



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

This is a scan of a document number DUN/Speeches/1948  
in the Dunstan Collection, Special Collections, Flinders University Library.  
<http://www.flinders.edu.au/library/info/collections/special/dunstan/>

**Title:**  
Speech at Productivity Promotion Council Dinner, Adelaide

Please acknowledge the source as:  
Dunstan Collection, Flinders University Library.  
Identifier: DUN/Speeches/1948

© Copyright Estate Donald Allan Dunstan

1948  
55

SPEECH BY THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN, AT PRODUCTIVITY PROMOTION  
COUNCIL DINNER. ADELAIDE.

24.11.71

MR. GITSHAM, MR. FOOTNER, MR. CLARING-BOULD, MR. SYMONS, MR. STEVENS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN;

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR INVITING ME HERE THIS EVENING.

THIS YEAR'S AWARDS HAVE AGAIN SHOWN THAT WE ARE VERY FORTUNATE IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA IN HAVING IN OUR WORKFORCE A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH IDEAS ABOUT NEW WAYS OF DOING THINGS AND A WILLINGNESS TO SHARE THEM IN A MANNER WHICH IS OF DIRECT BENEFIT TO OUR ECONOMY. THE AWARDS SHOW TOO, TO ANYBODY WHO MIGHT STILL NEED CONVINCING, THAT THE SCHEME HAS BECOME AN ESTABLISHED SUCCESS AND THAT THE PRODUCTIVITY PROMOTION COUNCIL LIVES UP TO ITS OWN PRECEPTS IN EFFICIENT ORGANISATION AND CAPACITY FOR HARD WORK.

2.

THE COUNCIL DOES A VERY FINE JOB - AND ONE THAT'S OF INCREASING IMPORTANCE - NOT JUST ON OCCASIONS SUCH AS THIS BUT THROUGHOUT THE YEAR IN INFORMING INDUSTRY, COMMERCE AND OTHER SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE NEED TO EXPAND PRODUCTIVITY.

IF AUSTRALIA IS TO INCREASE ITS COMPETITIVE EDGE IN THE WORLD - AND IF SOUTH AUSTRALIA IS TO MAINTAIN ITS LEAD WITHIN THE COUNTRY - GROUPS SUCH AS YOURS MUST NOT RELAX FOR A MOMENT. CERTAINLY MY GOVERNMENT VERY MUCH APPRECIATES THE WORK YOU'RE DOING FOR THE STATE AND IS KEEN TO FURTHER IT IN ANY WAY WE CAN.

WE REQUIRE A COMBINED AND CO-ORDINATED EFFORT BY EMPLOYERS, TRADE UNIONS AND GOVERNMENTS IN AUSTRALIA TO INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY. WE NEED THIS NOT JUST TO SWELL PAY PACKETS OR DIVIDEND CHEQUES BUT TO PROVIDE THE WHEREWITHALL FOR A CROSS-COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT IN LIVING STANDARDS AND SO THAT WE AS A COUNTRY CAN DO MORE TO HELP OTHER NATIONS IMPROVE THEIR STANDARDS TO THE POINT WHERE THEY CAN AFFORD TO WORRY ABOUT PRODUCTIVITY INSTEAD OF SHEER SURVIVAL.

IF I MAY QUOTE FROM YOUR OWN OUTLINE OF PRINCIPLES:

"HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY RESULTS IN THE STRENGTHENING OF THE ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS OF HUMAN WELL-BEING".

THIS IS A MOST UNCONTROVERSIAL GOAL. IT IS ALSO A VERY GREAT CHALLENGE.

THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND THE PRODUCTIVITY GROUPS HAS ALREADY ACHIEVED SOME VERY PRACTICAL BENEFITS, SOME OF WHICH WE'VE HEARD ABOUT TONIGHT, IN MOVING TOWARDS THIS GOAL AND YOU HAVE, I KNOW, AN AMBITIOUS PROGRAMME TO DO A LOT MORE.

IN FRAMING FUTURE PROGRAMMES YOU ARE GOING TO REQUIRE SIMILAR QUALITIES OF ENTHUSIASM AND DEDICATION. I THINK IT WILL ALSO BECOME NECESSARY TO GIVE MORE ATTENTION TO ONE PARTICULAR ASPECT OF THE DEFINITION OF PRODUCTIVITY WHICH, AGAIN TO QUOTE THE

COUNCIL, I TAKE TO BE "MAKING MORE EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES IN GENERAL".

WE ARE NOW REALISING JUST HOW IMPORTANT THIS PROBLEM OF USE OF RESOURCES IS GOING TO BE, AND JUST HOW SOON IT IS GOING TO BE A PROBLEM. THE VERY NATURE OF AUSTRALIA AND OUR RECENT HISTORY OR RAPID - ALMOST EXPLOSIVE - GROWTH OF DISCOVERIES OF NATURAL RESOURCES, SUCH AS OIL, IRON ORE AND NICKEL, HAS TO SOME EXTENT SHIELDED US FROM AN APPRECIATION OF THE PERILS THAT CONFRONT THE WHOLE WORLD. WE TALK BLITHELY ABOUT RESERVES IN MILLIONS OR TRILLIONS OF UNITS AND, BECAUSE WE HAVE MADE DISCOVERIES IN THE PAST, ANTICIPATE THAT WE WILL MAKE STILL MORE IN AN EVER-ABUNDANT FUTURE.

BUT, EVEN IN THIS COUNTRY OF PLENTY, THE STORM SIGNALS ARE GOING UP.

5.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS RECENTLY HAD PUT BEFORE IT THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT. IT IS AN EXPERT, THOROUGH AND THOUGHT-PROVOKING DOCUMENT. IT HAS BEEN PUBLISHED AND, IF YOU HAVE NOT YET READ IT, I URGE YOU TO DO SO. ONE OF THE THINGS THE COMMITTEE CONSIDERED WAS THIS PROBLEM OF RESOURCE CONSERVATION. AND THIS IS ONE OF THE THINGS THEY HAD TO SAY: "IN SPITE OF THE DIFFICULTIES OF MAKING ACCURATE PREDICTIONS, IT CAN BE CONSIDERED ALMOST CERTAIN THAT WORKABLE DEPOSITS OF SOME MINERALS AND ELEMENTS ESSENTIAL TO MODERN TECHNOLOGY WILL BE NEARLY EXHAUSTED BY THE YEAR 2000".

NOW MILLENIAL FIGURES HAVE A CONFORTINGLY DISTANT RING. IT'S FAR LESS COMFORTING TO REALISE THAT THE YEAR 2000 IS JUST 28 YEARS AWAY. I'LL PROBABLY BE A GRANDFATHER BY THEN BUT I HOPE I'LL STILL BE AROUND AND SO WILL MANY PEOPLE IN THIS ROOM.

6.

THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ITSELF POINTED TO THE DIFFICULTY OF MAKING ACCURATE PREDICTIONS. THEY AGREED THAT FUTURE DISCOVERIES MAY BRING RELIEF FROM THESE DIRE PROJECTIONS. BUT EVEN GIVEN THIS WE SHALL STILL BE FACED WITH DEVELOPMENT LAGS AND THUS TEMPORARY SHORTAGES. BESIDES WHICH TO ASSUME, AS I SAID EARLIER, THAT PAST DISCOVERY IMPLIES FUTURE DISCOVERY COULD WELL BE TO EMBRACE A FATAL FALLACY.

WE ARE, AS I REMARKED, ONLY NOW BEGINNING TO APPRECIATE THE DIMENSIONS OF THIS COMPLEX PROBLEM, TO DEFINE AND QUANTIFY IT SO IT IS OBVIOUSLY PREMATURE TO TALK ABOUT SOLUTIONS - AS WELL AS BEING ROSILY OPTIMISTIC.

WE MAY, INDEED, HAVE TO UNDERGO A SOCIETAL CHANGE AS PROFOUND IN IMPACT AS THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION WHICH TRIGGERED IT. ONE THING IS HOWEVER, I BELIEVE ALREADY PLAIN. IT IS THAT WE CAN NO LONGER AFFORD THE SQUANDERING OF FINITE RESOURCES.

INCREASINGLY FIRMS - AND GOVERNMENTS - WILL HAVE TO CONSIDER AND ENCOURAGE THE RE-CYCLING OF THOSE RESOURCES CAPABLE OF RE-CYCLING. IN DISCUSSING PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY WE WILL HAVE TO CALCULATE THIS CONSERVATION AND RE-USE FACTOR INTO ANY FORMULA USED. IT COULD WELL BE THAT PRODUCTIVITY WILL COME TO MEAN NOT ONLY THE MOST EFFICIENT USE OF THE PHYSICAL MEANS OF PRODUCTION, BUT THEIR MOST EFFICIENT RE-USE.

MR. GITSHAM, AGAIN MY THANKS TO YOUR COUNCIL FOR THE WORK YOU ARE DOING AND MY CONGRATULATIONS TO TONIGHT'S AWARD WINNERS.

THANK YOU.