

9/12/85

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PARLIAMENT HOUSE, MELBOURNE, VIC. 3002

TELEPHONE 651 8911

15th November, 1985.

Mr. J. Heard,
Secretary,
South Bendigo Branch,
Commercial Egg Producers Association,
Wicks Road,
MAIDEN GULLY 3551

Dear Mr. Heard,

RE: REPLACEMENT POULTRY OFFICER - BENDIGO REGION.

I have enclosed comments I made in State Parliament this week concerning the replacement of the above Officer.

I have forwarded these on for your information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Bernie Dunn'.

Bernie Dunn M.L.C.,
Leader of the National Party (Council),
Member for North Western Province.

Enc.1.

taken into account. Both the parents and the students must be happy about the education the students are receiving and the school they are attending. This policy is inflexible.

The Honourable Ken Wright has met deputations on the subject and discussions have been undertaken with the regional director of education with little result. We will continue to work on that matter because some degree of flexibility is needed with that policy because the views of the parents and students have to be considered. At this stage, it looks as though the decisions are being made by the department and appeals are being cast aside and there is very little flexibility.

I now wish to refer to agriculture and rural affairs, with particular regard to the importance of the poultry and egg industry in Bendigo. The egg industry is a significant industry which involves a number of efficient egg producers who are enthusiastic and proud of their industry. They have their own industry organization, the Commercial Egg Producers Association, and that organization has been to the forefront in putting the views of egg producers forward in this Parliament and the district. The Minister would be aware of some of those representations and more will be made with respect to a Bill to be debated in the House.

The Hon. E. H. Walker—Which they support.

The Hon. B. P. DUNN—I have asked them to comment and give their considered view. The industry has had some difficulty with the fowl plague problem. The industry has recently been advised that Mr Greg Parkinson, the poultry extension officer of the department is to be transferred from Bendigo to be located at the Attwood Veterinary Research Laboratory, along with other research and diagnostic staff. That was a recommendation of the department. I brought this to the attention of the Minister who said he would review it; he recognized the importance of the poultry industry in Bendigo and the value Mr Parkinson was to that industry. However, the Minister still stood by the recommendation that Mr Parkinson should be transferred.

The egg producers in the district have expressed concern about this move. They believe it is important that in view of the fact that a fairly intense section of the egg industry is located in and around Bendigo, a poultry extension officer located in the area is of great value to the industry. Mr Parkinson has been accessible to the industry and its members believe and rightly so, that if the staff are located away from Bendigo there will be difficulties in obtaining the direct and good service they have enjoyed in the past from this person.

All I want the Minister to do is to examine the matter and, it is hoped, review the decision and, if possible, leave a research officer located in Bendigo. Those are the only comments I wish to make at this stage.

The Hon. HADDON STOREY (East Yarra Province)—I wish to speak on the education program and to cover a number of items in that program. The over-all figures for education show an increase of 5.7 per cent against the consumer price index estimate in the Budget of 7.5 per cent, so that on the face of it there is a real decrease in the amount of money provided for education. The Minister for Education explains this away by saying that the Budget does not provide for increases in salary and that those will be met out of the Treasurer's Advance when there are wage increases as a result of decisions of the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.

If one analyses the figures provided in the Budget, there is no doubt that there is a decrease in real terms in the allocation provided for education. That was not explained in the Budget speech but it became apparent when one examined the figures regarding the strikes that have taken place in this State throughout the whole of the education system.

I shall refer to some of the figures relating to that at a later stage.

I shall now refer to that part of the education allocation that deals with the administration of the Education Department, now the Ministry of Education. The Budget does not

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