

"ALL BREEDS CATTLE DISPLAY"

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CANBERRA NATIONAL SHOW

February 24, 1978

I am very pleased to have been asked to open the 2nd All Breeds Cattle Display at the National Capital Agricultural Show.

Cattle breeding in both Australia and Canada has undergone tremendous changes in the past ten years as cattlemen have introduced the so-called exotic breeds. Most of these breeds have flourished for many years in their lands of origin. Some of the new breeds have yet to prove themselves under Canada's notoriously severe climate and some of these types may eventually be kept for show purposes only. In both Canada and Australia, of course, our respective cattle and dairy industries continue to rely upon the traditional breeds. Certainly Herefords for beef production and the Holstein Friesians for milk production remain the two most popular cattle breeds in Canada.

Nevertheless, breeders in both our countries have been fortunate to have been able to test the performance of new breeds under the very different and distinctive conditions in our two countries. While I cannot purport to speak for Australia, I can attest to the fact that Charolais, Simmenthal, Limousin and Maine-Anjou cattle now have an important place in commercial cattle operations in Canada. I understand also that your own distinctive breed, the Murray Grey is now well established in Canada. I cannot help but wonder whether they would miss the sun and warmth of their homeland especially during our long Canadian winters, but perhaps even Australian cattle partake of some of the resilience, toughness and hardiness for which Australians have always been renowned.

If I may be permitted to add a word on behalf of Canadian cattle breeders, I am pleased to see on this occasion that there is a salute to Canadian Galloways, a breed which originated in Scotland and which has been further developed in Canada since its introduction in 1853. This breed has proven to be particularly hardy under some of the most extreme Canadian conditions.

I am, of course, aware that both Australian and Canadian cattlemen have suffered from difficult market conditions in the last few years.

At the same time, Canada has been and continues to be a reliable and substantial market for Australian beef. Moreover, recent indications are that returns to producers in both our countries should improve as the year progresses.

With these thoughts in mind, it is with great pleasure that I officially declare open the 2nd All Breeds Cattle Display.