Hello Ladies and Gentlemen,

The admission of Communist China as a full member of the United Nations last Wednesday, and the expulsion of Taiwan was an event of great historical significance, particularly for Australia.

Our delegation, led by Sir Laurence McIntyre, had tried strongly, together with the United States and a number of other countries, to prevent the expulsion of Taiwan.

That we failed is of course a matter of considerable disappointment to the Government. However we can take some comfort from the strenuous way in which we honored what we believe to be our obligation to Taiwan.

A message from the Ambassador of Nationalist China to Australia Dr Sampson Shen, showed that our efforts were appreciated. Dr. Shen said that for the good intentions of all Taiwan's friends he thanked them sincerely.

For a number of years Taiwan has been a constant and reliable trading partner with Australia. It has also been a constructive and active member of the United Nations.

This is not to say that we opposed in principal the admission of Communist China. I have stated on a number of occasions that the United Nations would be strengthened by recognizing the realities of the situation in regard to China. That mainland China with a population comprising one fifth of the world's total, should have a seat in the United Nations, and that the Government of Taiwan should also be represented.

However that this view was not shared by many other countries is now a matter of historical fact.
The expulsion of Taiwan does not mean that she ceases to be a trading partner with Australia. We believe this two way trade, in goods valued at nearly $100 million a year will continue.

It does mean that our government's efforts to normalise relations with mainland China will continue with renewed importance. Our trade with mainland China is already considerable. The importance for wheat sales is well known. Looking to the future it can be said that our awareness of the actions of this immense country must now take on an even greater significance.

On the subject of wheat sales it is pleasing indeed to note that the wheat growing areas of Western Victoria are experiencing one of their best seasons for many years. The rain over the wimmera in the past few days will give our crops a welcome boost. Our hope is that the present encouraging situation continues.

The wheat quota for Victoria this season is 57 million bushells, up five million bushells from last year. And the latest rough estimate by members of the Australian Wheat Board indicate that the total yield from the 2½ million acres sown to wheat in Victoria will be approximately 60 million bushells.

This is quite a jump from the total crop last year of 32 million bushells, but with the low carryover at the present time still puts the wheat industry in a very sound position. At a time when wool is causing such worry this is most reassuring situation.
The rural reconstruction scheme is now beginning to come into effect in Victoria, not as fast perhaps as had been anticipated by the Federal Government.

To get a clear picture of the present situation with regard to reconstruction I have been advised by the Minister for Primary Industry, my colleague Mr. Sinclair, that he has asked the Bureau of Agricultural Economics to collect current statistics from the States.

As you know the Commonwealth has made available a total of $144 million dollars among the States for providing debt reconstruction and farm build-up.

It is important to note that only 75 percent of this amount has to be repaid by the states, and that interest, at 6 percent per annum is only charged on this repayable 75 percent.

How each State appropriates the 25 percent grant is entirely up to the State governments.

The suggested interest rates chargeable to farmers in receipt of debt reconstruction funds is four percent per year, and for farm build-up, 6½ percent per year. It is our belief that these rates are necessary because the whole basis of reconstruction is to give assistance over a long term to those farms which are economically viable.

Finally I would like to say that I was with pleasure that I presented a petition signed by nearly 15-hundred residents of Western Victoria calling for increased aid to the Pakistani refugees in India.
This partition, drawn up by several public bodies in Warrnambool, was further evidence of the widespread concern in the community over the plight of the refugees.

The Government has now increased our aid contribution to the United Nations and Indian relief agencies by a further 2 and a half million dollars, bringing our total contribution so far to five-and-a-half million dollars.

We will continue to constantly review and assess the aid situation in collaboration with the authorities concerned.

I would like to add that the Government's record in the provision of aid has been very effective. We have sought to control supply of food and equipment in such a way that it has reached the areas promptly in a form which matched the immediate needs of the refugees.

Thank you and goodbye for now.
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