



Archived at the Flinders Academic Commons:
<http://hdl.handle.net/2328/27231>

This is a scan of a document number DUN/Speeches/1522
in the Dunstan Collection, Special Collections, Flinders University Library.
<http://www.flinders.edu.au/library/info/collections/special/dunstan/>

Title:
Speech at the Institute of Mining & Metallurgy Dinner

Please acknowledge the source as:
Dunstan Collection, Flinders University Library.
Identifier: DUN/Speeches/1522

© Copyright Estate Donald Allan Dunstan

SPEECH BY THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN, AT THE INSTITUTE OF MINING & METALLURGY DINNER. ADELAIDE. 14/8/71.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA IS A PARTICULARLY APPROPRIATE STATE IN WHICH TO PROPOSE A TOAST TO THE MINING INDUSTRY SINCE IT WAS THE COPPER DISCOVERIES IN THE PAST CENTURY WHICH ESTABLISHED OUR ECONOMY AND WHICH MADE POSSIBLE OUR RAPID POPULATION GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THRIVING COUNTRY TOWNS.

WE'RE NOW A CITY AND INDUSTRY ORIENTED ECONOMY BUT MINING AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT CONTINUE TO BE A PRINCIPAL PROP OF OUR ECONOMY AND TO FULFILL THE SAME FUNCTIONS IN POPULATION GROWTH AND DECENTRALISATION WHICH THEY DID A CENTURY AND MORE AGO.

AND, ON A NATIONAL LEVEL, MINING HAS PLAYED THE CRUCIAL ROLE IN ENABLING US TO WEATHER WHAT COULD OTHERWISE HAVE BEEN THE CRIPPLING EFFECTS OF THE PRESENT RURAL RECESSION.

PAGE 2.

WITH IRON ORE AS OUR MAJOR MINERAL CONTRIBUTION, AND WITH ALMOST A WORLD MONOPOLY ON OPAL PRODUCTION, THE STATE IS ALSO A SIGNIFICANT PRODUCER OF GYPSUM, BARYTES, TALC AND SALT AS WELL AS MUCH EVERYDAY MINERALS ESSENTIAL TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND URBAN GROWTH SUCH AS ROCK AND SAND.

THESE HAVE GIVEN US AN ANNUAL MINERALS OUTPUT WORTH SOME \$110M. IN THE LAST CALENDAR YEAR.

AND IT'S AN INDICATOR OF THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF THE MINING INDUSTRIES TO THIS STATE THAT THIS FIGURE REPRESENTED AN INCREASE NEARLY 12 PER CENT ON THE PREVIOUS YEAR WHILE OVER THE PAST DECADE IT HAS GONE UP TENFOLD.

IT'S A SPECTACULAR RISE BUT WHAT IS MORE CHEERING STILL IS THAT THERE'S EVERY PROSPECT THAT THIS PLACE CAN BE MAINTAINED OR EVEN IMPROVED ON.

EXPLORATION HAS REACHED AN UNPRECEDENTED LEVEL WITH 80 COMPANIES IN THE FIELD.

EACH YEAR SOME \$10M. IS BEING SPENT IN THIS STATE ON EXPLORATION PROGRAMMES FOR COPPER, URANIUM, NATURAL GAS AND OIL AS WELL AS OTHER MINERALS.

ALREADY THERE HAVE BEEN NOTABLE SUCCESSES, SUCH AS THE NEW COPPER OPERATIONS AT KANMANTOO AND BURRA AND THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATURAL GAS FIELDS AT MOOMBA AND GIDGEALPA SUPPLYING ADELAIDE, THE SECURING OF THE VALUABLE SYDNEY MARKET AND THE BREAKTHROUGH IN THE DISCOVERY OF OIL IN THE COOPER BASIN.

THIS WEEK WE HEARD THE EXTREMELY ENCOURAGING NEWS THAT THE TIRRAWARRA NO. 2 WELL HAS FLOWED AT A RATE OF 1,500 BARRELS A DAY - OPENING UP THE PROSPECT OF A LIQUIDS PIPELINE AND POSSIBLY AN ADDITIONAL REFINERY FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND DEVELOPMENT OF A PETROCHEMICAL COMPLEX.

OIL EXPLORATION PROGRAMMES CONTINUE AT A RAPID PACE ELSEWHERE IN THE STATE AND OFFSHORE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DRILLING WILL RESUME AGAIN THIS YEAR WHEN SHELL BRINGS THE "OCEAN DIGGER" RIG TO BEGIN THE FIRST SUCH PROGRAMME IN THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN BIGHT INTO OPERATION. ADDED TO THIS IS THE URANIUM SEARCH CONCENTRATED ON THE FLINDERS RANGES.

I'M HAPPY TO SAY, AS MINES MINISTER, THAT WE SPEND SOME \$2½M. EACH YEAR IN PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO THE INDUSTRY IN ALL THESE MINERAL DEVELOPMENTS. AND I'M EVEN MORE HAPPY, AS TREASURER, TO KNOW THAT WE RECOUP ALL OF IT IN RENTS, ROYALTIES AND SERVICES. BUT WE'RE MORE THAN JUST A GEOLOGICAL HAPPY HUNTING GROUND.

OUR EARLY LEAD IN MINING DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONSEQUENT ESTABLISHMENT HERE OF A POOL OF TECHNOLOGICAL EXPERTISE AND HIGH SKILLS, AS WELL AS OUR CENTRAL GEOGRAPHIC POSITION, HAS ENABLED US TO MAKE AN IMPORTANT NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MINING AND MINERAL SCIENCES.

WE ARE DETERMINED TO RETAIN THIS POSITION AND TO BUILD ON IT. HERE WE BELIEVE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AUSTRALIAN MINERAL FOUNDATION WILL BE OF TREMENDOUS VALUE IN CONSOLIDATING THAT POSITION. THIS IS GOING AHEAD ON LAND CONTRIBUTED BY THE GOVERNMENT AT GLENSIDE. THE NATIONAL CONTRACT RESEARCH ESTABLISHMENT, AMDEL, IS IN THE AREA AND THE FOUNDATION WILL BRING TOGETHER A NETWORK OF LIBRARY, INFORMATION AND TRAINING FACILITIES TO SERVE THE INDUSTRY ON A NATIONAL BASIS. A MAGNIFICENT GIFT OF \$ 1M. WILL ENSURE THAT THE FOUNDATION WILL BE HOUSED IN A FIRST-CLASS BUILDING. PLANNING FOR THIS IS NOW PROGRESSING RAPIDLY AND CONSTRUCTION IS EXPECTED TO BEGIN BY THE END OF THIS YEAR. APART FROM THE PROBLEMS OF FINDING THE STUFF AND THEN SECURING THE CAPITAL AND TECHNOLOGY TO EXTRACT IT, THERE'S ONE OTHER CURRENT CONCERN OF THE MINING INDUSTRY TO WHICH I'D NOW LIKE TO TURN.

THE EXPLOSION IN PUBLIC CONCERN ABOUT DAMAGE TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND VISUAL AND ECOLOGICAL POLLUTION HAS HIT HOME MOST STRONGLY AT THE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES. THE MINING INDUSTRY IS IN THE UNFORTUNATE POSITION OF BEING THE MOST OBVIOUS TARGET FOR THE ANGER OF THE CONSERVATION LOBBY AND THERE HAVE BEEN MANY CASES IN WHICH ANGER HAS BEEN JUSTIFIED. NO-ONE, I THINK, WOULD CHALLENGE THE VIEW THAT THOSE CONCERNED WITH MINING AND MINERAL PROCESSING MUST CONCERN THEMSELVES WITH THE EFFECTS OF THEIR OPERATIONS ON LANDSCAPE, ENVIRONMENT AND THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE. NO-ONE WOULD CHALLENGE THE VIEW THAT THERE MUST BE LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATIVE CONTROLS ON SUCH OPERATIONS. CERTAINLY NO GOVERNMENT IN AUSTRALIA HAS DONE MORE THAN THIS ONE TO ENSURE THAT ADEQUATE SAFEGUARDS ARE PROVIDED. AND NONE IS MORE DETERMINED TO SEE THAT THIS REMAINS SO. I, AS MINES MINISTER, AND MY COLLEAGUE THE MINISTER OF CONSERVATION MAINTAIN A CONSTANT REVIEW OF MINING AND CONSERVATION PROTECTION LAWS TO SEE THAT ADEQUATE PROTECTION IS PROVIDED.

THERE CAN BE FEW, IF ANY, INDUSTRIES SUBJECT TO CLOSER CONTROL AND SCRUTINY. IF I MAY GIVE A FEW EXAMPLES OF THE KIND OF CONTROLS WE HAVE REQUIRED: CHANGES TO THE MINES AND WORKS INSPECTION ACT, TO WHICH REGULATIONS HAVE NOW BEEN DRAFTED, REQUIRE EVERY MINE AND QUARRY OPERATOR TO SUBMIT, FOR OFFICIAL APPROVAL, A DEVELOPMENT PLAN INTO WHICH IS WRITTEN A PROGRAMME FOR PROGRESSIVE RESTORATION AND ULTIMATE RE-USE OF THE SITE.

THE NEW MINING ACT NOW BEFORE PARLIAMENT REQUIRES HOLDERS OF EXPLORATION LEASES TO MAKE GOOD ANY DAMAGE THEY DO, TO OBTAIN APPROVAL FOR THE USE OF EARTH MOVING EQUIPMENT AND PRESCRIBES SET TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE GRANTING OF MINING LEASES. SUCH LEASES WILL HAVE WRITTEN INTO THEM AN "ENVIRONMENT CLAUSE" TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS CONTROL OVER POTENTIAL DAMAGE. LARGE PARTS OF THE STATE CANNOT BE MINED AT ALL SUCH AS, SINCE 1968, A HALF MILE STRIP ALONG THE COAST AND OUR 90 NATIONAL PARKS AND THE ABORIGINAL RESERVES.

IT IS RIGHT AND NECESSARY FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD THAT SUCH CONTROLS SHOULD BE IMPOSED AND, I MIGHT ADD, THE INDUSTRY GENERALLY HAS BEEN EXTREMELY CO-OPERATIVE IN MEETING THESE REQUIREMENTS, IN MANY CASES OFTEN BEFORE BEING FORMALLY REQUIRED TO DO SO. IT MAY BE THAT FURTHER LEGISLATION WILL BE REQUIRED IN THE FUTURE, AND, IF SO, WE SHALL NOT HESITATE TO BRING IT SPEEDILY BEFORE PARLIAMENT. AS IT IS I THINK THE LEGISLATION WE HAVE ON THE STATUTE AND THAT NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION WILL MEAN WE SHALL AVOID THE DEVASTATING EXCESSES WHICH HAVE MARRED THE INDUSTRIAL AND MINING DEVELOPMENT OF SUCH COUNTRIES AS THE UNITED STATES, BRITAIN AND OTHER AUSTRALIAN STATES.

IT'S GOOD THAT THE CONSERVATIONISTS SHOULD BE CONCERNED WITH THE EFFECTS OF A TECHNOLOGICAL AGE ON THE NATURAL WORLD AROUND US. WE ALL SHOULD BE, BUT IT'S IMPORTANT, TOO, THAT A SENSE OF BALANCE SHOULD BE PRESERVED.

TO READ THE CONSERVATIONISTS' HARSHER CRITICISMS, ONE WOULD IMAGINE THAT THE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES ARE THE SOLE BLIGHTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT.

IN FACT MINING OR QUARRYING OPERATIONS OCCUPY ONLY ONE ACRE IN EVERY 20,000 IN THIS STATE, WHICH COMPARES WITH ONE IN THIRTY FOR CEREAL CROPPING AND ONE IN FOUR HUNDRED FOR ROADWAYS. NEITHER MUST WE LOSE SIGHT OF THE FACT THAT MINING IS NOT UNDERTAKEN MERELY FOR THE AGGRESSIVE JOY OF SCARRING THE LANDSCAPE.

THE COMMUNITY NEEDS ITS PRODUCTS, THE PEOPLE NEED THE JOBS IT CAN PROVIDE.

AS I SAID, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE MUST KEEP TO THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM ANY LIKELY DAMAGE - VISUAL, CHEMICAL OR ECOLOGICAL - RESULTING FROM MINING AND PROCESSING. WE MUST ENCOURAGE RESEARCH TO REDUCE SUCH DAMAGE STILL FURTHER AND PROVIDE THE CONTROLS NECESSARY TO SEE THAT THE PRODUCTS OF SUCH RESEARCH ARE APPLIED.

BUT WE CAN'T DO SO AT THE COST OF STOPPING MINING ALTOGETHER.

OVER-EMPHASIS ON CONSERVATION ALONE COULD GENERATE A MINERALOGICAL BACKLASH THE EFFECTS OF WHICH IN LOST DEVELOPMENT AND JOBS WOULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE.

THE MINING INDUSTRY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA IS NOW IN A PERIOD OF VIGOROUS EXPLORATION AND COMMITTED GROWTH.

I'M TOLD THE NATIONAL AVERAGE IS ONE MAJOR FIND FOR EVERY \$10M.

ON EXPLORATION SPENDING SO, ON THIS BASIS, WE SHOULD GET ONE EVERY YEAR OR SO.

ON WHICH CHEERFUL NOTE, I'D LIKE YOU TO JOIN ME IN A TOAST TO THE MINING INDUSTRY.

THANK YOU.