



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

This is a scan of a document number DUN/Speeches/0304
in the Dunstan Collection, Special Collections, Flinders University Library.
<http://www.flinders.edu.au/library/info/collections/special/dunstan/>

Title:
Radio Broadcast - Chowilla

Please acknowledge the source as:
Dunstan Collection, Flinders University Library.
Identifier: DUN/Speeches/0304

© Copyright Estate Donald Allan Dunstan

304
18/61

BROADCAST BY THE PREMIER, HON. DON DUNSTAN, Q.C., M.P., 5-K.A.,
6.55 P.M., FRIDAY, 10TH NOVEMBER, 1967.

GOOD EVENING : EARLY THIS WEEK I WENT TO CANBERRA TO SEE THE MINISTER FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, MR. FAIRBAIRN, CONCERNING THE WATER SUPPLIES OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA IN THE RIVER MURRAY, AND THE PROVISION FOR THE CHOWILLA DAM.

YOU WILL REMEMBER THAT AFTER THE CHOWILLA DAM PROJECT WAS DEFERRED, A REQUEST WAS MADE BY THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT, AND BACKED BY ALL SIDES OF POLITICS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA, THAT THERE SHOULD BE A MEETING OF MINISTERS FROM THE GOVERNMENTS OF AUSTRALIA CONCERNED WITH THE INTENTION OF THE RIVER MURRAY COMMISSION GIVING TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA, THE BENEFITS THAT CHOWILLA WAS ORIGINALLY DESIGNED TO PROVIDE, AND TO ENSURE THAT THE PRESENT TECHNICAL PROBLEMS OF SALINITY, PARTICULARLY SURROUNDING THE SUPPLY OF WATER IN THE RIVER MURRAY, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF CHOWILLA DAM, WERE BEING LOOKED AT WITH THIS END IN VIEW. UNFORTUNATELY, AT THE TIME, THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT FELT THIS WAS PREMATURE. IT WAS CERTAINLY NOT THE VIEW OF OUR GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA. AFTER ALL, THIS IS THE DRIEST PART OF THE DRIEST CONTINENT. WE ARE DEPENDENT UPON WATER SUPPLY NOT ONLY FOR IRRIGATION, BUT PROVISION FOR THE METROPOLITAN AND INDUSTRIAL AREAS SO THAT WE MAY HAVE PROPER INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION. WHEREAS I COULD GET NO AGREEMENT FROM THE COMMONWEALTH TO HAVE A MEETING, I DECIDED THAT THE ONLY WAY WAS TO GO TO SEE THE MINISTERS INDIVIDUALLY.

THE FIRST OF THESE VISITS WAS THE MINISTER FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LAST WEDNESDAY. AT THIS MEETING THERE WERE THREE BASIC MATTERS UNDER DISCUSSION. THE FIRST OF THESE WAS GETTING THE ASSURANCE WHICH SOUTH AUSTRALIA ORIGINALLY ASKED FOR. ON THIS SCORE, THE MEETING WAS MOST USEFUL. I AM VERY HOPEFUL, IN CONSEQUENCE, THAT AS A RESULT OF MY DISCUSSIONS, THAT I WILL HAVE NEXT WEEK WITH SIR HENRY BOLTE AND MR. ASKIN, THE ASSURANCES WILL BE GIVEN BY ALL GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED AS TO THE INTENTIONS OF THE RIVER MURRAY COMMISSION IN FUTURE.

THE OTHER THING WE WANTED TO DISCUSS WAS THE QUESTION OF FINANCES OF THE CHOWILLA DAM. THE GOVERNMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES WAS GIVEN SPECIAL CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMONWEALTH UNDER WHICH IT COULD GET LONG-TERM FINANCE FROM THE COMMONWEALTH AND LONG-TERM RATES OF INTEREST, AND IN CONSEQUENCE IT WOULD NOT HAVE ANY INTERFERENCE WITH ITS NORMAL WORKS PROGRAMME BY ANY HEAVY CALL FOR MONEY FOR CHOWILLA. WITH THE ESCALATED COSTS OF CHOWILLA, THE WORKS PROGRAMMES OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND OF VICTORIA ARE, OF COURSE, IN A STRINGENT SITUATION IF WE ARE TO BE CALLED UPON FOR LARGE AMOUNTS FOR CHOWILLA, BECAUSE THE ORIGINAL PLANNING OF THESE WORKS PROGRAMMES AND THE CONTINUING WORK OF OUR OWN WORK FORCE IN THIS AREA COULD BE CONCEIVABLY INTERFERED WITH IF WE HAD TO FIND A LOT OF MONEY IN THE SHORT TERM.

WELL, IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE THOUGHT IT REASONABLE TO ASK THE COMMONWEALTH THAT IT SHOULD CONSIDER GIVING TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND VICTORIA THE SAME DEAL THAT IT HAS GIVEN TO NEW SOUTH WALES. AFTER ALL, IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE FOR THE COMMONWEALTH TO GO IN FOR DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECTS - FOR INSTANCE THE VERY LARGE SUM OF MONEY BEING SPENT AT THE ORD RIVER OR THE MANY MILLIONS TO BE SPENT IN QUEENSLAND JUST ANNOUNCED, BUT THOSE PROJECTS WILL BENEFIT DIRECTLY A FEW THOUSAND PEOPLE. THE CHOWILLA DAM WILL BE OF DIRECT SERVICE TO SOME MILLIONS, AND, IN CONSEQUENCE, WE THINK WE HAVE A VERY GOOD BASIS FOR ASKING THIS CONSIDERATION FROM THE COMMONWEALTH.

NATURALLY ENOUGH AT THIS STAGE WE COULD GET NO REPLY AND WE HAVE BEEN ASKED TO DETAIL THE PROPOSALS IN WRITING.

ANOTHER THING WE DISCUSSED WAS THE PROVISION OF CHOWILLA ITSELF AND THE IMPROVEMENT MADE BY OUR ENGINEERS IN THE LIGHT OF SALINITY PROBLEMS OCCURRING IN THE RIVER MURRAY. WE ARE NOW SATISFIED THAT THE CHOWILLA DAM WILL NOT ONLY BE A VIABLE PROPOSITION TO ENSURE SOUTH AUSTRALIA THE QUANTITY OF WATER THAT IT REQUIRES IN DRY YEARS, BUT BECAUSE CHOWILLA WILL STILL SUPPLY FRESH WATER DURING DROUGHT PERIODS, WE ARE SATISFIED THAT IT WILL

ALSO BE A QUALITY CONTROL MEASURE AS WELL AS A QUANTITY CONTROL MEASURE. IN OTHER WORDS, THE SALINITY PROBLEM IS NOT LESSENERED BY CHOWILLA. CHOWILLA IS ONE OF THE OBVIOUS ANSWERS TO THE SALINITY PROBLEM. THIS IS THE VIEW WHICH WE PUT STRONGLY TO THE COMMONWEALTH.

NO CONCLUSIONS, OF COURSE, CAN BE ARRIVED AT BY THE COMMISSION UNTIL ALL THE TECHNICAL INFORMATION AT PRESENT SOUGHT IS AVAILABLE, BUT I AM SATISFIED THAT THE AUGURIES FOR THE CHOWILLA DAM ARE GOOD AND THE AUGURIES FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA GETTING THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF WATER ARE STILL GOOD.

GOOD NIGHT.