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Title:

ALP broadcast regarding 'Sir Thomas Playford approached the recent Frome by-election ... making ill-founded pronouncements'.

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A.L.P. BROADCAST PRESENTED BY DON DUNSTAN

MEMBER FOR NORWOOD

Good Evening,

The Premier, Sir Thomas Playford, approached the recent From by-election with his usual aplomb and with his usual proclivities for making ill-founded pronouncements quite unimpaired.

At his opening meeting at Quorn he announced that two important new industries would be coming to South Australia, he had negotiated for them and their arrival was assured as a result of his good salesmanship. When, however, it came to telling us what they were, Sir Thomas was coy. The whole thing was too important, too delicate, too secret at this stage to do more than say what he had. He couldn't tell us what the new industries were, and we haven't had the information vouchsafed to us since.

After promising Hawker a new bore for its town water supply (which had been previously arranged anyway) a new dam for Blinman and more schoolteachers for Leigh Creek, where the school has been understaffed for years and where his belated interest seemed to have been stimulated only by the fact of a pending election - Sir Thomas cantered off to Peterborough where he was determined to deliver himself of one of his more thunderous utterances.

"750 men to work for eight years on S. A. rail link. £21m. Broken Hill-Pirie job", said banner headlines in the News next day. Let me quote you the whole story as it appeared in that newspaper.

"The Premier said he expected to hear within two or three weeks from the Federal Government on plans now being considered by Federal Government ~~xxxxx~~ for the rail standardisation project.

"He said immediately the plan was approved the State Government hoped to call tenders for the rolling stock replacement for locos, freight trucks and passenger carriages to equal capacity of these ~~to~~ ~~xxxxx~~ at present in service on the Peterborough

"The Commonwealth under the rail standardisation agreement, was committed to paying the whole cost of line construction and siding stock with the State Government repaying 30% over a 45 year period.

"He said an early start on rolling stock replacement would enable this equipment to be put in service before completion of the rail laying with a saving of £10,000 per week to the S.A.R.

"At present the S.A.R. in this division was using steam locomotives, the economics of which did not match the change to diesel operation in other S.A.R. divisions.

"Specifications were already drawn up by S.A.R. for these rolling stock requirements.

"The Premier said, that the tremendous growth at Whyalla, where the B.H.P. was expected to spend up to £50m. on its steel works project matched by an equal sum to be spent by the State Government in providing housing and water power and other services made it obvious that this centre should also be linked with a standard gauge running clear from N.S.W. to Whyalla."

This is interpreted to mean that if the Commonwealth feels it is not obliged to assist in construction of a railway from Whyalla to Port Augusta the State Government will consider the project on its own.

"The Premier's announcement has heartened both business people and railway workers in the Peterborough area.

"Fears had been expressed that rail standardisation might mean a wholesale transfer of the Peterborough workshops to Port Pirie or other centres.

"The Premier said Peterborough would not be by-passed, the railway works would not be closed down, nor would railway employment suffer with the introduction of diesels into the division.

"In fact, he expected an increase in work available with increased traffic running direct from N.S.W. to W.A. in the future."

Now those who were aware of the evidence given that very morning to the Public Works Standing Committee, evidence which conflicted markedly with the views expressed by the Premier, might have been pardoned for treating the Premier's statement with reserve.

Coming as it did only three days before the Frome poll,

Sir Thomas' speech was obviously designed to get the working people of Peterborough to vote him a resounding pledge of their confidence. They didn't.

Now that the period mentioned by the Premier has elapsed, we find even less sign than before that the rail standardisation agreement is to be carried out by Federal Government.

We see no tenders for new rolling stock called - no 750 engaged no standardised rail link commenced.

Now the important thing about all this is that this sort of gay announcement by the Premier is not rare or unusual. We have had such announcements before about oil development, industrial development at Elizabeth, the deep sea port in the South East, the atomic power plant, country meat works, the great new industry Sir Thomas was going to bring back with him from the U.S.A. but which unfortunately got lost somewhere in the Pacific - one could go on and on. We have been fed too long on this kind of fairy story, the fact is that this State's industrial development since 1950 has been the worst in the Commonwealth and when this is added to the L.C.L. Government's woeful record on education, hospitals, child and aged welfare, industrial safety, it makes a very sorry picture indeed.

Goodnight.