

NUFFIELD SCHOLARSHIPS – 29 September 2011

Mr TRELOAR (Flinders) (11:55): I move:

That this house congratulates—

- (a) Nuffield Australia on the 60th anniversary of its first Nuffield farming scholar; and
- (b) Nuffield International on holding its triennial international conference in South Australia in September this year.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (12:29): I too wish to support the motion by the member for Flinders that this house congratulates both Nuffield Australia on the 60th anniversary of its first Nuffield farming scholar, and Nuffield International on holding its triennial international conference in South Australia in September this year. Nuffield is about scholarships for Australian primary producers, and Nuffield Australia—

An honourable member: Young ones.

Mr PEDERICK: Yes, young ones—is part of a unique global network of farmers. Nuffield Australia Farming Scholars provides a scholarship scheme for the benefit of the Australian farming community, and through the adoption of local and international best practice and continuous development of a network of industry leaders and innovators, the scholarship scheme promotes excellence in all aspects of Australian agricultural production, distribution and management. A Nuffield farming scholarship is a world experience, and a continuing benefit to past and present scholars.

I would just like to say that it does promote excellence in our farming colleagues. I congratulate the member for Flinders (Peter Treloar) on conducting a trip in 2002 to study the grain industry, and just having a brief look at the executive summary of his report, he certainly makes some apt considerations about the ownership of grain companies across the world.

I notice that, at the end of the report, he talks about farmers keeping control of their companies. I note that this was a report filed in 2004; how much the world has changed in that time. Sadly, we see that here in South Australia we have, as farmers, lost control over some of our grain handling companies. We certainly see, in Western Australia, with co-operative bulk handling, that the farmers in the west have fought to keep control of that structure, and I applaud them for that.

I would also like to acknowledge Andrew Johnson, who is a colleague and friend of mine from Tintinara and who is very much involved in the pig industry. He is another Nuffield scholar who has been and will continue to be an excellent contributor to agriculture, always striving for excellence. I note a couple of the scholars from this year: Linda Eldredge—who I think is from around the Clare region, and I am pretty sure I knew her in Rural Youth many years ago—and Robin Schaefer from the Mallee. I have heard Robin Schaefer—

Mr Whetstone: Old girlfriend?

Mr PEDERICK: Robin is a male and no, Linda is not an ex-girlfriend, I can assure you; she would probably be appalled!

The Hon. R.B. Such: We've only got half an hour.

Mr PEDERICK: I would like to absolutely congratulate Robin Schaefer on his success in becoming a Nuffield scholar. I have had the opportunity to hear Robin speak on a couple of occasions about setting up his practice for no-till farming. He is a Mallee farmer and he knows he has to extract not just every dollar, but every cent out of his soil, and do it sustainably. He is a really switched-on farmer, and I really do congratulate him on winning this scholarship.

The Nuffield program, as I have said before, promotes excellence in Australia and also through overseas connections, and I note that the triennial conference is here in Adelaide this week. I fully congratulate the organisation for that, because anything we can do to promote agriculture is a good thing, especially in times where we see the state government here take so much money away from primary industries, as we have seen in recent years. Sadly, the agriculture industry is learning more and more that it has to stand on its own feet without much government support.

I would like to congratulate Nuffield International, and also Nuffield Australia, as I think they do great work. It promotes lifelong friendships that will go on forever, with people who meet from across the world. It promotes networks of excellence in agriculture that can only benefit the agriculture scene, not just in this country but right across the world. I commend the motion.