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**Title:**

Speech opening conference of the Australian Chicken Meat Federation and the  
Australian Stock Feed Manufacturers' Association, Adelaide

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SPEECH BY THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN, OPENING CONFERENCE OF  
THE AUSTRALIAN CHICKEN MEAT FEDERATION AND THE AUSTRALIAN  
STOCK FEED MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION - ADELAIDE, 10.3.75.

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen

Thank you very much for asking me to open your Convention. May I first of all especially welcome the visitors to Adelaide. I'm also delighted that you've chosen, as the venue for your Convention, our Festival Centre.

Although the complex is primarily a home for the performing arts it is by no means intended solely for them. It also has an important role to play as a Convention Centre and was specifically designed to meet convention needs. This is the first time it has been used for a major convention and I'm sure you'll find there are none to equal it in Australia for facilities, grandeur of design or aspect.

You meet, of course, at a time when primary industries in Australia are facing a period of uncertainty. This is particularly so for industries associated with exports.

We're not alone in this, but that is little comfort.

It is ironic that while many industries associated with rural products are faced with over-production and low returns, much of the world is hungry. We have a simple duty as human beings to do all we can to help overcome this, the world's most appalling, urgent problem.

At the recent World Food Conference in Rome, the Australian Minister for Agriculture, Senator Wriedt, stressed the need for a new strategy, to rid the world of hunger and malnutrition. Gifts of food and money from developed countries to under-developed countries are necessary. But they are not the solution.

I believe that the only satisfactory way to do this is to increase the capacity of the emerging nations to provide for themselves. To this end, the Commonwealth, and I would add, the South Australian Governments, are placing greater emphasis on rural development in future overseas aid programmes.

This assistance involves making experts and our technology available to assist with development projects.

Domestically, the general down-turn in trade among western industrial nations is having an impact on our rural industries. If Australian farmers and the Australian rural industries are to remain competitive in the future, they must be soundly based financially. This means we have to develop and pursue

policies which will encourage them to become as self-reliant as possible.

Inevitably, for primary producers seasons and markets will fluctuate violently and rural incomes will therefore be subjected to a greater degree of instability than those of the rest of the community.

Policies intended to stabilise farm incomes must therefore have a high priority.

At the moment many of our rural industries are being examined by the Industries Assistance Commission. Some of them will undoubtedly have to be restructured and others given special assistance. This, I believe, is important for the producers themselves and important too if many of our country cities and towns are to remain viable and through this affect the whole economy. Here - as I've noted with manufacturing industry elsewhere - I believe the I.A.C. may have to consider social as well as purely economic costs.

Turning to your specific area of concern, I think it would be fair to say that over the years industries associated with intensive animal production have developed a rather sinister reputation. Intensive industry requires intensive capital, and this can very easily lead to the exclusion of small operators. As competition increases more and more are eliminated until eventually only a select few remain. However, size does not guarantee efficiency. I believe, for instance, that the small efficient family unit should always be given the opportunity, in fact the right, to remain in the industry.

As the small operator is often not in a position to protect himself from the large-scale vertical integrated operation, it is necessary at times to legislate to provide protection. In this general context of increasing pressures and difficulties I'd note that the State Government was pleased indeed to see the S.A. Chicken Meat Industry coming together as a unified body to discuss its current problems. Both the producer of chickens and the processor of chickens are facing difficulty. But, despite this the fact that they have been able to draw up plans that will ensure both remain in the industry as viable and efficient sectors has lessons from which other primary industry could profit. I believe, in fact, that the plans drawn up by the South Australian Chicken Meat Industry will prove to be a model for similar industries in other States.

It's yet another instance - if I may be permitted a little immodesty - of South Australia being the pacesetter State.

Another comparison of this Centre with a certain Opera House may prompt a similar feeling among local delegates.

Once again, thank you for asking me here. You have, as I see, a somewhat hectic schedule. It will, I'm sure, prove of benefit to all those taking part - producers, processors and retailers.

I have very much pleasure in declaring your Convention open. Thank you.

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