

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday, August 1, 1968

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

### ADDRESS IN REPLY

The PRESIDENT: I have to inform honourable members that his Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor will be pleased to receive them for the presentation of the Address in Reply at 2.30 p.m. this day. I therefore suspend the sitting of the Council to enable honourable members to accompany me to Government House.

[Sitting suspended from 2.17 to 2.40 p.m.]

The PRESIDENT: I have to report that accompanied by honourable members I attended at Government House and there presented to His Excellency the Address adopted by the Council on July 31, to which His Excellency was pleased to make the following reply:

I thank you for your Address in Reply to the Speech with which I opened the second session of the Thirty-ninth Parliament. I am confident that you will give your best attention to all matters placed before you. I pray for God's blessing upon your deliberations.

## QUESTIONS

### LAMB IMPORTS

The Hon. L. R. HART: I seek leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Agriculture.

Leave granted.

The Hon. L. R. HART: Prior to the Australian and New Zealand Free Trade Agreement coming into operation in January, 1966, New Zealand lamb coming into Australia was subject to a 10 per cent import duty. This duty has now been phased out. During the last six months about 462 tons of New Zealand lamb has been imported into Australia, but this amount, according to the Minister for Trade (Mr. McEwen), is infinitesimal compared with Australia's total production. Lamb producers in Australia, and particularly in South Australia, have grounds for concern if these imports are increased, and the indications are that they could be increased, perhaps substantially, as new shipping facilities will shortly permit New Zealand lamb to cross the Tasman Sea at rates competitive with road and rail transport for consignments from remote centres in Australia to killing works. Under the trade

agreement between the two countries, restrictions cannot be placed on imports of lamb into this country until such time as damage to the lamb industry in Australia can be proved. In view of the serious situation that may arise, will the Minister have this matter discussed at the next Australian Agricultural Council meeting with a view to protecting the lamb industry in this country?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I shall certainly study the matter closely.

### MOTOR REGISTRATIONS

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: Some little time ago the Minister of Roads said that he was looking into the possibility of allowing people with low numbers on motor vehicles to retain those numbers. As many of my constituents have asked me whether a final decision has been made on this matter, has the Minister a further statement to make?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: As I recall my statement, it related to people retaining existing numbers and not necessarily low numbers, as mentioned by the honourable member. I have had quite an extensive look into this matter, and I have received two departmental reports and held several discussions with officers of my departments about it.

I also discussed it with Ministers of Transport from two other States where the system of retention of some numbers is in force. However, all the opinions that I have received on the subject are strongly against changing back from the present system, so I have decided not to make any change, and so the present system will continue.

### WATER USE

The Hon. L. R. HART: I seek leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Mines.

Leave granted.

The Hon. L. R. HART: In this morning's *Advertiser* there appears an article, under the heading "Over-Use of Water", which states:

The Mines Department has completed a survey of the underground water resources on the plains north of Adelaide and a private consultant is carrying out an independent investigation.

The Minister of Mines (Mr. DeGaris) said yesterday the department's report had stated that there was a dangerous over-use of water from the underground basin in the area.

The report made no recommendations on how this problem should be overcome, but Cabinet felt that an independent opinion should be sought.

If this inquiry supported the findings of the Mines Department, Cabinet would consider steps necessary to protect the underground supplies.

Then the Political Reporter goes on to place his own interpretation on this matter. Under the Act the Underground Waters Advisory Committee is set up to advise the Minister on matters pertaining to underground waters. I understand that the Mines Department survey is carried out at the instigation of this committee. However, the committee has been unable to get a copy of the report although it has been in the hands of the Minister for several weeks. Will the Minister ensure that before any Cabinet decision is made the report will be made available to the advisory committee and that its submissions to the Minister will be considered?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: For a considerable time research has taken place into the availability of underground water in the plains north of Adelaide. A considerable amount of technical information has been gathered and from it an assessment has been made by the Mines Department. These findings are based upon this mass of technical detail, and the Government with the full approval of the Mines Department sought another opinion on the mass of technical detail available. When both these reports—that of the Mines Department and that of the private consultant—are available to the Government, an assessment will be made of them and the information will be available to the advisory committee.

#### COUNTRY RESERVOIRS

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: Has the Minister of Agriculture, representing the Minister of Works, an answer to my question of July 30 about water storages in the Midland District?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: The Minister of Works has provided the following reply:

Warren reservoir: This reservoir filled to its capacity of 1,401,000,000 gallons on 5/6/68 and it has continued to be full since that date.

South Para reservoir: This reservoir, which has a capacity of 11,300,000,000 gallons, contained 5,833,000,000 gallons on 31/7/68. This represents an intake into the reservoir since 1/5/68 of just over 5,000,000,000 gallons. The reservoir is a little more than half full and, if good rains are experienced in the next two months, the reservoir could fill. If, on the other hand, the rainfall pattern over the next two months is less than earlier in the winter, it would be unlikely that the reservoir would fill.

That seems logical. The report continues:

Barossa reservoir: This reservoir held 877,00,000 gallons on 31/7/68 compared with a capacity of 993,000,000 gallons. This reservoir receives all of its intake from South Para reservoir and it could be filled at any time by releasing the necessary water from South Para.

#### SOUTH-EAST PORTS

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Has the Minister of Agriculture, representing the Minister of Marine, a reply to my question of July 25 about the facilities at Beachport and Port MacDonnell?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: The following reply has been supplied for the honourable member:

A number of improvements to the fishing boat facilities, etc. at Robe, Beachport and Port MacDonnell have been approved and the necessary expenditure authorized. Work will commence as soon as the weather improves and a resident temporary gang can be recruited, which should be round about next October. Most of the heavy materials have been procured and some delivered to site, and one job, fencing off an area for the parking of fishermen's vehicles at Robe, has, in fact, been completed with a gang of three men sent down from Adelaide.

The permanent South-East gang is fully employed on extending the South End jetty and when this work is completed in October the gang will move to Cape Jaffa to extend the jetty at that place. One of the improvements recently approved, namely, the provision of a dinghy landing platform 150ft. long at South End, will actually be carried out by the construction gang working on the jetty extension and will be completed before it leaves South End for Cape Jaffa in October.

#### ADJOURNMENT

At 2.52 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, August 13, at 2.15 p.m.