

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, August 9, 1951.

The SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Robert Nicholls) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

PRICE CONTROL CONFERENCES.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The following paragraph appeared in this morning's *Advertiser*—

The Federal Government is expected to propose to the Premiers' Conference next week action to achieve a closer partnership between the Commonwealth and the States on the operation of price control. The Government's offer will be its answer to the demand of some States for the Commonwealth to resume price control.

Has the text of the proposals forecast in the press been communicated to the Premier? As they appear to offer some possibility of improvement in the present price fixing position, has the Premier any statement to make about the Government's views on the matter?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No communication has yet been received from the Prime Minister on the proposals, as reported in this morning's *Advertiser*. I believe that the proposals would be useful in connection with price fixing in the Commonwealth as a whole. They are a fairly considerable advance on the Commonwealth's attitude on the matter so far. Although the States had requested the Commonwealth to appoint a Prices Minister to attend the Prices Ministers' conferences and assist in bringing Commonwealth policy into line with that of the States, and *vice versa*, the furthest the Commonwealth Government has gone is to send a senior officer to the conferences and make him available for discussions with the State Prices Ministers. Mr. McCarthy, who has had wide experience, has attended a number of meetings and has been of considerable assistance to the conferences.

Mr. Macgillivray—Is he the same officer who was in charge of soldier settlement?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I believe that at one stage he was chairman of the Tariff Board, but as far as I know he is not associated with soldier settlement in any way. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that the attendance of a Commonwealth Minister would greatly enhance the possibilities of making price fixing uniform and a success, and my Government would willingly extend an invitation, with other State Prices Ministers, for a Commonwealth Minister to attend the conferences and take part in decisions.

BUILDING MATERIALS ACT.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I am concerned with paragraph (c) of subsection (2) of section 4 of the Building Materials Act, 1945-1949, which states:—

(1) The dwellinghouse is constructed at the cost of a person upon land in which that person has a beneficial interest and the dwellinghouse is constructed for occupation by that person as a permanent and principal place of residence.

Can the Premier indicate whether Parliament intended, when the legislation was passed, that if a person built a home in accordance with that provision it should be used entirely for his own occupation, and not for speculation purposes? A practice has grown whereby certain people build a home not exceeding the specified area and then sell it, immediately afterwards laying foundations of another home.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The intention is clearly set out in the Act. If a person requires a house to live in he has the right to build one provided it does not exceed a certain area and a certain cost. I agree that there has been some difficulty in policing the erection of a house under that provision ostensibly for occupation purposes, which, after being occupied for a short period, if at all, is sold, and the building of another home commenced. I have no doubt that when the amending legislation is introduced this session the matter will receive attention.

LABOUR FOR DAIRY INDUSTRY.

Mr. SHANNON—Has the Minister of Agriculture obtained a reply to the question I asked on July 31 regarding the serious hardship which will result if sons of dairy farmers are called up for national training, as virtually the only labour left on a dairy farm is the farmer's own family? It is feared that if the young men undergo national service training they will not return to the dairy farms.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The regulations under the National Service Act, 1951, make the following provisions for deferment of service on the grounds of exceptional hardship:—

39. A registered person who has been notified that he is fit for service and claims that the rendering of service under the Act by him would impose exceptional hardship upon him or upon his parents or dependants may make application in accordance with form 12 for deferment of his liability to render that service.

40. (1) The applicant shall post or deliver the form of application to the District Employment Officer at the District Employment Office specified in the applicant's certificate of registration.

(2) The matters relied on in support of an application shall be set out in full in the application.

41. Upon receipt of an application made in accordance with this part, the District Employment Officer shall forward the application to the clerk of a competent court of summary jurisdiction who shall arrange for the application to be set down for hearing before the court and shall give the District Employment Officer and the applicant not less than seven days' notice in writing of the date, time, and place fixed for the hearing.

It would appear that there is provision for any cases of hardship to be put with a view to deferment.

POTATO PRICES.

Mr. LAWN—Recently a Central Market stallholder was fined £35, plus £5 15s. costs, for selling seed potatoes above the controlled price. I understand that Harris Scarfe Ltd. is selling seed potatoes at 7d. lb., which is also above the pegged price. Can the Premier say whether action is contemplated against the merchant who sold the potatoes to the stallholder at £45 a ton and also against Harris Scarfe Ltd.?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I happen to know the implications of this transaction. The potatoes were not sold to the stallholder at £45 a ton. If the potatoes being sold as seed potatoes by Harris Scarfe Ltd. are not seed potatoes and we can get sufficient evidence, action will be taken. However, if they are obviously certified seed potatoes being sold for seed purposes, it is not the practice of the Prices Department to take action against their sale, which indeed is desirable. They must be brought from another State and purchased at prices much in excess of the ordinary potato price. They come under certificate, and if that certificate is available to show they are seed potatoes, and there is no contravention of the price fixing laws relating to ordinary potatoes, the practice of the department has been to allow their sale at a price which would compensate the vendor in a reasonable way for the service he is rendering. We now have an arrangement which enables us to know whether the potatoes are in fact seed potatoes sold for seed purposes. Where seed potatoes are sold for ordinary purposes but marked up at seed prices, the department will take action to see the proper price is charged to the consumer.

Mr. LAWN—I understand that an increase of 37s. 6d. a ton in the price of potatoes has been, or is about to be, granted by the Prices Commissioner, and that a huge quantity of potatoes is held in store by growers. Is this

increase to be paid on potatoes held in store and is any further margin to be granted to retailers?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The increase of 37s. 6d. a ton has been granted because the price of bags has risen by a like amount per ton of potatoes. The grower with potatoes in store will not be any better off, for he will not receive a net price greater than the present price. As regards subsequent margins, all potatoes have been increased in price, from producer to retailer, but the price to the consumer has not been raised because, of course, the retailer will have the sack, which is valued on the basis of 37s. 6d. a ton of potatoes. The adjustments are simply those necessary to cover the charge for bags.

MARGARINE PRODUCTION.

Mr. CLARKE—Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether any consideration has been given to increasing, during the butter shortage, the permissible quantity of margarine which may be made?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—Some consideration has been given to this question, which arose as a result of a telegram I received from the New South Wales Minister of Agriculture. The suggestion was that the restriction on the production of table margarine should be lifted. The matter was discussed but it was not considered advisable to make any alteration to the existing restrictions in this State at present in view of the state of the dairying industry, as any alteration would have a very disturbing effect at present.

DESTRUCTION OF RABBITS.

Mr. DUNCAN—It has been proved that myxomatosis has been effective only in the favoured areas of closer settlement where there are ample water nurseries for the propagation of mosquitoes. The outback areas are generally free from the operations of the virus among rabbits, and it is said that with the present weather conditions prevailing there is little likelihood of any progress in the destruction of rabbits in the far northern areas. The opinion is growing that the introduction of myxomatosis is a doubtful blessing, as in the settled areas the fox, deprived of rabbit food, is now an enhanced menace to landholders because of the inroads on lamb production. Also, many people are deprived of "underground mutton" which previously helped to counteract the increasing cost of

meat under State control. Has the Minister of Agriculture any information to impart to overcome this unbalance of nature now acting to the detriment of the people?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I draw the honourable member's attention to the fact that rabbits are not indigenous to Australia, and therefore in destroying them we can hardly be said to be upsetting the balance of nature. The C.S.I.R.O. and the Veterinary Departments of Australia have made a close investigation into the position and have decided that there shall be an Australia-wide campaign during the coming spring and summer for the distribution of the myxomatosis germ in any areas where it can be distributed with prospects of success, such as in mosquito-ridden districts where it will have the desired effect upon the rabbit population. Last year there was a very much wider spread of the disease in South Australia than is generally recognized, and as a result I would say that the State is freer of rabbits now, notwithstanding the very favourable season, than for many years. That can be said to be due largely to the spread of this disease. Next year we are importing the virus from the other States and it will be made available to landowners in order that it can be widely distributed. I should say that the South-East with the many swamps existing this year will be excellent breeding places for mosquitoes, and as a consequence during the next summer the disease should have a decided effect upon the rabbit population in that area. I am not quite sure what has transpired in what the honourable member has described as the outback areas of South Australia where he says the disease has not reached. About two or three years ago there was a disease among rabbits in our pastoral areas, particularly in the north-west, which had the effect of practically decimating the pest in those areas. Since the appearance of this disease, which closely resembles myxomatosis, the rabbits have not come back in any considerable numbers in the pastoral areas, so it would appear that the disease has had a material effect for the good of the State generally. Of course, rabbits have a certain food and economic value, but the feed they destroy would keep infinitely more sheep and cattle. It would be much better for the economic position of Australia to destroy rabbits than allow them to go unchecked and not to use this opportunity of destroying Australia's greatest pest.

BARTON COPPER DEPOSITS.

Mr. TEUSNER—My attention has been drawn to some deposits of copper at Barton, near Truro. I understand that about 100 years ago mining operations were commenced there, but were abandoned at the time of the Victorian gold rush. I have in my possession some specimens of copper ore from this area and would be pleased to make them available to the Mines Department. Will the Minister representing the Minister of Mines have an inspection made of the locality by an officer of the Mines Department to ascertain the extent of the copper deposits and will he furnish a report on whether the deposits are payable and warrant the resumption of mining operations?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes.

FLOODWATERS IN PORT ADELAIDE DISTRICT.

Mr. STEPHENS—No doubt the Minister of Local Government has noticed in the press lately photographs and reports of the flooding of several homes in my district. It has been said that the flooding was caused by water coming from other districts over which the council has no control. Others say that the flooding is the fault of the council because the drains have not been kept in good order and some blame the Government. I do not know who should be blamed, but will the Minister of Local Government have inquiries made by his officers into the flooding to see if it is the fault of the local council? Further, will the Government co-operate with councils in assisting those people whose homes have been flooded? The roads and footpaths are impassible and the children cannot leave their homes to attend school.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Government has always been happy to co-operate with councils in any matter of that kind. Up to the present I have not received any request from any council in regard to a solution of this problem. I noticed the other day that there was a blockage of a minor drain which caused considerable discomfort, but no great loss. In that case it could be regarded as bad luck rather than anybody's fault. However, if I do receive any representations from councils for help in this problem I will be glad to assist, but I could not start a heresy hunt all over the State to see who is to blame for the particular disabilities of any district, as whatever I did in one area I would have to do all over the State and we have not the plant or manpower to do that.

MID-WEEK COUNTRY RACING.

The Hon. S. W. JEFFRIES—Today's *Advertiser* contains the following:—

The following statement was issued by the B.C.B.:—"The Betting Control Board believes that mid-week country racing—particularly those meetings which are held at centres in close proximity of the city—has in itself a very bad effect on the industry of the state."

Has the Premier's attention been drawn to this statement of such a definite character by an impartial and well-informed body?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—My attention had not been drawn to it, but I think it is obvious that the holding of race meetings in country centres would cause some dislocation of activities in the district on the days they are held. When Parliament decided that every Saturday should be a race day in the metropolitan area it automatically relegated country racing to week days because it is, in many instances, impossible for a meeting to be held in competition with a much bigger meeting in the metropolitan area. Therefore it becomes a question of whether or not Parliament is prepared to legislate to prohibit mid-week racing and thereby, to a large extent, prohibit country racing. To date the Government has not felt it has had sufficient grounds to introduce legislation of that nature.

Mr. DUNKS—The following is an extract from an article in today's *News* under the heading "Urges Action Following Betting Ban":—

If the Betting Control Board thought mid-week country race meetings caused absenteeism, "appropriate action" should be taken, Chamber of Commerce president (Mr. A. M. Simpson) said today. Mr. Simpson was commenting on the ban by the B.C.B. against bookmakers betting on Victorian races at Snowtown on September 27. The board had said it believed mid-week racing had "a very bad effect on the industry of the State." He said that in view of the need to obtain maximum production, anything which tended to encourage absenteeism should be stopped. Mr. Simpson said he had no facts or figures regarding absenteeism on mid-week race days, but there was no doubt some employees at work followed racing and placed bets.

I believe that many employers also attend mid-week race meetings. As the Premier took some action within the four years referred to as the "hot war," and as the Federal Government has seen fit to put the Defence Preparations Act on the Statute Book—and it seems fairly certain that we are somewhat under war conditions commonly known as a "cold war"—will he reduce the number of mid-week racing and trotting meet-

ings? I do not ask him to prohibit them altogether, but there are at times two or even three country race meetings a week, not far from the metropolitan area, which are attended by both employers and employees.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have no wish to add to what I previously told the member for Torrens, except to say that in times of prosperity there is a great tendency for all sections of the community to take advantage of the conditions. At certain times of the year bowls and golf are played on week days in the same way as race meetings are held. I do not think it advisable to discriminate against one form of sport.

Mr. O'Halloran—And against country people.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have previously emphasized that a ban should not operate against any one section of the community. Country people are particularly concerned because of the peculiar circumstances affecting the allotment of racing days. If a national emergency requires action by this Parliament it will doubtless devise means of spreading the disability evenly over all sections. If any reductions are to be made they should be general and not sectional, so that we can all take our part in any drive for such production as is necessary. I attend race meetings only infrequently, so I do not particularly advocate that form of sport, but I cannot see much difference between attending race meetings or playing golf during the week, as both take people away from production.

MOONTA BAY WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. McALLES—Moonta Bay is becoming increasingly popular as a holiday resort for people from all parts of the State and as far afield as Broken Hill, but inconvenience has been caused by lack of an adequate water supply, particularly last summer. When I brought the matter under the notice of the Minister of Works some time ago he promised to make investigations. Can he now say whether the work can be gone on with?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—An investigation was made and the facts were found to be as stated by the honourable member. To overcome the difficulty a large squatter's tank has been ordered, for which delivery is awaited. The pipes are on hand and immediately the tank is received it will be installed. The objective is to have it ready for use this summer.

FREE MILK FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Premier received any further report from the Education Department on the question of the distribution of milk in schools?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have, through the Minister of Education, received the following report:—

Difficulty is being experienced in arranging the supply of milk in the metropolitan area. It is, however, hoped that the difficulties will be cleared up in time to begin the supply at the beginning of next term in September. The arrangement with the Commonwealth Government under which the distribution of milk is being made applies to the supply of milk in bottles only. When that scheme is under way the question of including schools to which milk is only available in bulk may be taken up with the Commonwealth authorities in those cases where it is shown that fully satisfactory facilities exist for the storage and distribution of milk in the school concerned.

SCHOOL CLEANERS' WAGES.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Recently I submitted to the Premier a request from the Government Workers' Association relating to the adjustment of the wages of school cleaners. Has he any information to convey to the House?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I find that on April 23 Mr. Nieass, on behalf of the union, interviewed the Public Service Commissioner. From the statements made it seemed probable that the basis of payment might require an alteration and that further inquiries were necessary. Subsequent investigations have been, and are still being made, but I expect that the matter will be finalized within a week. Mr. Nieass has been advised by the Public Service Commissioner that a decision will be made at an early date.

HOUSING TRUST HOMES, WALLAROO.

Mr. McALEES—Is the Premier in a position to give any further information regarding the Housing Trust's programme at Wallaroo?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have a report which states that so far the South Australian Housing Trust has built or contracted to build 58 houses at Wallaroo. Of these, 34 houses for rental have been completed and six are under construction; contracts have been let for a further six. Eight timber-frame homes have been completed and sold and four are under construction. If the demand for housing in Wallaroo justifies further building the trust will, in accordance with its usual practice, place further contracts for houses in this area.

DEFENCE PREPARATION ACT.

Mr. FRED WALSH—In view of the grave doubts that have been expressed by competent persons on the constitutionality of the Commonwealth Defence Preparation Act, can the Premier say if its validity has been examined by the Crown Solicitor, especially as regards the over-riding of State powers by regulations which might be made under it, and if not, will the matter be given consideration?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is not the normal procedure for the Government to obtain the Crown Solicitor's opinion upon the validity of Commonwealth legislation. There are many Commonwealth Acts in operation on which serious doubts exist whether their provisions are within the constitutional authority of the Commonwealth. A certificate of the Crown Solicitor would not, in itself, be conclusive evidence of the fact that the Acts were not constitutional; the only authority to decide whether they are constitutional is the High Court of Australia. Any certificate along the lines suggested would only be on well-formed and no doubt well-established opinion. It would not go further. The practice of the Government is, if Commonwealth legislation in any way over-rides or interferes with the administration of State functions and is detrimental to them, to secure an opinion from the Crown Solicitor. If the opinion were to the effect that State functions have been overridden in a manner which should not be allowed High Court action would be taken, but the Government does not, as a matter of everyday practice, submit every provision contained in Commonwealth legislation to the Crown Solicitor for opinion because in many instances, even if they were slightly in excess of Commonwealth powers, they would not be detrimental to the State or the people.

INSTITUTIONS FOR THE AGED.

Mr. HUTCHENS—In view of the comprehensive report just compiled by the South Australian Council of Social Services on the old age problem in South Australia which shows a really alarming state of affairs, can the Premier indicate whether the Government has any plans, other than providing a little more accommodation at Northfield, for the aged? A long list of recommendations is made in the report which was fully reported in *The Mail* at the week-end, and everyone knows that the problem is really acute. Has the Government any plans to extend accommodation at Old Folks Home, Magill, or to help various organizations in their efforts to assist the aged?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The report recently came into my hands and is being examined by the appropriate State authorities. When the practicability of the recommendations has been examined and reported on the matter will be considered by Cabinet. There are many things which it is considered the Government should do in nearly every State department, but there is a limit to the number of things to which practical application can be given. That is the basis upon which this matter will be considered in connection with health, mental hygiene and other functions of this type that the State is called upon to fulfil. If any useful points in the report can be adopted they will be. They have to be examined from the point of view of the physical capacity of the Government to carry them out.

QUALITY OF GAS.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Following on the question I asked on June 27, has the Premier obtained further information regarding the quality and pressure of gas in the metropolitan area?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received the following report from Mr. Cowan, Director of Chemistry:—

1. Quality of Gas.—Since the amendment to the Gas Act was assented to on November 30, 1950, the average calorific value of gas in the metropolitan area for each calendar month has been:—

December, 1950	510
January, 1951	501
February, 1951	500
March, 1951	499
April, 1951	502
May, 1951	502
June, 1951	501

These figures show that one month only the average was slightly under the standard.

2. Pressure of Gas.—I have examined pressure recording charts taken from the Gas Company's automatic pressure recording instruments connected to the mains at Mitcham, Rosewater, Burnside, Fullarton, Semaphore, Somerton, St. Peters, West Croydon and Underdale, and I am of the opinion that, generally speaking, pressures have been satisfactorily maintained. In addition, gas pressures are regularly tested by a gas examiner of this department at the prescribed testing places and the pressures have been found to comply with the Act. A requirement of the Gas Act, 1924-1950, is that "the pressure of gas supplied by the company shall not be less than that of a column of water fifteen-tenths of an inch high when measured at the outlet of any gas meter." The recording charts of the company show that even at peak periods of gas consumption the pressure is generally twice that required by the Act. I have discussed the question of pressure with

the general manager of the Gas Company who states that although complaints are received at times the trouble is due to local faults and these are rectified as soon as possible. As an addition to the official pressure tests regularly done at prescribed testing places I have arranged with the general manager of the Company to supply me periodically with automatically recorded pressure charts from the various localities. Concerning the question as to the effect on pressure of lowering the calorific value standard, I consider that the difficulty of maintaining an adequate pressure would be increased.

PUBLIC WORKS STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS.

The Speaker laid on the table interim reports by the Public Works Standing Committee on—Brighton infant school, hundred of Goode water supply, hundred of Shannon water supply, Light Square produce works extension, new chemistry laboratory at Roseworthy Agricultural College, St. Leonards infant school, Salisbury North primary school, and Whyalla primary school.

Reports ordered to be printed.

PUBLIC PURPOSES LOAN BILL.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended the House to make provision by Bill for the appropriation of such amounts of the revenue and other money of the States as are required for the following purposes, namely:—

(a) The repayment with interest of the sum of £38,666,000 to be borrowed for the purposes mentioned in the Loan Estimates for the financial year 1951-52 and of any other sums to be borrowed pursuant to the Public Purposes Loan Bill, 1951.

(b) To make payments from the Loan Fund of repaid loan money and surplus revenue for purposes mentioned in the Loan Estimates for the financial year 1951-52.

(c) Any other purposes mentioned in the Public Purposes Loan Bill, 1951.

LOAN ESTIMATES.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Gumeracha—Premier and Treasurer) moved:—

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the Loan Estimates for the year ending June 30, 1952, as set out in Parliamentary Paper No. 11.

Motion carried.

In Committee.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Loan Estimates for 1951-52 provide for an expenditure

of £41,166,000. Last year the Estimates provided for an expenditure of £21,000,000. This year it is necessary to make provision for a much larger amount due to rapidly increasing prices and the necessity to have financial provision approved by Parliament for a reservoir of works. A reservoir of approved works is desirable so that if, owing to shortages of material of one kind or another, it is impossible to proceed with one essential work, some other essential work can be proceeded with for which materials are available. All of the works included in the programme are urgent and essential but, as I stated last year when presenting the Loan Estimates, I would be misleading the House if I did not make it clear that it is not expected that a programme of the magnitude now presented will be completed. I do, however, point out that to carry out a programme of works during the year at the same tempo at which we have been working for the last few months, without any expansion whatever, would require approximately £30,000,000. When presenting the Loan Estimates last year, providing for an expenditure of £21,000,000, I said that I did not expect that this programme would be carried out, but I did expect that the expenditure would exceed the amount of £14,000,000 provided for in 1949. The actual expenditure for 1950-51 was slightly in excess of £20,500,000. Members therefore can see that the programme which, at the time it was framed, appeared to be incapable of accomplishment, although not actually carried out in works, was nearly expended in money.

In the total of just over £41,000,000 submitted in the programme this year just over £27,000,000 is required for railways, water and sewerage, housing, electricity, and the Leigh Creek coalfield. Members will see from this that the amount of money left for other works such as buildings, roads, forestry, and irrigation represents a small part of the programme. Experienced and trained labour is still difficult to obtain. Some relief was obtained from the employment of New Australians and assisted migrants, but the fact that the contracts of some of the New Australians have expired, or will expire shortly, can be expected to make the labour position more difficult as these people will be able to decide for themselves where they will seek employment. To offset this difficulty arrangements have been made to obtain about 1,300 New Australians for the railways, and other public utilities are arranging housing to attract suitable labour for essential works.

It is anticipated that the works programme for essential works will not interfere with the home building programme. I mentioned last year that every effort was made in framing programmes to avoid as far as possible interference with the building of homes. The policy of the Government not to interfere with the housing programme any more than is absolutely essential will be continued in carrying out the programme of public works, and every effort will be made to step up production of essential materials required for the public works and housing programmes. The extension of facilities such as electricity, housing, water, etc., to country districts has been given every consideration in the programme of works included in the Estimates so as to take to the country as many as possible of the amenities and conveniences enjoyed by people in the city.

Members have no doubt heard and read a great deal lately of the need to restrict public works programmes in the interests of combating the present inflation. I agree that it is desirable to examine all projected works to eliminate those which are not immediately essential and make no contribution to an early increase in production. However, a very great proportion of the programme now being put to the House for approval concerns works which must be carried out in the interests of combating inflation, rather than the reverse.

Apart from those fiscal and other controls, which I regard as a last resort, the best manner of attacking the present inflation is by ensuring both more production and more efficient production. In this the Government must make its contribution by ensuring it can meet all demands upon the essential public utilities of coal, electric power, water, and transport, and by taking all practicable steps to assist both the local production and the overseas acquisition of essential materials. As some measure of the present trends in costs I would like to quote a few simple figures. The average of wages paid over the immediate past year was 20 per cent higher than over the preceding year, and there is every indication that, in view of cost of living adjustments and review of wage margins, the coming year will see a rise as compared with 1950-51 of between 25 per cent and 30 per cent. Wholesale prices of commodities which the Government must purchase for its works and other programmes were 18 per cent to 20 per cent higher last year than the year before, and particularly if regard is had to the necessity

to supplement scarce materials by high price imports, this year material costs must be expected to be some 25 per cent higher again.

It would be foolish for anyone to imagine that an inflation due to so many causes, having many of its roots in the past and a number in the overseas situation, can be brought to a halt immediately by any possible measures. However, if tackled firmly now, with all authorities and all sections of the community playing their part, there would seem every reason to anticipate that the rapidity of the rise can be gradually reduced. Honourable members will, I know, be disappointed, as is your Government, that, because of costs, shortages of material and manpower, and the necessity to get the inflationary spiral quickly under control, many desirable public works must be deferred in favour of those most urgent to the public welfare and to protecting and increasing the productivity of the nation. There will be further disappointments as the year proceeds for assuredly all the programmes now presented to you will not be practicable, and further selection and deferment will be forced upon the Government. I believe the total of all loan programmes of Commonwealth, State, and semi-governmental authorities, but excluding Commonwealth defence, which will be submitted to the Loan Council next week, will be in the region of £375,000,000. It seems to me that this figure is well beyond what can reasonably be raised as loan moneys, and likewise beyond the capacity of the various authorities because of the physical limitations of available labour and materials.

Full details of the works proposed are set out in the Loan Estimates for the information of honourable members and I therefore intend to confine my remarks to the main works and purposes for which provision has been made.

STATE BANK.—The sum of £1,995,000 has been provided for the activities conducted by the State Bank. These are:—

	£
Advances for homes	1,200,000
Loans to producers	150,000
Advances to settlers	5,000
Loans for fencing and water piping	5,000
Vermin proof fencing	5,000
Advances to State Bank	600,000
Advances to State Bank Act, 1925-1941, Part VI A.—For loans to primary producers	20,000
Loans for water conservation	10,000

ROADS AND BRIDGES, £200,000.—Expenditure in connection with the maintenance and construction of roads is financed from two sources:—

1. The Highways Fund, which consists of revenue received from the registration of motor vehicles and drivers' licences (after allowing for debt charges on loan moneys previously raised for road purposes and the administration expenses of the Highways and Motor Vehicles Departments).
2. A Commonwealth Aid Roads and Works Grant.

The cost of road development and maintenance continues to rise and the provision in these Estimates of £200,000 for roads and bridges is for the purchase of road-making plant for the Highways Department and for advances to local authorities for the purchase of trucks, tractors, graders, loaders, and other road-making machinery. This amount will only be called upon if it is found that the moneys in the Highways Fund and the Commonwealth Aid Roads and Works Grant are insufficient to finance the department's programme and purchase the plant required.

LANDS DEPARTMENT, £340,000.—

	£
Land repurchase for closer settlement	30,000
Crown Lands Development Act	300,000
Purchase of land for agricultural graduates	10,000

The main part of the amount of £300,000 provided under Crown Lands Development Act is towards the cost of the development of approximately 30,000 to 40,000 acres in the hundreds of Field and Jeffries in the Upper South-East. The soil survey is now being carried out and, subject to this, the work will be commenced as soon as possible.

IRRIGATION AND DRAINAGE, £845,000.—Of the amount of £200,000 provided for irrigation and reclamation of swamp lands, £141,500 is for various works in progress the chief of which are the Loveday-Nookamka Drainage Scheme and the electrification of pumping plants at Cobdogla, Loveday, and reclaimed areas. The Loveday-Nookamka Scheme which will be carried out progressively over two or three years and which has been delayed because of difficulty in securing pipes and other materials is required to provide urgently needed drainage outlets for vineyards and orchards on which seepage and salt problems are quickly developing. The balance of the amount of £200,000, namely, £58,500, is for new works, the most

important of which are the electrification of pumping plants and installation of new rising mains at Berri, lining channels in the Ral-Ral division of Chaffey, replacement of the discharge pipeline at Jervois and purchase and erection of houses at Berri, Cobdogla, and Loxton. The sum of £638,000 has been provided this year towards the cost of the drainage scheme in the western division of the South-East. The estimated cost of this scheme when approved by the Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement in 1949 was £1,599,000. Certain organization difficulties at the inception of this scheme restricted operation during 1950-51, but these have now been overcome and the volume of work to be undertaken this year will be increased very materially. Contracts have been let for two major works under the scheme and work is now in hand.

AFFORESTATION AND TIMBER MILLING, £1,161,000.—During last year the receipts from the sale of forestry products amounted to £639,000 of which £598,000 was paid to the Loan Fund and the balance, £41,000, to General Revenue to meet interest and superannuation payments. Expenditure (£768,000) exceeded the receipts by approximately £130,000. As I explained last year the higher expenditure is very largely accounted for by increased expenditure on capital equipment, and for the next few years, with the demand for forestry products increasing and the necessity of replacing obsolete plant and extending the mills, expenditure by the Department can be expected to exceed the revenue. The demand for sawn timber and cases from the Departmental sawmills is still strong and difficulty is experienced in meeting flooring demands. A duplication of the case line at the Nangwarry sawmill has been approved. This will increase the log intake into this mill by 8,000,000 sup. ft. per year. It is hoped that this new line will be in production at the beginning of 1952. At the Mount Burr sawmill an additional gangsaw will be installed. This will enable a further 2,000,000 sup. ft. of log to be handled per year, in order to increase flooring output. The following is the estimated forest production programme for 1951-52:—

Log Production—Softwood—Saw-	
mills, etc.—	
Departmental sawmills	Sup. Ft. 39,000,000
Private sawmills	80,000,000
Plywood manufacture	2,000,000
Veneers for match splints	1,500,000
Pulpwood	25,000,000
<hr/>	
Total	147,500,000
Hardwood logs(sup. ft.)	3,000,000
Firewood(tons)	55,000

Sawmill Production.—The estimated departmental output for 1951-52 is as follows:—

Flooring and other dressed timber(lin. ft.)	18,000,000
Undressed timber(sup. ft.)	1,500,000
Veneer and match production(sq. ft.)	2,000,000
Fruit cases(cases)	2,750,000
Case flitches(sup. ft.)	2,000,000

Flooring and other dressed timber is used almost exclusively in connection with the housing programme, and the undressed timber for furniture manufacture. Fruit cases are supplied mainly for use in the citrus and dried fruit industries. Case logs and flitches are sold mainly for case production in the metropolitan area. The existing plants at Mount Burr, Nangwarry, and Mount Gambier will continue operations throughout the year and production will be maintained to the limits of their capacities. With the expansion of forest and sawmill operations, and because of the situation of the various works, it is necessary to build homes for employees. To advance the housing programme to ensure that employees are adequately housed, provision has been made for £41,000 for new houses for employees. This provision is in addition to an amount of £45,000 included to complete houses already approved.

The items of expenditure for the Woods and Forests Department are—

Forest Establishment—	£
Land purchases	30,000
Preparation of land and planting	66,000
Maintenance of existing forests, etc.	120,000
Purchase of plant	52,000
Buildings and improvements	51,000
Sawmills—	
Working expenses	276,000
Erection of employees' homes and other buildings, improvements and maintenance	185,000
Purchase of machinery	176,000
Felling and hauling mill logs	105,000
Administration	100,000

RAILWAYS, £4,483,000.—The Railways Commissioner has a large capital programme in hand, and proposed for the coming year. The actual Loan expenditure on railways last year amounted to £2,011,000, and the provision on the Estimates this year is £4,483,000. The increase is due principally to the very large programme for construction of rolling stock and cottages. The department is obtaining a large number of imported prefabricated cottages and is calling for tenders for an increasing amount of rolling stock because the Islington Workshops, although engaged to their limit on new construction, is unable to construct rolling stock at a rate sufficient to cope

with requirements. The large rolling stock and ways and works programmes are necessary for three reasons:—

1. The increasing business requires additional locomotives and rolling stock.
2. The serious lag which occurred during the war when our efforts were utilized largely in other directions and the constant shortage in manpower and materials which has existed since then.
3. The necessity to house an increasing number of staff, including migrants.

This last problem is a most serious one as is shown by the fact that the railways now have 2,500 new Australians employed out of a total staff of 11,500, and are arranging to bring in a further 1,300 during the year. Fundamentally, the whole question of expenditure of railway capital is that of bringing the railways into line with our expanding population and making up the leeway caused by the factors to which I have drawn attention. The main items of expenditure are for—

Way and Works—	£
Broadening the South-East gauge	400,000
Ballasting, buildings, platforms and stockyards, station yards, signalling and safety devices, main lines, bridges and culverts, drainage, etc.	304,180
New cottages and other dwellings	699,000
Duplication of the Goodwood to Marino line	138,000
Rollingstock—	
Diesel electric locomotives, 4-wheel louvre cars; class "N" locomotives from the Victorian Railways; diesel rail cars; joint stock-passenger cars; 4-wheel cattle and sheep vans; and Garratt locomotives for 3ft. 6in. gauge, etc.	2,683,000

HARBORS BOARD, £1,752,000.—The board is continuing with the reconstruction of wharves to provide berths Nos. 1, 6, 8, and 9 at Port Adelaide, including the deepening of the berths to 27ft., provision of three cargo sheds, rail tracks, roads, drainage, water service, electric light, and conveniences, and is anxious to complete this work at an early date as the need for additional inner harbour accommodation is acute. Deepening and improving channels, extension of the Currie Street shed, rehabilitation of dockyards, and purchase of sheet steel piling for wharf construction are other main items for which provision is made at Port Adelaide, and £65,000 is provided as a first instalment of the wharf extension project for the Osborne coal handling plant as

approved by the Public Works Standing Committee at an estimated total cost of £181,000.

Work on floodlighting to improve working conditions will be continued at Port Pirie and amenities will be provided at Railway and Federal Wharves.

It is proposed to make shore improvements at Kingscote on account of the present inadequate accommodation. Provision has been made for further additions to the plant and equipment for coal and cargo handling, and for floating, dockyard, dredging, construction, and maintenance purposes. An amount of £30,000 is provided for fishing havens and £97,000 to provide housing for employees.

ENGINEERING AND WATER SUPPLY DEPARTMENT, £5,807,000.

Adelaide and Millbrook Water District, £2,333,000.—The main items are as under:—

Mannum-Adelaide Pipeline, £1,500,000.—During 1951-52 it is anticipated that the first 16 miles of this project will be advanced to the stage where the entire rising main section of the pipeline, both 58in. and 55in. diameter pipes, will be laid. Camps will have been established at Mannum, Palmer and Birdwood, construction roadways completed over 22 miles of the line, concrete storage tanks of 2 million gallon capacity completed at Mannum and Tungkillo, and two pumping stations en route to Adelaide. The excavation and the concrete dam wall of the 30 million gallon reservoir between Tungkillo and Birdwood will be finished but it is possible that the lining of the reservoir will not have been completed. Three pumping stations will be in the course of construction, at least two being ready to have the machinery installed. The inlet works from the River Murray to No. 1 Pumping Station should be finished.

South Para Reservoir.—£344,000 is provided under the Adelaide Water District and £86,000 under the Barossa Water District, making a total provision for this work of £430,000 for the year. It is anticipated that during 1951-52 all preliminary work on the South Para will be completed, the diversion tunnel through the hill to carry normal river flow during the construction period will be finished and in use. It is estimated that the four coffer dams, each over 60ft. in height, necessary for the protection of the main embankment during construction will be completed, and it is proposed that approximately 100,000 cubic yards of main embankment of the rolled filled type will be completed. All camps and housing facilities will be built. £410,000 has been

provided for services and mains in the Adelaide Water District, including miscellaneous extensions and the provisions of mains from bores in the Salisbury area to augment the supply to the metropolitan area.

Adelaide Sewers, £634,000.—£98,000 is provided to complete extensions to the Port Adelaide sewers treatment works, and £215,000 has been provided for miscellaneous extensions and minor sewer works. Provision has also been made for reticulation sewers at Woodville Gardens, Woodville North and Wingfield, Marden-Felixstowe district, Golflands, Croydon Park, Ottoway district, and St. Leonards, and to provide house connections to new dwellings, housing schemes, etc. Provision is also made to complete pumping stations approved for sewer purposes at Glenelg, Queensbury and Port Adelaide. £442,000 has been provided for country water districts as follows:—

Southern District, £267,000.—The main item is the provision of a water supply at Loxton for the soldier settlers. Provision has also been made for improvement to supplies at many other country towns, and for various mains and services.

Northern District, £170,000.—The main item here is the Jamestown-Caltowie district water scheme. Subject to steel being available it is considered this scheme will be completed during 1951-52. Provision has also been made for a supply at Warooka. Mains and services have been provided for. Pumping plants will be provided at Peterborough, Quorn, Booleroo Centre, and Spring Creek.

Western District.—£5,000 is included in the Estimates for services, pumping plant at Streaky Bay, and a residence at Yeldulknie.

£142,000 is provided for the Barossa Water District, the main item of which is the South Para reservoir which I have mentioned previously. £35,000 has been included for bores and mains in the Salisbury basin. £416,000 is provided for the Beetaloo, Bundaleer and Baroota Water Districts, the chief items being for mains and services, service reservoirs and tanks, and the Bundaleer trunk main. The supply at Port Pirie will be reorganized during the year. In the Tod River Water District £351,000 has been provided, mainly for the Uley-Wanilla water supply and for mains and services in the district, including new mains in the hundreds of Shannon and Goode. In the Warren Water District the estimated expenditure is £83,000, and under the heading "Water Conservation" £64,000 has been provided almost wholly for tanks in the county

of Buxton. Provision is made under River Murray Weirs, Dams, etc., for £150,000, which it is anticipated will be the South Australian quota of expenditure for work done by the River Murray Commission, and £8,000 is provided for the Glanville Pipe Works. Under Engineering and Water Supply Plant and Machinery, etc., an amount of £1,170,000 has been provided for tractors, motor vehicles, and general construction plant.

ARCHITECT-IN-CHIEF'S DEPARTMENT.

HOSPITAL BUILDINGS, £400,000.—The main works which have been provided for in the Estimates are:—

Royal Adelaide Hospital.—New nurses' block, new boiler house, new patients' block and nurses' block at Northfield, additions to Ophthalmic block, and additions and equipment to the laundry, including improved ventilation.

Western Districts Hospital.—£50,000 has been provided for further progress on this hospital, the first portion to be proceeded with being the maternity section and some staff accommodation. This hospital in the western district of Adelaide, when completed, will consist of a seven-storeyed hospital building with a capacity of 402 beds, together with a multi-storeyed nurses' home for 442 nurses, a three-storeyed building for 28 resident medical officers and 15 students and a residence for the medical superintendent, boiler house, and ambulance garage and workshop, the total cost of which is estimated at £1,370,000. Owing to the present overcrowding of the Royal Adelaide Hospital the Government is desirous of this work proceeding as quickly as possible.

Parkside Mental Hospital.—Provision is made for a new nurses' home, new female treatment and admission block, new sculleries and alterations to kitchen, and a chalet to accommodate 20 nurses.

Bedford Park—Enfield Receiving Home—Mareeba Babies' Hospital.—Provision is made for alterations and additions to various buildings and new equipment.

Barmera Hospital.—Alterations to wards for domestics and children.

Mount Gambier Hospital.—New children's ward, new nurses' hut, and extensions to the boiler house and installation of new boiler.

Port Augusta Hospital.—Accommodation for night nurses; new block for domestics; alterations to Sharam Ward and provision of a cold store for meat and vegetables.

Port Lincoln Hospital.—New sewage disposal scheme.

Port Pirie Hospital.—New theatre and men's block and nurses' quarters; additional store

accommodation; and extensions to laundry and provision of modern equipment.

Walleroo Hospital.—New children's ward and additional accommodation for staff.

Purchase of Sites.—£61,000 has been provided for the purchase of land for hospital purposes and urgent accommodation as required.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS, £1,100,000.

Infant Schools.—£31,000 has been provided for new schools at Blair Athol, Port Lincoln, Brighton, and St. Leonards; and £6,000 for alterations and additions to Colonel Light Gardens, Kilkenny, Brompton, Glenelg, Marryatville, Nailsworth, and Parkside.

Primary Schools.—£79,000 has been provided for new schools at Ascot Park, Forbes, Hendon, Mount Gambier, Mitcham, Salisbury North, and Whyalla West; £143,000 for prefabricated aluminium alloy units at Barton Vale, Morphetville Park, Findon, Oaklands, Woodville Gardens, Paringa Park, Taperoo, and Northfield; £16,000 for a new block at Seaton Park; £6,000 for new science and library blocks at Ardrossan, Minnipa, and Kingston; and £56,000 for alterations and additions to a large number of schools which are set out in the Estimates.

Technical Schools.—£18,000 has been provided for additional storeys and additions to Adelaide Technical School; £38,000 for new schools for boys at Norwood and Nailsworth; and £7,000 for alterations and additions to Mount Gambier, Thebarton, Whyalla, Orreroo, Norwood Girls, Henley Beach, Mannum, and Tanunda.

Area Schools.—£10,000 is provided for a new school at Allendale East; £10,000 for a new block at Oakbank; and £4,000 for alterations and additions at Eudunda, Karoonda, Yorketown, Oakbank, and Loxton.

High Schools.—£57,000 is provided towards the cost of new schools at Brighton and Naracoorte; £8,000 for new blocks at Quorn, Nuriootpa, Victor Harbour, Kadina, Port Augusta, and Millicent; £6,000 for manual training centre buildings at Jamestown, Millicent, and Urrbrae; and £15,000 for alterations and additions at Birdwood, Glossop, Port Augusta, Urrbrae, Norwood, Port Pirie, Booleroo Centre, and Kapunda.

General.—£243,000 has been provided for portable buildings and these will be installed at centres where required; £50,000 towards cost of new factory for the manufacture of prefabricated classrooms at Finsbury; £24,000 towards cost of septic tank installations; £14,000 for grading and paving school yards;

£10,000 for a new annexe at the Teachers' College; £10,000 for purchase of land pursuant to Recreation Grounds (Joint Schemes) Act, 1947; £12,000 as a grant to the School of Mines towards the cost of a new building; £20,000 for purchase of land and residences for school purposes; £155,000 for new residences and alterations and additions to residences; and £48,000 for urgent accommodation as required.

POLICE AND COURTHOUSE BUILDINGS, £58,000.—Provision is made for new Police Stations at McLaren Vale, Tea Tree Gully, Woodville North, Flinders Park, Mount Burr, Nungwarry and Williamstown; removal of the police garage at Headquarters, Adelaide, and re-erection at the Police Barracks; additions and alterations to residences at several centres; alterations and additions to Supreme Court; and new Police Station and residence at Naracoorte.

AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE, £40,000.—£25,000 is provided towards the cost of rebuilding the chemistry laboratory and provision is also made for a cheese annexe to the dairy factory, and two new residences for the staff.

OTHER GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, £244,000.—The main items provided for are:—

Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department—

Magill Home.—New nurses' quarters; equipment for kitchen; and remodelling kitchen.

Magill Reformatory.—New dairy.

Struan Farm.—Wool and shearing sheds and new residence and school.

Lochiel Park, Campbelltown.—New buildings.

Seaforth Home and Allambi Girls' Hostel, Norwood.—Staff quarters.

Agriculture Department.—Residences for inspectors, etc., in country districts and additions to the existing residences.

Architect-in-Chief Department.—Alterations and additions to various Government offices, etc.

Lands Department.—Alterations to and erection of staff residences in country districts and erection of store, car-sheds and workshops at Thebarton.

Mines Department.—Erection of laboratory building at Parkside and new building at Thebarton.

Sheriff and Comptroller of Prisons.—Erection of cottages at the Adelaide Gaol Reserve and Yatala Labour Prison, and the installation of deep drainage at the Yatala Labour Prison.

Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science.—Erection of pyrogen test laboratory and concrete rabbit hutches. Alterations and additions to various Government buildings.

EXPENSES AND DISCOUNTS OF FLOATING CONVERSION LOANS, £200,000.—This amount is required to meet expenses which may be incurred during the year in connection with the conversion of maturing loans which form part of the State's public debt.

PRODUCE DEPARTMENT, £60,000.

Port Lincoln Freezing Works.—Considerable progress has been made on the new by-products division and the majority of this work has been completed except as regards the skip-conveyor system for transferring offals from the slaughtering section to the dry rendering department. Shortage of steel is delaying progress and it is also delaying the finalization of the dry rendering plant contract. Provision has also been made for a new boiler plant, and buildings and additions to the fish cannery.

Light Square.—Additional storage accommodation will be provided.

SETTLEMENT OF DISCHARGED SOLDIERS ON THE LAND, £10,000.—This amount is required to make advances to soldiers of the 1914-1918 war and for maintenance of reverted properties.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HOUSING TRUST, £5,150,000.—When I introduced the Loan Estimates last year I estimated that the Housing Trust would complete 2,000 houses during the year 1950-51. During that year the trust built 1,968 houses. In addition, 1,089 emergency dwellings were completed under the emergency housing scheme, making a total of 3,057 dwellings for the year. The expansion achieved over the past four financial years can be seen from the following figures:—

1947-48—1,014 houses, including 132 temporary houses.

1948-49—1,252 houses.

1949-50—1,790 houses, including 112 emergency houses.

1950-51—3,057 houses, including 1,089 emergency houses.

Notwithstanding this improved rate of construction, new applications for houses continue to be lodged at a rate much higher than the rate at which houses are being erected. Of recent months, the trust has placed contracts for a large number of houses which will be supplied from sources additional to those on which it has relied in the past. A contract has been made for the erection of 1,000 concrete houses, the materials for which will be drawn from local sources, whilst three contracts have been let, or are about to be let, for a total of 2,600 timber houses to be

imported from the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Western Germany. With the exception of one contract for timber houses from the United Kingdom (under which supplies are now coming forward and houses are being erected), the various overseas contracts referred to will commence to produce houses in the later months of 1951. The increased house production rate which will result from these contracts, in addition to the satisfactory completion rate at present forthcoming from the other contractors now building for the trust, is considered by the trust to justify the expectation that during the financial year ending June 30, 1952, approximately 3,000 houses (exclusive of emergency dwellings) will be completed. Such a programme can, of course, only be carried out by the trust if supplies of materials are maintained—both locally by the trust's normal building suppliers, and from overseas for the houses proposed to be imported. Subject to supplies being maintained and subject to no disturbance of the flow of imported houses being occasioned from causes such as the re-armament programme in Western Europe, or shortage of shipping space, the trust considers that its expected programme can be carried out. In addition to the house building programme the erection of flats has been commenced. The foundations for 72 flats are almost completed in a very desirable locality at Plympton. It has been estimated that during the past year, building costs increased by approximately 15 per cent over the cost at the beginning of that year. This has been brought about, in the main, by the £1 per week basic wage increase, which operated from the beginning of December, and its consequent effect upon material costs. The continued use of imported materials, which are more costly than the local materials, has also contributed to this increase. It must be borne in mind that the 13s. per week living wage adjustment in August of this year is likely to be followed by further adjustments over the period of the next twelve to eighteen months and these, too, will have their ultimate effect on the cost of Trust houses.

Land.—During the year 1951-52 the trust will continue its policy of purchasing land as opportunity offers. Land costs have risen considerably over the last two years and the supply of land in the metropolitan area which is available for purchase is diminishing rapidly. However, the trust has some reserves of vacant land which will ensure that the land cost per house remains at a reasonable

figure for some time to come. Considerable difficulty is being experienced, even at the present time, to obtain the materials necessary to carry on all the trust contracts. Basic materials, such as steel, iron, earthenware, and even bricks, cannot be obtained locally or in Australia in the quantities required by the trust. For this reason, the trust is ordering substantial quantities of building materials from overseas, but, owing to the international situation and shipping difficulties, it is doubtful whether all these orders will be supplied.

LOWER RIVER BROUGHTON IRRIGATION TRUST.
—An amount of £6,850 has been provided for several years for an advance to the Lower River Broughton Irrigation Trust to carry out the works authorized by Act of Parliament, but up to the present the trust has not been in a position to proceed with the work.

LEIGH CREEK COALFIELD, £742,000.—This amount has been provided and will be transferred to the Leigh Creek coalfield fund to provide the monies required by the Electricity Trust to carry on the development of the field so as to provide for a much larger output which will be required when the new Port Augusta power station comes into operation in 1953. The policy of the trust is to have all excavating machinery on the field driven by electricity. There are two machines driven in this way at present in use—one a 100RB excavating shovel and the other the 9W dragline excavator. The first machine is used for excavation of coal and the latter machine, which uses a 10yd. bucket, is used for removal of overburden. This machine was obtained from America, and since erection on the field has been in use for a few months and has proved to be very suitable for the work for which it was obtained and has reduced the cost of removal of overburden substantially. To provide adequate power for these two machines and further electrical machines being obtained, and for machines which will be altered from diesel-driven to electric-driven, it will be necessary to still further extend the north field steam power station. For this purpose a new 1,500 kw. turbine and one additional boiler are on order, and progress payments will be made on these during the year. Excavators on order include a 5W dragline at an estimated cost of £40,000, and a 50RB excavator at an estimated cost of about £30,000. These machines will be necessary to enable the output of coal to be stepped up to meet the requirements of the Port Augusta power station and they will be delivered before the Port Augusta station comes into operation.

To avoid delays in coal production and to ensure suitable facilities for loading trains, bins are now being erected into which coal will be delivered and held for loading on trucks when train delays occur. At present any delays in the train schedule not only hold up the trains when they do arrive but also hold up production on the field as adequate storage facilities are not available. So that the east field can be brought into production when the Port Augusta station commences operations provision will be made for either a spur line off the main line with bins, crusher, and grader, or the coal will be moved from the east field over to the existing railway by means of conveyor belts. These two systems are being investigated and when it is clear which will provide the best service at the lowest cost the work will be undertaken.

The housing shortage is very acute at Leigh Creek and the Housing Trust is co-operating with the Electricity Trust in the supply of prefabricated houses to provide homes for workmen on the field. The trust's engineers have for some time, in conjunction with the Department of Industry, the C.S.I.R.O. division at the School of Mines, and brickmakers in the State, been investigating the use of Leigh Creek coal in brick kilns. Experiments have been satisfactorily carried out at the Littlehampton brickworks and as soon as a brick kiln has been designed the Electricity Trust will undertake the manufacture of shale bricks at Leigh Creek to provide the raw materials for brick houses. In a climate such as is experienced at Leigh Creek it is desirable to have a swimming pool. Work has been commenced on a pool, many of the employees giving their own time towards the work, but, due to a shortage of cement, the trust has been unable to complete the pool. With supplies of imported cement coming to hand it is hoped that the work will be completed this year. In a township which is growing like Leigh Creek it is necessary to have an assured water supply. This is also necessary to enable the north field steam power station to function. The supply of water from the Sliding Rock mine is poor in quality and is insufficient to meet the future demands of the field. It has therefore been decided to construct at Aroona Gorge a dam with a holding capacity of 1,650 million gallons. Work has already commenced on the dam, access roads have been constructed, and the necessary plant to undertake the work is now being gathered at the locality.

Mr. Riches—Has that work been subject to inquiry by any body?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Under the Electricity Trust of South Australia Act the Electricity Trust has complete charge of all work done at Leigh Creek. It is an authority working under its own powers and none of these works requires investigation by the Public Works Committee. The same remarks apply to the Port Augusta power station.

Mr. Riches—Has the supply of water by pipeline from the River Murray been considered?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, and also the question of supplying water from the artesian basin. However, both those projects are much more expensive in initial costs. The proposed scheme is the most effective which can be devised. The coalfield is now raiing to Adelaide between 9,000 and 10,000 tons of coal a week and making a considerable contribution to the coal required in the metropolitan area. Without this coal, due to a shortage of black coal, it would be impossible for industry and people in their homes to enjoy uninterrupted supplies of electricity at the present time.

ELECTRICITY TRUST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA, £11,550,000.—This amount is provided for loans by the Treasurer to the Electricity Trust to carry out the extension of the Osborne power station, construction of power stations at Port Augusta and Port Lincoln, and for the construction of the associated transmission and distribution lines and sundry ancillary works. During the year ending June, 1951, the trust completed the erection of a further boiler at the Osborne "B" power station and stepped up the generating capacity of the station by a further 15,000 kilowatts. This boiler is fired by Leigh Creek coal. It is the largest boiler of its kind in Australia and its performance, using "fines" which were previously dumped at Leigh Creek has been very satisfactory, and it has delivered, without any trouble, the guaranteed quantity of 150,000 lb. of steam an hour.

This increased capacity has enabled the trust to meet all demands made on the system this winter, and as July has passed, it is unlikely, as long as coal supplies are kept up, that the trust will not be able to meet the demand for power. A 30,000 kilowatt turbine is at present being erected at Osborne and this will be available for operation towards the end of the present year. To bring this machine into operation, a further boiler, which is now being erected, will be required early next year, which

will add a further 15,000 kilowatts to the generating capacity of the station. Another boiler now under construction will be available a little later in 1952 providing for full output from the new turbine.

Construction of the Osborne "B" station building is proceeding ahead of the installation of plant, and present indications are that the building will be completed in time to allow of the erection of the various items of plant according to schedule. Work is also proceeding at Port Augusta on the construction of a 90,000 kilowatt power station. The first machine is estimated to be in operation in December, 1953. Present indications are that the estimated time for opening the station will be realized. A smaller steam power station is also in course of construction at Port Lincoln to supply the requirements of the town and rural areas.

Mr. Riches—What type of coal will be used at the Port Lincoln station?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is not designed for use of Leigh Creek coal. Associated with the building of these power stations is the major work of erecting the large transmission lines, and the necessary distribution lines, which distribute the power from the large transmission systems to the consumers. Considerable work has been done on transmission lines from the Port Augusta station and also in connection with the supply of power to the River Murray for the pumping of water for the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline. Copper cable for these various transmission and distribution projects is now in very short supply, but endeavours are being made to step up the delivery of cable, and I intend to look into this question when I am absent from Australia in the next few weeks.

During the last year the trust purchased the locally run power station and distribution systems at Port Lincoln, Tumby Bay, Yorketown, Moonta and Port Wakefield, and arranged with the local authority to take over the Wallaroo undertaking in the near future, when Wallaroo will be supplied from the trust's main system. The other areas will be supplied from the present diesel stations until the main system supply can be arranged. There are over 3,000 consumers in the localities mentioned. The main system has also been extended to Maitland and Waikerie, where supply from the local plants has been discontinued. High and low tension extensions have been made to over 500 consumers at a capital cost of £100,000 in the following localities—Blewett Springs, Forreston, Harpers Gully, Port Price, Stone Hut, Spalding, Truro, Virginia, Wistow, Wongyarra, and Tarnma.

Supplies to further rural areas and country towns will be proceeded with as speedily as available manpower and materials will permit. It is anticipated that bulk supplies will be available to the Broken Hill Associated Smelters and the town of Port Pirie by December next.

TEMPORARY AND EMERGENCY HOUSING ACCOMMODATION, £1,105,000.—The programme provides for the erection of 1,400 emergency houses during 1951-52. This scheme, although not providing ideal and permanent accommodation, is providing comfortable and private accommodation for those unfortunate families who, through no fault of their own, have had to live under distressing conditions. The emergency dwellings are at present being erected at Springbank, Semaphore, Swansea, Draper (two sites), Woodville North, Woodville Gardens, and Croydon Park, and 26 dwellings have been completed at Port Augusta.

Mr. Riches—Why are the rents in most cases, higher than those required for permanent houses?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—They are somewhat higher, in some instances, than those permanent houses because the buildings are regarded as temporary homes and the period of occupancy will be short. Some losses will ultimately be made on these houses. The undertaking will not, in my view, pay for itself when the work is finally cleaned up. It is difficult to say when that will be, but it is a question of providing reasonable accommodation for people living in desperate and unhappy circumstances.

Mr. Clarke—Will the material in the emergency houses be recoverable?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—They have been purposely designed for the re-use of materials, which can be used for hundreds of purposes, including agriculture.

Mr. Macgillivray—Over how many years have the costs been spread?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—We have not decided what the actual period will be. Unless their re-sale value is high and they are not used for more than 10 years as temporary accommodation the State will lose fairly substantially.

Mr. Macgillivray—The period should be at least 20 years.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—They are regarded by the Government as temporary houses, erected for the purpose of improving distressing circumstances in which some fellow citizens are living. I have personal knowledge that the homes are greatly appreciated by people occupying them.

Mr. O'Halloran—Notwithstanding that, they should not be used any longer than can be helped.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I agree; we do not intend that they shall be permanent.

INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT ACT—ADVANCES UNDER, £300,000.—This is to meet advances which may be made under the Industries Development Act for the production of building materials.

Mr. O'Halloran—Is that the only purpose for which advances will be made?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Under the Industries Development Act the Government, in the main, guarantees the amount of advances recommended for industries. A sum of money is being specifically set aside for the provision of building materials. The amount previously voted has been earmarked. Other matters dealt with under the Act will need a much larger amount.

MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS TRUST, £625,000.—This amount is provided for loans to the Municipal Tramways Trust to provide for extensions of services and the purchase of rollingstock and buses.

PUBLIC PARKS ACT—PURCHASE OF LAND, £50,000.—Provision has been made for the purpose of making payments pursuant to the Public Parks Act.

MINES—PLANT AND MACHINERY, ETC., £320,150.—This is to provide for plant and machinery required for the various branches of the Mines Department, including the Radium Hill project.

LANDS—BUILDINGS, PLANT, ETC., £100,000.—This provision is required for cars, trucks, and plant for the Lands Department.

PRINTING AND STATIONERY—PLANT AND MACHINERY, £20,000.—This amount is required for various plant and machinery.

This large programme cannot be fulfilled this year. It is difficult to say which works can be proceeded with, because much depends upon the materials available and the money provided by the Loan Council. The Government will do its best to carry on works such as transport, water, and electricity services, which will help to combat inflation. I thank members for allowing me to bring the Loan Estimates before the House this afternoon. I particularly thank Mr. Riches, whose Address in Reply speech has been interrupted. It was necessary for me to proceed with the Loan Estimates today because I shall be absent overseas for several weeks. The Loan Estimates

concern the Treasurer, and I thought it best to introduce them before leaving for overseas. I move the first line.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption of the Address in Reply.

(Continued from August 8. Page 281.)

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—I thank the Treasurer for his references to my agreeing to the introduction of the Loan Estimates this afternoon, thereby interrupting my speech. I am sure the House was most anxious to extend to him the courtesy he sought. We wish him every success in his visit overseas, because we realize he leaves South Australia on an important mission which could redound to the benefit of the whole State. Members generally feel that whilst away he should take every opportunity to rest in order that his health will not be impaired.

The Treasurer's speech on the Loan Estimates is a striking example of the trend of the times and it gives members reason to think seriously. In 1948 the Loan Estimates totalled £14,000,000. In 1950 the amount was £21,000,000, an increase of 50 per cent. We were told then that the increase was due to additional costs in wages and materials. This year the amount is £41,000,000, largely for the same works envisaged in the 1950 programme. This shows how costs are increasing, and it is disconcerting to both the Government and the housewife who has to balance the home budget without the assistance of loan money.

I shall refer to several matters related to my district. I make a special plea on behalf of an ambulance service at Port Augusta with a view to a subsidy being paid to people who at present give a certain amount of self-help. A motor ambulance transport service was formed at Port Augusta for the purpose of providing a service, not only for people desiring admission to the Port Augusta hospital, but for people from northern districts wanting to be transported to an Adelaide hospital for special treatment. It was found that in the absence of that service too often people were left without any ambulance transport. It was impossible to get a city ambulance to bring the patient to the Adelaide hospital.

Mr. Macgillivray—It is not possible to claim any reduction for the expenditure when preparing the income tax return.

Mr. RICHES—There is no assistance or encouragement whatsoever. The Port Augusta people conducted a house to house canvass and

after an extensive appeal for funds purchased two vehicles and a building in which to house them. A service is rendered to people residing at Port Augusta or within 200 miles of that town. In the last 12 months 400 calls have been answered and about 8,000 miles have been covered. The service has taken patients from outlying districts to the Port Augusta hospital, and from that hospital to the city hospital for special treatment. Patients have been taken from the Quorn and Booleroo Centre hospitals to Adelaide. It is not always easy to collect a fee for the service rendered. It is not feasible for the hospital committee to make an inquiry into the financial position of the person wanting transport. Humanity demands that the call should be answered as speedily as possible. A doctor would not call for an ambulance unless the need was urgent. Within three months £150 was outstanding in fees. We have made representations to the Government for the service to be subsidized in order to avoid increases in the transport charges. During the last two or three years there have been suggestions that the Government would take over all ambulance services and that they would be co-ordinated, but throughout the inquiries our ambulance committee has not been consulted in any way. We have not been able to ascertain the official mind on the matter. The committee is faced with the necessity, if it is to continue giving the service, to make provision for vehicle replacements. If it is not to continue and the service is to be conducted by the Government, it is not fair that the committee should levy people at Port Augusta in order to make the replacements.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—Are your drivers full-time men?

Mr. RICHES—No. They conduct a 24-hourly service at considerable sacrifice to themselves. They are fully qualified first-aid men. One works in a garage and another has a drapery shop. The latter closes his business sometimes for hours at a time while he takes a patient to the city, or from an outlying part to the Port Augusta hospital. This service is greatly appreciated, and it should be recognized by the Government by the granting of a subsidy.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—Do those drivers receive an honorarium?

Mr. RICHES—No; the committee makes a small payment to them which barely covers the cost of running the vehicle.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—Do they use their own vehicles?

Mr. RICHES—No, the vehicle used belongs to the Ambulance Committee, and a payment is made to cover petrol and other expenses. The committee tries to see that the drivers are not out of pocket. The charge made for this service is 1s. a mile, an amount on which even a taxi cannot be run. When the committee is unsuccessful in collecting outstanding fees its financial position is not made any happier. It is only kept going by the imposition of heavier charges on Port Augusta families who contribute to the scheme. A little child who took ill at Rawlinna on the trans-continental line in Western Australia was admitted to the Port Augusta hospital, where doctors ordered her to be treated by a specialist in Adelaide. Although no-one in Port Augusta knew either the child or her family the services of the ambulance were immediately made available to take her to the city. Her parents left Rawlinna and came to Adelaide. The child received treatment at the Royal Adelaide Hospital and later was a patient at the Adelaide Children's Hospital for some weeks. The Ambulance Committee applied for a subsidy from the Government with regard to her transport to the city, as the Government had previously told it that patients or the children of parents in indigenous circumstances would be assisted. The Government replied that the parents were working in Adelaide and the committee would have to take legal action to collect the fees. The committee was also told that over £40 was owing by the parents to the Adelaide Children's Hospital.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—Did the committee ultimately press for payment?

Mr. RICHES—It has now discovered the Adelaide address of the parents and has placed the matter in the hands of its solicitor. The committee has been told by the Government that half of the ambulance fee payable by a polio patient would be met by it if the Local Board of Health in that district recognized the case as one of hardship and also paid half. However, when the committee gets down to details, there is usually a dispute between two Local Boards of Health as to which district the patient came from. The Ambulance Committee is then left in the air. In the absence of information from the Government as to whether it intends to take over this service or proceed with the proposed co-ordination, the committee feels it is not right to curtail the operation of this service. Some towns have had to confine their ambulance service to a definite area around the town, but that has not been the case in Port Augusta. Patients in other centres who have been refused the service of other ambulances have been conveyed in that from

Port Augusta. That ambulance has not refused a call from a doctor. The contribution of Port Augusta families towards this ambulance service has been raised from 5s. to 7s. 6d., a heavier charge than in any other part of the State. This service should be encouraged by the Government, because without it an Adelaide ambulance would have to visit Quorn, Booleroo Centre, and other northern towns to bring patients to the city. I hope the Director-General of Medical Services will view this application favourably. Whyalla is also faced with the difficulty arising from the heavy charges made in cases where patients must be transported long distances to Adelaide. They are canvassing the possibility of inaugurating a family contribution scheme under which a fund would be established to assist families in cases such as I have mentioned. The Government has been asked whether it would be prepared to subsidize such a fund; but in answer to a question last week the Premier gave faint hope of such action. By helping in this way, the Government could make living in the country a little easier. The country resident should not be under such definite handicaps regarding education and the provision of other services when they are prepared to help themselves.

I am keenly disappointed at the hedging which has taken place in all the negotiations to obtain recognition of the services rendered so magnificently by the Flying Doctor Service based at Ceduna. This is one of the most humane services rendered anywhere in the State. It gives to the people of the outback a feeling of security which removes some of the horror of the isolation experienced by people, especially mothers, living in remote areas. In the last few years there have been instances of mothers travelling from places such as Barton to Port Augusta who have had children die in their arms on the way. Imagine the feelings of these ladies returning to live in the outback areas! Diseases hitherto unknown in the outback are now spreading there, and it is found necessary to immunize children in those areas where such action was never deemed necessary before. I have met no-one who has had any experience of the Flying Doctor Service who does not speak in the highest terms about it. Yet this service is almost the only one which is not subsidized or encouraged in some way by the Government.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—The Government subsidizes some Flying Doctor Services.

Mr. RICHES—A subsidy of £1,000 a year has been granted to an entirely different service with a flying doctor at Cloncurry, Alice

Springs and Broken Hill. That service answers emergency calls in South Australia and is doing an excellent job. I support that subsidy but ask members to compare that service with that rendered by the Flying Doctor Service at Ceduna. One of its planes is based at Ceduna and the other at Wudinna. The staff includes two pilots and a flying doctor. This is not an ambulance service merely used for conveying patients to a doctor. The doctor is taken to the sick. The doctor based at Ceduna pays monthly visits to Tarcoola, Cook, Mulgathing, and Coorabie. The bases are in constant communication with Coober Pedy and Mount Eba where emergency calls are answered. Weekly flights are made to Penong. This service is in a position to answer emergency calls all over Eyre Peninsula. Frequently it is called up to take patients not only from outlying parts to a hospital on the coast but also from such hospital to the city for treatment by a specialist. Only a couple of weeks ago this service made two aeroplane trips from the West Coast to Adelaide and back. This service is rendered at 1s. a mile, which is 40 per cent of the real cost without taking any account of depreciation. In order to maintain that service the pilots keep those planes airworthy for £400 a year. At the last conference of the Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association at which every local Government body on the Peninsula was represented a resolution was passed expressing the complete satisfaction of the people in those areas with that service. They asked the Government to see that a subsidy was paid so that the service could be stabilized and maintained. Such a service should not need this plea for recognition and a subsidy, but to date the Government has steadfastly refused to subsidize it simply because it is an offshoot of the Bush Church Aid Society. Representations have been made for a considerable period. In every instance the authorities have changed their ground, and as each objection is answered the ground is changed again and a further case has to be made out.

Last year the matter was taken up during the debate on the Estimates and the Treasurer promised that the request would be considered. A deputation was arranged to meet the Chief Secretary and included representatives of the Legislative Council and Mr. Christian and myself. An outline of the service was given and the Minister was asked to give the application sympathetic consideration. He explained that the Bush Church Aid Society was a denominational organization and therefore the

Government would have to consider the question carefully as it was one of policy. However, he promised sympathetic consideration. No answer was received to the request, although many weeks had elapsed. The Hon. R. Wilson, M.L.C., sought a reply from the Minister's department just before the last Estimates were before the House and was told that the Government had rejected the application. Consideration was given to the moving of a resolution in this House asking for an expression of opinion of members. Discussion took place on the Estimates and the Government denied that it had then reached a definite decision and said the matter was still under consideration and would be looked into. A letter was subsequently written to the Rev. Mr. Dillon, the South Australian representative of the Bush Church Aid Society, expressing surprise that any member of the deputation had informed him that the request had been refused. Obviously the writer of that letter thought that the person who had conveyed that information to the society was myself. It was an obvious attempt to put me in an invidious position, and is an attitude I deplore. Unfortunately for the perpetrator of the little scheme, it was not I who conveyed the information but the Hon. R. R. Wilson. Why he was told the Government had considered the request and rejected it outright, and why the Minister then wrote a letter saying that no definite decision had been reached and expressing surprise that such information had been conveyed to the organizers is a situation which has not yet been clarified.

The matter was followed up by a deputation to the Treasurer, and at his request details of the services rendered were given. It included every trip made during the preceding month, the rates charged, and the hospitals served, and as a result of that interview some help has been promised to some of the hospitals with which this service is associated. I think the Government has taken the correct attitude in regard to these hospitals. It has said that if the people, through their councils, will accept hospital rating and agree to the hospitals being conducted by the same organization, it would subsidize the amounts raised by rating on a pound for pound basis for their upkeep. I believe that two have indicated their willingness, and are likely to receive financial assistance as a result. However, there is nothing forthcoming for the maintenance of the Flying Doctor Service, and still no recognition of the services being rendered in

little hospitals conducted in areas outside district council areas. We were led to believe when we interviewed the Treasurer that if we could show that the service was worth-while and valued by the people there would be a reasonable chance of its receiving recognition. This continued until the opening day of the session—a few days before the end of the financial year. The Treasurer was asked in the House whether anything had been done to assist the Flying Doctor Service and he came down with an extraordinary statement. He said that a committee had been set up to inquire into the ramifications of the service and to investigate the claims. He was asked for the names of the members of the committee, but could not remember them. I inquired if I could appear before the committee with representatives of the Flying Doctor Service and he remarked that although that would be most unusual he would see if that could be done. He was asked if the committee had recommended a grant and whether it could be made retrospective to the financial year just closed as well as applying to the ensuing financial year. He replied that if the committee recommended a grant he would give consideration to the request. On the resumption of Parliament on July 24, before there was any opportunity for further questioning, the Treasurer, in a personal explanation, said there was never any such committee and that he had given the information under a misapprehension. He also led the House to believe that by some means an organization other than the Flying Doctor Service was receiving a subsidy from the Government, and he mentioned £2,000 for the Tarcoola Medical Fund. That fund is operated by a committee of local people who banded together to improve hospitalization in their area. They erected a small building and for a while maintained a nurse, but finding that most difficult came to the Government, which granted £250 a year subsidy for the maintenance of services in that building. This amount did not nearly meet the cost, and because it was only a nursing service and had no connection with any medical service they sought an agreement with the Flying Doctor Service under which the Bush Church Aid Society would take over all the nursing services at Tarcoola by providing a full-time nurse and make the services of their flying doctor available for regular monthly visits, as well as the services of the lady doctor for regular consultation. These people cannot speak too highly of the services rendered. Later they sought to erect a new

building as the present structure, which is very small, is terrifically hot in the summer. I would hate to think that anyone belonging to me was a patient in it for any time. It has been described as a "dog box." The people of the district realize its limitations, and have set out to build a stone hospital. The walls have been topped and cement and timber obtained to complete it, but not the finance. It has been in an uncompleted state for more than two years. I believe that some time ago the Government gave them a grant of £2,000, but this would not amount to a subsidy of a pound for pound towards the cost. The provision of the building is their responsibility and has nothing to do with the Flying Doctor Service, which maintains the nursing services within the building and provides the services of the lady doctor for regular monthly consultations and more often if an emergency demands it. The £2,000 granted to the Tarcoola Medical Fund is the £2,000 mentioned by the Treasurer on July 24. It is to be hoped that the building will be completed in the not far distant future.

This is the kind of service the Flying Doctor Service renders. At Coober Pedy an old age pensioner became seriously ill and the flying doctor was called from Ceduna. It was essential that the man should be taken to the Royal Adelaide Hospital for specialist treatment, and he was flown to the city. Even if the service collected the full charges, they would amount to only 40 per cent of the cost of running the aeroplane, without any allowance for depreciation. In such cases who pays the expense? Is not that kind of service worthy of recognition, and one which the Government could subsidize without embarrassment, and should not such service be encouraged? It should not be necessary for continual pleas to be made to the Government. I discussed the matter with the Treasurer since July 24 and he changed his ground again. This time he expressed concern that the service was too cheap. They have a form of hospital contribution at Cook and other places outside of local governing areas. The charge for treatment in the hospital is only 4s. 6d. a day. At Whyalla there is a contributory scheme through the Broken Hill Proprietary Company, but the charges are three or four times what they are in Cook and I was asked why the Government should provide cheap medical services for the people of Cook. I would have thought if this organization was charging exorbitant fees the Government could find a reason for not subsidizing it, but if it is

giving an essential service at a ridiculously cheap rate, should not we say, "Well done," and give it all the encouragement we can by subsidy? I am told that the aeroplane from Ceduna is at present being overhauled at Parafield. The Civil Aviation Department requires that it shall be overhauled every year and the overhaul alone of the Dragon last year cost £660. This organization will be faced with the replacement of some of its planes before long. To ask that it be placed on the same footing as the other Flying Doctor Service and be granted £1,000 is a most modest request. Every citizen in the district served would support this application. I emphasize that every local government body on Eyre Peninsula was represented at the last annual conference of Eyre Peninsula councils and a resolution was unanimously carried asking the Government to grant a subsidy for this work.

I hope I have clarified the position so as to show the distinction between the Flying Doctor Service and the hospital at Cook, which are the entire responsibility of the Bush Church Aid Society, and the other hospitals which are more or less district hospitals and receive, or are about to receive, more sympathetic treatment from the Government. I commend the Government for coming to the aid of these district hospitals, but I make this plea on behalf of the Bush Church Aid Flying Doctor Service. It has been argued that it is a denominational organization. Where are we getting if we say we will subsidize an organization so long as churchmen do not conduct it? What have churchmen done to be placed under such a ban? The Bush Church Aid Society is on exactly the same basis as the organization which conducts the Beltana, Oodnadatta and Innamincka nursing hostels, which have been receiving annual grants from the Government since Mr. Beerworth and I represented them in this House. This has caused no embarrassment to anyone and has helped in rendering a worthy service.

Mr. O'Halloran—Isn't there an element of church control in the other flying doctor service?

Mr. RICHES—There was at the outset. It was inaugurated by Flynn of the Inland, but I understand that now it is under independent control. I am not sure of the set-up. I have tried to avoid, in representations I have made, any comparison with the other Flying Doctor Service. I join with the Leader of the Opposition in putting forward my pleas. We have nothing but admiration and respect

for the work performed by the other Flying Doctor Service, and express our gratitude to the organizers for that service and the wonderful work being done through the pedal wireless. There are many precedents for granting a subsidy to the Flying Doctor Service. I consider it a privilege to represent a district with so much of interest as the district of Stuart. In every part of my electorate development is taking place and it is a thrill to see townships growing up and communities being formed in order to develop our natural resources.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—Decentralization.

Mr. RICHES—Yes, but unfortunately much of it has been brought about for defence purposes. I should like to think that such decentralization and expansion could be possible in times of peace.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—All the decentralization in your district, except at Woomera, has had nothing to do with defence measures.

Mr. RICHES—That may be a matter of opinion. The greatest development at Whyalla was during the war.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—But the progress being made in your district, except at Woomera, is not due to defence preparations.

Mr. RICHES—It is due to the good graces of a friendly Premier and Government and the needs of the State.

Mr. O'Halloran—And the outstanding representation of the member for the district.

Mr. RICHES—And the support of my loyal colleagues in the Opposition on continually hammering at the Government. A regional power station is being established at Port Augusta. The fact that the State needs coal and that nature has provided 14in. of rain may have had something to do with it. It is particularly pleasing to see new townships in areas that were formerly arid plains. Trees are growing where there was nothing higher than saltbush. Tremendous organization has gone into establishing the town of Woomera and in bringing water to it. It is hard to realize how much organization has been involved. I believe that the advice of town planning experts from all over Australia was sought. The layout of the town is remarkable to anyone interested in local government. The advice of arboriculturists of all parts of the world has been sought in the selection and planting of trees. Nurseries have been established at Port Augusta and Woomera and trees have been imported from Somaliland, Arizona, Africa and other dry areas which are experimenting with new systems of watering and tree propagation. It

is marvellous to see what is being achieved. At Bennett's Camp I saw an apple tree which was planted 3½ months before and watered by the underground method. It was a foot over my head. I saw other trees which had been planted last November and had grown 12ft., but were regarded as too spindly. They were cut down, but when I saw them they were over 8ft. high. This was in a place where no other tree was growing. This method of watering will certainly be tried at other areas in the north. Two earthenware pipes are used, one on each side of the tree. The pipes are perforated at the bottom and a lid is placed on the top. The water can only escape past the roots of the trees. Evaporation is greatly curtailed and the trees get the benefit of all the water. The roots are enticed downwards instead of upwards, and the results are truly remarkable.

Mr. Dunnage—How deep do the pipes go?

Mr. RICHES—About 4ft. Great things are possible from the experiments being conducted not only in the propagation of trees but also in the propagation of saltbush. I was impressed at Woomera with the amount of work being performed by men of all trades and callings. I wonder whether anyone appreciates it. The provision of houses, buildings, machinery and plant, transport, foodstuffs, and other things necessary to support the thousands of men at Woomera must be having a great effect on production and consumption in Australia. I do not wonder that we find it difficult to build all the homes required in our towns when we see the effort required at Woomera and the effort necessary in other places to support it. It is no wonder we have shortages in many directions, because Woomera is only one example of Australia's defence effort. I was pleased to learn of the good work being done by the Woomera Welfare Club.

I was particularly interested in this because when the men at Port Augusta sought to establish a co-operative enterprise in order to set up a chemist shop this House decided against it, and I want to inform members now of some of the work that has been accomplished by co-operative effort by the men themselves at Woomera, completely unaided. In the early stages a camp was set up at Phillips Ponds and some of the men found it more convenient to combine in ordering their tobacco, newspapers and supplies rather than to order individually. The idea spread until all the men in that camp adopted it. They then appointed someone to do it for them and put the whole thing on a better

footing. Men in the construction camps took it up, and they asked the authorities for the use of a building in which they could conduct a store. They then formed themselves into an incorporated body and appointed a manager. The business has grown, and today the manager is paid £1,200 a year and has assistants. Goods are purchased wholesale and sold to the men on the field at 15 per cent above cost, and this incorporated body now has assets of at least £25,000. The turnover last year exceeded £250,000, and from this fund they have fitted out all sporting bodies at Woomera free of charge.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—That is a bigger margin than the ordinary grocer gets; 15 per cent is a very handsome return.

Mr. RICHES—That is the highest margin charged on any item.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—The honourable member did not say that. Anyone could make himself a good fellow with 15 per cent on a quarter of a million pounds.

Mr. RICHES—It is probably a business which would not exist if it were left to private enterprise. I do not pretend to know much about clothing prices, but while I was standing in the store women who had just arrived from Sydney said that the prices were cheaper than in that city. In addition to fitting out the football teams with guernseys, socks, etc., free of charge, whilst I was there I saw an application for 70 pairs of socks for the soccer club. The welfare club provides £5 a week for visitors to the hospital for distribution amongst patients. It has spent £6,000 on the purchase of a moving picture projector and pictures are shown four times a week, with an entrance charge of only 11d., and only the best pictures are used. It has purchased a 16 mm. projector and handed it over to the Salvation Army officer. Pictures are bought each month and the Salvation Army officer shows them in outlying camps.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Who provides the halls?

Mr. RICHES—They are shown in the mess rooms.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Who provides them?

Mr. RICHES—The Government, of course.

Mr. Christian—What is the minimum wage on the field?

Mr. RICHES—Members ought to know that there is a special award for all workers at Woomera and they get penalty rates for overtime, but I am speaking of the provisions the men themselves are making for their leisure hours in order to make conditions on the field more pleasant and civilized. I consider this

to be such an outstanding effort that it is almost a romance, and the story is not finished yet. This club has been established in the main construction camp. When construction is completed there that camp will fold up; we do not know when, but it may not be much longer. The articles of association of the Woomera Welfare Club provide that on its winding up the whole of the money—at least £25,000, and probably more—is to be distributed among charities. The club is managed by men on the field and every man, exclusive of army and service personnel, can join for one shilling a year; when they leave the field they get the shilling back. The committee of management is elected annually.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—Can army personnel purchase from the store?

Mr. RICHES—Yes, but service personnel are not eligible for election to the committee.

Mr. Whittle—Are there any other stores on the field?

Mr. RICHES—No, there are canteens for the services, and in the village a co-operative organization has been set up to conduct a permanent store. All that I have mentioned has been accomplished by the workmen in the construction camp, and I think that is something entirely new and a story worth telling. It is the kind of co-operative effort we should encourage, and I regret that this House did not see fit to encourage others in my district who wanted to commence a similar undertaking last year. Whilst I was on the field I saw applications from a number of charitable organizations in Adelaide, including one from Glenelg, for donations, and I did not see a single donation under £50; most were £100.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—They will get a few more after your speech.

Mr. RICHES—I do not know that I should have mentioned it, but they are men of judgment and they can handle the situation. I pay the greatest possible tribute to them. Of all the organizations I saw at Woomera none impressed me more than the one in question. The club does not get any rate or other concession except using a small building as a store.

Mr. Christian—They might help us out with the Flying Doctor Service.

Mr. RICHES—I have in mind making an approach on the matter, but that will not excuse the Government's apathy towards it. I endorse a suggestion which was made to me by the chairman of the Whyalla Town Commission and of the country committee for jubilee celebrations. I understand that both

State and Federal Governments have made grants for them. Money has been donated to the fund to get conservatorium artists to visit the country and assist at musical concerts, plays, and other cultural activities. It would be a great pity if these activities were confined to this year only and thereafter cease. Country residents appreciate the visits of city orchestras and players from the Elder Conservatorium of Music. It is suggested that a small sum be placed on the Estimates, not to finance the trips, but to subsidize them where it can be shown that there is an appreciation of the work. A strong case has been submitted to the Premier and I trust that the Government will make this a permanent feature of country life, conferring as it does on out-back people one of the amenities they eagerly await.

Members of Parliament usually make a trip into the country at some part of the year. There is an understanding that members will be afforded the opportunity of visiting Leigh Creek at least once every two years, but it is more than that since a visit was made. I am sure that members would be pleased to visit the northern part of the State next year and include Port Augusta in their itinerary. I suggest that they visit Port Pirie and go on to Port Augusta to inspect the power station. They could then visit the tourist resorts in the Flinders Range, passing on to Leigh Creek. Such a trip would be not only enjoyable, but informative. Members could inspect works which are being carried out with public moneys, but are not subject to any investigations by a Parliamentary committee. If the trip can be made it should be during May, 1952. On May 24 next year Port Augusta will celebrate its centenary. It is just 100 years since the then Lieutenant-Governor of South Australia consented to the renaming of Curdnatta to Augusta, the name of his gracious lady. The name eventually became Port Augusta. I extend an invitation on behalf of the people of that town and surrounding districts to members to visit Port Augusta and Leigh Creek. Perhaps Port Augusta's centenary could be marked by a ceremony at the power station and it would be fitting if the Premier could turn a sod for some new work or unveil a plaque. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. WHITTLE secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.19 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, August 14, at 2 p.m.