**INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL AND VETERINARY SCIENCE BILL 1937**

**Legislative Assembly, 30 November 1937, page 1973**

Second Reading

Having obtained leave, the Treasurer intro iced a Bill for the establishment and maintenance of an institute of medical and veterinary science and purposes incidental thereto. Read a first time.

Second reading.

**The Hon. R. L. BUTLER (Wooroora— Premier and Treasurer)—**This Bill carries out the Government’s proposals for the establishment of an institution with independent status, to take the place of the existing laboratory of bacteriology and pathology at Adelaide Hospital and to perform additional functions. The care of the health of the people has been a constant and increasing preoccupation of Governments not only in the provision of hospitals and a public health service for the control and prevention of but also the education of medical men and nurses. Finally comes the problem of medical research, that is, the work of investigating causes and cure of disease. The Government has been so impressed by the value of medical research that it resolved to establish the Institute of Medical Science on a sound and permanent basis. We all appreciate how difficult it is for an institute of research to be established on a satisfactory basis if there are two or three controlling bodies, or if it is compelled to adopt the usual routine of ordinary Government offices. These men who give their services to medical research frequently work extremely long hours. Often in their enthusiasm they work all night and it is absolutely impossible to lay down the same hard and fast rules and regulations for a person engaged in that class work as it is for the ordinary civil servant. Previously the University donated a sum towards the salary of the Director of the Government Laboratory of Bacteriology. He is partly under control of the University, partly under the Minister, and more or less under control of the Hospital Board. With such control it must lead to an unsatisfactory position. The Hon. J. Mclnnes, who has taken a deep interest in this matter, brought forward certain aspects of this question because he considered they were urgent and worthy of consideration. Mr. Rudall raised the question when the Estimates were being discussed this year and pointed out the desirability of establishing a board to control thisinstitution. Realising the tremendous success we have achieved through the Waite Institute and the tremendous benefits it has conferred not only on South Australia, but on Australia in regard to plant diseases, etc., I feel that the establishment of this Institute to carry out research work in medical and veterinary science will also be of inestimable benefit. We have a branch in the Department of Agriculture which has been carrying out veterinary research work for many years, but it has not had the opportunities which it should have been given.

In looking back over the history of events leading up to the establishment of this Institute, I find that in 1912 the South Australian Government established at the Adelaide Hospital the Government Laboratory of Bacteriology and Pathology. This laboratory carried out scientific investigations for the Adelaide Hospital primarily, but also for other State hospitals, Boards of Health, the Stock Department, other Government departments and for private medical and veterinary practitioners. I take this opportunity of publicly paying a tribute to the work of Dr. C. T. deCrespigny. Twenty-five years ago when the Laboratory was first established, he was its first Director and, in this capacity, he has rendered excellent service to South Australia and her people. His work laid the foundation of what in time to come will be one of the most important medical institutions in the Commonwealth. May I also express the appreciation of the Government to the members of the Advisory Committee for the spade-work they have carried out. The history of the move for the establishment of the Institute furnishes proof of that spirit of co-operation between the Government, the University, and private individuals, of which South Australia is so proud. For many years Dr. L. B. Bull was Director of the Government Laboratory of Bacteriology and Pathology, and the work carried out by him and his staff was of great benefit to the community. His distinguished services led to his appointment by the Commonwealth to take charge of the Department of Animal Husbandry for the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research.

Two years ago a move was made for the foundation of the Institute of Medical Science to take over the work of the Government Laboratory and in addition engage in active research into causes, prevention and cure of human and animal disease. The need was felt, too, to bring the teaching of pathology and bacteriology fromthe University to the hospital, a move which has long been advocated by teachers in the Medical School. In order to further this plan, the University contributed from the Keith Sheridan bequest for Medical Research half the stipend to be paid to a director, whilst at the game time the University contributed towards the salary of the Deputy Director who is lecturer in Bacteriology in the Medical School. Three generous benefactors, Miss Edith Bonython, Mr. Norman Darling, and Mr. T. E. Barr Smith, on the occasion of the jubilee of the Medical School, each contributed £5,000 towards the erection and equipment of a new building to be placed in the grounds of the Adelaide Hospital, fronting Frome Road, opposite the University. The commissioners of charitable funds have generously contributed £10,000 towards its erection. This Government, impressed by the importance of the project, decided to erect the Institute on the proposed lines, and the foundation stone was laid by Sir George Ritchie on August 23 of this year. Having decided on its establishment and maintenance an annual sum has been set aside for working expenses to cover the next five years. The cost of this building with equipment has been estimated at £52,000. It will include provision for routine work in pathology and bacteriology for the Adelaide and other Government hospitals. Accommodation will be provided for teaching these subjects to students in medicine and dentistry. There will be ample facilities for research into all problems connected with medical science. Further, it is the intention of-the Government actively to foster investigation into diseases of stock and domestic animals, and for this purpose a department will be formed with a staff of veterinarians who will have ample accommodation and facilities for their researches. Special emphasis should be laid upon this development, for it is hoped that it may assist in saving much loss which accrues to stock through modern treatment of pastures and the resultant increase in stock per acre.

Mr. Melrose—Does the Government intend to establish a fund for the purpose of recompensing owners of animals that have to be destroyed?

The Hon. R. L. BUTLER—That is a different problem. As a result of the extensive use of artificial manures the carrying capacity of our land has been increased, and because of this increase we have a greater number of diseases to contend with. The losses in South Australiain this direction have been very heavy. It has been long felt that we should have a laboratory to inquire into the diseases which are entirely new to South Australia. I do not think there will be any compensation for a person who loses stock. After all, if a man startsoff under newmethods, he should bear the risk, although it is the function of the State to help in every way possible.

Mr. Melrose—I was thinking of the eradication of tuberculosis in cattle. This cannot be gone on with because there is no fund to recompense owners of animals destroyed.

The Hon. R. L. BUTLER—If a man has tubercular cattle they should be destroyed immediately, but this Bill does not deal with that problem. The director, Dr. E. Weston Hurst, although primarily a medical scientist, has himself had considerable experience in stock diseases in the United States of America. Research in bacteriology promises to be of service in fields other than human disease since this science plays a large part in many industries—agriculture, dairying, wine-making and brewing, to name only a few of them. The situation of the Institute is a very happyone in regard to its activities, so close both to the hospital and to the University and, in this respect, it is unique in Australia. I think it is almost unique in the world for an institution of this type of research to be alongside the University where our younger scientists are trained and also alongside a hospital from which eases can be sent to the research officers. From the foregoing it may be realised what great service the Institute may render to the State. The question of management has been carefully considered, and it has been decided set up a council of control, which be representative of the principal interests concerned, viz., the Board of Management of the Adelaide Hospital, the University, and the Stockowners’ Association, with duties as set out in the Bill.

The establishment of this Institute is without precedent in Australia, and marks a great step forward in its encouragement of medical and veterinary scientists in their fight against disease. By its action this State has once more taken the lead, as so often in the past, in a movement which seems likely to benefit not only our own people, but possibly others throughout the world. Scientific research, and especially medical research, knows no political boundaries. Who can predict what good may not flow from the patient and exacting work of the scientist? What he discovers of benefit to his fellows is free for them to share in, and there is no limit either in time or space to the results which he may achieve

Mr Robinson—Is there not a danger of plicating the veterinary work?

The Hon. R. L. BUTLER—We are closing down the present office and the work will be done in the future at the Institute. In medicine the Institute should be able to render invaluable work. In regard to the pastoral industry, in years to come Adelaide should be the most important centre in Australia for scientific research, since it will contain the Waite Institute, already famous; the Animal Nutrition Department of the Institute for Scientific and Industrial Research (of which the late Professor Brailsford Robertson and Sir Charles Martin were distinguished directors); and now the Department of Veterinary Science, which will make complete the study of those problems which are associated with the primary industries. I do not think there will be anything in the Southern Hemisphere to equal this Institute. It is universally considered throughout the medical profession that the Institute should be established. The Bill has been approved by the University, the Board of Management of the Adelaide Hospital—in fact all consulted are unanimous in approving of it.

Mr. Robinson—Should there not be facilities at the University for training veterinary surgeons?

The Hon. R. L. BUTLER—I do not know whether a chair may not be established. It does not seem right that our young people should have to go to New South Wales to complete their course in veterinary science. I think it is hoped that chair will be estab­lished here to enable our young people to complete their studies. I am afraid we shall havepay our veterinary surgeons a little more than we do. When I was in Great Britain I saw that young veterinary surgeons were earning as much as £1,000 to £1,200 per annum, yet we onlyoffer only £400 to £600. It was obvious to me that the authorities in Great Britain value very highly the services of their properly qualified veterinary surgeons. I do not think we really know how valuable their services are.

By clause 2 it is provided that the Bill shall commence on a day to be fixed by proclama­tion. This provision is inserted because of the probability that the new Institute buildings will not be completed for some months, and in the meantime the existing arrangements must continue. The only matter in clause 3 to which special attention need be drawn is the definition of “Institute.” It will be noticed that the full name of the Institute is “The Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science.’’ It is anticipated that while the work of the Institute will be primarily that of research into the diseases of human beings, veterinary work will also fall within its scope, and it is desirable that the name of the Institute should indicate this fact to the public. Clause 4 provides for the establishment of a council to control and manage the Institute. The council is declared to be a body corporate, with perpetual succession, a common seal, and power to hold land. Clause 5 sets out the provisions as to the members of the council. These members will be the chairman and the two other members of the board of management of the Adelaide Hospital, two persons nominated by the University of Adelaide, and a representative of the Stockowners’ Association. The Bill does not provide for the Stockowners’ Association nominating a representative. Some members of the association live in the far-flung parts of our State, and although they might be able representatives, they would be unable to attend all the meetings of the council owing to their living a long distance from the city. For that reason the Government will consult the Stockowners’ Association in regard to a suitable person for appointment to the council.

Mr. Lacey—Many of those who own valuable stock are not members of the Stockowners’ Association.

The Hon. R. L. BUTLER—Most of the big stockowners are, and I am particularly anxious to get them interested in this Institute. The Governor will select the chairman and deputy chairman of the Institute from among the members. The term of office for every member will be five years, except in the ease of a casual vacancy. Clause 6 sets out. the circumstances under which a casual vacancy will be created, and also prescribes a retiring age of 70 years for the chairman and every member of the council. Clause 8 provides that the first meeting of thecouncil is to be summoned by the chairman, and subsequent meetings will be held at the time and in the manner determined by the council. Clause 9 provides for the appointment of a director and deputy director of the Institute. It is declared that Dr. Hurst will be the first director, and shall be entitled to hold office for five years as from the commencement of the Act, and that subsequent directors and deputy directors are to be appointed by the Governor on such terms and conditions as may be thought fit in the future. The director is to be the principal executive officer of the council, and, subject to the directions of the council, will be responsible for the control and management of the Institute.

Clause 10 deals with the staff of the Institute. Salaried officers of the Institute will, unless the Governor otherwise determines, be subject to the Public Service Act. It is, however, anticipated that the director and some of the other principal officers of the Institute will prefer to remain outside the Public Service Act. The general staff of the Institute, most of whom will be taken from the staff of the Adelaide Hospital, will doubtless prefer to retain their rights under the Public Service Act and under the Superannuation Act. The council may also employ daily and weekly paid employees at proper rates of pay. Clause 11 provides that the council may, with the approval of the Minister administering the department of the Public Service, make use of the services of any officers employed in that department on any terms agreed. Clause 12 provides that the council shall have the right to grant to those officers of the Institute who are not public servants such leave of absence as the council thinks fit.

Clause 13 deals with the finances of the Institute. There will be established at the Treasury a trust fund into which all the money of the Institute will be paid and from which its expenditure will be defrayed. For the first five years of the life of the Institute the Treasurer will pay into the trust fund an annual amount of £10,000. There are also to be paid into the trust fund any moneys earned by the Institute in connection with work which it does for the general public. The Adelaide Hospital laboratory at present earns a sum of between £1,000 and £2,000 a year for tests and other medical work done for the public. It is anticipated that the Institute will continue to earn some such amount. In addition to paying money into the trust fund the Government willprovide and maintain a building for the Institute and will also make a payment into the superannuation fund on behalf of those members of the staff of the Institute who subject to the Superannuation Act, 1927.

Mr. Petherick—Will there be any contribution from persons on the veterinary side?

The Hon. R. L. BUTLER—That is one thing which we hope will occur as a result of the Bill.

Mr. J. A. Lyons—As this proposed Institution will be of great value to the whole Commonwealth, don’t you think we should getmoney from the Commonwealth Government.

The Hon. R. L. BUTLER—The Rockefeller Institute, which makes advances to institutions all over the world will not make advances to Government institutions, but now we have this separate entity, there is no reason why we should not receive assistance from that institute in the future. We are hopeful too, that will find other generous hearted public citizens whowill contribute towards this proposed Institute.In connection with superannuation payments, it must be remembered that the Institute win
continue to do a good deal of work for the Adelaide Hospital and that in effect some part
of the staff of the Institute might well be regarded as being part of the staff of theAdelaide Hospital and therefore entitled to come under the Superannuation Act.

Clause 14 provides for an annual audit of the accounts of the Institute, to be conducted by the Auditor-General. Clause 15 enables the Governor and other governmental authorities to make available to the Institute, buildings, plantand equipment of the Crown on such terms as are agreed upon. Clause 16 provides that the Institute is to be subject to the jurisdiction of the Supply and Tender Board, except in cases of emergency. In those cases the Institute may purchase without reference to the board anystores or materials which it urgently requires not exceeding £25 in value. Clause 17 sets out the functions of the Institute. These are as follows:—

1. Research into the diseases of human beings and animals.
2. Providing the Adelaide Hospital andMinisters of the Crown with free services in pathology, bacteriology, bio-chemistry and any other allied sciences in which services may he required.
3. Performing medical work for public authorities, medical practitioners and the general public.
4. Providing any facilities which the council may think proper for persons to conduct research at the Institute.

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iJding ^°! providing the University of Adelaide, a payment agreement, with the use of the Institute behalf 0f fings or plant for teaching purposes.Jistitute whwag anticipated that expenditure would1 o t, 1927,jually, gr<^w and whereas the Government’e any coa^;^e(j £8,000 on the Estimates for this year,inary side?jS providing £10,000 under the Bill eachat one tr for five years. I think it is wise, whensuit of the begin with an undertaking of this natureoposed Insl; build for future years instead of perhapsnhoIe ^01%iilding or making additions. The Government feels satisfied that £10,000 a year will be sufficient for the Institute to carry on with. Scientists and doctors usually are so thoroughly interested in their work that they do not naturally claim to be thoroughly qualified business men and for that reason I am anxious that one of the members of the board will be a highly qualified business man who will be able to look after the business side ofthe work. Clause 17 also provides that theCouncil maycharge the public fees for the work done by it and these fees may be recovered by the Director-General of Medical Services.

Clause 18 provides that the council may make agreements or arrangements with the Adelaide University for granting the University the right to use and occupy the buildings of the Institute, and to use plant or equipment (other than scientific equipment) of the Institute. Arrangements may also be made at the discretion of the council of the Institute for furnishing the University with other services. Clause 19 validates the gift of £10,000 made by the Commissioners of Charitable Funds towards the cost of building the Institute and also provides that it shall be lawful for those Commissioners out of any moneys which they hold for the benefit of the Adelaide Hospital to make future gifts to the Institute. As there may appear to be some doubt whether the Institute was actually part or branch of the Adelaide Hospital it was considered necessary to have this clause in the Bill so as to make the matter clear. I am certain that in this Parliament no Party interests will be allowed to interfere when it comes to a question of health of our people, and I am sure members always try to do all theycan to place health measures on a better basis so as to prevent anything from destroying our most valuable possession—human life—and alleviate the sufferings of people who do not enjoy the best of health. I feel certain that the Bill will receive the unanimous support of all members and that in future years we will be able to say that we have achieved something both for the State and the people. Clause 20 provides that the Institute is to make an annual report which must be laid before Parliament, and clause 21 contains the usual regulation-making power. I move the second reading.

Mr. LACEY secured the adjournment of the debate.