

ADDRESS ALL MAIL TO
P.O. BOX No. 13A,
SYDNEY, N.S.W.



PREMIER'S DEPARTMENT,

SYDNEY, 16 FEB 1942,

IN REPLY, PLEASE QUOTE NO.



Dear Mr. Dunn,

I have to thank you for your letter of the 2nd February enclosing a memorandum on "Total War - and Total Civil Collaboration" prepared by Mr. Swain, Forestry Commissioner.

I have read this with considerable interest and am of the opinion that many of the suggestions put forward by Mr. Swain are not only practicable, but desirable.

As you are aware, the Commonwealth Government has laid it down that, in the event of an enemy landing, all live-stock, industry, crops, foodstuffs, etc., should be ruthlessly destroyed. To organise to do this presents a problem of the first magnitude and, in view of Mr. Swain's interest in the matter, I propose, with your concurrence, to appoint a sub-committee of three, with himself as Chairman, to work out a scorched earth plan which will be dovetailed in with the plans for evacuation of livestock and industry which will be prepared by the Executive of the War Effort Co-ordination Committee in collaboration with the various authorities and organisations.

I understand that Mr. Swain has been approached, unofficially, by the Secretary of the War Effort Co-ordination Committee and has indicated that, if invited, he would be willing to serve in this capacity despite the fact that his duties are already very heavy.

I am convinced that Mr. Swain could render very worthy service to the State along the lines I have indicated, and I should be glad to hear from you as soon as possible that you have no objection to him doing so.

Yours faithfully,

John Keay
Premier.

The Hon. W.F. Dunn, M.L.A.,
Minister for Agriculture & Forests,
SYDNEY.

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SYDNEY, N.S.W.



PREMIER'S DEPARTMENT.

SYDNEY: 16 FEB 1942



Dear Mr. Swain,

The Secretary of the State War Effort Co-ordination Committee, Mr. W.S. Howard, informs me that he has spoken to you in regard to the matter of establishing a small sub-committee of three to undertake the formulation of plans for putting into effect a comprehensive scorched earth policy, should that ever become necessary, and that you have intimated to him that you would be willing to accept the chairmanship of such a sub-committee which, besides yourself, would consist of senior officers of the Military and Police Forces respectively.

In view of the importance of this task and of the urgent necessity for plans being evolved just as soon as they can be and submitted to me for approval, I am very glad indeed to know that you have found it possible to undertake this duty in addition to the very heavy responsibilities which at present rest upon you as Forestry Commissioner.

I understand from Mr. Howard that the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Mackay, has undertaken to make available as from Monday next, the 16th February, to serve on your sub-committee, Inspector Standen who, in addition to other qualities, has a very wide country experience. Mr. Howard also reports that arrangements have been made with the Army authorities to furnish a suitable Staff Officer.

In referring to the body of three which will handle this job as a sub-committee, I do so only because it will be necessary for you and your colleagues to work very closely with the Executive of the War Effort Co-ordination Committee which is handling the evacuation of industry and livestock. I am informed that your opinion is that everything possible should be saved rather than destroyed, and this is a point of view with which I am thoroughly in accord. But, in order to ensure that this may be made possible and also that we should be thoroughly prepared ruthlessly to destroy anything which may be impossible to evacuate, it is vitally necessary that the closest co-operation should exist between your sub-committee and the Executive of the State War Effort Co-ordination Committee.

The task you are faced with is a vast one and, in consequence, I should like to feel that it is being proceeded with with the utmost possible expedition. I should be glad, therefore, if you could find it possible to arrange for the first meeting of your sub-committee just as soon as you can do so. To this end I have instructed the Secretary of the War Effort Co-ordination Committee to inform both the Commissioner of Police and the Military authorities that the men they have appointed to act with you should be ready to meet with you at any time from Monday morning next onwards.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. Forster
Premier.

E.H.F. Swain, Esq.,
Forestry Commissioner,
The Forestry Commission of N.S.W.
44 Margaret Street,
SYDNEY.

540.



16th February, 1942.

The Hon. W. J. McKell, M.L.A.,
Premier of N.S.W.,
SYDNEY.

Dear Mr. McKell,

I acknowledge your letter of 16th February, 1942.

I accept the responsibility you have placed upon me.

The first meeting of the Sub-Committee took place this morning at 9 a.m. I attach a copy of the unconfirmed minutes of that meeting. The second meeting will take place tomorrow, the 17th, at 9 a.m.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) E. H. F. SWAIN

Commissioner.

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PREMIER'S DEPARTMENT.

SYDNEY, 6-3-'42.

IN REPLY, PLEASE QUOTE No.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

Mr. E. H. F. Swain, who holds this authority, is the Chairman of the special Sub-Committee which has been appointed by the Government to plan a "scorched-earth" policy to be adopted in the event of threatened invasion.

The Sub-Committee consists of

E. H. F. Swain, Esq., Commissioner for Forests - Chairman.


Col. J. J. L. McColl, Victoria Barracks.

Inspector A. F. Standen, Regent Street Police Station.

It is essential that every assistance and the fullest co-operation should be afforded to the Sub-Committee and each individual member of the Committee.

I desire that all Government Departments and Bodies and their officers as well as every member of the public of whom Mr. Swain requires information or assistance will furnish that information or assistance without hesitation or question and regard all matters on which Mr. Swain or other members of the Committee are engaged as of vital urgency and requiring immediate attention.

I feel that this request will be sufficient to obtain the maximum of co-operation from anyone whom Mr. Swain or his colleagues may approach.


Premier.