

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.**

Tuesday, September 1, 1953.

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

**QUESTIONS.****RADIUM HILL WATER SUPPLY.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The following is an extract from the *Advertiser* of August 29 under the heading, "Haste urged with Water Scheme":—

**BROKEN HILL**, August 28.—The City Council will request members for the district to press for the completion of the water storage at Menindee. The meeting last night endorsed the recommendation of the Water Board which said the water position was serious and there was urgent need to have the work completed by the end of the year. Yesterday the BIC sent a similar request.

Has the Premier any intimation from the Broken Hill Water Board that the water position in the area is serious, and that there is a possibility of a water shortage interfering with the delivery of water to Radium Hill when the pipeline from the Umberumberka Reservoir is completed?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have had no intimation from the Broken Hill Water Board that the position is serious, nor has the Premier of New South Wales sent any communication to me on that matter. It was realized when we negotiated with the Water Board that its scheme was not quite complete and would not be effective until fully completed, but, on the other hand, the amount of water required at Radium Hill is relatively small and the board expressed the view that it would be able to make the necessary supply available. It is only a small main and designed to provide only domestic water for Radium Hill. The water for industrial purposes will be obtained locally. It will be somewhat saline, but nevertheless suitable for the purpose required. It will be some little time before the pipeline from Broken Hill to Radium Hill is completed.

**GALVANIZED IRON SUPPLIES.**

Mr. HEASLIP—The following is an extract from a letter I have received from a firm with which I placed an order for galvanized corrugated iron, to be used for the covering of hay which I am trying to conserve:—

We have an order on hand for you for Australian galvanized iron, but Lysaghts are unfortunately not able to give us any idea when it can be delivered. Quite recently we offered to send our lorries to Newcastle or Port Kembla to pick up any lengths available, but

the manufacturers indicated that, even if our teams went to New South Wales, they were not in a position to supply.

The letter goes on to say that they are now ordering imported galvanized iron from Great Britain, the cost of which is from £125 to £130 a ton, whereas, I understand, the price of Australian iron is about £85 a ton. From a reply given previously by the Premier I understood that galvanized corrugated iron is not available. Can he do anything to make it more readily available, particularly in view of the fact that we are now exporting steel, although not able to supply our own requirements of galvanized corrugated iron?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member knows that the Government now has no control whatever over the sale or distribution of building materials. By way of a direction the Government cannot assist. Last week I asked Mr. Pollnitz, previously Director of Building Materials, to go to New South Wales and interview the authorities at Port Kembla and Newcastle. On his return he informed me that there were large quantities of steel materials of all sorts awaiting delivery to South Australia. The difficulty was mainly to get them loaded. It appears that fairly large quantities of steel materials are now being exported from Newcastle and Port Kembla and that overseas ships are taking their share of the berths and loading labour available with the result that the supply to South Australia is being prejudiced to a certain extent. Following on Mr. Pollnitz's report I asked that an additional ship be put on to lift a special load and I have been informed that that will be done. I also discussed the matter with one of the directors of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company to see if steps could be taken to give interstate ships priority. He has informed me that in future overseas ships are to be requested not to occupy more than one berth at the same time at either place to allow the freer loading of interstate ships. He also told me that a large additional number of men have been accepted by the union, and in consequence the flow of materials to South Australia should be more free. Following on these things I believe the position will improve, but the Government now has no direct control over building materials, nor can it direct any authority that it must sell along certain channels. I am prepared to take up any individual problem on behalf of the constituents of any member and try to find a solution.

## PRIVATE BUS SERVICES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Is the Minister of Works able to say whether the Tramways Trust intends to take over the bus services now operating from Daw Park, South Road and Ascot Park, and if not, could he ascertain from the trust how they will be continued under private ownership, with a view to either improving or extending the services under private enterprise or under the trust?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Government's responsibility does not extend to the rostering or supervision of bus services. Therefore, I have no information on the point raised, but will get a report from the general manager of the trust and bring it down.

## POTATO SUPPLIES.

Mr. LAWN—I understand that weekly potato requirements for the metropolitan area amount to about 800 tons. About a fortnight ago 570 tons from Western Australia were landed in Adelaide to be sold at 7½ lb. a pound as against 6d. for locally grown potatoes. I understand that South Australian potatoes are still not available but some supplies from the Western Australian shipment are still on the market, although in short supply. Can the Premier explain the position?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—As I said previously in answer to the member for Onkaparinga, at present a large quantity of potatoes grown in South Australia are not being marketed through the Potato Board, and consequently it is not known how many bags of locally grown potatoes are being made available by growers each week to metropolitan and other consumers. It is quite obvious that if the consumer had the choice of buying locally grown potatoes at 6d. a pound or imported potatoes at 7½d. he would purchase the 6d. potatoes on every occasion. The fact that the Western Australian potatoes have stayed on the market so long, in my opinion, arises from the fact that the shortage has been over estimated.

Mr. Riches—Would any South Australian potatoes be masquerading as Western Australian?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The prices officials inform me that they have no difficulty in detecting a breach of the sale conditions, and they have the complete power to check up on the validity of sales. At present prices officers are paying some attention to that matter. I am not quite sure whether the member for Adelaide is pleased or sorry that potatoes are available.

Mr. Lawn—I want to know why they claim they are from Western Australia?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The reason for the higher price for Western Australian potatoes is that they have to carry very heavy transportation costs which the South Australian potatoes do not carry.

Mr. LAWN—In *The Mail* of August 22 appeared statements by three persons concerning the shortage of potatoes, and the following are extracts:—

Matron B. Harding—The 65 children at Morialta Protestant Children's Home have not tasted potatoes for six weeks.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. O'Halloran)—Workers are being forced to buy potatoes at blackmarket prices.

Professor Sir Stanton Hicks—Thousands of South Australians are being robbed of one of their most vital foods.

Has the Premier's attention been drawn to the shortage, and will the Government consider taking action to remedy the position, having in mind, among other methods, the compulsory acquisition of supplies with provision for proper compensation to growers?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have seen a number of statements in the press concerning the shortage, but on examination some have proved to be inaccurate. General statements often contain some truth and something which is not the truth. If the honourable member had followed up the first case he referred to he would have seen that on the following day the matron stated that she had then been supplied with potatoes. Instead of addressing his question to me he should have addressed it to the New South Wales Government, which decontrolled potatoes and caused all the dislocation in prices which has been so manifest throughout Australia. If we did what the honourable member's colleagues had done in New South Wales we would decontrol prices and allow the sky to be the limit.

Mr. Lawn—What is the price in New South Wales?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The last I heard was £85 a ton wholesale. The New South Wales Government decontrolled the price against the advice and urgent representations of Price Ministers for the other States, and has refused to recontrol it.

Mr. Lawn—State price control has broken down.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It has broken down in New South Wales because they had to decontrol the price. South Australia always tried loyally to assist the other States in their

price control structure, and has never decontrolled prices here against the wishes of other States, although in some instances it may have been immediately favourable to it. A conference is being called to try to arrive at a solution of the problem which now arises, particularly in regard to New South Wales and Queensland. Recently the latter State decontrolled out of hand a large block of commodities on the ground that they could no longer afford to maintain prices control. I therefore suggest that the honourable member's question would be more fittingly referred to his colleagues in the eastern States. The South Australian Government's policy is to see that every section gets a fair deal.

#### KINGSWOOD TRAM SERVICE.

Mr. DUNKS—Great disappointment has been expressed by people in my electorate, particularly in the areas of the corporations of Mitcham and Unley, that a bus service is not to supersede the tram service on the Kingswood line. It has been rumoured that the councils have in some way prohibited the trust from running its buses on that route. Does the Minister of Works know under what authority the councils can do this?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The position is that the trust has undertaken to maintain a certain area of roadway each side of the tram track, and it may be argued that by taking off the trams and running buses the trust would be relieved of that responsibility. If that were a correct interpretation of the Act, it would follow that the maintenance expense that the trust could save by running buses instead of trams would be thrown on the local governing authority. I do not think that is correct. In my opinion, the council said in effect, "Inasmuch as you have to maintain a certain section of the road if you run trams, is it not a fair thing that if you run buses you contribute towards the upkeep of the road as you do at present?" In my opinion it is not a question of prohibition but of equity. It is a question of local government. As the tramways are under the control of the municipal authorities, I do not know that it is a matter in which I can intervene except to say that so far as I know the position the councils were quite justified in their attitude.

#### CEMENT SUPPLIES.

Mr. DAVIS—Recently in reply to a question regarding cement supplies the Premier said the position had eased and greater supplies were available in South Australia. That reply

appeared in the *Advertiser*, and as a result I have received the following letter from a merchant from Port Pirie:—

In a statement in the *Advertiser* yesterday the Premier made reference to cement supplies in this State. The quotation reads as follows:—"Mr. Playford said that production of cement had been stepped up sharply in South Australia and the general position was easier. If members knew of urgent cases where intervention was warranted, and if they could give the quantity of cement involved and the name of the merchant who was normally the supplier, the Premier would do his best to see that relief was given." Our remarks on this statement are that for this area at least cement supplies were never worse. To support our statement we have taken from our order book the attached list which dates from April 20, 1951, to date, and except in one case only, does not include quantities under  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton. As you will see, this totals approximately 150 tons and we could make up another 50 tons needed for urgent repair work. You will also note that most of the names given are for new homes of couples which are under construction or held up for completion on account of cement.

If I supply the Premier with the list attached to this letter, will he endeavour to get supplies to the merchant at Port Pirie?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The position with regard to cement is as I stated. Production has been stepped up largely, and as a consequence there has been an easing in the general use of cement. Control over its use was entirely abolished and people are now using it for all sorts of purposes for which a few months ago they were not permitted to use it.

Mr. Stephens—When they can get it.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—When I made that statement last week I think only three members came forward with any requirement of cement. I was able to see that they got supplies within 24 hours. Since then, one or two people from outside have also approached me and I have been able to find supplies for them within a relatively short period.

Mr. Stephens—Local cement?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, at the Australian price fixed by the Prices Commissioner. I think that one member sitting near the honourable member availed himself of my offer and was immediately accommodated. If the demand is an urgent one I will do my utmost to help, although the Government does not now control building materials and does not desire to set up as a merchandizing department. The good offices of the Government are available to assist, particularly urgent housing activities, but it will not

become an agent for merchants, and I do not think members would desire it to do so. However, it seems that that is what the member for Port Pirie is asking for. He is not asking for a supply for a producer or a consumer, but for a merchant. Merchants have their own activities and should be able to get supplies in the usual way, but if any person has a job held up for want of cement the Government will do its utmost to see that supplies are made available.

#### STURT RESERVE, MURRAY BRIDGE.

Mr. WHITE—Has the Premier obtained a reply to the question I asked last week about repair work required at the Sturt Reserve, Murray Bridge?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Director of the Tourist Bureau, Mr. Baker, has been in touch with the authorities at Murray Bridge and has inspected the area. He reports:—

When at Murray Bridge recently I inspected the Sturt Reserve in company with the town clerk. Some damage was undoubtedly caused by the floods, but I am surprised at the estimate of £1,000 to repair the damage and to render the area immune from future flooding. I should imagine that the bulk of this expenditure must be for protective works. I have had no approach from the council for any assistance, but if an application were submitted, I would be prepared to recommend that some financial help should be given to repair the damage. This would be in keeping with action taken at Renmark.

#### QUESTIONING OF ACCUSED PERSONS.

Mr. DUNSTAN—On July 30 I asked the Premier a question relating to the questioning of accused persons by police officers after they had come up and were remanded for trial and while they had counsel acting for them. The Premier asked me to give him instances. I find myself with an *embarras de richesse*, but I will confine the instances to a very few. One case that prompted me to ask my question was that of Ronald Joseph Dittmar, which came before the Police Court a couple of months ago. He was charged with breaking and entering and the police, finding they had an insufficient case against him—their only case being that they had a confession from him and he was a simple-minded person—withdrawed it, but the night before they withdrew it, and although they knew I was acting for him, the police visited his home. When I protested to Detective Leane he said that no car had gone out there, but when I said I had seen it, he said, “We have been

advised by the Crown Law Office that this practice is perfectly legal,” with which I do not disagree. The second instance is one which gives ample proof of the practice adopted by the police officer concerned, and a case came before the Supreme Court—

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—Question.

Mr. DUNSTAN—I was asked by the Premier to give certain information in order to give him a basis for a reply to my question.

The SPEAKER—Order. Under the Standing Orders when any other member calls “Question” the question must be put.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Very well. Is the Premier aware of the fact that in a case before the Supreme Court in 1951—a case against Williams—Detective Canny admitted to asking questions of the prisoner without the knowledge of defending counsel, although he knew counsel was acting? On oath, Detective Canny, in reply to a question, “Is it your custom to interrogate prisoners in custody when you know they have counsel acting for them?” said:—

I never make a habit of consulting counsel when I want to question a prisoner. I thought it quite proper.

Will the Premier see that this unethical practice of questioning prisoners while they have counsel acting for them, and without the knowledge of those counsel, ceases immediately?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I asked the honourable member whether he would give me the names of the persons concerned and the circumstances. I did not mean he should give them publicly, but privately, so that I could get a report in order to satisfy myself whether any injustice had been done to any person. The honourable member did not give that information; in fact, the Crown Law Office went to great trouble in trying to trace the cases, from the nature of the question asked, but whether the officers succeeded in identifying the cases I am not sure. One case they brought along I examined but could find nothing that did not appear to me entirely proper. As the honourable member did not give me any specific information I may not have had the right case before me. However, if he will give me the information in writing and the names of the police officers concerned I will make an investigation of the position and get a full report for him. A similar offer was made about a fortnight ago, and it still stands.

**CUMMINS-EDILLILIE ROAD.**

Mr. PEARSON—On September 12 last the Premier was in Port Lincoln and met a deputation asking for special consideration to the road between Cummins and Edillilie. He told the deputation that about £53,000 would be available for expenditure on the section southwards four miles from Cummins, and that in addition, private contracting would be engaged for the other section further south towards Edillilie. Up to the present less than £20,000 has been spent on the road.

Mr. Stephens—Question!

Labor members—No.

The SPEAKER—Objection having been taken the honourable member must now ask his question.

Mr. PEARSON—May I ask, Sir, whether the honourable member persists in his objection?

The SPEAKER—He doesn't have to persist. He has raised the point and the objection must be upheld.

Mr. Stephens—I withdraw the objection.

The SPEAKER—No. The Standing Order is explicit. Any objection calling my attention to the matter stands.

Mr. PEARSON—Can the Minister of Local Government say whether the amount originally intimated by the Premier as being available for the road is still available, and, if so, when is it proposed to proceed with the work on the section, and will the original programme as outlined by the Premier be carried out to fulfilment?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Work in this area has been designed with the ultimate purpose of providing reasonable road access between Port Lincoln and Kyanecutta with the more immediate objective of completion of the portion between Port Lincoln and Cummins. Considerable expenditure has already occurred on the main work, in acquisition of land, provision of culverts and bridges, and the forming and gravelling in various localities. It is therefore difficult to define the figure mentioned (*viz.*, £80,000) as to any one portion, as ultimately the work will cost some hundreds of thousands of pounds to complete. The section, Cummins-Edillilie, is only a portion of the whole, and has already had expenditure in excess of the £14,000 mentioned. It has been subjected to unexpected wear due to wheat cartage and weather conditions resulting in much heavier expenditure than originally expected. As experience had shown that construction during wet weather was both uneconomic and ineffective, work was temporarily suspended and the gang trans-

ferred to other work in the district for which many requests, had also been received. It is intended to recommence the Cummins-Edillilie section as soon as weather conditions are more suitable, which under normal conditions should be within the next month or two. Expenditure on both departmental and council work will probably exceed the figure of £66,000 mentioned.

**TRANSFERS OF SCHOOL TEACHERS.**

Mr. RICHES—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Education obtained a report following on the question I asked on August 27 regarding the transfer of 15 head teachers in preference to providing some temporary relief at the school which one head teacher is leaving?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—As I mentioned extemporaneously, the transfer of teachers from one place to another is largely dependent upon the degree of seniority and in order to establish their claims for promotion. In substantiation of my extemporaneous reply the Minister of Education reports:—

The series of appointments, of which the transfer of the headmaster of the Whyalla South school is one, involves eight headmasters (not 15) and are consequent upon the resignation of a class I headmaster. When vacancies occur and are to be filled from the normal promotion lists the appointments are made immediately, otherwise the teachers concerned would suffer financial loss through any delay in the promotions to which they are entitled. The chain of appointments at the end of the present term has already been arranged and a delay to the end of the year, besides delaying these promotions, could cause serious inconvenience to the teachers in their house accommodation and other arrangements. It is not considered that these transfers will upset the curricula in the schools concerned.

Sometimes there is the instance of a teacher wanting to remain, or parents wanting him to stay, but other issues are involved, such as the right of the teacher to promotion, which often means removing to another place.

**RUBBISH DUMP AT PORT ADELAIDE.**

Mr. STEPHENS—Recently some children were burned at a rubbish dump at Port Adelaide, which is regarded as dangerous. Can the Minister of Marine say if it is on Harbors Board property, and, if so, has he a report on the matter?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—When I saw the report of the regrettable incident I immediately asked the general manager of the Harbors Board for a report on the matter. I asked, in effect, who put the ash there, and

if not put there as ash who caused the material that was there to be ignited. The reply is as follows:—

It has not been possible to trace who was responsible for dumping this rubbish or to determine what the rubbish consisted of. It appeared to have been dumped some time ago and it could have become ignited by spontaneous combustion. On the other hand it might be that some live ashes were amongst the rubbish. The heap appeared to have been slowly smouldering for some time and there was nothing to suggest from its appearance on top that it was burning underneath. The board has a bulldozer at work removing the burning heap and dumping it in an adjacent swamp. Action is being considered to prevent a repetition.

As some children cannot read a notice I will ask the board to see that they have no access to the dump, and to prevent the public from putting dangerous material on it.

#### APPOINTMENT OF GUIDANCE OFFICERS.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Education obtained a report following on the question I asked last week concerning the possibility of appointing additional guidance officers to assist the work of the Education Department?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I took up the matter with the Minister of Education. The position arose out of statements attributed to Mr. Whitford. Relevant extracts from the report of the Director of Education are as follows:—

I have examined the report as it appeared in the *Advertiser* and as it is quoted in the extract from *Hansard*, and am assured by Mr. Whitford of the following two points:—

1. The report is not an accurate statement of what he said. He did say that there are already in this department a senior guidance officer and two other guidance officers who are engaged on this work. He went on to say that with the growing numbers of children in secondary schools in this State it would be necessary at some time to increase the total number of guidance officers from three to five. It will be noted that this is quite different from the statement attributed to him in the press report.

2. Mr. Whitford also informed me that this mention of guidance officers was one point only out of a large number of points which he made in his address. To quote this point out of its context is to give it a wrong construction altogether. Mr. Whitford was dealing with the whole problem of helping girls and boys leaving school to obtain the kind of employment for which their aptitudes fit them, and explained, *inter alia*, that while the teachers already assigned to this work in individual schools had done, and were continuing to do, good work in advising those students who were leaving, the problem of satisfactorily

placing girls and boys in industry was becoming more complex, and that the advice of permanent and specially trained officers for this work was likely to become more needed in the future than it had been in the past."

It should be pointed out that there are already three Guidance Officers in the Education Department, that the satisfactory placing of girls and boys leaving school in industry and business in accordance with their aptitudes and desires is one of the services which this department has conducted for a number of years, and that the improvement of the services which this department renders to the community is a matter of constant concern to the Minister and his officers.

Under the circumstances it is not regarded as necessary to appoint more officers at present.

#### APPOINTMENT OF RAILWAYS COMMISSIONER.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Can the Premier say when the position of Railways Commissioner, rendered vacant by the regretted death of Mr. Chapman, will be filled?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That involves a question of the highest policy, but it is expected that the position will be filled in the reasonably near future. There is no particular reason for the Government to hold up the appointment. It is not proposed to appoint anyone from abroad, or indeed from outside the railway service. It is a question of selecting the most suitable applicant from those available. The appointment has been held up because there were one or two questions of departmental organization to be examined.

#### ELECTRICITY TRUST LOAN.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Has the Premier a reply to my recent question regarding the number of subscribers to the Electricity Trust loan?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. I think it will give much satisfaction to all members. It shows to what extent the loan was supported by small investors. The information is as follows:—

Applicants.	Amount allotted.
	£
918—under £200 . . . . .	88,540
991—£200-£500 . . . . .	311,050
348—£500-£1,000 . . . . .	201,050
104—over £1,000 . . . . .	399,360
<u>2,361</u>	<u>£1,000,000</u>

#### WESTERN DISTRICTS HOSPITAL.

Mr. TAPPING—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked on August 18 about the opening of the Western Districts Hospital?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Director-General of Medical Services reports:—

The Architect-in-Chief reports that it is expected that building operations on the nurses' quarters, which will be used as a temporary maternity hospital, will be finished in March, 1954. Furnishings have already been ordered and it is hoped that they will be available when building operations have been completed. Under these circumstances it is not anticipated at present that the official opening ceremony could take place before May. It is expected that the permanent maternity block will not be completed for at least another 18 months.

#### SATELLITE TOWN NEAR SALISBURY.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—On August 18 I asked the Premier for certain information regarding the amounts being received per acre under grazing and agricultural licences for land that will ultimately be used for the proposed satellite town north of Salisbury. Has he any further information to give me?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The chairman of the Housing Trust reports:—

The amount being received per acre under licences of the land of the Housing Trust north of Salisbury varies according to the use to which the land is put and the time when the licences were originally granted. Some licences are for grazing only and some for cultivation purposes. Some were in existence before the trust purchased the land and are still current, while others have been issued since the time of purchase. The average rent charged is £1 11s. 8d. per acre.

#### SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. DUNKS—I noticed in the press recently a report on the sittings of the House in the next few weeks. Can the Premier indicate the intentions of the Government for this week and next week?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is desired that the House sit today and tomorrow, though not in the evenings. The House will adjourn on Thursday for show week and will resume after the show. That will mean four sitting days lost on account of the show.

#### OVERSEAS VISITS BY TRAMWAY OFFICERS.

Mr. LAWN—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked recently about overseas visits by tramway officers?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The general manager of the trust reports:—

No officers of the trust have been sent abroad in recent months. In 1950 two officers visited Great Britain, several European countries and North America, and the cost was

£4,500. These officers presented a report to the trust and made recommendations, some of which have been endorsed whilst others are under consideration for inclusion in the forward plan for the rehabilitation and development of the trust.

#### HOUSING COSTS.

Mr. LAWN—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked recently about comparisons of costs of State Bank and Housing Trust homes?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have a report signed by both the chairman of the State Bank and the chairman of the Housing Trust. It states:—

It is very difficult to make a true comparison of the cost of State Bank and Housing Trust houses as what is provided with its houses by each institution differs to a substantial degree. These differences occur in such matters as the design of the houses, the cost of the land, the height of ceilings, the installation of gas or electrical appliances and whether hired or purchased, the provision of rainwater tanks, differences in type and quantity of fencing provided, the provision of shower alcoves, the quantity of tiling and terrazzo supplied, the quantity of built-in furniture provided, the supply of clothes lines and wire doors and screens, the payment of road moieties, the use of imported materials, the roofing material used, the use of other walling material in substitution for bricks, and so on. The sale prices of recently occupied State Bank houses varied from £2,567 for a house of 1,170 sq. ft. to £2,841 for a house of 1,286 sq. ft. The sale prices of Housing Trust houses recently occupied range from £2,775 for a house of 1,140 sq. ft. to £3,200 for a house of 1,304 sq. ft.

#### FIRE BRIGADES CONTRIBUTIONS.

Mr. TAPPING—An extract from a letter I have received from the town clerk of Port Adelaide states:—

The mayor suggests you ask the honourable the Premier the following question:—I am given to understand that the Fire Brigades Board has no alternative other than to allocate any contribution by the Government to the other contributors. If this is the case will the Government amend the Fire Brigades Act to provide that any special grant to the board in excess of that required by legislation shall be a deduction *pro rata* from council's contributions?

I put that question to the Premier?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The original legislation in regard to the Fire Brigade provided that insurance companies should provide a certain percentage of the cost, local government authorities a certain percentage, and the Government a certain percentage. Later the Government of the day, not the

present Government, amended the legislation and included a proviso that, notwithstanding the existing provisions, the total amount provided by the Government should not exceed £10,000. The Government recognizes that the State gets protection through the operations of the board and notwithstanding the proviso it includes additional amounts in the Estimates each year. They should not be used to limit the responsibility of other contributors, but for the general purposes of the board. Any additional contributions by the Government should go into a pool rather than be used for particular purposes. A large number of people do not contribute anything in this matter, which means that people who insure with insurance companies are providing protection not only for themselves but for the people who do not insure. The substantial amount contributed by the State—and it will be higher this year—should be used for the general purposes of the board.

Mr. STEPHENS—Will the Premier ascertain the amount of money paid by overseas and interstate vessels coming to Port Adelaide for the protection they receive from the "Fire Queen" and other firefighting appliances at the port?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—They pay berthing costs and harbour dues. They pay heavily towards harbour maintenance and fire protection, and also heavy insurance.

Mr. Stephens—Not in South Australia.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—To a large extent insurance companies are tied together and they lay off between themselves certain risks. Some of the companies make contributions to the board. I assure the honourable member that harbour dues and charges will receive attention in due course.

#### AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION FROM ENGLAND.

Mr. BROOKMAN (on notice)—

1. Is there any permanent employee at South Australia House, in London, who is especially experienced in agricultural matters?

2. If so, is it the intention of the Government—(a) to instruct him to write an air mail letter each quarter, describing the most recent developments in British farming methods; and (b) to arrange for this letter to be published in the *Journal of Agriculture*, or released to the press?

3. If there is no such person employed at South Australia House will the Government consider some other method of regularly obtaining this information for farmers?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The replies are:—

1 and 2. No Agricultural Department expert is stationed in London.

3. This question will be referred to the Director of Agriculture. Numerous reports upon overseas experiments are received every year, and a very comprehensive library of such reports is already available here.

#### RATES ON PENSIONERS' HOMES.

Mr. TAPPING for Mr. JENNINGS (on notice)—Is it the intention of the Government to introduce legislation to amend the Local Government Act to enable councils to strike lower rates for age and invalid pensioners?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—No.

#### BIRKENHEAD WHARVES.

Mr. TAPPING (on notice)—Is it the intention of the Harbours Board to undertake the reconstruction of Birkenhead wharves during this financial year?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH.—In the Harbours Board's planned programme for the development of Port Adelaide there are several proposed measures that stand higher in the list of priorities than does the reconstruction of Birkenhead wharves. These, together with other works already approved and in progress, will require for some considerable time to come, all the resources in money, labour and materials that are available.

#### CEMENT PRODUCTION.

Mr. TAPPING (on notice)—

1. What amount of cement was produced in South Australia during the years 1951-52 and 1952-53 respectively?

2. How much cement was produced by the Adelaide Cement Company, Birkenhead, in each of these years?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD.—The replies are:—

1. 1951-1952, 104,545 tons; 1952-1953, 132,404 tons.

2. 1951-1952, 58,275 tons; 1952-1953, 70,860 tons.

#### BAROSSA AND WARREN RESERVOIR RESERVES.

Mr. JOHN CLARK (on notice)—

1. What is the total area of—(a) the Barossa reservoir reserve; (b) the Warren reservoir reserve?

2. What was the original cost of each of these reservoirs?



3. Are these reserves ratable by the district council of Barossa in which area they are situated?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The replies are:—

1. The areas of the Barossa and Warren reservoir reserves are:—(a) Barossa, 2,271 acres; (b) Warren, 808 acres.

2. The original cost of both reservoirs, alone, amounted to—(a) Barossa, £140,000; (b) Warren, £80,000. The capital expenditure to date, including complementary mains and tanks, amounts to—(a) Barossa, £1,260,000; (b) Warren, £1,203,000. Total overall cost, £2,463,000.

3. Crown property is not ratable. However, the benefits of the construction of these reservoirs and reticulation therefrom has greatly enhanced the prosperity and consequent ratable value of the whole of the rest of the district, and respective councils have benefited greatly thereby.

#### RURAL HOUSING.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (on notice)—

1. How many houses have been built by the Housing Trust, under the scheme inaugurated by that body in 1952, to enable housing accommodation to be provided for employees on rural holdings?

2. How many of these houses have been erected on farms?

3. How many have been erected on land contiguous to farms?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Up to the present 35 houses have been completed by the Housing Trust under the rural housing scheme. Of these, 29 have been built on farms, one has been built in a town for occupation by a rural worker, three for occupation by employees of district councils, and two for occupation by employees of the purchasers.

#### PETERBOROUGH SEWERAGE.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (on notice)—Has a scheme for providing sewerage for Peterborough been prepared by the Engineering and Water Supply Department?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Surveys and plans have been completed. Preliminary designs have been prepared and estimates of the capital cost and other financial aspects are now in course of preparation. When this information has been received the proposal will be submitted to Cabinet with a view to having it referred to the Public Works Standing Committee.

#### MAINTENANCE ORDERS (FACILITIES FOR ENFORCEMENT) ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

#### CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 25. Page 490.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—In view of the general agreement as to the desirability of appointing additional Ministers it is remarkable that the Premier should have found it necessary to labour the case as he did. The typewritten explanation of the Bill handed to me covered only one and a half foolscap pages, but the Premier's explanation, as recorded in *Hansard*, occupied several galleys. I wonder whether he found it necessary to placate some opposition to the Bill, real or imaginary, or whether he thought there would be some difficulty in passing it.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Why? Some members opposite hope they will be appointed.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—There are only two vacancies, for which there must be a number of contenders. Because of the inevitable process of sorting out on an occasion like this, a few members opposite must feel at this early stage of the race that they will be also rans, and will therefore become potential opponents to the prize, if it can be called a prize, being available to members with more prospects of success. The Premier is not entitled to expect serious opposition from this side of the House, because he said that on previous occasions when Labor, under a different electoral system, occupied the Treasury Benches it put forward proposals to increase the number of Ministers, and we have indicated our continued belief in the desirability of that action, by suggestions we have made from time to time. It will be recalled that during the worst period of the housing problem we continually advocated that a better form of organization should be established to solve it, and that it should be under the control of a Minister with no other responsibilities. In considering the Bill it is well to take note of the number of Ministers in the Commonwealth and other State Governments. At present the Commonwealth Government is limited to 20 Ministers, and there is no restriction on the proportion that shall be in either House. In New South Wales there are 16 Ministers, and here again there is no restriction on the proportion.

Mr. Teusner—Is there a restriction on the number?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Not under the Commonwealth Constitution. The number can be determined by the Commonwealth Parliament from time to time. The other States have powers similar to that in this State to amend the Constitution to provide for additional Ministers. Victoria has 12 Ministers, eight of whom are in the Legislative Assembly and four in the Legislative Council. Queensland has 11, it has only one House. The other House was abolished about 35 years ago, yet that State has apparently prospered exceedingly well.

Mr. Dunks—What was it you said about gerrymandering the position in Queensland?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I did not use the word "gerrymander." The honourable member has been so long associated with gerrymandering in his own Party that the word readily occurs to him. Western Australia has 10 Ministers, at least one of whom must be a member of the Legislative Council. Tasmania has six Ministers, plus three honorary Ministers. It will be seen that the present number of Ministers in South Australia is the smallest in any of the Australian States. That is a good reason, in addition to others of equal or almost equal importance, why we should accept the Bill. The Government should take the opportunity to consider increasing the number of members of this Chamber in proportion to the increase in population since the number was last fixed by Parliament in 1936. That is provided for in another measure before the House. The passing of that Bill should be considered a corollary to increasing the number of Ministers in order to cope with the increased importance of the business we have to transact, resulting from the greatly increased population. With the exception of Tasmania, South Australia has the smallest House of Assembly of all the States. The position is as follows:—New South Wales 94, Queensland 75, Victoria 65, Western Australia 50 and Tasmania 30 (representing five electorates, the members of which are elected on the basis of proportional representation). Many members of this House represent more than 20,000 electors, considerably more, I believe, than in the other States, particularly Western Australia, where the population and general conditions are somewhat similar to those in South Australia.

There is another point germane to the question. The Bill provides that the aggregate vote for Minister's salaries shall be increased in such proportion that the two new Ministers

will receive the same salaries as those now received by present Ministers. In this respect the Government is recognizing the increased responsibility of government, as indicated by the Premier's remarks, and which I accept as fair argument. The Government might have taken the opportunity to recognize that, just as Ministerial responsibilities have increased, so the responsibilities of the ordinary member have increased since the last adjustment of their salaries in 1951. Furthermore, when the salary adjustment was made in 1951 members of this Parliament were, with the exception of Tasmania, the lowest paid in the Commonwealth. Since then adjustments have been made in all the other States except Tasmania and South Australia, increasing the salaries of members to a much higher level than is now operating here. The opportunity might have been taken in this measure to correct the anomaly and injustice which have developed since 1951. The Premier had something to say about the demands on Ministers, and if what he said was correct, probably he could very well have proposed increasing the number even further. We can hardly take seriously his assertion that the Chief Secretary is responsible for mining, especially uranium mining, or that the Minister of Works is responsible for the Electricity Trust. That may nominally be the case, but we find that whenever matters appertaining to uranium mining or the development of the Electricity Trust and the supplies of electricity are under discussion in this House, or whenever information on those matters is given to the public—it is usually given through the press and not to members of this House—it is the Premier who makes the statement.

In the general reshuffle of portfolios indicated by the introduction of this measure we may see some change in Ministerial control as regards these activities. I have already referred to the fact that there seems to be much speculation as to which members are to be appointed Ministers, and here we might examine the Liberal and Country League method of appointing Ministers, which has the objectionable feature that it tends to create or strengthen the Premier's role of dictator. It has been widely publicized that the Liberal and Country League practice, over a period of years, has been for the Premier to choose his own Ministers. No-one is allowed to advise him or in any way interfere with his choice. The obvious thing today is for the Premier not to include in the Ministry men who may become difficult to handle or have opinions

that differ at times from those of the captain of the team. One of the most important issues in the appointment of additional Ministers is whether the Government will take the opportunity to re-organize and co-ordinate the many essential socialistic activities which, besides the ordinary public services, have been embarked upon by the Government. Such organization and co-ordination are necessary in the interests of efficiency and economy. It is a serious admission, for example, that the Highways Department is practically outside the control of the Government. The Government—that is the Premier—is responsible for the creation of semi-governmental authorities, which are autonomous when it suits the Premier, but apparently dictated to by him in other circumstances. Consider the Housing Trust. When there was a matter of raising rents a few months ago the trust was autonomous, for it had the responsibility of fixing rents and had to take whatever criticisms arose from the public as a result. However recently, when there was a question of erecting houses for pensioners, the Premier made statements in the columns of the week-end press, although the Loan Estimates were before the House and he had ample opportunity to make announcements in Parliament. I am getting tired of Parliament's being ignored, though I do not object to announcements being made in the press when it is in recess, for no-one would suggest that important announcements should be held over, perhaps for months.

That the re-organization and co-ordination of Government departments are necessary will be realized by members who travel about the State. I have had complaints from people in my electorate about the cartage of heavy materials by road to Radium Hill. Both the Mines Department and the Electricity Trust are involved. Much damage is being caused to the roads, whereas those materials could easily be sent by rail. A railway line runs within 14 miles of Radium Hill. I realize some types of equipment cannot be transported by rail, for the narrow gauge line trucks cannot accommodate loads over a certain length, but there is an opportunity for co-ordination that would set a good example to the public. Periodically we complain that road hauliers are damaging our roads, so Government departments should set a good example by using the railways as much as possible. The Premier said the Electricity Trust is under the control of the Minister of Works, who is also Minister of Railways, so he should see that the railways are used whenever possible.

Mr. Dunks—It may be possible that facilities are not available at the railway centre 14 miles from Radium Hill to unload heavy materials?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I think the railway facilities at Olary or MacDonald Hill would be as good as those at the field for unloading motor trucks. When Radium Hill was being opened up I learned that a crane was being sent there to handle heavy loads, and I assume it is still there. It would be better economics to have departmental vehicles stationed at Radium Hill to cater for the short haul from Olary or MacDonald Hill, rather than cart the materials by road all the way from Adelaide.

Mr. Hawker—I said something to that effect when speaking on the Loan Estimates.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes, and I take this, the first opportunity I have had, of endorsing the honourable member's remarks. The Premier made some remarkable statements in his second reading speech. For instance, he said:—

If members believe in democracy they will agree that there must be sufficient Ministers to control the functions of government in this State; otherwise we shall have authorities that are completely autonomous and autocratic, and Parliament will lose control over them.

I agree, but there are other aspects of democracy. For instance, in view of the essentially undemocratic system under which this Parliament is elected it is difficult to appreciate the relevancy of the Premier's argument. Apparently, so long as he can secure the almost perpetual right for one political organization to have a majority in Parliament—and for that majority to appoint eight Ministers—he has achieved the democratic goal. That is not my idea of the democratic goal, for I believe that the people should be able to change the Government when they desire, so the policy of the Government need not necessarily be something that suits the eight Ministers or a certain Party, on a system of dictatorial nomination, but something that suits the people and is in the public interest. The Premier should be reminded that a good working definition of democracy is:—

That form of government in which the sovereign power is in the hands of the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly. That does not exist in South Australia. He referred to what happened in the good old days and said:—

It is not possible nor desirable to put the clock back to the good old days when it was regarded as the function of Parliament

to make laws, the duty of the Government to administer them, and of the judiciary to interpret them.

Strictly speaking, the government of a democratic country consists of the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary. They are all parts of the one system, which is as sound today as ever it was. I cannot understand why the Premier spoke about putting the clock back to the good old days. It is the Government's duty to consult the welfare of the people and to take the initiative in introducing legislation designed to advance their interests, but a large section of the people are not considered when introducing legislation. The majority, who have consistently voted against Liberal and Country League candidates down the years, are not properly considered when it is decided to introduce legislation. How the Government goes about bringing down legislation is essentially a matter of policy and under ordinary circumstances the people would express their approval or disapproval through the ballot box, in retaining or rejecting the Government. Of course, this does not apply in South Australia. The Premier also said:—

Whether we like it or not, there has grown up in the community a demand—which, in any democratic society, must be met—that the Government shall do more than those things (whatever they might be) and therefore we are faced with the alternatives of establishing various semi-government activities under their own self-constituted boards not answerable directly to Parliament, or creating a large Ministry to ensure adequate supervision and direct responsibility to Parliament.

I agree with that argument, for Parliament finds the money and is responsible for seeing that these authorities operate in the interests of the people, so the Ministers should have proper control over their policies and activities. However, that is not the case in our Parliament. The Premier realizes that the demand for a socialistic policy cannot be resisted, that the functions of government must be extended into what the L.C.L. and its supporters have always regarded as the sphere of private enterprise. If the L.C.L. has decided to continue its adopted policy of Socialism, that is its own affair. The fact is that the forces of socialism cannot be ignored, even by an avowedly anti-socialist Government. In endeavouring to convey the impression that he was not really following a socialist policy the Premier has created a number of "semi-Government" bodies, which now apparently threaten to become Frankensteins, and he is contemplating bringing them under more obvious Government control.

Mr. Dunks—Are you satisfied that the Government is anti-Socialist?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—No. I have expressed myself on more than one occasion on this matter. I have said that plank after plank of Labor policy has been adopted by the Government Party, yet at election time it has intimidated its violent opposition to socialism in all forms. Then, having secured 40 per cent of the votes, and continued in office, it has merrily carried on with more socialist schemes. Plank after plank of the Labor Party has been implemented by the Government Party, but not as we would have done it. We would have appointed additional Ministers which the Government now says is necessary. It would appear that the Premier will have separate Ministers to deal with roads and education. Although I make no complaint about the present administration, the Minister of Education should be in this Chamber. Members in this place are closer to the people than members in another place; consequently education problems are brought before us rather than before Council members. If we could place those problems before the Minister in our own House we would have a better opportunity of getting answers more quickly, and the viewpoint of the constituents accepted more readily. There has been a suggestion that a Minister should be appointed to pay more direct attention to our road problems. What is actually proposed in this matter we do not know. Despite the Premier's long explanation we have no concrete information about how the new appointment will provide a different administration from what we have now. I will not enter into an argument about the efficiency or otherwise of the Highways Department, this is not the time to do it. Parliament must take a more serious view of transport generally, particularly road transport. I suggested about a fortnight ago that we should examine the matter of whether the present speed limit on heavily laden vehicles is sufficiently low to safeguard our roads.

Mr. Shannon—That is a road traffic matter.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes. I wondered whether the position should not be more in conformity with what I saw in America and Great Britain, where the speed of vehicles over a certain laden weight is severely restricted.

Mr. Pearson—Does that apply in America?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes. I visited four States and found a speed restriction of, I think, 30 miles an hour on vehicles weighing more

than three tons gross. It is the duty of Parliament to protect the highways put down by the Highways Department, and not have a position such as we have on the Duke's Highway, where it will cost over £1,000,000 to repair the damage.

Mr. Shannon—That will be dealt with in another Bill.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes, but all these matters should be considered in connection with road transport. The carting of goods owned by Government and semi-Government instrumentalities in competition with the railways is another matter. The Premier said that at the recent elections I said that we should have a Minister in charge of all forms of transport. I propose to tell members exactly what I did say, because it was different from what the Premier attributed to me. Our policy on the matter is clear and well defined. We believe that it is necessary, and we will continue to advocate it until the people realize how important and beneficial its adoption will be.

Mr. John Clark—They do now.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The majority do, but we must alter the 62 to 38 ratio before we can say there is full recognition. The co-ordination of all transport services under a Minister of Transport responsible to Parliament should provide for (a) railways and tramways being managed by boards, on which employees have representation, and (b) proper co-ordination of road transport as an auxiliary of public transport. I hope that as a result of the passing of this Bill, and the appointment of a Minister to control roads, some attempt will be made to co-ordinate transport activities, if not completely on our lines, because that would be too much to hope for. Perhaps in a year or two we will find another plank of the Labor Party has been appropriated and that we will be supporting something which we said some years earlier should be adopted. We have always favoured an increase in the number of Ministers, because of growing responsibilities; consequently I support the second reading.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—I support the Bill. I agree with Mr. O'Halloran that an increase is long overdue: we need a larger panel of Ministers to deal with the increasing affairs of State. With Mr. O'Halloran's permission I will refrain from dealing with electoral matters, which he dealt with fully, because there will be opportunities later to deal with them at length. At the appropriate time

I may be impelled to say something regarding them. The views of the Leader of the Opposition on electoral reform have been heard before, and I do not think they have any bearing on this Bill.

Mr. O'Halloran—I think the whole question of Parliament has some bearing on the matter. At least the Premier said it had.

Mr. SHANNON—I think the debate should be confined to the desirability of increasing the panel concerned with administration. Government recognition of the need for additional Parliamentarians to have some oversight of our civil service is overdue. This State has progressed a great deal over the last decade, but it is many years since we have had a change in the panel of Ministers controlling the civil service. I have now had some years of experience of it, and I think we can be justly proud of it. There are men at the head of departments who have rightly earned their promotion. Most of them have learned the hard way and they know what should be expected of the people in their charge. The civil servant is concerned only with the expenditure of money voted by Parliament for his department, and not as it affects any individual elector. He looks at the picture from a different angle from the man who resides in an area where the expenditure of public money can be of vital concern to him. The Premier made it abundantly clear that the time had arrived when the expenditure of money on highways should be more subject to criticism by Parliament through having a separate Minister to control roads. The Leader of the Opposition went to no end of trouble to explain that the Premier had misinterpreted the Labor Party's proposal on transport. However what the Premier said was, in effect, what the Labor Party proposed. As a back-bencher I would feel a little unhappy if one Minister were to be responsible for a vast State undertaking such as the railways, which is subsidized from taxpayers' money to the extent of millions of pounds a year, and also for the road programme. I am not in accord with the Leader of the Opposition that all transport problems should come under the one Minister. We should have some dual Ministerial authority on transport so that there will be a balance between one Ministerial point of view and another. Whilst the House was in session members would then have an opportunity to put their points of view either for rail or road transport. They could advise the Minister of the possibilities

peculiar to certain areas of the State in respect of either form of transport. Then Cabinet could come to a decision on all the views placed before it.

I am not one of those who advocate that we should discard the railways. I know that we cannot. It would be economically impossible for South Australia to continue in production without the railways. I am equally convinced that for certain primary producers roads are of equal importance. In his reply the Premier will probably say that South Australia has been more lenient towards road users than most of the sister States. Conditions here are very favourable compared with those in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. The Leader of the Opposition had something to say about restrictions which should be placed on people carting heavy loads over our highways and advocated steps to protect the asset that these roads provide for the average person engaged in production from the land. We all agree, but this matter could more appropriately be dealt with under the Road Traffic Act. I do not blame the Highways Commissioner for the damage done to our highways by interstate transports. He is to be commiserated because he has to spend large sums on highways which have been materially damaged by these transports carrying very heavy and high loads. Some of them are up to 14ft. high, the limit for loads which can pass under the railway bridge at Aldgate. Such high loads are a serious menace to the highways, because when these vehicles travel even at 30 miles an hour the high load thrusts a tremendous weight on the outside wheels when taking a curve, thus causing serious damage to the highways. I have the greatest sympathy with the Highways Commissioner because of the serious problems with which he has been faced for at least the last 15 years.

There cannot be any great difference of opinion on whether or not the Cabinet should be increased from six to eight Ministers. When I came into this House in the early 30's Parliament was spending about £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 of State income, but now the sum expended is nearly 10 times as great. Obviously the time has arrived when additional Ministers should be appointed to see that we get full value for the money spent. The Cabinet is the channel through which Parliament tries to supervise the efficient expenditure of public funds. We all agree that we should get the best value possible for the money spent in any department. Consider, for instance, the Education Department. Fourteen

or 15 years ago £1,000,000 for education was looked upon as almost the highwater mark which would never be exceeded. Then there were between 50,000 and 60,000 scholars, but today the number is approaching 100,000, and we are spending £6,500,000—6½ times the amount of money for less than twice the number of children. What the future holds is anyone's guess. It is obvious that this department has now reached the stage where one Minister can devote practically the whole of his time to it. In round figures, the expenditure on this department is one-eighth of our total State income. If one Minister looked after nothing else, he would have a full share of the financial responsibility and a little more than his full share of the physical responsibility in seeing that the maximum use was made of the money spent and the maximum benefit derived.

This argument is unanswerable from the point of view of increasing the number of Ministers. It would be unwise to allow the Leader of the Opposition to get away from what I call a political speech—the avoidance of the true matter now before the House. He dragged in red herrings which should be and will be debated on appropriate occasions at a later stage. For a number of years the Opposition has advocated an increase in the panel of Ministers, and it is rather begging the question when it seeks to belittle the Premier's statements when introducing the Bill by bringing in matters which really have no connection with it. As the Premier pointed out, South Australia will still have one of the smallest Cabinets in Australia. Even Tasmania, the smallest State in size, population, and income, will have the same number of Ministers as we shall. Western Australia, which has a slightly smaller population than South Australia, though a larger area, will have a larger Cabinet. The eastern States, some of which are not as great in area, but more populous, will have much larger Cabinets than we. Therefore, Parliament will be well advised to pass the Bill and forget incidental matters that can be dealt with later. A larger Cabinet is overdue. The State will be better served and get more value for the taxpayers' money as a result of a closer oversight of departmental activities. I am not criticizing any Minister now, but every private member has had the experience of having to wait a considerable time to get a reply to a query. The Ministers have many departments to control, and every man expects a considered reply, but delays are caused largely

because every Minister has too much work to do. I do not know how the Premier carries on. He must be made of steel and bone.

I was pleased that the Premier said it was proposed to alter the law relating to Ministerial control over the Highways Department and to appoint a Minister whose major task would be to administer the Education Department. I believe all members will get more prompt replies to their inquiries. The failure to get any reply or decision at all irks me. Of course, at times one can anticipate what the reply will be, but not to get it reasonably promptly is exasperating to the people concerned. I hope the Bill will have a speedy passage.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Goodwood)—I support the second reading, but I should like to hear more Government members expressing their views. It seems that some of the back benchers do not desire to tread on someone's corns for fear of missing out. The Leader of the Opposition referred to certain important statements being released by the Treasurer in the press, notwithstanding that Parliament was being called upon to vote large sums to carry out the projects concerned. A few months ago I extended the Premier the opportunity of making a statement in this House about his trip to the Coronation, but I found a more detailed statement in the press of a luncheon address he had given about half an hour earlier. I hope that in future the Premier and his Ministers will give information to Parliament before giving it to the press. It is proposed to increase the salaries pool for the Ministers from £14,250 to £19,000. I believe the Premier now receives £3,000.

Mr. Quirke—That is not enough.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—And each Minister gets £2,250.

Mr. Quirke—That is not enough, either.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I will come to that presently. The Labor Party Whip gets no remuneration, but it seems that the Government Whip gets £250. I should like to know whether the Government whip will be paid £250 from the proposed pool of £19,000, or will the Ministers continue to contribute to his allowance? Instead of increasing the salaries of Ministers first, the Government should have started at the bottom of the ladder and increased the salaries of private members.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order. The honourable member cannot introduce into this debate the matter of salaries of members of

Parliament. He can make a passing reference but he must be careful not to raise debate on the matter.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I accept the ruling. Is it not a fact, in comparing his salary with the salary of a Minister, that the most highly skilled artisan—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—The honourable member will not be in order in comparing the salary of a Minister with that of an artisan. He must confine his remarks to the matter before the House.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—More consideration should be given to the basic factors of the matter. When a man is elected to Parliament he gets the fixed remuneration. No Minister should receive almost double the salary I get as a private member. I want to be personal this afternoon. Up to a few weeks ago I was acting as Leader of the Opposition, for whom under the Constitution a certain emolument is fixed. Through the good graces of Mr. O'Halloran I received a present to wear on my left wrist for what I did during his absence, but I did not receive anything extra by way of stamp allowance—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—The honourable member is entirely out of order. He is referring to a position he held temporarily and it has nothing to do with the Bill. He must confine his remarks to the matter before the House.

Mr. MacAlees—You wouldn't know.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—I take that remark as a reflection on the Chair and I ask the honourable member to withdraw it.

Mr. Fred Walsh—It was in reference to something I said.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—The honourable member for Wallaroo made that remark and it was quite clear to me. I take it as a reflection and I ask him to withdraw it.

Mr. McALEES—Mr. Deputy Speaker, I made the remark to Mr. Fred Walsh. I said "You wouldn't know." I was not talking to you, at all.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—I accept the honourable member's statement that he spoke to Mr. Fred Walsh when he said, "You wouldn't know," but the honourable member was out of order in speaking to another member whilst the Deputy Speaker was on his feet.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Clause 3 increases the total amount of salaries payable to Ministers. The Government should give more consideration to the salaries and allowances of

members. Down through the ages, as the result of a blessing by the Labor Party, the Acting Leader of the Opposition has received some emolument for the extra work involved. Apparently I was not acceptable to the Government so I did not qualify for any compensation under the Constitution whilst acting as Leader of the Opposition. I have already said that it is proposed to pay £3,000 to the Premier and £2,250 to each of the other Ministers, but what is to be done with the remainder of the £19,000? Is it to be paid to the Government Whip? I would be agreeable that it should be paid to him, but let us know the true position. I do not agree that any Minister is entitled to almost double the salary paid to a private member. For seven days a week the private member does much work, and he is entitled to more consideration. In all industries the base rate is considered before there is any increase in the margin. Why has it not been done here? It is time that the status of the ordinary member of Parliament was reviewed. He should have transport available to him, and in that regard it would not be out of order for me to say that transport should be provided for the Speaker without his having to go cap in hand for it. Clause 4 says that no person shall hold office as a Minister of the Crown for more than three calendar months unless he is a member of Parliament. That should ensure Parliament getting all the information available. The clause also says that every Minister of the Crown shall be a member of Executive Council. That should result in all Ministers being brought into discussions. It will mean that all Ministers will share alike in the working of Parliament and the Government and that Ministers will have some knowledge of all departments. The portfolio of Minister of Education should never have been transferred from the House of Assembly, and it is to be hoped that in future he will be a member of this Chamber. The member for Onkaparinga mentioned that in dealing with an expenditure of £6,500,000 a year the Minister of Education has a fulltime job, and with that I agree. The same argument applies to the Minister of Local Government. A sufficient amount has not been provided for Ministers' salaries. In my opinion the total amount should have been £23,000. In addition, the Government should have given some consideration to private members' salaries before introducing this legislation. I support the second reading and hope the Government will not be too weak-kneed in introducing a Bill to deal with members' salaries.

Mr. BROOKMAN (Alexandra)—The history of the South Australia Parliament in relation to the number of Ministers is particularly interesting. It indicates that from 1908 the desire of the Government in power was to increase the number of Ministers. In 1901 the Ministry was reduced to four, but was again increased to six in 1908, since when the Government in office has tried to increase the size of the Cabinet, but for various reasons has failed. I am not particularly interested in the reasons for the failure, but it shows that the considered opinion of various Governments was that more Ministers were needed. It can be said that the case for an increase is now more pressing, having in mind how the duties of governing the State have increased in the last 10 years. Mr. Frank Walsh referred to the amount set aside to meet salaries of the enlarged Cabinet. I consider that the people of South Australia are getting a particularly good Government for the £19,000 it will cost for the new Cabinet of eight.

Mr. O'Halloran—We should have a look at the two new Ministers before we endorse that sentiment.

Mr. BROOKMAN—I believe it is very cheap government. The position of a Minister of the Crown is one of the highest a person can be called upon to fill in the public life of the State, but very few realize what it costs a man personally. Undoubtedly Ministers get toughened to public criticism, although they were probably tough before they entered the Ministry. I feel that the bright aspect some of our Ministers show toward the public is perhaps because of this toughening period, and not because they have not been kicked around in the performance of their duties. Ministers get very little thanks. No one could possibly cavil at the amount set aside for their payment. The increase in the number should improve the detailed control of the various departments. We do not know what the portfolios will be, or who will fill them, although we had a hint in the Premier's second reading speech that the Minister of Education may be a member of this Chamber. It has always been our pride that South Australia is a fairly thrifty State, and we are proud that it has been run with a smaller Cabinet than that in any of the other States. Although I regret the need for an increase in the Cabinet, there is an undoubted case for such a change. Even with the new appointments the Cabinet will be one of the smallest in the Commonwealth. I consider that eight Ministers should be ample to run our



State, and if we cannot do it with that number there is something wrong with us. The Leader of the Opposition criticized the principle by which the Premier selects his Cabinet, but that has always been Liberal practice. I believe it is a good principle. I cannot see that it is fair to ask a man to lead the Government, and accept almost full responsibility for the progress of the State and then hamstring him by selecting the Cabinet for him. It is most important that the Premier should be able to select the team he wants and which he knows will work in harmony with him.

Mr. O'Halloran—In other words, do as they are told.

Mr. BROOKMAN—That interjection seems rather strange coming from the Opposition, because its members are ruled by one of the most iron-fisted caucuses possible. I consider it a particularly inept interjection. We know how members opposite are ordered about by their Caucus—both by the Caucus inside and the Caucus outside the House. It is time our Cabinet was increased, and I therefore support the second reading.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—After listening to members on the Government side of the House I can understand why they have so little to say in debates. It seems it is because of their fear of their Leader, who has the power of a dictator to choose his Ministry. If he does not like them they are not in the running for office. I remember the pat on the back the member for Unley gave the Premier last year prior to a pre-selection ballot. He wanted the Premier to see that he won.

Mr. Dunnage—That is a lie.

Mr. LAWN—I made such a statement when the honourable member was speaking last session, and he did not deny it.

Mr. Dunnage—You did not say anything of the sort. You only accused yourself, and told many lies.

Mr. LAWN—When the honourable member for Alexandra spoke of the Labor Party Caucus he did not know what he was talking about.

The SPEAKER—Order. The member for Adelaide has the floor, and we cannot have the member for Unley speaking at the same time. Standing Orders provide that members must be heard in silence, though relevant interjections are permitted, but two cannot speak at the same time.

Mr. LAWN—It is obvious from Mr. Brookman's remarks that Government supporters are afraid to offend or criticize the Premier, for

it may have some reaction upon their pre-selection, or promotion in this House. I suppose the Premier chooses the Chairman of Committees.

Mr. Dunks—No, the House does.

Mr. LAWN—Obviously, Mr. Brookman knows nothing about the workings of the Labor Party Caucus. He probably got his information from pimps that we hear of. Sometimes I differ with the views of the Leader of the Opposition, for I am free to express my views. The Labor Party believes in democracy, and knows what it means, but members opposite do not. If they had their way they would hand-pick all members of Parliament: they would not allow the people to elect them. I seek leave to have a table inserted in *Hansard* without reading it. It shows the number of members of Parliament, the number of Ministers, the salaries paid as a Ministers' pool, and the population of the State at the relevant dates.

Leave granted.

	Members. H.A.	Min- L.C.	Ministers' istors.	Salaries. £	Popu- lation.
1856-57 .	36	18	5	4,400	107,886
1872 . .	46	18	5	4,400	191,828
1873 . .	46	18	6	6,000	197,685
1881 . .	46	24	6	6,000	285,971
1901 . .	42	18	4	4,000	359,330
1908 . .	42	18	6	5,000	385,831
1913 . .	46	20	6	5,000	444,573
1921 . .	46	20	6	7,750	501,742
1936 . .	39	20	6	7,750	589,312
1947 . .	39	20	6	10,750	653,065
1951 . .	39	20	6	14,250	729,836
1952 . .	39	20	6	14,250	751,535
1953 . .	39	20	8?	19,000?	

Mr. LAWN—The population figures prior to 1900 include the Northern Territory's, and they are the figures as at December 31 in each respective year. The first Parliament, as we know it today, met in April, 1857.

The SPEAKER—In case points arise later, this table has reference to the Bill before the House?

Mr. LAWN—Yes. When the Premier gave his second reading speech he gave figures from 1855 relating to the number of Ministers and their salaries. I have given more details in this table. It discloses that in 1873 there were 33,000 persons in the State to each Minister. There were six Ministers then, and the population was about 198,000. In 1921 there were 83,666 persons per Minister. Now there are 125,333. If the Bill is passed and eight Ministers are appointed there will still be 94,000 persons to each Minister, whereas in 1873 there were 33,000. In 1873 there were

4,000 persons for each member of Parliament. There were 46 members then and the population was 198,000. In 1921 there were 46 members and the State's population was 502,000, an average of 10,900 persons per member. Now, there are 39 members of the House of Assembly and the State has a population of 752,000, so there are over 19,000 persons per member. The activities of the State, as well as the population, have grown enormously. Many new organizations have sprung up. The Electricity Trust, a large undertaking, is becoming a State responsibility, although it is not strictly administered by a Minister. The Government now takes a far greater hand in housing, and the housing problem is greater than ever. Until a few years ago the Government did not take any part in mining, but today it is operating the large Leigh Creek coalfield. Further, it is now developing our uranium deposits. We have seen a great expansion in railways, education, water supplies and other directions. It may be said by the Government that that is a good reason why the number of Ministers should be increased, but it also discloses that the Bill does not go far enough. There is a good argument in support of the Leader of the Opposition's Bill for electoral reform. At the last State elections the Opposition proposed several alterations to the Constitution. One was to increase the number of Ministers, and we suggested that there should be one to deal with housing and another to control the co-ordination of all forms of transport. We also said that other aspects of the Constitution would be reviewed, and the majority of the electors supported our proposals. The Government Bill increases only the number of Ministers. In 1871 Government revenue was £778,094 and expenditure from revenue £759,478. There was no loan expenditure. In 1921 revenue had increased to £7,151,366, expenditure from revenue was £7,543,640, and loan expenditure was £4,675,452. By June 1952 the figures had increased considerably, and respectively they were £42,638,205, £42,548,823, and £26,437,450. Since we first had a Parliamentary system of Government in this State the population has increased considerably, and revenue and expenditure from revenue and loan has been greater. The State is also engaged in more activities. It may be suggested that that justifies an increase in the Ministry, but it also justifies a review of the Constitution so far as it applies to members of this House and the Legislative Council. Ministers have more matters under their control than previously. The

Railways Department has become an enormous undertaking and the Minister of Lands also has a greater responsibility than the Commissioner of Crown Lands had in 1857. His worth and responsibility today is greater than it was even after the 1914-18 war. Members' responsibilities have also increased. Since the establishment of the Leigh Creek coalfield the member for Newcastle has had the responsibility of representing the people working upon that field. None of us is growing any younger, but we are shouldering greater responsibilities. Uranium, radium and many other projects were not visualized years ago.

The Bill does not go far enough. I have checked the Premier's figures relating to the salaries and the amount provided is for the additional two Ministers. The question of salaries is one which should be closely examined. It is deplorable that we should have such cheap government. The Premier receives £3,000 per annum, but 13 years ago the manager of a comparatively small factory employing 2,000 men received that salary and it would probably have doubled by now. It is a reflection on this House and the public that the Premier receives only £3,000 per annum. It may be suggested that any increases in salaries would cost the people a lot, but increased responsibility costs the Premier a lot. I hope that before this debate is finished Government supporters will answer some of my comments and express their own opinions. I trust that from the figures supplied by Opposition members and from our statements they may be enlightened and as a result this Bill may be amended, thus ensuring that this place becomes a democracy. I could not follow the Premier's logic—or was it illogic—on bureaucracy and democracy when referring to the Electricity Trust and the Housing Trust as instrumentalities divorced from Ministerial control. If one desires a bureaucracy he should follow the lead of this Government and establish instrumentalities and then not accept responsibility and say that they are divorced from control.

Mr. Jennings—Unless a favourable statement has to be made.

Mr. LAWN—Exactly. If a favourable announcement has to be made the Premier makes it, but when something unfavourable has to be announced, such as an increase in Housing Trust rentals, it is made by the chairman of the Housing Trust or some other official.

Mr. DUNKS—On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, is the honourable member in order, when speaking to a Bill to increase the number of Ministers, in referring to the Housing Trust and the Electricity Trust?

The SPEAKER—He would not be in order if discussing the Housing Trust Act or the Electricity Trust Act, but I take it he is replying to the statement made by the Premier on this Bill about those instrumentalities.

Mr. LAWN—If instrumentalities which the Government establishes are divorced from Ministerial control, that is bureaucracy, but if they are retained under Ministerial control it is democracy. When Housing Trust tenants raised an outcry about the increased rentals the chairman of the trust bore the brunt of the explanations and not the Premier. When prices increases are announced they are made by Mr. McCann, the Prices Commissioner, but when price reductions are announced the Premier makes them. When this Government establishes any instrumentality it should be directly responsible. This afternoon several questions were asked about the Tramways Trust and the Minister of Works made a point of saying that it was nothing to do with this Parliament or with him as a Minister. The trust is an instrumentality over which Parliament has no control and yet we provide money to enable it to function. If we want democracy we must keep all these instrumentalities under the control of Parlia-

ment and Ministers and then we might be able to obtain more information than we are able to get now. Every sitting day we hear complaints from members that they are unable to obtain information from Ministers. Whether it is because of their incompetence or their insufficiency of numbers I am unable to say, but most of the complaints are levelled against those instrumentalities that are divorced from Parliamentary control.

I conclude by expressing the hope that this Bill will be amended so as to be more in conformity with democracy, and I remind the House of the interpretation of that word given by Abraham Lincoln, who said "Democracy means government of the people by the people for the people." The only way to give effect to democracy expressed in those terms is to put under Ministerial control those activities which are now divorced from it.

Mr. QUIRKE secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### DEEP SEA PORT IN SOUTH-EAST.

The SPEAKER laid on the table the report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, on the proposal for a deep sea port in the South-East.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.28 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, September 2, at 2 p.m.