

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, July 29, 1953.

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

QUESTIONS.**STATE BANK ADVANCES.**

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Can the Premier say if it is customary for the State Bank Board, once a loan is approved for an intending home builder, and it is not taken up immediately, to then require him to re-apply to have the loan renewed at a higher rate of interest?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will bring the question under the notice of the chairman of the State Bank Board and get a reply. As far as I know, State Bank interest rates are subject to adjustment from time to time, even when a loan has been approved and the applicant has actually borrowed the money. One of the problems in connection with the matter is that when the person for whom a State Bank loan is approved does not immediately take it up it results in inconvenience not only to the bank but to other applicants who are perhaps themselves debarred from getting a loan.

WHEAT STABILIZATION SCHEME.

Mr. HEASLIP—I understand that the Minister of Agriculture has just returned from Canberra where he attended a conference which dealt with wheat prices and stabilization. There has been a good report in the *Advertiser* but has the Minister any further information to give to the House?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The proceedings at the Council meeting have been fully reported in the *Advertiser* and there is little which can be added on the scheme itself. It will be necessary to introduce two Bills. One will deal with the stabilization scheme to carry us over a period of five years. The Bill will set out certain details in connection with the scheme. The other Bill will deal with a reserve plan to ensure orderly marketing over the period of the international wheat agreement. For wheat for stock and human consumption the price will be 15s. a bushel. It will be reduced if the price at which wheat is sold overseas is below that figure. The reserve plan will not have to be submitted to a ballot of wheatgrowers, but it will be necessary for the Bill to be passed by each Parliament to enable the Wheat Board to operate for a further three years, which is the period of the

international wheat agreement. The stabilization scheme will have to be submitted to a ballot of wheatgrowers, and if it should be rejected in any one of the principal wheat producing States it will become inoperative, and then the reserve plan will come into operation.

WALLAROO BOAT HARBOUR.

Mr. McALEES—Has the Minister of Marine anything to report regarding a boat harbour at Wallaroo?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I am glad to be able to report that the Harbors Board, in pursuance of the policy the Government desires in order to do the very best it can for fishermen throughout the State, and following on the strong representations made by the honourable member, will go to Wallaroo next Friday, and I hope that circumstances will permit me to go, too. I would welcome the honourable member's co-operation on that date. I will give him the times and the itinerary so that he and other interested people can make their arrangements.

UPPER MURRAY TRANSPORT.

Mr. MICHAEL—The following is an extract from a report in this morning's *Advertiser*:—

A deputation from the seven Upper Murray councils north of the river told the Minister of Local Government (Mr. McIntosh) in Adelaide yesterday that they were unanimous in preferring road bridges over the Murray to the bituminizing of the Eudunda-Renmark road.

With Mr. Macgillivray I had the honour to introduce the deputation, and in my opinion the report of *The Advertiser* expresses exactly the opposite of what was expressed by the deputation, which was supported by the council of Paringa, on the south of the river, which could not be represented at the deputation. It contended that the bituminizing of the Eudunda-Renmark road was a solution of the difficulties associated with Upper Murray transport. Does the Minister know how the report came to be in the press, and will he confirm the opinion I have expressed that it is the opposite of the deputation's request? Will he endeavour to have a correct report placed in the *Advertiser* tomorrow?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The facts are so entirely opposite to those recorded that I think the report must be an honest mistake, for on the face of it there was no propaganda either expressed or implied. I communicated with the News Editor of *The Advertiser* and suggested that the best way to correct it was to see that in fairness to the deputation and

myself, at least equal prominence should be given to a correct statement and I was assured that that would be done. The facts were that every person at the deputation said in effect that the best, quickest and most economical plan, having regard to future development, would be an improved road north of the river, with the ultimate object of bituminizing the whole length, and that only then could bridges be considered. I have already received urgent appeals from some members of the deputation as to whether my office was responsible for the press statement, but neither I nor anyone in my office know anything about the report.

BRIDGES ACROSS RIVER MURRAY.

Mr. STOTT—Yesterday, in reply to a question in reference to a bridge at Blanchetown, the Premier said that before estimates which provide for an expenditure of more than £30,000 for any public work can be introduced the project must have been reported upon by the Public Works Committee, and that it was not anticipated that any project could be prepared and reported on in time for this year's Estimates, which are now ready for introduction. The Public Works Committee has made an inquiry regarding a railway line to Barmera and said it was inevitable that there should be some inquiry in regard to bridges across the river. Can the Premier say if the Government intends to refer to the committee the question of the establishment of bridges at Kingston and Blanchetown?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I said a few days ago that an examination is being made as to the practicability of having bridges at the places mentioned so that the project could be considered by Cabinet and the committee. Some work on the examination has been done already, but I point out that a project like this is large and expensive, and requires much detailed information before anything can be submitted to the committee or recommended to Parliament, with any assurance that it is justified. I have some plans already in my office about the project, but one of the problems is that at flood times there is a very large rise in the level of the river. At one place under discussion the rise is nearly 20ft. above normal level. That is extremely high and it would need an extremely costly structure, because the engineers say that it would be impracticable to have a bridge that would be submerged as it would be likely to be damaged and of no use at certain times. The committee has already made an inquiry into the possibility of having two

bridges across the river to take a railway line to the Upper Murray area, and it was not recommended. In its report some reference was made to the question of building bridges across the river, but such a project has not been before the committee. I am advised authoritatively that there is no reference at present which would enable the Government to place any estimate before Parliament.

PUBLIC WORKS EXPENDITURE.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Can the Minister of Works say whether it is customary for the Highways Department to refer to the Public Works Committee all projects estimated to cost more than £30,000?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—No, as is proved by such power as is given to the Commissioner to act along certain lines.

Mr. STOTT—Yesterday in reply to a question by the member for Hindmarsh the Minister of Works said that the cost up to the present of widening the Hindmarsh bridge was £33,694 and that the anticipated total cost was £53,500. Section 25 of the Public Works Standing Committee Act states:—

(1) After the first day of July, nineteen hundred and twenty-eight, it shall not be lawful for any person to introduce into either House of Parliament any Bill—

(a) authorizing the construction of any public work estimated to cost when completed more than thirty thousand pounds; or

(b) appropriating money for expenditure on any public work estimated to cost when complete more than thirty thousand pounds;

unless such public work has first been inquired into by the committee in manner provided by this section.

Section 3 defines "public work" as—

Any work proposed to be constructed by the Government or any person or body on behalf of the Government out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, and includes any proposed continuation, completion, repair, reconstruction or extension of any existing work or any addition to an existing work and the duplication, deviation, or alteration of any line of railway. The term includes the construction but not the repair or maintenance of any road.

In view of the fact that the estimated cost of the work on the Hindmarsh Bridge is more than £30,000, can the Treasurer say under what authority that money has been spent by the Highways Department without the project having been referred to the Public Works Committee?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Certain moneys have been approved by Parliament which may

be spent by the Highways Commissioner and which are automatically paid into the Highways Fund by the Treasury each year without any appropriation by Parliament for that purpose. Such amounts consist of certain moneys from the Commonwealth received as a rebate on petrol taxation and moneys paid into the Treasury for the registration of motor vehicles and drivers' licences, less the cost of collection and with one or two minor adjustments; therefore, if this work could be included in the Highways regular expenditure no doubt the Highways Commissioner could undertake it out of his ordinary funds. The size of the work suggested on the Murray is so great that if the amount were taken from the Highways fund it would mean that many other works in South Australia would have to close down, for the Highways fund is not sufficiently large to cover the cost of this project, which can only be provided, if it is provided at all, from the State Loan allocation which must be approved by Parliament. The expenditure would be subject to the Public Works Standing Committee Act and I would have to introduce a Bill with respect to it. If the money could be provided from the Highways fund the Highways Commissioner could do the work without its being referred to the Committee.

Mr. Stott—It would appear that some amendment to the Public Works Standing Committee Act is necessary, for the work being done is the reconstruction of the Hindmarsh Bridge.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The motoring public have held very strongly that they do not desire to have moneys paid by way of motor taxation alienated from road purposes and those funds have been automatically made available for road purposes. Later this year an amending Bill will be introduced with regard to control of the Highways Fund and undoubtedly Parliament will then consider this matter. Government policy demands that all moneys provided by the motorist by way of taxation shall be earmarked for road purposes and I would in no instance believe that this should become a matter which should go into the State Budget in the general way.

Mr. STOTT—Does the Government intend to bring down legislation to amend the Public Works Standing Committee Act to increase from £30,000 to, say, £60,000 or £90,000 the estimated cost of projects that must be referred to the Public Works Committee, to bring the position more into line with present-day costs?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The purpose of the legislation referred to in the Governor's Speech is to make it clear that repair work will not be regarded as public works. Certain maintenance works are undertaken by the Railways Commissioner on railway lines, and it has been argued that under the present provisions of the Public Works Standing Committee Act these are public works and that before the Railways Commissioner undertakes them it should be necessary to have an inquiry by the Public Works Committee. The question mentioned has already received some consideration by Cabinet. Two years ago I mentioned this matter to the chairman of the Public Works Committee and asked whether the committee would give its views upon an alteration of the Act. The committee reported that it was considered undesirable to alter the amount, and as a consequence no action was taken to have it submitted to Parliament. In view of the very large alteration in the value of money, I believe there are now grounds for further consideration of the matter. Only this week at Cabinet it was decided that I should again discuss the matter with the Public Works Committee.

SULPHURIC ACID PRICES.

Mr. TEUSNER—*The Advertiser* of Friday last contained the following report:—

The Nairne pyrites project being developed by S.A. fertilizer companies would probably be a "white elephant," Mr. W. P. McAnaney, of Langhorne Creek, told the annual conference of the S.A. division of the Australian Primary Producers' Union yesterday. Superphosphate made with Nairne pyrites would cost more than superphosphate made with imported sulphur, which was becoming easier to obtain, he said. Unless exploitation of the Nairne deposits was necessary for defence, the project would be an added financial burden on farmers.

In view of the important part played by the Government in recent development of pyrites resources, can the Premier say whether there is any justification for the fears expressed by Mr. McAnaney?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The import of sulphuric acid from abroad depends on many factors. In recent years it has been either unprocureable or procurable only at a high price. Whether sulphur from abroad will be available at a cheaper price in future is pure speculation and there is no evidence at the moment to show that it will. Sulphuric acid is the most important chemical there is and American supplies today are totally inadequate to meet the requirements of the

American economy. Under those circumstances it would appear unlikely that imported sulphur would be cheaper than our product. The honourable member quoted a report saying that sulphur is becoming more readily available, but only yesterday, on examination, I found that the price of superphosphate next year, which would otherwise show a substantial drop will be adversely affected by the imported brimstone which is necessary at present and will be necessary until our own resources are developed. In fact, the cost of the imported sulphuric acid was approximately £7 10s. a ton higher than the estimate of that made from materials available in Australia. By and large there is no ground for the statement in the report. The Nairne project was carefully examined by the Industries Development Committee and by the Broken Hill Zinc Company, which did investigational work on behalf of the Government. I have also received a report from the engineers who are establishing the large chemical works at Birkenhead. All these authorities say that the locally produced acid will be very much cheaper than any from any other source.

POTATO MARKETING.

Mr. QUIRKE—Has the Premier a reply to my question of last week concerning the control of potato prices and the co-ordination of the activities of the Potato Board and the Prices Commissioner?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Under the Potato Marketing Act the Potato Board was established as a producer board and Parliament laid down that the price to be charged for potatoes should be that fixed by the Prices Commissioner. I have discussed with the Chairman of the Potato Board, the Prices Commissioner, and merchants representatives the question of bringing some order into the present difficult position and I have no doubt that in due course action will be taken which will have the effect suggested by the honourable member, that of having a common policy established between these various authorities. I notice that the Victorian Government is becoming concerned about this matter and has requested a conference of State Ministers of Agriculture on it. The difficulty mainly arises out of the unco-ordinated effort taking place in Sydney, where there is no control at present. However, steps are being taken to import a substantial quantity of potatoes to South Australia and a common policy will be brought into operation here, and I hope at least that some of the chaotic conditions which now exist will be overcome.

PREFABRICATED HOMES.

Mr. DUNKS—During the Address in Reply debate reference has been made to prefabricated houses and their slow erection. I have been told that some of these houses are still in their cases as they arrived from overseas. Would the Government be prepared to sell some of them in their present form to young men, most of whom now have Saturday mornings free, and would be able to erect and wire them in their spare time and thus save the labour costs of erection which are estimated at about £400 to £500?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am not aware that there are a substantial number of houses banked up awaiting erection. The Housing Trust was provided with funds to maintain a steady programme of erection as the houses came forward, but it is quite possible some of them are still in their cases. I believe the last shipment under the contract was made within the last two months, so there would still be some coming forward or just unloaded. The trust will be prepared to sell the houses as mentioned, and indeed I believe has sold some houses under similar circumstances to a number of primary producers. One of the problems associated with such a sale is that the houses come boxed in groups of eight, and same unpacking problems would be involved. The trust has always been prepared to sell houses under the conditions mentioned.

HOUSING TRUST TEMPORARY HOMES.

Mr. STEPHENS—In reply to a previous question I was informed by the Premier that the erection of emergency homes under special legislation passed by Parliament had been completed and the houses occupied and none was now available, and the only houses of this type which would become available would be those which became vacant. As many people are still wanting emergency homes, is it the Government's intention to bring down special legislation this year to provide for more temporary homes?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—When the honourable member raised the question previously I said I would give him a more detailed reply from the Housing Trust than the one I then gave him. The following is the report of the chairman of the trust:—

Approximately 2,300 houses have been erected by the South Australian Housing Trust under the Government emergency housing scheme. Whilst these houses provide good accommodation, they have been designed and built with a view to their having a limited life only and with a view to their removal and use for other purposes when the housing position warrants

this action. The Government emergency housing scheme has been very successful in providing quickly and economically housing accommodation for persons in urgent need of housing and has, to an appreciable extent, relieved the housing shortage. However, it is obvious that there should be some limit placed on building of this kind and the trust has suggested to the Government that it is now undesirable to build more of these houses and this view has been accepted by the Government. Among other reasons prompting this attitude is the fact that the imported house programme of the trust is now well in hand, with the result that substantial numbers of permanent houses are now becoming available both for sale and for letting.

PORT LINCOLN-TUMBY BAY ROAD.

Mr. PEARSON—Following on the reply by the Minister of Works to my question yesterday, will he obtain a report from the Commissioner of Highways as to what he proposes to do to make the Port Lincoln-Tumby Bay road a permanent one instead of the patchwork job being done at present, and when he obtains that report will he make it available to me?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will certainly do both. I point out that it is easy to make a report, but much harder to make £1 do the work it did formerly.

CONTROLLING MURRAY WATERS.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The Premier knows that in recent years much trouble has been experienced in controlling the waters of the Murray. There is a growing feeling in the district that the locks and weirs have now become outmoded and that the water should be released from the bottom of the weir instead of being allowed to flow over the top. Then the water would not have the saline concentration it now has, nor would the weir be blocked as a result of silting. Will the Premier consider sending an engineer from the responsible department to America to find out the latest methods of controlling water in that country, because it is felt that it would be of great value to South Australia, especially as the City of Adelaide will shortly be depending on the Murray for the major part of its water needs?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Under an arrangement with the United States Government an officer of the Engineering and Water Supply Department was sent to that country and spent nine or 10 months in the department concerned studying the latest methods used, particularly in connection with their irrigation projects. I will refer the question to the Minister of Works to get a report from

the Engineer-in-Chief. I believe we now have full information on the methods being used in the United States where, incidentally, the problem is entirely different from that here. I think all honourable members realize that South Australia, with its significantly small resources, has a peculiar problem in the distribution of water and in irrigation.

CONDITION OF LOCOMOTIVE.

Mr. DAVIS—Has the Minister of Railways a reply to the question I asked yesterday about locomotive No. 604?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I would hate to see a revival of the system which used to apply in this House when practically every culvert and railway engine was the subject matter of questions. On one occasion a colleague of the honourable member asked why a culvert was constructed in section so and so and he was told by the then Minister of Railways that it was required to take the railway line across a creek. The report from the Acting Railways Commissioner is:—

With reference to the question asked by Mr. Davis, M.P., in the House of Assembly on July 28, 1953, in which he alleges that locomotive No. 604 is in bad condition, I have to inform the Minister that actually this engine is in good mechanical order, and is not behind in its servicing. The trouble in the instance referred to by Mr. Davis was caused by the very fine coal which the department was obliged to use. This coal caused trouble with the mechanical stoker of this particular engine.

If every hold-up and every fault in the railway system, where £30,000,000 is involved, becomes the subject matter of discussion in this House we shall lose our conception of the proper things to discuss here.

RAILWAY SERVICES.

Mr. LAWN—Has the Minister of Railways a reply to the question I asked yesterday regarding the "Man-in-Blue" service at the Adelaide Railway Station?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have received the following report from the Acting Railways Commissioner:—

With reference to the question asked by Mr. Lawn, M.P., in the House of Assembly on 28th July, 1953, regarding the curtailment of hours of duty of the Man-in-Blue at Adelaide, I have to advise—

1. The hours of this service were curtailed for purposes of economy and to bring the working as close as possible to the requirements of the Arbitration Court award of 10 shifts per fortnight, totalling 80 hours.

2. No service is required after 9.30 p.m. on any week night, there being no outward bound country trains after that hour.

3. Most persons desirous of visiting the country at week ends do so by the Friday evening trains and, therefore, the services of the Man-in-Blue are not required on Saturday morning, but are provided on Saturday afternoon to cover the arrival of the Up East-West Express at 4.20 p.m. and the departure of the Overland Express at 7 p.m.

4. The Man-in-Blue service is not considered necessary on Sundays.

5. The Public Inquiry Bureau is open daily Mondays to Saturdays 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.

6. The inquiry counter in the Stationmaster's Office on the Adelaide platform is open Mondays to Saturdays from 6 a.m. to 11.30 p.m. and on Sundays from 8.45 a.m. to 10.45 p.m., and this office on Sundays handles all telephone inquiries.

From the above details it will be seen that ample inquiry and information attendance is available at all times during which trains are running, including the hours when the Man-in-Blue is not in attendance.

Mr. LAWN—Is it not a fact that the services of the Man-in-blue were curtailed first and that the Acting Railways Commissioner had to find him work at the platform barrier to make up the fortnight prescribed by the Arbitration Court?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I am not in a position to have that knowledge. I deprecate these questions about the employment of railway officers. A perusal of the Act will show that the matter is delegated to the Railways Commissioner.

Mr. Lawn—Is it not a public matter?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—No. He is only one man in many thousands, and if we make a practice of dealing with the position of individual men we shall not be able to do anything else.

COUNTRY SEWERAGE SCHEMES.

Mr. FLETCHER—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked last Tuesday regarding the policy of the Government on various sewerage schemes approved by the Public Works Committee?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A number of projects have been referred to the committee and favourable reports have been presented in regard to about five to seven schemes. They are being examined by the Works Department with a view to their inclusion in the Loan Estimates, as soon as funds can be made available.

LEIGH CREEK COAL.

Mr. JENNINGS—Has the Minister of Works any further information to give following on the inquiries I have made recently regarding the handling of Leigh Creek coal at Mile End?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I assure the honourable member that the same complaints have reached me as have reached him, and we are trying to iron the difficulties out. I have received the following report from the Chief Storekeeper, which will be more easily understandable as a result of my preamble:—

Following on the inquiry made during the past two or three weeks by your secretary relative to supplies of Leigh Creek coal for domestic purposes, I wish to report that after consultation with the general manager of the Electricity Trust and the Acting Railways Commissioner, the weekly tonnage coming forward from the field has increased from 7,500 tons to 10,000 tons. This has enabled us to build up a reserve of at least two days' requirements at Mile End and has resulted in vendors being supplied with a minimum of delay. The officer in charge of the coal yard at Mile End assures me the facilities for distribution at the yard meet with general satisfaction.

Except for that regrettable and unavoidable holdup I would think things are normal. I assure the honourable member, and I ask for his co-operation, that there is every desire to have the coal used to the fullest extent for domestic purposes. I can thoroughly recommend it.

HOUSING TRUST SECOND MORTGAGES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Premier obtained a reply to my question regarding Housing Trust policy on second mortgages?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have a report on this matter which I will make available to the honourable member.

GALVANIZED IRON.

Mr. HEASLIP—Can the Premier say whether galvanized iron is being exported and, if so, in what quantities?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am not aware that galvanized iron is being exported from Australia except in the quantities which have been normally exported over the years. For instance, Australia has always had an obligation to make galvanized iron available to New Guinea as a mandated territory and I believe a limited tonnage has always been supplied to New Zealand, but I am not aware of any large export other than to near neighbours which have always looked to us for supplies. Substantial quantities of raw steel are being exported at present, but there is a surplus of that commodity.

OIL BURNING LOCOMOTIVES.

Mr. STEPHENS—Has the Minister of Railways a reply to my recent question regarding damage done by oil burning locomotives on the Port Adelaide line?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The honourable member based his question on the premise that the Railways Department already had sufficient coal and therefore there was no necessity to use oil, and I said I would be glad if that were the actual position. The Acting Railways Commissioner reports:—

With reference to the remarks made by Mr. Stephens, M.P., *Hansard*, July 22, 1953, concerning oil-burning suburban engines, as the honourable the Minister stated in reply, it is not the object of the department to use imported oil if we can get good Australian coal. Actually, we are concerned at this moment with the coal position, as our stocks have dwindled from 40,000 tons at the beginning of May to 5,000 tons, or sufficient for only one week. Towards the end of last year the late Commissioner, in view of the plentiful supplies of coal coming to hand from New South Wales at that time, converted back to coal 24 of our large locomotives which are fitted with mechanical stokers. He would no doubt have been prepared to go further had the quality of the coal not been so satisfactory. With the rolling strikes on the New South Wales coalfields, deliveries fell away as from the beginning of May, and with your approval endeavours were made to obtain supplies of higher priced coal *ex* Balmain, but without success. I also authorized the re-conversion to oil of the 24 large locomotives referred to above, and 16 of these have already been handled. At the present time there are 31 narrow gauge and 63 broad gauge engines burning oil, with eight more broad gauge engines now being converted. It will be seen, therefore, that we are not in a position at present to give consideration to the conversion of our suburban tank engines back to coal.

I would be delighted if the position were as stated, but unfortunately if we are to maintain services we must use oil, no matter how expensive it is.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT PAYMENTS.

Mr. STOTT—Has the Premier a reply to my question of last week regarding payments under the Workmen's Compensation Act?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received the following report from the Parliamentary Draftsman:—

The member for Ridley (Mr. Stott) states that insurance companies are deducting Commonwealth health and social services benefits from the amount of workmen's compensation payable under the State Workmen's Compensation Acts. The State law does not allow this, and I am informed by Mr. Jackson, chairman of the Fire and Accident Underwriters' Association, that he has no knowledge of any such action on the part of South Australian insurers. As a result of Commonwealth legislation, however, a workman is not entitled to receive both workmen's compensation and Commonwealth benefits in respect of the same injury, and no doubt Mr. Stott's question arises from this fact.

The relevant Commonwealth legislation contains provisions having the following effect:—

- (a) The weekly rate of Commonwealth sickness benefit is reduced by reason of compensation received by a workman under the State Act.
- (b) If a workman receives sickness benefit without reduction, and workmen's compensation as well, he can be required to repay to the Commonwealth all or part of the sickness benefit according to circumstances.
- (c) An employer or insurance company liable to pay workmen's compensation to a person entitled also to sickness benefit can be required to pay the compensation to the Commonwealth instead of to the workman.
- (d) Commonwealth health benefits are not payable to persons entitled to medical expenses under the Workmen's Compensation Acts except with the approval of the Commonwealth Director of Health and subject to terms and conditions fixed by him.

All the above matters are prescribed by section 119 of the Social Services Consolidation Act, 1947 (as amended in 1948) and regulation 26 of the National Health (Medical Benefits) Regulations. It will be seen that duplication of benefits is provided against by Commonwealth legislation, but persons liable to pay workmen's compensation do not escape liability. The chairman of the Fire and Accident Underwriters' Association has informed me that if Mr. Stott supplies particulars of any specific cases of alleged deductions from workmen's compensation, the association will be pleased to investigate the facts.

WIDENING OF MOUNT BARKER ROAD.

Mr. SHANNON—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my question of last week regarding the widening of the Mount Barker road at Crafers?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The honourable member's statement that "the Atkinson family has made the Highways Department buy the whole of its property" is not correct. The department has not purchased the property mentioned, nor has an approach been made to the owners to this end. Considerable agitation has occurred to have the main road widened, and if this is to be carried out it is possible that the butcher's shop will have to be demolished, but no action has yet been taken along these lines. All such land acquisitions would in any case require Cabinet approval. The area known as Crafers oval is private property and therefore the Minister would not be in a position to "set aside this area for public use." If the local people are keen about such a proposition they could support the council in taking steps to reserve the land under various powers of Acts. If any subdivision is projected the buildings thereon would have

to conform to the alignment as set out in by-law No. 24 under the Building Act, as detailed in the *Government Gazette* of December 8, 1949.

HILLS HIGHWAY.

Mr. SHANNON—Can the Minister of Works say what is the estimated cost of the by-pass on the Princes Highway near the Eagle-on-the-Hill, how many such by-pass sections are proposed to be created, has the land for the proposed new highway leading from Burnside along the Waterfall Gully spur to Crafers been secured and what is the estimated cost of this new section of highway?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—A sum of £29,000 has been expended up to the present on the widening of the road near the Eagle-on-the-Hill hotel. Work will be carried out at other points to provide sections where traffic can pass in safety. These will not necessarily be similar to that at the Eagle-on-the-Hill, but will be adjusted according to the lay of the ground. The length of time taken and cost is dependent on the amount of excavation necessary. Because provision has to be made for traffic at all times, the work cannot be carried out as expeditiously as ordinary work. When the sections mentioned above are completed, the passage of traffic should be much facilitated, although there may remain certain lengths where the cost of widening would be prohibitive, and care will still be required. To build the new road and leave the present road in its existing state would be contrary to the recommendation of the State Traffic Committee and would involve an expenditure of funds at present not available. The proposed new highway would not afford any immediate relief to traffic congestion until it is complete in its entirety. The money spent on widening would only do a very small portion of the new road, and for this reason the State Traffic Committee recommended the works now being carried out. The alternate new road would cost at least £1,250,000. Speaking generally, the Highways Commissioner is of opinion that the scheme outlined by the Traffic Committee is by far the most feasible and will answer the problem for several years to come. The total cost will probably be about £120,000.

HOUSING TRUST HOMES, DARLINGTON AND GILLES PLAINS.

Mr. STOTT—Has the Premier anything further to report following on the question I asked on July 21 regarding Housing Trust homes at Darlington?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received the following report from the chairman of the South Australian Housing Trust:—

The South Australian Housing Trust has had a number of imported timber houses at Darlington and Gilles Plains which have been completed for some time, in some cases for a considerable time, but which have not been capable of being occupied by reason of the lack of sewers and other services. As these services become available, the houses are being occupied by purchasers or tenants. Whilst there is still a lag in the services the sewers have now reached both the Darlington and the Gilles Plains groups and connections are being made. However, the combined effect of the recent very wet weather and the operations of trenching machines has, in instances, been to make the roads impassable, and now some houses cannot be occupied because of this difficulty. Action to secure access to the houses will be taken as speedily as possible. As regards sales, the Trust is not finding that purchase prices are too high although some would be purchasers have not sufficient deposits. As regards the letting of these houses the houses are letting very readily and the Trust has received and is receiving many applications to rent the imported houses.

If the honourable member desires further information I suggest that he look at the answer to the question on notice yesterday.

Mr. STOTT—It is apparent from the answer that the trust has had the houses available for a considerable time and has been unable to get them occupied because of the lack of essential services. Will the Government take the necessary steps to co-ordinate the work of the various Government departments so that these services can be made available, and so keep good migrants here instead of their leaving because of the shortage of suitable accommodation?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member will realize that it is not possible to put the roof on a house without having the necessary foundation. These essential services must be the last work in completing a housing programme. The honourable member will realize that there has been no unusual delay, except that the Electricity Trust found some difficulty in getting its heavy plant to work because of the wet ground. In any 4,000-house programme at any given moment there must be a number of houses with only the foundations laid, a number with the walls up, a number awaiting roofs, and a number awaiting the plaster work. The overall picture is that South Australia is completing houses at a much faster rate than any other State in the Commonwealth—that is, from the commencement of the construction to occupancy. Not only in regard to efficiency, but in relation to the

number of houses completed, the work of our trust compares more than favourably with the work done by similar bodies in other States.

Mr. STOTT—Will the Premier take up the matter with the trust so that Parliament can be informed of the period the trust considers to be the lag between completing the building of a house and its being connected with the essential services? Is two years too long a time, or does the trust want six, 10 or 20 years?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There is a close co-ordination between the departments in this matter. I frequently get reports on the subject, and the latest report I have shows, in respect of Gilles Plains, that the total number in the group is 558, none of which have yet been occupied. The Electricity Trust has completed its work at 29 houses which are not yet occupied. There are 20 houses with meters awaiting services which will probably be completed within the next few days. A further 18 houses have electric meters fixed and tested. The services are not on, and in some other way these houses are not completed. A further 27 houses have electric services on, but the houses are not yet metered and cannot be occupied as they are otherwise incomplete. All requests from the Housing Trust electrical contractors have been met or are in hand. The 558 houses will require 350 poles, of which 250 have been erected. The Electricity Trust is completing about 30 services per week. The Gilles Plains area is so cut up that it is exceedingly difficult to deliver poles to the area and it is doubtful whether people could be moved into the houses away from the main roads. The honourable member will see that in a big housing project there is always the problem of providing water, electricity and sewerage services. The proper authorities are doing the work and in a reasonable time, subject to the vagaries of the weather, will complete it. The Housing Trust and the Government are as anxious as the honourable member to see these houses occupied, for while they are unoccupied they are not earning revenue and the people who desire to live in them cannot do so.

Mr. STOTT—Some of the Darlington homes have been erected for more than two years. Can the Treasurer say which department is responsible for the loss of revenue by way of either interest on the purchase money or rents on these places? Does he not think that the Housing Trust or some other authority should build the roads in such places before the erection of the houses?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member proposes that the Housing Trust become a local government authority.

Mr. Stott—There should be co-ordination.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Local government authorities have always been responsible for roadmaking but the Housing Trust has realized the problem facing councils and given them all possible assistance. As soon as it receives money from the Treasury it becomes responsible for the interest thereon and for any losses. I doubt very much whether the honourable member is correct in saying that houses have been unoccupied for two and a half years, but I will have the matter investigated.

CORONATION MEDALS.

Mr. CORCORAN—My question relates to the distribution of Coronation medals. It is somewhat belated but I have been requested by the Justices Association to bring the matter before the responsible Minister. Can the Premier say who was responsible for the distribution and on what basis they were distributed? Some of the justices have performed court work over many years without remuneration and they and other people are disgruntled about the way the medals were distributed.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member will realize that in the distribution of any medals there must be many worthy people who do not get them. A limited number of medals were available for distribution and because of the large number of worthy citizens in this State perhaps the distribution was unsatisfactory to some, but the number of medals to be distributed and the method of distribution were matters for overseas authorities. Lists were prepared by the Commonwealth and the State and every effort was made to have the distribution as wide as possible and to the most worthy people. No-one will deny that many worthy citizens have been missed. It was not intended to overlook them, but there were insufficient medals.

BULK HANDLING OF WHEAT.

Mr. STOTT—Is the chairman of the Public Works Standing Committee able to report on the project for the bulk handling of wheat in South Australia, and, if not, can he indicate when his committee is likely to report on this important question?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—The committee is not in a position to furnish a report at this juncture, but I hope that a progress report will be available some time this year.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

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

(Continued from July 28. Page 192.)

Mr. JOHN CLARK (Gawler)—I express thanks to the House for the courtesy of allowing me to continue today what is already a rather lengthy speech. I feel that in very few Parliaments in Australia do members have the opportunity to continue their remarks at such length. By a fortuitous accident I happened to speak on education yesterday and it was yesterday that the Minister of Education's report was tabled. This morning's *Advertiser* contains two headings side by side. The first, referring to the Minister's report, is "Education Costs Rise Steeply," and the second, referring to my speech, "Too Little Spent on Education." Both those statements are correct. The press report on the Minister's report states:—

The problem of finding enough teachers for the rapidly increasing number of pupils is difficult, and the only possible solution is to employ a large number of women as temporary teachers, the report says. Of 608 full-time teachers appointed or re-employed in 1952, 387 were temporary teachers. Recruits for permanent staff are, however, increasing.

I agree with that except that I think the employment of many temporary teachers should have been only a temporary solution, whereas I am afraid that, on present indications, it may become a permanent feature. The press report continues:—

The report refers to the introduction of the "Boomerang books" this year as a notable advance in primary instruction. "Strikingly illustrated in colour, and printed in Adelaide by the most modern methods, the books are regarded as very creditable to all concerned in their production," it states.

Although the *Advertiser* is too modest to take the credit for the production of the Boomerang Books, I feel it is my duty to say that these books were printed in South Australia by the *Advertiser* and have generally been accepted as an excellent job. I am particularly interested in this matter for I happened to be one of a committee of four who were instrumental in choosing the contents and arranging the setting out of the books. Mr. Edgar Allen, former Deputy Director of Education, recently told me that he had seen no better reading books for use in schools. The children are also delighted with them and my small daughter, aged seven, spends hours reading them. That is an example of what can be done when sufficient funds are made available.

Yesterday I said that as a result of the paucity of money available for education purposes student teachers were not entering the Teachers College in satisfactory numbers. There may be a few more this year according to the report of the Minister; although I was under the impression that that would not be the case. This shortage of trainees has led to the adoption of a temporary expedient—the engaging of temporary trained and semi-trained teachers—which looks like becoming a permanent feature. With regard to the supply of temporary teachers the position varies in different parts of the State. In some places there appears to be a good reservoir of former teachers who are prepared to come back to teaching, but in other parts there are not so many and almost anybody who is prepared to try to teach is taken on. I do not say that all the three-month trainee teachers are bad, for many have been a complete blessing in their schools, but during their training period they go into schools where the heads have many other duties besides training and cannot devote adequate time to thoroughly training the newcomers. Where there is no opportunity for methodical training the trainees are left to pick up what they can. If they are particularly keen and anxious to make a success of their new job they pick up a good deal, but if they are not so keen they cannot be expected to learn much; but they get appointments as teachers even if the head of the school cannot recommend them. When these trainees begin teaching some find their feet for some have natural ability for the work, but others do not find their feet and become a liability on the permanent staff. What are the results of this? Our previously high standard of education is inevitably being lowered. This applies to a much greater extent in infant departments where many semi-trained teachers work. In some schools 90 per cent of the teachers in the infant department are temporary teachers.

Obviously, as a result of this education must become unbalanced. Many of these semi-trained teachers are capable of teaching the three R's but have neither the background nor the knowledge to teach other subjects of a cultural nature. I know one school where there are three permanent assistants, four temporary assistants, and six temporary uncertificated assistants, and only two of the teachers are men. This sort of thing leads to too great a load being placed on the permanent male teachers with a consequent unbalancing of the

teaching staff. It also leads to the overworking of teachers and a diminishing enthusiasm through people finding themselves over and over again saddled with the responsibility of looking after work which is supposed to be done by somebody else. This in turn leads to increased absenteeism among the teachers. One mistress, who is responsible for an infant department of 10 assistants, last year taught classes on 114 days because of absenteeism among her teachers. She had very little time for her administrative duties. Although needing more help in their schools, some headmasters are trying to palm off unwanted assistants on other heads. This is bad for the teaching service, for the children, and for the staff. All this occurs because adequate remuneration is denied trainee teachers by a Government which either does not know the facts or does not care about them. If proof is needed here is a wonderful example of what can and does happen when a Government continues to govern too long. This is a negation of the value of the Party system.

We cannot afford not to afford greatly increased expenditure for educational work. More money is required for subsidies to enable school amenities to be purchased. Each year subsidy funds are exhausted, or almost exhausted, and many applications for assistance are deferred until the following year. Many things are urgently needed and have been urgently needed for a long time. One teacher's residence in my district is really unfit for human habitation and yet the teacher, his school committee and I have been trying for a long time to get something done. How can any teacher expect to keep up a decent standard when forced to live in such a place? Last year an additional £20,000 was voted for subsidies at about the same time as £875,000 was voted to bolster up the tramways. I wonder which in the long run is the more important? Surely, we do not wish to kill the enthusiasm of people who are working hard to gain school amenities. Although, in one sense, it might be a good thing if their enthusiasm for raising money were killed. They would be only too happy to divert their efforts to helping the schools in other ways, and these amenities would then have to be provided by the Government through increased grants to the Education Department. However, in that case, it is doubtful whether such necessary amenities would then be provided.

I should like to quote the case of the Ridley Grove school which proves my point. I can well remember when it was opened as a very

modern school in about 1946. I heard with amazement and joy, and perhaps with a touch of envy, of the amenities provided there. Apparently, those up-to-date amenities were then considered necessary, and I still think they are desirable. Some of the newer schools have similar amenities provided by the department, but at many little attempt has been made to introduce them. I shall give a list of some of the things at the Ridley Grove school which I maintain should be available at every school. The head teacher's office has a well-covered floor, an office table, filing cabinet, telephone, and a book room adjoining the office, with shelves and electric light. The male teachers' room has a linoleum, table, and chairs, and a wash room adjacent with suitable fittings and a lavatory alcove. It might be asked, "Surely they have these things at most schools?" For years, when I was a teacher, I had my lunch at one of the desks occupied by the boys and girls during lessons, and it did not fit me very well either. There is a similar room at the Ridley Grove school for the women teachers, and adequate cupboards in the classrooms for teachers and pupils. A kitchen, with some cooking equipment and conveniences connected by a counter and a slide window to an assembly or general purpose room with a number of chairs is also provided. This room is used for meetings and for serving food at functions held to raise funds. The school also has central heating, electric light in all rooms and power points in eight rooms for films, wireless, and so on. There is also a medical room for scholars, with a toilet room adjoining. Nowadays, schools receive many visits from medical officers and such a room is needed. The school also has a cloakroom with shelves, and there is a shower room for the boys and another for the girls. If physical training is to be carried out adequately at schools, shower rooms are a necessity.

The school also has a library with shelves, tables and chairs, but books are not provided. There are also a woodshed, two storerooms and cleaners' storerooms with tap and sink. Wash bowls are provided for the children, who thus do not have to wash in a communal trough as they do in many schools. These things should be standard equipment for all schools with, of course, suitable variations to suit the sizes and conditions of the schools. Some may say that I am aiming rather high, but I do not think so. I do not think the amenities I have mentioned are by any means enough. Why not also provide blankets and pillows for sick children in the medical room? These are

particularly necessary in country high schools. Many of the girls are a long way from home, and at times some may feel the need of a rest, because they cannot be sent home for their mother's attention. First-aid equipment should also be provided. This is very necessary, although nowadays very costly. Why should not all schools have a piano, for which school committees and other organizations struggle to raise money? There should also be wireless equipment and a few selected pictures and library books. I also advocate that one teacher at each school should be trained in library management.

Another thing which may sound rather radical to some honourable members is that at the larger schools some clerical assistance should be provided for head masters and head teachers. They are involved in much clerical work, having many forms to fill in. Included among their multifarious duties are the ordering of books from departmental sources, for which they have to fill in five forms, and the filling in of medical forms for medical examinations. Arrangements have to be made for work in connection with junior red cross workers, for the visits of psychologists, the examination of deaf children and for X-ray examinations. They have to make arrangements for religious instruction, which usually means the separating of different denominations into groups. If, because of illness or other reason, the clergyman cannot come more alterations and extra work are entailed, and this extra work could easily be done by a clerk. These officers also have to order the sound films, silent films and film strips, and attend to the purchasing, supervising and repairing of library books. They also may have to attend meetings of departmental sub-committees at the Education Office. They have all kinds of forms to fill in during the year. I am not saying that they are unnecessary, but they take up an enormous amount of time. Most head teachers dislike putting extra work on their assistants. They realize that the assistants have much to do in looking after their classes, and incidentally most assistants do not like having extra work placed on them.

Head masters with academic degrees and long experience in their work should not have to do junior work. They should be able to look around their schools and seek weak spots, and advise their teachers. They have also to help the trainees who do not know much about teaching. That is why I say that a head master puts in two-thirds of his time in doing the work of a junior clerk. It is a waste of good material and the head master loses his

grip on the school, with the inevitable result that the education of the children suffers. I suggest also that there should be equipment for physical education, and in these times it is expensive. In all schools there should be properly completed asphalt yards. The school yard at Gawler badly needs attention, and I understand those at Mansfield Park and Ferryden Park have yards which are little better than bog patches. Many people think that education is free, but the cost of books is mounting so much that it constitutes a real hardship for many parents. Free education should be extended to all schools and free books should be made available. If my suggestions are adopted it must lead to more efficient and contented teachers, and happier, more interested and better taught children, which must result ultimately in better citizens. These things should be demanded as a right. Much more could be said on the needs of education, but I will not say it now.

I hope I have not quoted too much from the remarks of others, either wittingly or unwittingly. To bring ethical and cultural standards to their schools I have seen young and not so young teachers, in remote country districts and in the city and towns, devoting their time, energy and money to this cause dear to their hearts. In any democracy the scattered efforts of the enthusiastic cannot be considered enough. There must be keen interest and lively support by the Government and the public. In U.S.A. and England in recent years great educational progress has been made, because the public mind has been aroused to interest and realization of the meaning of education for individual and national welfare. The more public opinion is stirred, the easier it becomes to obtain financial support without which a modern system of education cannot flourish. Not enough attention has been given to this matter. Education has changed enormously since most of us went to school. Education cannot and must not remain static, but in the main the public has retained certain traditional ideas on education which are hard to shake.

I commend all the work that has been done by mother's clubs, welfare clubs, parents and citizen's associations, school committees, high school councils and the like. Perforce much of their sterling efforts must be restricted to raising funds to supplement the meagre equipment provided for schools. The so-called extras such as pianos, books and library facilities, are no longer extras but necessities today for

satisfactory instruction. Surely then the burden of providing these things should be more widely distributed among the whole public instead of being left solely to the chance interest of enthusiastic groups or individuals. Education must be considered as a national and State investment of the highest kind. It does not immediately repay interest, but brings in incalculable dividends in health, happiness, prevention of crime, and the advancing welfare of our country.

Mr. Jennings—And the prevention of wars.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Yes. I should be happy to see that, too. There are numerous questions we must ask ourselves. Some of them are:—Are we satisfied except for a few notable examples with school buildings and grounds? Is present equipment of schools adequate? Should only a comparative few work to raise money to gain subsidies from the Education Department, while the many have the benefit and no responsibility? Is teacher recruitment satisfactory? Are there enough opportunities for the promotion of teachers? Can we guarantee under present conditions, a satisfactory future for our coming citizens?

Mr. Dunks—If you keep going you may get a "Yes" to one of your questions.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—I must reply in the negative to each of the questions asked. I commend these various matters to the attention of the House. In education we must be satisfied with nothing but the best. At a public meeting called to discuss Federal aid for education and held in the Sydney Town Hall in May last, in an address Dr. K. S. Cunningham, Director of the Australian Council for Educational Research, said:—

Look round the world and you will find that the backward and under-developed countries are the ones with the highest proportion of illiteracy. The unhappiest countries and those with the least certain future are those which deny opportunities of training and culture to a certain proportion of their people so that the more privileged may preserve their advantages. Some countries—I think France is a fair example—have caused themselves difficulties through placing so great a value on past cultural tradition that they have failed to adapt methods to modern needs.

Perhaps that is the reason for the present exhibition of French paintings. Dr. Cunningham continued:—

Switzerland, Sweden and Denmark stand out in my opinion as countries which through education have achieved great things. Their economies are sound and they have gone far in achieving social stability and equality. Switzerland, a Federal country like our own,

has achieved wonders in welding three different language groups into unity. Her Federal Government has accepted increased financial responsibility for education.

I hope that our Federal Government will find a way to help our education to a greater extent. Earlier in the debate the new member for Torrens spoke of the great importance of justice, and I agree with him. Without education there can be no real justice, but what we need most is a little justice for education. I support the motion.

Mr. W. JENKINS (Stirling)—May I join with other members in congratulating you Mr. Speaker, on having been re-elected to your high office. The record of 20 years in office is sufficient evidence of your impartiality and efficiency. I trust that the coming term will be a very pleasant one in your memory.

I would like next to refer to His Excellency the Governor's Speech at the opening of Parliament. In his remarks he thanked and paid a tribute to officers and public authorities who planned and carried out the Coronation celebrations with such marked success, and to the public generally for their whole hearted co-operation in the celebrations. This work was carried out in a spontaneous upsurge of loyalty to Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second by all sections of the community in the District of Stirling, embodying Coronation tree planting, sports and loyalty ceremonies. The grand effort by all school masters, teachers and their staffs, throughout the district was highly commendable.

His Excellency, Sir Robert George, performed his first public ceremony in the country when he unveiled the World War II. Cross of Sacrifice Memorial at Victor Harbour, and where he became most popular and endeared himself by the way he mixed with our people. We of the South Coast wish Sir Robert and Lady George a happy sojourn in South Australia as Her Majesty's representative. The people of the district of Stirling look forward with anticipation to the Royal visit in the coming year, but with deep regret that the itinerary does not include a visit to our district, particularly as the South Coast is rich in history and scenic beauty, and from the earliest days of pioneering has been a British settlement. Incidentally the few miles of Encounter Bay embodying Victor Harbour and Port Elliot was the last inhabited coast line to be discovered in the world. This was effected when Matthew Flinders on the *Investigator* met Captain

Baudin on the French sloop *Geographe* off our shores in 1802, thus closing the exploratory pincers from east to west around Australia. But I have no doubt that civic and other organizations will see to it that the greatest numbers of people, and especially the children, will have an opportunity to visit Adelaide and see Her Majesty.

I was particularly pleased to see in paragraph 7 of His Excellency's speech that the Commonwealth made a grant to the States for the expansion of agricultural services and that the Government has already from these funds inaugurated a project to demonstrate irrigation methods and investigate pasture and vegetable growing on the shores of Lake Alexandrina. There is ample evidence that money spent on this kind of investigation will repay the State a hundred-fold for, with irrigation, this fertile land will produce all kinds of produce for intense culture; and with electricity reaching out to these areas, closer settlement will automatically come about and decentralization result. I believe land has been purchased in the Finniss area for experimental purposes to test the best methods of irrigation for these regions. This is highly commendable and I compliment the department on the move.

Our people are still anxious to know when the unbituminized four miles of road from the Finniss cross roads to Double Bridges will be completed, as during the past few weeks these bridges have been impassable owing to flooding. Also we want to know when the bitumen road from Mount Compass to Victor Harbour will be widened and straightened. This, I know, is a major project, but the question is an important one to the south coast, as last year on several holiday occasions there were 4,000 cars and buses in Victor, and this movement of transport took place over a very narrow and winding road. I realize that in the South-East and West Coast there are new settlements with no road access to their properties, and that these should receive priority, but consideration must be given to the fact that our south coast is the recuperation resort of the State. I make that statement with all deference to the metropolitan resorts, but a poor road is not an inducement to people to use our holiday places where we spend large sums yearly for their pleasure and accommodation, and the people who cater for the holiday trade are the losers.

I am grateful to the Government for the services being provided in my district, namely a water scheme for the township of Milang

which should be completed this summer, and the Encounter Bay water scheme which, as recommended by the Public Works Committee, will be commenced shortly. This will alleviate to some degree the poor pressure in Victor Harbour and Encounter Bay from the Hindmarsh Valley reservoir, the enlargement of which is planned. Settlers along the Hindmarsh Valley River are turning to potato, vegetable and lucerne growing but find that during the dry months of summer the pumping for irrigation uses all the water in the upper river and water holes. This could be overcome—and reasonably cheaply too—should the river be dammed at the Hindmarsh bridge by weir to raise the upside of the river by 18 in. or more and keep back the sea water. The flats along this river bank are rich and black and some fine samples of vegetables have been taken from there this year, and the great increase in dairy herds which would result and the nearness of this area to the Amscol factory would make this scheme well worthy of consideration. It is essential that the Woods Point water scheme be commenced at the earliest possible moment because the dairymen are urgently in need of regular supplies of water during the summer months.

The electricity station being built at present at Strathalbyn should give unlimited power to the district as far as Encounter Bay, assisting in rural pursuits and an encouragement to industry to become established at Goolwa and Victor Harbour thus assisting to keep those of our young people who wish employment in their own towns at home. In the Hartley district there is an area of 50,000 acres of scrub land which, with stock water only, would be capable of carrying one sheep to the acre in a warm climate suitable for dairying. The owners of this land are prepared to commence clearing immediately if stock water can be provided as the only water at present is bore water containing 690 grains of salt to the gallon. It is hoped that an extension of one of the nearest mains may be made into this area which would make possible a big step up in production right in the middle of market areas.

The centenary of the first railway in Australasia will occur next May and I trust that a celebration befitting the occasion will be implemented. Records show that the first railway was opened on May 18, 1854, but there is evidence that it was in operation a week or two prior to that. This railway ran from Goolwa to Port Elliot. A great deal of controversy is taking place as

to which was the first railway in Australia, and I think the question may be finally decided on the definition of "tramway," as this piece of line was referred to as a tram road in those days, but the following evidence does not support the fact that the line in question was a tramline but rather it was a railway line. The definition of "tramway" in Murray's dictionary is "a track of parallel rails originally of flat planks of wood, afterwards lengths of stone or plates of iron, forming wheel tracks for vehicles." A tram road is defined as "a track with rails flush with the road surface laid in a street or road on which tramcars run for the conveyance of passengers." Evidence that South Australia can claim the first railway is taken from the *Australian Book of Trains*, by J. H. and W. D. Martin. That book states:—

New South Wales claimed Sydney's Parramatta to be the first line in Australia but its opening was preceded by the Hobson's Bay Railway Company's line from Melbourne to Sandridge opened on September 13, 1854. Now even Victoria cannot have this record completely on its own because the distinction of providing the first railway or tramway for public conveyance goes to South Australia. In the early months of 1854 a track was laid between Goolwa and Port Elliot and along this a vehicle resembling a stage coach mounted on rail wheels was drawn by a horse. Railway historians both young and old will undoubtedly proceed to debate which was the first railway. We are content to remark that the first past the post was a horse and that it had the lead by several months.

Reference is made in Parliamentary Paper No. 65 of 1854 to several works at Port Elliot. One reference is to a house at Port Elliot which was built for the railways superintendent, a bridge over the line, level crossings, and goods and passenger traffic. The line is referred to many times as a tram road but a book, *Engineering in South Australia*, by W. B. Hayes, published in London in 1856, and in which matter was supplied by the civil engineer who built the line, refers to it as a railway and states that it was surveyed for locomotives and that Croydon type rails weighing 40 lb. a yard were used. I believe it is important to establish that the first Australian railway was laid in South Australia and that this is a matter of historical Commonwealth interest.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Will various functions be held to celebrate the centenary of the line?

Mr. W. JENKINS—Yes, such functions are being arranged and our citizens would appreciate the co-operation of the Government to ensure the success of the celebration of the

centenary of such an important event. I listened with interest to the maiden speech of the member for Prospect and it struck me as ironic that he should castigate the Government for its lack of provision of homes when it appears that through the instrumentality of the Government so many trust homes were erected in his district as to win for him the seat he now occupies on the Opposition benches. I am sure all members are thankful for the signing of the Armistice in Korea. I take this opportunity of congratulating the member for Victoria on the decoration awarded his son in Korea. The signing of the Armistice must be of some comfort to the honourable member. The member for Norwood volubly debated the unfairness of the electoral boundaries, but I imagine that they are only unfair in so far as they are considered unfavourable to his Party. When the present boundaries were recommended by a politically impartial committee and approved by Parliament Opposition members were jubilant, and I believe they said, "This will do us," but as electors realized the value of the Liberal Government and as the Opposition lost seats their cry became, "We can't win because of the Government gerrymander."

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Is it not a fact that the electorate with the lowest number of electors in South Australia is represented by the Leader of the Opposition?

Mr. W. JENKINS—Yes. Questions I asked yesterday sought information which I intended to use today in speaking about student teachers and their training conditions, but the member for Gawler covered the subject so ably and possesses so much more information than I do that I will refer only briefly to this matter. Although student teachers are being taught a profession I believe we should examine their salaries and conditions, particularly those of trainees from the country who must pay a high tariff for board. Considering that these young people will be the teachers and character builders of our children from the ages of five to 15 years we cannot do too much to encourage the best students to enter our Education Department. I support the motion.

Mr. CORCORAN (Victoria)—I, too, support the motion and express my pleasure at being back in this House once more. I do not know whether I come into the category of a new member, but I assume I do and that I am entitled to all the privileges extended to a member in making his maiden speech. I am delighted to renew old acquaintances and I

appreciate the courtesies extended to me by members of both sides of the House whose friendship I am proud to claim. I trust that what I say in this and other speeches will not weaken those bonds of friendship. I heartily endorse the sentiments expressed by previous speakers in regard to the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. I join in expressing the hope that she will have God's blessing in carrying out her various and arduous duties and that she will be blessed with a long and peaceful reign. With other members I extend a welcome to His Excellency the Governor, Air Vice-Marshal Sir Robert George, and to Lady George, and trust they will have a happy sojourn in this State. I have no doubt they will endear themselves to all South Australians as their illustrious predecessors did. I had a great regard for Sir Willoughby and Lady Norrie and I trust that they are enjoying conditions in New Zealand.

Like the member for Stirling, I am pleased that the Korean war has ended. I hope it will mean a lasting peace. I thank the honourable member for the tribute paid to my son, who has been at the war. The district of Victoria is one of the most important in the State because it holds great possibilities for land development; in fact, there is no other electorate which has the same potentialities. It has much fertile land with an assured rainfall. If we properly exploit our resources there it will become one of the most important land development areas in the State. I realize it is my responsibility to work in co-operation with other members in their efforts to do all they can in the best interests of the State, and I will give them my whole-hearted support, but I realize that, in particular, I have to keep an eye on the interests of the district of Victoria. It is every member's responsibility to attend to the needs of his own district in particular, as well as work in a general way for the benefit of the State.

The Governor's Speech referred to five research centres to be established in various localities. One will be established in the lower South-East and another in the Upper South-East. I am sure they will greatly aid land development schemes. If soil erosion is not dealt with it will devastate the country, as it has done in other parts of the world. I am glad that the broadening of the railway gauge to Mount Gambier is an accomplished fact. This has been advocated for as far back as I can remember, and never more than just prior to an election. I am sure it will aid the development of the South-East. We should

pay credit where credit is due and acknowledge that the Commonwealth Government is bearing seven-tenths of the cost of the broadening of gauges. Mr. E. Ward, when he was Commonwealth Minister for Transport, played a most important part in the uniform gauge proposal. I am keen to see better road and rail transport facilities provided in the South-East. Both district and main roads need attention. Recently I asked a question of the Minister of Local Government about bituminizing main roads in the district of Victoria. The work that has been carried on for a number of years has been more or less a patchwork maintenance. It has given temporary relief, but little has been done in bituminizing those stretches not surfaced. The bituminizing of these roads is the only way to make a satisfactory job. Although the temporary repairs gratify to some extent the wishes of the people it is not an answer to the problem. When bringing these matters before the Government we get an acknowledgment of the necessity of doing the work, but always the comment that there is not sufficient money. I should like to see a strenuous effort made by the Government to raise sufficient money by loan or through some other medium, such as increased motor registration fees. If motorists find themselves in a bog they will blame the Government. They may grumble if registration fees are increased, but as the Government has the responsibility of rehabilitating the roads it should tackle the problem fearlessly, even if it takes five or six years to put them in good repair. Greater attention should be given to the arterial roads leading to the main highways. To obtain greater production we must offer every encouragement to primary producers, and the provision of better roads is one.

I have been assured by the Minister that it has been decided to broaden the railway gauge from Mount Gambier to Millicent. I hope that work will be expedited because at present the important cellulose industry at Snuggery has to load materials on to narrow gauge trucks, and when they have travelled the short distance to Mount Gambier transfer them to broad gauge trucks. No matter how carefully they are handled there is always some damage. Such things undermines the confidence of people who patronize the railways. When they send breakable goods on the railways they are always worried whether they will reach their destination intact. The broadening of the gauge from Naracoorte to Kingston may not be carried out for some years. Perhaps it will

be considered in conjunction with the broadening of the gauge from Millicent to Beachport. Dislocation will prevail on the South-East system until the gauges in that division are broadened. Recently the chairman of the Public Works Standing Committee informed me that it had completed taking evidence on the proposed deep sea port at Cape Jaffa and that it had come to a decision. I will not try to predict its recommendation, but there is a division of opinion among the people of the South-East. Those around Mount Gambier and Naracoorte are not very concerned about it because they are nearer to Portland, which they consider will serve their requirements. The attitude of the district council and the corporation of Mount Gambier was not one of over-enthusiasm. There is some talk of renewed activity of coastal shipping. This flourished at one time, so is it absurd to talk about its re-introduction? Perhaps the transport requirements of the South-East will have to be reconsidered by the Government.

The Minister of Works told me that a water supply scheme for Millicent is before the Public Works Committee. I hope the committee will expedite its deliberations, for the people there are anxious for the scheme to be implemented. Important towns like Millicent and Naracoorte are without sewerage. We often talk about the prosperous times we have enjoyed for many years. The Playford Government says it is proud to boast of the prosperity of South Australia since 1938, but many important country towns have not water and sewerage schemes or other amenities. Public health will be jeopardized until a sewerage system is installed at Naracoorte. The nature of the ground in that area does **not lend itself to any other system**. It has been suggested there is not sufficient money available but there is plenty of money at Naracoorte and the residents in that area might subscribe to a loan to aid the Government in providing sewerage. Millions have been spent on wars and if another war broke out money would be found to enable us to fight for our existence. Surely, then, money should be available for works which affect the health of the community. One can talk himself into Parliament and talk himself out, but silence would be taken as contentment with the present situation in this matter, so I ask the Government to forgive me if I keep plugging away at what I consider to be my responsibility.

I hope a more vigorous land policy will be put into operation in the South-East, though

I am not disparaging what has been accomplished since the war. It is easy to criticize but it is another matter to offer constructive criticism. We should fully utilize the land and reduce the size of holdings. Instead of allotting 500 acres to each settler the Government might now consider 250 acres or less to be sufficient. It was decided after the war that smaller areas should not be allotted to soldier settlers because of what happened after the first world war when the areas were too small. I do not blame the Government for guarding against the same mistake but now that scientific methods have revolutionized farming the question of decreasing the size of holdings is worthy of consideration by the Land Settlement Committee. I believe the Government already holds large areas of land in the South-East and that one area of 30,000 acres was purchased many years ago. I do not know why there has been a delay in settling that area; the Minister may make some explanation. There are many areas in the South-East which could be purchased by the Government for settlement. The land is good and the only requirements are homes, fences and windmills. If the landholders will not sell the Government must not allow itself to be swayed by sentiment but must take action to compulsorily acquire it. I do not suggest we should rob the landholders; they should be justly compensated and a committee established with instructions to investigate the whole problem. Unless we fully exploit our country we may not be permitted to hold it. There are people who would gladly welcome our land and we must do all we can to build a bulwark against the possibility of invasion. Land should not be idle. I hope my words do not fall on deaf ears. Some Government members have a clear conception of their obligations and I hope they will insist on a more vigorous land policy.

More secondary industries should be established in country areas. The Labor Party believes that a meat works should be established in the South-East whether a port is established there or not, and the wool scouring industry has an opportunity of renewing its activities there. The South-East has natural waterways and there are still people there who performed that work many years ago. Instead of sending wool overseas to be processed it should be done at the place of production. Those industries can be sources of revenue and can provide additional employment. A man of vision suggested that the day is not far distant when between 500,000 and 1,000,000

more people will be established in the South-East. It is easy to say what should be done but I realize it cannot be done in a short time. As each Government takes office it should shoulder its share of the responsibility. When we pass on we should be able to say that we have added our contribution to the development of our areas. If people will not negotiate for the sale of their land we should apply the provisions of the Compulsory Land Acquisition Act, which was introduced by a Playford Government.

Mr. Fletcher—Don't you think the South-East has responded in making land available?

Mr. CORCORAN—It has. I do not blame any landholder for holding out: it is the Government's fault for permitting him to do so. An impartial committee should be established to decide the value of the land; then there would be no miscarriage of justice. If it is already a function of the Land Settlement Committee they should put it into operation. Let us hope that that committee will become active, and then we will have satisfaction in knowing that we are not dodging our responsibilities. I am sure members opposite will support me, and I hope that the owners will adopt a patriotic attitude and make their land available. Some people are holding land, but doing nothing with it.

Mr. Dunks—The big proportion are using it.

Mr. CORCORAN—Yes, but hundreds of thousands of acres are not being used. I am concerned about the schools in my district, and particularly the provision of bus services for those living in the outback areas. People living in the undeveloped country are doing a great job, turning non-producing country into an asset not only for themselves but for the State. In motoring through my district and seeing this effort I have a feeling of admiration for those people battling against terrific odds, and also an admiration for their wives who also suffer the trials and tribulations of developing this country. Many of these women have to teach their children under the correspondence system. I want an investigation to be made to see if something can be done to relieve these women, who are doing a noble job in helping to develop this country. I cannot speak too highly of them. Under the present system of providing bus services for children greater opportunities for education become available. It would appear that the days of the small school are numbered. In some instances great difficulty is experienced in persuading bus proprietors to continue their services, because the

bad road conditions cause heavy depreciation to their buses. Trouble is also experienced because teachers encounter great difficulty in getting board and lodging. Many of the people have not the facilities to board them, and some schools have been closed as a result.

The establishment of secondary industries in the country is no wild dream. Meat works could be set up in the South-East. That is part of the policy of my Party and has been thoroughly examined. I ask members to try to visualize the benefits which would accrue by the establishment of additional secondary industries. The cellulose industry at Millicent is an excellent example of decentralization as advocated by the Labor Party. We are proud of our forests in the South-East. The present Government has done a great deal towards their development, but I am proud to remember that when the Gunn Government was in power the then Minister of Lands, the Hon. T. Butterfield, was instrumental in having vast areas around Nangwarry purchased. I also remember the carping criticism meted out at the time. Whether he had the vision or not to see what was ahead, the fruits of his efforts now stand as a magnificent monument to his memory, as well as to the present Government. The least we can do is to pay tribute to those responsible for these areas being purchased. The South-East forests employed only 90 people in milling operations in 1934, but today, the Mt. Burr, Nangwarry and the little mill along the Mt. Gambier road are employing 420, exclusive of the forest workers. Production now amounts to 42,000,000 super feet of log timber a year, whereas the three mills in 1934 produced only 8,000,000 super feet. We want to see this progress maintained. I was given those figures by a reliable authority. I am proud to know that the timber industry is flourishing in the South-East and I hope the Government will continue with its forestry policy. It means a great deal to Millicent, Tantanoola, Mt. Gambier and the State. In spite of the efforts and activities in afforestation demands still cannot be met. During World War II. opportunities were created for the use of our timbers, and the previous prejudice against it was broken down. People had to take it because they could get nothing else, and as a result got used to using it, and the cry now is for more. I know people in Naracoorte who are clamouring for increased supplies and tell me their quota is totally inadequate to meet demands.

Some people at Mt. Gambier were opposed to the establishment of a mill near the town

and suggested that the land be used for other purposes. Nothing will produce more value per acre than pine trees, and when the mill is working it will employ an additional 400, who will require 400 more homes. Possibly these homes will house more than 1,000 people, who will create an extra demand on the Mt. Gambier business houses. When the chickens come home to roost there will be no grumbling about the mill being erected, and the people will realize the wisdom of those who selected the site. I think the Conservator of Forests did the right thing in insisting upon the site. I am pleased that the last season was so prolific and that our wheat average was 23 bushels, five bushels higher than on any previous occasion. Although the area under wheat was considerably less than usual, the total production was in excess of the average. It does not matter what effort the farmer puts into his work, unless he is blessed with good rains his efforts are in vain. This year there was much pessimism about the season starting late, but let us hope the final results will not be as disastrous as was anticipated two or three months ago.

I expected to see some reference in the Governor's Speech to electoral reform. I am one who believes something should be done to put our system on a basis whereby it will result in one vote one value. At present that does not prevail. A total of 62 per cent of the people live in and around the metropolitan area and only 38 per cent in the country, but our Parliamentary representation amounts to 13 members from the metropolitan area and 26 from the country. The result is that a country vote is worth three and a quarter times a metropolitan vote. That is not democratic and I cannot see how anyone can argue it is. Although the present Government was not responsible for fixing the boundaries, it came in to enjoy the privileges it provides. The discrepancies today are considerable compared with 1936, and they have been aggravated since by the flow of population from the country to the city. The general tendency in country areas is to support the Liberal Party's policy. I hope that those members on the other side of the House who have any idea of political fairness will join me in this matter and that this session the Premier will introduce legislation for full adult suffrage and compulsory enrolment for the Legislative Council. A Government elected by the votes of one-third of South Australian electors cannot be said to be democratic and I will do everything possible to put our

electoral system on a democratic basis. I am proud to represent the district of Victoria and I hope to be able to work in harmony with other members for the welfare of that district in particular and of the State in general. I support the motion.

Mr. STOTT (Ridley)—In supporting the motion I will refer to some subjects which have already been mentioned this session. The Housing Trust has been building houses which it cannot let or sell because they are not connected with essential services such as electric light and sewerage. The Electricity Trust and the Engineering and Water Supply Department should co-ordinate their efforts with those of the Housing Trust to meet the housing shortage. The Government should shake up the Engineering and Water Supply Department which could possibly engage more employees if shortage of labour is the problem. Something is wrong when houses erected at Darlington between two and two and a half years ago and those erected at Gilles Plains six months ago are not yet occupied, for it should not take that long for services to be connected. I do not wish to criticize the Housing Trust, but I criticize the lack of co-ordination between Government departments. The trust should arrange with the councils and the Highways Department to build the roads before houses are erected. In some areas I have seen trucks loaded with bricks stuck in the mud at the top of a road while workmen further down were idle awaiting their arrival. That sort of thing could be overcome by a co-ordinating policy of building the roads before erecting the houses.

Mr. Stephens—That is done in New Zealand.

Mr. STOTT—It is also done in the United States of America. While I was there earlier this year I inspected some housing schemes and I was amazed at the time in which the houses were completed. The first job was to take a survey and test the land for its building qualities, and then the roads and footpaths were built. Consequently, when the bricks, cement, timber and other building materials arrived, the trucks were not likely to become stuck in the mud. A foreman told me that if the delivery was not made in the summer it would be difficult. I told him that we made sure of that in some parts of Australia for we did not start building until the winter had begun and then the trucks did get stuck in the mud.

The Premier has shown vigour and enterprise in investigating the possible development of

atomic energy in this State and has looked ahead with vision to greater industrial development. He should be congratulated on his efforts to develop our uranium deposits, but he has been enterprising in the past on other projects and I am wondering whether the Government under his leadership is not undertaking far too much and leaving uncompleted projects at present in hand. The Government has pursued a vigorous housing policy, but we have the unfortunate spectacle of tenants being unable to occupy completed houses because of the lack of essential services and of immigrants booking their passages home to Britain because they cannot obtain houses. This state of affairs is due to the lack of co-ordination between Government departments, and they should be shaken up. The Government is falling down on its job if tenants cannot move into houses as soon as they are built. There is something wrong somewhere, and Parliament should focus the Government's attention on the necessity to rectify matters. The Commonwealth and State Governments have co-operated in a vigorous migration programme, not only to develop the continent but for defence purposes. We must provide migrants with proper homes. Many homes have been erected, yet people are leaving this country because they cannot get into them. The Housing Trust often replies that the applicant's name will be placed on the waiting list and that he will be communicated with when a house is available. Some people I know have been in South Australia for three and a half years. They told the trust they would be prepared to take a home at Darlington or Gilles Plains. Seven weeks passed before they received a letter from the trust that owing to the lack of essential services it would be some months before they could be allotted a home. They are in the unfortunate position of having to vacate their present country home within a week or two because it has been purchased by someone who wants to occupy it. They have told me if they cannot get a house very soon they will have to sell their furniture and return to their native country. The Government should investigate the administration of departments responsible for providing services to homes. We often find one department passing the buck on to another, but this must stop.

The Premier has been giving us a glimpse into the crystal ball in regard to atomic energy. I congratulate him on his foresight. South Australia has wonderful possibilities because

of its uranium deposits at Radium Hill. Parliament may later have to vote Loan moneys for the purpose of establishing an atomic enterprise. I hope the Premier will go ahead with the project, but I trust he has all his plans in order. I hope it will not be held up because some department has not the wherewithal to push the scheme ahead. We have had far too much lack of co-ordination amongst Government departments. The Premier is vigorous in his approach to all problems, but when members ask other Ministers when certain works will be carried out we hear the same old parrot cry, "There is no money and no labour. First things must come first, and others must wait." That is not good enough. Besides lack of co-ordination amongst Government departments, there seems to be lack of co-ordination amongst the Ministers. We vote moneys for the Minister of Works to do certain jobs. Perhaps he will say Parliament has not given him enough money. This afternoon the Premier said that the Highways Department had only a certain amount of money voted for it and that if it is spent on the Hindmarsh Bridge some other project has to be curtailed. Perhaps the Government is trying to do too much at the moment. I would sooner see some undertakings completed before others are started. For instance, the five-year road programme was introduced some years ago, but hundreds of miles of country roads have not been completed because of lack of money, materials and manpower. I hope when the Loan and Revenue Estimates are before the House that the Treasurer will be able to tell us the Government intends to complete the projects started. There seems to be too much energy at one end of the Government benches and not enough completion of works at the other, or perhaps there is fault in the administration of some of our Government departments. My purpose is to focus attention on the lack of co-ordination and to ascertain who is at fault—whether a Government official has not the necessary administrative or organizing ability or whether the Minister has called a halt to projects because more money is being spent than appears on the Estimates. If the latter is the cause, it is the Treasurer's fault for not providing sufficient money or for not going on the loan market to obtain more. The policy of the Commonwealth Government does not present a happy picture because of the lack of support to Commonwealth loans. The Acting Premier, Mr. McEwin, did a good job for this State at the last Loan Council meeting, but it

appears that the Loan Council is not taking sufficient interest in ensuring the completion of works in the States. Premiers go to the meetings with schedules of what is to be done and at what cost. Projects are commenced on the assumption that a certain amount will be provided by the Loan Council. In its desire to have a work commenced the Government will vote an amount from the Estimates knowing that the particular project may ultimately cost double. The Government has not received sufficient money to complete the projects and there has been a break down in the work.

The question of land settlement is tied up with Commonwealth finance and I refer particularly to the Loxton Soldier Settlement which is blossoming into a flourishing settlement. It had its teething troubles and difficulties arose because the Minister of Lands was dependent upon the Commonwealth Government for finance. Local officers are instructed to make a survey of an area and they send their recommendations to the Commonwealth Government for approval and to obtain money to purchase the land, but there is a delay of some months before a reply is received. During that time the Minister is plagued with questions from members about what he intends to do with soldiers who have had applications in for as long as two years. The Minister says on the one hand that there is not sufficient land available to meet all applications and on the other hand that he is waiting for word from the Commonwealth Government to purchase land. That disheartens the soldiers. They hope to become settlers and follow the avocation into which they were born—working the land. Because of the long delay they obtain other employment with good conditions and a good rate of pay, and later when asked by the Minister whether they are still prepared to go on to the land they are hesitant.

Now that a truce has been signed in Korea soldiers will be returning in the hope of obtaining the recompense offered by the Repatriation Act for playing their part in the defence of Australia. No doubt another scheme of soldier settlement will be introduced to enable them to become men of the soil, but after the experience of returned men from the last World War I doubt whether the department will be over-burdened with applications. We should bestir ourselves and try to get money from the Commonwealth Government so that we may know what the position is before we make plans. We should know how many applications there are and how much

finance will be necessary to settle them. The Commonwealth should give an assurance that the money will be forthcoming and then there would be no delay.

One matter which concerns the settlers at Loxton is the spraying of orchards. When the question of sprays was first introduced the settlers formed a committee known as the Spray Committee. It went into the question of the proper type of spray for the blocks in the Loxton area. The Government officer in charge at Loxton was keen on what is known as the portable spray. The settlers made inquiries in New South Wales and Victoria and were able to prove to the last engineering detail the quantity of water the pump could pump hourly and how much the sprays could spray per acre, and it was proved that the portable spray was not as efficient as the permanent spray. The men waited on the Minister and asked him to have permanent sprays installed. No conclusion has been arrived at yet. Inquiries were made by the Loxton Soldier Settlers Committee, and the Government Department promised to look into that aspect. Costs are building up against the settlers because they have not the proper materials to install the sprays, and they are becoming disheartened.

Another problem which will be a headache for the Minister and his department is seepage at Loxton. A number of blocks are showing signs of this great nightmare. I approached the Government months ago to have trial bores put in to see whether they would eventually eradicate seepage, as was done at Waikerie. The department made trial holes, but nothing was heard by the settlers, and still the seepage grows. Some of the settlers in the worst patches are losing vines and trees because of salt. This question requires urgent attention. Where this danger of seepage rears its ugly head it should be handled quickly in order to stop its spread, and thus stop the decrease in the settlers' capital investment. I am not blaming the Minister. I know he has taken the matter up with the Commonwealth Minister as to whether it is necessary to install a deep drainage scheme, which would cost a considerable sum, or whether it is better to try bores or small drains. It is months since seepage started to spread, but still nothing conclusive has been arrived at by the Commonwealth or the State, and no plan has been put into force. We were told by the soil experts that the texture of the soil at Loxton was somewhat similar to that at Waikerie and that there would not

be a great deal of seepage danger because the soil would allow the surplus water to escape without creating salt trouble. It is now proved that the experts' report was incorrect. I do not wish to blame the officers, but I remind the House that they do make mistakes.

I deplore that some of our Ministers consider that Government departmental officers never make mistakes, and that it is their job to protect those who make such appalling mistakes. A Minister cannot have his finger on all departmental operations, but must rely on his officers and their technical knowledge. When these men cost the State thousands of pounds by their mistakes the Minister should admit it to the House and not try to hide it. We have evidence at Loxton of the engineer in charge of the soldier settlement scheme having cost the State thousands of pounds by his colossal mistakes by installing small channels instead of a pipeline, with the consequence that settlers' blocks at the lower end of the channel are flooded. In one instance the water went under a settler's house. The excessive water caused seepage in his block and when I took this matter up with the department I was promised that the matter would be attended to. However, to my amazement all that was done was to put another brick on top of the channel. When the water reached the higher level, it simply overflowed again.

The Government has been adopting the excellent policy of trying to open up new areas by making good roads. When an approach was made to the Minister of Works we were told that a certain road had been approved and that the work would go ahead as soon as possible. Often in such instances a start is made on the job, but before long the gang is sent to another part of the State, with the job only partly completed. When the Minister is questioned about these things he says there is a lack of money and that first things must come first. If South Australia is to progress, as the Premier intends that it should, we must have more and better roads in our rural areas to enable the settlers to market their products.

We are living in a motor age with bigger trucks and semi-trailers coming into operation. There has been a tremendous improvement in transport in the last decade. The Government has the problem of keeping the railways going and the Minister the problem of providing roads for these big trucks and semi-trailers. I agree that truck owners should make some contribution towards the upkeep of the roads, but if they do contribute it is only natural that before laying out considerable sums for the purchase of these vehicles they should want to see some security for the future. Having entered the industry it is not long before they run up against the Transport Control Board and I will give an illustration of this. Certain business people in Port Augusta who were anxious to get their supplies from Adelaide made arrangements with a carrier to transport the goods, but his application to the Transport Control Board for a permit was refused. The people concerned, hotelkeepers, promptly decided to buy their own trucks and cart their own supplies and the effect of the stupid policy of the Transport Control Board is that the Railways Department is losing valuable revenue. Renmark, Loxton, Waikerie and Berri hotels have done the same thing and in all probability there are many other instances of traders who have done it. Through the foolish, shortsighted policy of the Transport Control Board the Government is losing thousands of pounds of revenue. It is a policy of despair which can only kill progress and I hope the Government will endeavour to establish a closer knit policy in order to keep the wheels of industry turning. We cannot live without motor transport; if it is here to stay it is the duty of this Parliament to bring itself up to date and lay down a policy that will meet circumstances as they arise. I ask leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.47 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, July 30, at 2 p.m.