My portfolio of Education and Science gives me responsibility for The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, an area of Government-sponsored activity which never ceases to fascinate and inform me.

Its contribution to Australia's primary industries over the years through the results of its extensive and varied research have impressed me greatly as a farmer and a Minister and Member of Parliament.

Let me mention one of their recent activities and findings. C.S.I.R.O. plant industry specialists have conducted experiments and field trials which show that sheep do better when run with cattle than when they are run by themselves.

The experiments measured production obtained from running sheep and cattle separately and together on the same pasture. The results pointed to the conclusion that the two animals grazed together could be more productive than either on its own.

Both the liveweight gains of sheep and the weight of shorn-fleece proved greater. More ewes became pregnant and the average weight of lambs at weaning was higher.

While higher stocking rates reduced the performance of sheep grazed by themselves, it scarcely affected the performance of those running with cattle.
Some cattle at high stocking rates on improved pasture lost weight in winter, but made compensatory gains in Spring, increasing in weight faster than better fed cattle on lower stocking rates. It appears that the fact that sheep prefer short green feed and cattle longer grasses is the main reason why they can be complimentary feeders.

The C.S.I.R.O. experiment showed that sheep and cattle together made better use of the pasture than either of them separately. The experiment also illustrated that the productivity of sheep in mixed grazing was virtually the same at all stocking rates.

The results show that at optimum stocking rates, sheep and cattle together can be more profitable than either on their own when prices for wool and beef are not too disparate.

At a Canberra field experiment, the optimum stocking rate was about 50 steers or 450 ewes per 100 acres for cattle or sheep by themselves, or 30 steers plus 250 ewes for the mixed system.

Another important conclusion from the research is that profit from mixed grazing appeared to exceed the total profit from the same number of sheep and cattle run separately. However, work on the economics of mixed grazing is being continued.

These experiments are of particular interest and significance at the present time when there has been a great swing from sheep to cattle. How relevant they are to our own part of the world is something we would very often have to judge for ourselves.
I now turn to a matter which was aired last week in the Federal Parliament and which concerns me greatly as an Australian and as a Member of the Government. At the centre was Mr. Morrison, former Australian diplomat and now a potential foreign Minister if the A.L.P. became the Government. Mr. Morrison alleged that the Australian Government had "bugged" with a hidden microphone the Malaysian delegation's hotel rooms during a five-power defence conference in Canberra three years ago.

This claim from Mr. Morrison came only a few days after he had returned from a visit to South-East Asia during which he had told newsmen in Singapore that he did not believe Singapore or Malaysia would be very worried if Australia withdrew its troops from the five-power defence force in the territory. The A.L.P. is committed to withdrawing Australian forces from the five-power defence arrangement which involves Malaysia, Singapore, Britain, N.Z. and Australia.

The withdrawal policies of the A.L.P. are well known and widely rejected by both the Government and the community. Statements such as those of Mr. Morrison's in Singapore embarrass and concern our allies who regard Australia's firm commitment, backed by forces in the region, as the lynch pin of the region's defence arrangement.

But the bugging charge shows the complete irresponsibility of the opposition in the field of foreign relations and the disregard of Mr. Morrison for the effect of sensational, completely unfounded allegations on the friendship that has been carefully developed between Malaysia and Australia.
The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Bowen, who was Attorney-General three years ago, has denied that the bugging occurred. The Malaysian High Commissioner, Dato Stephens, has said he is satisfied there is nothing in it. And the counsellor at the High Commission, Mr. Walter Ayathury, has said the whole thing began with a joking remark at the time.

To seal the issue, the Malaysian High Commission issued an official statement denying categorically the bugging allegations. But, unbelievably, Mr. Morrison persisted with his charges based on two paragraphs in a book published two years ago dealing with an allegation that a Malaysian security man had found a listening device hidden in the air-conditioning equipment in one of the hotel rooms.

If one couples these outbursts with the low priority the A.L.P. gives to defence generally, then the international outlook for Australia under a Labor Government is indeed bleak.