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IMPROVED HARBOUR AND COAL LOADING FACILITIES AT
GLADSTONE

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

Recently the Premier of Queensland (Mr. Nicklin) sought Commonwealth financial assistance towards the cost of improving the facilities at Gladstone Harbour for the export of coal to Japan. There is the prospect that at least one million tons of coal from the Lower Dawson Valley may be exported through the port of Gladstone during the next five years. The improvements it is proposed to carry out include the provision of new coal loading facilities and the deepening of the port to permit access by larger vessels. These improvements are estimated to cost £405,000.

The Commonwealth Government has been impressed by the prospect of substantial additional export earnings which improvement of these harbour and loading facilities would permit.

The Commonwealth has therefore offered Queensland financial assistance towards the cost of improving the facilities at Gladstone. The assistance is contingent upon a contract being obtained for the export of at least one million tons of coal from the Lower Dawson Valley within a five-year period. Subject to this, the Commonwealth will provide a total of £200,000 towards the project. Of this, £100,000 will be a grant, and the remaining £100,000 will be a repayable long-term loan. The Queensland Government has accepted this offer.

CANBERRA,

1st November, 1961.