

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

THIRD SESSION OF THE THIRTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT (1957)

Parliament, which adjourned on April 24, 1957, was prorogued by proclamation dated May 9. By proclamation dated May 23 it was summoned to meet on Tuesday, June 25, and the Third Session began on that date.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, June 25, 1957.

The **PRESIDENT** (Hon. Sir Walter Duncan) took the Chair at noon.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Clerk read the proclamation by His Excellency the Governor (Air Vice-Marshal Sir Robert George) summoning Parliament.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

His Excellency the Governor, having been announced by Black Rod, was received by the President at the bar of the Council Chamber and conducted by him to the Chair. Members of the House of Assembly, having entered the Chamber in obedience to his summons, His Excellency read his opening Speech as follows:—

Honourable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly.

1. I have called you together for the dispatch of business.

2. I have to inform honourable members that Her Majesty the Queen has been pleased to extend the term of my office as Her Majesty's representative for a further two years. It will be my earnest endeavour to continue to perform my duty as Governor of this State to the best of my ability.

3. My advisers are gratified to observe a continuance of the prosperity which South Australia has enjoyed in recent years. The rapid growth of our population is being matched by

the development of natural resources, progress in Government undertakings and housing, and increases in production and commerce.

During the last five years, while the natural increase in the population of this State has been a little above the Australian average, the rate of increase from migration has been almost twice the Australian figure. The strong attraction of South Australia for migrants is a reflection of our favourable living conditions and sound economic position.

4. The recent restrictions of credit did not halt the upward trend, though the rate of expansion in secondary industries slowed down a little. The basic wage in South Australia in terms of real purchasing power is still the greatest in Australia, while the "C" series index reveals that since June, 1953, price rises in this State have been the lowest. The standard of living is higher than ever, and our citizens are animated by a lively spirit of enterprise and optimism. Sufficient loan money has been obtained to enable the Government to carry on a controlled programme of public works throughout the year without serious disruption.

5. The Government continues to make its contribution to the progress of the State by attention to power, water, housing, transport and other basic services, and by promoting conditions favourable for development. My Ministers may, however, be compelled to reconsider the charges for some services. Since the present rates were fixed there have been two substantial increases in the basic wage, which have added £2,000,000 to the annual wages

bill. Every effort is being made to absorb the consequential increases in costs to the greatest possible extent.

6. In primary production the season of 1956-1957 was notable for a number of remarkable records, some of which are these:—A record harvest of grain (73,000,000 bushels); a record sheep population (15,000,000); a record number of beef cattle (365,000); a record total of dairy and beef cattle (630,000); the highest wool production in our history (187,000,000 lb.); and the highest number of lambs marked (4,930,000). These results are attributable not only to good seasonal conditions but to the application of science and improved methods to primary production.

7. The Government is repairing the serious damage caused by the Murray floods to embankments, roads, bridges, pumping plant and other public works, and temporary levees erected during the floods are being re-sited. Financial and technical assistance is also being given to local authorities to enable them to make good the damage to works under their control. As a result of the floods, State revenue will be reduced, while additional expenditure amounting in all to £1,775,000 is being incurred. The Commonwealth has agreed to assist the State by a pound for pound subsidy on expenditure for flood protection works, reinstatement of roads and banks and re-siting levees. For the relief of private losses £450,000 is available. This consists of £350,000, generously subscribed by the public to the Lord Mayor's Relief Fund, and £100,000, contributed by the State and the Commonwealth. An assessment of the claims for relief is being made by a committee under Sir Kingsley Raine. Financial assistance has already been given to claimants in urgent cases.

8. Particular attention has been given by my Ministers to the improvement of water supplies, and the State is now deriving the benefit of the special efforts made by the Government in this sphere. The Mannum-Adelaide pipeline, which will shortly be completed, has again proved its value. During the recent long dry period it enabled the vast demands for water in the metropolitan area to be met without restrictions, at a time when our reservoirs would otherwise have been empty. In the opinion of my Ministers, this work has already amply justified its construction. The embankment of the South Para Reservoir has been completed, and the construction of the spillway is proceeding.

If the rainfall is sufficient, the reservoir will impound water during the coming winter. Preliminary work for the proposed Myponga Reservoir is completed and tenders will shortly be called for the construction of the dam. This project will provide water for towns and rural areas as far south as Yankalilla, and will augment the metropolitan supply. The works for providing a permanent water supply throughout the length of Yorke Peninsula have advanced in a satisfactory manner. The trunk main has reached Maitland and during the coming year will be extended to Minlaton. Reticulation mains and service reservoirs are being built concurrently with the trunk main. On Eyre Peninsula the Uley-Wanilla scheme and the storages in the Kimba district have been completed.

Numerous other waterworks are in preparation, including the scheme for supplying towns and rural areas in and near the Onkaparinga Valley, improvements in the Warren district, the Loxton domestic water supply, and water supplies for Coonaplyn, hundred of Finniss, Pajamanna, and St. Kilda. The Government also expects during the coming year to begin work for the betterment of the supplies in the Encounter Bay district and the Blackwood areas, and to make further progress in the operations for supplying River Murray water to Peterborough. Other proposals under investigation include new storage reservoirs at Clarendon, Kangaroo Creek, and Smith's Creek on Kangaroo Island.

9. The accounts of the railways during the first three quarters of this year reveal a decided improvement in the financial results. The use of diesel power has effected substantial economies in working costs, and the attractive new passenger coaches are securing increased business. The broadening of the Naracoorte to Kingston line is proceeding satisfactorily, and much work has been done for the re-conditioning and relaying of permanent way. Although the use of road transport continues to grow, the railways are still a vitally important part of our land transport system. My Government will give constant attention to the maintenance, efficiency, and economical working of this undertaking.

10. The policy of improving harbours has been continued throughout the year, and sound progress has been made. Special attention has been given to the work at Port Lincoln and Wallaroo in connection with the bulk handling of grain. At Port Lincoln a

new pier for bulk loading is being built, together with a new wharf and facilities for intra-state ships, and general improvements of the harbour. Tenders have been received for the supply and erection of a bulk loading installation at Wallaroo. The rehabilitation of the Port Adelaide wharves has continued. The new berths at No. 2 Dock are almost completed, and a contract has been let for the provision of four heavy duty wharf cranes. Substantial repairs to the jetties at Largs Bay and Wallaroo are in progress, and the restoration of the Victor Harbour causeway is now complete. Future works in various stages of planning and preparation by the Harbors Board include improvements to Port Pirie harbour, better arrangements for loading gypsum and grain at Thevenard and the rehabilitation of additional wharves at Port Adelaide.

11. The Government is conducting negotiations relating to the establishment at Port Adelaide of ship-building yards for tugs and other small ships. A company representing South Australian and English interests is showing keen interest in this project, and the Government anticipates that a satisfactory arrangement will shortly be concluded.

12. Road authorities have again had to cope with the growing volume of traffic and the excessive weight of loads. To meet these difficulties the Highways Department has this year done more work than ever before. The expenditure amounted to £6,750,000—an increase of over £750,000. As a result of Government action the councils are now better equipped with modern road-making equipment and during the present year have carried out work valued at £2,340,000 on roads maintained from funds provided by the Government. It is the policy of my Ministers to continue the extension of bituminous roads throughout the State and to provide assistance for developmental roads.

13. The Electricity Trust has had another satisfactory year. Sales of electricity are now at the record annual rate of 1,000,000,000 units, producing an income of over £10,000,000. Consumers have increased by 11,000, making a total of 226,000. To meet the great growth in demand additional plant is being brought into service. Within the next few months both the Osborne B and Port Augusta A stations will be completed to their designed capacities of 180,000 and 90,000 kilowatts. The Trust is also proceeding rapidly with the construction of the Port Augusta B station which will be in operation by 1960. The station to follow

Port Augusta B will be one using conventional fuel, and will have a capacity at least twice that of Osborne B. The preparation of a site for this station on the Port River may commence within the next 12 months. During this year the regional power stations at Mount Gambier and Port Lincoln came into operation, both of them providing substantial increases in the current available in their districts. There has been a great growth in the Trust's business outside the metropolitan area. For the second year in succession there were more than 4,000 new consumers in the country and, in addition, 10,000 persons are now supplied by local governing bodies which buy current in bulk from the Trust. During the River Murray floods the Trust maintained a high degree of continuity in the supply of electricity, which was most helpful in preventing and repairing damage.

14. The Leigh Creek coalfield is also continuing its successful operations. The output of coal for this year will reach a record of 500,000 tons, and the efficiency of the plant on the field is being constantly improved. Leigh Creek is a sound enterprise making a financial surplus each year and providing the cheapest source of electrical power in the State. Production of coal will greatly increase when the Port Augusta B station is complete, and the annual output will then reach 1,500,000 tons.

15. My Ministers have continued the policy of land development and closer settlement. Preparation of land for allotment to ex-service-men under the War Service Land Settlement scheme has progressed in a satisfactory manner. The scheme has provided holdings for 920 settlers, and 1,200 other settlers have been assisted by loans. In addition, 6,000 acres east of Meningie has been prepared and subdivided for settlement under the Crown Lands Development Act, and applications for blocks are being considered.

16. Further progress has been made in the drainage of 260,000 acres in the southern part of the Western Division of the South-East. The new drain is proving most effective and has already increased production on a large area. The works now in hand will be continued during the coming financial year. The South-Eastern Drainage Board has prepared proposals for the drainage of another area consisting of 140,000 acres in the northern part of the Western Division. This project has been recommended by the Land Settlement Committee, whose report is being considered by the Government. The Board has been instructed to investigate the possibility of

draining a large tract of land in the Eastern Division of the South-East, comprising 700,000 acres, and extending from near Kalangadoo to about 20 miles north of Naracoorte. There is reason to believe that with proper drainage a large increase in the income from this land could be achieved.

17. The Government forests have had another profitable year, despite the dry summer and some loss through fire. Since June, 1956, 2,900 acres have been planted with forest trees and arrangements are in hand to plant about 5,000 acres during the forthcoming year. Production of timber has been well maintained and during the past three years the forests have contributed £440,000 to the general revenue of the State. It is expected that a further surplus of £240,000 will be realized during the coming year. The construction of the Mount Gambier sawmill and the installation of additional plant at Mount Burr are nearing completion. These new facilities will approximately double the output of the departmental mills.

18. The current year has witnessed great activity in exploring and developing the mineral resources of the State. The search for high grade iron ore outside the Broken Hill Company's leases has already revealed the existence of 20,000,000 tons in an area adjacent to Iron Knob, and the prospect of other valuable deposits in the Middleback Ranges. The search is being extended into the Tarcoola-Wynbring area. At Crocker Well, further exploration is being undertaken, and investigations are being made into the possible recovery of other minerals besides uranium. Active mining operations are now being considered by overseas authorities. Oil exploration is being carried out vigorously both by private companies and the Government. For the exploration of Yorke Peninsula, the Government has authorized the purchase of a large diamond drill capable of boring to much greater depths than the plant formerly used. Next year a thorough investigation of South Australian beach sands will be commenced to assess their thorium content, and to determine whether they contain other minerals of commercial value, particularly rutile and zircon. The output of gypsum will be expanded as a result of increased production from Lake Fowler on Yorke Peninsula and from the high-grade deposit near Kingscote. When the new loading facilities are completed at Thevenard, the gypsum deposit at Lake MacDonnell, which ranks among the best in the world, will also be exploited in an adequate manner. Numerous other activities in connection with South Aus-

tralian minerals have been carried on with success during the past year, and the total value of the production exceeded £24,000,000.

19. Enrolments in the Government schools continue to increase, and the total number of pupils is now double that of ten years ago. In the last five years the net increase has been about 8,800 a year. A growing proportion of the increase is in the secondary schools. This is due both to the greater number of enrolments and to the fact that secondary pupils are remaining longer at school. Vigorous steps have been taken to provide additional accommodation. Last year, five large schools were opened, in addition to the 23 schools opened during the previous three years. Since 1954, over 1,000 portable class rooms of modern design have also been added to existing schools. New and improved methods of construction adopted by the Architect-in-Chief are enabling him to build much more quickly than before. The Government has a large programme of school-building for the coming year, estimated to cost £2,500,000, which represents an increase of nearly £1,000,000 in the annual expenditure. The programme includes the continuance of work on nine secondary schools and 18 primary schools, and extensive additions to many others. Work will also begin on 12 secondary schools and 18 primary schools.

A pleasing measure of success has been achieved in securing teachers. The total number of students in training has increased from 435 in 1953, to approximately 900 at the present time. At the beginning of this year 250 students, who had completed their courses at the Training College, were appointed as teachers. This is the highest number ever appointed from the College in a year. There was a surprisingly large response to the call for trained teachers from England and Scotland, and 60 teachers will be brought to Australia during the current year. In recent months a new Teachers College has been established at Wattle Park, having its own staff and operating independently of the Adelaide Teachers College. Over 350 student teachers are already enrolled. At the same time, plans are being prepared for extensive additions to the Teachers College in Kintore Avenue. Attention has been given to the educational requirements of Elizabeth. A big primary school is already in use, another is nearing completion, and the building of two more primary schools and one secondary school will be commenced in the near future. The Government's plans for this town include eight

primary schools, three secondary schools, and an apprentice trade school. In order to give the people of South Australia an understanding of the problems and aims of education, the Government has decided to conduct an Education Week in August of this year.

20. Although an improvement in the housing position is now evident, the unsatisfied demand for houses is still strong, and is likely to remain so for some time. The Government therefore proposes to continue a vigorous policy of using all available agencies to assist home seekers. The Housing Trust will complete about 3,100 houses during the current year and will continue to build at the same rate next year. The Trust's operations extend throughout the State. It has built houses in approximately 140 towns, and more than 1,000 houses have been built on farms, as well as numerous houses for specific industrial undertakings. Ever-increasing numbers of people are taking advantage of the offer of the Trust to erect houses on privately-owned land and over 100 houses have been completed or are in course of construction under this scheme. The town of Elizabeth is making rapid progress. Its population is now 5,300 persons, occupying 1,365 houses. One thousand one hundred houses are under construction and rapid increases in the population are to be expected. Arrangements are well advanced for the building of a modern community hospital and a town centre with public buildings and shops. Money provided by the Government has enabled the State Bank also to play a notable part in assisting home seekers. In all, about 1,100 persons have been helped this year to build or acquire houses by loans under the Advances for Homes Act and the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. Government guarantees under the Homes Act are still being given in considerable numbers, and so far 8,000 people have been assisted under this beneficial legislation.

21. The public health services are being maintained at a high standard and extensions made to deal with the new problems which constantly arise. There has been a steady decrease in infectious diseases, infantile mortality and tuberculosis, a result which may fairly be attributed to measures taken by public health authorities. During the coming year special attention will be given to the campaigns against poliomyelitis and tuberculosis.

22. The comprehensive programme of building, extending and equipping hospitals, which

is rendered necessary by the increase of population and the development of medical science, is being carried on with success. The major works of building the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the general hospital at Mount Gambier are making good progress. The maternity block at Queen Elizabeth Hospital has been completed and was recently occupied and the nurses' block, which had been used as a maternity hospital, is available for nurses. At other Government hospitals the installation of modern equipment and the erection of new wards and ancillary hospital buildings has rapidly advanced. In addition to the work at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Mount Gambier, extended accommodation for patients is being provided at Parkside and Northfield Mental Hospitals, and at Port Pirie Hospital. The Government has continued to assist subsidized hospitals in maintenance and building, and the subsidies for this year show an appreciable increase. The grants to community and non-profit hospitals were also continued and it is expected that the full sum of £961,000 provided in the Estimates will be used in this way.

23. With the encouragement and help of the Government the fishing industry is making considerable progress. Tuna fishing was carried on successfully this year, while fishermen in both gulfs had good catches. The crayfish catch was again profitable and new crayfish grounds were fished in the Streaky Bay area. The Government is preparing to build further jetties and slipways for fishing boats and is continuing investigational work of value to the fishing industry generally.

24. My Ministers expect that expenditure from revenue during the current financial year will approximate closely to the Budget estimate of £65,682,000. On the other hand revenue is expected to exceed the estimate, partly as the result of the decision of the Commonwealth to subsidize the cost of the work rendered necessary by the flooding of the River Murray. The deficit for 1956-57 is accordingly expected to be a small one. The gross loan expenditure for the year will be of the order of £26,500,000. Credits of approximately £2,500,000 will bring the net loan expenditure to £24,000,000.

Gentlemen of the House of Assembly:

25. Supplementary Estimates providing for unforeseen additional expenditure of £436,000 incurred during the current financial year will be laid before you.

Honourable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly:

26. You will be asked to pass a Supply Bill providing £7,000,000 towards next year's expenditure.

27. A measure for granting long service leave to employees has been prepared and may be submitted for your consideration.

28. Your sanction will be asked to legislation authorizing the Government to subscribe for additional ordinary shares in Cellulose Australia Limited.

29. Bills for extending the operation of the legislation relating to the control of prices and rents for a further year will be introduced.

30. The Government has conducted investigations into the problem of preventing pollution of underground waters and is preparing a Bill on this subject for submission to you.

31. My Ministers are considering numerous other proposals for legislation and are preparing measures to be laid before you. Among the topics under consideration are audit, mines, scaffolding, amusements duty, marketing of eggs, Renmark Irrigation Trust, limitation of actions, South-Eastern drainage, brands, hide skin and wool dealers, elections, licensing, road traffic, local government building, Statute law revision and other matters.

32. I now declare this session open and trust that your deliberations may be guided by Divine Providence to the advancement of the welfare of this State.

The Governor retired from the Chamber and the Speaker and the members of the House of Assembly withdrew.

The PRESIDENT again took the Chair and read prayers.

[*Sitting suspended from 12.45 to 2.15 p.m.*]

QUESTIONS.

PROPOSED SHIPBUILDING YARDS.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Can the Attorney-General indicate what progress has been made in respect of the proposed establishment of ship-building yards at Port Adelaide?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—The overseas company that was interested in the establishment of ship building yards at Port Adelaide eventually decided not to continue negotiations in

South Australia or, indeed, anywhere in Australia. At that stage negotiations were opened with the Broken Hill Proprietary Company with the suggestion that it should extend its ship-building activities at Whyalla to enable the construction of large tankers to be undertaken there. Those negotiations have been carried on very satisfactorily: the company has submitted prices to the Australian Shipping Board and those prices are now being referred to proposed purchasers. If they are satisfactory, and negotiations go on, the Government has promised, through the agency of the Housing Trust, to provide over 400 rental houses at Whyalla for the accommodation of employees. The question of the construction of tugs at Port Adelaide was covered, I think, by paragraph 11 of His Excellency's Speech, namely, that the Government is conducting negotiations with South Australian and English interests. These are proceeding satisfactorily and it is felt that a successful conclusion will be reached in due course.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON CONSOLIDATION BILLS.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—During last session I asked the Attorney-General whether the Government proposed to call together the Joint Committee on Consolidation Bills at an early date, and he intimated that the matter was under consideration. Has any further action been taken?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—The matter is still under consideration. The honourable member will realize that the present policy is that when Acts become too much amended consolidated Acts are reprinted from time to time at the end of the annual volume of statutes. I do not know whether the honourable member was referring to a complete reprint of Acts, which was last done in 1936. It involves a tremendous amount of work and could not be undertaken until sufficient legal assistance is available to do it.

REPORTS OF PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE.

The PRESIDENT laid on the table reports by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works on the Wandilo to Glencoe railway and the Port Augusta and Port Lincoln sewerage systems, together with minutes of evidence.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

The President, having laid on the table a report of the Governor's Speech, the Hon. C. D. Rowe (Attorney General) moved—

That a committee consisting of the Hons. C. R. Cudmore, F. J. Condon, J. Cowan, R. R. Wilson and the Attorney General be appointed to prepare a draft Address in Reply to the Speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor and to report on June 26.

Motion carried.

SESSIONAL COMMITTEES.

The following sessional committees were appointed on the motion of the Hon. C. D.

Rowe:—

Standing Orders.—The Hons. Sir Walter Duncan, Sir Lyell McEwin, F. J. Condon, C. R. Cudmore and A. J. Melrose.

Library.—The Hons. Sir Walter Duncan, K. E. J. Bardolph, J. L. S. Bice and Sir Arthur Rymill.

Printing.—The Hons. S. O. Bevan, J. Cowan, A. J. Shard, C. R. Story and R. R. Wilson.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 2.30 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, June 26, at 2.15 p.m.