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SECOND SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND EMPLOYMENT

Corrigendum to Verbatim Report of Fortieth Meeting of Commission A (E/PC/T/A/PV/40(1))

The following text should be substituted for the remarks by the Delegate from Australia appearing on Page 4:

Mr. E. McCARTHY (Australia): It will be noticed that we have sent a circular proposing the deletion of the word "critical" in paragraph 2(a). We have done that on the instructions of our Government; and it has not been raised sooner because we were not members of the sub-committee, and this is the first opportunity we have had of raising this point since the original meeting of the Commission.

The reason why we suggest that this word be removed is that it is feared that export prohibitions on merino sheep which we impose might, because of the strict qualification of the word "shortages", have to be removed at a time when, in our view, they should be retained. We feel that whilst we have suffered very heavy shortages, it would be difficult with our sheep population to describe them as "critical". In the drought which occurred a little over a year ago we lost 20 million of sheep over a period of a few months. It caused something of a crisis at the time, but the effects of a drought do not wear off until very many years have passed, and measures may still be needed even when the really critical stages have passed. In other words, the critical element in the shortage might pass rather rapidly, but the effects remain for some years. It should be realised that, even with out large flocks, it takes time to get back to anything like a loss of 20 million sheep. I have therefore to ask the Commission that it agree to the word "critical" being removed and to explain that it is designed to meet our present position on the prohibition of merino sheep, a position which might be expected to recur periodically. We could contemplate removing this prohibition perhaps in a year or so, but our problem is that if we have another drought in perhaps 3, 4 5 or 6 years' time, we would not be able to reimpose this prohibition, or if we did reimpose it, we would only be able to keep it on during the very critical period of the result of the drought.