Australia is a young country. Our continent was the last large new fraction of land to be settled by the white man. In our 176 years of possession we have done a great deal to develop our resources. We have the finest wool in the world shorn from over 100 million sheep, a very large part of the world's total. Our beef, dairying and wheat industries all play a considerable part in supporting our national prosperity and every day efforts are being made to improve the quantity and quality of their products. We have made great strides in particular improvements in many areas, as you well know in Wannon the carrying capacity of our virgin land has been increased manyfold by the slowing down of improved grasses and by improved stock management. In the north of Wannon we have the Rocklands Scheme which takes water by irrigation channel to the dry areas of the Wimmera and the Mallee. Further to the north still, on the banks of the Murray our citizens have planned and developed an extensive irrigation scheme that supports a great fruit industry and prosperous Mildura. In the south the Portland Harbour Scheme is in progress which when completed should ease the transport problem in this southern part of Victoria.

In Warrnambool, Hamilton, Casterton and in other areas we are seeing the growth of our secondary industries, many of which supply the needs of our primary producers, and at the same time they form a large local market for our primary produce. The growth of butter factories over a large part of Wannon is a good example of this.

In every direction it is easy to see evidence of the fine job that our men and women have done in building a great country but at the same time we can see no end to the job ahead. Travelling around Wannon in the last few months I have been amazed at the large area of timbered and improved land in the midst of what is for Australia is a closely settled part of our country. North of Caverndish over by Koralla extending to the foot of the Grampians and up to the country of the Rocklands alone are thousands of acres of timber, between Chetwynd and Poolalgelo is another area with only a small settlement and moderately isolated properties in the midst, east of Casterton and along our southern belt towards Portland there are two more large areas of forest land. It is quite possible that some of this country cannot be easily improved but it is equally certain that there is much more of it that could well be turned into two sheep to the acre land. There are some local problems for the people of Wannon and their Government but in the wider sphere it is possible to envisage vast schemes that could well change the face of Australia. I was speaking with an English industrial expert some weeks ago, and he firmly believed that with atomic power, which we will have in the life time of most of us now living, that it will be possible to fill our inland water and irrigate large areas of Australia. In the Kimberleys there are two river valleys the Ord and the Fitzroy which now support a few large stations but if the water that now runs away to the sea as soon as it falls was harnessed to irrigation schemes water could be made available for thousands of Australians forever. The development of our country is going to take men who, as in the past are prepared to put up with a certain amount of present hardship for future reward. We cannot meet the numbers ourselves and so since the war the Government has instituted an immigration scheme. The quality of the migrants we get depends upon the future Australia holds for them. There is no doubt as we have seen in Wannon that in many things they have done a good job. If they are prepared to become 100% Australians and if we are ready and willing to accept them as Australians in every way then our new people will feel at home and will write back to the old world encouraging others to come here. And above all if Australians in the eyes of the world are as a nation determined to march ahead and develop her resources to the utmost that she may make more happy for free and prosperous men then people in other lands will be much more eager to come here.

If these things are done we cannot fail to keep this great and happy country but if we do not use the resources nature has given us in this land then other races will over-shadow us. This shall not happen.
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