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6th November, 1985.

The Hon. Evan Walker, M.L.C.,  
Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs,  
P.O. Box 500,  
EAST MELBOURNE. 3002

Dear Sir,

On the 26th June last I wrote to the Egg Farmers of Victoria on behalf of the Central Council of the Commercial Egg Producers' Association of Victoria. The substance of the letter detailed our opposition to a number of aspects of the Board's 5 year plan.

We would have hoped that this letter was treated as official and confidential correspondence. You might, therefore, understand the anger of our members upon learning that the substance of this letter was quoted, without our approval, by Mr. John O'Connor in his address to the Sixth Australasian Poultry and Stockfeed Convention. This misuse of correspondence is, in itself, bad enough. However, Mr. O'Connor then added salt to the wound by using the letter as the basis for a scathing attack upon the requests made by us in relation to the 5 year plan.

We are deliberately misrepresented as having a "backward attitude" and as having "rejected outright" the whole of the 5 year plan. This is, at best, as mistruth. We requested a status quo situation until such time as we could meet with the Board. Also, Mr. O'Connor's snide remarks regarding our opposition to the introduction of extra egg grades were not called for. They set out to portray our membership as fools who would seek to prevent hens from laying 70 gram eggs. This type of gratuitous humour speaks poorly for a person who is supposed to represent our interests.

In fact, the overall tenor of Mr. O'Connor's speech betrays his supposed concern for the small farmer. In his scenario of complete deregulation, increased efficiency and "whizz bang" productivity increases, the small farmer will find himself completely overrun by the industry giants.

In short, we find Mr. O'Connor to be the one who is out of touch with reality and not, as he supposes, the "1960 style farmers" who dare to question certain aspects of the 5 year plan.

We would hope that in his future comments and prognostications regarding the egg industry, Mr. O'Connor pays a little more attention to the facts and to the accepted ethics of confidentiality in dealing with correspondence.

Our Association is most dissatisfied with the attitude of Mr. J. O'Connor, we hope you will take notice of his actions as we believe him to be a most unworthy representative of our industry.

Yours sincerely,



K. Fitzgibbon,  
SECRETARY.