

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, August 19, 1953.

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

QUESTIONS.**SANDY CREEK—WILLIAMSTOWN ROAD.**

Mr. JOHN CLARK—During the debate on the Supplementary Estimates I mentioned the bad state of the Sandy Creek-Williamstown main road, No. 162, and expressed the hope that something would be done to improve it. I understand that consideration has been given to this matter, and I ask the Minister of Works what information he can give me about it?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Following on discussions with the district council of Barossa, that body expressed its willingness to undertake, over a period of years, the reconstruction of the Sandy Creek-Williamstown main road No. 162, the full length of approximately six miles of which is within its district. Certain sections of this road will need to be re-aligned and arrangements are in hand to survey the length proposed to be reconstructed this financial year to enable an early commencement of the work by the council.

HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT AND COUNCILS' PLANT.

Mr. DUNKS—From time to time I notice a lot of plant owned by the Highways Department lying idle in the metropolitan area, and I now particularly have in mind the plant on the Port Road where a bridge is being constructed. I presume plant also lies idle in country areas, whilst at the same time councils in the metropolitan area, and I assume also in the country, are expending money on costly items of plant and equipment. It was announced a few days ago that one council borrowed £20,000 to purchase equipment to make £35,000 worth of road. That seems a heavy expenditure to do that amount of work, although, of course, the equipment may be employed on other work afterwards. Is there any way of co-ordinating the employment of very heavy plant owned by the Highways Department by leasing it to councils, or could they be advised that it might be better to hire plant from private enterprise?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—There is much misconception on what might be regarded as the duplication of plant. Obviously, when a

Highways Department gang goes into an area it has to have every type of plant necessary for the job, just as the farmer has to have on his farm implements necessary for the different seasonal requirements. For instance, he must have a harvester, plough, harrowing and cultivating implements, and they are each lying idle for months at a time. When a Highways gang moves to a job it cannot complete it unless it has on hand all the requisites from time to time required. Therefore, it is impossible not to have at any given moment a considerable portion of plant unoccupied. That gives rise to a lot of comment on so-called idle plant. A great amount of money—and I will get the figures and bring them down tomorrow, but they run into hundreds of thousands of pounds—has been made available to country districts for plant. It has been provided out of the highways fund free of interest, and that, too, must remain idle occasionally. Wherever possible, the Highways Department is prepared to hire plant, such as tractors and graders to councils. If councils are short of equipment that they only want momentarily and not as a permanent part of their equipment every consideration will be, and has been given, to their requirements. Speaking generally, there are few contractors that have the type of plant required on the highways or by local government. Following what has been accepted over a period of years, I have approved of loans running into scores of thousands of pounds this year for plant for councils which will not be used at any longer periods during the week than that used today on highways.

WALLAROO HOUSING, AND REFRAC-TORIES LIMITED.

Mr. McALEES—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked recently about rents of Housing Trust homes in Wallaroo? Has he any further information about the operations of S.A. Refractories Ltd. at that town? I might mention here that I was reported as saying that 80 men were dismissed from that industry, but that was not correct. I said 18 men had been dismissed.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member has asked a number of questions about housing at Wallaroo, on which I have two reports from the chairman of the Housing Trust. The first, which deals with the rents, states—

When the South Australian Housing Trust increased the rents of a large number of its houses, the rents of 40 houses at Wallaroo were increased from 26s. to 32s. per week and two

houses from 30s. to 35s. In no case was the increase of rent 7s. per week. The design of the five room houses at Wallaroo is the best used by the trust for its semi-detached rental houses. This design has only been used in country areas. This country house is appreciably better and larger than the five room houses being built in the metropolitan area. However, the metropolitan houses are let for 45s. per week, that is, 10s. per week more than the highest rent at Wallaroo. The trust is now calling for tenders for another small group of houses at Wallaroo and the recent rent increases will be of material importance when the rents of the new houses are to be fixed.

In connection with the appointment of an agent mentioned by the honourable member, the chairman of the trust states:—

When appointing an agent to collect the rents of its houses at Wallaroo, the South Australian Housing Trust, after considering the qualifications of various applicants, appointed an agent who carries on business at Kadina, which is a few miles from Wallaroo. The agent collects rents weekly from the trust's tenants by means of a door to door collection. Consequently, it is considered by the trust that the tenants are not subjected to any inconvenience by reason of the fact that the agent lives at Kadina.

On the other topic mentioned by the honourable member, I have been given to understand that the refractories industry which commenced operations at Wallaroo has found it impossible to carry on, mainly because of disabilities in connection with freights and other costs, caused by its being so far from its markets.

Mr. RICHES—And because of importations.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not think that the question of importations arises. Refractory bricks generally are in much better supply everywhere now, and consequently, I understand, the Wallaroo factory has been unable to carry on and intends to close down, and the company to go into liquidation, although I have not confirmed that information. In the meantime, another firm has applied to the Government intimating that, if the premises become available, it desires to establish an industry in the building.

Mr. McALEES—It was clearly understood by the Government and all concerned that insulators were to be manufactured in the refractory plant at Wallaroo. What has become of the undertaking? Can the Premier say if there is an overflow of insulators from overseas, or has the plant been closed down for some other reason?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Following on previous questions I made some general inquiries on the matter. I am not in the

confidence of the company, so what I say must be taken as being without authority. I understand three firms in Australia are actively engaged in making insulators of the type proposed to be made at Wallaroo, and that the Australian demand today is being successfully met from local production. Two Victorian firms got in ahead of us and they are supplying the market at competitive rates. I believe the Wallaroo company proposes to go into liquidation.

DESICCATED COCONUT.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—Can the Premier say whether the Government has decided what shall be done with stocks of "Tropic Snow" brand desiccated coconut, whether stocks held by storekeepers and manufacturers will be destroyed under police supervision, and, if so, whether holders of stocks so destroyed will be re-imbursed by the Government for their losses, or, alternatively, whether there is any method of treating existing bulk stocks by which the safety of consumers would be assured?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The action recommended by the Food and Drugs Committee has been that the sale of the particular brand of coconut found to be contaminated and a serious health risk, if consumed, should be prohibited. That order is being prepared and will be issued in the near future. In addition, the Government has issued extensive warnings against the eating of coconut, particularly the brand mentioned, which warnings have been heeded throughout the length and breadth of Australia. It is not the intention of the Government to seize the stocks mentioned, nor can it be held responsible for compensating any person in the event of his not being permitted to sell something which is injurious to health.

EMERGENCY HOUSING PROGRAMME.

Mr. RICHES—The Premier has made an announcement regarding the number of applicants for Housing Trust emergency homes, a number of whom cannot be housed in such homes. I understand he has also said that a number of them will be housed in trust homes under the normal building programme being carried out by the trust; but there are many applicants who, for various reasons, are not acceptable to the trust as tenants. I do not criticize the trust at the moment for that attitude, but I ask the Treasurer whether he will obtain from the trust the number of applications received from people whom it is not

prepared to house and call for a report or a recommendation from the trust with regard to possible action to provide homes for those people?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The only persons whom the trust will not take as tenants would be those whom it has every reason to believe would not be good tenants, and such people would not be good tenants in emergency homes. The emergency homes project was started by the Government after consultation with the chairman of the trust, and the Government has remained in close consultation with the trust and has accepted its recommendation in connection with the size of the programme. Only a few days ago the trust re-affirmed its opinion that now that better class houses could more easily be built it would be undesirable to continue or extend the emergency housing programme. The answer to the problem of the unsatisfactory tenant is that that tenant should make himself satisfactory. If he will not pay rent and knocks the property around, obviously, no landlord will desire to accept him, nor could he be expected to. The trust has no animus against any person. It desires people to be housed freely and is doing its utmost to provide homes, but naturally, it reserves the right to accept tenants whom it considers will be satisfactory.

GEORGETOWN-BUNGAREE STATION ROAD.

Mr. HEASLIP—For years the Highways Department has been working on the widening and recoating of the main highway between Georgetown and Bungaree Station. It has already been done once, and a big part of it has been recoated within the past 12 months, but now potholes are appearing in the part which has been done twice. In view of the fact that no heavy transport, apart from that going to the Port Augusta power house and some to Woomera, goes along the highway why is it that the road will not stand up to the traffic?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will get a report from those competent to advise on the matter.

PORT PIRIE-ADELAIDE RAIL SERVICE.

Mr. DAVIS—Has the Minister of Railways a report following on a question I asked on August 4 regarding the condition of carriages on Port Pirie trains?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I think the matter can be epitomized in this way—you

cannot have omelettes without cracking eggs. The carriages in use today were put there so that the better carriages might be taken away to be re-painted and placed in better condition, which is being done at the earliest possible moment. I have a more comprehensive report dealing with the matter which I can let the honourable member see. The fact is that the carriages complained of are in temporary use and were the best available to take the place of those taken off the road to be put in better condition.

MANNUM PIPELINE.

Mr. SHANNON—I understand that the completion of the Mannum pipeline to serve the metropolitan area is expected within a year or two. The Public Works Committee has before it a reference dealing with the sewerage of the town of Gumeracha, which is a comparatively small village. Because of its situation on the banks of the Torrens River it draws its water from that source of supply. Can the Minister of Works say if it is the policy of the Government to have projects dealing with similarly situated towns along waterways which serve metropolitan reservoirs placed before the Public Works Committee? If so, when can it be expected that this will be done because time will elapse before the matter is considered by the committee and very likely the water will be here before the reports of the committee are presented?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The point raised by the honourable member in regard to Gumeracha has not been overlooked. As the question has been raised I will take it up with the Engineer-in-Chief. I am sure the House has great confidence in his judgment. Up to date the only town reported to me is Gumeracha, but I will follow up the matter.

MILLCENT WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. CORCORAN—Can the Minister of Works say whether the report of the Public Works Committee on the proposal to supply water to Millicent has been received and, if so, what are the Government's intentions in regard to the proposal?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The report has not yet been presented. I know the committee is actively engaged on the investigation, and the honourable member knows that by statute the Government is prevented from taking any action until the committee's report is received.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 1).

Second reading.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Before explaining the Bill I will clear up a point raised by the Premier when he spoke in the Address in Reply debate. Among other things he said that he understood one notice of motion dealing with this matter had already been placed on the Notice Paper and hastily withdrawn, and that another was coming on. There is no mystery about that. Whilst Mr. Frank Walsh was very efficiently and effectively leading the Opposition during my absence overseas, at the instance of the Party he gave notice of a Bill to amend the Constitution Act. On my return it was the wish of Mr. Walsh, and the unanimous desire of the Party, that as I had handled the subject in a previous Parliament I should handle it again in this Parliament. Therefore, Mr. Walsh's motion was allowed to lapse and I gave notice of motion for the Bill the second reading of which I am now moving.

The Bill seeks to make such amendments to the Act as will enable the people of South Australia to elect the Government they want and reject the Government they do not want; that is, to render our Parliamentary institutions democratic. I think any unbiased observer who has examined what has taken place since the last amendment of the Constitution dealing with the distribution of voting strength, etc., must be satisfied that, as to the method of election, there is nothing democratic about this institution at present. As I have said previously, it is not the Labor Party's desire to have the Constitution amended in order to benefit it as an Opposition. Its sole desire is to permit the people to speak and speak effectively in their Parliament. The reforms we seek to introduce cannot be achieved merely by amending the Constitution Act. Some of the provisions relating to elections are in that Act and some in the Electoral Act, so it follows that if this Bill is passed a further measure amending the Electoral Act will be introduced to provide for the adoption of other reforms which are necessary and desirable. Among other things, I will have to refer to the question of electing Parliament by proportional representation in order to explain certain features of the Bill. Briefly, the Bill proposes, among other things, the determination of electoral boundaries in the manner prescribed under the Federal Electoral

Act for the determination of divisions for the House of Representatives. In other words, it takes the determination of the divisions for the House of Assembly out of the sphere of politics and places it in the hands of an unbiased tribunal—a tribunal which will give effect to the principles set out in this Bill without fear or favour to any political organization in South Australia.

Mr. Dunks—That was done last time, wasn't it?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—No, not so far as the actual charter of the terms of reference was concerned. The fact that the matter has been raised by the honourable member adds considerable importance to the question. I make no charge against the committee which brought about the redistribution of electorates in 1936, and I made no charge when this matter was previously before the House. It was the Government of the day which made it impossible for the committee to do justice to democracy by instructing it to maintain the ratio of representation, namely, two country seats to one metropolitan seat, and a Government of the same persuasion has maintained that ratio ever since despite the fact that the changing population of the State has, over the years, accentuated the electoral injustice. A gerrymander was inflicted on the people on that occasion. My Bill redistributes the State into nine five-member districts for the House of Assembly and three six-member districts for the Legislative Council, each of the latter to comprise three Assembly districts. The elections under this system for both Houses will be held on the basis of proportional representation. It also provides for the democratic settlement of deadlocks between the two Houses, mainly on the lines appertaining to the Federal Parliament. I have taken these principles from the Federal Constitution. The delineation of Federal boundaries has worked admirably in the 52 years since the establishment of the Commonwealth Parliament. As to deadlocks, the principle of the two Houses meeting together is infinitely better than the provision in our Constitution Act, whereby there can be a dissolution of the House of Assembly, and if a House is returned of the same mind the matter can be submitted again; and if the Legislative Council is still of the same opinion and defeats it, there can be a dissolution of both Houses. As the present method of electing the two Houses is dissimilar, in the result we will be as we were, and this could continue *ad infinitum* and thus afford no solution of the problem.

I also provide in the Bill to delete much of the dead wood which has crept into the Act from time to time. Amendments were made to meet certain circumstances, such as the retirement of members of the Legislative Council. I doubt whether anyone understands what the present provision means, because over a period of years, with changing circumstances and changing numbers, it has been amended without being consolidated and brought up to date. The Bill also provides for the transition period between the passing of this legislation and its full enactment as regards elections. If the Bill is passed two Legislative Council elections will elapse before the whole scheme becomes fully operative. There is another anomaly in the Constitution which I have never been able to understand. It relates to the qualification for membership of the Legislative Council with a minimum age limit of 30 years. I see no reason why, if a person can be elected at the age of 21 years to this House, the Commonwealth Parliament, the House of Commons, and as far as I know all other Parliaments in the British Commonwealth of Nations, we should retain the archaic provision for a minimum age of 30 for the Legislative Council.

Mr. Dunks—Was not that provision in the very first Act when there was only one House?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes. It was one of those restrictive provisions placed in the very first legislation establishing Parliamentary government in South Australia, and like many other restrictions it has been retained either for a purpose or because it has become traditional to keep it there. Therefore, I desire to amend that section of the Constitution to provide that a person may be elected to the Legislative Council if he is over 21. A Bill to amend the Electoral Act, which is a necessary corollary of the passing of this Bill, will provide for adult franchise for the Legislative Council, compulsory enrolment, compulsory voting for both Houses, and for the use of one electoral roll for all Parliamentary elections. I want to again refer more fully to the position that obtained in South Australia before the last amendment of the Constitution, dealing with the redistribution of electoral districts in 1936. I was a member of the House when we had multiple electorates, and there are other members who were members at that time. They will recall that, although we had an unjust system of distributing voting strength, it was infinitely better than the one we have today, for in those days when each district elected two or three members there was an imperfect, but nevertheless rough and

ready, system of proportional representation. For instance, in the electorate I represented on one occasion I had as a worthy colleague the present Minister of Agriculture, but the electorate usually changed its political complexion at each election. Then there was usually a change of Government. It was only necessary for the Opposition to win some of the multiple electorates in the country for it to become the Government. That occasionally happened, but in 1936 the Liberal Party, with a strong majority in both Houses, determined it would try to achieve continuity of office, so it reduced the number of members in the Assembly from 42 to 39 and established single electorates. It was completely successful, from its own point of view, for we have had Liberal and Country League Governments ever since, irrespective of what the people thought or how the Governments mismanaged the State's affairs.

Mr. Dunks—Did the 1938 elections prove that?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I was returned to the Parliament then and although there were a number of alleged Independents elected the Liberal and Country Party that was responsible for the gerrymander of 1936 had no difficulty in retaining office.

Mr. Shannon—Those Independents have gone where they belong.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I remember one famous occasion when the then Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. R. S. Richards—and I am pleased to see him sitting in the gallery this afternoon—moved five no confidence motions in one afternoon on various subjects. Any one of them should have meant the defeat of the Government because many of the so-called Independents who voted for the Government made statements on the hustings indicating they were opposed to the Government's policy on those matters. Mr. Shannon said those Independents have gone where they belong. Quite a number have: they have gone to the Liberal Party.

Mr. Shannon—No, I meant they have gone where we will all go.

Mr. Dunks—Wouldn't the same thing happen under proportional representation?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes, but only with the consent of the people, and that is the vital point. Let us examine the elections in various States since 1936. During the war years the Labor Party was successful in every State except in South Australia. Although it had a

tremendous majority in the Federal Parliament, in this State the Party led by Mr. Richards was unable to unseat the Government. I hope that when considering this Bill members will again read what I had to say on this subject three years ago. In the 1953 elections in New South Wales the A.L.P. won 48 of the seats contested with 852,276 votes, an average of about 17,800 votes for each seat won. Nine Labor members were returned unopposed. The Liberal Party won 19 of the seats it contested with 432,739 votes, an average of about 22,700, and three Liberal members were elected unopposed. The Country Party won 13 seats with 179,671 votes, an average of about 13,800. Labor had an overall majority of 155,684 votes over all other Parties, and secured a majority in Parliament. Those figures show that the election results approximated very closely to the voting strength of the respective Parties in Parliament. In other words, the people of New South Wales were able to speak effectively through their members, and they were able to determine effectively what Government should have charge of affairs. At the Victorian elections held last year the A.L.P. won 27 seats with an aggregate vote of 500,070, an average of about 18,500 votes for each seat won. Ten A.L.P. candidates were elected unopposed. The Country Party won nine seats with an aggregate vote of 85,843, an average of about 9,500 votes. Three Country Party candidates were elected unopposed. The L.C.P. won 11 seats with an aggregate vote of 288,759, an average of about 26,000. Labor won 27 seats out of the total of 52 contested and polled 500,070 votes out of a total of 1,033,736.

Those figures are not so near as New South Wales figures to true democracy, but they show that Labor had a following in Victoria sufficient to give it an overall majority in Parliament, and one of the first acts of the Labor Government was to correct the mild electoral gerrymander which existed in that State. Some members opposite have had much to say regarding the position in Queensland, and, so that they may have all the assistance possible, I will tell them what happened in Queensland at the last State elections, held this year. The Australian Labor Party won 42 seats with a total vote of 323,881—an average of about 7,700 votes for each seat won. Eight Australian Labor Party candidates were elected unopposed. The Country Party won 13 seats with 117,094 votes—an average of about 9,000 votes. Two Country Party candidates were elected unopposed. The Liberal Party won

seven seats with a total vote of 134,006—an average of about 19,100. However, most of the Liberal candidates opposed Labor candidates in the larger quota districts won by Labor, and that explains why the average number of votes for each seat won is higher in the case of Liberal candidates. The real test is that Labor's aggregate vote exceeded that of all other Parties by 39,058. Labor secured a majority of votes and a majority of members in the Queensland Parliament. All this happened in this year of grace 1953.

Mr. Lawn—Disgrace in South Australia.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes, what happened in this State is really a travesty of democracy. One would have thought, considering the trend in all the other elections, that a new trend would have been evident in this State. It was evident, but, because of the unequal distribution of the number of electors, such a trend could not reach fruition and South Australians were denied the Government they wanted. In South Australia at the last election the Australian Labor Party won 10 seats with an aggregate vote of 166,526—an average of about 16,600 votes for each seat won. Four Labor candidates were unopposed, the total enrolment for their districts being 51,485. The Liberal and Country League won 16 seats with an aggregate of 119,003 votes—an average of about 7,400 for each seat won. It took twice as many votes to return a Labor candidate to this House as were required to return one Government member. Labor contested 22 districts, and the Liberal and Country League 22 districts. Labor's aggregate vote exceeded that of the Liberal and Country League by 47,523 in a total of 285,529 cast for both Parties, but Labor is represented in this House by only 14 members and the Liberal and Country League by 21.

Mr. Dunks—And still the country prospers!

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes, in spite of, and not because of, the Government. I gave the member for Mitcham food for thought in my speech in the debate on the Loan Estimates yesterday afternoon, and in a few years' time, when we are required to meet the interest bill on the total of those estimates, we may hear another story from him. The total enrolments for the House of Assembly provide further irrefutable evidence of the fact that our electoral system is completely undemocratic. The total enrolment of the 13 metropolitan districts for this House at the last election was about 279,000. This was 62 per cent of the total Assembly enrolment for the State, but these electors returned only 13 members,

or 33 per cent. Under the present constitutional provisions, if the population of the metropolitan area were to increase to 70 per cent or 80 per cent of that of the State, as it might well do considering the rapid increase in recent years, city people would still be represented by only 13 members, although far fewer country people would still have 26 representatives. The total enrolment of the 26 country districts for the Assembly was about 170,000, which was 38 per cent of the total Assembly enrolment for the State, yet these electors returned 26 members, or about 67 per cent. The city-country representation ratio for Assembly members is 329 to 100.

Mr. Dunks—That will be altered when there is decentralization.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Unless we alter the Constitution as proposed we shall never get decentralization. The present pernicious electoral system and continuous Government has prevented decentralization in the last 20 years. In order to decentralize population and industry the Government must be changed. The figures I have quoted show that at present it is practically impossible to change the Government.

Mr. Dunks—The idea of the Bill is to change the Government?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—No. It is to enable the people to get the Government they want and reject the one they do not want.

Mr. Dunks—I think they did that.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—At the March elections the electors did their very best, but unfortunately under the rules of the game as played they had no opportunity. This city-country representation ratio is extraordinary. It takes 329 metropolitan voters to equal the electoral strength of 100 country voters, yet we talk about democracy. Australia sends delegates to conferences overseas to talk about imposing democracy on other people. Our soldiers have been fighting in Korea and giving their lives to establishing democracy in that country, yet in South Australia we have not the foggiest semblance of democracy. For the Assembly the average metropolitan enrolment is 21,400 and the average country enrolment 6,540. The metropolitan enrolment is about $3\frac{1}{4}$ times that of the country. The lowest country enrolment is 3,645, about 44 per cent lower than the country average. The highest country enrolment is 10,810, about 65 per cent above the country average. The lowest metropolitan enrolment is 12,111, about 43 per cent below the metropolitan average. The

highest metropolitan enrolment is 30,230, about 40 per cent above the metropolitan average. Mr. Stephens represents 30,000 electors, whereas many members opposite represent only 4,000 or 5,000. The highest metropolitan enrolment is about $8\frac{1}{4}$ times the lowest country enrolment. Thirteen of the country enrolments are more than 20 per cent above or below the country average. Four metropolitan enrolments are more than 20 per cent above or below the metropolitan average, three others being very close to the lower limit.

One would have thought that the franchise for the Legislative Council would be a sufficient line of defence for the Tories, but in addition to the property qualification electorates were arranged in favour of the Government. The total enrolment of the two metropolitan Council districts is 105,000, or 62 per cent of the total enrolment for the State. The electors in these two districts return eight members, or 40 per cent of the total number of members of the Council. The total enrolment of the three country Council districts is 64,000, or 38 per cent of the total enrolment for the State. The electors in these three districts return 12 members, or 60 per cent of the total number of members of the Council. The ratio of representation for the Council is 247 to 100. One city member represents 247 electors for every 100 represented by a country member. These figures bear a close relationship to the disproportionate representation I have described for the Assembly. The voice of the people in South Australia, which should be articulate in a proper democracy, is not heard because of the bastions through which the voice of the people cannot penetrate. There is maldistribution of voting strength in the Assembly and the Council, and the property qualification franchise for the Council, yet we talk about democracy and criticise people who have other forms of government. There is another sort of comparison which is unique. It comes from a State where a previous Liberal-Country Government re-arranged the electoral boundaries in order to perpetuate itself in office, but it was not as competent in preserving its continuity as the Liberal and Country League Government in South Australia. At the Western Australian elections the A.L.P. won 14 of the seats contested with an aggregate vote of 94,021, an average of about 6,700 votes per seat won. Twelve A.L.P. candidates were elected unopposed. The L.C.L. won 21 seats with an aggregate of 74,630, an average of about 3,500 votes per seat won. In Western Australia, as here, it took twice as many votes

to elect a Labor member to the Assembly as it did a Liberal member. Three L.C.L. candidates were elected unopposed. The Country Party won two seats with an aggregate vote of 5,991, an average of about 3,000 votes per seat won. Labor polled 94,021 votes as against 94,541 votes cast for all other candidates.

This type of electoral system results in the election of an extraordinarily large number of unopposed candidates. It does not give the electors the opportunity to change their representation. In the Western Australian elections 12 Labor men were returned unopposed, which showed that the Government fixed the boundaries to create some safe pockets for the Labor Party, and at the same time make safe pockets for itself, with fewer electors in them. Of the 50 seats in the Western Australian Assembly elections 22 were not contested. This shows conclusively that the system leads to a complete stultification of the people's rights to democratically voice their opinion.

The last Senate elections in South Australia were a more abstract affair than the State elections. It was not a campaign hotly contested individually, and the electors had a better opportunity to express themselves on purely political principles than on the personal worth of the candidates. Labor candidates polled 219,628 primary votes, and three were elected. L.C.L. candidates polled 189,105 primary votes, and two were elected. Labor polled about 30,500 primary votes more than the L.C.L., and about 23,000 more than all other candidates. The electors gave a majority of about 30,000 in support of the principles of Labor, yet at the State elections they could not return a Labor Government. They will not get the principles they want until there is an equitable distribution of voting strength, and the voice of the people is clearly expressed and heard by the adoption of a system of proportional representation.

I have to refer to the system because it is a concomitant of the Bill. Without proportional representation the measure ceases to have any effective meaning. To honourable members who are inclined to oppose my proposal because it introduces proportional representation I commend a very excellent work by G. H. Hallett entitled *Proportional Representation*. He writes—

A Swiss author named Ernest Naville has said "In a democratic Government the right of decision belongs to the majority, but the right of representation belongs to all."

Undoubtedly, the right of decision belongs to the majority, but all are entitled to represen-

tation in the assembly which arrives at a decision. Later in the book is included the following:—

Obviously, the fair representation of minorities cannot be secured by any process of majority election. What is needed is not a system of dividing the voters into winners and losers but a system of condensing them in the right proportion to their chosen leaders. . . . Nearly half the votes may be lost in a single electorate contest between two candidates on a majority basis.

That was proved conclusively at the recent State election in South Australia where in three large metropolitan electorates very narrow margins separated the winning and losing candidates. Hallett also wrote:—

The exclusion of large minorities always means the possibility of minority rule. Sometimes distortions of representation under the district plurality plan make this very apparent. The minority votes in each district will be wasted anyway (under a single electorate system) and the Party in control at the time a re-appointment is made usually contrives to draw the district lines so that most of these wasted votes belong to its opponents. This practice is known as "gerrymandering," from a re-districting under Governor Elbridge Gerry, of Massachusetts, in 1812, which gave Governor Gerry's Party 29 Senatorial seats to 11 for an opposing party with more votes and which produced one district resembling a salamander. Such curious effects can be found on most maps of legislative districts, bearing mute witness to the political motives of those who drew them.

I understand that a salamander is of the lizard family and capable of withstanding great heat. As regards electoral reform, the Party which sits on the Government benches is running true to salamander form and is capable of standing great heat in the form of pressure to bring about electoral reform. The electoral map of South Australia shows some very peculiar lines of demarcation not totally unlike the famous example of Governor Gerry in the U.S.A. in the early part of last century. On page 54 of his book Hallett writes:—

It is, after all, much better to get the right results in a week than to get the wrong one in a day and suffer under it for years.

That is a very important aspect of this question. Some opponents of proportional representation claim that its counting system is too complicated, but is it not better to get the right result by taking a little longer than to get the wrong result in a shorter time? Mr. Hallett further wrote:—

The comparative complexity of the Hare system count is a matter of trifling concern to the intelligent voter. He does not have to count the ballots any more than he has to

make his own watch or repair his own car. The watch is more complicated than the sundial and the car than the stage coach, but they give better results.

So a political institution elected under proportional representation would give better results than one elected under any other system. Later Hallett says:—

One of the incidental benefits of proportional representation is its effect on the fine art of gerrymandering. The purpose of a gerrymander is to draw district lines so that most of one party's votes will count and most of the others will not. This cannot be done when nearly all votes count in a district.

I now come to a few of the arguments used against the introduction of proportional representation. Perhaps first I should deal with the land of my forefathers, namely, the little isle of Ireland where they had some genuine "do's" at election campaigns in the old days, when many brickbats were hurled, resulting in numerous broken heads, and all that went with a really rousing electoral campaign.

Mr. Shannon—The candidate who lived to be elected was lucky.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Quite so. Hallett also had the following to say:—

The moderating influence of proportional representation on election campaigns has been shown best where it was probably most needed—in Ireland. All the important elections in the Irish Free State have been conducted by proportional representation since the Free State was first established, and most of them have been models of good order.

Back in 1923 *Punch* put it this way—

"Ye'd wonder what's wrong wid the nation!

The way the elections was done

Was proportional reprisintation—

And in consiquince iverywan won."

Hallett continues:—

Proportional representation was used for the election of the provisional Parliament which passed the Free State treaty and was included in the Free State Constitution at the request of the Irish leaders on both sides of the treaty controversy. This was the more remarkable since proportional representation was introduced in Ireland by Act of the British Parliament—first for the city of Sligo in 1918 and then for all local and county councils in 1919 and finally for the Parliaments of Northern and Southern Ireland in 1920. The Unionists of Northern Ireland subsequently abolished proportional representation because they did not like the representation it gave to Labor and independent Unionists.

So we see that conservative thought in Northern Ireland runs on parallel lines to that of conservative thought in South Australia. I agree that some criticism can be levelled not at the principle, on which this system applied in

Ireland, but at the way it was applied, because they have not the method of electing continuing candidates of the Party that applies in Tasmania and that I propose in this Bill.

When I was in Ireland a few months ago I found that the Government lost three by-elections in a row because when a by-election becomes necessary there owing to a vacancy the whole constituency votes on a "first past the post" principle. Three Government supporters who had been elected with a quota at the previous general election unfortunately died, but the Government had no hope of securing 50 per cent or more of the votes when it had secured only the quota at the general election, and the result was opponents of the Government were elected to those three seats and the Government was in danger. That is the only weakness in the Irish system, but is one which could not occur under my proposals. Other countries where proportional representation has been tried and alleged to have failed are Italy and France. The system in France is not proportional representation as those who believe in the principle understand it. It is the "List System" where an elector does not vote for the candidates, but votes for Party lists, and the Party leaders determine the representation in the House. That is bad enough, but the French constitution also provides that even if a Government is defeated Parliament cannot be dissolved. That has been the difficulty concerning Government after Government in that country during recent years and particularly in recent months. A Government is elected and tries to give effect to financial and economic measures which are necessary in order to bring about the country's recovery. Some of those measures are unpopular and the weight of feeling in the constituencies is felt in the Chamber of Deputies and the Government is defeated and another formed which meets the same fate; but the Parliament which brought about its defeat can go on merrily on its way defeating Government after Government for a term of six years before it can be dissolved by the President through the effluxion of time. I understand that provision was placed in the French constitution to prevent anything in the nature of a Parliamentary coup and prevent a strong group from seizing control of the Parliamentary machine and establishing a dictatorial form of government such as Hitler established in Germany. The very thing it was designed to prevent, namely, the establishment of a dictatorship, will probably be the result of that weakness in the

French constitution, and probably one of these days a strong leader, either of the Right or of the Left, will seize power and govern despite the constitution. All this, however, is not an argument against the principles of proportional representation, but a warning against the mis-application of the principle.

I now come to Italy where proportional representation is supposed to have failed because of the unstable condition of politics in that country at the moment. I could say a great deal about Italian politics because I was in the country at the height of the election campaign. They take their elections very seriously, but the point is that in Italy they have the list system for the lower house, as they do in France. The Senate is elected on the basis of individual candidature, but it is the list system that is the weakness in Italy. The de Gasperi Government, in a fit of jitters prior to the election, established a form of gerrymander of its own and amended the Constitution to provide that a Party or group of Parties that had formed a coalition for election purposes and polled 51 per cent or more of the votes should get 70 per cent of the representation. The effect of that attempt to thwart the people's will was so widespread that a large number of electors who would normally have voted for the de Gasperi block voted for other candidates as the only means they had of voicing their protest. Those remarks effectively dispose of criticism that may be levelled against my proposals on the ground that proportional representation has failed in Italy and France. Hallett's book also says:—

Democracy is on trial today as never before. In some of the world's leading countries it is held in derision.

There is no doubt about that. We do not strengthen democracy here, or anywhere else in the world, by permitting the system that exists in South Australia to continue. For that reason, if for no other, we should pass the Bill. The words of J. S. Mill are as fitting today as they were when he wrote them in his autobiography in 1875:—

To these great evils nothing more than very imperfect palliatives had seemed possible; but Mr. Hare's system affords a radical cure. This great discovery—for it is no less—in the political art inspired me, as I believe it has inspired all thoughtful persons who have adopted it, with new and more sanguine hopes respecting the prospects of human society.

John Stuart Mill had in mind the rotten boroughs of England and the consequences they produced. Great evils, he called them, and he said the electoral system sponsored by Mr.

Hare offered a hope for the future. It offers a chance in this State for the people to speak effectively in their Parliament. This Bill is almost identical with the Bill introduced in 1950 and the basic arguments submitted in support of it, recorded in *Hansard*, pp. 578 *et seq.*, need little amplification, but members are recommended to study these arguments carefully. The fundamental principle is that the majority of the people shall determine the nature of the Government; and the means of achieving this democratic ideal is to ensure that, as nearly as possible, all votes shall have the same value. This, in turn, can only be achieved by the adoption of the Federal system of determining electoral districts and by the adoption of proportional representation in Parliamentary elections.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD secured the adjournment of the debate.

LOAN ESTIMATES.

Grand total, £27,618,000.

In Committee.

(Continued from August 18. Page 392.)

MR. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I might not have risen to speak on the first line had it not been for some remarks made yesterday by the member for Light. He said, "In my experience members opposite have criticized, but seldom brought forward any constructive suggestions." He has been a member for 11 years, and I have perused *Hansard* covering that period and found the Opposition has been very active and that the Government on numerous occasions was prepared to accept its suggestions. Therefore, Mr. Michael's statements was without justification. If I spoke for five minutes on constructive suggestions put forward by him it would be four and three-quarter minutes too long. His statement was made, I believe, for the purpose of belittling the Parliamentary institution and to suggest that the Opposition had failed miserably in its duty. Members opposite supporting the Government should be the last to cast any reflections upon members on this side of the House. The failure of this institution would only breed Communism. During the last few days we have spent most of our time considering the Loan Estimates, but what interest has been displayed by members behind the Government? What concern do they show about the increasing public debt? Mr. Michael should apologize for his statement. When considering the Loan Estimates yesterday we had

only one Minister in the House, but he had such little concern that he fell asleep. That is enough to incite the Opposition to protest against the manner in which the Government is bringing the Parliamentary institution into disgrace, and it encourages the people to rebel and accept the principles of Communism.

In a constructive speech the Leader of the Opposition showed that the public debt has increased in the last 10 years by £88,000,000 to £198,000,000. He raised an important point when he said that this House should be given details of Loan expenditure, for all loans have to be repaid and interest commitments met. The Opposition is anxious that Loan money be wisely spent, otherwise it will not approve it. What will the expenditure return, and how will it aid development? That information should be given to the House. I agree that increased food production is necessary. The Treasurer said it was the Government's desire to extend utilities and amenities to the country, but the Leader of the Opposition said they were the words he used in his policy speech. I was present when he made that speech and I remember that he used those words. The Leader of the Opposition and his Party, have so frequently offered constructive suggestions that the Leader of the Government has adopted not only his policy, but his words.

Mr. John Clark—He could not take a better model.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I agree. Mr. O'Halloran pointed out that much of the expenditure provided for in these Estimates would assist large landholders. Mr. Hawker told of what could be achieved by the use of large scale equipment and Mr. Quirke gave members the benefit of his knowledge of scientific farming principles proving Mr. Hawker's theory most damaging.

The sum of £165,000 is provided for expenditure under the Crown Lands Development Act. I agree with Mr. Michael that a great job has been done in closer settlement along the Murray. The areas now being established around Loxton and Renmark will more than repay the money spent there. I have seen no finer irrigation projects in Australia and trust that more money will be spent in developing these areas. Mr. Michael said that, if South Australia did not use more water from the Murray, it would suffer because Victoria and New South Wales would try to reduce its quota. On August 9 Mr. Dridan the Engineer-in-Chief, said, "South Australia is using less than one-third of the 600,000 acre feet of water to which it is entitled." To

suggest that Labor Governments in other States, elected under a democratic system, have no humane feelings or national outlook, and are parochial thieves, is wrong, for those Governments agreed to the proposal made by a Federal Labor Government and opposed by the then Federal Liberal Opposition with regard to the construction of the Snowy River scheme, to which the Minister of Agriculture referred yesterday in rebuking the member for Light. That scheme is being rapidly proceeded with and is expected to be producing at least 2,000,000 acre feet of water for irrigation purposes by 1960; therefore, to say that other State Governments will try to reduce South Australia's quota of River Murray water is wrong. Indeed, the Adaminaby dam is capable of storing 3½ million acre feet of water. Members should be given details as to how the amounts appearing in the Loan Estimates are to be spent. I support the expenditure of money on irrigation projects, for the reticulation of water is a most important aspect of development which could assist in making this country prosperous, and such expenditure could prove a valuable investment. Members have often been told—and I believe the statements—that city people depend on the productive capacity of country areas, but today industrial areas have developed to such an extent that country areas are at least partly dependent on city industrial areas. It is sometimes said that so much is to be spent in the city and so much in the country, but, because of the unjust electoral system, the metropolitan area will suffer with regard to some of the items contained in the Loan Estimates. For instance, the Adelaide water district is to be granted £2,469,900 of the £5,175,000 to be spent on waterworks and sewers, which means that far more will be spent in the country than in the metropolitan area. How will this money be spent? Members have not been given details, and they are asked to approve of the expenditure of almost 2½ million pounds on unnamed projects within the metropolitan area.

The sum of £2,605,000 has been provided under the heading of "Architect-in-Chief," under which there is a line for school buildings.

The 1949-50 Loan Estimates contained the amount of £14,000 to be spent on the Norwood and Croydon boys' technical schools, but subsequent Loan Estimates have not mentioned the latter school. The Minister of Works has told us that his hands are tied and that he must await a report by the Public Works Committee before certain work can be proceeded with, but the Committee has reported

on the construction of a boys' technical school at Croydon. The report stated:—

The reasons advanced by Mr. McDonald for the proposed construction of new buildings are set out below. He stressed two angles—the growth of the school population generally creating a need for more accommodation, and the peculiar circumstances at Croydon. In the north-western suburbs of Adelaide there is a large number of primary schools which feed certain secondary schools. The number includes Woodville, Challa Gardens, Ridley Grove, Hindmarsh, Allenby Gardens, Croydon, Kilkenny, Seaton Park, and Brompton. At these primary schools there were in 1951, 335 boys in Grade VII. and 644 boys in Grade II., so the figures for Grade VII. will practically double in the next six years and the number of boys passing out of that grade will rise each year. The four secondary schools to one or another of which most of them will go have recently been expanding rapidly. Information available in October respecting enrolments was as follows:—Adelaide Boys High, over 900; Woodville High, over 900, and 1,020 scholars anticipated in 1953; Thebarton Technical, over 500, and school full; Croydon Boys Technical, 217, with an expected attendance next year of 295. No other secondary school draws many boys from the area except, perhaps, Nailsworth Boys Technical, which may take some who live on the northern margin, as may the Enfield High School when it is built.

The committee said that the school was necessary and recommended its construction at an estimated cost of £66,626, in accordance with plans prepared by the Architect-in-Chief's Department. The Croydon girls' technical school is in desperate need of accommodation, and the Croydon primary school grounds, on which there is now a solid building known as the Croydon girls' technical school and other temporary buildings, have been gradually smothered, leaving insufficient room for the children to enjoy necessary physical exercises. Indeed, it has been found necessary to stagger the scholars' recess and lunch hours, so that they may move around without knocking down smaller scholars. Despite this disgraceful state of affairs there is no line on the Loan Estimates for any of these schools. I have not given up hope, for I know how these things are juggled by the Government without giving detailed information to members. I enter a vigorous protest at the lack of details in the Loan Estimates. I hope the Government will spend some of the money provided in these Estimates for other more urgent purposes. The sum of £4,500,000 is to be made available pursuant to the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement. The Premier said very joyfully—and to my complete satisfaction—that the Housing Trust had built 4,120 houses during 1952-53. In the Address in Reply debate I said that the year mentioned was the first in

post-war years when the number of houses built exceeded the number of marriages. It is gratifying to know that the building of houses has been stepped up so much, and the Premier has said that next year 4,500 more will be built. It is the policy of the trust to buy land at about £60 an acre in places far from the metropolitan industries and commercial areas, but this necessitates the provision of transport, and water, sewerage and other facilities, which causes a drain on State revenue. Part IV. of the Housing Improvement Act of 1940 can be summarized as follows:—

- (1) Where in any area there are houses unfit for human habitation or the area is unhealthy or there is an excessive number of buildings within the area, etc., the trust may recommend to the Governor that the area be declared a clearance area.
- (2) Before making such recommendation the trust shall be satisfied that suitable alternative accommodation for the inhabitants is provided.
- (3) The trust to consult with councils before submitting recommendations.
- (4) Serve on every owner notice of recommendation.
- (5) Consider objections made by (3) or (4).
- (6) Upon a clearance area being proclaimed, the trust may proceed to—
 - (a) order the demolition of any houses in the area.
 - (b) acquire the land and demolish.
- (7) The trust may completely replan the whole area and may rebuild either themselves, provide housing for persons of limited means, or assist any housing corporation or may sell the land as the trust thinks fit.
- (8) Before the trust deals with any clearance area it shall consult with every council of the municipality with which the clearance area is situated.

The present practice of local boards in condemning houses as unfit for human habitation only when such houses are vacant or in an extremely bad state of repair is probably the only course left open to them in view of the housing position, but this spasmodic action will not in any way overcome the position. These houses unfit for human habitation may be badly vermin-infested or incapable of keeping out the weather. Prior to the setting up of the Housing Trust the Government appointed the Building Act Inquiry Committee to go into the matter, and it presented its second progress report on September 12, 1940. Its classification of houses was as follows:—

A class—Houses structurally sound, in good order or needing repairs or renovations, and provided with reasonable amenities and fit for habitation.

B class—Houses undesirable to be used for habitation by reason of structural condition, bad state of repair, or lack of amenities.

C class—Houses unfit for habitation and demolition necessary.

D class—Houses of the very worst type.

The report contained the following statistics regarding the municipalities of Adelaide, Hindmarsh and Port Adelaide:—

Total number of houses in the area: 18,706.

Number classified B, C or D class: 5,404, or 29 per cent of total.

Number classified as B class: 3,600, or 19 per cent of total.

Number classified as C class: 1,711, or 9 per cent of total.

Number classified as D class: 93, or .5 per cent of total.

The trust has been in operation now for many years and has been operating as I have set out, creating a burden not only on the State, but on the occupants of the houses. If the trust were to demolish the many sub-standard homes, and build in their places satisfactory homes at economic rents, and giving the homes to applicants close to their place of work, there would be a more satisfactory standard of living. I urge the Government to take steps to bring before the trust the matter of demolishing the sub-standard houses for the purposes mentioned. It is proposed to spend about £3,000,000 on our railways. I join with other members in referring to the untimely death of Mr. Chapman. I knew him personally, and came into contact with him at the University Council. He was an excellent Railways Commissioner, and his work will be long remembered. I regret that he was not spared to carry on his work. Earlier it was said that the Henley Beach railway line would be electrified soon, but the proposal seems to have died a natural death after it achieved the purpose of gaining some popularity for the Government at election time. The Government had to fly kites because it was not sure of success even with its pernicious gerrymandering of electorates.

Mr. Jennings—The proposal was written up as if it had already been completed.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Yes, and as though it was ready for the Minister to press the button, but we still have to use antiquated trains when going to Henley Beach. The necessary land for the electrification has been purchased. Mr. M. Smith, the town clerk of Woodville, and I were told that the Tramways Trust could not provide a service for about 300 residents in the area between Findon Road and Henley Beach because it would be uneconomical to do so. If the line had been electrified these people would

have been assisted. I am the last to advocate one form of transport competing against another, particularly when they are Government or semi-Government services. I urge the Government to seriously consider the matter and make money available to commence the work as soon as possible. If that were done my constituents would be most grateful. The Government should see that all matters brought forward in this debate are carefully considered. It should also see that more than one-seventh of its supporters are present in the House when they are discussed. It should give more details of the proposed expenditure and the possible results instead of asking Parliament to vote blindly, but that is only what can be expected when we have a most vicious dictatorship running the State.

Mr. FRED WALSH (Thebarton)—The Leader of the Opposition has referred to the expenditure of money on primary schools. More information on that matter should have been given to members. We on this side have the same grievance in regard to the presentation of the Loan Estimates as we had with the Supplementary Estimates on the opening day of the session. Sooner or later Parliament will have to realize that this matter is serious. It is not right that estimates of expenditure should be presented without reasonable details. An amount is provided in the Estimates for the Lockleys school and I have to assume that it is for extra shelter accommodation as practically none is provided now and the children are exposed to strong westerly and south-westerly winds and sometimes have to be kept in the school rooms during recess periods. I notice that provision is made for additions at the Thebarton Technical School and I presume it includes a new fence, about which I have been complaining for some time. When I asked a question of the Minister of Works the other day he expressed regret that this work had not yet been completed. I called attention to the bad condition of the fence last November and mentioned that vandals were trespassing on the school property and writing obscene words on lavatory walls. A number of brass taps had also been removed. The front of the school is protected to the extent that it is under the observation of nearby residents. The provision of the fence was not proceeded with as was indicated by the Minister last November. I have been advised that there have been instances of vandalism in the last few weeks, tools have been removed and the main part of the school entered. I am now told that

tenders were called prior to my asking the question. Members should be advised of departmental intentions in respect of schools in their districts so that they will know what is going on. All members take an interest in their district schools. The Minister of Education should be in the House of Assembly because this is a very vital department and members should be able to get the information they desire direct from him. It is regrettable that other school items in my district are not on the Estimates, and I hope that in the not far distant future provision will be made for the construction of a primary school in the Lockleys area. When Mr. Justice Abbott was Minister of Education he advised me that land had been procured at Rowell Road, Lockleys for a primary school and that it was the Government's intention to use the existing school as an infant school.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to increased school enrolments. That applies to most schools in the metropolitan area and to some country districts. Since I have been a member of the House enrolments at the Lockleys school have doubled. It is true that portable rooms have been erected, and I doubt whether there is one school in the metropolitan area where these rooms are not in use. The department is making too much use of this type of accommodation instead of providing permanent structures. At the Thebarton school there is no space for portable rooms and some of the children are accommodated in two portable rooms half a mile along Taylor Road. That is not in the best interests of efficient administration.

Mr. O'Halloran has complained of the lack of information supplied to the House concerning expenditures on uranium mining. I contend that members are not being told all they should be told concerning the activities of the Department of Mines, the Housing Trust and the Electricity Trust. The Premier asks us to approve Estimates for certain departments, but we are not given sufficient information. I particularly refer to the developments at Radium Hill. I am one who is not wholeheartedly enthusiastic about this project. When it was first mooted and taken over by the Government we were given to understand that it was one of the principal uranium deposits of the world, but there have been large deposits found at Rum Jungle and other parts of the Northern Territory. Apart from the most recent finds Radium Hill is by no means as valuable as we at first thought. Big deposits have been found in Canada, United States of

America and South Africa. We know nothing of the deposits discovered in Iron Curtain countries. At Auxe, in Saxony, Germany, many thousands of men are employed in and around the uranium field. I am of opinion that time might prove that much of the money expended at Radium Hill has not been worth while. It does not appear to have the advantages we at first thought, and other fields may be necessary to supply the ore for treatment at the Port Pirie works established as the result of much expenditure. It would appear that we will not be able to get sufficient uranium from Radium Hill. Much has been said about the justification of the expenditure for this work. I was under the impression that this project would cost South Australia very little because of the arrangement with the Anglo-American Atomic Commission whereby we would virtually get sufficient money to finance the development of the uranium field at Radium Hill from the sale of uranium to America and presumably to England. These returns were to be used in part payment of the amount advanced, the repayment to be spread over a period of seven years. That is the talk one hears from fairly authoritative sources, but we have not been given any definite information in this Parliament of the agreement.

If the Government wants to obtain the confidence of members it must in turn give them the information they expect, otherwise they cannot but criticize and perhaps condemn, sometimes unjustly. I would be one of the last to do this if I thought the expenditure of certain moneys was warranted and was shown to me to be justified. The Government must take members into their confidence. I do not want to criticize at this stage, but applaud the Government's action in working these deposits rather than that private enterprise should do it. I know many members opposite would prefer these deposits to be worked and developed under private enterprise, but such matters should be entirely under the control and direction of the Government. It has been the practice of the Government to start off on such ventures which the Leader of the Opposition was pleased to call "socialistic enterprises." I hardly think that is a correct term. I refer to them as "nationalized undertakings." Immediately the Government starts to run these projects as they should be run it sets up a board, trust or some other controlling authority and then divorces that body from the authority of Parliament. That is my objection. At all times they should be under the direction of a

Minister. For instance, the Housing Trust was established by statute and given certain authority. I question whether Parliament has any control over it, other than by amending the Act. The Electricity Trust is another body that was established and given certain statutory powers. We have little control over it, except through assisting to finance it, but now it appears to have authority to raise loans itself, though the Government is responsible as guarantor. For those reasons members should be in a position to question and criticize whenever they think fit, in order that they may keep those undertakings in proper check.

As a young man I worked in the Broken Hill mines and have some knowledge of mining; but I was not deeply impressed with what I saw at Radium Hill about 18 months ago on a Parliamentary visit. One has to make due allowance for developments since I was a miner, but it surprised me to see the narrow width of the lode. It did not seem to me over-rich in its bearing and I was not greatly impressed with the working. Of course, the department may have certain advice that it feels justified in acting upon but which would not be known to the ordinary person visiting the mine and viewing it from the surface. The Premier has been proclaimed by members of his Party, both in this House and in another place, as the atomic apple grower, though I do not know whether that means he grows them outside or is able to grow them overnight. You, Mr. Chairman, called him "Atomic Tom." I do not know which title suits him better, but not long ago he was referred to by some of his supporters as a superman. Perhaps he would prefer to be given the same title as his grandfather, "Honest Tom," but he has to justify himself first, as his grandfather did. While speaking of titles, I think we could call the Minister of Mines "Little Sir Echo," because he goes around the country echoing whatever the Premier says about his department. The Director of Mines, Mr. Dickinson, addressed a meeting at Mildura on July 11 on uranium mining and atomic energy. He suggested that South Australia would have a commercial atomic power reactor operating within five years. He also said:—

The recent fixation of a guaranteed price for the purchase of uranium ore over a period of years would encourage private enterprise to play an active role in mining the large quantities of uranium needed. The price and Australian selling conditions were comparable to those in the United States, where many private concerns were operating quite profitably. However, uncertainty of ownership

could be making prospectors hesitant about pegging claims and starting mines. There was doubt over mining rights. It seems very important that the policy position should be made clear to allow the public to work deposits freely. With the active participation of the mining industry Australian uranium production would increase rapidly within the next 10 years.

I agree with those views, but my mind goes back to last session when we carried the Bill dealing with security measures. Many of us questioned the possibility of abuse following on that legislation. We were given assurances by the Government that our fears were unfounded and therefore there was not the same need to oppose the measure as some of us, particularly the Leader of the Opposition, contemplated. Even the *Advertiser* of August 15, 1952, in referring to that legislation, said:—

The Bill is designed to lower Iron Curtain security around the rich Radium Hill deposits in which the United States in recent months has taken an active interest. Some important conservative Adelaide citizens today wonder whether Mr. Playford is asking for stringent security which the United States is unable to ask newspapers or citizens to observe about American uranium mining in such places as Colorado.

I am not sure whether members opposite expressed the same fears as the Opposition; though, I think two or three did, but the statements of the Director of Mines of the need to take people into the Government's confidence and give necessary information with respect to uranium mining is not in keeping with what has happened in recent months at Radium Hill. The fears we expressed last year have been justified to some extent because when I was in Broken Hill in January I was approached by the mayor and told that two men, one of whom has been personally known to me for many years, had applied to visit Radium Hill because they were interested in uranium mining. The application was forwarded some two or three months previously, but no acknowledgment had been made by the department. I promised to make inquiries and was informed that the department regretted that an acknowledgment had not been forwarded, but that they would give the matter attention. I received a copy of a letter addressed to Mr. Frank Walsh, M.P., that had been forwarded to Mr. G. Polkinghorne, the person who made the application. He was the secretary of the Barrier Industrial Council in Broken Hill, and the other applicant was a Mr. O'Neill, a mines inspector in Broken Hill.

The Director of Mines forwarded to them the following letter:—

Because the uranium reserve at Radium Hill has certain security aspects, it is our practice to restrict visitors to those whose presence is essential to the conduct of our project. In this it is realized that a number of people are disappointed, but it is felt that the requirements of security make this course desirable. In declining your application for a permit I would like to add that it has been necessary to make a similar reply to others who, like yourself and Mr. O'Neill, were interested in this new mining industry.

I advised the mayor of Broken Hill, Mr. Riddiford, to that effect, and later he wrote to me:—

I would now like to advise that the Mr. Polkinghorne that I spoke to you about is the same person who is interested in the uranium deposit found in the Broken Hill district. Further, I have pleasure in stating that Mr. G. Polkinghorne is well known to me and is held in high esteem by the citizens of this city and district, where he has resided all his life except when he was at World War I, in which he served with distinction and was awarded a Military Medal. His son, who is also interested in the uranium discovery, served in World War II. and was the winner of a Distinguished Flying Cross.

Previously I had asked Mr. Riddiford whether this Mr. Polkinghorne was the same person that had been given assistance by the New South Wales Government to take up uranium mining in the Broken Hill district. At least reasonable inquiries should be made into the *bona fides* of applicants who are interested, not so much in having a look at Radium Hill on the surface, but for the purpose of gaining knowledge that would assist them in mining uranium deposits, particularly those in which they were interested and had discovered. We have not been given the information we have required of Ministers, and until the Government is prepared to take Parliament into its confidence it must be subject to criticism. I believe that as a result of the Korean armistice there will be a slackening in the development of uranium mining, particularly if there is no further aggression in South-East Asia. The main object in the last few years has been to develop uranium production for the purpose of constructing atomic missiles. Therefore, having regard to the need for expenditure in other directions, I question whether we are wise in spending the amount of money provided for uranium production.

Much has been made of the claim that the Government is able to give effect to its plans for public works, but if, after the Public Works Committee has reported on projects, the

Government takes no action, where is the value in those recommendations? The Leader of the Opposition said no attempt had been made to install sewerage and water reticulation schemes in certain country towns and districts, and, until the Government wakes up and spends money in that direction, those country areas will be waiting for necessary schemes. Regardless of expense, the Electricity Trust is erecting huge transformers and other plant in almost every country district. In the Glenelg and Thebarton districts it is erecting expensive plant, which may be justified, but we should be told of the actual position, so that our time could be far better spent in putting concrete questions, getting concrete replies and debating subjects on their merits rather than in indulging in debates on abstract subjects, as we have done in the past and are doing today. I believe that members would make better speeches if they did not vie with one another with regard to their length. I am concerned about the way the Premier replied to my recent question regarding the administration of a Government board. He gave me the "brush off," and I will take the opportunity later of referring to this matter. I appeal to Ministers, both here and in another place, to give the fullest information possible and not an evasive reply to members' questions.

Mr. CHRISTIAN (Eyre)—I assure the member for Thebarton that I will not vie with any other member today in making a long speech. I hope to be brief, but I feel obliged to say one or two things on and examine one or two items involved in this rather staggering total of over £33,000,000. My mind goes back to a few years ago, when I first came into this place and the modest Loan Estimates totalled between £2,000,000 and £5,000,000 each year, and our total public debt stood at the moderate figure of £91,000,000. Members used to console themselves with the thought that that amount was well taken care of by the Financial Agreement, under the provisions of which the whole of the public debt would in due course be liquidated. We did not envisage the time when, after a few short years, it would assume the staggering total of about £190,000,000. Although members critically examine these Estimates, eventually they must agree to them, for all the items are absolutely necessary and, in many cases, urgently required. The fact that must cause members to pause and think is that this enormous expenditure of money

produces so very little, for, in the final analysis, the assets will be small and in many cases vanishing. We are getting a small return for expenditure in these days, and we must face up to that alarming fact. The assets we see in return for the expenditure of public money are nothing like commensurate with that expenditure. Of course, many factors have created that position. We have passed through an inflationary period, during which the costs of all commodities going into public enterprises have risen. The basic wage has been subjected to a tremendous rise. All these factors are important, but one of the most serious factors is the lower return obtained these days from labour employed. This question will have to be tackled sooner or later by the application of better methods in our public undertakings. The 40-hour week has brought about many other factors which have reduced the output per man hour. Innovations operate practically everywhere in industry. Wherever a gang of men work, whether inside or outside a factory, smoko periods and morning and afternoon tea breaks eat into the effective time applied to the work in hand. I do not begrudge people these amenities and improvements in their working conditions, but we must have a return for these things by way of an improved output per man hour or we will drift into that position referred to by Mr. O'Halloran when we will have to stop and consider seriously how we are to meet the interest commitments on our huge public undertakings.

With regard to the passing of these Estimates, some critics outside the House will undoubtedly say, "Members swallow a camel and so often strain at a gnat." No doubt some members will be examining the smaller items in the Estimates and that may be construed as straining at the proverbial gnat, but I wish to refer to one aspect of our public debt—the number of new and large public enterprises which have come into being in recent years and have tremendously swelled the total figure in these Estimates. They include the Housing Trust, which, according to the Loan Estimates, accounts for £17,500,000 of Loan funds and the Leigh Creek coalfield which accounts for £3,000,000. At Leigh Creek, however, large sums from revenue were invested in that enterprise. Apart from our own contributions from revenue, we received several gifts of about £250,000 from the Commonwealth Government, all of which have swelled the total investment to a substantial figure. The State has taken over the electricity enterprise which

was formerly run by private enterprise, and, according to the Loan Estimates, it has invested £21,000,000 of Loan funds in that undertaking. Our latest undertaking is the uranium development at Radium Hill involving £3,000,000. This gives a total of about £44,500,000 which is included in our public debt.

I do not know whether it is comforting to realize that these new enterprises absorb such a large proportion of the recent increase, from £91,000,000 to about £190,000,000, in our public debt, but it can only be comforting if the whole of those enterprises can continue to stand on their own feet and eventually liquidate this indebtedness. I am afraid that the day on which the Financial Agreement will liquidate our public debt is receding further and further into the future. I do not think any of us will see any substantial part of it liquidated under the terms of the Financial Agreement, because, although certain amounts are periodically extinguished, the State is going further and further into debt with regard to these enterprises, mainly because of the terrific costs involved.

Mr. Macgillivray—The Financial Agreement was one of the worst things that ever happened to South Australia.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—No, it was a sound setup.

Mr. Macgillivray—You do not seem to like its results.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Its results may be far better than those we would have otherwise seen, for the position would have been chaotic without a financial agreement not only to regulate the raising of public moneys, particularly loan moneys, but also to control the interest rates and the apportionment of Loan moneys on a fair basis between States, and to provide for the ultimate liquidation of such debts.

Mr. Macgillivray—It has resulted in none of the things you suggest.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—It has regulated the loan market with regard to the States' requirements and has controlled, to a considerable extent, the interest rates operating on public borrowing. It provides for the sharing of the responsibility between the Commonwealth and State for the eventual liquidation of the public debt.

Mr. Pattinson—What was the rate of interest on the last loan?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—£4 12s. 6d. per cent, but I am afraid we cannot entirely avoid an increase in the interest rate if the public's money is to

be attracted to finance public enterprises. However we should put the brake on. I regret that the brake on interest rates on public borrowings was released somewhat prematurely because it will react seriously to our disadvantage.

Mr. Pattinson—Why, then, all this fulsome praise of the Loan Council?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I am not giving it fulsome praise. I am merely saying that conditions would have been chaotic without the provisions of the Financial Agreement. Conditions were chaotic before the agreement was entered into. I cannot agree that it has been a failure. Money is now more wisely borrowed than previously.

Mr. Corcoran—Is it wisely spent?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—If it is, the result will be satisfactory.

Mr. Corcoran—If it were not borrowed through the Loan Council, what would happen?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Each State would be a competitor for the money available. There would be all kinds of interest rates and the money would go to the highest bidders. Most honourable members agree with the provisions which apply today in the borrowing of money. I said earlier that if the new enterprises could remain on their own feet and be a success we need have no worries, but I have some doubts about some of them. I am concerned about the large amount of money tied up in housing under the control of the trust. I do not want it to be inferred that I do not have a high regard for its efficiency and its administration, for it is an excellent undertaking and capably managed. By virtue of its magnitude, however, it will sooner or later get into difficulties, particularly as it has had to build houses in the lengthy period of tremendously inflated costs, and when building was not undertaken by many other people. There was a tremendous slackness. The war period placed a bar on private building and the trust had to accept the full responsibility of providing houses. It had to be done under great difficulties and its programme had to be financed at present-day inflated costs. That will bring the trust into difficulties, particularly when prices of commodities drop, as eventually they must. We cannot expect the present period of inflated prices to continue. There need be only some factor in world conditions to start us back to normal again when everything will follow in its train, and come at a rush. When we have such a period the houses which cost about £3,000 to build will not be

worth that amount. When houses can again be built for one-third or half the present-day cost there will be grave difficulties for the trust as a housing authority, because it will be faced with the writing down of the values of properties and perhaps reducing rents to a competitive figure. Obviously it will be faced with a great loss.

Mr. Davis—How about the man who is building his own home?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—The time has come when we should recognize the very valuable efforts being made by people in building their own homes. In yesterday's *News* we saw a good example of it. We saw where a man had built a substantial house for the modest cost of £1,500. He said it would have cost £3,000 if built by someone else. That is the sort of thing we should encourage. It is an inspiration to other people to do likewise, but I know that everybody does not know how to build a house.

Mr. John Clark—Some cannot get cement.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—This man started with £3 and bought his materials as he went along. Presumably he got a mortgage later, but in the end he built the house at about half the cost if built by someone else. He provided a home for his wife and family.

Mr. Davis—Thousands have done that.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I know many have done so, but I doubt whether there are thousands. We should encourage such work by some tangible means. Perhaps we could provide educational facilities. We could very well consider holding night classes to assist men to learn how to build a house. The man with aptitude will soon learn how to do it.

Mr. Corcoran—The man mentioned in the press knew nothing about building a house.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I knew nothing about it when I started to build my home. I take pride in the fact that many years ago, largely because a builder was not available, I built my own home. I derived a real satisfaction and so does everyone who creates or does something for himself. He gets a great deal more out of life than the man who spends his week ends at the pub or at the races, or following his particular bent in regard to sport and amusement. I do not decry sport and amusement, because I believe in it, but the man who spends his spare time creating something of value for himself is a good citizen and worthy of recognition.

Mr. Davis—How about the man who borrowed money to have a home built by a contractor?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Many people have done that. Under the various guarantee systems in force today they can get an advance of 90 per cent of the valuation of the proposed building. In the matter of providing financial assistance we are doing a great deal, and I sometimes wonder whether we are not doing too much.

Mr. Davis—How will this man get on in meeting his increased commitments?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—He will be in serious trouble, as some people were in past years. People who spend as much as £2,700 and £3,000, and have a second mortgage, on a house will be in serious trouble. We have these sound enterprises, but are still borrowing money and pouring it into other enterprises which are not so sound. I do not profess to have the answer to the problem, which is serious. We have one glaring example in the railways. Another £3,000,000 is to be spent on new rollingstock, permanent way, and many other things. Every year we provide at least £5,000,000 out of revenue to help balance railway accounts. Now it is proposed to advance loan money to make purchases which I think should be financed from railway revenue. There are such things as ballasting, building platforms, signalling, new stockyards and safety devices. They all look like maintenance expenditure, and should be covered by railway revenue. In the Loan Estimates there is an ambitious list of rollingstock to be purchased. One line covers the purchase of 10 Beyer Peacock type Garratt locomotives for £161,000. I wonder whether that is wise expenditure. Some years ago when in Western Australia I learned that the Government had purchased some Garratt type locomotives, had difficulties with them, and then condemned them, yet we are buying 10 of that type of double end locomotives. They are supposed to have far greater traction power than ordinary locomotives. We propose purchasing engines of that type after they were condemned in Western Australia, but they may have been improved since those days. It is also proposed to purchase 100 four-wheel cattle vans for £90,000, 40 50-ton capacity hopper cars for £147,000, 300 D.W.F. four-wheel louvre cars for £284,000, 20 40-ton hopper cars for £77,000 and 200 "O" bogie cars for £150,000. I draw attention to these items because it seems to me, although I have great confidence in our Acting Railways Commissioner, as I had in his predecessor, Mr. Chapman, I feel it is too great a responsibility for one man to decide these tremendous expenditures. The time has come when that responsibility should

be shared. I am reminded of the old adage that there is more wisdom in two heads than in one. The total capital involved in our railways was more than £30,000,000 years ago, and it must be now nearer £50,000,000. In the management of lesser undertakings we have boards in charge. Consider, for instance, the Harbors Board, the capital invested under which is substantially less than that in the railways, and yet there are three members on the board to share the responsibilities. You can always get different viewpoints and sometimes sounder advice with such a board of directors. It is, therefore, somewhat unfair to expect the Railways Commissioner to carry the whole responsibility for the railways.

There is another anomaly in railway management. When it comes to the building of new lines or expenditure on relaying, these matters are first supposed to be investigated by the Public Works Committee. However, in recent years there has been no expenditure on new lines and as to the relaying of old tracks I think the provision under the Public Works Committee Act has been forgotten and much relaying has been done without any such reference, a matter to which the Auditor-General drew attention in his last annual report. There is no examination of items of much greater expenditure by anyone outside the railways, although no doubt the various departments peruse the individual items carefully. Some independent investigation would be of great advantage to Parliament, which every year is asked to vote large sums to the railways but thereafter has no control over how it is spent or whether it is necessary to be spent at all. Perhaps it was with some misgivings that we voted the money. We are confronted each year with a substantial list of rolling stock required by the railways. It is to be hoped that I am not speaking to deaf ears, because it is of great importance that our railway finances should be closely overhauled every year. For years the Public Works Committee has drawn attention to this matter, but so far without results. I am not personally concerned about my committee getting more work, because already we have enough, but Parliament should protect itself as to the moneys it votes for this huge enterprise.

Mr. Pattinson—Wouldn't it be better if your committee didn't have to inquire into the small jobs?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—There may be a case for that, but in any event the committee does not hold up any of these projects that come

before it. I could give a list of inquiries which the committee dealt with as far back as four years ago, but which have not yet been commenced.

Mr. Pattinson—But £30,000 is an insignificant sum these days.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I remind the honourable member that Parliament does not want to give anything away. I remember Professor Bland, chairman of the Federal Accounts Committee, saying that Parliamentary control of public finance has become a farce. We do not want that to happen here. If we give away the safeguard we have even over sums of £30,000 we shall not be any better off, so I suggest it is in Parliament's interest to retain as close a grip as possible over the spending of public money. I do not say this by way of disparagement to the Executive, but we do not want this State to be run entirely by it. Parliament has the final responsibility for voting money, and it must know that it is to be put to good purpose. The member for Semaphore drew our attention to the state of tramway finance and referred to the fact that Colonel Bingham, a traffic expert, is to be brought from New York to overhaul our tramway system. I interjected at the time, from which the inference might be drawn that I questioned the authenticity of the figures Mr. Tapping was presenting. I simply directed the question to probe their correctness. Since then I have ascertained that the figures were correct. The New York metropolitan transport system is controlled by a municipal set-up and caters for the 8,000,000 people to whom Mr. Tapping referred. As I understood the position, Greater New York embraced much extra territory on the western side of the Hudson River, and if that territory is included with what is known as metropolitan New York the population is about 11,500,000, which approximates what I had in mind when I interjected. I have ascertained that the transport system under the control of Col. Bingham deals only with New York on the eastern side of the river and comprises a population of 8,000,000. I give that information to make the position clear that the figures used by Mr. Tapping were correct. It increased my respect for the *South Australian Transport Journal* in which those figures occur. What it had to say is relevant and could be taken notice of in any discussion on our metropolitan transport systems. What it has said about our tramway system should have been given more publicity.

When I dealt with the tramways tangle last year I advocated that private bus operators be given a voice on the new Tramways Trust, because they have operated their services successfully and with great advantage to the public and possibly to themselves.

Mr. Pattinson—Their only qualification is that they thoroughly understand the problem.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Yes, and they are making a success in the fringe districts. I know some of the services come to the heart of the city, which undoubtedly must be very profitable, but many of the bus routes are on the fringe areas where the Tramways Trust hitherto had not ventured because the traffic was not dense enough. They have made a success of their business and were worthy of being consulted on the new set-up for our metropolitan tramways system. I will have more to say later on the individual lines of the Estimates.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY (Chaffey)—With unfailing regularity we are regaled by the news-hungry press with the doings of the Loan Council. We find the press writing up the Prime Minister as Horatius holding the bridge, with Spurious Lartius at his right hand in the form of the Federal Treasurer, Sir Arthur Fadden, and Herminius on his left hand in the form of the chairman of the Commonwealth Bank. Conversely sometimes the Prime Minister is shown as a thrifty, portly and staid housewife safeguarding the economies of the Commonwealth against her spendthrift family represented by the State Premiers, who are anxious to get as much of the wealth of the country as possible. Either of those illustrations conveys what the average person in Australia would believe if he read the press and knew nothing about the facts. I suggest that that includes many persons inside Parliament, especially the member for Eyre, because his speech shows his abysmal ignorance of finance. I should like to investigate what really takes place at Loan Council meetings. My impression is that the Premiers go along and place before the council the needs of their particular States, and, as the member for Stanley has pointed out, every one of them is an honest and sincere man who fights to the best of his ability to get all he can for the development of his State. No-one can find grave fault with that approach. It is the duty of a Treasurer to get the most he can for the State he represents, but we find the Commonwealth Treasurer saying that if the States get too much the economy of Australia will be ruined. We can imagine

10-ton trucks at the tradesmen's entrance of the Commonwealth Treasury awaiting the final decision on finance and the responsible officers carting out hundredweights of gold to be loaded on to the trucks for carriage to the various States. Not many years ago even Ministers of the Crown thought a gold backing was essential to any monetary system. However, after World War I, gold gradually disappeared and the printing presses issued the money. They have turned out our money under an orthodox financial system, not one advocated by irresponsible people like myself who are continually drawing attention to the weaknesses of orthodoxy. Let us assume the trucks today are loaded with bales of notes of all denominations instead of gold so the Treasurers can go back to their States with loads of money to pay to the individuals contracting for public works and undertakings, but most people know that all that happens at the Loan Council meeting is an agreement on a book-keeping arrangement setting out what works the various Premiers can carry out. I agree we should have an accurate bookkeeping system to reflect the needs of every State.

A few years ago we thought the money advanced should be limited by our production of gold and by our gold backing. A provision on those lines was incorporated in the Commonwealth Bank Act, that every issue had to have a 25 per cent backing of gold. That has now disappeared and we find that the States and the Commonwealth Treasurers argue along the lines I have never been able to understand. If our Treasurer speaks again on the Loan Estimates I would like to hear from him what is the basis on which moneys are issued to the States. I believe they should be limited by the amount of available labour that would not otherwise be employed and by the amount of materials that could not otherwise be used. Those two factors should be the basis of the decisions of the Loan Council.

Mr. John Clark—What if no men or materials are available?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Then we would not need more Loan money. People do not realize that our public works programme bridges the gap between the work available to the public and the full use of manpower and materials. In the 1930's there was a policy of making men work harder, but until South Australia was able to borrow money and put it into circulation there were more goods available than purchasing power. No-one buys a public undertaking such as a railway, but money spent on it provides purchasing power for the consumers.

Money spent on building reservoirs and railway lines is just as good when it gets into the hands of the consumer as money in the hands of people who grow food, make boots, or build houses.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—The theory that we should use Loan moneys for public works was not understood in the 1930's.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I think that is right, for I do not think anyone would deliberately set out to create the hardships that we had in the depression years when misery came into the homes of thousands. We heard of children sleeping on bags stuffed with papers to keep them warm, but at the same time the stores were full of blankets that storekeepers wanted to sell. There were willing sellers and willing buyers, but the finance was lacking. If we had put money into circulation then to pay for water conservation schemes and other useful projects we would have solved the problem.

Mr. John Clark—Why wasn't that done?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Because it was cheaper to keep men idle. I think the ration cost about 3s. 9d. a week, but if the unemployed were given work they would have to be paid the basic wage, and the Government could not get the necessary money. Money is the one thing that we know very little about, yet we hear the member for Eyre murmuring about inflation when it is the financial system that creates it. One of our leading bankers is associated with the rural youth movement, but with all due respects to him he is the last person who should tell the primary producer he has to work harder and produce more and tighten his belt. He represents the institutions that made high prices necessary. It now takes £300 to do what £100 did, and although the rate of interest is now $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent against 7 per cent in previous years, the primary producer is paying 12 per cent or 13 per cent for money to finance him compared with what he would have paid in years past. The banks have caused this. Time after time I have quoted McLeod's *Theory and Practice of Banking*. He said it is the function of a bank to manufacture credit, and credit is money. When one talks about manufacturing credit all orthodox people hold up their hands in horror. They say it cannot be done, or they say, "Then let us have millions of pounds" and they cast the cheap gibes that come from every ignoramus. According to McLeod, it is the function of banks to create money, and he is an authority on banking. Sir Reginald McKenna, at one time Chancellor of the Exchequer in Great Britain, pointed out that the amount of money

in circulation is only altered by the action of the banks. Some try to say the amount is regulated by production, but that is wrong. I could quote figures produced by a man who belonged to one of the largest heavy industries the world has known. He was a director of the Bank of England and when he saw what was behind our banking system he refused to be associated with it any longer and resigned from one of the most important positions the world had to offer. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* says the banks create money out of nothing. Actually, it is the people in industry and commerce who create the wealth.

Mr. Riches—Does the latest edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* give that definition?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Yes, under "Banking." I have another authority on the function of banks, namely, Sir Winston Churchill, who is widely respected throughout the British Empire. At one time he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, but he was big enough to admit his mistakes, that all the advice he got on banking was entirely wrong, and he said so. In one speech he stated:—

When I was moved by many arguments and forces in 1925 to return to the Gold Standard I was assured by the highest experts, and our experts are men of great ability and of indisputable integrity and sincerity, and I accepted their advice.

That is exactly what is happening in Canberra today. We have men like Sir Douglas Copland and a few other so-called experts who are continually advising the Prime Minister and Treasurer of the Commonwealth Government. The same advice is given Liberal Treasurers as is given Labor Treasurers. They are always offering their advice and in every instance it has been wrong. It has been proved to be wrong, and these experts are wrong today.

Mr. Riches—Does that apply in Britain, too?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I do not know, for I am not acquainted with conditions there today. Sir Winston Churchill went on:—

I take for myself and my colleagues of other days whatever degree of blame and burden there may be for having accepted their advice. But what happened? We have had no reality, no stability. The price of gold has risen since then by more than 70 per cent. That is as if a 12in. footrule had suddenly been stretched to 19in. or 20in.; as if the pound, avoirdupois, had suddenly become 23oz. or 24oz. instead of—how much is it?—16oz. Look at what this has meant to everybody who has been compelled to execute their contracts upon this irrationally enhanced scale. Look at the gross unfairness of such a distortion to all producers of new wealth, and to all that labour and science and enterprise can give us. Look

at the enormously increased volume of commodities which have to be created in order to pay off the same mortgage, debt or loan. That is something which will soon be of major importance to Australians, who will have to pay a tremendous amount to service the debt incurred, and it will be worse if we experience a recession. Sir Winston Churchill continued:—

Minor fluctuations might well be ignored, but I say quite seriously that this monetary convulsion has now reached a pitch where I am persuaded that the producers of new wealth will not tolerate indefinitely so hideous an oppression. Are we really going to accept the position that the whole future development of science, our organization, our increasing co-operation, and the fruitful era of peace and good will among men and nations; are all these developments to be arbitrarily barred by the price of gold? Is the progress of the human race in this age of almost terrifying expansion to be arbitrarily barred and regulated by fortuitous discoveries of gold mines here and there or by the extent to which we can persuade the existing cornerers and hoarders of gold to put their hoards again into the common stock? Are we to be told that human civilization and society would have been impossible if gold had not happened to be an element in the composition of the globe? These are absurdities. They have only to be asserted long enough, they have only to be left ungrappled with long enough, to endanger that capitalist and credit system upon which the liberties and enjoyments and prosperity in my belief of the vast masses depend. I therefore point to this evil and to the search for the methods of remedying it, as the first, the second and the third of all the problems which should command and rivet our thoughts. This new House of Commons contains a great number of new and young legislators. I commend this problem to them as the supreme topic of the age.

That speech, made in 1932, is recorded at page 1662 of volume 264 of British *Hansard*.

Mr. Dunstan—Yet he defeated a Labor Government on the issue of the gold standard.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Possibly, but I am not defending him as a Party politician for I am not responsible for his actions as such. I merely point out his remarks on a financial set-up tied to such factors as fortuitous discoveries of gold. No-one can take exception to that speech, even if Sir Winston did not implement it. He did not do so because, as a Party politician, he had to do as he was told, but I am happy to be able to quote his speech which is one of his greatest, for it tells the whole world how absurd is the idea that, because a man stumbles upon a hill of gold, he should be rich, whereas the whole thing should be ignored as entirely fortuitous. The amount of money, which the Premiers secure for their States, is limited by the idea

implicit in Sir Winston's speech. Even though gold no longer plays an important part in our currency, the superstitions and evils inherent in our financial system still remain and the Loan Council acts on that basis, whereas it should judge the case on the actual living facts—the necessary requirements for each State and the resources available.

Mr. Riches—Not long ago the Premier echoed those principles.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Then he made a fine speech, but, although he may be a big man in this State, he is not so big when he goes to Canberra. It may be the fault of Parliament that we have not backed him sufficiently. Many years ago I submitted a motion, which was eventually carried, pointing out that the credit of the country should be used for its development and for other purposes. A similar motion was passed in every other State Parliament except that of New South Wales, but what has been done about it since? Have we ever instructed our Premier to fight for this principle? Under the present financial system the real live needs of the State are subject to an abstract system of bookkeeping.

Mr. John Clark—As many so-called authorities oppose the opinion you have quoted, as do support it.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Possibly, but I am prepared to back Sir Winston Churchill and Sir Reginald McKenna, who was not only Chancellor of the Exchequer but also chairman of a bank with funds greater than the total funds of all Australian banks. Sir Reginald should have known something about finance.

Mr. John Clark—That does not necessarily mean that theory is correct.

Mr. Quirke—The member for Chaffey would be prepared to listen to counter arguments, but they are never advanced.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The final test of any financial system is whether it works, and it is not hard to prove that our financial system does not work. The member for Burnside pointed out, by implication, that it failed miserably during the depression of the thirties.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—I said that the theory of spending in times of depression was not understood.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The main thing wrong in Australia during the depression of the thirties was the financial system. Too many people were worried about the man who would not work, whereas no one worried about the hundreds of thousands crawling on their knees and begging for work to keep themselves

and their families respectable. These men could not be employed, not because there was no work, for, when the war broke out we found that the discards of an economic system—some of them cripples—had to be sent north to make roads, which should have been made in the early thirties when these men were anxious to work for about 10s. a day. Anyone with foresight should have known that the weakest part of Australia was to the north and that, in the event of war, roads would be required. Those roads were built later, but at a far greater cost. They were not built earlier, because, we were told, no money was available.

The CHAIRMAN—Do I take it from the honourable member's remarks that the Loan Estimates are not necessary under the system of government he advocates?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—No, I am describing the nature of a loan and say that, often, we do not understand the principles involved. If we realized that the system of loan is really only a bookkeeping system, we would realize further that all the wrangling indulged in at the Premiers' Conference is belittling to the intelligence of legislators. Members should feel sorry that our leading citizens fall for this sort of system, whereas the Premier should be required to show only the needs of the State and its capacity to fulfil those needs.

Had we used our loan moneys wisely in the 1930's, roads would have been built by labour paid for at the rate of 10s. a day, but we had to wait for a war to get that work done. In fact, wars are the only way in which we can beat the financial system, for in war-time more money—often too much—is put into circulation, but then we have to pay far more for our roads. Representatives of bodies such as the Wheat and Woolgrowers Federation and of stock exchanges in New York, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide tell us that, now the war is finished, we will be faced with a ruinous fall in prices resulting in a depression. We are told, in effect, we must keep killing off our young men—the best of our race—so that their fathers may pay their debts. Had it not been for World War II we could not have paid off our debts, and we will be unable to pay off our future debts unless we engage in war or alter our financial system.

Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I hope I have provided members with some food for thought, even if I have not convinced them that the

position is as I have stated. I intend to deal briefly with the results of the Loan Council, although I will not traverse them in great detail because the Leader of the Opposition has already explained exactly what has happened and the member for Stanley has pointed out the astronomical increase in our public debt, which has caused increased taxation. It is assumed that all debts must eventually be paid, and until they are the interest charges must be met. If our public debt increases it is futile to suggest that our taxation will be reduced. Some years ago I pointed out that the total income from taxation in South Australia was not sufficient to meet our debt charges. It is futile to suggest a better education system, improved hospital services or other social benefits which our modern civilization might be entitled to, when we have not the necessary finance.

There is a debt of £237 12s. per head of population in South Australia which means that every baby born is saddled with that amount of debt. That is not often publicized. What is published is that South Australia is the most stable State in the Commonwealth and its savings per capita are greater than in any other State. According to the latest figures, the average saving is £140 5s. 1d. per head, but when considered with the average debt there is a debit of almost £100. If that were the end it would be bad enough, but any person of ability will realize that it is not the end because there is a continuing process of debt. When a debt is incurred the intention should be to pay it off, and if it cannot be paid off it should not be incurred. That is how simple our present financial system should be. Citizens of South Australia in particular, and citizens of the Commonwealth in general, are incurring debts which will never be paid.

Mr. Teusner—Do you suggest that there should be a national balance-sheet which will reveal our national assets?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—A balance sheet should be compiled to indicate our national assets and that could be the basis for the issue of national credit. The private banking system is able to finance probably 90 per cent of the business undertakings of the Commonwealth, but it should not be asked to incur the responsibility of financing huge undertakings like the wheat pool, the dried fruit pool, or any other big exporting industry. At present there is no balance-sheet to show what the Commonwealth resources are. It is often said that it is easy to talk about these matters

but that no-one has ever tried to establish any other financial system. A person who endeavours to alter the present financial system is faced with the greatest monopoly in the world. No other monopoly is so deeply entrenched or heavily guarded as the present financial system. Any person who tries to alter it must be a one hundred per cent man. I am glad that at least one man, Mr. Aberhardt, did try. He was not a politician by profession nor was he an economist; he was a minister of religion. One of the complaints against this man who fought against the wrongs of the world was that he opened his Parliament with prayer. That is rather peculiar because every Parliament in the Commonwealth is very rightly opened with prayer, although at times members do not measure up to the full implication of the prayer itself. He was also criticized because, it was said, he would not permit a typiste in the House who used lipstick. I do not know if that is true but that is what told against him. He started what is probably the biggest thing this world has known in the last three or four centuries. Many people have said that he was a failure because he did not succeed in his endeavours, but he started the movement. I have a copy of a Budget speech made by the Premier of Alberta, Mr. Manning, who succeeded Mr. Aberhardt, and it should be compared with the speech we will shortly hear from our own Premier. Mr. Manning said:—

I am pleased to report that during the current fiscal year, notwithstanding record expenditures for social services and capital development, Alberta became the first Canadian Province to accumulate cash surpluses and investments in excess of its total indebtedness, an achievement of which every honourable member and every citizen of this Province can be justly proud. The next step in the Government's programme is to institute practical measures to assist municipal governments in attaining a comparable measure of financial independence and stability. Accordingly, the Budget I am privileged to present today embodies substantially increased appropriations for direct municipal assistance and a programme under which the total estimated necessary municipal borrowings for the ensuing year will be advanced by the Provincial Government from a revolving fund, established under legislation to be introduced during the present session.

We know that our councils are hard pressed for money for essential works but if they approach the Government for assistance they are told that they are shirking their responsibilities and should impose a greater tax on their ratepayers and squeeze them hard to get more money. I do not blame the Government,

because that is part of the system and it has not the money to advance to the councils. The speech makes reference to irrigation, and continues:—

Last year the Legislature authorized the expenditure of 3,750,000 dollars for the construction of distribution canals and other necessary facilities in connection with the Saint Mary Milk River Irrigation Development project. A further sum of 3,810,000 dollars is being requested to continue this project and complete facilities to serve some 137,500 irrigable acres.

We regard 20,000 acres as a large project but in Alberta they go in for mass production, not only of dried fruits and citrus but of hundreds of acres of lucerne and other cereals. I will not weary members by reading the whole speech but if any member is interested he can read it in the Parliamentary library. Alberta is the only part of the British Empire which is reducing its State debt. The speech continues:—

For the information of honourable members, the following statement indicates the progress which has been made in debt reduction from March 31, 1936, to December 31, 1952:—

Year ended.	Total debt. Dollars.
March 31, 1936	167,027,144
March 31, 1940	156,501,773
March 31, 1945	150,159,819
March 31, 1950	130,600,687
March 31, 1951	111,830,132
March 31, 1952	100,437,090
December 31, 1952	97,303,037

Those figures reveal a reduction in the debt of almost 100,000,000 dollars, or 50 per cent

Mr. Fred Walsh—But Alberta has oil.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Alberta has great resources and they are playing their part, but if she did not have the finance to develop those resources how much better off would she be? The United States of America also has very great natural resources and oil, but her public debt is increasing by leaps and bounds. We, too, have natural resources which we cannot develop because we cannot get enough money. A country can have natural resources, but they are of no benefit to it unless its financial system allows them to be developed. Alberta had oil long before the Social Credit administration took over, and if it went out tomorrow and orthodox financial administration took charge, within two years the State debt would be increasing again, for there is nowhere in the world where that has not happened. As a natural corollary, if a financial system is controlled by interests that are not synonymous with the interests of the State, and the State has to borrow money from outside, every such

borrowing is a debt. Notwithstanding this some members seem to think that because we can borrow from the Commonwealth Government we are well treated. They seem to forget that we are the Commonwealth, that we are the people who make the money available. What does the Commonwealth territory produce? The States produce the wealth, and that money belongs to us as a right, for without us there would be no Commonwealth. Because of the fundamental truth of social credit we find other countries following the excellent example of Alberta. In British Columbia the Social Credit Party recently had an overwhelming victory, and in some of the other States of Canada its adherents are working hard, with considerable success. At the last Canadian Federal elections they increased their numbers from 10 to 15, and that is very heartening to me. The future of the world depends on the evolution of a financial system that will meet the needs of the times and of the people, for I believe that the people are supreme and not the present banking system. Social credit is also being strongly advocated in our neighbouring dominion of New Zealand and I remember that some years ago the social credit movement here decided to fight an election, not with any hope of winning, but because we thought we could spread the gospel of truth by fighting an election and getting the people to argue and debate it. After, I think, two elections we altered our policy of fighting elections, but I say that this movement belongs to the people and if we can convince them of the truth then they have the responsibility of putting men into Parliament who would give them a true financial system. I was interested in the remarks by Mr. Christian, who preceded me because, although no-one doubts his sincerity, it was quite obvious from his remarks that—

Mr. Dunstan—He did not agree with you.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—He did not agree with himself; his mind was in confusion. He complained about inflation, for instance, and of the small return the Government gets from expenditure. Obviously that is because of inflation. It is not a question of getting more manpower output as he asserted, for I suppose that, due to machinery, the world is getting a bigger man-hour output than ever before. A financial system that requires £300 to do what £100 did previously is obviously inflated and unless we can stop it and bring it back to near normal we will not only kill our public works but kill all industry, especially those which rely on exports. Recently I

mentioned the case of an Adelaide banker who has been closely associated with the Rural Youth Movement. He went to one of our larger country centres, Kapunda I think, and had the audacity to tell those hard-working farmers that they must work harder and produce more—and, of course take less for it. He was responsible for the farmers needing a lot more for their wheat, due to inflation for which the banking system is responsible. Again, according to a statement in the press, addressing students at Roseworthy College he commented on criticism of banks and said, "The trouble in the 1930 depression was that the banks were too liberal." What an audacious statement. I have not forgotten Mr. Stott in those years asking the Premier whether he would take up a case with the Farmers Assistance Board to see if one of his constituents could be allowed to pay his son, a fully grown man, 10s. a week for working on his farm, and the Premier replied that he could not be allowed more than 5s. That was the sort of liberal advance that this banker said the banks were guilty of in the depression days. Is there any argument more false or more futile than the attempt to divide employer and employee? Both are tied up to the one financial system and I do not care how generous one may desire to be to employees one cannot pay them more than one is earning. I have been informed that citrus growers are getting 3s. 6d. a case net for oranges, which does not pay for picking and handling, and wine grapes that cost £18 a ton to produce have been sold at £8.

Mr. Davis—When was this?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—On the river this year. The price of dried fruits has also dropped so that the producers have had the whole range of their income cut severely. How can these men keep on paying £11 15s. a week for wages without having income themselves? It is true they could do it for a period with overdrafts from the bank, but I think every Labor man realizes today that in order to provide a decent living standard for the worker the employer must also be assured of a fair return.

Mr. Davis—No-one argues against that.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Quite so. My point is that both are tied by the same financial system, and I will show in a few sentences just how this financial system can wreck the whole productivity of the country. Until recently South Australia produced practically the whole of the brandy output of the Commonwealth and its quality was second to none

in the world. The Commonwealth Government, which controls the financial policy of Australia, imposed an extra excise duty of 6s. a bottle and killed the trade. That is why we had to accept £8 a ton instead of £18 for our wine grapes; that is the financial system evolved by men sitting in Canberra who have never grown a grape or grain of wheat.

Mr. Davis—The consumer got no benefit.

Mr. Coreoran—What was responsible for the drop in price?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The extra 6s. a bottle priced the article out of existence. The member for Eyre dealt with the financial agreement between the States and the Commonwealth and thought it was a good thing because it reduced interest rates and competition for loans. I pointed out by interjection that if that was its purpose it had failed miserably, and even the parties to the agreement—the State Governments—are deliberately flouting it by means of loans for quasi-State undertakings such as housing and electricity. It may not be against the law, but it is against the spirit of the law. When the Loan Council was set up there was to be one authority to borrow money, but because of the failure I have mentioned State Governments flouted the agreement and floated outside loans. Apparently Mr. Christian believes every man should build his own home. He thinks we should have a hand loom, weave our own cloth and sit under our own tree, and then everybody would be able to live independently, but that would not be of much use to our economic system. We have skilled craftsmen who can build houses much better than the amateurs. I know the honourable member is a particularly handy man and can build boats and houses, and perhaps he is a little better than perfect, but the rest of us can hardly hope to get into that category. The idea that every man should grow his own food, cook it, make his own suits and build his own house is not worthy of consideration. It shows the confusion of thought that many members have when they talk about these things. It would be all right in a primitive economy where everybody ate berries and dug a hole in the ground in which to live, but we must have a financial system which enables us to produce the things we need. If we do that we will not be envious of any other country. Our ability to do things is second to none in the world. We have land in the tropical north and in the temperate south. We have to import some things, but we have enough exports to make up for it. We must realize that finance is only

a bookkeeping system. We must have a financial system to meet the needs of the people and not the needs of the banks. To talk of other things is nothing but a waste of time. I hope to get some information on some of the lines which I cannot debate at present.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—Mr. Macgillivray has gone to no end of trouble to explain what previous speakers meant when they put forward fairly their ideas in this debate. He has interpolated to suit his own purpose and has added things in order that he might have an Aunt Sally to shy at. I thought what he said about Mr. Christian was anything but fair. Although he might have said it, I did not hear Mr. Christian say that we should wear a loin cloth. If that is to be the standard of debate I will agree that it is a waste of time. Mr. Macgillivray has some fine ideas in regard to private finance. He thought it most unfair for a private individual to borrow money without being able to repay it. Reading between the lines, however, it seems that the State can borrow *ad libitum* and notes can be printed as required. It appears to me that if there is such a thing as economic law in regard to loans—and the honourable member thinks there is one for private people—I cannot see that it can be avoided by the State. If it attempts to avoid it, the State will reap the same reward as the honourable member suggests will be reaped by the private individual. These are amazing contradictions to come from a man who alleges that logic is his guide. He makes no bones about quoting people from outside the State. It seems that his latest guide, comforter and friend, is the Rev. Aberhardt, once Premier of Alberta, Canada.

Mr. Macgillivray—He is dead.

Mr. SHANNON—The honourable member also quoted Sir Winston Churchill. Unfortunately the Rev. Aberhardt did not live long enough to recant, as did Sir Winston Churchill. Mr. Macgillivray is an Independent and regards himself as free as the air to bring forward any financial theory, knowing full well that he will never be asked to put it into practice. I do not think any electoral law would enable him to become Treasurer and tell us how we can get our public works done for nothing. So why not let him have his fun and let him tell us what can be done and how he will do it. We can only do as the private individual does—borrow within our means, live within our

income and pay back what we have borrowed. We know that there are some people who are not so honourable in regard to their public debts. After World War I. there was a revolution in Russia and the people who took over wiped out all debts and started off with the assets obtained with the borrowed money. With a start like that Russia should be the most prosperous country in the world. If Mr. Macgillivray believes there is a way to get money or credit for nothing, and to get assets presented on a plate, I would like to know about it, because I could do with a few of the assets in my backyard. This is not a matter for levity. It is very important for the State.

Mr. Macgillivray made some foolish comments about the Loan Council. He said that the Financial Agreement was being abrogated by certain States permitting loans to be raised by semi-Government authorities. In practice there must be unanimous agreement in the Loan Council when loan funds are allocated. Before a semi-Government loan can be raised there must be the approval of the Loan Council, and if they are sanctioned there can be no disagreement or abrogation of the agreement. I would hate to think that any member of Parliament would try to break down the Loan Council set-up. Following Federation it was the practice for various States to compete against each other for money for public works. Common sense later prevailed and the States and the Commonwealth got together to find a better way of raising money for public works, and they set up the Loan Council. I hope no responsible member of Parliament will suggest that we should get away from the agreement, which is working in the best interests of everybody. It has kept the interest rates down considerably below what they would be if all States competed on the market for loan money. In another peculiar kink of reasoning Mr. Macgillivray pointed out that Savings Bank deposits in South Australia amounted to so much per head of the population and that the State owed so much per head which disclosed a debt. He also suggested we should take into account the national assets represented by that debt. I should like him to consider what this likely disparity would be in 10 years if we adopted his peculiar system of unlimited credit. He glibly conveyed what Alberta had done, but failed to disclose the tremendous source of income from her oil fields. It might be of some use in assessing the position and deciding the desirability or

otherwise of social credit if we knew the actual income Alberta enjoyed from this source. I think Mr. Macgillivray would be the first to admit that had it not been for private enterprise discovering further oilfields and securing concessions from the Government to work those fields Alberta might not have been able to carry on its social credit system on the same scale as when the first oilfields were discovered.

I am in agreement with the member for Eyre, who is generally logical in debate, that a tighter hold upon the expenditure of Loan funds in South Australia is overdue. By that I mean closer supervision by the elected representatives of the people. Our democratic system of government has proved its worth among the British-speaking people, and one of the things which makes it work is the opportunity of the electors to discuss their problems with their elected representatives. Mr. Christian mentioned that £3,000,000 is provided on the Estimates for the Railways Department. Like the honourable member, I shall not criticize either the late Mr. Chapman, or the Acting Railways Commissioner, Mr. Fargher, nor will I entirely agree that a board would operate more efficiently than a commissioner. I am still a strong believer that the right man as a board of one is the best type of board, and believe that the present administrator is an excellent officer who understands the railways from the bottom upwards. There should be some check by a Parliamentary authority on the expenditure of large sums on railway works.

Mr. O'Halloran—Are you suggesting a public accounts committee?

Mr. SHANNON—I am suggesting nothing. The honourable member has had some experience in the Commonwealth field where such a committee might fill the bill. I do not suggest that this work should be thrown on the shoulders of the Public Works Standing Committee, because I agree with Mr. Christian that it is not short of jobs. An amount of £4,200,000 is allotted to the Electricity Trust. I am not so happy as some people about the credit balance of £300,000 on its last year's operations. Actually, that represents only a fraction over 1 per cent on the £20,000,000 of State money involved in the undertaking.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—Is that not after meeting interest on capital?

Mr. SHANNON—Anyone who thinks that that is a valuable contribution to the affairs of the State must bear in mind that the trust does no pay income tax. In its last year of operations the Adelaide Electric Supply Company

paid into the coffers of the Commonwealth Treasurer £200,000 income tax. That takes some of the gilt from the operations of the trust and makes the position more realistic. When the State sets out to run a big undertaking it is discovered that it is no one's business to see that money is spent which should not be spent. It is other people's money that is being handled. For instance, it takes six men to erect an electric light pole and at no time are more than one or two working. I have seen that during the present regime. Members of the trust are friends of mine and no doubt some have discovered that running a show for the Government is not the same as running it for private enterprise.

I draw attention to what is happening in Japan. Under American guidance its economy is being rebuilt by private enterprise, not by State socialisation, Douglas credit, social credit or the Rev. Aberhardt's doctrine. At the moment all we know is that Japanese goods are becoming readily available. We should encourage the person with ability and initiative to do something for himself. I have never conceded that it is a crime for a man to make reasonable profits from his enterprise. For those reasons I believe that a Parliamentary committee should be appointed to thoroughly examine all the proposed public works which will be undertaken as a result of the loan expenditure. The Treasurer can take full credit for the very rapid development of our uranium fields. That further extensive and valuable deposits have been discovered is no doubt the result of his direction and drive and encouragement to the officers of the Mines Department. It is quite on the cards that South Australia will be in sad need of a further base source of supply within the not distant future, and at the present rate of progress we obviously cannot expect to depend on Leigh Creek for as long as was originally thought. We have not had the luck to find other large deposits of coal within an accessible distance of our needs.

Some people refer to the Treasurer's statements about the conversion of uranium to domestic power requirements as being rather optimistic. I say they are realistic and I believe that the Treasurer realizes that the State must ultimately use this source of power. I have no quibble in supporting the Treasurer when he suggests that we should spend money on developing our uranium resources, but I could not in justice suggest that that is one field which should be omitted

from any inquiry. Departmental officers who have been concerned with the development of our uranium deposits have emerged with flying colours because their proposals have been accepted. After all, the public servant is activated by the right spirit and wants to do the best for the State, therefore he gets some satisfaction from receiving a pat on the back as the result of his efforts. I can see no harm in that, and much good might come of it. I know from my own experience on the Public Works Committee that such things as I have pointed out could happen in this field have already taken place, and obviously there are occasions when we hold up a public work because we had some doubts about it. The Leader of the Opposition was a member of the committee on one memorable occasion, but there have been several occasions when works have been set aside because the committee had doubts about the wisdom of going on with them. I will not say that the works programme we now have before us is not a wise one, but because there is a large sum involved it would be wise to see that Parliament is properly informed on all matters. A member can be cross-examined on a report tabled and asked why he did this or did not do that. That is a good safeguard and ensures that the committee will mind its p's and q's. I am proud that our present Government stands so high in the regard of the average investor. I do not think any other State could boast of raising £1,000,000 for what in pre-war days would not have been looked upon as an ideal investment, but it raised that sum in a matter of hours. That is a definite sign that the management of the affairs of South Australia has the confidence of the people.

Mr. FLETCHER (Mount Gambier)—The sum of £450,000 is listed on the Loan Estimates for South-Eastern drainage. Some speakers have condemned that scheme, and so have a number of landholders in the South-East, but I have no fears, particularly about the drain in the western division of the electorate of Victoria so ably represented by my colleague. Ample provision has been made to see that the country will not be over-drained. A proposal has been put forward for a long time to drain another stretch in the South-East from Dismal Swamp to the Glenelg River, in Victoria. The natural fall of the water is in that direction. Many discussions have taken place between South Australia and Victoria, but apart from a survey nothing has been done. Thousands of acres in the area

are water-logged, but the proposal is not listed on the Loan Estimates. The drainage of the Eight Mile Creek area represents some problem. That district has been settled by ex-servicemen, but the drains have not been cleared since they were constructed. Members can imagine that on that rich peaty soil it does not take long for the drains to become cluttered up with debris. Just over a week ago I visited Eight Mile Creek and came away a disappointed man, though I have always had much faith in the undertaking. Some of the settlers are endeavouring to make a living under shocking conditions. It will be some years before that country reaches full production. If any member would like to see it he should go there now. It is so rough that it is impossible for the settlers to cut the hay necessary to feed their stock during the winter. Consequently, they have to buy feed and 50 per cent of their milk cheques go in purchasing fodder.

The main drains should be three times as wide as they are now, though they need not be made any deeper. There is ample land to widen them because they are fenced and at present average only 4ft. to 6ft. wide, although there is anything up to 15yds. of land between the fences. We have been informed by authorities from New Zealand that have visited the area that the water may eventually have to be pumped away. At present there is a slight fall to the sea, but as the area sinks the water may have to be pumped off. This district will become one of the show spots of South Australia, but it will take some time and much hard work. All the settlers that I have visited were real triers. They were men anybody would be proud to meet. They are worried because their instalments are becoming due, but they have done much hard work that should have been done for them before they took possession. At one time the cutting grass was so high that one could not see a cow if it got into it, but the settlers have cleared acres with the grubbing axe, so they are deserving of every consideration. Several speakers referred to country sewerage schemes, but only £6,000 is provided for them. I think the Public Works Committee has approved about six schemes, but we will not get far with only £6,000. Sanitary conveniences are in a shocking condition in many places. The Public Works Committee has inspected several country towns.

Mr. John Clark—And has not even inspected many others.

Mr. FLETCHER—That is so.

Mr. Fred Walsh—The worst conditions are in your district.

Mr. FLETCHER—I would not say that, but Mount Gambier will not progress until it has a proper sewerage system. All the hotels, guest houses and business houses in the main street have used up every available piece of land to dig runaway holes to take effluent from lavatories. Three-storey buildings cannot be erected in Commercial Street because there is nowhere to dispose of effluent and waste water. However, Mount Gambier has been very fortunate, for Nature has provided it with a wonderful natural drainage. However, it is beyond nature's capacity to deal with such a large supply as that coming from the business centre of the town. Nobody knows where the water, running away underground, goes to. It may go into the Blue Lake or into water supplies nearer the sea coast. If members think of the recent outbreak of meningitis among Mount Gambier school children, they will realize how serious the position could become, for sanitary facilities have been lacking in Mount Gambier schools for many years. Today 900 children at the old primary school use the same lavatory accommodation as was available 40 years ago for 300 scholars.

Mr. Shannon referred to public loans raised by semi-Government instrumentalities. Could not Mr. Playford, on behalf of this Government, seek permission from the Loan Council for money to be borrowed from the public to enable the sewerage of at least some of our large country towns? In view of the success achieved by the Housing Trust and the Electricity Trust in raising loans and the faith of South Australians in their State and this Government, the successful floating of such a loan should be possible.

Mr. Davis—Do you mean that councils should raise the money?

Mr. FLETCHER—No, the State Government. The Treasurer should tell the Loan Council how urgently sewerage schemes are required in our country towns and seek permission to float a public loan to finance their installation. The requirements of my district generally have been fairly well catered for. An area school has been opened at Allendale East, a new primary school is being erected at Reidy Park, and a new school is planned for Mount Gambier East; but, like many metropolitan districts, my district is growing so rapidly that, in many cases, no sooner is a

temporary classroom erected on a school's grounds than a new one is required. Although the portable buildings used by the Education Department have fulfilled a useful purpose, I am afraid the department now has its mind more or less fixed on the erection of portable structures, and it seems that today no modern school is fully equipped unless, a few weeks after its opening, one or two temporary buildings are erected. During a recent visit to Mount Gambier I was asked to meet the high school council with regard to accommodation at that school. Mount Gambier has a fine high school, but, like many other schools, the demand for its educational services has outgrown its capacity and many portable buildings have been erected there. The largest of the recently erected buildings in the school yard could not be described as a portable building, for it is of weatherboard construction and has a tiled roof.

Mr. Fred Walsh—That is a temporary-permanent structure.

Mr. FLETCHER—Yes. The temporary buildings at the high school are due for a coat of paint, as the present paint is peeling. The necessity of constant expenditure on the upkeep of such buildings will, in the long run, mean that they will cost far more than would have been the case had a stone or brick building been erected. In a book entitled *Vital Speeches of the Day*, the President of the National Association of Home Builders states:—

Fritz Burns, who worked in collaboration with Mr. Kaiser in building houses, said, before Congress, that after years he had found that prefabrication was quicker once you got it set up, but inevitably more costly.

I am afraid that will be the experience with regard to these portable buildings, but, especially in the rapidly expanding suburban districts, if the children had had to wait for a permanent building, many of them would have been denied education for a number of years. Recently, I read the Premier's second reading speech on the South Australian Housing Trust Act Amendment Bill, which was introduced in 1940 after an inquiry into sub-standard housing. Much has been said in this debate about the spirit of that legislation, and after reading the Premier's speech, I feel that the trust has got away from that spirit. In 1940 the Premier emphasized that the Bill was modelled largely on legislation covering the British housing scheme and was designed to get people out of sub-standard houses and into

houses where they could live under good conditions. Although I do not say the officers of the trust have failed, I think that because of Government policy, the spirit of the original legislation has not been carried out.

Only recently I asked the Premier a question regarding the possible extension of the trust's temporary housing scheme to Mount Gambier. I have never favoured temporary houses, for generally they turn out to be permanent, but there are 250 sub-standard homes in Mount Gambier, and a health inspector there told me that only four residents had ever left those homes to move into trust homes. That is a bad state of affairs which, I feel sure, does not reflect the intention of the legislation. If possible, action should be taken to remove people from sub-standard houses. Some years ago the Mount Gambier corporation suggested that, if an inspector condemned a sub-standard house, on the tenant's leaving it it should not be re-occupied until it had been put in order, otherwise it should be demolished. Had action been taken along those lines, it would have helped most country towns as well as the city and suburbs, for it would have meant that these people living in sub-standard houses would have been given some hope of getting a trust home. At present applications for trust homes are dealt with in the order in which they are received. Unless a person has had an application with the trust for almost two years he has little hope of securing a home. Legislation should be enacted giving power to country health inspectors or the Central Board to direct that a house must not be occupied and that the tenants should receive a trust home. That would be of assistance to those needy persons and also to the townships. All members receive letters from persons seeking trust homes. I do not criticize the trust but many people are living in sub-standard houses and endeavours should be made to provide better homes for people now living in shocking conditions.

An amount of £22,500 is provided for additions and alterations to residences at police stations in many country areas. Many of the police buildings are almost 100 years old. Recently I had occasion to visit the Mount Gambier police station, which is the headquarters of the South-Eastern Division. There is no private interviewing room and if the inspector or sergeant desires to conduct a private interview the plainclothes officer has to vacate his room. Three men and three typewriters occupy one small room about 12ft. x 10ft. The office is so small that there is

barely room for a person to stand between the desk and the wall when making a statement to a police officer. That station is 80 years old but three times as many officers are there now as when it was erected. It is difficult to transact business there. The police officers are like most Government servants and probably do not care to complain. I inspected the building and was astounded at the conditions under which the men are working. There would be no necessity to purchase additional land because there is already sufficient to enable alterations to be made. Building is expensive but it would be possible to improve conditions at no great cost.

It is proposed to devote \$75,000 to improving the Mount Gambier water supply but I assume that amount includes relaying which has already taken place. Can the Premier say whether it is the intention of the Government to electrify the pumping station at Mount Gambier? This is a project that has been under discussion between the Engineering and Water Supply Department and the corporation of Mount Gambier for a number of years, and as the present antiquated pumping set-up is out of date it would be interesting to know if finality has been reached on this important matter.

Mr. DAVIS (Port Pirie)—Many suggestions have been made about how this Government's undertakings might be financed. The member for Chaffey orated at length on social credit. That system may have some merit, and possibly some other system than the one under which we are operating should be introduced. However, the Government and the people of the Commonwealth have decided to continue the present method of financing by loans. I was rather impressed by the remarks of the member for Eyre, particularly when he discussed housing. I believe the Premier did not receive sufficient money from the Loan Council. He expressed satisfaction at the amount received but he could have stood firm with other Premiers and sought more money which could have been used to improve our housing. It is heartbreaking to members to be continually approached by persons wanting trust homes. The Housing Trust has erected many homes and is still performing a creditable job but thousands of homes are needed, including hundreds in the city of Port Pirie. Mr. Fletcher stated that there were 250 sub-standard houses in Mount Gambier, but he is more fortunate than members representing some other districts, for I suppose I could pick out 400 houses in that

condition in Port Pirie. We have no opportunity to do anything for the unfortunate residents, for if they were removed from their homes they would be unable to get houses elsewhere. To purchase a trust home today requires between £2,800 and £3,000 and it is beyond the powers of the workers. Housing Trust rents are also getting beyond them. I agree with Mr. Christian who said that he appreciated the people who built their own homes when finance was available, but there are many others who have been compelled to borrow money in order to do so. Like him, I wonder what will happen to them in a depression, for some of them have committed themselves too heavily. Some have borrowed more than £2,000 and committed themselves to weekly payments of £5 or £6 a week, and even more, and I am fearful of what will happen to them in the event of a recession. If we merely returned to normal, when the weekly wage of the worker would be £6 to £7 a week, they would be in great difficulties. I am not condemning the Government for placing them in that position, but I am fearful of what may happen. We can take our minds back to the Thousand Homes Scheme of the 1920's. When the depression hit us hundreds of unfortunate tenants lost their homes, and I sincerely hope such a thing will never happen again.

I am pleased to note the amount provided for railways. I know the Minister will be pleased to hear me say this, for it is probably the first time I have given him a pat on the back for a number of years. We have allowed our railways to deteriorate to such an extent that large sums are required to restore them, but what pleases me most is that the department has decided to purchase certain passenger cars which will be of great benefit to travelling public. The Government should speed up our railways in order to induce people to use them instead of their own cars and other means of transport. I have travelled extensively on various State railways and I say that ours are worse than any in the Commonwealth at the moment. I suggest that the Government give serious thought to adopting the Budd car as used on the Commonwealth Railways. It would be ideal for service between, say, Adelaide and Port Pirie where the distances between stations are so short that a steam train scarcely has time to attain full speed before it has to slow down again. The Budd car has very fast acceleration and deceleration, and I can honestly say it is the smoothest rail car I have ever travelled in.

I regret to learn that only £6,000 is provided on the Estimates for country sewers. Mr. Fletcher drew the Minister's attention to the position in Mount Gambier, but Port Pirie is in a far more unhappy situation and I was surprised to find that there is nothing in the Estimates to start the Port Pirie sewerage scheme. It has been approved by the Public Works Standing Committee, but I can see no prospect of our getting the work done for a long time. The Government should take into account the health of the people, for I can only say that a town or city the size of Port Pirie, working under its primitive sanitary system, has been most fortunate to escape epidemic disease. I am pleased also that a certain amount of work is to be done on the Port Pirie courthouse and police station, but I agree with other members that the Government should give more information on proposed works. For example, £22,500 is set down for additions and alterations to police residences in about 20 towns, including Port Pirie, from which it is obvious that very little is to be spent in each place. We should be told how much money is to be spent in the Port Pirie district. After a long delay the Government has decided to spend £10,850 for flood lighting the wharves and providing lavatories. The lighting has been needed for a long time. It has been dangerous for the men to work on the wharves and I am glad that the position is to be improved. The sum of £82,000 is to be spent on the Port Pirie hospital in providing a new theatre, men's block, additions to nurses' quarters, alterations to buildings and equipment. I appreciate this expenditure but am disappointed that money previously voted for expenditure on the hospital has not been used. I dealt with that matter in the Address in Reply debate and will not refer to it further now. Australia could do with more land development. The Government should ascertain how much land is available for productive purposes. We have a duty to feed people in other countries. In my district along the foothills there is some development but there is room for more. Every drop of water should be conserved to assist production. There are great possibilities in the River Broughton area for the growing of foodstuffs. The Government should spend money on irrigating this area. I regard it as most suitable for dairy farming and growing vegetables. Further inquiries should be made by the Government. If Government members are sincere in their desire to increase production they should cease condemning the workers

for the lack of production and get the Government to do more in the matter. Ever since I have been in this place it has been the usual thing for members opposite, when they want to get out of a difficulty, to throw the blame on to the workers. Many Australian workers would be glad of the opportunity to settle on the land and do something advantageous for the Commonwealth. In these days South Australia is experiencing prosperous times and we have few unemployed people, but if the good times should go we would soon have a greater number of people unemployed. The best way to find them employment would be to put them on the land. The State is in a sorry position in respect to railways and other public utilities. The Government has been criticized for borrowing money to be spent recklessly but I think it has not borrowed enough because it cannot carry out all the promises made to the electors.

From time to time we read what the Government proposes to do. The Premier told the Loan Council that he had sufficient money to carry out proposed works, but he should not have done that. He should have tried to get more money and go on with more public works. So far the Government has not dismissed any men, but no additional men have been employed. Earlier I was given a guarantee by the Minister of Railways that he had a number of men training for railway work and he promised that when they were fully trained it would be possible to have proper train services to and from Port Pirie. That has not eventuated and the matter should be given consideration. I hope the Government will be able to carry out all the promises it made to assist the Port Pirie area.

First line—State Bank, £2,008,000—passed.

Lands, £170,000; Irrigation and Drainage, £696,000; Woods and Forests, £1,300,000; and Railways, £3,000,000—passed.

Harbors Board, £950,000.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I draw attention to the amount of £20,600 for accommodation for the fishing industry. Can the Minister of Works say whether this is an instalment of the Government's policy of a few years ago to spend a large sum in providing fishing havens? Some money in this direction has been spent at Robe, but as far as I know that is the only work done in implementing the programme. Has any priority been determined?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—An order of priority has been arrived at as the result of collaboration between the Fisheries Depart-

ment and the Harbors Board. The work will be carried out to the extent of the sum provided.

Mr. TAPPING—What is represented by the amount of £125,482 for rehabilitation of the dockyard?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have not the details, but will make them available tomorrow.

Mr. STEPHENS—Is there included among the items for maintenance anything for travelling cranes on the wharves? Will the Minister consider the suggestion I previously made to have evidence taken from people who use the sheds to ascertain whether it would be advisable to have rolling doors instead of sliding doors?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The amount covers the provision of plant. That question of doors comes under reconstruction, and I do not know that any amount is available at present for the purpose.

Mr. TAPPING—How much of the £20,600 is to be spent on the fishing industry?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—As I said earlier, the Harbors Board and Fisheries Department have collaborated and prepared a programme of priority. Last year the Government could not do much in this direction because of more important work. When I receive the order of priority for these works I will bring down details showing where the money is to be expended.

Mr. STEPHENS—Is it intended to proceed with the proposal to have a fish market at Port Adelaide near the Jervois bridge, together with accommodation for fishing boats?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I do not know whether we can make much provision for this purpose, but what has already been done has been appreciated. Much of this work will come under reconstruction from Revenue rather than from Loan.

Mr. PATTINSON—Among the items for sundry works I see no specific reference to the recommendations of the Glenelg-Brighton Foreshores Advisory Committee relating to the reclamation of the Patawalonga, which matter was further investigated and supported by the Public Works Committee. Has any amount been set aside for preliminary work on this necessary and urgent project?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Government, in collaboration with the local council, has been purchasing land in conformity with the recommendation of the committee. The details of the particular work are not before me,

but I will bring them down. In anticipation of something being done in the direction recommended, preliminary provision has been made.

Line passed.

Engineering and Water Supply, £5,175,000.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Can the Minister of Works give any information concerning the amount of £66,000 for mains and services and minor works? Does that include new connections? Will there be any alteration to the policy of not connecting the sewers to houses if they are more than three chains from the main? Is there any back lag in connecting the sewers to houses?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—There is not much back lag. South Australia can claim a record unexcelled elsewhere in Australia. The chairman of the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works said at a public lecture here some time ago that in Melbourne they were two years behind in providing water for houses constructed and five years behind in connecting the sewers. South Australia has been able to practically keep abreast with housing. There must be some lag between the construction of houses and water and sewer connections in the outlying suburbs, but there have been few complaints.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—Does the line "Adelaide sewers, reticulation sewers—miscellaneous extensions and minor works, £280,923" provide for the extension of sewers to the foothill areas where it has been found that septic tanks are not suitable because of the nature of the subsoil?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—That question is now under discussion. However, the number of residents concerned is low, and until further development takes place it would be only robbing Peter to pay Paul to extend sewer services to them. The priorities have to be determined on the basis of doing the greatest good for the greatest number. Negotiations are still going on, and I hope a solution will be found, but it will not be possible to provide those people with sewers this year.

Mr. HAWKER—The people of my district will be glad that £230,000 has been provided for the Jamestown-Caltowie water scheme, but two other small schemes in regard to Spring Hut Creek and Andrews have been approved. Have they been included?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I think they have been, but I will get further details for the honourable member.

Mr. DUNNAGE—Does the £379,000 under "Adelaide Water District" cover the rehabilitation of old mains, or is it only for new services? About two years ago I approached the Minister about water mains in North Unley and Wayville, which were in a bad state. Will any of the money be used to rehabilitate them?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—That money is not all for new work, nor only for reconstruction. Where many new buildings have been erected services have to be provided, and where old mains have corroded they have to be replaced. The same money cannot be spent on two jobs, and as the Loan money is restricted we have to give services to those without a supply before renewing the old mains already supplying other districts.

Mr. STEPHENS—The people of Woodville North realize the difficulty of providing services to everyone, but they would like to know when their area will be sewered because they do not want to go to the expense of installing septic tanks if they will be connected shortly.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—There is no possibility of Woodville North being served in the near future. I took up the honourable member's representations with the Engineer-in-Chief, but he told me it would cost £500,000 to sewer Woodville North and the cost, in relation to the number of people there, puts it out of court for some considerable time. If they install septic tanks they will not be put to much further expense when they are served by a sewerage system. A project to sewer Woodville North has not yet been reported upon by the Public Works Committee.

Mr. CORCORAN—Only £6,000 is provided for sewerage schemes for country towns and Naracoorte is not even mentioned. What work will that £6,000 cover?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The amount shown is in the nature of a token in recognition of the work to be undertaken, and preliminary works and surveys will necessitate that amount. These schemes were reported on in about the order shown, which is about the order of priority recommended by the Engineer-in-Chief. Certainly, Port Pirie is the country town most urgently requiring sewerage facilities.

Mr. PEARSON—Has further consideration been given to the proposed Port Lincoln water supply, is the branch main previously approved for White's River included under the Tod River Water District, and has provision been made for the Warachie branch main which, I understand, has also been approved?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I cannot give those details this evening but I will have the information available tomorrow.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Can the Minister indicate the Government's policy on the provision of house connections in streets where, although many residents wish to avail themselves of water supplies and sewerage connections, a few persons wish to evade the financial obligation involved in the payment of rates?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Each case must be considered on its merits, and policy determined after considering the funds available and the nature of the work required. I think it can be fairly claimed that we have maintained services unexcelled in Australia, and we can do no more than that.

Mr. PATTINSON—Eight years ago, as mayor of Glenelg, I took up with the Minister the question of the sewerage of that part of north Glenelg, north of the Anzac Highway, but no action has been taken not only because manpower and materials have been scarce, but also because of technical difficulties associated with the pumping station and the treatment works. Can the Minister say whether the sum of £21,992 provided for Islington, Finsbury, Ethelton and Glenelg pumping stations or the sum of £26,700 for modifications to Glenelg treatment works, will cover the provision of improved sewerage facilities for North Glenelg?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—That expenditure is provided towards that end, and I will let the honourable member have details of what is proposed under those two headings.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—I thank the Minister for the work done by the E. & W.S. Department in increasing the water pressure along the Angle Vale Rd. Can the Minister give details of the expenditure of £26,000 provided for the South Para reservoir? Will water supply extensions in the Yatta Creek area be covered by the sum of £66,000 provided for mains and services and minor works? Can the residents of James Street, Willaston, expect any improvement in their present unsatisfactory water pressures?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Such work will be dealt with in its order of priority, and I will get the information for the honourable member as early as possible.

Mr. TEUSNER—Can the Minister say whether any of the £14,000 provided for mains and services in the Warren Water district will be spent in replacing the smaller mains with

larger mains in Tanunda, Nuriootpa, and Angaston, so as to overcome the poor pressure in those towns?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I am confident that at least part of the amount would be for the purpose mentioned, as the area is relatively closely settled, but I will get the details for the honourable member.

Mr. JENNINGS—An amount of £21,992 is provided for pumping stations at Islington, Queensbury, Ethelton, and Glenelg, and £26,700 is provided for modifications to the Glenelg treatment works. I recently approached the Minister concerning sewers at Croydon Park and he promised to bring the matter before Cabinet. Do these amounts include any provision for sewerage at Croydon Park and will the new pumping station at Islington facilitate sewerage of that area?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have not any itemized details but will obtain information for the honourable member.

Mr. MICHAEL—Can the Minister say whether the amount provided for the Barossa water district includes provision for work at Freeling?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will obtain information for the honourable member but obviously the most urgent works will be undertaken first.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—An amount of £45,000 is provided for "Encounter Bay—Enlargement of mains in Victor Harbour and improvements to supply in Goolwa—Middleton." How much of that is to be devoted to the enlargement of mains at Victor Harbour?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will ascertain that information for the member.

Mr. STEPHENS—An amount of £40,385 is provided for extensions to the treatment works at Port Adelaide. Every summer residents in that area complain of the offensive smell from the treatment works. Is any of that money to be devoted to overcoming that smell?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Mr. Hobson is a world authority on sewage treatment and he is actively engaged in reducing to a minimum the nuisance caused by smells. I feel sure he will be particularly successful at Port Adelaide, where the aim is to improve the treatment works and obviate smells.

Mr. WHITE—A sum of £10,500 is provided for pumping plants at Murray Bridge, Taillem Bend and Moorook. What is to be done at the pumping plants at Murray Bridge and Taillem Bend? A further amount of £15,000 is provided for work at Murray Bridge, including the enlargement of mains. A few weeks ago

I asked a question concerning the poor water pressure to Hungry Hill which residents suggest is due to the small pipe which feeds that area. Is portion of that amount to be used in supplying a bigger pipe to that area?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have not the particulars in detail but I will obtain the information. If the position at Hungry Hill is as bad as the member states I will discuss the matter with the Engineer-in-Chief with a view to having the difficulty remedied.

Mr. FLETCHER—An amount of £75,000 is provided for improvements to the Mount Gambier water supply. Is it the intention of the Government to electrify the pumping plant at Blue Lake? How much of the £6,000 provided for country sewerage schemes is to be devoted to Mount Gambier?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Mount Gambier Corporation has been in communication with the Engineer-in-Chief but I do not know whether complete agreement has been reached concerning electrification of the pumping plant, but it is intended to electrify it. Referring to the second question, that amount is a token payment and serves as an authority to proceed with work to the extent of making preliminary examinations.

Mr. CORCORAN—A large amount is provided for country water districts but there does not appear to be any provision for Millicent. Is that because the Public Works Committee has not reported on a proposal which is before it? Are we to abandon all hope during this financial year of any further progress in that project even if the Public Works Committee's report is favourable?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Until the committee's report is received the Government, under the statute, cannot lawfully introduce any expenditure whatever. If the report is received in sufficient time and the Treasurer is in a position to supplement the Estimates it could be considered, but it would be entirely dependent on the funds available.

Mr. Corcoran—But there is still a possibility?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—On the financial side this scheme shows one of the best prospects I have seen but I cannot give any assurance in view of the fact that all the Loan funds have been allotted.

Line passed.

Architect-in-Chief, £2,605,000.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I am interested in two lines on page 12—purchase of land and residences for school purposes, £82,000, and new residences and alterations and additions to

residences, £20,850. Provision was made on the Loan Estimates, I think the year before last, for a new residence for the headmaster of the Peterborough high school, but nothing has yet eventuated. Can the Minister say whether there is any immediate intention of proceeding with the work as the present accommodation is totally unsuitable and costly to maintain?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will ask the Architect-in-Chief to let me have a full report tomorrow.

Mr. WHITE—The sum of £6,000 is provided for new courthouses at Barmera, Berri and Murray Bridge. A courthouse is badly needed at Murray Bridge. Can the Minister say how much of this sum is to be spent in that town? Also a sum of £22,500 is provided for additions and alterations to police residences in numerous towns including Murray Bridge, where a new police station is urgently needed; five officers are now working in a room 20ft. by 18ft. Can the Minister say how much is to be expended on this work?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The amount set down is what will be spent this financial year on the three places, but the honourable member can be confident that the work will not be stinted and that it will be carried out expeditiously. I have not the details regarding the other item, but will get the information and make it available to the honourable member.

Mr. HUTCHENS—In 1949-50 Estimates provision was made for boys technical schools at Croydon and Norwood. As the Public Works Committee Committee recommended the building of a boys' technical school at Croydon at a cost of £66,626, will this year's provision for technical schools be sufficient to enable that work to be commenced, or is there some other method of financing this project?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—As previously indicated, the full amount available is to be expended in the order of priority laid down by the various departments, but I see no line that will permit this work going ahead this year.

Mr. TEUSNER—I am pleased to see the large sum of £100,300 set down for septic tank installations and additional lavatory accommodation for schools, as the lavatory accommodation in many small country schools is deplorable. Is it the policy of the department to change over to the septic tank system in State schools throughout South Australia? In the last month or so I have on several occasions communicated with the Education

Department in connection with the grading and paving of the Angaston school yard which is in a deplorable state. Can the Minister tell me whether work on it is included in the total amount of £24,100? A few years ago an allotment of land was acquired in the main street by the department concerned for the purpose of erecting a new police station and residence. The present station and residence is about 90 years old, and it is proposed to make alterations and additions to it. I hope the department does not intend to utilize it for any length of time but will with all speed proceed with the erection of the new station and residence in the main street, which work I understand was recommended some years ago by a previous Police Commissioner.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will let the honourable member have information regarding the grading and paving of the Angaston school yard and the erection of a police station and residence. Only occasionally is money spent on septic tank installations. It is only when there is no alternative available that the work is done.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I thank the Minister for placing on the Estimates the line dealing with new court houses at Barmera and Berri. Some years ago we asked for a new court house at Berri where the justices of the peace had to work under difficult conditions. I hope the needs of the area will be remembered when the matter of priority is considered.

Mr. W. JENKINS—A new police station is to be built at Strathalbyn, and the sum of £9,000 is provided for the building of new police stations at four towns. I want to know how much is to be spent at Strathalbyn. Does the answer the Minister gave to the member for Murray apply also in this instance?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Yes.

Mr. FLETCHER—Regarding the Mount Gambier hospital, the sum of £1,500 is to be spent of a new residence and construction of road and footpaths. Can the Minister indicate the work proposed?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I shall get the information for the honourable member.

Mr. JENNINGS—I notice that provision is made for the expenditure of money on new primary schools at Enfield and Northfield. I am astonished to see this on the Estimates because the schools are already built and occupied. I am glad that a new primary school is to be built at Hampstead because it will serve a rapidly growing area. Can the Minister

indicate when the building will be started and completed, and can he say specifically the additions and alterations to be made to the Enfield high school?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Obviously it is impossible to say when the Hampstead building will be started and completed. When the authority is given by the passing of these Estimates the Architect in Chief will proceed immediately with the work. Then it will depend upon the progress made by the contractor. I shall get information with regard to the Enfield high school.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—The Gawler technical school is in the centre of a large area and its work has been commended. For some years negotiations were in hand to alter the old electoral office in Murray Street. Is that the work included in the total of £7,950 for alterations and additions to technical schools? The sum of £14,450 is to be spent on alterations and additions to high schools, and I am pleased there is to be some work on the Gawler high school. A few months ago a highly placed officer in the Education Department told me that for its class of school the school was probably the worst equipped in the State. I have suggested a number of improvements in the last 12 months. Can the Minister indicate the alterations to be made at the school? At the Gawler primary school four temporary buildings have been erected. They are of benefit, but they are on a lower ground level than the rest of the school, and at times the ground is very wet and muddy. Can the Minister say if any money is to be spent at this school to improve the position?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—A number of questions have been asked by members in regard to these matters and I shall bring down specific answers for them.

Mr. CORCORAN—In response to representations, I was assured by the Minister of Education that a school would be erected at the beginning of the school year for people living near Mount Bruce, which is adjacent to Lucindale. Can the Minister of Works say what the position is?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have not the details, but under "urgent accommodation" an amount of £37,000 is provided and if this is a small item it may be included in that amount. I will make inquiries and bring down a reply.

Mr. FLETCHER—Both Mount Gambier and Port MacDonnell are mentioned in reference to the amount provided for additions and

alterations to police and court house buildings. Can the Minister say what is to be done at these places?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will get details and let the honourable member know.

Mr. WHITE—Will the Minister get details of the work proposed to be done at the Mannum and Monarto Junction schools?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Yes.

Mr. STEPHENS—The Port Adelaide police station is possibly the worst in the State. How much money will be spent here, and will it be on alterations or only a few repairs?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will obtain the information for the honourable member.

Mr. DUNNAGE—I notice that £250,000 is to be spent on the Parkside and Northfield Mental Hospitals. Over the years it has been understood that the Parkside Mental Hospital's operations would be transferred to Enfield, but it would appear now, because of the large amount proposed to be spent, that there is no possibility of that. Has the Government ever considered this proposal, and what objection could be raised to taking male patients to the new tuberculosis ward at Enfield?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I do not know why the honourable member should assume that it is Government policy to shift the Parkside Hospital. The large amounts spent there,

and proposed to be spent, indicate that that is not feasible. It is also not feasible to remove patients to Enfield as suggested even if the accommodation were available, because they require special treatment.

Mr. MICHAEL—What is the nature of the classrooms proposed to be built at the Eudunda school?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will obtain the information.

Line passed.

Miscellaneous, £11,539,000—passed.

Grand total, £27,618,000—passed, and resolution agreed to by the House.

PUBLIC PURPOSES LOAN BILL.

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

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to authorize the Treasurer to borrow and expend moneys for public works and purposes and to enact other provisions incidental thereto.

Motion carried. Resolution agreed to in Committee and adopted by the House.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 10.45 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, August 20, at 2 p.m.