

EXPANSION OF BEEF PRODUCTION FOR EXPORT

Statement by the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. R.G. Menzies

The Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies, announced today that the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments have agreed that construction of a road from Julia Creek to Normanton should form part of a broad plan for development of roads to facilitate increased export of beef from the North. To facilitate early commencement of the work on the road the Commonwealth has offered to contribute up to £650,000 towards expenditure on this road to the end of the financial year 1961/62. The two Governments will consider the basis upon which the cost of a wider scheme of road development might be shared when the planning has further advanced.

The Prime Minister added that he had replied to a letter from Mr. Nicklin in which the request had been made that officers of the Commonwealth Government confer with officers of the Queensland Government with a view to exploring various aspects of the question of expanding beef production in Queensland. Mr. Menzies said he had told Mr. Nicklin the Commonwealth Government is very interested in expansion of beef production which could lead to increased export earnings, and has decided to appoint a committee of officers which could provide it with a more complete picture of the likely extent of the market for beef and possible means of securing an expansion of beef cattle production. These investigations will be part of the comprehensive examination being undertaken by the Government of avenues for increased export earnings.

Mr. Menzies said that arrangements would be made for this committee to confer with officers of the Queensland Government so that both Governments could study information provided from their talks together.

CANBERRA,
15th May, 1961