

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, August 2, 1961.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir Walter Duncan) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTION.**ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY.**

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH: Has the Chief Secretary a reply to the question I asked on July 27 about under-staffing at the Adelaide University?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: I told the honourable member that I would refer the matter to the Minister concerned, and so far I have not received a reply.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption, which the Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph had moved to amend.

(For wording of amendment see page 121.)

(Continued from August 1. Page 171.)

The Hon. A. C. HOOKINGS (Southern): Although some excellent speeches have been made in this debate I feel that it is still necessary for me to endorse some of the sentiments expressed about the arrival in South Australia of His Excellency the Governor (Sir Edric Bastyan) and Lady Bastyan. I commend Sir Edric for the excellent way in which he presented his Speech at the opening of Parliament. I join, too, with other speakers in expressing deepest regret at the passing of Lord Dunrossil, who unfortunately was not with us in Australia very long after taking office in Canberra. We had the privilege of meeting him in Adelaide and his memory will remain with us for a long time. I also want to mention the passing of Mr. M. R. O'Halloran and the Hon. Frank Condon, two men whom I regarded it as a privilege to know. His kindness and the welcome that Mr. Condon gave to a new member, irrespective of his political beliefs, was appreciated very much by me, and I would like my sentiments to be passed on to his widow and family so that they will know how we feel. Both men served the State with great distinction, and their leadership and ability will be long remembered. The late Sir Malcolm McIntosh was not so well known personally by me, but his work will long be remembered throughout the State. Other speakers have referred to his excellent qualifications and the service he rendered. I congratulate Mr. Shannon, M.P.,

on being honoured by Her Majesty the Queen in the Birthday Honours earlier this year for the excellent work he has done for the people of South Australia. Congratulations are extended to Mr. Ivor Ball, Clerk of the Council, on being selected to accompany Commonwealth Parliamentary Association representatives to London. I wish him a fruitful trip and a safe return.

I listened with great interest to the speeches made by the mover and seconder of the motion, and I commend them for their efforts. I regret that a man like the Hon. Mr. Edmonds will be leaving the Council at the end of this session. I am also sorry that you, Mr. President, will be leaving us. I appreciate very much the way in which you have helped me in the short time I have been here. May your retirement be full of the rest and enjoyment that you so richly deserve.

The Governor's Speech contains references to many matters and it is impossible for members to speak on all the subjects that are of interest to them. I want to deal first with the proposed expansion of the pine milling industry in the South-East. It is said that the annual planting of pine trees will be increased from 4,000 to 6,000 acres a year. No doubt this is due to the imminent establishment of a new paper pulp mill at Mount Gambier. It will be of great benefit not only in creating employment in the district but to South Australia generally. We look forward with interest to the first signs of the establishment of the mill, which I understand will cost about £14,000,000. The good work of the pine milling industry can be seen when visiting the South-East. Members of Parliament visited that part of the State a few weeks ago and saw how waste timber is used in the production of electric power at the new Nangwarry power station.

Earlier this year a new land tax assessment was issued in South Australia and many property owners were concerned about the increases. Meetings of protest were held and it was pleasing to hear the Premier say that the Government intended to amend the legislation passed in 1939 and last amended in 1952. In the last decade land values have increased steeply. Land tax assessments are not made annually. I understand that it takes a number of men two years or longer to make a new assessment for land tax purposes. The last assessment was commenced probably in 1958 for taxing purposes in 1960. In 1958 the man on the land in particular was more on top of the wave than he is today.

In other words, the prices for his products have fallen since 1958. The amendments proposed will be of much interest and probably some members will have more to say about them when they are laid before the House. I am sure, from my information, that these amendments will help people whose land tax bills may be beyond their capacity to pay.

The Electricity Trust has done and is doing a wonderful job in South Australia and the expansion of its work is well-known to all. The first of the single-wire earth return systems is about to be commenced in the lower South-East and His Excellency's Speech referred to the grant of £1,000,000 to link up the grid with the already established Mount Gambier system. When the Hon. Mr. Bevan yesterday referred to electricity he rather implied that the £1,000,000 grant for the establishment of the 132,000 volt line was being provided for the people of Mount Gambier, but the facts are that that high voltage line is being connected to the South-East to help attract and establish the new paper pulp industry, besides extending power to rural areas.

Electricity tariffs and charges have been mentioned in this Chamber and in another place. In some areas away from Adelaide people think that tariffs are higher than they should be. For instance, Mount Gambier people pay more for electricity than do the people in Adelaide. I hope the Government can in the near future, and probably as a result of the establishment of the new high voltage line to the South-East, make it possible to review electricity charges.

South Australians are proud of their Government departments and the excellent job done by their officers. The public, and we as members of Parliament, receive courtesy and assistance from our public servants. One department that I have come to know well for two reasons in the last decade is the Agriculture Department. The first reason is that since about 1950 experiments have been conducted on my property in conjunction with the South Australian Department of Agriculture and the Australian Meat Board to study the growth rate of cattle of various ages and sexes. It was a privilege to be a member of the Advisory Board of Agriculture in this State for some years but I retired from that board on entering this Chamber.

In recent years the Agriculture Department lost several men who, in the eyes of many farmers, rendered excellent service. They possessed a wonderful practical knowledge of

livestock and animal husbandry, but they did not hold university degrees, though some of them had diplomas, perhaps from the Roseworthy Agricultural College. Some of them, after leaving the department, went to other States, but others are still working in South Australia. One man, with whom I had much to do recently, retired as an animal husbandry adviser but he is now working for the Department of Lands. He was not only most capable in his work, but he was admired and sought after by men requiring assistance in cattle husbandry. He retired from the Agriculture Department to join another Government department.

Many South Australian farmers have spoken to me and to others expressing concern at the loss of men of this calibre. The reasons given in some instances are that there is no scope for promotion and no scope for getting more money or for progressing to higher office in the department because they lack academic qualifications. One officer who left the department three or four years ago is now holding down a high post in London and he has a tremendous amount of ability. I have nothing but respect and admiration for high academic qualifications, but surely it should be possible for those who were not fortunate enough to attain high academic qualifications to gain rewards in the department in the form of advancement and higher wages after many years of loyal service. It is not always possible for every family to give its children the education it would like to give them. One man of whom I have spoken was the son of a widow and he went out into the world to work in the depression days in the early 1930's. It was not possible for his mother to send him to a university. Surely there are men with qualifications other than university degrees who can be of great service to the department.

These resignations from the Agriculture Department have not only been discussed in South Australia, but some of the officers were known in the eastern States and on visits to Melbourne and Sydney in connection with agricultural affairs I have been somewhat disturbed because people have asked me why such and such a person is no longer with the department. I do not know the departmental reasons, but it appears that some review is necessary if we want the best of the young people of this State to be of assistance to farmers by remaining with the Agriculture Department of which we are so proud. If we look at the post-war position we find that

approximately 12 scholarships are annually offered to young South Australian's who wish to take agricultural science degree courses. On completion of that course they are then employed by the department and the young teenagers who happen to have been born at the right time and are in this category are much more fortunate than those who went to work in the difficult years of the 1930's. The scheme to assist people to take agricultural science degree courses is excellent and should be expanded rather than restricted, but surely academic knowledge should be tempered by practical knowledge particularly in relation to matters affecting the man on the land.

There is no need for me to stress the importance of agriculture to South Australia. The role of the animal husbandry officer is to impart new knowledge in that field to the farmers throughout the State, and past experience has proved the sound worth of the practical man. I see no reason to deny such men opportunities for advancement.

In the field of education the policy of the South Australian Government is one of which we are all proud. Other honourable members have spoken at great length on the subject, but I wish to mention one aspect that is evident in the South-East. Year by year in this State we establish area schools that are regarded by the community in which they are established with much pride. These schools render a great community service in the education field and recently in the lower South-East a site was prepared for the establishment of another area school. In the last month a contractor was engaged clearing 18 acres of land on an historic site on the Robe-Penola Road. I am concerned that, when the contractor went on to the 18 acres with his bulldozer, he razed every tree to the ground. This area is in a patch of scrub and it is a great pity that some of the gums and other smaller trees could not have been left on some portion of the land where buildings will not be erected. Eighteen acres is a sizeable area and a desirable one for the establishment of any school because it gives plenty of room for sports fields and so on. I hope the Education Department will not allow this example to go unnoticed and that in future some trees will be left for shade and beautification purposes until such time as newly planted trees can grow. Those of us who have had experience know that trees take a long time to grow before they become the ornament of which we are all proud. The National Trust of South Australia was mentioned by the Hon.

Sir Arthur Rymill and this is one sphere in which it could take some interest. I admire the work of the National Trust and I am fond of the beauty and interested in the history of our country areas. I hope that in future all trees will not be removed from every square yard of any area being cleared for the establishment of South Australian schools.

In the last 10 years many local government meetings and conferences have been held in the South-East at which reference has been made to empty beer bottles on roads. This matter has been mentioned in this Chamber and also in another place over a long period and it is a problem in areas some distance from the city. To my knowledge at nearly every council conference, stockowners' meeting, and political meeting in South Australia, the matter of beer bottles on roads has been discussed. The problem is mainly in areas which are outside a radius of 100 miles from Adelaide, and the freight cost is an important factor. It is virtually impossible for bottle collectors in the lower South-East to get much money for the bottles once they have been collected. It was announced two days ago that an extra penny deposit would be charged on a soft drink bottle, making the total deposit 4d. on a Coca-Cola bottle or on a larger lemonade bottle. To me the answer to the problem of beer bottles on roads is to charge a deposit, and if this was 4s. a dozen it might help to reduce the dangerous and unsightly litter on our roads. It may be a slight hardship to the consumer to pay the extra money, but it would only be the initial 4s. deposit that would have to be paid.

The Hon. N. L. Jude: The Government does not compel people to pay deposits on any tin or bottle; it is a private matter.

The Hon. A. C. HOOKINGS: The Government could assist by arranging with whoever is responsible to charge a deposit. I do not know the answer to the problem, but that is my suggested remedy. Surely a deposit could be paid on bottles of beer when it has to be paid on soft drinks and particularly when it has to be paid by children.

I congratulate the Government on the progress that has been made, and on its future planning for the benefit of the State. I have pleasure in supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply so ably moved by the Hon. Mr. Edmonds and seconded by the Hon. Mr. Story.

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON (Northern): I, too, support the motion and join with the other members in their expressions of sympathy

and sorrow at the passing of Lord Dunrossil. In the short time of 12 months in office he had endeared himself to all, and was giving promise of rendering great service to the Commonwealth. I express my sympathy to the relatives of the late Sir Malcolm McIntosh, who had been of great service to this State; also to the family of Mr. O'Halloran with whom it was my great privilege to work as a representative of the Northern District; and to the family of our late colleague, The Hon. Frank Condon, who endeared himself to all members and who gave tremendous service to Parliament and to the State. I congratulate Mr. Ball on his appointment to accompany a delegation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to a conference to be held in London. We appreciate the services he has rendered to our branch here, and trust he will have a pleasant and profitable trip to the Old Country. I congratulate the Leader of the Labor Party in this Chamber, the Hon. Mr. Shard, on his appointment, and also the Hon. Mr. Bevan on his appointment to the Public Works Standing Committee.

We appreciate the manner in which Sir Edric and Lady Bastyan have settled into the community life of this State, and I, and other members for the Northern District, express our pleasure at their early visit to a northern town, where they came in contact through the Flying Doctor Service with people in the more distant parts of the State, and with children through the School of the Air. I am sure those people appreciated the opportunity of speaking to them over the network, and it would be regarded as a red-letter day by all people in those areas. I congratulate the mover and seconder of the motion on their thoughtful speeches. The Hon. Mr. Edmonds has been a colleague of mine in the Northern District for some 15 years, and I express my appreciation of his loyalty and support during that time. He has contributed much to the district and to this Parliament. I appreciated particularly his reference to the desirability of providing roads into the cattle country in order to counter the moves being made by eastern States, and to ensure to this State stock for our markets.

I welcome back the Minister of Roads, who has been examining the far northern roads and from the report in today's newspaper, it seems the proposal put forward will go a long way to securing the cattle trade for this State. It is vital that we retain this trade in order to keep our cost of living at a reasonable level. If the routes to the eastern States are allowed to become better than ours, a greater volume

of stock will go there, and, with less competition, our living costs would increase. We appreciate the information that the Hon. Mr. Story gave to this Chamber on the problems of the irrigation areas, as we regard him as a practical authority on this question. I was interested in his reference to the Golden Heights and Sunlands projects, which have been developed by a private company at Waikerie. Recently, when visiting that area, I had the privilege of inspecting these projects with a representative of the company, and appreciate the possible developments of those two areas.

At Waikerie, the almost worn-out diesel plant is being replaced by an electric pumping station which will give a greater volume of water sufficient to develop some 500 additional acres. The 500 acres are on attractive high lands and will be serviced with practically no additional cost for channels. The present channels will be used and the greater volume of water will supply amenities for the 500 acres. With this development the question of markets becomes a problem now that Great Britain has entered the European Common Market and will probably not be allowed to give us the favourable treatment we have had in the past. We shall have to look for other markets, and I was interested to note that a representative from South Australia travelled on the trade ship to the Far East recently to explore the possibility of the sale of our goods there. His impression was that there are prospects of considerable trade in those areas, although the people there, generally speaking, do not enjoy a high standard of living.

There are between 10 per cent and 15 per cent of those people in a position to buy from us, and that proportion of the population could provide a market for our goods should the market for our dried fruits from the irrigation areas be lost in Europe and Great Britain. I consider, however, that the market in Great Britain will not be affected, because of the high quality of our river area products. I was impressed when in London and Europe with their quality, and they were well displayed and had a ready sale.

I would like to give honourable members some information on some of the more prominent projects which have come before the Public Works Standing Committee during the last year or so. During last year 12 new primary and 15 new secondary schools were opened. This year about £12,000,000 is to be spent on school buildings, which will all be of a high standard and cover a wide range of

teaching. Wherever possible the committee tried to keep expenditure within reasonable bounds without impairing efficiency in any way, with the result that savings were effected. I was interested in learning why an additional room was provided for a commercial class in technical schools and I was told that an additional course in secretarial training was now being provided in the school curriculum. I understand that a representative of a British firm is in Australia endeavouring to get 1,000 girls to work as secretaries in Great Britain, because our girls are regarded as amongst the best secretaries in the world. This additional course will enable more of them to be available. In addition to shorthand and typewriting they are being trained in bookkeeping, arithmetic, commercial law, filing, interviewing, deportment, dress, and the operating of duplicating and calculating machines. In the commercial world in this type of work there is always a great wastage through marriage, and the additional course will go some way towards meeting it. It is a good move to provide training in this way. I pay a tribute to the friends and parents of children for conducting tuck shops at schools to raise funds for amenities not provided by the Government. Large sums of money are raised in this way, and they are subsidized by the Government. The shops enable the children to stay on school grounds in the lunch period and to spend their money on wholesome rather than unwholesome food.

Much progress has been made in the provision of water in South Australia. Yesterday the Hon. Mr. Bevan referred to the supply of water to Whyalla, but he was fearful that in the next year it would be insufficient. Last Sunday the Public Works Committee visited Whyalla and saw a booster pumping plant being installed. All along the pipeline boosters are being put in to increase the supply of water to the towns served by the line. The committee saw a property east of the Lincoln Gap homestead where a 100,000,000 gallon tank is being constructed to supply Whyalla and to act as a feeder for Iron Knob. Water will go into the tank when there is a reduced demand for water on the cooler days so as to be available when the demand is greater on warmer days.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph: What will be the cost of it?

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON: It will be £700,000, but it will result in a reduced amount having to be spent on the pipeline. If this provision were not made it would cost about £2,500

a mile for every additional inch in providing a pipe of larger diameter. Under its Indenture Act the Broken Hill Proprietary Company has asked for a greater quantity of water to be supplied at Iron Knob for the treatment of low grade ore. This additional water will enable waste material to be taken from that ore and so provide a 65 per cent ore, which is equal to the average of the higher grade ore in the district. There will also be an improvement to the Mount Bold reservoir. By increasing the height by 21ft. the capacity of the reservoir will be almost doubled. This work will cost about £440,000. Its capacity will be increased to what was originally proposed, 11,500,000,000 gallons, which earlier the engineers thought was unnecessary. Work on the Myponga reservoir is almost completed, and the storage will be filled during the coming summer for the supply of water to the Halletts Cove area. Until water from the reservoir is available water will come from the Happy Valley reservoir, but when it is available 2,000,000,000 gallons of it will go into Happy Valley reservoir for reticulation to the metropolitan area. I was delighted when supplies of water were made available to Appila, Booleroo Centre, and later Wirrabara. Also, on August 18 a supply is to be made available to Melrose from a bore. The schemes at Booleroo Centre and Appila will return only 2½ per cent on the capital outlay, but they will eliminate the need to have costly pumping from a well. The cost is now 18s. for each 1,000 gallons and it is poor water. Work is also to proceed on the Knotts Hill to Minnipa pipeline at a cost of £4,890,000. This main was relined and relaid above ground in 1936 and it was estimated that it would last 20 years. Maintenance on the pipeline last year cost about £18,000, and it is increasing. It is estimated that in some sections 1,000 repairs to each mile of the pipeline have been necessary. Undoubtedly the expenditure of £4,890,000 is justified.

Penola is in a district with a good rainfall and it may be thought that an additional water supply would not be necessary. I believe that water can be found there at 10ft. to 20ft. below the surface of the ground. Most of the townspeople have their own water supplies, but the water comes from an area where septic tanks are used and where the nature of the soil is not good. Because of this the septic tanks do not function properly, and it was found that ill-health was caused, particularly amongst the young people. Bores are being placed on the upstream side of the town and

it is hoped that they will be free from pollution and that the town will get a purer water supply.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph: What is the salt content of the water?

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON: I do not know the exact percentage but it could be about 50 grains to the gallon. It is satisfactory water. We were pleased to hear the Hon. Mr. Story speak about the proposed Chowilla Dam on the River Murray. Its provision will have a greater bearing on the water supply of the State than the rest of the supplies put together. I understand that the technical difficulties have been overcome and this project is now being regarded favourably by the other States, and they will receive some benefit from it. It is possible that the other States and the Commonwealth may help South Australia with that project and if it is implemented it will be a great boon to South Australia.

I compliment the Government on last year's financial results. I do not suggest that the Government is wholly responsible for this happy position, but over the years it has been careful in its management of State affairs. Last year the bountiful harvest resulted in increased revenue for the South Australian

Railways and the Harbors Board, but I stress that the Government has been careful in its budgeting during the years it has been in power. The State's financial position will enable it to undertake projects capable of employing more people, but we already have less unemployment than other States and the Government is to be congratulated on that. With the State's finances at such a satisfactory level we can look forward with confidence to the future.

In conclusion I have much pleasure in supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, but I strongly oppose the amendment moved by the Hon. Mr. Bardolph. It is the duty of any responsible government to ask its officers to give evidence of its economic position and of the effects that any overall increases in wages would have in its competition with other States and overseas countries. There is no purpose in having wage increases if our factories are to become idle and our people unemployed.

The Hon. A. J. SHARD secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.19 p.m. the Council adjourned until Thursday, August 3, at 2.15 p.m.