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Title:

Speech opening new irrigation system, Valle D'Oro Winery, McLaren Flat

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SPEECH BY THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN, OPENING NEW IRRIGATION SYSTEM,
VALLE D'ORO WINERY, McLAREN FLAT.

10/4/72

MR. WHITE, MR. COMMAZZETTO, MR. ROSSETTO, MR. REEDMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN;

THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT McLAREN FLAT AND COMMISSION YOUR NEW IRRIGATION SYSTEM. I WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED TO HAVE BEEN ASKED BECAUSE, OF COURSE, PASTA D'ORO AND VALLE D'ORO HAVE VERY CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH MY ELECTORATE AND I'VE HAD PERSONAL EXPERIENCE BOTH OF THE QUALITY OF THEIR PRODUCTS AND THE EFFICIENCY OF THEIR BUSINESS.

INDEED THIS NEW INSTALLATION BEING COMMISSIONED TODAY IS A FURTHER DEMONSTRATION OF THE COMPANY'S ENTERPRISE AND FORESIGHT. IT WILL ENABLE THOUSANDS OF VINES TO BE WATERED AT ONE TIME WITH VIRTUALLY NO WASTAGE OF WATER. AND IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE THE RESULTS CAN BE PUT TO THE BEST TEST OF ALL - THAT OF THE PALATE.

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THE VALLE D'ORO WINERY HAS BEEN PRODUCING WINE FOR SOME TIME BUT UNTIL NOW THESE HAVE BEEN MADE FROM GRAPES PRODUCED BY OTHER GROWERS. NOW THE WINERY'S OWN 40-THOUSAND CABERNET SAUVIGNON AND SHIRAZ WINES ARE ESTABLISHED AND THE FIRST HARVEST SHOULD BE MADE NEXT YEAR. I'M SURE THAT THE PRODUCT WILL FURTHER ENHANCE THE ALREADY VERY HIGH REPUTATION OF THE AREA FOR HIGH QUALITY WINES.

THIS IS A VERY DESIRABLE EXPANSION AND VALLE D'ORO ARE TO BE COMMENDED FOR UNDERTAKING IT. YOU COULD, HOWEVER, BE FORGIVEN FOR A LARGER DEGREE OF ANXIETY THAN THAT WHICH NORMALLY ATTENDS THE BIRTH OF A NEW BUSINESS ENTERPRISE BECAUSE OF EVENTS ELSEWHERE. I'M REFERRING, OF COURSE, TO THE CONTINUING DEPRESSING EFFECT ON THE WINE INDUSTRY OF THAT ABSURD IMPOST, THE WINE EXCISE. I HAVE, OVER THE YEARS, BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO FEDERAL LIBERAL GOVERNMENTS DECIDING IN HASTE AND ALLOWING AUSTRALIANS TO SUFFER AT LEISURE.

BUT THEIR INCOMPETENCE IN THIS HAS BEEN BREATHTAKING. IT'S NOTHING SHORT OF INCREDIBLE THAT AN ADMINISTRATION WHICH IS ALWAYS AT PAINS TO PROFESS ITS CONCERN FOR THE PLIGHT OF THE COUNTRY PEOPLE SHOULD, WITH ONE SIMPLE ACTION, CAUSE SERIOUS DAMAGE TO THE ONE SECTOR OF PRIMARY INDUSTRY WHICH HAD UNTIL THEN BEEN LEAST AFFECTED BY THE GENERAL RURAL RECESSION.

AND NOT ONLY THAT - THE COMMONWEALTH THEN COMPOUNDED THE FELONY WHEN THE FOLLY OF THIS ACT WAS POINTED OUT TO THEM BY REFUSING TO REVOKE THEIR DECISION BUT INSTEAD INITIATING AN INQUIRY TO ASCERTAIN WHAT WAS ALREADY ONLY TOO OBVIOUS.

THE EFFECT OF THIS EXCISE HAS NOT ONLY BEEN TO END THE HEALTHY GROWTH FACTOR THAT HAD MARKED THE INDUSTRY FOR SOME YEARS BUT TO ACTUALLY THROW IT INTO REVERSE. FOR THE YEARS 1969-70 AND 1970-71 THE ANNUAL GALLON RATE OF CLEARANCES FROM BONDED PREMISES WAS RUNNING AT ABOUT 24-MILLION.

UNTIL THE END OF JANUARY THIS YEAR - THE LATEST PERIOD FOR WHICH WE HAVE FIGURES - IT WAS RUNNING AT AN ANNUAL EQUIVALENT OF 23-MILLION.

THERE'S BEEN A STORY OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS THAT FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF PROFESSOR GRANT'S INQUIRY INTO THE EXCISE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MAY MAKE A 50 PER CENT CUT IN THE EXCISE. THIS IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH. I HAVE ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS STATED MY OWN VIEW AND THAT OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ON THIS MATTER. THIS TAX SHOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN IMPOSED IN THE FIRST PLACE. IT SHOULD BE REPEALED - IN ITS ENTIRETY. HALF MEASURES WON'T DO. EVEN IF IT WAS REPEALED YESTERDAY MUCH DAMAGE WOULD ALREADY HAVE BEEN DONE. IT'S MY VIEW THAT THE COMMONWEALTH SHOULD NOT ONLY ABOLISH THIS TAX BUT SHOULD AT THE SAME TIME CONSIDER GIVING FINANCIAL HELP TO THE INDUSTRY TO ENABLE IT TO OVERCOME THE EFFECTS OF THIS SEVERE AND UNJUSTIFIABLE BLOW TO ITS DEVELOPMENT.

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AUSTRALIAN WINE CAN COMPARE FAVOURABLY WITH ANY IN THE WORLD
(AND I MIGHT ADD THAT SOUTH AUSTRALIAN WINES ARE THE BEST OF ALL),
AND THEY HAVE VERY GREAT EXPORT POTENTIAL. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
SHOULD BE ASSISTING THIS INDUSTRY, NOT SABOTAGING IT.

SIR, I AGAIN COMMEND YOUR ENTERPRISE IN DEVELOPING THIS PROPERTY,
AND THE EXTREMELY EFFICIENT MANNER IN WHICH YOU ARE DOING SO.
IT NOW GIVES ME VERY MUCH PLEASURE TO SWITCH ON THE NEW IRRIGATION
SYSTEM.