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**Title:**

ALP broadcast regarding 'Sir Thomas Playford ... "percentage-wise" this State has grown more rapidly than any other'.

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10TH  
A.L.P. BROADCAST 27th OCTOBER, 1960.

D. A. DUNSTAN: MEMBER FOR ROSEWOOD.

Good Evening,

The Premier, Sir Thomas Playford has made his chief claim to electoral support in South Australia the development of industry in this State. Repeatedly he has told us that proportionately, or as he puts it "percentage-wise" this State has grown more rapidly than any other. You've all heard statements of this kind repeatedly, but in case I should be accused of misrepresenting him, I want to quote his most recent utterance verbatim. Speaking on the debate on the Prices Bill Sir Thomas said:-

".....let it not be said by anybody that any State has more business activities coming to it than has South Australia. At present, we are busting our seams with new business activity coming into this State. At present new enterprises with a capital value of not less than £100,000,000 have announced their intention of establishing works in South Australia. There is not one State that percentage-wise can show any figures to approach that."

On Wednesday in the House of Assembly he said this expansion was not just in the future but that South Australia had already had for some time a rate of growth greater than that of other States.

Now some of you will have heard me challenge these claims before. I have said that as I read the Commonwealth Statisticians figures, the annual value of factory output per head had increased more in Tasmania than here and that in addition Victoria and New South Wales had not expanded at a slower rate than our own.

But now even more interesting figures have come to light.

The South Australian employers have brought an application before the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission aimed at getting the basic wage in South Australia ultimately fixed at 90% on the wage in Sydney and the rural wage at 75% of the city wage. In other words they want rural workers paid

at least £1/19/- per week less than their N. S. W. counterparts.

This application in itself is ~~extraordinary~~ <sup>extraordinary</sup> but the even more extraordinary thing is that the Government has appeared before the commission in support of the employers' application.

For a Government which from time to time pays lip-service to the idea of decentralisation of industry this is astounding. Already in some rural areas it is difficult to get the artisans and craftsmen to do jobs needing to be done - what a fine inducement it will be to artisans and craftsmen to come forward in increasing numbers to fill such parts when they find that they will be paid less to work in the country. Labor members have bitterly attacked the Government on this score.

The employers have also claimed as a ground for the gradual reduction of the value of minimum wages that South Australia's industry suffered from disabilities which had given her recently the lowest rate of industrial growth of any State in Australia and that therefore, labor costs should be reduced so that the working people of South Australia would bear the cost of South Australia's private industrial expansion. The employers' figures handed to the Commission in support of this contention are as follows:-

Value of goods produced by factories in South Australia annually as compared with the value of goods produced in other States show that for the period 1942-43 - 51-52 we were expanding more quickly than N.S.W. Vic., and Queensland though more slowly than W.A. and Tas. During that time, of course, we gained the advantage of war time munitions factories put here by the Commonwealth Labor ~~Govt~~ Government and which were turned over to peace-time production at the end of the war.

But in contrast for the period of 51-52 to the present day, our rate of expansion of value of factory output has been less than any other State - we slipped from 3rd to 6th position in rate of industrial growth. In case it should be said that these were unrepresentative years and therefore the figures did not give a true picture, an examination of the year 1949-50

to the present day gave the same result as did the year 55-56 to the present day.

Now of course these figures submitted with detailed analyses to the Commission by the Premier's own supporters, make his contention that South Australia has had, under his administration, a far greater industrial development proportionately than any other State - so much utter nonsense. What is more, the counsel for the South Australian Government before the Commission has appeared to say not only that he supports the employers' case for lowering South Australia's basic wage as compared with that of other States, but has said specifically - it appears in the transcript - that he does so for the reasons they advance.

So the Government speaks with two voices in this matter. The Premier, speaking in Parliament and on the hustings makes the untrue statement that this State's development has been greater than that of other States and that he is responsible. It is always to this allegation that he and his supporters are taxed with the undeniable fact that this State's social services, health, hospitals, education and welfare are the worst in Australia and that he spends less per head on them than does the Premier of other States.

When, however, the Government appears before the Arbitration Commission, a different story appears.

Mr. Robinson, counsel for the employers there said:-

"We say that S.A. in this period (since 1953) while progressing has not progressed as rapidly as the larger and better endowed States... the rate of progress has slowed down in comparison with the larger Eastern States.

We will show that in the period from 1940 to 1950, S.A.'s development was at a particularly high level, that any period you take from 1950 to the present date shows that on a comparison with other States, South Australia has in fact done the worst."

He has said this on an application supported by Sir Thomas Playford to make S.A. already the State with the

lowest effective real wage in Australia, a still lower wage state. In this regard Mr. Robinson said, and I again quote from the transcript of the Commission's hearing:-

"As to the decrease we believe that the Commission adopts the philosophy ... .. that the tribunal cannot take the bone from the dog's mouth, and what we are saying, of course, is, if S.A.'s capacity is smaller, if its cost of living is lower, then the bone should be smaller."

~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~

Now Sir Thomas is a past master at getting away with things, but this he will not get away with. I challenged him to comment on the employers' figures which after all had come from the Comm. Bureau of Census and Statistics and their analyses in rising on a matter of grievance in the House of Assembly last week. His only reply was that he did not intend to comment on the figures - that you can do anything with figures. I leave it to you whether that reply is good enough.

Goodnight