

DAIRYING INDUSTRY COMMITTEE.STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, RT. HON. R.G.MENZIES, C.H., Q.C., M.P.

In my last Policy Speech I foreshadowed the appointment of a strong committee to enquire into the various aspects of the Australian Dairying Industry. The reason for this announcement was that the Government felt and feels that the problems of the dairying industry need to be objectively examined with a view to evolving policies calculated to ensure efficiency and economic stability.

We have now appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Mr. M.E. McCarthy. Its terms of reference are very comprehensive. It has to consider the conditions, structure and problems of the industry against the background of the overall interests of the nation.

The committee will hold its first meeting in Melbourne tomorrow (Thursday).

I want to emphasise the extreme importance of this enquiry which will, I hope, lead to conclusions of a comprehensive kind. The committee will visit many dairying districts in order to collect information on the spot. It will have, I am assured, co-operative help from the various State Governments and departments. Its work, if it is to be successful, will require full and frank expressions of opinion and propositions of fact from a great variety of people. This means that information has to be obtained not only from those who speak for various branches of the industry but from other citizens who may have criticisms to offer or suggestions to make. The greater the public interest in this enquiry, the more likely is it that the committee will be able to hear and consider conflicting views, not only from producers and from consumers but also from anybody else who appreciates the importance to the nation of having the whole matter put upon a sound economic footing.

I express the hope, therefore, that there will be considerable public interest in the committee's proceedings and that anybody who feels that he or she has some useful suggestion or criticism to make should feel at liberty to present these to the committee.

Mr. McCarthy himself is a man of immense experience, having dealt with many great problems for the Commonwealth Government. He has an independent mind and he has with him a committee selected for its variety of experience and its capacity for study and judgment.