

FOR PRESS

POLYVINYL CHLORIDE PRODUCTS

(Statement by the Acting Prime Minister,
and Minister for Trade and Industry, Mr. J. McEwen)

The Acting Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and Industry, Mr. J. McEwen, announced today that temporary duties would operate as from Monday morning on certain polyvinyl chloride products, viz:- sheet, film, textile coated or supported fabrics, curtains and tablecloths.

The temporary duties would be in addition to the normal duties, but would not apply to goods in direct transit to Australia on 2nd June, 1966 and entered for home consumption within twenty-one days after importation.

Mr. McEwen said that the temporary duties were as recommended by the Special Advisory Authority, Sir Frank Meere, C.B.E., who had been requested to conduct an inquiry into claims by the Australian industry that urgent action was necessary to protect the industry from import competition, in the main from Japan.

The Tariff Board has been asked to inquire and report on the protective needs of the industry, and the temporary protection now imposed is holding action pending the Government's decision on receipt of the Tariff Board report.

Mr. McEwen went on to say that, in his report, Sir Frank Meere had referred to the fact that a suggestion had been put forward on behalf of the Japan Vinyl Goods Manufacturers' Association for some restriction of exports

from Japan to Australia. However, this offer to control exports to Australia had been made at a late stage of the inquiry and there had not been sufficient time for Sir Frank Meere to obtain the views of other interested parties or to give it adequate consideration.

Since the report has been received there has been further representations about voluntary restraint of exports from Japan but so far there has not been a specific proposal put forward for the Government to consider, Mr. McEwen said.

The Government would, however, be prepared to give serious consideration to a proposal which would provide satisfactory holding action until the Government has made its decision following the Tariff Board report. Accordingly, provision is being made now which would allow the previous duties to operate without the additional temporary duties if such a proposal is accepted.

Copies of the Special Advisory Authority's report, which will be tabled in the Parliament, are available from the Department of Trade and Industry, Canberra and Collectors of Customs in all States.

CANBERRA A.C.T.

15th July, 1966.

50/66T