

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, July 23, 1952.

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

QUESTIONS.**SHOOTING OF STOCK.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I have been alarmed at recent press reports that stock—some of them valuable—have been maimed or killed by persons apparently engaged in more or less indiscriminate shooting in country districts. I have had complaints from pastoralists in the north about stock being maimed or killed, about valuable tanks associated with water supply being holed, and about windmills being damaged, particularly by the use of high-powered rifles. Personally I do not object to the low-powered short-ranged rifle, but I would like the Premier to say whether his Government would consider the introduction of legislation to provide that, when persons desire to purchase high-powered and very dangerous firearms, they should have to submit some good reason for owning them before being permitted to buy them?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I, too, was concerned to see reports of the incidents mentioned. I will bring the question under the notice of the Chief Secretary to see whether police action to cope with the position can be taken under existing laws, or, if it cannot, what amendments of the law are necessary.

ADDITIONAL IRRIGATION AREAS.

Mr. MICHAEL—Several recent press reports have indicated that the Government is taking steps to secure more irrigation areas on the river with a view to satisfying soldier settler applicants for blocks. Has the Minister of Lands any report of progress made in having further areas allocated for this purpose?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yesterday at the conference of the Returned Soldiers' League I said that I expected a further 3,000 acres to be allocated to South Australia for irrigation settlement, and I had hoped to have official information by this time. This morning's radio news broadcast contained a statement by the Minister of Agriculture (the Hon. Sir George Jenkins) to the effect that it had been agreed that South Australia should be allocated a further 3,000 acres. If that is correct it will mean that sufficient land will be available for all applicants for irrigation blocks.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I understand that as well as the 3,000 acres to which the Minister has referred a large area allotted for the planting of citrus and deciduous trees has not yet been used. That means that the 3,000 acres, plus this unexpended portion, will have to be provided for. What plans has the Minister of Irrigation to absorb all these plantings? Will he consider the possibility of developing lands, mainly highlands, in existing irrigation areas at Renmark, Berri, and Barmera for ex-service-men, some of whom have tried to develop some of this land at their own expense? As we now have this new allocation, it would seem that the question of plantings will not be as important as in the past. When the Minister is considering the new plantings, will he also consider the possibility of using all the lands in the existing settlements?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Not only the land, but also the types of plantings, are allocated to us by the Commonwealth, and therefore that programme will be carried out. At the moment I have not been advised of the allocation of the plantings for the 3,000 acres. The honourable member has raised this question on several occasions, both in the House and by correspondence, and the reply from the department has always been that when we are satisfied there is sufficient land to settle first applicants under the scheme consideration will then be given to other applicants. The Government has never actually refused anyone, and has always stated that it would, after it knew what was required for settlers under the scheme, give assistance in respect of high land. Now that we know that we will have sufficient land for all applicants, the department will immediately set about making land available for those other applicants who in certain circumstances were unable to enlist, and also those who enlisted but did not apply under the scheme.

MOONTA BAY PRESSURE TANK.

Mr. McALEES—For years the residents of Moonta Bay have been promised that a pressure tank would be installed, and preparations have been partly completed. Can the Minister of Works say whether it is intended to complete the installation of the pressure tank, and, if so, when?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I assure the honourable member that it will be completed, and I shall inquire where the project stands in the order of urgent priorities.

POTATO SUPPLY.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Can the Premier say whether it is correct, as alleged by the member for Onkaparinga yesterday, that a quantity of potatoes is in danger of rotting in sheds, and if so, why the price of potatoes is fixed at over £32 a ton?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not know whether that information is correct, but I presume the honourable member for Onkaparinga checked the position before making this statement.

Mr. HUTCHENS—As I feel that some misunderstanding may have been caused through utterances recently in connection with the potato industry, will the Premier indicate whether there is any Act which prevents either producers or retailers from selling below the fixed price?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Our prices legislation has always fixed a maximum price, beyond which it is not lawful to sell a product. No minimum price is fixed. Such matters as quantity, quality and where the potatoes are sold, are dealt with by a Potato Marketing Board, which is controlled by growers. I believe our Chief Horticulturist, Mr. Strickland, is the chairman. The price fixed is the maximum price; there is no provision in our State legislation permitting a minimum price to be fixed.

Mr. SHANNON—Can the Premier say whether the Potato Board fixes a quota of potatoes, based on the acreage of the grower, for delivery to the market from time to time and whether the quotas at present operating will mean that the hills grower will not clear his storage sheds for at least 10 to 12 months unless the quotas are considerably increased? Is it not true that, where an upper price limit is fixed but such limit does not prevent the sale of a commodity at a price below it, there is no need to worry about price fixing?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I believe that a limitation is placed on the number of bags per acre each grower may deliver each week, but that the time taken to clear present stocks depends on two or three factors which may have been overlooked. Some time ago I discussed this matter with the chairman of the Potato Board who was then negotiating with a view to clearing some South Australian stocks to other States. It is customary for large quantities—particularly from South-Eastern districts—to be sold in Victoria and New South Wales each year. The overall position in Australia does not disclose a big surplus and

South Australia is probably better off than other States in this matter. New Zealand was suffering a grave shortage and some of the Tasmanian crop which would normally have been sold on the mainland was diverted to New Zealand. I will see Mr. Strickland, the chairman of the board, to find out the present position.

YALATA STATION.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Last Saturday's *Mail* reported Pastor Kriewaldt, who I believe is a member of the Lutheran Mission Board, as saying that the Lutheran Church had not yet decided whether it would run Yalata as a mission station, and that the State Government, which had acquired the property as a new home for the natives, had asked the church if it would buy buildings and other improvements, together with about 8,000 sheep. He remarked that such a purchase would mean a big capital outlay for his Church. I have also been informed by a person who recently made a trip to Yalata that he was authorized to make a valuation of all the improvements on the property, that he did so, and that he was recently in town in connection with that matter. As there is a good deal of confusion and misunderstanding about what is to happen with Yalata—particularly among the white settlers living in the area adjacent thereto—can the Minister of Works clarify the position as to what is actually proposed with regard to this property?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Nothing is proposed at present other than this: the Government bought the station primarily for the use and benefit of natives not necessarily only those at Ooldea but also those in the neighbourhood. In order that we should not repeat certain mistakes, some of them inevitable, of which we have learned through our experience in running such stations at Point Pearce and Point McLeay, we suggested to two missions that they should take over and run the station, training the natives from the point of view of usefulness, educational benefit generally, and spiritual guidance especially with regard to the younger natives, and giving the older natives the benefit of a place in which to roam on walkabouts in congenial circumstances. We gave them information that would give an indication of the cost as regards sale and improvements. Obviously one cannot dissociate a magnificent homestead from a pastoral property. I think the term has been misinterpreted. We asked the organizations to give us an indication of what they were prepared to do

in regard to taking over stock and working plant, keeping the homestead and other permanent improvements inviolate.

Mr. RICHES—Would they have to buy the sheep?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Obviously, if they are to get the benefit of the wool. We asked them to give us some suggestions and say under what conditions they were prepared to take over the responsibility of the care and conduct of the natives. Unfortunately, we have not heard from either of the missions into whose areas these natives will go. When we get a reply it will be considered by the Aborigines Protection Board, of which I am chairman. Professor Cleland, who is deputy chairman, has taken an intense interest in this matter and the other members of the board comprise men and women of first-class integrity, and members can be assured that the board will give the replies full consideration. It is not the Government's intention, and never has been, to part with the ownership of that property. There is sufficient good land in the eastern portion to enable us to make allocations, approved by the Pastoral Board, the Aborigines Board, and the Land Board, to augment the areas of those people that have not sufficient land now. Seeing there is one million acres on this property, it may be possible in some cases to make new allocations of land. All these matters are still quite fluent; no decision has been made. We are running the station as a very profitable undertaking pending a final decision on its future, which will be for the benefit of the natives.

DRAINAGE OF DISMAL SWAMP.

Mr. FLETCHER—Can the Minister of Lands say what progress has been made with the proposal to drain Dismal Swamp into the Glenelg river? Is there any likelihood of the undertaking going on? Has any arrangement with the Victorian Government been worked out?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Recently a party of Victorian members of Parliament visited this State, particularly to investigate the possibilities of the South-East and the Victorian border. They arranged an appointment with me to discuss the very problem that the honourable member has mentioned. Unfortunately, one member died during the trip and the party returned to Victoria, but I understand the committee proposes to come to this State again and our talks on the matter will be continued. About two years ago this Government arranged with the Victorian Government for a meeting

at Mount Gambier of officers of the Victorian and the South Australian departments, and after discussion it was agreed that the two Governments together would undertake some scheme of drainage in the locality. Unfortunately, about 12 months or more ago the Victorian Government was not able to supply officers, particularly surveyors, to continue with the scheme. The work in the locality lapsed, but I am still hopeful about it, and will do all I can to bring about that very desirable undertaking of draining Dismal Swamp into the Glenelg River.

COUNCILS' SUBSCRIPTIONS TO HOSPITALS.

Mr. PATTINSON—In 1949 the Government purchased from the Housing Trust some land at Oaklands for the purpose of establishing a public hospital to serve the needs of the rapidly expanding south-western suburbs. In announcing the purchase the Premier assured me that the hospital would be established, but that construction could not be commenced for a lengthy period. In view of the inevitable delay I assisted local residents to have established two community hospitals in my electorate, namely, the Glenelg Community and the Ashford Community Hospitals. The Government made generous grants to both these hospitals on the condition that local councils also made grants. The Glenelg and Brighton Councils made grants to the Glenelg Hospital, and the councils of West Torrens, Marion, Unley, and Mitcham made grants to the Ashford Hospital, and they have continued to do so each year. Doubt has now arisen as to whether it is within the competence of the councils to make these grants on the ground that these institutions may not be public hospitals within the meaning of the Hospitals Act. I do not necessarily share that doubt, but publicity was given to it in the *Advertiser* last week. I ask the Minister of Local Government whether his attention has been drawn to this matter, whether he will obtain an independent legal opinion and, if there should be any real doubt, whether he will introduce amending legislation to make assurance doubly sure that the councils can continue to make grants to these hospitals?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I noticed the press reports and, in order to make assurance doubly sure, as the honourable member says, I asked the Assistant Parliamentary Draftsman, who is also chairman of the Local Government Advisory Committee and an expert on local

government matters, for his views. This morning I had a conference with Mr. Cartledge, whose report is as follows:—

Section 287 of the Local Government Act, among other things, provides that a council may subscribe to any public hospital or charitable institution or association within its area. Whether or not a community hospital of the kind in question comes within these categories is a question of fact. If a part of the hospital is used for the accommodation of sick indigent persons and this accommodation is made available free of charge, this would probably make the hospital a public hospital and would give the hospital the characteristics of a charitable institution. If the hospital is managed by an organization which makes no profit from the undertaking and if the hospital derives part of its funds from public subscriptions (other than subscriptions from the council) with the result that the expenses of patients in the hospital are partly met by this means and if the accommodation in the hospital is available generally to residents within the particular community, then, notwithstanding that the patients are required to pay fees (representing part of the costs of their treatment) the hospital would probably be held to be a charitable institution. If the hospitals in question come within either of the above categories, I consider that the council would have power to make contribution to their funds.

In my opinion there is not the slightest doubt that the councils have the necessary power under either one or another of the categories under section 287 of the Act. Obviously these qualifications are fully met in the case of either of the two institutions mentioned, namely, that it derives part of its funds from public subscription and that the Government has subscribed to it. I should say they are in exactly the same position as the Children's Hospital. If there is any doubt, the Local Government Act could be amended, and I suggest the honourable member confer with the Parliamentary Draftsman as to whether it is necessary to do so to make assurance doubly sure; but in my opinion the Government and the council are fully authorized to make contributions to these very worthy hospitals.

ATOMIC PILE SITE.

Mr. RICHES—I assure the Premier of the pleasure with which people in the northern districts received his statement regarding the nomination of Fitzgerald Bay as the probable site for a proposed atomic pile. When he returned from America he said it was expected that England might have the answer to the industrial use of atomic energy within three years. Newspaper reports indicate that America has succeeded in using it for submarines. Does that mean there has

been further advance since the Premier was in America, and, if so, is he in a position to elaborate on the press statement regarding his nomination of Fitzgerald Bay as the probable site for an atomic pile, and to say when it will be established?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—What I said was that if I were to make a prediction as to where the first atomic pile would operate in the Southern Hemisphere I would nominate Spencer Gulf, and of the places in that gulf which had come under my notice Backy Bay, or Fitzgerald Bay as it is now called, appeared to me to have the best qualification. The bay is very well protected and has deep water close in shore. It would be close to transmission lines and it appeared to me to have every qualification necessary for the site of such a plant. I have had no direct information since I returned from America of the progress made in atomic power production, but from press reports undoubtedly great progress is being constantly made in the development of atomic energy and knowledge concerning fissionable materials. I believe we are living in an age when we shall see revolutionary changes in the methods of producing power for industry, and nothing I have seen in the press leads me to alter my opinion of the correctness of that view. The problem today is not so much being able to create a unit of work. I believe that can already be created; but from information I received in America I believe that any power unit created now would be obsolete almost as soon as it was in operation because of the tremendous strides being made in the development of this particular energy. All the advice I had tended to show that in the next 10 years we would see revolutionary changes in the outlook on this problem, and that in the meantime it would probably not be wise to spend a great deal of money on plant which would be outdated almost before it was put into operation.

TRUST HOMES FOR COUNCIL EMPLOYEES.

Mr. PEARSON—The Premier has announced that the Housing Trust would undertake the erection of houses on farms and in country towns and provide labour for doing the work. Can he say what response has been received to this offer, and is he prepared to extend the offer to district councils who may require housing for their employees? If so, will he advise the House to that effect so that councils may take advantage of the offer?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The trust has always been prepared to assist councils in their

housing problems, and in many districts has sold houses to councils for the housing of their employees. It would be prepared to extend the scheme the honourable member mentions to councils if they desire to purchase homes for employees in areas where it is not normally operating. It would indeed be prepared to arrange for the erection in country areas of houses of substantial materials, not timber-frame houses, provided the standard of design of the house was in accordance with the plans the trust is operating on. The only obligation on the council would be to finance the purchase of the house, as the trust is not in a position to do that.

PARAFIELD RAILWAY ACCIDENT.

Mr. GOLDNEY—I understand that early this morning a very serious accident occurred at a railway crossing near Parafield Aerodrome. Has the Minister of Railways any particulars from the Railways Commissioner regarding the accident?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I am sure we all deplore the unhappy circumstances surrounding the loss of life occasioned by this accident, and that the House would like me to say that our sympathy is extended to those who have been bereaved. The report from the Railways Commissioner is as follows:—

At approximately 8.10 a.m. this morning, 23/7/52, a Chevrolet tourer, registered No. S.A. 193-280 ran into the side of rail car working No. 170, Balaklava to Adelaide passenger train at the level crossing at Parafield. The motor car was driven by Mr. A. H. Pomeroy, planner, 33 years of age of York Terrace, Salisbury, who was accompanied by his wife and three children. Mr. Pomeroy was not seriously injured but his wife, Mrs. J. M. O. Pomeroy, 27 years of age, and two children, Master David Pomeroy, 7 years of age, and Caroline, 5 years of age, were killed. The other boy, Graham, 3 years of age, sustained lacerations and was removed with his father to hospital. The motor car was wrecked. Mr. Pomeroy stated that he was approaching the crossing from west to east and he did not see the approaching rail car as the sun was in his eyes. No. 182, North Gawler to Adelaide rail car, which runs a few minutes behind the train, *ex* Balaklava, came to a stop at the scene of the accident and Mr. F. Collins, 65 years of age, of Gawler Terrace, Gawler South, alighted. He was walking along the track when struck by the Adelaide to Port Pirie passenger train, and was killed. Police, ambulance and doctors were called to the scene of the accident, and the matter was handled generally by the Police Department.

As this matter will be the subject of coronial and departmental inquiries I feel that I would not be justified in adding anything further to the report.

RUM JUNGLE URANIUM DEPOSITS.

Mr. LAWN—Can the Premier say whether the uranium ore that is being sold to America has a considerable quantity of copper in it, from which copper America will derive a profit of 100 per cent? Has the Premier any information to give on this matter?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have no information concerning the sale of Rum Jungle uranium ore. In fact, I do not know that any sale of the ore has yet taken place. Rum Jungle is not in South Australian territory and therefore under no circumstances would we be consulted in connection with ore from that place.

SEWERAGE FOR NEW HOMES.

Mr. WHITTLE—In Foster's Road, Gilles Plains, a number of houses are being erected, and others are to be erected later. A number of them will soon be ready for occupation. The Public Works Committee has presented a report making it clear that the sewerage of the area will have to be delayed for a considerable period as it is a project which is linked up with the sewerage of the eastern suburbs. Many houses in Enfield Heights could not be occupied for a considerable time because of the lack of sewerage facilities. Can the Premier say whether the houses in Foster's Road, Gilles Plains, will have to remain unoccupied until sewered? If this is so, would it be possible for some temporary arrangement to be made for the people who will later occupy the houses?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have not got the information the honourable member desires and I will obtain a report on the actual position. Our Engineering and Water Supply Department has done a very good job in keeping up so well with our water and sewerage facilities. Notwithstanding the big increase in the number of houses built in South Australia, particularly in the metropolitan area, Adelaide is almost 100 per cent sewered. Capital cities like Sydney and Brisbane are only about 50 per cent sewered, which shows that our department has done a magnificent job in meeting demands.

INCREASE IN PETROL PRICE.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I understand that the Premier will be going to a conference of Prices Ministers in Brisbane this week. Can he say whether, before any decision is made in regard to an increase in the price of petrol, an investigation has been made into the large sums of money spent here in establishing one-brand petrol re-selling stations, and is he

aware of the huge profits, as disclosed in the press recently, made by the major oil companies?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A careful investigation is made of the balance-sheets and affairs of the oil companies trading in Australia before price increases are granted. Normally Victoria undertakes the investigation. For some years an officer with a staff did no other work than investigate concerns in connection with price fluctuations, but recently other States have assisted in checking the position. Generally speaking the price of petrol in Australia is fixed on the international price of fuel determined by a record of price fluctuations, plus a standard freight for the carriage of the fuel to Australia plus certain wholesale and retail margins. Where there is an industry price, as in this case, and the costs of securing the petrol from various sources fluctuate so widely, it is impossible to get a proper view of the position by merely looking at the balance sheets of the companies, for some may show big profits and others heavy losses. I assure the honourable member that the matters referred to will be watched before an increase is granted.

COUNTRY SEWERAGE SCHEMES.

Mr. FLETCHER—Yesterday, in reply to a question on the Whyalla sewerage scheme, the Minister of Works said that his department was considering a modified scheme for that town. Can the Minister say whether the same consideration will be given with regard to other country sewerage schemes investigated by the Public Works Committee?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—In my reply to Mr. Riches yesterday I did not use the term "modified plans" nor was it implied. I have read the *Hansard* report but not the press report. I was asked when it was expected that the plans for the Whyalla scheme would be submitted to the Whyalla Town Commission and I replied that plans had been prepared, that owing to the very greatly increased costs arising from various basic wage increases the total cost and the economics of the scheme would have to be reviewed, and that when those had been related the matter would be submitted to the Whyalla Town Commission. My reply to yesterday's question will not affect anything already considered by the Public Works Committee.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE: MR. HAWKER.

Mr. PATTINSON moved—

That one month's leave of absence be granted to the honourable member for Burra (Mr. G. S. Hawker) on account of illness.

Motion carried.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption of Address in Reply.

(Continued from July 22. Page 68.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I am sure all members endorse the sentiments expressed by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor in opening Parliament on June 25 when he referred to the death of the late King. When we were speaking on the Address in Reply last year we were looking forward with pleasant anticipation to a visit from His Majesty, the Queen, and Princess Margaret, but now we express our sorrow that a great King has passed to his eternal reward. Our sorrow is tempered somewhat by the accession to the Throne of the young Queen, Elizabeth II., who has shown that she belongs to that way of life that has characterized our race through the ages and which, I hope, will characterize it to the end. She has a love of simplicity and a belief in the family unit on which much of our greatness is based. I join, too, in the tribute paid to our lately departed Governor, Sir Willoughby Norrie, and to Lady Norrie. The little over seven years they spent among us passed all too quickly and the speed at which it seemed to pass no doubt was due to the fact that they were welcomed and welcome amongst all sections of our people. Indeed, they carried out the duties of their high offices in a way that has not been excelled in my experience by others who have held their positions. I join, too, with His Excellency in paying a tribute to a former colleague on this side of the House, the late Mr. Les. Duncan. He served in this place for over 13 years and not only endeared himself to all members but showed great ability in mastering the details of problems that Parliament was called upon to solve, and his passing is regretted by all. We have, of course, the pleasing duty of welcoming his successor, Mr. John Clark, who, I feel sure, will worthily uphold the tradition established by the late member for Gawler.

Before I deal with some of the matters mentioned in His Excellency's Speech and make passing reference to one or two matters that were not mentioned therein, I shall again bring before the House a few items associated

with my own electorate. They concern the question of a water supply for Yongala and Terowie and a more adequate water supply for Peterborough. Then there is the question of the water supply for Radium Hill. I recently visited that area and was pleased with the development that had taken place in the short period since my last visit. The Government and the officials of the Mines Department are to be complimented on the efficient way in which they are developing the field. The question of an adequate water supply is one of great difficulty and I think that ultimately it will prove to be expensive to solve the problem. Efforts have been made to provide a supply from local sources. Bores have been sunk, but the water from the best of them is much more highly impregnated with solids than any water that can satisfactorily be used for domestic purposes or for a general town supply. The department is now involved in considerable expense in railing water to Olary and then carting it by road to the field. This expense will continue until a permanent supply of good water is assured. The chances of securing adequate local supplies are seriously jeopardized by the limited and irregular rainfall in the district which in all years has been low, sometimes exceptionally low. Records show that sometimes for two years no substantial run-offs have been secured from any catchments. Radium Hill is an extremely hot place in the summer and this necessitates adequate supplies of good water. I believe a township of considerable size will eventuate. A satisfactory sewerage scheme will be required to safeguard the health of the people; indeed, a sewerage scheme is necessary not only for a town in this area but also in country towns generally.

Lawns and gardens must be provided if we are to encourage the right type of people to go to an area such as this. Therefore, I suggest that the Government should be considering the provision of a permanent supply of good water irrespective of the cost, because, if this mineral is as valuable as we are led to believe, then it will stand the cost of providing an adequate supply for the town resulting from its development. Although it may be a costly undertaking, serious consideration should be given to the extension of the proposed pipeline to Jamestown, which has been approved, and for which I believe the pipes have been delivered at Spalding waiting to be laid through to Peterborough and along the Cockburn line to a point close to the field. This would ensure that a permanent supply

would be available to the field and also to the Railways Department for locomotives on the Cockburn line. Even at present, despite several years of plentiful rainfall in that area, there is considerable difficulty at some of the watering centres in providing water for locomotives. Actually water is being carted from some dams which resulted from fortuitous summer thunderstorms. These supplies are usually at their best in years following drought periods, when usually the drought is broken by a violent thunderstorm, and as the ground is bare there is a considerably greater run-off than there would be at present when the country is better grassed than it has been for 50 years. Therefore, when the reservoirs are full they should be drawn on to their full capacity both for railway purposes and for maintaining supplies at Radium Hill. I visualize that these supplies could be linked with the pipeline. With the installation of pumps the water could be pumped from them and used, instead of most of it being allowed to evaporate, as at present. Evaporation in this territory ranges from 60 to 80 inches a year. If a normally sized reservoir were filled and no water taken from it, it would be completely dry in three years owing to evaporation.

For some years I have been pressing for a number of school repairs. Some of them were approved by the Education Department many years ago, and even passed on to the Architect-in-Chief for attention, but up to the present nothing has been done about it. A classroom and sanitary accommodation were promised for the Terowie School. I believe both these proposals were approved by the then Minister of Education, the Hon. S. W. Jeffries. It is only a matter of about 10 or 11 years ago! Since then practically two generations of children have passed through this school, and therefore I think it is a little too much to expect the parents to accept the position. At the Yongala school there is a sanitary system which is not as good as that used by Noah in the Ark. It has been condemned by the local health authorities and adversely criticized, if not condemned, by the Central Board of Health, but apparently nothing is going to be done about it. These are matters of urgency which should be attended to by the respective departments at the earliest possible moment. I have a particular reason for raising this question now. During the last week or so I have discovered a new and insidious type of propaganda being circulated against me in my electorate. I have been told that a statement is abroad that the only way Yongala can get water and

Peterborough a better supply of water would be to change the member for the district—that the Government will not do anything for the Leader of the Opposition. I do not for a moment believe that is true, nor do I believe that politics in this State would ever reach the level where any Government would refuse to carry out worthwhile works in a district simply because it might happen to be represented by a member of the Opposition. In the course of my associations with the South Australian Parliament since 1938 I have seen no evidence of it. I make that statement deliberately, and I think I am justified in making it in order that this kind of propaganda, which is probably purely local, may be nailed at its source. It would have a peculiar boomerang effect if it were prosecuted very far, because I do not happen to be the only representative of this area in the South Australian Parliament. In the Legislative Council there are four Liberal and Country League representatives of the Northern District, one being the Chief Secretary, and I think they are just as cognizant of the needs of the district, and as desirous of doing their best to have them satisfied, as I am.

Another matter which has an impact on my district, and in days to come will have an impact on the economic position of the State, particularly the northern areas, is the decision of the Royal Commission recommending the adoption of the western route for the proposed standard gauge line from Stirling North to Brachina, which will result in the by-passing of Quorn and in a very considerable disadvantage to Quorn and towns between Peterborough and Quorn, and a considerable loss to Peterborough. This Parliament agreed to accept the decision of this Royal Commission when legislation relating to its appointment was before us in the session before last. I shall not quarrel with the decision of the umpire, but I should like to know the reasons for it. All I have seen to date is a brief summary of the findings published in the press. That report should be made available to honourable members at the earliest possible moment because the South Australian Parliament is vitally interested in it. I am not satisfied with the way in which the enquiry was conducted. I believe the commission placed too much reliance on technical questions—whether it was more economical to run a certain loaded train from point A to point B, compared with running a similar train from point C to point D in the same vicinity. Sufficient value was not attached to the evidence of local people. I have always taken

the view that once a public work like a railway has been established and as a result people have been encouraged to build homes and public buildings such as hospitals, halls and churches, in the main at their own expense, such communities should not be lightly disturbed. I feel strongly that lawyers should not have appeared at this enquiry. Had I visualized when the Bill was before this House that counsel were to be briefed by the Commonwealth, necessitating that South Australia would also have to brief counsel to protect its position, I would have sought to amend it to preclude lawyers appearing. In saying that, I am not antagonistic to the legal profession; but this was not a question of court appearance or one of determining the issue on matters of law, but one of determining the issue on questions of fact. Many circumstances should have been considered in the final determination as to the effects on the interests of the State and the nation in building a line west or east of the range.

It would be easy to speak on the numerous subjects mentioned in the Lieutenant-Governor's opening speech. Many of the sentences and phrases had a familiar ring. We heard them first in the Premier's policy speech in 1950, and again in the Governor's opening speeches during the last two sessions. We should remind ourselves of the names of the shop-soiled goods which have appeared in the political shop window for so long. There is the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline, the South Para reservoir, the Jamestown-Caltowie water scheme, and the Yorke Peninsula water scheme. There is also the suggestion, I believe it was first made in 1950, that sewerage schemes are imminent in many country towns. They are still imminent, and the way things are going at the moment it seems that I will never have the pleasure of visiting those country towns when sewerage schemes have been installed. Then there is the matter of a deep sea port for the South-East. This proposal has been in the public eye for a long time and it has rendered valuable service to the Government and the Liberal and Country League Party during two election campaigns. First the port was to be established at Robe and that created a great deal of confidence in the town, particularly amongst the local people and speculators. It was thought that Robe would be the deep sea port through which all the production of the new-found province in South Australia would pass to the markets of the world. It was hoped that Robe would grow and flourish in the way visualized many years

ago when a former Governor established his home there, and a Government House and a gaol were built. The venue has since been shifted to Cape Jaffa. I am not familiar with the present position, but I understand it is still where it has been for a very long time—the subject of investigation by the Public Works Committee. It may be resuscitated in time for the next State election. It cannot be regarded as a new proposal; in fact, it ought to be regarded as an old proposal covered with the excreta of pests which might have rested on it from time to time.

Mr. Pattinson—A good story bears repetition.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Dr. Goebbels was the publicity expert for the Hitler regime in Germany and he held the view that in order to influence the people a big lie had to be told very well.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—A big truth would go further.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I am coming to that. I believe the proposals I have mentioned are all truths, and all are worth-while schemes, if and when they can be established. The point is that they do not belong to the stock in trade of any political party. They are public works which any member would be prepared to support on every occasion. Works which have been approved partially or wholly have received the consistent and enthusiastic support of members on this side of the House. We believe firmly in the development of the State, and that development can only be properly planned and carried out by due attention being given to the public works programme, and the provision of necessary amenities following the carrying out of that programme. There is no political argument on this score and there should not be any political kudos in it. It appears to me that the completion of some of the public works already begun and the beginning of others will have to wait until we get a Federal Labor Party in control at Canberra to see that the national financial policy is so ordered that this type of work will be possible in times of peace. I shall have more to say about this matter later.

There is another aspect of the window dressing of the Premier and his Government to which I want to refer. It deals with the making of important statements through the press and not to Parliament. I know that if any important matter develops in a recess it is not reasonable to expect it to be withheld from the public until Parliament has met, but we find that important statements have been made

whilst Parliament has been sitting. Several important statements were made on the eve of this present meeting of Parliament. They referred to a possible atomic pile at Fitzgerald Bay and a proposed new fibre industry in Spencer Gulf, probably at Port Broughton. Our Parliament is respected by our people and by other Australian Parliaments. In order to maintain that respect Parliament should be given the attention it deserves, and the Government should have confidence in it, judging by the number of its supporters.

Other matters mentioned in His Excellency's Speech were the extension of the Electricity Trust activities, the Nairne pyrites scheme, the afforestation programme, and the proposed development of timber resources in the South-East. In the final analysis none of these matters represents Liberal policy. The Liberal Party has told us over the years that it believes in private enterprise and not in socialization or nationalization of industry, or in anything other than the pure and unfettered right of private enterprise to develop the country and to carry on its industries. The Labor Party has another policy in this matter. We believe that those things socially necessary for the community ought to be owned by the community. We believe that industries which become monopolistic and a burden on the people ought to be acquired and used in the interests of the people. Those industries which can be conducted in a socially useful way by private enterprise, and without exploitation of the people, have nothing to fear from the implementation of our policy. Most of the money for the development of the pyrites deposits at Nairne is being provided by the Government, although some private enterprise capital is involved, and the technical assistance of three great companies has been invited in the development of the project. This is a good way to develop our national resources. There should be a combination of community and private enterprise in order to get technical benefits from those people with a long association with certain types of production, and to get the weight of a Government representing the community behind the development of the enterprise. I have said previously that never has there been any argument about the wisdom of these undertakings. The real enthusiasm for their development has come not from the Government side of the House in the main, but from our side.

When we passed the first Bill for the development of the Leigh Creek coalfield the Premier promised that members of Parliament would

be given an opportunity to inspect the field every two years. It is about four years since the last Parliamentary inspection of the field was made. I do not think that Parliament should continue to vote large sums of money for the development of the field by the Electricity Trust without our having a look at what is going on. I suggest that the Premier give serious consideration to having a visit of inspection to the field in the not too distant future.

Recently, we have had statements from the Premier and other supporters of the Liberal Party regarding decentralization of population and industry, and about the assistance and encouragement which should be given to bring about an expansion of our primary industries. With all this I agree, but in season and out of season my colleagues and I on this side of the House have pleaded with the Government to do something in the matter. It is only now when we are approaching a great crisis that apparently our pleadings are being heeded. The Playford Government has been in office since 1939 and it has had a majority in both Houses. With that majority it had the power to do anything it wished to bring about decentralization of population and industry, to assist our primary industries, and to help in the establishment of new industries in country areas. I realize that during the war little could be done, but the war has been over for a long time and nothing has been done since. In fact the position is rather the reverse, for all the industries which could be attracted to South Australia have been established in and around the metropolitan area. Yesterday the honourable member for Onkaparinga very properly criticized the huge metropolitan housing scheme designed to provide homes for tens of thousands of workers who have been attracted to the city from country districts. Enormous expenditure has been entailed in the provision of water and sewerage schemes and other amenities to serve these homes which have been built in areas which were formerly paddocks. A comparison of expenditure from both revenue and loan sources in 1938-39 with that in the last two or three years shows the tremendous cost entailed in the establishment of these amenities and industries in the metropolitan area.

Whilst this has been proceeding primary production and land settlement generally have had a sorry tale to tell. In 1938-39 there were 11,842 wheat farms in South Australia, but by 1950-51 the number had decreased to 8,416. During that period the Playford Government

was in office with a majority in both Houses, yet the decrease was 28.93 per cent and the decrease in the last two years has been 9.95 per cent. I realize that all States have experienced a decrease, but both those percentages are higher than those for any other wheat producing State. Between 1938-39 and 1950-51 the decrease over the whole of Australia was 13.90 per cent—less than half the decrease in South Australia—and over the last two years it has been 4.97—again less than half the decrease in South Australia over the same period.

What impact has this decrease had on wheat production? A report in the *Advertiser* of July 18 headed, "Wheat Crop falls sharply—Yield rises, but Acreage down" states:—

Although the average yield for the 1951-52 State wheat harvest rose from 16.74 to 16.93 bushels an acre compared with the previous year, the total crop fell from 30,936,044 bush. to 27,305,953 bush.

That reports a decline of 3,630,091 bushels in one year despite the fact that the average yield increased slightly during that time. I point out, however, that the average yield in the previous year was much higher than ever before in this State, and this average together with that for 1951-52, was undoubtedly due to propitious circumstances which our practical common sense must tell us cannot continue indefinitely.

Mr. Quirke—Those yields may have been due to wiser crop rotation.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Possibly, but I think they are due at least partly to the fact that the seasons have been more propitious to the growth of grain crops over the past two years than at any other period I can remember. When we again experience the normal average yield the decline in wheat production will be a tragedy indeed, for the acreages have declined and are still declining. The press report states, "The acreage declined from 1,847,791 to 1,612,987"—a decrease of over 200,000 acres in 12 months. According to the forecast of the intended acreage to be sown this year and ignoring the fact that wet weather may have affected planting, the area to be sown this year will be 82,000 acres less than last year giving a total decline in two years of over a quarter of a million acres. It will be said that the acreage under barley and oats has increased, but I point out that it has not increased in the immediate past but has remained stationary for the past couple of years, and forecasts of prospective plantings show that it is likely to remain stationary for

the next year. This is a very serious problem for we in Australia hold a vast country capable of producing much more food than is required to maintain our existing population. We should be able to make a major contribution to assist in feeding the under-privileged people in other parts of the world. Our national existence depends on something being done to arrest this drift from primary production—something more effective than making window-dressing speeches or proposals which have no practical background and lack machinery for their implementation.

In this connection we must consider the number of landholders in this State. It was once said that the Labor Party was out to dispossess people of their land, but I contend that it was the Liberal Party which by one means or another reduced the number of landholders very appreciably between 1939 and 1951. In 1939 there were 31,280 individual landholders in South Australia, whereas by 1951 that figure had been reduced to 28,248—a decrease of over 3,000 which has some relation to the decrease in the number of wheat farms. Much re-aggregation of land took place between 1939 and 1951, and that is one cause of the decline which must be effectively tackled if this State is to pull its weight in the production of food.

Mr. Dunks—Those farms are still producing even though the number of holdings has decreased.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The decline in the number of landholders indicates that those people have gone off their holdings and are probably now working in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Shannon—Much of that re-aggregation was in the outlying areas.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Some of it may have been, but, together with the adoption of the marginal lands scheme to amalgamate the holdings in the drier areas and provide living areas in those districts, there should have been a closer settlement scheme so that the people who were removed from the drier areas could still become landholders and primary producers in some other part. Not only has there been a re-aggregation of land in the drier areas but also in the good districts inside Goyder's line of rainfall, and it is about that which I am protesting and will continue to protest until something effective is done to arrest the trend.

In 1939, of the State's population of 599,000, 323,000, or 54 per cent, lived in the metro-

politan area, and 276,000, or 46 per cent, in the country. In 1951, of the State's population of 730,000, 442,000, or 60.5 per cent, lived in the metropolitan area and 288,000, or 39.5 per cent, in the country. In 12 years the population of the metropolitan area had increased by 119,000 and that of the country areas by only 12,000, the ratio of the increase being 10 to 1 in favour of the metropolitan area. The population of the metropolitan area increased by 37 per cent, that of the country by 4.3 per cent, and the State's population by 22 per cent. This is a vitally important matter, not only as regards the wider question of world politics to which I referred of assisting under-privileged people in other parts of the world, but if this ratio of population increase continues before long we shall be importing primary products to feed ourselves. I shudder to think what may happen under those conditions. Paragraph 6 of the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech states:—

Notwithstanding the difficulties connected with the Loan Programme, the economic position of the State remains sound.

The population figures I have just quoted show that the economic position of the State is not sound. We have been told by His Excellency and by the Premier that the Government will sponsor a housing programme in country areas. The Housing Trust will assist farmers to build houses for potential employees and may even go to the extent of building houses in country towns. I agree that adequate housing is essential if employees are to be attracted to and remain in the primary-producing industries. However, in the districts where re-aggregation has taken place hundreds of good homes have been destroyed in the last few years, homes that would have made admirable residences for rural workers. Something should have been done, and could have been done, by the Government to prevent the destruction of these houses which were quite substantial stone buildings. I raised this question some years ago. It is now proposed to erect frame houses for rural workers. No attempt has been made to establish community settlements for rural workers near country towns furnished with amenities, though not many towns have much in the way of amenities. Workers should at least be given a block of land upon which they could keep fowls and perhaps a cow so that they could themselves provide a portion of their own living. When unemployed they could produce vegetables and live off the land. That is the way to encourage people to settle in the country and

establish themselves and by natural propagation maintain themselves from generation to generation. There is nothing new in the proposal I am now putting forward, for in my policy speech before the 1950 elections I said:—

One of the urgent needs of primary industry is a supply of suitable labour to handle the various duties associated with this type of industry. Lack of proper residential facilities discourages workers from seeking employment in rural areas, so housing schemes will be established in all suitable country centres with a sufficient area of land to enable the primary needs of the family such as vegetables, butter, milk, eggs, poultry, etc., to be produced. Care will be taken to see that this provision is not used by employers to depress wages.

I have reiterated those views since 1950, and I suggest that here is an idea that the Premier might exploit for the benefit of the State. The point that rural housing schemes should not be used by employers to depress wages brings me to another important aspect, namely, some form of legal protection for rural workers in regard to the wages and conditions under which they are expected to labour. Members on this side of the House have frequently asked for that provision to be inserted in the Industrial Code. Only last year I moved an amendment of the Code in this respect, but what happened? Member after member on the Government side rose and condemned the proposal out of hand and when a vote was taken it was defeated by the weight of numbers. A permanent and efficient rural population is necessary to our primary industries, which are not the "no-hoper" industries that many people think. More skill and judgment is required in primary industry than in most forms of industry. That is why I asked last year for steps to be taken to give rural workers the same legal protection as regards their wages and working conditions as is afforded to workers in other industries.

Mr. Dunks—The trouble was that the industry could not afford it.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—That is a peculiar remark coming from a member who is usually well-informed. Every organization of primary producers is complaining about the high taxation imposed by the Federal Government and about the big returns that their members have been getting for wheat and wool and other produce. If primary producers were properly staffed with employees receiving reasonable wages their taxation difficulties would be mitigated and we would be a long way towards increasing production from the land.

Mr. Heaslip—Don't you think rural employees are getting good wages today?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—In the main they are being well treated because if they were not given better conditions than those obtained in other industries primary producers could not get them at all. Unfortunately conditions are changing rapidly. During the past two months I have seen more than 30 men carrying their swags in various parts of the northern areas. I am afraid that that number will increase. I do not want a repetition of the conditions existing a few years ago when there were two or three men looking for every job available in the country, when rural workers had no bargaining power at all. I am prepared to admit that at that time the primary producer did not have much steam either, but I do not want to see those conditions returning when men were employed on the land for 5s. a week and their keep. Parliament will have to see that country lands are divided into home maintenance areas where diversified farming can be carried on. If we do not do this we shall have the curse of collective farming. Farming at its best is an individual enterprise which should be carried out by a man who knows his job, has a love of the land, and is prepared to look to it as a way of life, and he should be prepared to inculcate that attitude into his family. The question of prices is referred to in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech. Paragraph 28 states:—

"In the administration of price control, the Government's policy is to give as much freedom to traders as possible having regard to the public interest. Experience has shown that freedom from control is to the advantage of the public, provided that supplies are adequate and there is no trade arrangement designed to defeat competition. A wide range of goods has already been freed from control. Import restriction, however, will have the effect of reducing supplies of some commodities and it will be necessary to retain power to control the prices of these in the event of unreasonable demands being made on purchasers. You will therefore be asked to extend the operation of the Prices Act for another year." Behind it all, according to that paragraph, is the desire to get away from price control as soon as possible. We have had an experience in the last fortnight which should cause us to pause before getting too enthusiastic about the complete abandonment of price control. On Friday there was an announcement concerning the quarterly adjustment in the basic wage and the increases in the various cities were as follows:—Adelaide, 13s.; Sydney and Melbourne, 12s.; Perth and Hobart, 8s.; and

Brisbane, 6s., the Australian capital average being 11s. Therefore, the Adelaide figure is 2s. up on the Australian average and 7s. above the Brisbane figure. That indicates to me that South Australia might have prosecuted price de-control a little too far. In the past South Australia has prided itself on its low cost of living compared with that in the other States, but now, according to the basic wage index, we have the second highest cost of living in the Commonwealth. That gives me considerable concern as to whether price de-control has not been carried a little too far here—whether we should not see if we can keep our figures down either to the Australian average or a little below. This matter is of vital importance to the workers. In the recent adjustment one important increase has not been calculated, namely, the increase in the price of butter which, according to press statements, will represent an increase of about 4s. a week in the cost of living for the average family. There is also the fact that the figures on which the basic wage increase was determined are a month old. No doubt there has been an increase in other commodities since then, so that when the worker receives his 13s. increase at least half will have already been taken away from him, and so it will go on.

It has been suggested during this debate that two things should be done. The member for Onkaparinga said that hours of work should be increased—and this at a time when unemployment is growing. In other words, he favours lengthening the working week, which will result in putting many thousands more workers out of a job, necessitating higher taxes on those in employment to provide the dole. The member for Prospect was concerned about rising wages, but would not go so far as to suggest that they should be reduced. It is no use complaining about a thing unless one has a remedy. I believe that wages and prices could be stabilized if the question were tackled on a Commonwealth level, but it can be done only by a competent Commonwealth Government. Unfortunately, we have not one at the moment. On the questions of prices and production, we have had some more remarkable suggestions by interstate economists—people apparently pretty close to the Commonwealth Government. Among other things they say that Australians should eat less. The only question I should like answered is, "What Australians should eat less, and how many?" It would not include these economists who give this gratuitous

advice. This campaign of boosting exports by eating less is desired for the ordinary John Citizen and the ordinary working man—the fellows who do the real work of producing the wealth, portion of which they are asked to forgo at the behest of some of these economists. I want the world to know that I for one do not believe in that type of economy and am prepared to protest vigorously against it on all possible occasions.

The question of soldier settlement is also mentioned in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech, and it is one which must give honourable members some cause for alarm. I will refer only to the number of soldiers settled and the number likely to be settled in the near future. In the Governor's opening speech in 1951 the figures given were 616 who had had blocks allotted to them and 135 who had been selected for settlement. In 1952, the figures are given as 683 to whom blocks had been allotted and 90 who had been selected for settlement. That shows that 67 soldiers were settled on the land during the year.

The Hon. C. S. Hincks—Since the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech a further 27 have been allotted.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—It is good to hear that, but I suggest that the settling of 94 during the year is still not good enough, having in mind the time which has elapsed since the end of the war and the fact that there has been so much manpower and other power available to prepare the land for allotment. The Minister might have a look into the operations of the Land Development Executive and see whether a little drive could not be imparted to speed up the availability of land for soldier settlement. I suppose that the 67 who received blocks in the period referred to were taken from the 135 selected last year. If my assumption is correct, 22 new applicants were selected for settlement during the year. What I feared would happen is happening. Many worthwhile men have lost interest and given up any idea of ever becoming settlers on the land. This should not have happened.

Another question which I am afraid will be of vital importance in the not distant future is immigration, and its association with employment. We read in the press that about 2,300 Italian migrants at Bonegilla almost rioted because they cannot get jobs. We read in the same press that many German and Dutch migrants are walking the wharves or our main ports trying to get a passage back home because they cannot find employment in Australia. Yet, we also read that the Federal

Minister for Immigration is going to embark upon a comprehensive world tour to discuss the question of immigration with a number of governments. I do not suppose our South Australian Government has much influence on the Federal Government, but we should have some say in the absorption of these immigrants, because in the final analysis it will be the State Governments which will have to provide homes for them, and if they are to be land settlers find land for them or opportunities to work on the land. Although I believe Australia should have more population, any increase of population must be planned. For the population brought here from overseas to tramp about looking for work will not be of much value to us locally, nor a good advertisement for Australia overseas. I suggest that this question of immigration should be looked at immediately, and if necessary immigration should be suspended until we are assured that we can absorb those already brought to our shores.

I will now refer to the question of the housing of our aged and infirm people as distinct from the general question of housing. I do not intend to elaborate on that at the moment, except to say I regret that it appears as a result of the curtailment of Loan expenditure many South Australian families who are living under most trying conditions, being virtually homeless, are to remain in that condition for a much longer period. Bad as their condition is, it is not worse than that of many of the aged folk, and I hope steps will be taken in the near future to provide some form of housing for these people, both in the metropolitan area and in country districts.

I now come to what is, in my opinion, one of the most important aspects of government and one which is exercising the mind of Parliament at the moment—that of Commonwealth and State financial relationship. The following appeared in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech:—

My Ministers are seriously concerned at the curtailment of the State's programme of public works. Despite all the efforts of the Government, the arrears of construction work accumulated during the war have not yet been overtaken and the present need is for expanded rather than restricted programmes. Not only is much new construction necessary to enable the authorities charged with the duty of providing transport, water, electricity, harbours, schools, hospitals, and housing to meet existing needs, but the increased requirements of the future must also be provided for. While the loan programme is a matter for the Loan Council to decide, and the raising of the loans

is a matter for the Commonwealth, the development of the resources, industries, and population of the State is a prime responsibility of the State Government; and accordingly my Ministers are making every effort to ensure that such development and the provision of proper social services will not be disrupted by lack of finance. All the States in common have felt the embarrassment arising from the limitation of their public works. In large public undertakings it is essential to plan operations and order plant and material some years ahead; and waste and confusion occur if plant and materials are delivered at a time when operations cannot be proceeded with. The difficulties of the States have induced them to exercise the right, conferred on them by the Financial Agreement, of requiring a meeting of the Loan Council to be convened.

I agree with those sentiments and suggest that anything the Opposition can do to assist the Premier and the Government in having those principles recognized in another place will be cheerfully and willingly done. I do not forget that not many years ago we had a Government at Canberra which did recognize those principles and did assist the development of the States, and would make loan money available, particularly to a State like South Australia, to develop its potentialities and to provide for an increasing population. It was the Chifley Government, but when it went to the country in 1949 every member on the Government side of this House stumped the State to bring about its defeat. Unfortunately they were successful, so Government supporters cannot entirely divorce themselves from the position in which South Australia, in common with the other States, finds itself. I have no doubt that one reason why the Commonwealth Government cannot float loans at present is that the people have lost confidence in it. That is proved by the fact that the Electricity Trust in South Australia had a loan over-subscribed almost immediately.

The Hon. T. Playford—£1,500,000.

Mr. McLachlan—How did the semi-governmental loan in New South Wales get on?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I do not think that loan has been floated, so we cannot say how it got on. Then there was a Brisbane City Council loan which was over-subscribed.

Mr. McLachlan—Are you sure of that?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I got my information from the press.

Mr. McLachlan—I think you are wrong, but I will check it.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I took the statement in the press to be correct. The lack of confidence in the Commonwealth Government is due to the fact that it has no continuing

policy, and it has not had one since it was elected. It has made little effort to give effect to the specious programme of legislation with which it wooed the people. There were all sorts of promises about putting value back into the pound and providing freedom from control. The only promise the Commonwealth Government has kept has been the supply of unlimited quantities of petrol. Controls considered necessary by the Chifley Government and relinquished by the Menzies Government have since been re-imposed with greater severity. We had an example last week of how value has been put back into the pound. The Commonwealth Treasurer said that the value of the pound was being restored and that the cost of living was coming down, but on the following Friday there was a basic wage adjustment which completely belied that statement. There have been numerous statements about our overseas credits. When the Chifley Government left office the position in regard to them was sound, but about two years later we have had the most savage import cuts ever imposed, and mainly against the Mother Country. Is it any wonder that the people have lost confidence in the Commonwealth Government? There was every good reason for all States, irrespective of Party, to join in a united front against the Commonwealth Government.

One of the most amazing things I have read recently was the attack by the Prime Minister, when speaking in the Brisbane City Hall last week, on State Premiers. He criticized them in the most vigorous terms. Amongst other things he said the State Premiers were liars and that they should get off the back of the Commonwealth Government. He said that if it had not been for the States getting on the back of the Commonwealth Government it would not have been necessary to impose such high taxation in the previous year, but when Sir Arthur Fadden presented the Budget for that year there was no mention of increasing taxation to assist the States. It was an anti-inflationary budget and he said he would take some of the surplus spending power from the people and put it where it would do the least harm. This sort of thing brings the Government into contempt and makes it difficult for the Government to raise money to finance Australia's development. The Labor Party has always averred that national credit should be used for developmental purposes. When a war breaks out we have not hesitated to use national credit, but wars are destructive. They are necessary in the defence of a country, of the living conditions

in that country, and of the population and what it believes in, but in essence wars are destructive. It is perfectly proper to use national credit to finance a war, but according to the dictum of our Liberal friends at Canberra it is not right to use that credit for developmental purposes in times of peace. It will be a sorry look-out for Australia if we have to depend upon a war to bring about the even flow of money which is required for the proper development of our country, the absorption of increasing numbers of migrants, and for the sustenance of our natural-born population, which I am pleased to say is increasing with great rapidity at the moment. Australia is a Federation. We on this side of the House have believed for a long time that the constitutional set-up of the Commonwealth and States is somewhat outmoded, and that it should be improved. On a number of occasions we have tried to amend the Constitution in a way which we think is in the interests of the better government of Australia, the better development of our country, and the provision of better security for succeeding generations of Australians, but we have been consistently opposed by our friends opposite. In season and out of season when we have suggested that the Constitution should be amended, they have opposed it. We have reached the stage when we must make the Federal system work and the only way is to regard that system as a partnership. The six State Governments and the Commonwealth Government should not regard themselves as enemies to get on each other's back. They should get together as a partnership to bring about a better development of our country in the interests of the people.

Yesterday Mr. Shannon gave us a long dissertation on finance and propounded a scheme. I have not had the opportunity to read the *Hansard* report of his speech and I hope I do him no injustice. I would like to have had a good look at the scheme, but at present I do not think it differs very much from the present system of uniform taxation. That system provides for the Commonwealth collecting all income tax, and then, as the result of an agreement, which can be varied from time to time, making refunds to the States of portion of the taxation collected. As I understand Mr. Shannon's scheme, he desires that the taxpayers should be divided into two groups, a lower and an upper group, with one being taxed by the Commonwealth and the other by the State. It looks a fine proposition as far

as it goes, especially if the State had the right to tax those on big incomes and the Commonwealth had the unpopular task of taxing those on low incomes. I am concerned about the line of demarcation. I understand Mr. Shannon wants that line determined by a constituted authority that will meet annually. I can see the same wrangling developing over the line of demarcation as now develops over the distribution of the proceeds of uniform taxation. In essence, I do not think there is much difference between the two schemes. Australia should be regarded as a partnership and the Prime Minister and the Premiers should decide upon a formula so that uniform taxation can be continued, with the States receiving a fair share of the taxation. In the final analysis uniform taxation is a just system. Under it a man in one part of the State pays the same rate of tax as a man in another part of the State. Before uniform taxation a man in say, New South Wales would pay more than a man on a similar income in South Australia. I am reminded that in those days a Premier in one State would try to get an industry for his State by promising taxation concessions. It is not so many years since there was a real threat of the great motor body building industry being moved from South Australia because of the incidence of income tax, and the South Australian Government, rightly or wrongly, had to make certain concessions in order to retain it. Before we become too enthusiastic about the return of our taxing powers we should look at the position in the not distant past, for it is not long since we had the right to impose our own income tax. The year 1941-2 was the last financial year in which we

exercised that right and in that year we collected £2,819,000 in income tax and received as a Commonwealth grant under Section 96, £1,854,000. The total amount derived from both sources that year was £4,673,000, which represented 31 per cent of the State's revenue. In 1951-2 we received from the Commonwealth a total of £15,462,000, or four times as much as in 1941-42, and this represented 37 per cent of our total revenue, so if we look at those figures carefully we may see that the ordinary person in South Australia will be considerably worse off as a result of a change.

I should like to have touched on many other subjects—in fact so many that I had difficulty in selecting my topics—but there will be opportunities to deal with transport, particularly the future of the Municipal Tramways Trust when an agreement is reached between the Premier and the local governing bodies, and the drift in railway finances, which I understand is considerable, but they will have to await a future occasion. In conclusion I wish to say, as on previous occasions, that when the Government introduces legislation with which we can not only agree, but which is entirely on the lines of our policy—as it has done—it will have our whole-hearted support, but when it introduces legislation which is not so acceptable to us we shall endeavour to amend it so as to make it work in the interests of the people as a whole.

Mr. PATTINSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.35 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, July 24, at 2 p.m.