

7th December, 1981

Mr. A. C. Byrne,
Secretariat to Policy Discussion Group,
Department of Primary Industry,
BARTON. A.C.T. 2600

Dear Sir,

Regarding the preparation of a Policy Discussion Paper on Agriculture - We of the Commercial Egg Producers' Association of Victoria, who are associated with the Commercial Egg Producers Co-op, a trading Co-op with over 600 farmer members (large and small) are concerned with the number of family units that have closed down over the last 10 years and we would like to give our submission on The Policy Discussion Paper in brief:-

(a) We think that the family farmer wants some protection from the Multi Nationals and large enterprises, who by continued expansion are able to avoid Income Tax.

In a lot of primary industries "Demand Supply Management" is one way of protecting family farms who can be indirectly responsible for another 3 or 4 jobs in the community. (Farming was the first decentralized industry in Australia.)

(b) Farm costs:- The fact that the farmer is in a situation where he is unable to pass on cost increases like, power, fuel, interest, wages and cartage costs, causes difficulties at times.

(c) Export:- This varies from one industry to another, but we do not recommend subsidised exports. The Egg Industry is an example where there is no payable export market anywhere in the World. It is far better not to produce surplus.

(d) Technical and economic efficiency:- This has increased dramatically over the last 10 years and will continue, whether we like it or not.

(e) Government measures affecting Agriculture:- Producers need long term legislation and planning for their respective industries. Financial assistance must be available to cover farmers through droughts, depressions and other disasters. More notice should be taken of Agricultural Statistics to try and avoid Boom and Bust situations.

(f) Marketing and Distribution:- This is the most important part of any industry. We support orderly marketing and Marketing Board, but think producers should have the right to elect some producer members to their Boards.

Essential foodstuffs like milk, eggs, fruit, vegetables, etc., should be declared free from strike action.

(g) Quarantine:- This is an area where we must exercise more care, especially at airports. The quarantine laws need to be changed so that in the case of an exotic disease outbreak farmers are not ruined.

Farmers should be paid replacement value for stock, building and equipment destroyed in cleanup and should be compensated for loss of income.

If you require any further information, we could send a deputation of 2 or 3 members to meet The Discussion Group when you meet in Melbourne.

Yours sincerely,

K. Fitzgibbon,
SECRETARY



DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRY

POLICY DISCUSSION PAPER ON AGRICULTURE

The Minister for Primary Industry, Mr Peter Nixon, recently announced the appointment of a Working Group to prepare a Policy Discussion Paper on Agriculture. The Group has been requested to report by September 1982 and is to be chaired by Mr J. S. Balderstone. Other members of the Group are Sir Donald Eckersley, Mr L. P. Duthie, Professor F.G. Jarrett and Mr J. C. McColl.

The Group has been asked to identify for the Government's consideration the major policy issues and options relating to the Australian agricultural sector, having in mind the changing economic environment of the 1980's. It has been specifically requested that its deliberations include:

- (a) *Implications for Australian agriculture of developments in the domestic economy, including resources development and the effects thereof on the competitiveness of the agricultural sector and on intersector relationships.*
- (b) *Any differential effect which factors, such as fuel and energy pricing, wages and assistance afforded other sectors of the economy may have on farm costs.*
- (c) *External influences, including developments in overseas countries which are either large markets for Australian rural produce or significant competitors in the world market, including barriers to agricultural trade and subsidised exports.*
- (d) *Technical and economic efficiency in resource use in agricultural sector, including:*
 - *past and desirable future changes in patterns of sector activities*
 - *effects on productivity of such factors as*
 - ... *substitution of capital for labour*
 - ... *size of farm unit*
 - *farmer education including extension*
 - *research*
- (e) *Government measures affecting agriculture including the form and extent of industry assistance and assistance to factors of production; income stabilisation; rural adjustment; research and extension activity; taxation issues and financial arrangements including rural credit.*
- (f) *Marketing and distribution arrangements for Australian primary produce.*
- (g) *Agricultural resource management issues including quarantine, conservation and animal husbandry measures.*

Interested persons and organisations are invited to make submissions to the Group.

Since the Group is working within a fixed timetable submissions should be forwarded as soon as possible and certainly no later than **Friday 11 December.**

Early notification of intention to make a submission and submissions and inquiries should be directed to:

Mr. A.C. Byrne,
Secretariat to Policy Discussion Group,
Department of Primary Industry,
BARTON A.C.T. 2600. Phone: (062) 72 5479.