOD PRODUCTION QUOTAS IN SOME COUNTRIES WHILE MILLIONS STARVE OR SUFFER MALNUTRITION ELSEWHERE WITH THE SAME CONTEMPT AND DISGUST WITH WHICH WE LOOK ON THE USE OF CHILD LABOUR IN THE FACTORIES OF THE VICTORIAN AGE. THE SPECTACLE OF FARMERS BEING RATIONED IN WHAT THEY CAN PRODUCE WHILE A LARGE PART OF THE HUMAN RACE SLOWLY STARVES TO DEATH IS OBSCENE.

THERE IS A NEED FOR ACTION ON A GLOBAL LEVEL. PERHAPS THE ANSWER LIES WITH THE CREATION OF A WORLD FOOD AUTHORITY - MAYBE THROUGH THE UNITED NATIONS, MAYBE RUN BY SOME OTHER SUPRA-NATIONAL BODY - TO BRING SOME SANITY TO THE PRESENT ABSURD DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD. WE SHALL NEED, TOO, TO TAKE DRASTIC ACTION TO CURB WORLD POPULATION GROWTH.

NOW PEOPLE WHO TALK OF WORLD AUTHORITIES AND SUPRA-NATIONAL BODIES ARE USUALLY BRANDED AS IDEALISTS AND DISMISSED AS MUDDLE-HEADED DREAMERS ADRIFT IN CLOUD-CUCKOO LAND. (AND THE RATHER SORRY RECORD OF MULTI-NATIONAL GROUPINGS TO DATE LENDS FORCE TO THAT ARGUMENT). BUT YOU CAN'T MAKE A PROBLEM GO AWAY BY SIMPLY SHOIVING A DISMISSIVE LABEL ON THOSE WHO TALK ABOUT IT. AND THE EXISTENCE OF AN UNDER- OR MALNOURISHED THIRD WORLD ISN'T JUST A PROBLEM, IT'S TOMORROW'S CRISIS. WE, AS GOVERNMENTS AND AS HUMAN BEINGS, NEED TO LOOK AT THIS APPALLING PROBLEM AND SEE WHAT WE CAN DO TO OVERCOME IT. THE EFFORTS SO FAR, WHILE WELL CONCEIVED IN SOME AREAS, HAVE PROVIDED LITTLE MORE THAN INADEQUATE PANACEAS. OF COURSE, WE CAN'T OVERNIGHT SET UP SOME MARVELLOUS GLOBAL BODY THAT WILL SOLVE ALL PROBLEMS AND BRING ABOUT IMMEDIATE PLENTY.

BUT, IDEALISTIC OR NOT, A START MUST BE MADE. FINDING THE ANSWER WILL BE PROTRACTED, ARDUOUS AND HEARTBREAKING. NOT FINDING IT WILL BE, QUITE LITERALLY, A DISASTER.

WE COULD START AT HOME. AMONG THE FIGURES CONTAINED IN THAT RATHER STRANGE DOCUMENT THE 1971-72 FEDERAL BUDGET WERE SOME WHICH REVEALED THAT AUSTRALIA LAST YEAR DISTRIBUTED IN EXTERNAL AID SOME \$181M. IT SOUNDS PRETTY IMPRESSIVE UNTIL YOU CONSIDER THAT THERE ARE ABOUT 12 AND THREE QUARTER MILLIONS OF US AND THAT WORKS OUT AT A PRINCELY \$15 A YEAR EACH - OR ABOUT THE PRICE OF A COUPLE OF BUTCHERS OF BEER A WEEK. AND THEN WHEN YOU TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE FACT THAT ABOUT \$122 OF THOSE \$181 MILLIONS WENT TO PAPUA-NEW GUINEA - AN AREA IN WHICH WE HAVE RATHER STRONG ECONOMIC INTERESTS - YOU'RE LEFT WITH JUST OVER \$59 M. TO GO ROUND THE WORLD. I THINK THAT'S A FAIRLY MISERLY FIGURE FROM A COUNTRY IN WHICH THE SECOND CAR IS FAST LOSING EVEN STATUS SYMBOL RANKING.

THE SAME FEDERAL BUDGET CLAIMED PROUDLY THAT IN 1970 "AUSTRALIA RANKED THIRD IN THE WORLD IN TERMS OF NET FLOW OF OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE OF GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT".

AGAIN PRETTY IMPRESSIVE. AGAIN TAKE AWAY PAPUA-NEW GUINEA AND WE RANK BEHIND ALL MAJOR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN - A RATHER DIFFERENT PICTURE.

FOR A COUNTRY OF THE AFFLUENCE AND ABUNDANCE OF AUSTRALIA THIS IS SHAMEFUL. WE CAN'T PRETEND TO BE IGNORANT OF THE FACTS. THIS IS THE NATION IN WHICH A FARMER CAN RETURN FROM A DAY TENDING HIS QUOTA OF WHEAT FIELDS TO WATCH A TELEVISION NEWS BULLETIN SHOWING THE LATEST HORRORS FROM THE PAKASTANI REFUGEE CAMPS. AND WHICH WILL THEN CHARGE FREIGHT ON THE LITTLE BIT OF HELP IT DOES SEND.

IF SIMPLE HUMANITY ALONE DIDN'T DEMAND THAT WE SHARPLY AND IMMEDIATELY RAISE THE LEVEL OF OUR SUPPORT TO THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES THEN A SELF-INTERESTED AWARENESS OF THE DAMAGE WE DO OURSELVES DAILY IN THE EYES OF THE WORLD SHOULD DO SO.

INDIVIDUALLY WE ARE A GENEROUS PEOPLE AS DOOR KNOCK APPEALS AND BADGE DAYS SHOW. GOVERNMENT IN CANBERRA HAS NOT BEEN. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO ACCEPT THAT FOREIGN AID IS NOT A FORM OF CHARITY. IT IS AN ENLIGHTENED INVESTMENT IN A FUTURE OF WHICH AUSTRALIA WILL BE PART. IT IS A TRUISM, BUT ONE WHICH WILL BEAR REPITITION, THAT A PROSPEROUS WORLD WILL BUY MORE GOODS THAN A POOR ONE.

SIR, YOUR OPERATIONS ILLUSTRATE WHAT CAN BE DONE BY ENLIGHTENED, SELF-INTERESTED CO-OPERATION IN THIS STATE. SHOULD NOT THIS LESSON BE APPLIED, TO A FAR GREATER EXTENT THAN NOW, INTERNATIONALLY.

THANK YOU.