

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, August 28, 1951.

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

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN POTATO BOARD,

Mr. O'HALLORAN—This morning's *Advertiser* contained the following report:—

“Potatoes Would be Dumped.”—Thousands of tons of potatoes would be dumped in this State from Western Australia and Victoria if local growers decided to dispense with the South Australian Potato Board, Mr. A. D. McAllan, a member of the board, said at Woodside last night.

I understand there is a serious shortage of potatoes in many parts of South Australia. Mr. McAllan's statement conveys the impression that that shortage is due in some way to the board's having prevented the importation of potatoes which are available in another State, but I do not think that is correct. Can the Minister of Agriculture say what is the true position and, if not, will he obtain a report from the board so that any suspicion that the board is responsible for the present shortage may be dispelled?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I think the Leader of the Opposition has a wrong impression of what Mr. McAllan wished to convey. As I read the statement, he wished to convey that, if the board were abolished, during certain periods of the year when potatoes were in abundance in Western Australia they would be dumped in South Australia. Under the Potato Marketing Act potato growers have the right to demand a poll be taken provided 100 registered growers petition for it. I have received a petition from more than 100 petitioners asking that a poll be taken on the question of whether the board shall be continued. That petition is being investigated to ascertain whether all the signatories to it are licensed potato growers. Mr. McAllan was warning potato growers in the Onkaparinga district that, if the board were abolished, they might have to put up with the dumping of potatoes during periods of the year when they were in abundance here and might have to stand the strain of the additional potatoes coming from other States.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Is it a fact, as has been alleged outside and supported to some extent by the extract I read, that the Potato Board is responsible for the potato shortage in South Australia, and if so, will the Minister see what steps can be taken to overcome the shortage?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I say definitely that the Potato Board is in no way responsible for the shortage because it is not the price-fixing authority for potatoes.

LOAN ESTIMATES.

Mr. PATTINSON—With regard to the agreement reached by the State Premiers at the recent Loan Council meeting to reduce their respective Loan programmes for this financial year by 25 per cent, can the Acting Leader of the Government say how this reduction will affect this State's programme of Loan works?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The following is a report furnished by the Under Treasurer since his return from Canberra:—

The 25 per cent reduction decided on at the recent meeting of the Loan Council and referred to in *Hansard* of last Tuesday does not necessarily mean a 25 per cent cut in the works to be carried out by the Government for the year. The reduction made by the Loan Council was in the amount of money to be borrowed. The Treasurer has at his disposal for carrying out Loan works the moneys borrowed during the year and repayments of moneys advanced by the Treasurer in previous years. The Honourable the Premier and Treasurer, before leaving for the United States of America, informed me that he did not think it necessary to cut the Loan programme as he had already pointed out in his speech on the Loan Estimates that it was essential to have Parliamentary approval to a reservoir of works. The following is an extract from the Premier's speech which makes it quite clear that he did not expect to carry out the programme set out in the Loan Estimates, and in my opinion the reduction in the borrowing programme does not in any way affect what the Premier has already said:—

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.

There is more than sufficient money available to finance a programme based on the

same volume of work at which the State has been working for the last few months so that some expansion on the rate of progress of the last few months can be handled and the Premier did not anticipate any slowing up of our essential works programme.

MOTOR VEHICLES INSURANCE PREMIUMS.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Early in the session, in answer to my question, the Premier indicated that motor vehicle insurance premiums would be investigated with a view to determining whether the suggested increases were justified or not, and that if they were found to be not justified they would be brought under price control again. Have those investigations been completed and, if so, what action will be taken?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have no information just now to give the honourable member, but I will bring down a report tomorrow.

BUTTER PRICE.

Mr. STOTT—Can the leader of the Government say when the new butter prices will be declared and operative in South Australia? As an increase of only 6d. a pound is to be allowed in New South Wales and Queensland, will that alter the policy of the Government to allow an increase of 11½d. in South Australia? Further, in view of the lack of agreement between the States on the price of butter, does the Government consider that there should be one uniform price control?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The honourable member is aware that the Chief Secretary attended a prices conference recently. He only returned this morning after a rough trip and I have not had an opportunity to confer with him, but I will get a report from him for the honourable member.

HILTON BRIDGE.

Mr. FRED WALSH—On numerous occasions I have brought before the House the totally inadequate lighting on the Hilton Bridge. This matter is aggravated by the bad condition of the footpath and the boundary fence. During the past week every light on the bridge was out; I do not know who is responsible for that, although I am aware of an arrangement between the council and the Electricity Trust. Is the trust responsible for the maintenance and continuity of street lighting in the metropolitan area and will the Minister of Local Government obtain an explanation of the black-out on the Hilton Bridge last week?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Speaking generally, the Electricity Trust and the councils have a mutual contract, the duration of which and the number of lights being a matter of negotiation and agreement between them. This does not come under the purview of the Government but, as Minister of Local Government, I will obtain a reply to the honourable member's question and bring it down as soon as possible.

PRICE OF EGGS.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—An article appearing in the *Advertiser* last week stated that consignments of from about 1,000 to 2,000 dozen eggs are being sold each week to Melbourne operators by poultrymen in the Pinnaroo district, the price obtained in Melbourne being 3s. a dozen, but in Adelaide only 2s. 10½d. I ask the Minister of Agriculture whether the real trouble about the price of eggs in South Australia does not lie in a contract which has been entered into by the Commonwealth Government, supported by the South Australian Government, to sell eggs to Great Britain at a price lower than the cost of production? If that is so, what steps, if any, has the Minister taken to have the contract price increased in order that this important branch of our primary industries can pay its way?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The honourable member is correct in saying that a contract was entered into between the Australian and British Governments on the overseas price of eggs. The South Australian Government was not consulted about that matter, the Commonwealth fixing the price for the whole of Australia and the various States having to conform to it. There is a rise and fall clause in the contract by which prices can be raised a certain extent, and I understand that the Commonwealth Minister for Commerce and Agriculture is in England discussing certain matters affecting the prices of commodities which have been sold. I noticed the article mentioned by the honourable member, but there is nothing to prevent eggs being sold from South Australia to Victoria if producers desire to do so. The extraordinary thing is that it is a member of the Victorian Egg Board who is buying eggs in South Australia, not as a member of the board but as a private individual. He may have to make some explanations to his Minister, but his transactions are no business of mine. The overseas price is below the cost of production disclosed by a survey and I understand that the Commonwealth Minister is making representations overseas to have it raised.

POOL OF DAIRY STOCK.

Mr. FLETCHER—Has the Department of Lands a pool of young dairy stock to supply requirements of soldier settlers who are about to receive their blocks? What is the position of the heifer pool that existed during the early stages of settlement? Has the pool made a profit or a loss?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The dairy heifer scheme for the provision of livestock for developmental work and to assist war service settlers to stock their holdings has been completed, the operations resulting in a loss of £323 17s. 9d. The sum of £5,754 19s. 5d. was paid to the Commonwealth as fees for agistment of the stock and is a credit to the cost of acquisition and development of estates.

BRICK MANUFACTURERS LTD.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Has the Minister of Lands, representing the Premier, anything further to report in reply to questions asked by the member for Port Pirie and myself about a supply of bricks at Port Pirie for building war service homes?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have received the following reply from the Director of Building Materials:—

Presumably the usual procedure will be followed in any application for financial aid from Brick Manufacturers Ltd. or any other company in that proposals will be investigated by the Industries Development Committee, which is an all-Parliamentary committee, with the exception of one Treasury officer.

SHORTAGE OF SOAP AT LEIGH CREEK.

Mr. DAVIS—Has the Minister of Lands anything further to report in reply to my question to the Premier about the soap shortage at Leigh Creek?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The following report has been received from the General Manager and Chief Engineer of the Electricity Trust:—

The shortage of soap at Leigh Creek was first brought to the notice of the Coal Production Engineer on July 23, 1951. Immediate contact was made, by telephone, with the head office of the trust, and additional supplies of soap were requisitioned. As the result, two gross of toilet soap and two gross of bar soap were consigned to Leigh Creek on August 2, 1951. This soap was made available to the public through their normal source of supply, the co-operative store. No complaints of shortage have since been received. The shortage at the co-operative store is due to non-fulfilment of their orders by the wholesale houses, who, in turn, claim that manufacturers are unable to obtain sufficient primary products. Accordingly, they have only

been able to satisfy portion of their customers' orders. However, the management at Leigh Creek will, in future, watch soap supplies to the co-operative store and, whenever necessary, assist through the Electricity Trust Stores at Hilton. In addition to normal supplies to the township through the co-operative store, the management makes a weekly issue of soap and "Solvol" to those employees who are engaged in particularly dirty duties. This issue has, to date, been uninterrupted.

EXPORT LAMB PRICES.

Mr. STOTT—I have received complaints from farmers during the past fortnight about the fixing of prices for export lambs that are offered for sale. Will the Minister of Agriculture give due consideration to the request of both farmers and exporters for an announcement of the export price when the lambs are offered, so that they will have an idea of the prices obtainable?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—An announcement has been made that an increased price will be paid for export lambs this year. I hope to receive a report, either today or tomorrow, from the manager of the Produce Department, who is also a member of the Meat Board, on what the increase will mean in the price per pound to be paid for export lambs this year. The information will be published as early as possible so that growers can obtain the fullest information as to what their lambs are worth per pound.

CEMENT PRODUCTION.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Minister of Lands any further information in reply to my question of August 21 about a report in the *Advertiser* under the heading "South Australian Cement Needs More Capital"?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The cement company referred to in the article that appeared in the *Advertiser* is financing its own development; it has not applied to the Government for financial assistance.

PRICE CONTROL.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I have been approached by one council in my district, which states that price control over councils is redundant, it being contended that ratepayers are the people who have the right to control councils and not the Prices Commissioner. I understand that when the Commonwealth Government controlled prices both the State Government and councils were exempt. As I believe that an amending Bill will be brought

before Parliament this session, will the Minister look into the position and see whether it is not possible and desirable to leave councils out of control?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I will have the matter investigated.

BULK HANDLING OF WHEAT.

Mr. STOTT—Can the chairman of the Public Works Committee indicate when the committee will present a report on the bulk handling of wheat, whether it will be available for the matter to be dealt with this session, the reason why the committee has not presented an interim report, and whether the question of unloading wheat trucks could not be the subject of a further investigation after the interim report has been presented?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—The committee's inquiries in regard to a bulk handling system for South Australia are by no means completed. The reference to the committee is a wide one and it is obliged to virtually work out a scheme for the State. Although the question of bins is a comparatively simple one, the shipment of wheat is a complex problem, and until it is solved no system can be installed in this State, because the matter of handling wheat is as important as storing it. At the moment the committee is awaiting reports from some overseas firms which are looking into the matter of handling equipment. Until they are to hand and we can work out the economics of a scheme we cannot very well submit any report. One report tabled so far is related to the general question of the bulk handling of wheat and refers to the Ardrossan project. When that is in operation we will gain valuable information about certain aspects which affect the general scheme for South Australia. At the moment I regret that the committee cannot give the House any report which would be of value.

CITRUS TREES FOR LOXTON AREA.

Mr. STOTT—Has the Minister of Lands obtained a reply to the question I asked on August 16 regarding citrus trees for the Loxton irrigation settlement and the precautions taken against red scale?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have received the following report from the Secretary for Irrigation:—

On present indications contractors will have sufficient citrus trees for the 1951 planting programme on war service settlement holdings, except for a small shortage of grapefruit trees.

This shortage will, if possible, be made up by additional purchases. All contract trees have been raised in the Upper Murray areas and red scale infestation is unlikely, but the usual precautions will nevertheless be taken.

MOTOR CYCLISTS.

Mr. BROOKMAN (on notice)—

1. (a) How many motor cyclists were fatally injured during each of the last two financial years? (b) How many of these were under the age of 21 years? (c) What were the ages of this group?

2. (a) How many persons are holders of licences to ride motor cycles? (b) How many holders of motor cycle licences are under the age of 21 years? (c) What are the ages of this group?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The replies are:—

1. (a) Year ended June 30, 1950, 53; year ended June 30, 1951, 58. (b) Particulars not available. (c) Particulars not available.

2. (a), (b), and (c).—It is not possible to give the desired information. 22,296 motor cycles were registered for use on July 31, 1951, whereas at that date only 3,758 licences restricted to the driving of a motor cycle were in force. Most drivers of motor cycles hold a motor vehicle driver's licence, which authorizes the holder to drive any type of motor vehicle, including a motor cycle. It is, therefore, not known how many people drive motor cycles, as all licensed drivers of cars and trucks are licensed to drive motor cycles.

SUPPLY BILL No. 2.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended the House to make provision by Bill for defraying the salaries and other expenses of the several departments and public services of the Government of South Australia during the year ending June 30, 1952.

In Committee of Supply.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS (Minister of Lands) moved—

That towards defraying expenses of the establishments and public services of the State for the year ending June 30, 1952, a further sum of £5,000,000 be granted; provided that no payments for any establishment or service shall be made out of the said sum in excess of the rates voted for similar establishments or services on the Estimates for the financial year ended June 30, 1951, except increases of salaries or wages fixed or prescribed by any return made under any Act relating to the Public Service or by any regulation, or by any award, order, or determination of any court or other body empowered to fix or prescribe wages or salaries.

Resolution agreed to, adopted in Committee of Ways and Means, and agreed to by the House. Bill introduced by the Minister of Lands and read a first time.

Second reading.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS (Minister of Lands)—Clause 2 of the Bill provides for a further £5,000,000 to carry on the public services of the State for the year ending June 30, 1952. The amount of £5,500,000 provided by Supply Act No. 1 is practically exhausted. The £5,000,000 now sought will, it is estimated, carry on the services of the State until the first week in November, by which time the Appropriation Act for the year ending June 30, 1952, should be assented to. Clause 3 provides that payments shall not exceed last year's estimates except in the case of increases of salaries and wages where, if the increases are the result of fixation by regulation, award, or determination of any court or other body authorized to fix same, the Treasurer is authorized to pay the increases out of the monies provided for by this Bill. I move the second reading.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages without amendment.

PAYMENT OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

POLICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 16. Page 367.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Frome—Leader of the Opposition)—The provisions of this Bill conform to the principle which was adopted by the House in making adjustments to the salaries of judges of the Supreme Court, the Auditor-General, and members of Parliament in accordance with recommendations made by Mr. President Morgan. As the increase in salary recommended for the Commissioner of Police is in my opinion warranted, I offer no objection to the Bill.

The Hon. S. W. JEFFRIES (Torrens)—I must oppose this Bill on the principle I enunciated when speaking on other Bills dealing with salary increases. Of course, the Government has been consistent in bringing down this avalanche of Bills: if it introduced one it had to introduce the others. I remind the House that when the expenditure Estimates are brought down we shall have another avalanche of large salary increases for public

servants. I strongly oppose this Bill on the ground that it will have the effect of aiding inflation.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

INDUSTRIAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS (Newcastle—Minister of Agriculture)—This Bill makes some amendments to the Industrial Code dealing with several different topics. The first matter dealt with is the definition of "metropolitan area." This expression occurs several times in the Code, and last year the definitions of it were altered. Previously it had been defined as including a number of obsolete electoral districts and some parts of certain hundreds; but in last year's Bill it was declared to include a number of municipalities and portion of a district council district. By accident, when the new area was being worked out the municipality of Walkerville was omitted. Walkerville is not an industrial area and no harm has resulted so far from the omission; but it is desirable to correct the oversight as soon as possible. For this reason clause 3 amends the definition of "metropolitan area" wherever it occurs in the Code so as to include Walkerville.

Clause 4 deals with the salaries of the President and Deputy President of the Industrial Court. As members know, Mr. President Morgan has recently inquired into and made recommendations upon the salaries which should be paid to judges of the Supreme Court, Ministers of the Crown, and the holders of certain Parliamentary and public offices. He has, however, not been asked to report on his own salary nor on that of the Deputy President. No doubt if he had been asked he would have felt that it was not proper for him to undertake any such task. The Government considers that the President and Deputy President are entitled to increases of salaries proportionate to those proposed for judges of the Supreme Court. The increase proposed for puisne judges of the Supreme Court is 30 per cent and the existing margin of the Chief Justice over the other judges is to be retained. The Government has decided to ask Parliament to apply the same principles to the President and Deputy President of the Industrial Court. It is suggested that the salary of the Deputy President should be raised from £1,600 to

£2,100, and that the margin of the President above the Deputy President—namely, £400—should be retained, thus making the President's proposed salary £2,500. These rates are included in clause 4 of the Bill. Clauses 5 and 6 provide that when a wage rate is automatically adjusted on a quarterly variation and works out at 1½d. above a multiple of 3d.—*e.g.*, at an amount ending with 1½d., 4½d., 7½d., or 10½d.—the rate will be adjusted upwards to the next highest multiple of 3d.

Clause 7 deals with the employers' representatives on the Board of Industry. At present section 255 of the Industrial Code provides that the two employers' representatives shall both be nominated by the South Australian Employers' Federation. The Government has acceded to a request made by the South Australian Chamber of Manufactures that it should have the right to nominate one of the employers' representatives. Clause 7 provides for this change to be made, but it provides that the change will not affect the members of the present board, one of whom will be regarded as being a representative of the Chamber of Manufactures. The alteration in the constitution in the Board of Industry necessitates some consequential amendments of sections 255, 256 and 257 of the Code. These are made by clauses 8, 9, and 10 of the Bill. At the same time the opportunity has been taken to improve the drafting and arrangement of these sections and to include a provision, which experience has shown to be desirable, that a person appointed to a casual vacancy on the board shall hold office only for the balance of the term of his predecessor. I move the second reading.

Mr. FRED WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

PORT PIRIE PARK LANDS ACT REPEAL BILL.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS, having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to repeal the Port Pirie Park Lands Act, 1932. Read a first time.

LOAN ESTIMATES.

Grand total, £41,166,000.

In Committee.

(Continued from August 16. Page 374.)

Mr. TAPPING (Semaphore)—I am concerned about the provision of £4,763,868 for the Municipal Tramways Trust. It would be unwise, however, to criticize the trust's adminis-

tration as it is under review by an inquiry committee. About two years ago the trust planned to inaugurate a trolley bus service from Cheltenham to the Largs North area. Employees of the trust have been busily engaged erecting poles and wires for the service, but I was disgusted to learn last week that it had decided to change its plans and, instead of instituting a trolley bus service, run a diesel bus service. Today trust employees are busily engaged in removing the poles and overhead wires. This action shows a very short-sighted policy by trust officials and I register a strong protest on behalf of the people I represent. I do not know how much was involved in the work, but think it would be between £25,000 and £30,000. The people in the district feel that they have been betrayed. I understand that the trust, unlike the Electricity Trust, does not appreciate suggestions from its employees. Unless there is co-operation between employer and employee the Tramways Trust cannot possibly get out of its present financial difficulties.

The gigantic sum of £8,527,864 is provided for the Harbors Board, of which £65,000 has been ear-marked for the extension of the wharf at Osborne coal gantries to provide an additional berth for coal boats. At present only one boat at a time can be worked and members of the Australian Government Workers Association have frequently worked all day on Sundays discharging coal required urgently by industry. The Osborne gantries compare favourably with any in Australia or, for that matter, in any part of the world. The gantries enable coal boats to discharge 8,000 tons in 14 to 16 hours, which is most expeditious and economic. A second berth will more than double this output. The sum of £350,500 has been set aside for the purchase of properties under the Harbors Board harbour improvement scheme. Some houses which have been erected only two or three years will be demolished to make way for the scheme. Following discussions the Government has agreed that houses of a good standard will in future remain intact, but sub-standard ones will be demolished and people whose tenancies are affected allowed to occupy Housing Trust homes. The letting agent for the Harbors Board, Sutton Limited, has purchased a number of allotments in the Taperoo area, but some of its offers are most unfair. Some of the owners purchased the land 12 or 14 years ago and still desire to build in the district when materials and manpower become available. Sutton Limited has offered certain owners £40 for their blocks which under today's open market conditions

would bring between £200 and £250. Apparently no consideration has been given to land-owners having paid taxes and water and corporation rates for years. Dozens of owners have approached me and protested at the board's action. The Government should review the offers made by Sutton Limited and take into consideration the true value of the properties, as these people will be forced to acquire land in another area, which may cost them £300. Improvements to the offices for tally and check clerks at Port Adelaide and Outer Harbour are estimated to cost £5,000. Present conditions and poor lighting affect the work of clerks greatly and I am glad to see that the conditions will be improved. Better provision is to be made for Glanville dockyard employees, the sum of £8,500 being provided for pick-up-shelter and amenities buildings. The work that is being undertaken at the Glanville dockyard is enormous and it is pleasing to note that the Government is endeavouring to improve existing amenities. This must prove of benefit, not only to the Harbors Board, but to the employees. I support the Loan Estimates.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY (Chaffey)—In introducing the Loan Estimates the Treasurer stated that Parliament should provide for a reservoir of works. He said:—

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.

Further on he said:—

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.

I suggest that when the Treasurer said that he spoke with his tongue in his cheek. This afternoon the Minister of Lands substantiated it by quoting a report from the Under Treasurer, which in effect said that Parliament has the right to vote money for expenditure on

works, but has no say in where the money will be spent. This takes from Parliament all responsibility and transfers it to the heads of Government departments. There is a growing feeling that our bureaucratic system is getting a hold on the community far greater than was ever intended, and it is a hold which is not being used in the best interests of the general public, but to enable people close to Ministers to have their hobbies adopted. If the head of a democracy is the Parliamentary institution, we should be jealous of our responsibilities and see that they are not handed over to other people.

Mr. Christian—Would you say that any of the items in the programme of loan works are not urgent, but merely hobbies?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Some heads of departments have a strong bias in certain directions, and apparently the money will be spent as they desire. Parliament is responsible for spending the taxpayers' money, and if we do not retain that responsibility we will be failing in our duty. It is useless talking about freedom for the peoples of the world if the people of Australia are not free to spend their own money. I am perturbed that not one member of the Government can say where the money voted for these Loan works will be spent. The general public is concerned about the money to be spent on housing. We have it on good authority that the Treasurer, when agreeing to the 25 per cent reduction in Loan expenditure, said that expenditure on housing would not be reduced. I am glad of that, because the housing of our people is a necessity. Regarding the difficult labour position the Treasurer said:—

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.

That will present a problem, because hundreds of men who offered their lives in the defence of Australia are not properly housed. What will be their position when the 1,300 New Australian get homes? It shows what can be done under a bureaucratic system. Departments are concerned about their own responsibilities and they tell the powers-that-be that the labour is wanted and that the men must be housed. It is a doubtful policy to follow. The Treasurer said that the subject of inflation would be raised in connection with these Loan Estimates. Mr. Jeffries, in the Address in Reply debate, cast an accusing glance at me and said that last year I said that, despite inflation, the

people of the Commonwealth were never happier. Apparently the honourable member and I look at inflation in different ways. He regards the shortage of production and monetary inflation as being closely allied. I do not view inflation in that way, believing the shortage of production to be only one item. Every seller of goods has a ready market, and that is what we have always desired. We want everything produced to be absorbed by the community and a payable price obtained for it. That is what I meant when I said last year that despite inflation the people of Australia were never better off. In the 12 months since then we have seen an increase in the inflation of our monetary system, which is something different. It means that whereas a one pound note could buy a certain quantity of goods then, two notes are needed now. Government supporters do not realize that a financial policy and the production of goods are two separate matters. We should have a definite financial policy in order to put more shillings into the pound.

Mr. Michael said he had heard me say in depression years that millions of pounds of bank notes should be put into circulation. He must have said that more as a figure of speech than as a statement of fact, because I challenge him, or anyone else, to say that I suggested that bank notes should be put into circulation in that way. The putting of bank notes into circulation is the prerogative of banking people. Orthodox banking has always depended on the printing press. Today the printing press in the Commonwealth is putting millions of pound notes into circulation. A similar thing was done in Germany after World War I. and in China after World War II. and those two countries crashed. Unorthodox people, like myself, suggest that many bank notes should be taken out of circulation, and that more value should be put into those remaining. I can understand Mr. Dunks, Mr. Hawker, and Mr. Jeffries opposing the Bill introduced to increase the salaries of members. If I thought as they do I would not accept the salary increase either. They could not possibly accept it believing, as they do, that it will add to the vicious spiral of inflation, but it is a wrong view. It might just as easily be said that if someone spat in the sea it would affect the tide. The Premier said he regarded fiscal control as a last resort. The Government's slogan of harder work, increased production, and decreased consumption is the same as that which led us into the depression of the thirties. Government members have suggested that our younger men are not as

good as our older men were years ago. That kind of statement has been repeated since Biblical days. Our younger men are at least as hardworking as their fathers. The member for Alexandra, one of the younger Government members, asked why should the modern farmer with his many mechanical aids slog his inside out merely because his grandfather did. However, Government members are continually preaching the doctrine of increased production through harder work. Australia today has a higher standard of living under so-called inflation than she has ever known before. Inflation should be countered by a monetary policy. Increased taxation will only kill the wage-earner's initiative.

Because of the present exchange rate Australian consumers, most of whom are congregated in metropolitan areas, are transferring 25 per cent of their spending power to their brothers in the country, thus helping to make country life attractive. An appreciation of the Australian pound would not affect the inflationary spiral, but would make it harder for the man on the land. Australian eggs are bringing about 2s. 9d. a dozen in London, and appreciation of the Australian pound to parity with sterling would mean that the Australian consumer would have to pay more for his eggs to make good the reduction in the export price. I have spoken to New Zealanders regarding the effect of the appreciation of their currency on the economic position of their country, but I have received no definite answer.

The CHAIRMAN—Order. How is the honourable member linking up his statement with the debate on the Loan Estimates?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I have quoted the Premier as saying that he puts fiscal policy last; whereas I put it first. The miserable sum of about £200,000 is to be spent on highways, whereas the Railways Department will receive more than £4,000,000. Those amounts should be reversed. Far more money should be spent on the development of good arterial roads linking up the various States than on railways. Our railway passenger service is not as important an aspect as its carriage of freight. We are told that during the last 10 years the number of passengers travelling on our railways has diminished. That being so, why should all this money be spent on a method of transport which will eventually go into the discard? Although some road transport is under a vicious system of control, the Railways Department is not making a success

of its job. The inventor of the internal combustion engine set a limit on the use of railways. Government members have said that road hauliers should not be allowed to spoil our country roads. One would imagine that they used a pick and shovel in an effort to destroy them.

Mr. Christian—They do it as effectively by other means.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—They do it while carrying out the work which the railways, although financed so heavily by us, are not doing.

Mr. Shannon—Unfortunately, the major factor in causing the damage is the excessive speed at which interstate carriers travel.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—If that is so it should be easy to amend our laws so as to prevent excessive speeds. We have been caught unprepared with regard to the development of road transport. Only since the American forces entered this country and showed what could be done has any real development taken place. Were it not for the road haulier, who is forced to use unsuitable roads, our economy would be practically at a standstill. Recently whilst on a visit to Western Australia I saw newspaper headlines which indicated that the drivers of two overlander trucks loaded with piping had reached Norseman and hoped to be in Perth within a day or so. Those headlines reminded me of statements which were current at the time of the relief of Mafeking, a beleaguered city desperately in need of food. Perth was anxiously waiting to proceed with its housing programme but was short of piping, galvanized iron, and other necessary materials. One would assume that if the railways can cart anything they can cart piping from Newcastle for it is a good long haul of what is known as good cargo, but not a week elapses when I do not see trucks passing through my district with piping from Newcastle for South Australia, and probably some of it is sent on to Western Australia.

Mr. O'Halloran—And at Newcastle you will see it being carted back from South Australia.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I suppose that statement is correct or the honourable member would not have said it, but it is somewhat surprising.

Mr. O'Halloran—Perhaps not Newcastle, but Sydney at least.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I am very surprised to hear it and such a statement ought to be examined. I can only wonder where the incen-

tive is, for one would imagine that Sydney would be able to get piping from Newcastle much more easily and cheaply than South Australia.

Mr. Shannon—Has the honourable member never heard of black marketing?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I am not taking that into consideration. I am referring only to legitimate trading and our railways, despite assertions by the responsible Minister, are not handling goods in the way we should expect of them in view of the millions of pounds Parliament has provided over and above the revenue they earn from customers. The time has come when we either must put more money from State revenue into our roads or make a much firmer approach to the Commonwealth Government. I have taken a cutting from the *Advertiser* of last week, and the headlines are sufficient to tell the story—'£16,500,000 paid as sales tax on motor vehicles.' That is on top of all the revenue derived from excise and petrol duty. When this tax was first imposed it was with the idea of building up the road system throughout Australia. What right has the Commonwealth Government to put a surcharge on the citizens who happen to make their livelihood by road transportation, or on those who use their cars for pleasure? If this taxation were handed back in the shape of better roads there could be no objection, but when it imposes a surcharge and most of it goes into general revenue it proves that the Government has fallen down on its job. However, it is useless to spend money on light surface bituminous roads. I know that the time is not opportune, but the Government should have plans for laying down solid concrete strips on either side of existing bituminous arterial roads. Consider the Sturt Highway, for example. I understand that the Adelaide-Gawler road is to be widened as soon as opportunity occurs. Instead of laying down more bitumen there should be a solid concrete strip on either side, and all heavy, slow-moving traffic should be forced to use it. Concrete roads which were put down experimentally have been down for a long time.

Mr. Whittle—Where are they?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I have in mind a strip on the Henley Beach road. It has been there for a great number of years with little or no attention.

Mr. Whittle—That was put there because of the flood waters at that spot.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—In any case it has stood up well.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—There are quite a number of concrete roads in Melbourne.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—If South Australia found any difficulty in laying concrete roads there would be no trouble in getting the correct information. An amount of £845,000 is provided for irrigation and drainage. The Treasurer pointed out that some of this money is required to provide urgently needed drainage for vineyards and orchards in which seepage and salt problems are quickly developing. There never has been an irrigation settlement in the world which has not been faced sooner or later with a drainage problem. Professor Perkins, a former Director of Agriculture, held a very strong view, when irrigation was being developed in South Australia after World War I, that drains should be laid down at the inception so as to be ready to take away the excess water which he knew was likely to accumulate. I do not go that far, for it is not always possible to foretell where the water will accumulate. It is better to wait until it mounts up at the danger spots and then take it away. However, it is beyond argument that most of the seepage comes from the watering of loose sandy rises—the type of soil known as Winkie sands. On the other hand, the growing tendency is to plant such rises with citrus trees, which can be sprinkler irrigated. Much investigation on these lines has been carried out in the new Loxton settlement by an officer of the Department of Agriculture. He points out that anyone who uses more than three inches of water at one irrigation is simply wasting water. At Loxton the settlers have to pay their own electricity charges, so naturally they will not put on more water than is necessary, and it does not cost them any more to spread their waterings to, say, two irrigations of two inches instead of one of four inches because they are charged on a quantity basis. As the Minister knows, settlers in the older settlements are not charged on the quantity basis, but on an acreage basis for each irrigation. If a Berri settler, wishing to take advantage of the latest scientific knowledge, decides to put on two light irrigations instead of one heavy one his costs go up by 100 per cent because he has to pay for two irrigations. These men are prepared to install the sprinkler systems at their own expense and pay for their own electric motor and electricity charges, and if the department could see fit to allow these men to split their irrigation in respect of the sprinkler-irrigated

part of their properties it would result in better production, the keeping of the blocks in production longer and the cutting down of drainage costs.

Mr. Shannon—Are certain settlers putting in their own sprinklers?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Yes. Generally they are in favour of the Loxton system; that is, paying for the actual amount of water used.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—Should there not be a minimum amount which a settler should pay?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—That is the position in Loxton, and the older settlers have, for the last 20 years, been asking to be brought under the same system. The man who tries to look after his property will use the water wisely and will not have to pay for the water his neighbour is wasting, but the department, I understand on the score of costs, has not yet agreed to it.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—Every block would have to be metered.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—That presents no difficulty; it is common to all the other States and it is being done at Loxton. However, I am not asking the department to go that far at present as it would be a little impracticable in view of the shortage of materials. As far as sprinklers are concerned, however, no material is sought, and if the department feels that there would be no control over the use of water I point out that the electricity charges would be the limiting factor; no-one would pay for more than he needed.

The report of the Royal Commission on Transport, which I have already mentioned, points out how working expenses per train mile increased, between 1939 and 1949, from 114.34d. to 287.91d., an increase of 151.8 per cent, and I have an idea that much of this increased cost of running the railways, and the losses which have been incurred, come from using our railway system in the wrong way. The railway authorities are like spoilt children for they compete for business on which they know they have no chance of making a profit; they are determined to get it whatever the cost. During the fruit picking season men come into my district to buy apricots and peaches. They have their own trucks and can cart the fruit direct to Adelaide. About two years ago a vigorous attempt was made to stop people doing that by refusing a supply of petrol. At

that time petrol was rationed, but as rationing of petrol has been abolished the preserving companies cannot now be prevented from carting their own goods. In spite of that the Government sent steam trains to Renmark, when we did not have enough coal for our everyday needs, to bring down a very moderate amount of fruit, probably not more than a truck or two. Had the Government allowed road hauliers to handle that fruit there would have been no losses in this direction for the taxpayer to meet.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—Were special trains sent to bring down the fruit?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Yes.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—Were they well patronized?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Nobody wanted to patronize them, as most of the fruit came down by road. The road haulier is able to go on to a property, pick the fruit up, and take it direct to the preserving companies. To transport it by rail the producer may have to hire a vehicle to cart it to the railways and then load it into a truck that has been standing in the heat of a summer day. The fruit may then remain in the truck for a considerable time before being taken to Adelaide. It must then be unloaded in Adelaide and carted to the preserving company. There was an understanding between the companies and the railways, or the Government, that a proportion of the fruit should be carried on the railways, but I believe the companies refused to have good fruit wasted by being transported by the railways, and ignored the arrangement. It is childish for the Government to interfere with the transport of fruit from the river districts. No great principle is at stake and much money would be saved by allowing hauliers to cart the produce. The Railways Department takes the view that this may be the thin edge of the wedge.

Some years ago there was a strong move in the river areas to get a direct road service to the city. It was pointed out that intrastate traffic was allowed and at the time railway workers were on strike empty coaches went through the district, but people could not use them because this, too, would be the thin edge of the wedge. Deputation after deputation waited on the Premier and the Minister of Railways and on one occasion I introduced a deputation to the Railways Commissioner, but their requests were always refused. The Government's argument was that if the river traffic were taken off the Morgan line it would not be

possible to extend the service past Kapunda and that the upper river traffic made the service possible. We took a dim view of that argument. Now the Railways Department is doing the very thing it said could not be done; it has taken the upper Murray traffic off that train by running a special train. There are now two trains to Morgan, one to take people to places *en route* and the other, an express, to cater for people going higher up the river. I suppose the Government's reply would be that if the member for the district pushes this matter the remedy might be to cancel one of the trains, but that is not a satisfactory answer. If a direct road service were allowed it would be just as fast and more comfortable and would not be a drain on the taxpayer. I think that road transport operators in competition with the railways must pay 10 per cent of their takings into the revenue of the Transport Control Board, so instead of a drain on the taxpayer the revenue of the State would benefit.

The Transport Control Board should be abolished because it is a menace to the primary and secondary industries of South Australia. It merely serves the interests of the railways and the needs of country people come a bad last. A Parliamentary committee similar to the Public Works Standing Committee should be appointed to co-ordinate transport. I have often heard the Minister of Railways say that all that is needed is happy co-operation between the various transport services.

Mr. Brookman—Do you believe in licensing routes to transport operators?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Yes.

Mr. Brookman—Who should do that?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—That is now being done by the Transport Control Board, but a committee like the old Railways Standing Committee could do it.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—That committee only considered the construction of railways, not administration.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—My committee would have greater powers, but not interfere with the administration of the railways. It could work out policies in the same way as the State Traffic Committee does. Members of Parliament should be appointed to such a committee because they are in touch with the needs of the people. The Premier said that he admired the work done by members of Parliament on commissions and committees

because they brought down practical recommendations. That is much more than he could say of the findings of many commissions which are not in touch with the people or the workings of Parliament. If a Parliamentary committee were set up people from the country could go before it and say what was happening in their district. I know what such a committee would have to say about the railways or private enterprise running a service to the Murray areas.

Mr. Christian—What about the authority Judge Paine's commission said should be set up?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I should imagine that would be an outside authority.

Mr. Christian—No, a Ministry of Transport.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—At present we have a Minister of Railways with no control over the department, so a Ministry of Transport would not get us far. I do not favour the appointment of more Ministers for this or any other purpose. Any Government department or committee must consider Government policy, but members of Parliament need not be influenced by the policy of the Government. A tremendous amount is proposed to be spent on water supplies in the metropolitan area, but very little for country districts. A considerable sum will be spent on the Loxton soldier settlement scheme, but much of this will be recouped from the Commonwealth.

I would like some information from the Minister about the item of £10,000 for the settlement of discharged soldiers. It was stated that this amount is required to make advances to soldiers of the 1914-18 war and for the maintenance of reverted properties. I do not know of any soldier settler of World War I. who needs help. Probably there have been reverted properties, but they would doubtless be allotted to ex-servicemen from World War II. I support the Estimates.

Mr. CHRISTIAN (Eyre)—One feels helpless in discussing Loan Estimates in the light of constantly rising costs in different departments. Last year the Estimates aggregated £21,000,000 and it would be interesting if one could ascertain to what extent all last year's works were completed or what stage they have reached. It is astonishing that we should have spent £21,000,000 from loan last year. I would like the Loan Estimates presented in a somewhat similar form to the Revenue Estimates,

where the amount voted and actually expended the previous year and the balance remaining on each item are shown.

Mr. O'Halloran—We used to get a special annual return showing the expenditure on all loan works.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Yes, and we could have a statement showing what stage of completion the works have reached. We are dealing in tens of millions today and should know where the money has actually gone. We have little control over actual costs. At one time we had Estimates aggregating £3,000,000 or £4,000,000, but today they total £41,166,000. I understand that we will be down 25 per cent on the actual moneys allocated for works, but we do not know which particular ones will go ahead and which will have to remain in the doldrums.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—That will be dictated by the materials supply.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I admit that, but it would help members if they knew where they stood as regards the money voted. Members must know all the facts. I do not suggest any lack of confidence in the manner the money will be applied, but that is not the point. We are asked to vote £400,000 to the Architect-in-Chief for hospital buildings, £1,752,000 for the Harbors Board, £5,807,000 for the Engineering and Water Supply Department, and £22,741,000 for various miscellaneous items.

Mr. O'Halloran—The Electricity Trust alone is to get £11,000,000!

Mr. CHRISTIAN—One is struck with wonder as to how much of the money voted will be spent, and to what extent it will be usefully spent. Although we are voting a huge sum to the railways for a definite programme, how much of the work will be completed in view of the still rising costs? We have our Great Australian Bight and Great Australian Inland, but we appear to be developing a Great Australian Sink on loan expenditure. The total Commonwealth loan programme is about £350,000,000, of which our share was to be £41,000,000. Take the Snowy River project, which was originally estimated to cost £250,000,000, but which will cost an incalculable sum before completion if what I have read of our achievements is correct. In an article in the *Australian Monthly Magazine*, the writer gives considerable details about the progress of the works and states, finally, the opinion of an American drilling expert:—

After watching the work in progress here and in other Snowy camps I feel confident that this project will never be finished. There is not enough money in the world to pay for it.

That makes one hesitate before voting such huge sums as we are committed to under the Loan Estimates unless we know more adequately and correctly how the money will be spent and which projects will be pursued. We are committed to a considerable building programme for hospitalization proposals. One thing causing a steep rise in the cost of health services and hospital building programmes is today's new working conditions, including the 40-hour week. We should not blind ourselves to the salient factors that are causing this tremendous rise in capital outlay for various facilities. An enormous proportion of today's expenditure is required to provide accommodation for hospital staffs. Take Mount Gambier, which will ultimately have a most modern hospital. Although the bed capacity for patients there will be 210, we will have to provide 180 beds for nurses and 60 for domestics, a total of 240. The other point about it is that although the bed capacity is 210 the daily average will be much less. I doubt whether it will be more than 170 or 180. There will be a nursing and domestic staff aggregating one and a half to each patient. The whole thing is becoming top-heavy, and if we want these conditions to obtain in our hospitals and other institutions we will have to pay for it, but the payment will fall heavily on the taxpayers. I suggest that the health of the community should be dealt with in a more direct way. Preventive methods should be pursued with a much greater vigour. We spend too much time and money on the treatment of disease instead of prevention. Recently I questioned the Minister of Works on the dosing of our water supplies with fluorine for the control of dental decay. I obtained a reply and had the opportunity of studying the docket. I gathered the impression that the only people actively in control of the matter are those in charge of our water supplies, but they are not the only people who should be actively interested.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Except that they have a lot of medical people associated with them.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—There is an investigational committee which examines our water supplies and advises the Minister. The Health Department should be one of the prime organizations concerned with the treatment of our water supplies in this way. It is not only a matter of whether repercussions will follow the dosing of our water supplies, but the elimination of a costly trouble which is rife in our

community. I suppose the Australian community suffers more from it than any other country in the world. We have no research on foot, but we have available to us the results of extensive research in the U.S.A. and other countries. In America they are so satisfied with the fluorine dosage of water supplies that it has been adopted in 90 municipalities. It has passed the experimental stage there, but the authorities here think we should conduct investigations before anything is done.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—I have had the opportunity of discussing the matter with an eminent person from Great Britain, where they discount the results in America.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—America is apparently satisfied with the results achieved. According to the report made available to me we have one water supply in South Australia which measures up to optimum requirements, and that is the Uléy-Wanilla water supply. We should watch the effects in the districts served with the water, and if they are good we should apply the results of the investigations to the rest of the State.

Mr. Dunnage—What is the position with our metropolitan water supply?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—It has a fluorine content of .3 per cent, whereas it should be 1 per cent. Mr. Quirke referred to the matter of sewage disposal and the composting of garbage and refuse. For the city of Adelaide a new sewerage scheme is being prepared to cost about £5,000,000. Before any finality is reached with it, the suggestion made by Mr. Quirke should be examined by someone who understands composting. There may be enough in his suggestion to make it worthy of adoption. I have no doubt that municipal authorities in the metropolitan area have a tremendous problem facing them in the disposal of garbage and refuse. From what I have seen I believe it is a problem which is becoming difficult to handle. If the proposal by Mr. Quirke were adopted the problem could be solved by having a central authority to collect garbage from municipal authorities and having it treated at a central depot. In this regard some success has been achieved in other parts of the world, notably Scotland on a small scale where they have been successful in combining sewage and garbage, and manufacturing a fertilizer which is being retailed at 10s. a cwt. I think Mr. Quirke's suggestion should be examined before the £5,000,000 sewerage scheme is finalized.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—About a year ago I asked them to consider the matter when preparing a scheme.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Have they done so?

The Hon. M. McIntosh—They will take it into consideration in the final proposal.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—In regard to harbour expenditure, one of the large items is the purchase of properties for £350,500, which I assume involves the acquisition of considerable areas of land in the Port Adelaide and Outer Harbour districts for the development of a greater Port Adelaide. In the past and recently land has been subdivided when it should not have been subdivided. This winter has driven the point home more forcibly than all the talk in the past. I was astonished to learn from information given me that one large area on the eastern side of the river, which is to be developed as an industrial area, was subdivided without the Town Planner having made a proper examination of whether or not the land was subject to flooding or anything else to make it unsuitable for subdivision. It is known as No. 2 area in the greater development scheme and is adjacent to the rifle range. Notwithstanding the Town Planner's power, he did not make himself acquainted, so I understand, with the actual conditions before giving his consent to the subdivision.

Mr. Fletcher—Is it not a matter for the local governing bodies?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—It is a matter for both the Town Planner and the local governing authorities before any subdivision takes place.

No. 72 of regulations made on March 12, 1930, states:—

The Town Planner or council may, in his or its discretion, withhold approval to any plan if—

- (a) the area to be subdivided or resubdivided, or any part thereof, is liable to inundation by drainage or floodwaters;
- (b) all allotments, reserves, or parcels of land contained in the plan cannot be satisfactorily drained;
- (c) the plan does not provide for reserves or easements necessary for the purpose of coping with drainage problems;
- (d) the land, or any portion thereof, is unsuitable for the purpose for which it is to be subdivided.

Nearly all these provisions would rule out completely the subdivision of the land I have mentioned, but it was subdivided and allotments were sold to mainly New Australians who

knew nothing about the value and disadvantages of the land. They paid high prices and they are now in possession of flooded land. If my information is correct, this land was subdivided without the Town Planner having given careful attention to the matter.

Mr. Stephens—Has not the Government offered to buy some of it back?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—It is committed to purchase that area, but those people who were induced to buy the land should be recompensed. The Government should also assume the responsibility of transferring them to a suitable area. Part of the blame for that mistake must be laid at the door of the Government. In its report on the Rosewater sewerage scheme, the Public Works Committee suggested that the Town Planner's powers should be widened, or, if that could not be done, some other town planning authority should be set up so as to avoid the repetition of past mistakes which have caused much misery.

I express regret at the lack of provision in these Estimates for the narrow gauge rail systems. The situation on Eyre Peninsula is deplorable. We have not half the rollingstock required for the transport of commodities which should be shifted by the railways. At many sidings we have the grain of two harvests awaiting transport. Another bountiful harvest is expected to add to the problem.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—It is not so much a matter of rail transport as of shipping. I have a report in connection with this matter which I will let the honourable member have.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Railway authorities have frequently told me that they have neither the rollingstock nor the manpower to cope with the problem and that they have welcomed the advent of road transport which has moved the grain from their sidings. Road transport has shifted tens of thousands of bags of grain which normally would have been carried by rail. The cost of that road transport has been colossal. The charge recently made for the transport of barley from Streaky Bay to Port Lincoln was 7s. a bag. At one time a producer would have thought himself made if he had received 7s. a bag for his barley! But that is not the only cost. Our roads are being flogged to pieces. I am disappointed that no provision has been made to increase the rolling stock on narrow-gauge lines.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Rolling stock to be released from the South-East system will afford some relief.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—For years our hopes have been pinned on the South-East; but what have we received? Hope deferred maketh the heart sick.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—But when it cometh it maketh a crown of joy.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—When it comes it will be completely worn out and fit only for the scrap heap. The three harvests which will have accumulated on Eyre Peninsula will be infested

with weevil, mite, and other pests. If it is to be carted by road, the cost of maintaining those roads in a serviceable condition will be far greater than the initial cost of say 100 rail trucks at £2,000 each which could considerably relieve the position.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.56 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, August 29, at 2 p.m.