PRESS STATEMENT:

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WOOL INDUSTRY BALLOT

Some further moves have been made to bring the wool industry closer to the wool industry ballot. The opening and closing dates of the referendum have been announced by the Minister as November 5th and December 9th.

The rolls of growers have now been distributed to the different States and are available for inspection at the Commonwealth Electoral Offices in each State. The office in this area is at Hamilton. A large part of these rolls were compiled from information obtained from the wool brokers and it is probable that broking firms would not know the full details of partnerships and trusts. In other words, if a grower sends his wool to a certain store the broker probably would not know if the grower's wife is a partner with an entitlement to vote. For this reason the rolls that have been circulated are likely to be incomplete and in need of amendment.

This can be done in two ways. It would be possible to go and inspect the roll at the Returning Office and if people entitled to vote were not on the roll, they could then obtain an enrolment form, fill it in and send it to the Returning Officer. Then when the ballot papers were posted out the appropriate number of additional ballot papers would be sent.

Alternatively, it would be possible to wait until after the ballot papers have been posted in the first instance. Approximately four weeks would be allowed before the ballot closes so there will be plenty of time for people who have not received a ballot paper to make an application to the Returning Officer. They will then be sent a ballot paper and get their vote lodged before the closing date of the referendum.

Enrolment cards and a pamphlet showing the voting entitlements of growers, of partners or of trustees should by now be available at all Post Offices.

The ballot has taken a little longer than we expected to finalise but the machinery and the printing and the technical aspects of the matter have been the reasons for this delay. I only hope that when the final results of this particular ballot are known the result will be clear-cut so that this vexed and difficult problem can be decided firmly and finally.

There should be no need to repeat my own views in this matter. I believe it is important that the ballot be carried in favour of the reserve price plan because I am convinced that if the price of wool continues to fluctuate severely as it has in the recent years, more and more manufacturers will begin to turn to the calmer waters and the easier life that is provided by synthetics.
AIRPORTS

It is a historical fact that from the time of Victoria's break from New South Wales, jealousy and rivalry has existed between the two States. This rivalry is more often than not the subject of humour and in general terms it has no material effect. There have, however, been unfortunate examples of difficulty and stupidity in relationships between the two States. The break in the rail gauge between Melbourne and Sydney was largely as a result of this rivalry and the inability of the two States to co-operate in a sensible fashion.

This, as we know, resulted in heavy expense in recent times in building a standard gauge railway to Melbourne to Albury so that interstate goods would not have to be unloaded at Albury.

More recently we have seen an example in the Federal Parliament of New South Wales Members becoming extremely touchy about the subject of Melbourne's future international Jetport at Tullamarine. The Sydney representatives have tried to show that the Kingsford Smith Airport at Mascot has been neglected and that there is some underhand policy on behalf of the Government to make Tullamarine Australia's premier international airport. There have been questions and motions and debates in the Parliament about this matter.

This is not something that merely concerns the capital cities because the major airports of the State are there to serve and to be used by all the citizens of the State.

Whatever the Commonwealth may or may not do in establishing airports, Australia's major international terminal will depend upon the industrial and commercial activity in the States concerned and New South Wales has to some extent been jealous of the remarkable growth in Victoria in recent years. But it is likely that there will be more international traffic in and out of Sydney than in and out of Melbourne because Sydney is the nearest major terminal on the East Coast which makes it closest to the United States. Therefore, whether or not they land at Melbourne, most aircraft coming from the United States would land first at Sydney. And this is a fact of life that we can't change, but the arguments used in the Parliament have been based upon the false belief that the Commonwealth is spending more on the Melbourne airport than Sydney, that the runways will be longer than those at Sydney, that the international terminal to be built at Tullamarine will be superior to the new one to be built at Sydney.

It would be very nice for Victoria and Tullamarine if these allegations were correct, unfortunately, they are not. The terminal, the runways and the buildings will all be of equivalent quality but the ones at Sydney will be slightly larger than those at Tullamarine because it is believed that there will be more traffic in and out of Sydney for the reason that I have mentioned. However, the facilities to be built at Tullamarine will be capable of quick and rapid expansion if international traffic at this airport expands more quickly than expected.