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Title:

Radio talk by Don Dunstan 5-K.A.: script of talk with document setting out terms of reference and membership of Water Resources Committee set up in March 1969

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The Water Resources Committee was set up in March, 1969. Terms of reference:-

- (a) Water needs of South Australia and anticipated rate of demand and growth.
- (b) Water resources available and the likely costs of utilisation.
- (c) What additional investigations, if any, should be undertaken and how these should be implemented.
- (d) Improvements to methods of conservation and drainage.
- (e) The efficient re-use of water, including effluent discharge.
- (f) The future role of desalination plants in South Australia.

People on the Committee:

Secretary :	Mr. A.M. Hewett,	Retired Public Servant.
Chairman :	Mr. K.M. Bennett, O.B.E.	Former Manager, B.H.P., South Australia.
	Professor E.A.Rudd,	Professor of Economics and Professor of Geology, University of Adelaide.
	M.A. Kinnaird	A Consulting Engineer.

No report has yet been submitted.

GOOD EVENING. LAST WEEK I WAS DOWN IN THE SOUTH EAST ON A TOUR DESIGNED TO MEET AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE AND TO HEAR FROM THEM JUST HOW THINGS WERE GOING LOCALLY. THE SOUTH EAST IS A VERY IMPORTANT PART OF OUR STATE. IT IS A VERY IMPORTANT AREA AGRICULTURALLY. IT HAS AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST COMMERCIAL FORESTS AND IMPORTANT TIMBER MILLING AND PAPER INDUSTRIES. IT HAS A SIGNIFICANT FISHING INDUSTRY, AND IT IS A GENERAL AREA WHERE A GREAT DEAL CAN BE DONE TO CREATE A MAJOR TOURIST ZONE EXTENDING FROM THE GLENELG RIVER AND MOUNT GAMBIER RIGHT UP AND THROUGH TO THE COORONG. IT IS AN AREA OF IMMENSE POTENTIAL FOR EXCITING FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT.

BUT THERE IS ANOTHER SENSE IN WHICH THE SOUTH EAST IS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO THE STATE. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT IT HOLDS THE ANSWER TO PART OF OUR WATER PROBLEM. TAKING THE STATE AS A WHOLE, WE ARE THE DRIEST STATE IN THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE STATE MOST LIKELY TO SUFFER QUITE SEVERELY FROM A LACK OF WATER WITHIN THIRTY YEARS. THAT IS WHY THE SOUTH EAST IS SO IMPORTANT, FOR IT IS POSSIBLE THAT UPWARDS OF 450-THOUSAND-MILLION GALLONS OF WATER COULD BE AVAILABLE IN THAT AREA FOR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT, WHICH IS NEAR ELEVEN TIMES MORE WATER THAN ADELAIDE USES IN A YEAR AT THE MOMENT.

THE FACT THAT SUCH ENORMOUS BODIES OF WATER ARE ESTIMATED TO EXIST IN THE STATE POINTS UP, HOWEVER, ONE OF OUR GREAT ADMINISTRATIVE DEFICIENCIES. WE HAVE NEVER HAD AN EXPERT SURVEY OF OUR WATER RESOURCES, AND THIS MEANS IN TURN THAT WE ARE AT THE MOMENT QUITE UNABLE TO ESTABLISH PRACTICAL WAYS BY WHICH SUCH WATER AS WE DO HAVE CAN BE CONSERVED.

THE LAST LABOR GOVERNMENT DID SOMETHING ABOUT THIS, FOR WE COULD SEE THAT IT WAS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL IF OUR PLANS FOR

TECHNOLOGICAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT WERE TO SUCCEED. INDUSTRIES USE FAR MORE WATER THAN PEOPLE DO, AND SO WE PLANNED TO EMPLOY TOP WORLD EXPERTS TO CONDUCT A SURVEY INTO THE STATE'S WATER PROBLEMS AND WENT EVEN SO FAR AS TO CALL TENDERS. THE TRAGEDY, HOWEVER, IS THAT THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT FOR SOME REASON - PERHAPS SIMPLY PERVERSITY - DECIDED THAT AN AMATEUR APPROACH WOULD BE BETTER. IT HAS SHELVED PLANS FOR AN EXPERT SURVEY, AND INSTEAD HAS ESTABLISHED A COMMITTEE OF NON-EXPERTS TO TAKE EVIDENCE FROM NON-QUALIFIED PEOPLE ON A SUBJECT WHICH CONCERNS THE VERY LIFE AND FUTURE OF THIS STATE. SO FAR THIS COMMITTEE HAS NOT EVEN FILED A REPORT.