

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, October 20, 1953.

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

PUBLIC OFFICERS' SALARIES BILL.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended to the House the appropriation of such amounts of the general revenue of the State as were required for the purposes mentioned in the Public Officers Salaries Bill.

QUESTIONS.**HOUSING TRUST PENSIONER HOMES.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier noticed the press reports of the criticism at last night's meeting of the Marion council of the plans of proposed homes for pensioners to be erected by the Housing Trust? I draw particular attention to the reported statement of the building inspector that the homes would be sub-standard and that they would not comply with the Building Act. I realize that the trust is probably endeavouring to keep costs down so that the homes can be let at a rental within the means of pensioners. Has consideration been given to this matter, and is it possible for this type of building operation to be brought within the scope of the Commonwealth-State housing scheme so that a better standard of house could be provided for pensioners, the rental being adjusted on a subsidy basis, as provided for in that scheme?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It would be possible to bring houses which might be allotted to old age pensioners within the scope of the agreement, but the question is whether it is desirable that the State should enter into a system of house subsidization. In my opinion the answer is emphatically "No," because it is neither necessary nor desirable. Indeed, at the last Premiers' Conference when housing was being discussed it was very significant that every Labor Premier who had previously supported the housing subsidy and letting scheme now supports, for immediate application, the plan whereby the people concerned would buy their houses. Those States that have entered into these subsidy schemes have found that they become very costly and limited in the benefit they provide and very onerous on the State Budget, and ultimately upon the general taxpayer. We have then, the anomalous position of a person having to find a house for his own occupation at his own cost being compelled, by taxation, to provide a house for someone else who has not made his own provision. As

a matter of policy my Government does not favour house subsidization under the Commonwealth-State housing agreement. It never has favoured it because it believes it is wrong in principle.

Mr. O'Halloran—Then why did you sign the agreement?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Because it provided that certain moneys would be available to the State at a lower rate of interest than could be obtained by any other means. It was a number of years after the agreement had been signed before action was taken by this State to use the agreement. In fact, it is only this year that we are starting to use it. We came into it purely for financial reasons. The money provided under it is additional to what we could get under any other allocation, and at a very much lower rate of interest. I do not believe the method of providing assistance as suggested by the honourable member is the best. We must endeavour to get money as cheaply as possible, and thus keep our costs down. That is the best service we can provide for housing.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Can the Premier say whether any consideration has been given to the question of whether the social service powers of the Commonwealth Government would enable it to either provide homes for pensioners or to furnish assistance to the States in providing such homes? If such consideration has not been given, will he take up with the Prime Minister the advisability of some joint arrangement whereby the Commonwealth and the State Governments might be able to co-operate in the provision of suitable homes for pensioners?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have no doubt that any legal problem as to whether this matter comes within Commonwealth or State powers could easily be overcome. The Commonwealth Government has old age pensions specifically within its authority and in fact provides such pensions to a considerable number of persons; therefore I have no doubt whatever that there is ample Constitutional authority for dealing with the matter mentioned. The question is, who would take the financial responsibility for the job, and my Government holds the firm view that, as old age pensions are set down in the Commonwealth Constitution as a Commonwealth responsibility, the Commonwealth Government is the authority which should make financial provisions for all types of expenditure for old age pensioners. I have discussed in correspondence over a period the question of whether

the Commonwealth would be prepared to make available moneys for homes for old age pensioners, and, if the Leader of the Opposition desires, I can let him see that correspondence. It was not conclusive but amounted to this, that the Commonwealth Government believed that any housing for old age pensioners should be undertaken out of moneys already being provided to the States, that it was not prepared to provide additional money and that it did not have additional appropriations for that purpose. The Housing Trust scheme is an extremely good one, and the provision of a flat at £1 a week for an old age couple is an achievement. I am certain that when I announced the rental in this House every member would not have been surprised had it been quite a bit more. Some criticism is levelled against the Housing Trust everywhere, for it always seems popular with a certain class to level such criticism. We were criticized when we built the emergency homes, but I am sure that every member, including members opposite, would agree that those homes have proved a great blessing to many thousands. Notwithstanding the bitter criticism from outside interests that arose when the scheme was embarked on, those homes have provided good, clean accommodation for people who previously had no homes. The fact that there is some criticism of the pensioners' homes scheme does not worry me. In due course I will confer with the chairman of the trust to see whether any criticism relates to matters that could or should be avoided, and the criticism is valuable from that point of view. Those homes will be of inestimable value to old people and they will be provided at a cost within the financial means of their occupiers. That will be their justification.

Mr. STOTT—Has the Premier's attention been drawn to a press report regarding the erection of Housing Trust homes for pensioners in Marion? At a meeting of the Marion District Council a councillor said that the general manager of the trust, Mr. A. M. Ramsay, said that the homes would be 75 per cent within the requirements of the Building Act. Will the Premier investigate that statement and state how is it possible for the trust to build homes 75 per cent within the Act when other persons must build to 100 per cent?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Leader of the Opposition has already asked two questions upon this subject today and I have given lengthy, although perhaps not specific, replies. The Housing Trust is owned by the Crown and is, in point of fact, the Crown and, as such,

is excluded from the operation of certain Acts. I have no doubt that when investigations are made they will place an entirely different light upon the statements which appeared in this morning's press. Some people always take a delight in criticizing the Housing Trust.

Mr. McAlees—They are entitled to.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There has never been any organization in South Australia which has done more for the wellbeing of the community. It is rather interesting to note that those who frequently criticize the trust are the first to approach it when they are in difficulties because of housing problems. I have already informed the Leader of the Opposition that I will investigate the matters raised by the honourable member and supply him with a copy of any report I receive.

SHEEP BRANDING FLUIDS.

Mr. HEASLIP—Woolbuyers' complaints regarding the use of sheep branding fluids which will not scour out have been many. Some years ago C.S.I.R.O. set out to evolve a fluid which would remain on the wool for 12 months and then scour out. The result was a formula named L.B.E. (lanolein based emulsion), which is now being widely used by growers. It has, however, been stated to me that in some cases this formula has been departed from but is still being sold as L.B.E. I, personally, do not think this is so, but growers who are not keen on the use of L.B.E., on hearing these statements, are inclined to go back to the use of tar brands. Could the Minister ascertain if there is any truth in these statements and if there is not, could he reassure growers and encourage them to use this fluid?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I will obtain a report and bring down information on this matter.

POLICE REPORTS OF ACCIDENTS.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Until fairly recently it has been the practice of the Police Department to make available to persons taking civil action the police report of an accident in respect of which that action has been taken, and that practice rendered a great service to people otherwise unable to get the information, for the police report was made by the officer who was on the spot. That practice having been discontinued, police reports are not now available except in exceptional circumstances, and a hardship is being worked on people bringing civil actions as a result of accidents. Can the Premier, representing the Chief Secretary, say whether this matter will be re-considered and

whether Cabinet will consider again making such police reports available to people in civil actions?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A similar question was asked by the member for Torrens last Thursday and I stated then the reasons which prompted the Government to alter the practice, which seems, incidentally, to have been purely a State custom. I also informed the member for Torrens that I would obtain for him a report as to the type of information we would be prepared to supply and the conditions under which we would supply it. I have received a report from the Police Commissioner which states:—

I recommend—(1) that the following information be supplied, upon application by one of the persons involved in an accident or by a properly accredited representative of such person:—

- (a) Date, time, location and nature of accident.
- (b) Numbers, ranks, and names of the members of the force reporting or assisting to report the occurrence, and whether or not they were witnesses.
- (c) Registration numbers and types of all vehicles involved.
- (d) Names and addresses of owners and drivers of the vehicles concerned or any other parties involved.
- (e) So far as I am at liberty to disclose them, the names and addresses of witnesses within the knowledge of the member of the force reporting the accident.
- (f) In cases of fatal accidents, the time and place of the inquest and particulars of the finding, if known.
- (g) Copies of statements of witnesses relating to an accident. (These will only be supplied to the individual who made such statement or his representative on a signed request from the person making the statement.)

I recommend (2) that no information be supplied in cases where it is not in the Government's interest that information be made available, nor in cases where police proceedings against any party are contemplated or an inquest is to be held until such time as the case has been disposed of. However, where court action is contemplated I am prepared to inform interested parties of the name of the defendant and date and place of hearing.

I attach a *pro forma* of the advice at present given to persons concerned or interested in road traffic accidents.

Recommendation (1) above extends to some extent the particulars I am prepared to supply and makes provision for copies of the statements of witnesses to be supplied to the witness who made the statement or, on his authority, to his representative.

It has been the practice, and I am prepared to continue such, whereby insurance adjusters,

solicitors, or other interested parties are permitted, in approved cases, and upon written application to me, to interview a member of the force who investigated or witnessed an accident. I require that such interviews, as far as is practicable, take place in the presence of a commissioned or other senior officer. At such interviews the member of the force concerned will be instructed to limit his statements to matters within his own knowledge as distinct from his knowledge of statements made to him by witnesses or other confidential information.

The Police Commissioner goes on to say, and this recommendation has been approved:—

(3) That the usual fees for interviews and copies of witnesses' statements when authorized as abovementioned be charged.

I am prepared to supply the particulars mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (f) of recommendation (1) in an appropriate form without fee.

The above recommendations have been discussed with the Crown Solicitor.

Mr. TRAVERS—It seems that the really important part of the police reports—the statements of the witnesses—will not be made available, except to the witnesses themselves or their representatives. The Premier mentioned two questions—the cost, and the reluctance of people to make full statements if they are to be available to all and sundry. It seems that the element of truth remains constant, whether one directs it to possible criminal proceedings or to possible civil proceedings, and it has been the universal experience that the supply to interested parties of copies of statements of witnesses has had two important effects; firstly, to avoid unnecessary litigation when the adviser can see what the contemporaneous statement was, and secondly, to enable the court to adjudge the value of the story of the witness in court should it be different from the contemporaneous statement. In view of those facts, I ask firstly, for how many years has it been the practice in South Australia to furnish to interested parties copies of witnesses' statements? Secondly, has there not already been made an offer to the Police Department by certain insurance interests to bear the cost of providing them? Thirdly, has there been any case, and if so, when, and what case, in which governmental privilege attaching to public documents has become important in relation to police reports, and in which any witness has taken the stand that he would make a statement if it were directed to police proceedings, but would not do so if directed to civil proceedings?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I cannot inform the honourable member how many years the practice of making police reports available has

been in operation, but it is certainly a considerable number. If the honourable member desires the information precisely, I can get it for him. The practice that has grown up has become particularly onerous to the Police Department, so much so that the Police Commissioner now informs the Government that he is not in a position to continue it. He has consulted the Crown Solicitor, who has advised that in any case the reports should not be made available, because many of them are secured under what might be considered a semi-privileged condition.

Mr. Travers—It has been the same for years.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I realize that. Investigation has shown that in Great Britain and in the neighbouring Australian States it has not been the practice to make the reports available. What the Police Commissioner is prepared to do I consider reasonable. He is prepared to supply approved authorities with information as to the vehicles involved and the names of witnesses, and if any solicitor desires to take action he can then approach the witnesses concerned and get the necessary information. The police obtain this information to decide whether an offence has been committed against the Road Traffic Act, but not for the purpose of providing information to such people as insurance adjusters. The fact that we make the names of witnesses available must be regarded as being something already outside what is strictly police information. In many instances the police do not make available reports upon matters they investigate where other persons are involved. In fact, it has been the custom for police documents not to be made available in those cases.

Mr. TRAVERS—In view of the fact that the public bears the cost of the police inquiry, could the Premier give specific replies to my four specific questions?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—If the honourable member wants questions of policy answered specifically and puts them on the Notice Paper, he will be given specific replies.

FRUIT FLY CAMPAIGN.

Mr. SHANNON—During the last week there have been statements in the press from ill-informed correspondents about the fruit fly campaign in South Australia. Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether the campaign conducted here to combat the fruit fly pest has followed the pattern adopted in Florida, U.S.A. and whether the success achieved here has been favourably commented upon by authorities outside this State?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—When fruit fly first appeared in South Australia there was a considerable outbreak in the southern suburbs. The Chief Horticultural Adviser thoroughly investigated what was being done in other States where fruit fly was rampant, and also what was being done in the United States of America, particularly in Florida, where fruit fly was doing tremendous damage to the fruit industry. As a result of the investigations, recommendations were made to the Government that it should adopt the measures which had been so successful in Florida rather than those which were being practised in New South Wales, Queensland, and Western Australia. The result more than justifies the Government's decision because within two years, except for a small sporadic outbreak, the infestation has been overcome in the southern suburbs. I have a great deal of information which is not in the possession of members generally or of the general public regarding the extent of the outbreak at that time. One very well informed householder said that he had given up trying to use any of his fruit, so bad was the fruit fly infestation in the area. The present work is being done because of the success which followed on the efforts of those responsible for the previous eradication of the fruit fly. The Government is satisfied that the work is being well done. Regarding the one mile radius, the Entomologist advised the Government and the department that a wider radius would be necessary, but the Chief Horticulturist decided to try out the mile radius, and generally it has been very successful. Two or three of the small outbreaks have occurred just outside the mile radius, and, although it could not be proved, it was suspected that they were a carry-over from the area cleared in the previous year. The Government is satisfied that the work being done is worth while, as it has protected the produce of backyard gardeners almost completely, and the Government has no intention of letting up on the campaign.

PRICE CONTROL.

Mr. STEPHENS—The Commonwealth Arbitration Court has pegged the basic wage as from a certain date. As the wage is fixed in accordance with prices, will the Premier, as Minister in charge of prices, peg prices at their level when the last adjustment in the basic wage was made?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No. From time to time there have been price increases and decreases.

Mr. Lawn—Not too many decreases.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I believe that in the future there will be more decreases than increases. In any case prices of commodities are determined upon certain known facts, and it is not possible to peg all prices. For example, take the price of petrol. A pegging notice would not affect world parity, upon which the price of petrol sold in Australia ultimately depends. It is not possible by a simple act to make present prices continue for all time. There must be adjustments. This morning I signed an order, which will be gazetted in due course, dealing with prices of certain food-stuffs, and there will be big reductions in many instances. It is not possible to peg the prices of all goods at today's prices. It is inevitable that the prices of some commodities will come down and others go up, and the Prices Commissioner must study the relative information before giving a decision one way or another.

Mr. LAWN—Last Thursday I asked the Premier whether he could make a public report about the decisions of the Prices Ministers' conference being held in Adelaide, and he said that in several instances the Ministers were able to agree on price reductions. I read in Friday's *Advertiser* that some £2,000,000 to £3,000,000 would be saved the consumers of petrol, oil and kerosene but I could find no reference to price reductions concerning the household budget or items related to the C series index. Did the Prices Ministers reduce the prices of any items affecting the C series index, and to what extent can the household look forward to a reduction in his weekly budget?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I did not understand the honourable member to confine his question last Thursday to items affecting the C series index.

Mr. Lawn—I did not.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I understood his question related to prices generally. I could not have answered a question on the effect on the C series index last Thursday, for the information was not available to me at that time, but I point out that all price reductions ultimately affect that index. Although the price alterations of petrol, oil, copper, or any metals, do not directly alter the C series index they have an ultimate bearing upon it, for upon them depend the prices of electricity and other commodities, the cost of delivery of goods and of transportation. I have never regarded it as the duty of the Prices Ministers to merely administer the schedule of the C series index, and I am certain that if any attempt had been

made to do so the basis of price control would have broken down years ago. This morning I signed orders relating to a number of commodities that will be reduced in price. Arising out of the Prices Conference last week there was a reduction of £30 a ton in the consumer price of copper, and a reduction on a full range of oil commodities, including diesel and furnace oils, which will have a big bearing on the price of electricity.

Mr. Quirke—Household kerosene was reduced in price.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, and that is an item in the C series index. I also signed an order, which will appear in due course, and which will become effective when it appears, covering some 50 items, though they are not directly associated with the Prices Ministers' conference held on Thursday.

PRE-RACE BROADCASTING OF ODDS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked on October 8 with regard to pre-race broadcasting of odds?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received the following report from the chairman of the Betting Control Board:—

The practice of broadcasting totalizator odds has been reported by our betting supervisors, and described as objectionable. It appears, however, that no offence against the Lottery and Gaming Act is involved. The Act contains various provisions calculated to prevent inducements to bet. These may be grouped as—

- (1) Those against tipsters, *i.e.*, persons who give certain betting information for fee or reward.
- (2) Those against the exhibition or distribution of written or printed information about betting.
- (3) That against giving betting information by wireless broadcast. The broadcasting of the totalizator prices referred to is not by wireless.

The broadcast in question gives no information which, on metropolitan courses, cannot be obtained by the initiated through inspecting displayed figures, and it is comparable with the calling of odds by bookmakers. But there is an important difference in each case. The effect of the displayed figures is limited by situation, and of bookmakers' odds by the range of the natural human voice. The broadcast is an obtrusive inducement to bet from which few can escape, and it may be supposed many succumb. It appears to us that the Act should be amended to prohibit the broadcasts under discussion and this may be taken to be an addendum to our recent report drawing attention to, and recommending the prohibition of the wireless broadcasting of certain racing information between the end of a race and the commencement of the following race.

I do not want it to be assumed that the recommendation on the last two matters has been accepted by the Government. This matter is being investigated and the acceptance of the recommendation will depend upon the result of other information, some of which deals with the question of whether we have the power over wireless broadcasting to enable us to prohibit this practice.

TAILEM BEND ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

Mr. WHITE—I have been approached by several residents of Tailem Bend regarding the supply of electricity to that town. At present the supply is direct current, which is proving unsatisfactory both to the housewife and to industry some distance from the source of supply. Can the Premier say if it is the intention of the Electricity Trust to supply electricity to Tailem Bend and, if so, when will it take over the supply?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I cannot supply the information offhand. It is the intention of the Electricity Trust to continue the power lines, which have been extended from Mannum to Murray Bridge, to the river areas at Jervois although this will not take place until the necessary connections are made to the line to Murray Bridge. The question of taking over supplies where direct current was supplied has presented a considerable problem, because the owner of the existing system usually required a fairly heavy purchase price for equipment which had to be scrapped the moment the Electricity Trust took over. The trust has taken a fairly strong stand against purchasing equipment that is of no value to it and which, far from being an asset, involved it in a liability for its removal. I will obtain for the honourable member a report in due course.

EMPLOYEES REGISTRY OFFICES.

Mr. HAWKER—Can the Premier say how many employees registry offices are operating in South Australia and what their names are?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There are very few today, probably only three or four, but I will get the information and supply it to the honourable member, probably tomorrow.

DISPOSAL OF OLD EWE MEAT.

Mr. STOTT—Has the attention of the Minister of Agriculture been drawn to the cessation of the United Kingdom canned meat contracts on September 30 and a report from the United Kingdom that it now has adequate supplies available to it? If so, what steps

are being taken by the Government Produce Department to assist producers in the disposal of their old ewes?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—If any member wants to find the value of old ewes he should try to sell them to the United Kingdom. The one complaint we get in regard to the sale of meat in the United Kingdom is that butchers there cannot sell very old ewes at present. The whole complaint is against the ewe mutton that the British Ministry of Food has been trying to force on an unwilling public. One butcher actually went so far—and I saw this in one British paper—as to chalk on his window “Mutton chops given away. No charge.” However, he was able to give away only a limited quantity because people were so fed up with the old ewe mutton being fed to them. The best information that the Meat Board has, and which has been supplied to me, is that there will be a demand in England for good wether mutton, but I am afraid there is not much hope for old ewe mutton.

LIGHTING AT CROYDON SCHOOL.

Mr. HUTCHENS—For a considerable time the school committee and parents at the Croydon School have been working to establish a library, and have reached the stage where the Minister of Education has consented to open it next Friday. The only thing lacking is the installation of electric lighting. For some time the committee has been negotiating with the Architect-in-Chief's Department on the matter. Will the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Education, see if the Architect-in-Chief's Department will be so generous as to make every effort to have the lights installed by Friday?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—My information is that the lights will be installed not later than Thursday in readiness for the opening.

RAILWAY SHUNTING AT PORT PIRIE.

Mr. DAVIS—Last Sunday morning a young railway employee had both legs amputated whilst engaged in shunting at Port Pirie. As the Minister of Railways probably knows, the method of shunting at Port Pirie is that a train taking ore to the smelters is pushed down the street. The only method of warning is the ringing of a bell by a man on the front truck. From the report I have received, the young man concerned was in the act of getting on a truck and slipped as the train moved off. Will the Minister take this matter up with the

Acting Railways Commissioner with a view to having some other warning given when a train is shunting?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The best method to employ is a matter of practical experience. As there might be an inquest in this case, any comments by myself or the Acting Railways Commissioner at this stage might be prejudicial to the full inquiry. However, I will take up the question with the Acting Railways Commissioner and at the appropriate moment bring down a reply.

BROADENING OF SOUTH-EASTERN GAUGE.

Mr. CORCORAN—Can the Minister of Railways say what progress has been made with the broadening of the railway gauge between Mount Gambier and Millicent, and can he give any idea when that section will be completed?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The honourable member was good enough to indicate that he intended to ask the question, and I have since communicated with the Acting Railways Commissioner, who states that earthworks are in hand between Mount Gambier and Holloway, and the broad gauge track will be completed as far as Compton on October 23. The time it will take to complete the whole of the conversion between Mount Gambier and Millicent will depend upon the funds which will be made available by the Commonwealth during this and the forthcoming financial year. It may also depend upon the supplies of rails and sleepers. However, with the present allocation of £750,000 for 1953-54, it is anticipated that 30 per cent of the Mount Gambier-Millicent railway will be completed at the end of June next.

ROYAL VISIT.

Mr. RICHES—My question concerns the transport of school children in outlying districts who wish to attend the centres to be visited by the Queen next year. From inquiries made since I previously asked the Premier a question, I am certain it will be necessary to call into service almost everything that will run on wheels, unless a tremendous number of our people are to be disappointed. When I raised the question before the Premier mentioned the necessity of getting a ruling from the Transport Control Board as to its attitude in allowing vehicles to run on the roads, and he also referred to insurance. Has he had further discussions with the committee which, I understand, has been set up to assist in the provision of transport, and can he inform the House of any decisions reached?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have a report from Mr. Fargher, who is not only Acting Railways Commissioner, but Chairman of the Royal Visit Transport Committee, and he informs me as follows:—

I referred the matters raised in the House of Assembly on September 29 concerning transportation problems in connection with the Royal visit, to the chairman of the Transport Control Board and attach his reply of October 8 from which it will be seen that the Transport Control Board will fully co-operate with local committees in facilitating transport arrangements and, subject to the vehicles being safe and suitable for passenger transport, will place no restriction on the movement of the public. My committee gave consideration to this letter at its meeting on October 8 and recommend that all vehicles used for passenger traffic during the Royal visit should comply with the provisions of the Road Traffic Act in respect of road safety certificates and insurance of passengers. Active steps are of course being taken by my committee to ensure that transport arrangements both in the city and country will be organized in the best possible manner to meet the requirements of the public during the Royal visit.

Mr. RICHES—According to a statement read by the Premier, the Transport Control Board will not place any obstacle in the way of provision of transport in connection with the Royal Visit provided the vehicles are considered safe and suitable for passenger transport. Will the Premier take up with the board the question of whether open lorries will be considered suitable? It would be of assistance to the committees which are endeavouring to transport as many people as possible to the sites chosen for the visits of Her Majesty to know definitely whether open trucks will be acceptable.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The chairman of the board has already visited many country districts in connection with this matter. The policy of the board is specific; it will approve of a licence for any vehicle which is considered roadworthy and safe for passengers. I am not prepared to ask the board to licence vehicles which are not safe.

Mr. RICHES—You said, "Suitable for passenger transport."

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Exactly.

Mr. RICHES—Would an open lorry be regarded as such?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I would not consider an open lorry with a number of passengers as suitable because it could very easily be the means of a serious accident.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Can the Premier say whether any finality has been reached regarding the procedure to be adopted to enable persons

residing outside council areas to be supplied with invitations to certain functions associated with the Royal Visit?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No, but I give the Leader of the Opposition the definite assurance that a fair proportion of the tickets will be issued to outside areas, but the precise machinery under which it will be done has not yet been decided. Inside local government areas we have properly constituted councils which can act in respect of their districts, but outside such areas there is no authority of that description, and the position becomes difficult. The matter is being investigated and in due course I will let the honourable member know what is being done.

S.A. SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—During the week-end I received representations from certain people expressing dissatisfaction at the fact that musicians possessing superior musical qualifications and attached to the Elder Conservatorium had been overlooked and that preference had been given to interstate personnel in making appointments to the South Australian Symphony orchestra. Has the Premier been informed of any discussions with the A.B.C. on this subject? Will he have an investigation made to see whether local talent which is being neglected at the moment can be used?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Usually a person employing another person to do a specific job employs the one who is most competent to do it. The A.B.C. provides twice as much as other sources for the maintenance of the orchestra. The agreement entered into with the Government at the time the orchestra was established was that the A.B.C. would be the authority to control the orchestra and that two persons would represent the Government. Those persons act in an honorary capacity but assist in the running of the orchestra because substantial sums are provided by the State. It was a condition that the orchestra should provide free concerts in the city and country concerts as a justification for State grants. From memory, the persons representing the Government are my secretary, Mr. Pearce, and Professor Bishop of the Elder Conservatorium. Mr. Pearce does not profess to be a judge of musicians but he would undoubtedly see that the conditions relating to free concerts and country concerts were carried out. Professor Bishop would be competent to judge the qualifications of musicians. I have no doubt that the A.B.C. is most anxious to obtain the best musicians

for the money provided. If the honourable member knows of any musician who he believes has superior qualifications to those already employed and will supply me with his name I will advise the A.B.C. so that the matter can be investigated.

INSURANCE OF HOUSING TRUST HOMES.

Mr. STEPHENS—Has the Treasurer obtained the report I asked for on October 15, relative to the insurance of Housing Trust homes?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received the following report from the chairman of the trust:—

The South Australian Housing Trust carries its own insurances on houses owned and let by it. When houses are sold by the trust, the insurance is, of course, then a matter for the purchaser and, where appropriate, the purchaser is required to take out with a company selected by himself any insurance required pursuant to a mortgage of the property. The emergency houses built under the Government Emergency Dwelling Scheme are owned by the Government and not the trust and, in the case of these houses, the insurance is carried by the Government. As regards houses under construction, the building contracts of the trust require the builders to take responsibility for any damage occasioned by fire, etc., and they are required to insure against this risk and they make their own arrangements for this purpose. During the financial year ending June 30, 1953, the trust set aside from its income £18,649 for insurance purposes and at that date the amount standing to the credit of its insurance fund was £47,396.

Mr. STEPHENS—Am I to understand that the Government has insured its temporary houses with the present Government insurance department; and that the Housing Trust has established a separate department for the insurance of its houses?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—For many years the Government has accepted certain special risks, or when undertaking work for other people has carried its own insurance. Each year an amount is voted on the Estimates to cover any losses on Government buildings and because the risks are spread it is a perfectly safe and legitimate procedure. This scheme covers emergency homes; the Housing Trust also has a scheme to cover any losses on its own houses and I have provided details of the amount to the credit of that fund.

BROKEN HILL ROAD.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Minister of Works noticed that the New South Wales Government has decided to bituminize the road from Broken Hill to Cockburn? As I have

been recently approached again by the Broken Hill people with the suggestion that more bitumen should be placed on the South Australian section of the road, has further consideration been given to sealing the surface of the road beyond Marrabel in the general direction of Broken Hill and, if so, how many miles are likely to be done in the near future?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Speaking generally, the extent of the work to be done is limited to the funds available to the Highways Department. Every penny received by way of motor registration, petrol refund, licence fee, etc., goes into the fund. Obviously, if we spend money on one road there is a correspondingly lesser amount for another. It has been the object of the department to give priority to the roads carrying the most traffic. There is a section from Marrabel beyond that should under ordinary circumstances, perhaps, have received further consideration. The difficulty is that the Commissioner has decided that it would be a waste of money to proceed with the section, as it needs re-aligning in keeping with modern requirements. I will endeavour to see what progress he can expect to make on the road, assuming that the present rate of revenue is maintained or, alternatively, increased.

WATER TANKS FOR TRUST HOMES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Premier obtained a report following on the question I asked on October 15 regarding the supply of water tanks to Housing Trust homes?

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

During and since the war years until relatively recently the South Australian Housing Trust was unable to obtain supplies of galvanized iron for the purpose of rainwater tanks and it could not supply tanks to houses for which a reticulated water supply was available. As a result, at September 30, 1953, there were 3,741 rental houses of the trust without rainwater tanks. However, the trust in most cases built a tank stand to each house for the purpose of providing a tank when possible. The trust is now endeavouring to place rainwater tanks in these houses, but the supplies of galvanized tank iron are limited and progress is very slow and in order to carry out a limited programme the trust is obliged to have iron curved to make up the deficiency of available tank iron. The trust is installing some concrete tanks and so far has installed nearly 400 of these tanks. The trust has not made any promises to tenants for the supply of rainwater tanks, and owing to the difficulties in securing tank iron is not in a position to make any promises. Under existing circumstances it will be a very long time before all the tanks are installed, but in the meantime the trust is providing tanks at as rapid a rate as

the limited supplies available to it permit. In addition to taking steps to provide tanks to houses already built the trust has now arranged for tanks to be installed in houses now under construction.

On making a check of the galvanized iron position I found that at present the outstanding orders in South Australia total 14,000 tons.

Mr. O'Halloran—Is any to come forward in the near future?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The amount of iron in stock is practically nil, and the 14,000 tons probably represents orders which have been banked up for two years. The honourable member can see that the provision of iron for 3,741 houses will be a formidable task.

APPOINTMENT OF PROBATION OFFICERS.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Can the Premier say if any decision had been made about the appointment of paid probation officers?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. Last week when the honourable member asked the question I told him the matter was before Cabinet. On Monday it was decided that a probation officer would be appointed and stationed at the court.

NISSEN HUTS AT LOXTON NORTH.

Mr. STOTT—Has the Minister of Lands a reply to the question I asked on October 6, regarding the completion of Nissen huts for the Loxton soldier settlement area?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have received the following report:—

It has been decided that where settlers are able to take occupation of their houses at the time their blocks are allotted Nissen huts are to be provided as sheds only. The shed comprises a shell with one end enclosed and a concrete floor. In the cases where one end has not already been enclosed this will be done as soon as practicable. If settlers desire to use these huts as accommodation for pickers it will be necessary for them to equip them by using their own funds or surplus crop proceeds. Any difference between the value of a shed and a shed converted to living quarters will be taken into consideration when the holding is valued.

ASCOT PARK RAILWAY CROSSING

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Will the Minister of Railways inform me of the result of my recent request for the installation of a wig-wag signal or flashing light at the railway crossing at Sixth Avenue, Ascot Park and for improved lights on locomotives and rail cars?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Acting Railways Commissioner has advised that he intends to instal flashing lights at this crossing in

conjunction with the duplication of the line to Oaklands, which work is now in hand. The provision of better lighting on suburban locomotives and rail cars has already commenced. It is intended to fit an improved type of headlamp to 43 "F" type locomotives and 12 model 55 railcars and 20 locomotives and three railcars have already been fitted. The remainder will be fitted as soon as possible. The headlight of the model 75 railcar is considered to be quite satisfactory.

APPOINTMENT OF RAILWAYS COMMISSIONER.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Can the Premier inform the House whether any decision has been made regarding the appointment of a Railways Commissioner, or if not, when such appointment is likely to be made?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Cabinet considered this matter yesterday and a decision was arrived at. This will be placed before His Excellency the Governor in Executive Council on Thursday next. An officer at present employed in the Railways Department has been recommended, but, as it is not usual to announce appointments before they are dealt with by Executive Council, I am sure the honourable member will not desire me to disclose his name.

CONDEMNED HOUSES.

Mr. LAWN (on notice)—How many houses and residential in the city of Adelaide have been condemned by the Local Board of Health and put to other use during each of the years 1950, 1951, 1952, and 1953?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Local Board of Health for the city of Adelaide reports that two of the houses which have been condemned during the last four years were converted into business premises—one in 1950 and one in 1952.

BULK HANDLING OF WHEAT.

Mr. MICHAEL (on notice)—

1. Has the Minister of Agriculture read in the *Advertiser* of October 12 the letter by Mr. C. T. Chapman, South Australian representative on the Australian Wheat Board?

2. Do all wheatgrowers in Australia contribute to the cost of bulk installations in the other States?

3. If so, what amount is contributed by the wheatgrowers of South Australia to the cost of bulk installations in the other States?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The replies are:—

1. Yes.

The head office of the Australian Wheat Board advises:—

2 and 3. All costs incurred by the board in receiving, handling and storing wheat, whether in respect to bagged or bulk wheat, are pooled on a Commonwealth basis, and the average per bushel cost is shared equally by every grower in the Commonwealth, irrespective of whether he delivered bagged or bulk wheat. It is the board's experience that in an average normal season, costs incurred in receiving, handling and storing bulk wheat are less than the costs incurred in receiving, handling and storing bagged wheat, and thus growers in Western Australia or in the eastern States who have delivered bulk wheat contribute towards the higher costs incurred in handling bagged wheat in South Australia. Conversely, South Australian bagged wheatgrowers have received the benefit of the lower average per bushel costs resulting from the lower costs of handling bulk wheat in States other than South Australia. The comparative costs of receiving, handling and storing bulk and bagged wheat, respectively, in the 1951-1952 season (No. 15 Pool) were as follows:—Bulk, 5.623d. per bushel; bagged, 9.248d. per bushel. The above average rates are calculated on the respective quantities of bulk and bagged wheat received by the board in that season.

BITUMINIZED ROADS.

Mr. CHRISTIAN (on notice)—

1. What was the total mileage of bituminized roads in South Australia—(a) prior to 1945; and (b) as at June 30, 1953?

2. What was the total mileage of bituminized roads on Eyre Peninsula—(a) prior to 1945; and (b) as at June 30, 1953?

3. What was the cost per mile of bituminizing roads—(a) prior to 1945; and (b) at the present time?

4. What were the main roads allocations in 1952-53 for—(a) the whole State; and (b) Eyre Peninsula?

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

1. Total mileage of bituminized roads in South Australia constructed and/or maintained departmentally—(a) prior to 1945, 1,816 miles; (b) as at June 30, 1953, 2,072 miles; increase approximately, 14 per cent.

2. Total mileage of bituminized roads on Eyre Peninsula constructed and/or maintained departmentally—(a) prior to 1945, 100 miles; (b) as at June 30, 1953, 120 miles; increase of 20 per cent.

3. The cost per mile of constructing bituminous roads varies within very wide limits, according to the condition of the base, type of surface, location and topography of the district, availability and cost of road metal, etc.

An approximate average cost for a country road might be taken as—(a) prior to 1945, £3,500 per mile; (b) at the present time, £10,000 per mile.

4. Total expenditure on main roads for 1952-1953—(a) the whole State, £2,255,778; (b) on Eyre Peninsula, £229,174. Showing increased expenditure on Eyre Peninsula of approximately 10 per cent as compared with an overall increase for the whole of the State (on a population basis) of 4.5 per cent.

WHEAT INDUSTRY STABILIZATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS (Minister of Agriculture) 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 amend the Wheat Industry Stabilization Act, 1948-1951.

Motion carried. Resolution agreed to in Committee and adopted by the House. Bill introduced and read a first time.

BUDGET DEBATE.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from October 15. Page 1063.)

Legislative Council, £8,747.

Mr. QUIRKE—(Stanley)—When progress was reported I was referring to a number of matters that I considered were most worthy of investigation. I shall now mention a question that directly concerns the Department of Agriculture, though there is no relevant item on the Estimates. Some time ago I asked the Minister a question concerning the enormous number of spray materials now on the market. He informed me that those materials, particularly those that were reported to be nutrients applied to the leaves of plants, would be the subject of legislation. Of course, his remarks did not convey the form of that legislation, but as a layman I have examined some of these so-called nutrient sprays and concluded that most of them were nothing more than ordinary commercial fertilizers in liquid form, and that their prices are out of all proportion to their value. They are supplied in gaudily coloured bottles with well-grown flowers and vegetables pictured on the label, indicating what type of fruit and vegetables would grow if the contents of the bottle are used. I will be particularly interested in the legislation to be brought down to control this sudden upsurge of consideration for the gardener. The legislation should make it mandatory for everyone supplying these materials to show what they comprise. Chemical formulas are not sufficient, for formulas in chemical terms often look impressive, whereas the contents of the bottle

may be of little value as a spray nutrient. They may merely represent a confidence trick foisted upon an unsuspecting public.

Fairly extensive use is being made of a system of spraying cereal crops to kill the weeds so as to leave the crops without competition. The weeds are certainly killed, but I suspect that dangers may be inherent in this method. Recently the member for Gouger asked the Minister of Agriculture a question relating to the distortion of the heads of cereal plants arising from the use of certain sprays. I take a dim view of anything that will cause distortion of the grain, for that distortion can only be caused by something affecting the metabolism of the plant. The heads are not in evidence when the crops are sprayed at a comparatively early stage, but the plant is affected by the hormone spray. It is only when the spray is used in a certain proportion that it will kill the broad leaf weeds and not the cereal grass. I have noticed the effects of these sprays when used on fat hen. It is nothing short of diabolic. Anyone with any consideration for plant life, even for weeds, must be afraid of the consequences of the use of these hormone sprays. It is certainly known that they kill, but what effect have they on the plants themselves and on the soil? This is not known, but last year there was a debate in the House of Lords on this question. Legislation was introduced there for the purpose of making the use of these sprays legitimate under certain circumstances, and it was admitted by the Minister in charge of the Bill that their effect, other than the power to kill, was not known.

The method of killing a weed is by causing an overgrowth of the cellulose structure of the plant. Every plant and animal is made up of myriads of cells, and the only effect of the hormone spray is to cause them to multiply at a terrific rate. So great is the multiplication that the plant becomes twisted and distorted. The only thing known for certain about cancer in the human body is that it is an overgrowth of ordinary normal cells. For some reason the ordinary cellular structure of the body goes completely mad in one direction and sets up a cancerous growth, which is an overproduction of cells. The hormone sprays used to destroy plant life apparently have the same effect. They promote the overgrowth of the natural cellular structure of the plant, thereby killing it by the resultant cancerous growth. I should like to be reassured by the Department of Agriculture that no harm can result from the use of these sprays, but I

doubt whether the department can do so, for I do not think we know where we are going in this matter. I remember that at one time the Department of Horticulture recommended the use of D.D.T. as a spray to combat codlin moth. It certainly killed the moth, but it also upset the natural balance in the orchard and that destroyed the parasite of the red spider without destroying the red spider itself. We might just as well have had codlin moth, for it did less damage than the red spider. The department does not now recommend the use of D.D.T. for spraying apple orchards. We do not know what we are doing to the thousand and one organisms associated with soil life when we indiscriminately spray them with complex chemical mixtures. I should like to know what takes place to cause the distortion in the grown heads of cereals months after the crop has been sprayed, for this indicates spraying has an effect on the plant itself.

Another matter worthy of consideration is the operation of our Soil Conservation Branch. Reams have been written relating to the conservation of soils, but a great deal of progress has not been made in this respect and in the education of the man on the land as to its importance. The contouring of slopes is not the complete answer to soil erosion. We could have this trouble even if every slope in South Australia was contoured. Soils do not become fertile because they are contour-banked; subsequent use of the land is of major consideration. The soil will hold water to a greater extent, and thereby lays the basis for higher fertility, but unless it is then properly managed it will not give 100 per cent results. Contour-banking is usually necessary because of the extreme damage that has already occurred. Its object is to slow up the flow of the water and spread it. The timely rain in the last two days has to a large extent overcome the result of the recent warm weather and has saved many crops. Undoubtedly our cereal production is very sick. Some people contend that a crop 18in. high or less will give a yield equal to one 3ft. high. They say, "Why do you want all that straw; you do not reap the straw? You have the head on top." The head on the low crop is not equal to that on a vigorous crop 3ft. high.

Mr. Heaslip—Our land is in better condition than it was 15 years ago.

Mr. QUIRKE—I have my doubts. There have been some improvements, but considering the money spent and the effort involved the response has not been what one could have expected.

Mr. Brookman—The rise in the price of wool has affected the position.

Mr. QUIRKE—That rise over the last 10 years has resulted in a greater improvement in our soils than anything done by farmers. Last week I mentioned that farmers have been tempted to break their crop rotations, and all over the country one sees barley crops which should not be there. The member for Rocky River knows that to be true. These crops have intruded upon and completely smashed the organized rotation that was being built up. Farmers have been tempted by a cash-catch crop to get a little extra off the land, and many have dismally failed, thank goodness. If a lesson was needed, we can see the effect of it today. The soil fertility of the average farmlands of South Australia has not been built up to such a stage where successive crops can be taken off it. We are placing an undue reliance upon the value of some of our leguminous crops. One has only to investigate the known nitrogen cycle factors to know that the cycle in its full strength is not operating in South Australian soils, and simply cannot because the primary factors are not there. We attempt to overcome the natural nitrogen cycle of organic matter of ammonia, nitrites and nitrates by thinking we have a very effective substitute in the form of the leguminous crop. For one year the result may be very good, and even for a succession of years, but the conditions in the soil mitigate against a continuity of that system of providing nitrogen. I will read a condensation of *Soil Conditions and Plant Growth*, the work of Sir John Russell, of the famous Rothamstead experimental station in England. A copy of this is in the Parliamentary Library. In this work he says:—

The mineralization of soil nitrogen is the name used for the process by which nitrogen in organic compounds becomes converted into inorganic ammoniums and nitrate.

The organic content of our soils is the basis of crop production and it is one thing above all other ills in this country in which we are at fault in primary production. As a substitute for the recognized cycle we use the leguminous plant. Sir John Russell also said:—

Leguminous plants seem to differ very considerably among themselves in their calcium requirements. If phosphates and calcium requirements are not fully met legumes can grow and produce some sort of a crop, but they will not necessarily fix nitrogen, and a following crop may show little benefit.

If either phosphates or calcium is lacking, then the nitrogen cycle cannot take place, and neither will nitrogen be formed in the nodules of the leguminous plants. Until recently it

has been said that phosphate fixation was one of the big factors in the wastage of phosphates in South Australia. We know now that it is not such a big factor as was originally thought, provided there is plenty of organic matter in the soil. If there is plenty, an acid like citric acid can liberate the phosphate already in that soil to such an extent that I have seen a succession of good cereal crops grown on pasture land without the addition of any superphosphate.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—In parts of New South Wales and Queensland they have grown crops for 30 years without the addition of superphosphate.

Mr. QUIRKE—That is because phosphate is already present. The soils referred to in Queensland have a tremendously high organic content. Agricultural text books written by famous men are not generally read by the farming community, and one cannot expect them to read the type of books on the subject we have in our Parliamentary Library. If they did, some would receive a shock as to what they do not know. The application of sulphate of ammonia to soils is damaging unless there is plenty of organic matter available and dressings of lime are used to neutralize the acid effect. Backyard gardeners are advised to use sulphate of ammonia around their orange trees, and they thus build up the acid content of the soil until ultimately the tree suffers, instead of benefits, unless lime is added to neutralize the acid. My authority is Dr. F. W. Parker, assistant chief in the Bureau of Plant Industry, Soils and Agricultural Engineering, who is in charge of soil and fertilizer research in that bureau in America. Every gardener in the metropolitan area should be made aware of his advice to offset the danger from the continued use of sulphate of ammonia. This is what Dr. Parker had to say:—

Sulphate of ammonia is quite acid in its action in the soil. It requires about a pound of limestone to correct the acidity from 1 lb. of ammonium sulphate. Nitrogen fertilizers give best results where their use is combined with other good soil and crop management practices. The soil should be limed when needed and have a good supply of available phosphate and potash, be in good tilth and have a satisfactory supply of moisture. Nitrate of soda tends to reduce slightly soil acidity.

Those are the conditions necessary for the safe use of sulphate of ammonia, but our people know nothing of them. I have never seen instructions regarding the use of sulphate of ammonia accompanied by a statement that the acidity must be neutralized with calcium carbonate in a ground limestone form. Why

is this not done? Like other members, I am constantly being asked questions regarding the care of gardens and use of fertilizers. Some questions are readily answered but others cannot be answered so readily. What is required is an avenue for the dissemination of scientific information to farmers and gardeners. At present it is locked up in text books in the Parliamentary and other libraries, and in such institutes as the Waite Research and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, very often in terms completely unintelligible to the ordinary layman.

On previous occasions I have referred to the possibilities of the use of sewage sludge. Members have been told that the old sewage farm is to be removed and a sewage treatment plant established near Wingfield. The Premier recently said that 30,000 tons of sewage sludge per annum would result from the establishment of the new plant. The following table shows the tonnage of garbage collected each week by councils and the cost per annum of its disposal:—

	Tons per week.	Disposal cost per annum. £
Port Adelaide . .	55	6,735
Woodville . . .	60	4,600
West Torrens }		
Glenelg . . .	94	1,500
Hindmarsh . . .	25	1,500
Thebarton . . .	25	1,000
Prospect . . .	50	500
Enfield . . .	30	1,000
St. Peters }		
Payneham }		
Norwood }	106	5,600
Burnside }		
Walkerville }		
	445	£22,435

That list does not include the Adelaide, Unley, Mitcham, Marion, Henley and Grange or Brighton councils. The Adelaide City Council during the year 1951-52 collected 500 tons of vegetable matter from the city markets and 7,053 tons of garbage, but they are unable to give the cost of disposal as it was burnt in the destructor along with the garbage from the Unley Council. That is evidence of dreadful waste and a shocking crime against the health and fertility of the Adelaide plains. My proposal is the that 30,000 tons of dried sewage sludge—if it is dried—shall be used to break down into compost form the thousands of tons of garbage collected annually. A proper treatment plant for that purpose should be established. Plenty of such plants exist in other countries, and the councillor who supplied me with this information has evidence of the

successful working of such plants. In some cases the garbage is carted 14 miles, processed, and composted, and the sale of the produce completely defrays the cost of collection, cartage and processing. If it did only that it would be worthwhile, but the ultimate benefit derived from its use as a fertilizer is incalculable. It could be sold at a handsome profit and would probably pay for the whole cost of collection throughout the metropolitan area. Under such a scheme the present annual disposal cost of over £22,000 could be recouped from the sale of the product, and I trust that such a scheme will be introduced. I have been approached by representatives of those councils mentioned in the table with a request that such a plant should be established.

Some weeks ago in reply to my question the Premier said that, while treatment works were the responsibility of the Government, the collection of garbage was the responsibility of councils, but that should not damn the scheme at its inception. The fact that the establishment of such a plant would enable both the Government and the councils to recoup at least the best part of collection costs is only one reason why it should be established. The scheme I advocate would make sewage sludge available and eliminate the present practice of disposing of garbage in disused rat-infested quarries around the boundaries of the metropolitan area. Those quarries are a blight and a reproach to everybody in these days of modern thought in relation to the disposal of such refuse. Members have only to read some of the books on this subject in our library to realize that such schemes operate in South Africa and Kenya Colony as well as in India and Ceylon where compost is used in the tea industry. It is also used in Scotland, but not to any great extent in America where the disposal of sewage is a reproach on that otherwise advanced country, for in many cases the raw sewage is tipped into rivers and pollutes them. That is a disgusting and disgraceful practice closely akin to the suggestion made here some little time ago that our sewage refuse should be tipped into the sea near our beaches.

Mr. Davis—None should be wasted.

Mr. QUIRKE—There is no need to waste it, for it contains all the residual phosphates. We talk about phosphate and other deficiencies of our soils, but the excess of phosphates could be used, because mineral matter is completely indestructible. I read the newspaper article regarding the homes for pensioners referred to earlier this afternoon, and although I do not criticize the Housing Trust I ask why must

it ignore the Building Act and council regulations and by-laws in building houses and not conform to standards laid down by Parliament. Is there any shortage of materials with which to build these houses that their ceilings should be lower? Is there any shortage of men to build them? What is the shortage? Only that of money. There is not the money to build a house to conform to the ordinary requirements laid down by Parliament, and because there is not the trust must build something inferior. Recently I asked that money be provided to assist people to install septic systems in country towns, because some people have not the necessary means to afford £70 or £100 on septic installation. The Premier promised to examine the proposal and said:—

An important consideration which it is difficult at present to overcome is the financial outlay. The Government is working under a Loan Council allocation and this has an inflexible upper limit.

Members have been told that certain towns will eventually have deep drainage and a sewage treatment plant, but I do not expect country towns to enjoy those amenities in my time and I want corporations to be told that they will be able to do away with the obsolete and objectionable system of pan sanitation and that it shall be compulsory for everybody to install a septic system. If such a system is made compulsory, some people—pensioners and others—will not have the cash to install it, and exemptions will probably be made allowing them to continue with the present obnoxious system. Councils can raise money on their rates, but if they do they will be paying interest for a period out of all proportion to necessity. I would prefer the Government to say, "In lieu of the sewerage system which you cannot have now, and will have in the problematical future, you can have septic systems, and here is a tithe of the cost of it." That would be between £1,000 and £1,500 for a town like Clare. However, the Government's reply is that there is an inflexible upper limit beyond which it cannot go. The necessity for these things does not matter a curse. There is an inflexible upper limit imposed upon the Governments of this country which we accept without a protest. A Budget with the astronomical figure of £50,000,000 is introduced, all but about £5,000,000 being represented by debt. Because of this inflexible upper limit councils cannot obtain the few thousand pounds necessary to provide ordinary, decent amenities. I disagree entirely with such a

policy. It is completely fictitious and can ultimately work to the detriment of Australia to such an extent that our whole economy can be ruined. Knowing full well that when in Rome one must do as Rome does, and that when discussing Budgets one must accept what for the present is inevitable, on that basis alone I accept the inevitability of this Budget.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS (Stirling)—I would like to add a few general remarks on the fifteenth Budget introduced by the Premier and congratulate him on bringing down a Budget that is not only acceptable to this House but acclaimed by the people of the State as being in keeping with the progress of the State. Members opposite, of course, in their capacity as the Opposition, find very little in it to commend, but I venture to suggest that that opinion is out of step with public opinion. The State Budget, like the Federal Budget, ensures an incentive to primary and secondary production alike. Mr. Lawn related a 20-year criticism of the Government, but nothing constructive or helpful arose from it. Mr. Dunstan quoted figures to disprove that any good may be derived from the Federal Budget, but that Budget was acclaimed with enthusiasm by all classes of people and by almost every newspaper in the Commonwealth and they cannot all be wrong.

Last evening I was privileged to hear a speech by Lord Swinton who painted a picture of the economic and financial difficulty into which England had fallen in 1951 when, with a deficit of £14,000,000,000, she was at such a low ebb that it was almost impossible to carry on. He said that the surgeon's knife was unpleasant but drastic action was often necessary to save life. Drastic action was warranted in England and resulted last year in a recovery and a surplus. This is exactly what has happened in Australia, and the measures taken by the Federal Government have had the same result, distasteful as the medicine was at the time. The remedy has warranted the action taken and today this is a healthy country. The confidence in the Federal Government is indicated by the over-subscription by £16,000,000 of the eighteenth Security Loan.

This Budget is well balanced and provides for every phase of the State's development, including services such as schools and hospitals. The Leader of the Opposition said:—

The question more particularly demanding attention is country hospital services. We have Government hospitals in certain towns and Government subsidized hospitals in others, and here and there a private hospital, very few

of which remain. Then there are a number of community hospitals maintained entirely by the communities they serve.

I agree that some tidying up of our hospital services is necessary because fully maintained Government hospital operating beside community hospitals and Government-subsidized hospitals would appear to be untidy and may cause people to wonder at the different set-up obtaining. Some community hospitals have been established near Government and Government-subsidized hospitals. They have often filled a need in the district and eventually have received considerable recognition from the Chief Secretary and been subsidized on a pound for pound basis in respect of capital expenditure. The tidying up process is desirable, but would entail a big cost and may not at present be practicable.

Increased costs of maintenance and the building of new schools are responsible for a large amount of the expenditure provided in the Budget. If the Government provided sufficient money for one service as it would like to do, there would be the danger of depriving another of its requirements. School committees are performing a wonderful service and it is a good thing that parents serving on committees are concerned with the welfare of the schools their children attend and the work done. School committees do much in providing furnishings and other amenities and their efforts are subsidized by the Government. This has caused most of our schools and their amenities to be of a high standard. I am happy to note an increase of £30,203 for the conveyance of country students to schools and that is greatly appreciated. A paper issued by the Minister of Education, including notes of an address by the Director of Education to the High Schools Councils Association on October 2, is most enlightening and provides a picture of 14 years' progress in education. It includes figures relating to the increases in the number of students, the numbers of schools and teachers, the costs involved, and proves the soundness of the system and that attention is being paid to our children's welfare.

The loss on railways is deplorable. It is a major problem brought about to some extent by the prosperous seasons we have been enjoying. Many primary producers have their own transport vehicles and cart large quantities of wool, superphosphate and produce. The same applies to passenger traffic because most people have their own cars and drive them to work and into the country on holidays and Sundays. These factors all contribute to the big losses

in railway revenue. I have been through the Islington Workshops and have noted the tremendous works taking place there which, should a war break out, could maintain rolling stock and be diverted to the manufacture of munitions. In view of the training it provides to many young technicians and engineers the modern machinery in use there would be the greatest insurance this country could have should our lines of communication be cut. Thus some of our railway losses can be written off as defence insurance.

Some members opposite have said that there is no relief to be obtained from the Federal Budget. I contend there is. A great saving will result from the raising of the exemptions from payroll tax. Last year the Education Department paid £87,194 in payroll tax. The relief provided will represent a large saving to councils which employ large staffs and this saving can be used on construction or maintenance work and will be appreciated by ratepayers. The provision for the building of homes for old folk is timely and meets with the approval of all people. I hope that Victor Harbour will participate in this provision and that the Housing Trust will be asked to consider erecting at least a token group of homes for the town and district. The increase in charges for harbours and wharfage is necessary because each department lagging in revenue imposes a strain on those which are paying. Losses have to be met by the taxpayer. Electricity extensions into the rural areas of my district are greatly appreciated, and when certain plans are implemented will be a great boost to producers. The fact that electricity will be reticulated at a price as near to cost as possible will not detract from its value, for the indirect revenue will be great. With other speakers, I believe in the future of this State, and one of the greatest indications of our prosperity is the record attendance and entries at many country shows, and the high standard of exhibits. However, let us conserve some of the plenty, for the time which will surely come when seasons and prices decline. If we are thrifty and careful now we shall survive the lean periods.

Mr. DAVIS (Port Pirie)—I shall not imitate the previous speaker and congratulate the Government on its achievements over the last few years. I have listened with amazement to some of the statements of Government members. They have suggested that the Playford Government has done many things in the interests of South Australia and has developed the State. They have referred to

Leigh Creek, the development at Radium Hill, and to the Mannum-Whyalla pipeline. The Government can claim very little credit for the latter project because the pipeline was only constructed because of an agreement with the Broken Hill Proprietary Company, which was to establish a steel works at Whyalla. However, the B.H.P. has fallen down on its part of that arrangement. In most projects the Government has been financed by the Federal Government. Radium Hill will be in the interests of the British Empire and if the Government had not developed that field others would have been quite prepared to. Mr. Dunnage eulogised the Government for its achievements in education. I do not think he has travelled extensively in the country, because had he done so he would not have made such sweeping statements. Mr. Pearson referred to expenditure on education. I do not know if he thinks we are spending too much, but my view is we are not spending enough. At Port Pirie about 1,900 children attend two primary schools. At Port Pirie West the enrolment is 1,260; last year it was 997. Nothing has been done to provide for the additional children. At Solomontown the enrolment is 600; last year it was 510. For a long time we have been promised a third primary school, but so far nothing has been done. I do not know how any member opposite can say that school facilities generally are being improved. The Port Pirie children are not getting a fair deal. I believe the Port Pirie schools are fully staffed. More school accommodation is needed because the town's population will soon increase. But for the private schools I do not know how the position at Port Pirie would be met. They accommodate 523 children. Members opposite will say that they should go to State schools, but if they did the present bad accommodation position would be much worse. There are more amenities in one private school than in all the public schools in the town. The buildings are better, too. The Minister of Education should visit Port Pirie more often to ascertain the school requirements. I hope the new Minister of Education will give the matter more attention. If the member I have in mind is appointed greater attention will be given to the subject.

The Port Pirie High School is overcrowded and cannot accommodate more children, yet next year it is expected that 100 additional children will attend. Some time ago plans were prepared for four additional rooms, but again the Government has fallen down on it job

and only two temporary rooms are to be provided. How will the additional children be accommodated? The Port Pirie people are afraid that in the near future it will lose another advantage. In 1900 a School of Mines was established and students were prepared for certain School of Mines examination. I understand that a number of students benefited from the training. In 1915 the School of Mines was taken over by the Education Department and renamed the Port Pirie technical School. The School of Mines course disappeared and in its place came a technical school course, but it was of a much lower standard and the certificate issued was scarcely known outside Port Pirie and completely unknown outside South Australia. In 1946 the members of the technical school council agitated for the re-establishment of the School of Mines course. Applications were called for an instructor, but the salary offered was too small. I understand one company provided more money to enable an instructor to be engaged. The present instructor is doing a good job, and we are proud of the students who have taken the course and received a diploma. Every opportunity is offered for the course to be undertaken. In addition to the schooling practical experience can be obtained at the Smelters. Students working there are allowed eight hours off per week for study. The diploma is a valuable one and gives a young man holding it an opportunity in life. It is recognized through-out Australia and overseas. The possibility of gaining this qualification at Port Pirie is a privilege which ought to be prized and carefully guarded. It offers a professional career to local young men without their having to come to Adelaide. The establishment of the course at Port Pirie is a further effort to stop the drift of country people to the metropolitan area, and also assists in the building up of the general standard of the town. At present there is one full-time instructor and another on part-time. Three instructors are needed. I cannot see why the School of Mines should not have been retained at Port Pirie, and enlarged to be something like the School of Mines at Kalgoorlie, where students get a practical experience of mining in addition to their schooling. I hope the Government will give the School of Mines the consideration it deserves. We do not want to lose it, because it would be a great loss to the town and the State. The Government must appreciate that it has a responsibility to schools in country areas.

A branch of the Motor Vehicles Department should be established at Port Pirie. Residents at present have to apply to the department in Adelaide when they want to register a motor vehicle or obtain a driver's licence, and there have been great delays. A local resident approached me last Sunday and said that although he had applied for registration of a motor vehicle in September his papers have not yet been supplied. If motor vehicles offices were established in some of our country towns there would be no delay, and Port Pirie being a central town, should be the place to have such an establishment. Pirie is the shopping centre of the north, and while visiting the town people from the many small townships nearby could transact their business with the Motor Vehicles Department. This would obviate the long delays country residents have experienced. I believe I have the support of some members opposite on this question, which should be considered by the Government.

I have listened with a great deal of interest to statements by members opposite who seem to like venting their spleen and hatred on the workers. They have accused them of having too much leisure, of being the cause of inflation, and many other things. They have seized every opportunity to express their desire the lower the standard of living. Mr. Hawker was one who said the workers had too much spare time, but I do not suppose he considers he has too much leisure, or that his leisure is paid for by the sweat of the workers who shear his sheep and work his land. It is all very well for men born with silver spoons in their mouths to say that the workers have too much leisure; I don't suppose Mr. Hawker has done a hard day's work in his life, yet he has the audacity to tell us that the people we represent have too much leisure because they are working only a 40-hour week. Probably he would like to go back to a 60-hour week with the employee working from daylight to dark in the interests of the employer and being treated as the farmer treats his horse—perhaps not even as well, because the farmer would provide a roof for his horse. Mr. Hawker blames Mr. Chifley for the introduction of the 40-hour week, but he does not know what he is talking about; Mr. Chifley had no say in the matter. An application was made to the Arbitration Court by the organizations concerned and after an 18 months' hearing the court unanimously decided to introduce a 40-hour week, stating that Australia could afford it. Mr. Hawker blamed the 40-hour week for inflation, but the real reason for inflation was the greed of

the employers who, immediately they had the opportunity, increased the prices of every article possible to obtain a greater profit. As soon as they got a greater profit inflation commenced. It snowballed and we now have no control over it. Despite this, the member for Burnside tried to tell us about the wonderful progress that had been made in this direction and that inflation had been arrested.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—The unions' representatives put that forward in the Arbitration Court in making out their case.

Mr. DAVIS—We can forgive the honourable member for some of his statements because he hasn't sufficient knowledge of the position. The employer has at all times had the thick end of the stick as far as the basic wage is concerned. We have been told repeatedly in this House that the workers should work for less and that wages should be fixed, but not prices or profits. They say that the workers should bear the whole of the burden. Mr. Geoffrey Clarke has told us how kindly the employing classes have treated the masses. In February, 1953, the basic wage was reduced by 4s. and members opposite then told us that Mr. Menzies had done wonderful things and had arrested inflation, as was evidenced by this reduction, yet, despite the consequent reduction in the wages bill, in the following quarter the basic wage increased by 3s. The employers received the benefit of the 4s. reduction, yet prices were increased to such an extent that an increase of 3s. was necessary in the basic wage in May, and a further 3s. in August. This shows that the argument of members opposite has no weight because immediately the wage was reduced the employer increased his prices. Where, then, is the argument that a reduction in the basic wage will arrest inflation?

Mr. Lawn—They are mistaken when they say that prices follow wages.

Mr. DAVIS—Yes. Next month, if the workers received their dues, they would obtain an increased wage, but the Arbitration Court has decided there will be no future adjustment. The press states that it was impossible to get into the court today because of the large numbers of employers and their representatives who were there applying to enjoy the fixed basic wage. It is pleasing to note that some of the States have not adopted the same attitude as South Australia. The other day the Premier said that if we adopted a method whereby one section of employees would enjoy quarterly adjustments and the other would not, chaos would be created in industry, yet for years we worked under the two systems here.

Until four years ago those working under State awards had to apply to the Board of Industry for an adjustment, whereas men working under Federal awards obtained automatic quarterly adjustments, so how can the Premier justify his remarks? The Arbitration Courts in Queensland and I believe Western Australia have decided to continue quarterly adjustments. I wonder how the Premier will rectify the damage that has been done by the Federal Arbitration Court. I am pleased to know that a judge in New South Wales asked what jurisdiction the Arbitration Court had to do away with quarterly adjustments. That is something thousands of people would like to know. All fair-minded employers are of the opinion that if the cost of living goes up the workers will be entitled to more, yet our Premier will not state his intention on the matter. Although the unions can apply to the Board of Industry for a review of the living wage because of an increase in the cost of living, such application can only be made six months after a previous decision. By the time the case has been prepared and heard by the Board of Industry 12 months has elapsed, so the workers have to wait a long time for an adjustment to their wages. Under the system of quarterly adjustments the workers had to wait long enough before being compensated for rises in the cost of living, so it is the Government's responsibility to retain this method. The Minister of Industry should amend the Industrial Code to enable the workers to get the benefit of quarterly adjustments, which they have enjoyed during the past four years.

I have heard the member for Unley boasting about the wonderful roads we have in the north of this State. The main roads are fairly good, but members opposite would form a different opinion if they travelled over some of the by-roads. I do not know whether the member for Unley, the Treasurer, or the Minister of Local Government has travelled over the road from Stirling North to Quorn.

Mr. Jennings—The member for Unley flew over it in a helicopter.

Mr. DAVIS—He would need to use a helicopter to get over the ruts. It is the worst road in the State, yet it is one of our main arteries. One cannot travel on it at any speed, but I particularly stress the necessity of improving the back roads. The Minister of Railways certainly has the job in front of him in rehabilitating our railway system. I have noticed how our railways have deteriorated, particularly over the last few years. If some of the rolling stock is not attended to soon it will

be beyond repair. The Government must keep it in good order, otherwise the railways will be losing more money than ever. On several occasions the Government has said it cannot afford to spend money on acquiring further rollingstock, but I can show the Minister rolling stock that has been in country areas for 40 years, and not used for about 20 years. At least 12 trucks and an engine are perishing. That rollingstock could have been used on other narrow gauge lines badly needing it. Had a motion submitted by a former Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. R. S. Richards, been adopted, an investigation of our railways would have been carried out, and probably our railways would be in a much better position today. Recently I brought this matter under the notice of the Minister, but he had the audacity to tell me I would be kicking my mates in the pants if I brought the matter before the House, yet I find that the employees are slaving their insides out on the engines drawing the trains between Adelaide and Port Pirie. I am pleased that through my agitation in this House I have had one of those engines removed. The employees told me how hard they had to work to keep that engine running. Neglect and maladministration in the department are responsible for the condition of that locomotive. Investigations should be made into the administration of the railways and the Education Department; in fact, into every department of the State.

Mr. WHITE (Murray)—I congratulate the Treasurer upon submitting his 15th consecutive Budget. The fact that he has been Treasurer for so long indicates that South Australia has had good Government for 15 years. The Government has given complete satisfaction to the people. A study of the Budget discloses that ample money has been provided to enable all departments to function satisfactorily without imposing hardship on any section of the community. I believe all members will agree that this Budget is a good one, for the only two sections called upon to make extra contributions to revenue are motor vehicle owners and those who use our harbours. I do not think any great objection will be offered to the increase in motor taxation, because money derived from that source will be earmarked for improvements to our roads. They will be brought up to date and reconditioned to enable them to carry the heavy and fast motor vehicles used today. The people paying the extra taxation will derive the most benefit. The same can be said about increased harbour

dues. Harbour and port fees have not been increased for a considerable time, and I know those who use our harbours and wharves have been expecting an increase in dues for some time. I am sure they will pay the extra fees without any fuss or bother.

An examination of the Budget indicates that in some departments extra expenditure will be incurred to meet exigencies that can be foreseen. I particularly have in mind the Department of Education, for we must always plan ahead when dealing with questions of education. For instance, we must now start to tackle the problem of educating children in 1956. The authorities study the birth rates and the effect of immigration upon the population in our schools. I have seen graphs in the department showing that by 1956 many more children will have to be accommodated. It is obvious that the Government is alive to this problem because recently it increased the allowances paid to student teachers. This was necessary, for the previous allowances were not sufficient, and many students were suffering grave hardship, particularly those who could not obtain assistance from their parents to augment their incomes. I am certain the increased allowances will prove instrumental in creating interest among our young people to enter the teaching profession. It seems that the Budget provides for the payment of these increased allowances.

The Budget shows that the Government recognizes the growing importance of many other departments. Some time ago the Mines Department was tucked away in a little corner and almost forgotten, but in the past 15 years it has come into prominence. It has greatly assisted in developing our brown coal deposits, and has helped to discover valuable deposits of uranium. These assets will greatly assist the industrial development of the State. The vote for the Mines Department will be increased by £119,000, which shows that the Government recognizes its importance. Ample money has been allotted to the Department of Agriculture, another prominent department. In my speech on the Address in Reply I pointed out that we were essentially an agricultural State. The Department of Agriculture has the vital task of caring for our primary industries, so it must not be kept short of money. The increase in the allocation for this year amounts to £47,000. That seems to be ample to cater for the increased activity of the department.

I now wish to refer to two matters under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Agriculture.

Some time ago I asked a question regarding barley crop competitions. I do not want to seem a fanatic on this question, but I was instrumental in having these competitions started in South Australia. I have taken a great interest in them since 1938, and have always felt that the department had missed out in not providing a subsidy in the same way as for wheat crop competitions. In reply to my question the Minister of Agriculture said that barley crop competitions as conducted at present did not fill the bill entirely, because to make them complete it would be necessary to examine samples of grain harvested to see that it was not damaged in the process of reaping, and to do that, much work would be involved, and the department did not have sufficient staff available. It was said that if a subsidy were paid it would give such encouragement to the competitions that the department could not handle the position adequately. Although these competitions are not subsidized, they have played an important part in maintaining the overall quality of barley exported.

One of the things the barley buyer dislikes is a mixture of types. The chief buyer is the maltster, and in the process of malting the barley is made to germinate, and anything that interferes with an even germination is regarded as a fault. We have the six-row varieties and two-row varieties, and mixture of these is regarded as very objectionable by those in the trade, because the six-row variety has a thicker skin. Consequently, when they are placed upon the malting house floor and made to germinate, by the time the six-row variety has properly germinated the two-row variety has almost become rotten. The result is a very poor malt. Mainly, three two-row varieties are grown in South Australia. Prior is the standard variety and is probably the best malting barley in the world. To produce a type that would stand up to the ravages of hot winds, Roseworthy Agricultural College brought out a variety called Maltworthy. Although it has a tougher straw than Prior, its malting qualities are not regarded as being its equal.

Mr. Pearson—If you get a particularly good sample it is a good malting barley, but it is rarely that you get an average sample equal to Prior.

Mr. WHITE—That is so. Another two-row variety is Research, which was produced at the Werribee Experimental Station in Victoria. If a sample is a mixture of these three varieties the object of the maltster is defeated, because each germinates at a different pace. Barley crop competitions could assist considerably in

producing quality barley, because they apply to areas of 10 acres, which are sufficiently small to enable a farmer to pull out all foreign growths. A departmental officer would visit the crop and, if he considered that the barley was sufficiently true to type, we would recommend it for seed purposes. His recommendation would be advertised in the *Journal of Agriculture* and it would also appear in the daily press and journals like the *Stock and Station Journal*. Thereby farmers all over South Australia, and possibly in other States, would be able to approach the owner and get a seed true to type. One year when my barley was recommended for seed I sent a few bags to Karoonda, Palmer, Naracoorte, Auburn, Coomandook and Tepeco. That shows how barley crop competitions can assist in keeping our barley true to type, and thereby help the State to produce a good quality sample. Because of that I believe that future Budgets should provide for these competitions, as is done for wheat crop competitions.

In the Budget appears a line for the fauna and flora reserve on Kangaroo Island, and I am pleased that the amount allocated for this very worthy project has been stepped up by £1,500. Of the reserves under the jurisdiction of the Fisheries and Game Department, one is situated about 10 miles from Murray Bridge on a disused road known as Chance's Line, which in the early days was the coach road between Adelaide, Wellington and the South-East. This area of 3,000 acres was set aside to preserve the mallee fowl, one of our very interesting birds. It is not fenced, and there is no notice to indicate that it is a sanctuary or reserve, and consequently people go in there and cut wood and brush, thus defeating the object of the reserve. I suggest that in future Budgets the Government provide for these fauna and flora reserves to be rabbit-proof fenced so that any vermin in the areas can be prevented from spreading to nearby agricultural areas. Provision should also be made for notices indicating that they are reserves. I mention this because in the years to come these areas will be valuable from the standpoint of natural history.

The member for Stanley referred to the compulsory installation of septic tanks in country towns. He considered that the Government should make finance available for the purpose. I shall tell the House what has been done at Murray Bridge. Eighteen months ago the council decided to compel local residents to install septic tanks. At that time there were 700 to go in, but only about 60 homes have not

had them installed. A pamphlet was sent to each householder pointing out that the Central Board of Health was not very pleased with the night soil system in operation, and that the council should consider the compulsory installation of septic tanks. It was pointed out to the people that the council had authority to enforce this under the Local Government Act. I am pleased that the response was very good. It was realized that the financial position of some people would prevent them from installing the system. The statement issued advised that if compliance with the order created financial embarrassment to anyone he should contact the council and place all his cards on the table and the council would then see what could be done to assist. A committee of two was appointed, one being a retired farmer and the other a solicitor, the object being to save a person the embarrassment of divulging all his business to a group of councillors. About 30 applied for assistance. Following upon interviews with the committee, many were advised that they could raise finance themselves. A number had freehold properties, but not the cash required. We were able to point out that they could borrow the money from a bank at a rate which would amount to about the same as the sanitary rate now being paid.

Mr. Pearson—And they would be improving the value of their property at the same time.

Mr. WHITE—That is so. Out of about 30 applications, only 14 had to be helped. This will be done out of the general rates. It will probably cost the council £900, and I should say that in five years the whole position will be cleared up. If Mr. Quirke would approach his council and put a similar proposition to it I doubt whether it would need to ask the Government for financial assistance. In local government one has to be prepared to help oneself. If what we have done at Murray Bridge can be of any assistance to other councils, the corporation will be only too happy to make the information available. It likes to do that, because it is pleased to extend courtesy to other councils and thus help in the work of local government throughout the State.

An overall increase in expenditure of seven per cent is indicated in the Budget. This has been referred to by at least one speaker opposite as indicating that inflation is still with us. However, I prefer to say that it indicates the steady, solid expansion that is taking place in all Government departments. If inflation were still a factor to contend with we would

see in the Budget increases in estimated expenditure on a scale shown in Budgets between 1949 and 1952, when the full blast of inflation had to be met. The present stable position of prices and costs as indicated in the Budget is a vindication of the methods adopted by the present Federal Government to bring about this happy state of affairs.

Another feature of the Budget is that it aims at a surplus of £10,000, which indicates that practical economy is being practised in most departments and that an honest attempt is being made to live within our income. Another feature appears to be that all expenditure has been sobered by the possibility of poor seasons being just around the corner and the fact that some overseas markets for our primary products are not as buoyant as they used to be, because of which we must expect lower prices for those products. The elements of caution that these two factors have created should be appreciated by everybody because both could cause a rapid fall in revenue. The splendid rains that have fallen today should further augment the beneficial effects of this Budget which is a good one and has been drawn up with a knowledge of all exigencies that could affect its successful implementation. It should provide a profitable year and I have much pleasure in supporting it.

Mr. McALEES (Wallaroo)—I do not intend to pose as a high financier. I have listened to several financiers in this debate, but I do not think I have learned a great deal from their remarks. Good arguments have been advanced by members on both sides, and many suggestions made for improvements in the various departments. The main question seems to be as to where money is to come from. Much has been said about roads and improved roads would undoubtedly be a great asset to the State. When I became a member of Parliament I imagined that soon I would own a motor car and enjoy driving it over our roads, but I am still looking forward to that pleasure. I am poorer today than when I first came into this House and my motor car is still on the showroom floor. To compensate me for my loss in worldly wealth I have the honour of being patron of every show in my district. Indeed, it is remarkable that even some bodies in the more conservative parts of my district have unanimously elected me as patron for which office I was certain I would be opposed.

The education of our children and the respect engendered for their teachers are important factors in our community life.

Much has been said about education, particularly by the members for Port Pirie and Murray. It must be remembered that the boys and girls of today will be the men and women of tomorrow, and too much money cannot be spent on their education. Nobody knows the value of education more than those who have had little of it. It is the Government's duty to see that children are educated to the highest standard possible and that teachers enjoy satisfactory remuneration and conditions. Many teachers undoubtedly go home after a day in the classroom with more headaches than some members of Parliament ever have. Our children will some day be called upon to face the problems we are facing and the best way in which we can help them is to educate them.

Conditions at the Kadina Primary School are disgraceful and would not be allowed to continue at any school in the Gawler district from which the Minister of Education comes. When he was in Kadina to open the annual show the Minister was invited to inspect the school. Since his inspection the school board has been waiting for his report on the steps which will be taken to relieve the position there. On the Saturday prior to the Minister's visit I visited the school and found that the water in the underground tank had become putrid and that the tank had been sealed. The children had to drink water from a tap, the water from which was so dirty on some days that I would not put it on my garden. On other days it seemed to be clearer, and when the Minister visited the school it was quite clean.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—How can the water from the reservoir be different one day from another?

Mr. McALEES—The Minister should be in a position to answer that, for he is the Minister of Works. The children at the school are not supplied with milk as are children in some other schools but are forced to bring their water to school in bottles. The parents have complained about the position, but I understand from the chairman of the school board that the Minister said it was all right. The floor of one classroom is on a slant and the teacher must write on a sloping blackboard. To read what he writes the children must almost lie on their sides in their seats. Three hundred and fifty children attend that school and the parents have complained bitterly about conditions. Action should be taken to improve the position, but we are told that shortage of money will not permit the Minister to initiate the necessary action.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—He is controlled by the taxpayer through Parliament.

Mr. McALEES—Who comprises the Government if it is not those members who sit on the Treasury benches? They are the ones to whom we look for help in these matters. These are facts from which there is no escape. About two years ago Moonta was affected by an earth tremor which shook one of the main walls of the school. Consequently the children were not allowed to attend that school because it was unsafe and they were transported to Moonta Mines—a distance of just over two miles. Many walked to the Moonta Mines school, although there were many dangerous concealed shafts along the track. The Minister promised an investigation and for two years that investigation proceeded. Finally I was notified that the school board had resigned and I took up the matter again with the Minister. Within a fortnight tenders were called to build a school and I believe the work is now almost complete. The fact that it took two years to get the Government to act shows the way in which my district is treated. I do not want to say anything personal against the Minister, but I am sure his district would not be treated like that. The member for Unley may have inside information, for earlier in this debate he told us that the member for Glenelg would be one of the new Ministers. I will be pleased when the Minister of Education is in this House so that I can ask him questions regarding educational facilities in my district.

A fair sum is provided for the Hospitals Department, and no section of the community earns more respect than the sisters and nurses who care for the sick. Nobody knows the conditions they must face except those people who have seen them at work. The people in my district have been disappointed at the failure of the Government to use the grain distillery premises at Wallaroo. I was a member of the deputation that waited on the Minister of Works asking that water be supplied so that an industry could be established in that town. He told us that the lack of a water supply would not stand in the way of the establishment of an industry there and went on to say that he would recommend a project to Cabinet and also Parliament. He did so and Parliament approved of the laying of an additional 30 miles of piping. The Federal Government was approached and it decided to build a grain distillery at Wallaroo. The State Government then suggested that the Federal Government pay for the additional piping. However, that difficulty was overcome and

the grain distillery was erected. At that time the shipping lanes were closed and wheat could not be exported. The distillery was to be used for making power alcohol from wheat. It took four years to build but by then the shipping lanes had been re-opened and the fuel was again being imported. The Federal Government erected three grain distilleries in the Commonwealth—in Western Australia, at Warracknabeal and at Wallaroo. They dismantled those at Warracknabeal and in Western Australia and proposed dismantling that at Wallaroo. I have always said that Wallaroo, Moonta and Kadina are a law unto themselves and they would not permit the Federal Government to dismantle the building. It then indicated that it would sell the building to the State Government but it did not want the interior fittings sold for the purposes of profit but desired the building to be used for the establishment of an industry. This Government has sold the interior fittings for a profit and the building, as it stands today, is worth about £75,000. The Premier said that the Barley Board and the Wheat Board desired to use the building. If the Government permits the stacking of wheat or barley there it will be the biggest curse the district has known. There is plenty of room outside for the stacking of wheat and barley and the building should be used for the establishment of an industry. If either of those boards obtain possession of the building, the district and Federal Government will be betrayed.

Mr. Pearson—You tell Yorke Peninsula farmers that.

Mr. McALEES—I would say that anywhere.

Mr. Shannon—Isn't Wallaroo almost dependant upon grain production?

Mr. McALEES—Has the honourable member ever been to Wallaroo?

Mr. Davis—When was the Premier there last?

Mr. McALEES—The Premier was at Wallaroo when he wanted the grain distillery but he has not been there since. On the eve of the last elections he spoke of establishing a meat works at Kadina. He said that to prove that he was sincere in trying to bring about decentralization. That was his promise and I am still waiting to see something come from it. The beaches at Wallaroo and Moonta are great assets to the district. People from miles around are taught to swim there. The *Advertiser* proposes holding a swimming campaign early next year and Wallaroo is one of the sites chosen for instruction. We are

anxious to teach young children to swim but if we cannot get help from the Harbours Board to meet the damage caused to the baths by the recent storm I do not know what will happen. I hope consideration will be given to that matter and that something will be done. I do not claim to be an authority on finance but I do agree with many of the things that have been said and I, too, pay a tribute to the teachers who are doing so much for education in this State. I support the first line.

Mr. GOLDNEY (Gouger)—I congratulate the Treasurer on producing his fifteenth consecutive Budget, which is a State record and, I think, a record for any State in the Commonwealth. He has kept a close rein on finance, which has been in good hands during that period. One matter which has been well ventilated during this debate is that of education. I am not so concerned with education itself as with some of the adjuncts which have recently accrued to the system. One is transport, which absorbs large expenditure. I believe it is fulfilling a good purpose. However, there are often requests for extensions of the services, which are a source of worry to country members and present difficulties. The Leader of the Opposition said that school committees were being called upon to do more work and to raise more money than they should be asked to. I disagree, because parents should realize that they have some responsibilities as parents and citizens. A considerable amount of public revenue is spent on the welfare of their children and the Government should not be expected to do everything. School committees which are functioning so effectively should be encouraged. Last year they worked energetically and raised so much money that the Minister had difficulty in keeping up with the subsidies. The payment of subsidies affords greater encouragement to the committees and better school amenities are provided for the children. I know many parents who, although their children are beyond school-going age, are still actively interested in the work of school committees. As parents and members of the community we should realize that while Cabinet is doing much for the education of our children we have certain responsibilities.

Mr. Davis suggested that private schools relieve the burden of the Government and the taxpayer in providing education. They are doing good work and are assisting the educational system. A high standard of secondary education is being provided in private schools and colleges. We have many classes of hospitals—Government, subsidized, and private.

All are performing good service to the community but are faced with difficulties because of rising costs and high wages.

[Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.]

Mr. GOLDNEY—Members will agree that subsidized hospitals in their areas have periods of financial difficulties. There must be an efficient staff, and often the number of patients is greatly reduced. This sometimes happens when there is a change of medical officer. Many people have faith in a doctor and if he transfers from the country hospital to the city they continue to consult him instead of going to the new local doctor. This has an important bearing on the number of patients in subsidized hospitals and on finances. I know where two or three small community hospitals have been established and the Minister, after some persuasion, has made a grant on the understanding with the local committee that it is to be the only grant, but I am sure that if these community hospitals show that they are doing their best to help themselves he will not refuse to make another grant. Our agricultural institutions have greatly increased financial responsibilities. A large sum of money is being spent on Roseworthy College and it is not a waste because the college is playing an important part in the agricultural life of the State. Money spent in this way must pay dividends, not only in South Australia but in other States, where some of the graduates go and are outstanding in their work. In the last two or three years the control of weeds has become an important feature in our wheat growing areas. The use of hormone sprays has been most effective in controlling various types of weeds, but they have a detrimental effect on the later stages of the cereal crop. We have had so little experience of them that we do not fully understand their implications. A few weeks ago a constituent who grows tomatoes under glass told me that during the flowering stage he used a hormone spray to make the fruit set. It proved effective in the setting because few flowers failed to produce fruit, but the tomatoes developed an abnormality and the Melbourne market refused to take them. Although the spray is useful in one sense it is disadvantageous in another, and the tomatoes are liable to deteriorate more quickly.

Mr. Quirke—And there is not the same flavour.

Mr. GOLDNEY—Yes. There are many problems associated with pasture development which have not been solved. By the application of certain trace elements to the soil we have

increased production, but other matters are causing concern to growers, and they must be given consideration. I favour spending as much money as we can on providing better roads. Most councils have fairly efficient plant and they should be able to keep their roads in good order, according to the finances available. It would be good policy when main country roads are reconstructed to seal them with a bitumen surface, according to the money available for the work, and if this were done maintenance costs would be reduced. It would be a good thing to do a small mileage each year. The proposed motor taxation increase will provide more money for road work. Motor taxation has not been increased for many years, and it is not unreasonable to ask owners of motor vehicles to pay a little more taxation in order that better roads may be provided.

Mr. Frank Walsh—How will the primary producer get on if he has to pay the full tax?

Mr. GOLDNEY—Nobody knows how the increase will be applied but I am sure the Government will distribute the burden as evenly as possible. This afternoon Mr. Davis attacked Mr. Hawker, and said that he was better situated financially than most other members in this place, and that he had never done a good day's work in his life, but I know that Mr. Hawker has never asked any man to do something that he was not game to do himself. He has gone down wells and to the top of high windmills, and has never shirked dangerous work. I hold no brief for the honourable member, but we should give credit where credit is due. I have pleasure in supporting the Budget and shall later refer to some of the other lines.

Mr. TEUSNER (Angas)—I congratulate the Treasurer on introducing his fifteenth consecutive Budget, which provides for an estimated revenue of £51,355,000 and an estimated expenditure of £51,345,000, leaving an estimated surplus of £10,000. I believe this to be a record Budget, and it is gratifying for us to know that the increase over the previous year is only a little more than 7 per cent, which is a strong indication that the inflationary spiral, if not stopped, has been at least blunted.

Mr. Jennings—Could it not be an indication that the Government is not to do as much work?

Mr. TEUSNER—I think it indicates that the Government is prepared to provide services not inferior to, and perhaps a little in excess of those provided in the past. In recent years it has been patent that more

can be done with less money than was the case some years ago. The only two items in this Budget in which there will be an increase in taxation are motor vehicle registrations and licences, and harbour charges. It is proposed to increase motor taxation to provide an additional £1,100,000, and harbour charges to obtain an additional £400,000. I feel that the South Australian public will not unduly criticize the Government for increasing motor taxation if it realizes that such taxation will be used in the future, as in the past, for roads, for the public will then reap a very considerable benefit. That has been the policy of this State for many years and is universally adopted by the other States. The amount estimated to come from petrol tax is £1,675,000 and from motor registration and licence fees £2,650,000, a total of £4,325,000, compared with £3,225,000 in the past year. I consider the most equitable method of raising money for roads would be the imposition of a petrol tax by this State, although I realize that a court decision in 1926 made it quite clear that such a practice is unconstitutional and consequently only the Commonwealth can raise revenue by such means. However, I hope that when legislation is introduced in this Chamber to implement certain of the Budgetary provisions, the primary producers, as in the past, will receive concessions in registration fees on their own motor vehicles.

Mr. Lawn—If they get any more concessions it will be hard on other owners.

Mr. TEUSNER—I am asking for some concessions. I also trust that district councils will again receive reasonable grants out of revenue. The policy of providing interest-free loans to councils, which has met with universal approval by them, should be continued because this has helped many of them to overcome difficulties and to purchase adequate machinery and plant for construction work.

Mr. Quirke—These loans are not interest free.

Mr. TEUSNER—A number of councils have received interest-free loans to enable them to purchase plant and machinery. I support the remarks of Mr. John Clark urging an early start on a dual highway between Gawler and Adelaide, because of the large amount of traffic. I travel along that road frequently in my car. Mr. Quirke and Mr. Lawn referred to the tremendous public debt of the State and Mr. Quirke, speaking on the Loan Estimates, referred to it as being astronomical. Mr. Lawn compared the debt today with what it was 20 years ago, but does he suggest that

South Australia is the only State in the Commonwealth that has shown an increase in its public debt over those years?

Mr. Lawn—*Hansard* shows that I did not say that.

Mr. TEUSNER—I think the honourable member did say that there has been a tremendous increase, and he was rather critical of the Government concerning it.

Mr. Lawn—The Liberal Government has been in power for 20 years.

Mr. TEUSNER—That is so, but does the honourable member suggest that South Australia, with its Liberal Government, is the only State responsible for a big increase in its debt?

Mr. Lawn—If someone committed suicide, would you do the same?

Mr. TEUSNER—A Labor Government has been in office in Queensland for 20 years, in New South Wales for over a decade and also in Tasmania for a considerable number of years, yet in each of those States the public debt has increased. In New South Wales, in 1939, the public debt was £359,844,000, which rose to £522,491,000 by June 30, 1952; in Queensland it increased from £127,503,000 to £187,310,000 in the same period; in Tasmania from £26,367,000 to £71,652,000.

The Hon. T. Playford—The honourable member for Adelaide is not interested in those figures.

Mr. TEUSNER—Perhaps he is not, only in the figures that suit him. The debt increased in South Australia from £108,887,000 in 1939 to £173,436,000 in 1952. I am not cavilling at that, because the real test is how we are spending our money, and as members will agree, the money we have spent has been for developmental purposes. Money spent wisely and prudently on developmental projects is money well spent, and there is every justification for having a national debt of the size that we have in this State. This is a young country and history shows that other countries have gone through a similar period and have spent considerable sums on development. Future generations as well as the present will reap the benefit of the expenditure in South Australia. The motto *festina lente*—"hasten slowly"—could well be applied to the first century of this State's existence, because we have hastened slowly over that period, possibly because there were few basic minerals available for development: there were deposits of iron ore, but no coal. Since 1942, however, Nature has revealed more of her secrets, and coal, uranium and pyrites have been found. The discovery of

these basic commodities opened up an entirely new vista of unlimited possibilities and the generation to come will no doubt reap the benefit. Although progress in the first century has been slow, it has been sure, and I am certain that if development in the second century is in the hands of statesmen of the calibre of the present Premier and a Government that is prepared to act wisely, it will be fast and faultless. The Government and the Premier have seized every opportunity to advance the claims of South Australia, and money that has been spent has been spent prudently, giving this State for many years a reputation for wise and judicious spending of public moneys. This was the first State to put its house in order after the depression of the 1930's, and also the first to balance its Budget after that period.

The stability of this State is made evident by the employment situation. Early this year Professor Karmel, Professor of Economics of the University of Adelaide, made an analysis of the unemployment position here and in other parts of the Commonwealth. He said that post-war employment had reached its peak in November, 1951, and since then there has been a decline divided almost equally between males and females, but a large proportion of these were people who would not normally be regarded as part of the labour force because they were married women or elderly people who only took jobs to ease the labour shortage. In January, 1953, the analysis revealed there were 41,600 people on unemployment relief in the Commonwealth. More than half of them were in New South Wales, but only 1,200 in South Australia. The unemployment rate at that time was less than $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent in Australia. In the depth of the depression, in 1930, the unemployment rate in Australia was 30 per cent. In 1939, when there were 300,000 unemployed, the percentage was $12\frac{1}{2}$. In 1948, statistics reveal that for every 100,000 of the population there were 11.3 persons unemployed in New South Wales, but only 3.1 in South Australia. That indicates we have something better than the other States, and that is reflected in our low unemployment figures. Our people have shown confidence in the future of this State.

Mr. Lawn—They haven't shown confidence in the Government.

Mr. TEUSNER—They have shown their confidence in the future of the State by the over-subscription of semi-governmental loans. I refer to the loans floated by the Electricity Trust, the Housing Trust, and other institutions, such as

the Gas Company. The Leader of the Opposition recently said that the oversubscription of these loans was largely due to the attractive interest rates, but I remind him that the loans floated by governmental and semi-governmental authorities in other States have been at a higher rate of interest, yet they sought subscriptions from this State.

Mr. O'Halloran—Can you name one of them?

Mr. TEUSNER—I think one was in Queensland and another in New South Wales.

Mr. Shannon—And the State Electricity Commission in Victoria.

Mr. TEUSNER—They advertised in our newspapers, and the rate of interest was higher than that offered by our institutions.

Mr. O'Halloran—It is easy to make a general statement.

Mr. TEUSNER—I undertake to give the Leader of the Opposition the names of the instrumentalities in due course. My main purpose in speaking was to draw the Government's attention to a matter that vitally concerns not only my district but adjacent areas. I refer to the water supply from the Warren reservoir. Recently the Public Works Committee was given a reference to inquire into and report upon the renewal of the Warren trunk main. For many years I have referred to the inadequate supply in my district and to the poor pressures experienced there. Fortunately, the committee's report was favourable and was tabled in this House last week. The Warren reservoir is the most elevated in South Australia. It is 1,273ft. above sea level and therefore commands a large area that cannot be served by any other reservoir. Thus, the availability of sufficient water at the reservoir is a matter of supreme importance. It supplies the lower north, and a trunk main of 115 miles passes through the hundreds of Barossa, Moorooroo, Belvidere, Kapunda, Gilbert, Upper Wakefield, Hall, Stow, Goyder and Kulpara, and supplies portion of the Beetaloo and Bundaleer districts. The reservoir was completed in 1916. It has a capacity of 1,401,000,000 gallons. The wall of the reservoir was raised in 1926 by 4ft 6in., increasing the capacity by 352,000,000 gallons.

The mains laid between 1916 and 1926 were of steel, with an estimated life of from 25 to 30 years. That time has now elapsed and I submit that these steel mains have outlived their usefulness. During the past five years the pitting of the pipes has been general, and a considerable amount of patching has been necessary. When speaking on the Address in Reply three or four years ago I mentioned that it was apparent that a considerable amount of

corrosion was taking place. According to the evidence submitted to the Public Works Committee that corrosion has considerably weakened the main, and as a result its capacity has been considerably decreased by incrustation. The committee found that a new Warren trunk main was necessary and that an enlarged main should be installed if the Government proposed to adopt a long-range plan. The increasing demands for water, and future developments, require a larger main. The population of the Barossa district, and its numerous industries are increasing. There are about 50 industries within 10 miles of my home town, and frequently they cannot get the quantity of water desired. The Barossa area is well-known for its diversified farming methods. It is one of the most closely settled districts in the Commonwealth, and has frequently been referred to as the Canaan of Australia. Since 1942 vegetable growing has become an important industry there. Scores of people now grow vegetables, particularly carrots. There was a big demand during the war years for Army purposes, and many people have continued to grow vegetables.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—One of the difficulties is to convert the Warren system from a domestic supply to an irrigation system. It was never intended to do that.

Mr. TEUSNER—I realize that when the Warren reservoir was constructed vegetable growing was not envisaged, but the construction of the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline presents an opportunity to reticulate additional water in the district.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—You cannot lift water economically 1,600ft. under pressure to use it on vegetables.

Mr. TEUSNER—I believe the gardeners would be prepared to pay a reasonable rate for the water.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—They pay 1s. a thousand gallons, but it costs 4s. to bring it to them.

Mr. TEUSNER—They would probably be able to carry on their operations if additional water were supplied at a reasonable rate. They would rather pay more than go out of production. They are doing a good job, and it would be a pity to see them cease activities. Numerous applications have been lodged with the department for extension of the main in various parts of the district, but extensions are virtually at a standstill. In evidence

before the Public Works Committee the Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Dridan, stated:—

There are applications for many extensions, a few of which have been approved and others, requiring some 80 miles of branch mains, are held up, either through shortage of water or for financial reasons, the former being the most important.

It is not so much a matter of finance. Mr. Dridan stressed that the shortage of water has held up extensions.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—He doesn't have to find the money. Parliament has to do that.

Mr. TEUSNER—I have lodged a number of applications for extensions of the main on behalf of various people. Some were for extensions of no more than one-quarter or one-half of a mile to serve a group of persons. If the present system or rating does not bring the department sufficient revenue to make the scheme payable I am certain the people concerned would be prepared to pay a higher rate to ensure at least a return equal to interest on the capital outlay on the extensions.

Mr. Quirke—Hundreds of country people would be prepared to do that.

Mr. TEUSNER—In some country towns there has been a tremendous increase in the population of the outskirts, but the people have not been provided with a water supply. The Minister should consider bringing those people within the town area, and that would ensure a greater return to the Treasury. Section 31 of the Waterworks Act states:—

The Commissioner shall, in each water district, unless prevented by unusual drought or other unavoidable cause or accident, distribute, to all persons entitled thereto under this Act, a constant supply of water in the manner prescribed by this Act and by-laws made thereunder.

Where a main traverses a district the people within a reasonable distance of it should be supplied, and those already connected should be kept supplied unless, as the Act provides, there is a drought. Unfortunately, that has been the position and restrictions were imposed in the Barossa district in 1945 and 1946. I know that the Minister will say that they were drought years, and it is possible the people will have to face further restrictions if there is a hot summer. In many parts of the area pressures are poor and I feel that restrictions will be inevitable unless something is done soon to increase supplies and enlarge the trunk main.

The proposed further augmentation of the Yorke Peninsula supply also warrants the enlargement of the Warren Trunk main.

In the past the Warren system has provided up to 100,000,000 gallons a year for the Yorke Peninsula system by reticulating the water to the upper Paskeville service reservoir, which I understand is to be enlarged from 10,000,000 gallons to 40,000,000. According to the evidence given by the Engineer-in-Chief to the Public Works Committee, the Warren system is to make a bigger contribution to the Yorke Peninsula scheme and provision is made for a supply of from 300,000,000 to 350,000,000 gallons. If this is proceeded with it will be urgently necessary to increase the size of the trunk main and seek additional supplies elsewhere. The consumption from the Warren reservoir increased from 158,591,000 gallons in 1931-32 to 373,015,000 in 1949-50, which shows that augmentation of supplies is necessary. I know that ameliorative measures have been taken by the Government, particularly in the last six years, and that a number of boosting stations and service tanks have been erected in the district. A very important project was the link up in 1946 of the Warren system with the Morgan-Whyalla main at a cost of approximately £80,000, and as a result up to 5,000,000 gallons of water a week could be obtained from the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline. It was of assistance only to the more northerly areas being reticulated by the Warren system and did not directly assist the country areas further south, although no doubt it was of some indirect benefit. These measures have simply been ameliorative and have not actually cured water shortages, restrictions and the poor pressures experienced from time to time. The only solution is the enlarged trunk main recommended by the Public Works Committee. In a general statement on the project the Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Dridan, said that the trunk main from the Warren reservoir to Paskeville service reservoir had deteriorated through both external and internal corrosion, and was no longer capable of conveying sufficient water to meet the ever-expanding needs of the important towns and rural areas dependent on it for a water supply. Interruptions in the flow resulting from the necessity to shut down the main to effect repairs were becoming more frequent, and the internal corrosion had caused a serious loss in capacity.

During the 1945 Address in Reply debate I referred to a statement made by Mr. L. R. East, chairman of the Victorian State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, who went into the question of what is a profitable developmental water reticulation scheme for a State,

and his statements were quoted to the Public Works Committee when it investigated the Tod River water supply. He made the following statement:—

An undertaking is profitable to the State if the resulting increase in State revenue exceeds the annual cost to the State. The increase in State revenue comes in very many ways—some under pre-war conditions State and Federal revenue combined amounted to about two-fifths of total production, this revenue being approximately equally divided between State and Commonwealth. It is considered, therefore, that a natural undertaking is profitable to the State and Commonwealth if it results in an increase in production amounting to approximately two and a half times the annual cost. It would be profitable to the State if the increase in production exceeded five times the annual cost to the State.

He then gave an illustration of how this affected Victoria and said what would be a profitable undertaking in his State and then added:—

Relative desirability of public undertakings, as far as the State is concerned, may be measured by the relationship between gross production resulting from the undertakings and annual cost to the State, and may be expressed very approximately in a simple formula—

Desirability to State =

One-fifth of value of gross
production at farm or factory.

Annual cost to State.

Where one-fifth of gross production is equal to the annual cost to the State, the "desirability" would be unity indicating that there would be neither gain nor loss as far as State finances were concerned. Where the result is less than unity there would be a loss, and where the result is greater than unity there would be a gain to State finances.

I believe that his formula and contentions are agreed to generally by most of the States.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—We are miles ahead of them.

Mr. TEUSNER—In a statement on the Warren system Mr. Dridan, the Engineer in Chief, said that in recent years many applications for extensions of the system had been turned down, although some of the extensions would be of much benefit to the State if the trunk main were capable of supplying the additional water. I suggest that some consideration be given in the immediate future to provide water to some of the areas which I assure the Minister will return at least the interest on the capital expenditure under a reasonable rating system. These requests for extensions do not come only from those who grow vegetables, but also from those engaged in diversified farming and others who want water for household purposes. The size of the main I have referred to varies from

26in. to 12in., and I understand that the proposed new main will vary from 36in. to 15in. If the proposed enlargement of the trunk main recommended by the Public Works Committee is proceeded with it will be necessary to assure a greater supply than is available from the Warren reservoir. Four or five years ago I suggested that it might be possible to increase the height of the Warren reservoir wall to provide the additional water, but I understand there are certain engineering difficulties which make such a proposition impossible and that would mean that less water would become available for the South Para reservoir now under construction. Therefore, it appears that such a project would be out of the question. The only other alternative, and one which has also been recommended by the Public Works Standing Committee, is linking up of the Warren reticulation system with the Mannum-Adelaide main.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—The Warren system is already linked up at several points with the Morgan-Whyalla main.

Mr. TEUSNER—I have already commended the Minister for proceeding with that undertaking in 1946 following on two drought years, but that was only a palliative and not the true remedy. We must face the position as it is now, and proceed urgently with the link-up with the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline. I understand provision has been made in that scheme for the supply of 400,000,000gall. per annum to the Warren system and that the new Warren trunk main has been designed for a capacity of 1,200,000,000gall. per annum. Following on the favourable report by the Public Works Standing Committee for the enlargement of the Warren trunk main and its link up with the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline, I urge that immediate and favourable consideration be given by Cabinet to these proposals and that the scheme should be approved so that an immediate start can be made on the work. From certain comments made by the Engineer in Chief, Mr. Dridan, it appears that materials could be ordered immediately if Cabinet approved the scheme and that prospects of obtaining cheaper Australian steel have greatly improved. The Engineer in Chief says this project should be treated as urgent and, if I have the Minister's assurance that he will give it immediate consideration, I shall be satisfied. The committee realized the urgency of the project and it did not call any evidence apart from that of the Engineer in Chief, his Deputy, and the Engineer for Water Supply.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—The Government

will proceed with the work in the order of priority recommended by the experts and as permitted by the monies made available by Parliament.

Mr. TEUSNER—The report of the committee states:—

The proposed public work, although it involved very much capital expenditure, was one on which the committee did not require evidence from other sources in order to reach a decision.

In view of certain remarks the Minister has made during my speech, I have every confidence that the matter will be taken up as urgent, and I trust that approval for this important project will be given at an early date. I have pleasure in supporting the Budget.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—I must start my remarks where the member for Angas left off for the topic of water rating is one of the most important facing every Australian Government and particularly the South Australian Government. It has been laid down by law that land through which a main passes shall be rated for one mile on either side of the main on a basis of between 4d. and 7d. an acre, but nobody knowing the variation in the qualities of land throughout the State would suggest that that ratio is a true reflection of the variation of those qualities. The land mentioned by the member for Angas as being suitable for growing vegetables might be valued at as much as £100 an acre, whereas land on Eyre Peninsula or east of the Murray, both of which areas have a reticulated system, would probably be worth much less than one-tenth of the value of land in the richly endowed Barossa Valley. In my district there is rich and fertile country, and I would be the first to admit that a maximum of 7d. an acre for that land, compared with 4d. an acre in the hundred of Tooligie on Eyre Peninsula where water is a much needed commodity, is an unfair basis on which to work. However, no-one can say that the folk on Eyre Peninsula are not entitled to a water supply, and one day some Government will have the courage to do something about this problem. I suggest this Government should make a start now. If we were to divide the minimum number by two to give us 2d., and multiply the maximum by two to give us 1s. 2d. we would start in the right direction, but even then we would not have arrived at a sufficient disparity in the range to cover the various types of land supplied with reticulated water.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—It costs as much to take water past land worth £10 an acre as it does past land worth £100 an acre.

Mr. SHANNON—That is true. The same pipes are used and in some cases the water must be pumped. The member for Angas suggests taking water from the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline to augment the Warren system. That will cost at least 3s. for pumping alone without paying any charges on the Mannum-Adelaide pipe-line.

Mr. Quirke—That scheme has been approved.

Mr. SHANNON—Yes, but it is hardly economic and the State should not be expected to subsidize people in the vegetable growing industry to the extent of 3s. a thousand gallons on their water.

Mr. Teusner—I did not limit my request to land used for vegetable growing.

Mr. SHANNON—Where water is used for irrigation for any crop, to expect the State to step in and subsidize the cost of the water supplied to the landowner by upwards of 75 per cent is out of the question. It is high time this problem was tackled. We should get down to the fundamentals involved and some of our country water schemes would then be made to look at least reasonably respectable. If we had applied the suggested formula to most of the schemes presented to the Public Works Committee during the past 10 years, none would have been recommended. South Australia has certain geographical disabilities which must be accepted. The Tod River scheme on Eyre Peninsula has never paid working expenses let alone interest charges. I do not say that the State has been the loser because it established that scheme, for we could not have developed Eyre Peninsula without it. Essential services such as water supplies, railways and roads must be provided, and to apply any mathematical formula to decide whether or not the State will win or lose by them is a fallacious approach. Besides the rate to be levied another problem faces the Government. For at least the last 30 years a charge of 1s. 8d. a thousand gallons has been made for rebate water supplied and only 1s. a thousand for excess water, which means that excess water is supplied at the house for only 3d. a ton.

Mr. Quirke—On land rating most water is excess water.

Mr. SHANNON—The Public Works Committee has had the invidious task of asking some water schemes to accept a higher than normal rate for their water. Clare residents accepted a rating $1\frac{1}{2}$ times and Tumby Bay

residents a rating $2\frac{1}{2}$ times the normal rating. As a member of the Public Works Committee, I know that to make a country scheme sufficiently presentable and to ensure that it will pay at least something towards its running costs, $1\frac{1}{2}$ times or double normal rating must often be imposed. I draw members' attention to one major factor in relation to these increasing charges, and that is the inequity of making those who have waited longest for water supplies pay the most. In effect that is what we are doing. The increases in costs since the war have doubled or trebled the expenditure on every project for the supply of water. One can readily see how impossible it is to make any water supply to country areas even meet interest on the capital cost. In the latest scheme presented to the Public Works Standing Committee it cost £8,250 to supply one farm with water. It would have been cheaper to buy the farm.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—That does not take into consideration the cost of head works.

Mr. SHANNON—No. It does not pay the costs of pumping water from the Uley-Wanilla basin or from the Tod River basin. Is it not time we examined the charges we are making for water? We have not continued to supply electricity at the same rate as when the Government took over the Adelaide Electric Supply Company. I class electricity and water as reticulation systems. They are both essential for the establishment of certain occupations upon the land. We have revised electricity charges as costs have increased, but why has not that been done with water? Why have we avoided our obvious obligations? I do not think anybody would complain about paying an increased charge for water which will cost more when the full impact of the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline is felt. When that main is completed, if we experience a dry season most of our water supply will have to be pumped from the Murray. Has anyone any conception of what the figures for the Engineering and Water Supply Department will be during that year? The pumping alone will cost about 3s. to which the overhead costs of laying and maintaining the line will have to be added, but we will sell a lot of the water for 1s. How will the Budget look when that position arises? The Adelaide water system has paid its way over the years and showed a small profit last financial year.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—It is a dwindling profit.

Mr. SHANNON—Yes, as soon as the complete charge for the Mannum pipeline is experienced, unless the price for water delivered to the metropolitan area is revised, that profit will vanish overnight. The principle of revising charges for country water districts has been accepted and it is high time the same principle was applied in the metropolitan area. Two problems we are faced with are the basis of rating and the price at which we will sell water.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—The people who have not got water will be prepared to pay more, but the people who have got it will not be prepared to have the price averaged.

Mr. SHANNON—We have had evidence before the Public Works Standing Committee that people are prepared to pay more. One man was compelled to cart water for 29 miles to keep his stock alive.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Naturally he would be prepared to pay more for his water.

Mr. SHANNON—All he was going to do was to take water from the standpipe at the end of the line and cart it 24 miles. He would not be rated for that, but would buy the water. The residents in that district were happy to accept the basis of $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the usual rating and would have paid more. At Tumby Bay people agreed to pay $2\frac{1}{2}$ times the normal rating and at Clare, Jamestown and Caltowie they agreed to pay $1\frac{1}{2}$. Those are points I would like the Minister to consider.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—The people who have water would not be prepared to average the charges although the people who haven't water would be prepared to pay more.

Mr. SHANNON—Did you receive complaints, deputations or petitions when electricity charges were increased because of rising costs of coal and wages? Have there not been increases in costs in the Engineering and Water Supply Department? I have always regarded this as one of the major problems confronting the State. I do not think that if the true facts were put before the public there would be any outcry. I would take all the odium that came my way for charging a reasonable rate in view of the increased costs of providing water services. When the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline is completed residents of the metropolitan area will be paying about one third of the amount it costs to provide water. If that principle is continued indefinitely I do not know what the results will be. It is some new law of economics which I do not understand.

Because of my place of residence I have to pass work which is being done on the Prince's Highway on the Mount Barker road almost daily. The formation and the metalling have been finished, but the road has not yet been sealed. Frequently heavy transports park on the surface of this road and if there is any more rain, tracks will form along which the water will flow, and before the road is completed it will have to be resurfaced before it is sealed. I do not think the Government has sufficiently explored the possibility of engaging private contractors to do some of this work. At Port Elliot all of the maintenance and construction work is done by a private contractor. The construction of one strip of road a few miles in length was entrusted to the Port Elliot district council under the supervision of one of the engineers from the Highways Department. The private contractor completed that section for between £1,500 and £1,600 a mile. The Commissioner of Highways had estimated that it would cost about £2,500 a mile. According to the Minister a strip of road about a half a mile in length near the Eagle on the Hill has already cost £30,000.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—There has been a lot of filling.

Mr. SHANNON—I suggest that a lot of filling has been wasted. A large island of spoil has been left in the centre of the highway near the Eagle on the Hill Hotel yet filling was carted in what I call small tiptrays from quarries at what must have been enormous cost. The road still has to be sealed, and applying the same ratio as the costs for the formation of the road, it will cost about £5,000. On those figures the road will cost £70,000 a mile.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—The average cost is £10,000 a mile.

Mr. SHANNON—I believe that that is too much. We should consider engaging private contractors. I instance the good work done by the private contractor at Port Elliot. He has plant worth between £30,000 and £35,000 and does all the work down there. There are men in the metropolitan area with much bigger plants and able to do road construction work. If competitive tenders were sought for some of this work on the Princes Highway the cost of £10,000 a mile would be beaten by a large margin. Probably twice as much work could be done for the money now spent. I suggest that the Highways Department examine this matter. Government departments do not like the idea of drawing in their horns and putting off gangs of men so that

other people can do their work. I know some councils do their best to keep their men fully employed, irrespective of the value of the work done. I do not suggest that it would be wise to put on inexperienced men, but it would be better if the Highways Department confined its energies to engineering supervision to see that contractors complied with specifications.

During this debate Mr. Lawn gave a resume of the financial affairs of the State since the Liberal Party took office in 1933. He said that during the period accumulated deficits amounted to £334,000, an average of about £17,200 a year. Mr. Lawn could not have paid a greater tribute to a Treasurer who so arranged his finances that over the long period of 20 years expenditure on the average exceeded revenue by less than £20,000. Such budgeting is a mark of sound financing by a Treasurer. When Mr. Lawn's figures are analysed it will be seen that he paid a great tribute to the Treasurer for so carefully handling the financial affairs of the State. Over a period the Treasurer achieved almost a balance because he was only a fraction of 1 per cent out in his estimates. I want now to refer to one of the fundamental reasons why the Labor Party has not been in office in this State since 1933. Mr. Lawn did not tell us what happened when Labor was in office in the preceding three years. From 1930 to 1933 the Hill Labor Government accumulated deficits of £5,103,061. It took office in 1930 after the previous Premier, Sir Richard (then the Hon. R. L.) Butler, had said on the hustings that times were getting hard and that anyone not realizing that the State was in for a belt-tightening period was not prepared to face the facts. Because of his statements the electors returned the Labor Government. Mr. Hill had said that everything would go along swimmingly. Those deficits were accumulated in years which were not the three most critical years of the depression. Towards the end of Mr. Hill's term as Treasurer Australia had a visit from overseas financial experts, and as a result the Premiers' Plan was adopted, to which Mr. Hill and Mr. J. H. Scullin, the Commonwealth Labor Prime Minister, put their signatures. Under the plan there was a 22½ per cent cut in interest rates and other charges, such as salaries.

Mr. Lawn—Do you suggest that Mr. Scullin accepted the proposal?

Mr. SHANNON—No. I said that we had a Premiers' Plan, to which Mr. Hill and Mr. Scullin were signatories. I said that Mr. Scullin was the Federal Labor Prime Minister.

Would he have had any voice in it? I want to draw attention to this salient factor because it might have some effect on the public policy of members opposite and on their statements regarding public finance when it comes to the next election. They might even win the Treasury benches if they get down to sound finance and discover what the thriftlessness of the Hill regime resulted in as far as their Party is concerned, because in that period the public debt increased by £8,500,000, in addition to the deficits of over £5,000,000 they incurred. There is no doubt the public realized that the Government finances had got into a shocking state, so it decided to elect a Party which understands how to finance a Budget and would be able to come within reasonable distance of balancing it. Although he may not have realized it, the honourable member for Adelaide paid the Premier the highest compliment possible a few moments ago, because it is a remarkable achievement to balance Budgets to within a few thousand pounds over the period of 20 years mentioned by him. Although the present Premier has not been in office all that time he was preceded by Sir Richard Butler, who was also a sound Treasurer. Mr. Lawn paid a tribute to a succession of Premiers when he said they were able to keep public finance almost within a state of balance over that long period.

Mr. Lawn—Who said that?

Mr. SHANNON—You did. I am sorry if you did not understand what you said because I was trying to use your very obvious reasoning to explain how this thing actually works.

Mr. Lawn—It should not need an explanation.

Mr. SHANNON—It appears to need one. I challenge the honourable member to point to the Budgets of any Parliament in the Commonwealth of Nations that have been so near the mark for a similar period. He also suggested that certain surpluses should have been used to reduce our consolidated debt, but he does not realize that had we adopted his policy the Commonwealth Grants Commission would have taken into account the amount written off and reduced our grant accordingly.

Mr. Lawn—Does the honourable member consider that the Act of 1936 should not have been passed?

Mr. SHANNON—No, I only admit that the Federal arena is superimposed on this Parliament.

Mr. Lawn—In other words, the State Parliament could go out of existence?

Mr. SHANNON—That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. Lawn—Are you not saying that we have to bow to Federal control?

Mr. SHANNON—Apparently the Labor Party supports unification. Its members are admitting things which they left unsaid at election time because they realize that the people in this State like to have their own Parliament.

Mr. Lawn—The honourable member is the one who suggests that this Parliament is useless.

Mr. SHANNON—I am glad to have the support of the honourable member for Adelaide to the policy of unification put forward by the member for Norwood.

Mr. Lawn—Are you not supporting it?

Mr. SHANNON—All I am interested in is where the Labor Party stands on the question of State Parliaments.

Mr. Lawn—But you tried to say that this Parliament is subordinate to the Commonwealth Grants Commission, and that the Acts passed have been superseded by that commission.

Mr. SHANNON—I have had the admission of the honourable member for Adelaide that he has joined the band of unificationists. The honourable member for Norwood said he did not speak for himself but for his Party, so they are all for scrapping State Parliaments on that side.

Mr. Corcoran—Our State platform does not provide for the abolition of State Parliaments.

Mr. SHANNON—Oh! I can see that you will have to have a Party meeting tomorrow. When I heard the Premier get from the member for Norwood the admission that he spoke not for himself but for the Party in saying that he favoured wiping out State Parliaments I thought, "There's a nigger in the woodpile. I'd like to see if the nigger will come out so that I can see whether he has all his legs and arms intact." Now I discover a little finger missing in Victoria. Something has maimed him. Does the Labor Party agree that one Parliament in Australia is the ideal?

Mr. Lawn—You would not know if you were told.

Mr. SHANNON—I might be able to understand if the question were honestly and simply answered. I will take it that the majority rules, and that the Labor Party considers State Parliaments should be abolished.

Mr. Lawn—But you said we have one Parliament in Australia.

Mr. SHANNON—I would not say anything as silly as that. All I said was that, when it comes to the grant, this State is justified

in securing from the Commonwealth Government all that it is entitled to by virtue of disabilities suffered under Federation. If the policy advocated by the honourable member for Adelaide were adopted, South Australia would be involved in a loss at least equivalent to the amount written off by virtue of our having made a surplus.

Mr. Lawn—Then this Parliament is useless.

Mr. SHANNON—I would not suggest, despite the honourable member's statement, that that is the only measuring stick in deciding whether we should retain the State Parliament. We have to put our State accounts into a certain form to get the maximum benefit accruable to us from the Grants Commission. That is all our Treasurer does. He sees that his capable officers in the Treasury present the State accounts in a form required by the commission. I believe the commission has complimented our Treasury officials on the manner in which they submit financial statements.

Mr. Lawn—For doing what they are told.

Mr. SHANNON—They are not doing what they are told, but what is in the best interests of the State.

Mr. Lawn—They have to do what they are told even with surpluses. You know that is a fact.

Mr. SHANNON—I do not. I do not think the honourable member understands many of the statements he makes. He has given the answer why Labor has been in the wilderness for 20 years. It made such a horrible hash of things during the last three years it was on the Treasury benches that the people have not voted it into power since.

Mr. Fred Walsh—What happened between 1924 and 1927?

Mr. SHANNON—I have studied the record of the Gunn Government.

Mr. Fred Walsh—What about the depression?

Mr. SHANNON—The full impact of the depression was felt in the period the Hon. R. L. Butler was Premier.

Mr. Lawn—No, in 1930.

Mr. SHANNON—The Butler Government of 1933 inherited two things from the outgoing Hill Labor Government.

Mr. Fred Walsh—No, it inherited perpetuity of office.

Mr. SHANNON—I am giving the reason for Labor's period in the wilderness. If the

honourable member takes the lesson to heart he may oppose me successfully at the next election, for he will be able to mount the platform and be as sound on finance as I am. The Liberal Government of 1933 inherited from the Hill Government over £5,100,000 of accumulated deficits. Even worse, it inherited the Premiers' plan, which was hatched and brought to maturity by Labor. If members opposite do not like this medicine they should tell me where I am wrong. South Australians had such an overdose of Labor finance between 1930 and 1933 that they decided to put a Liberal Government in office, and the Liberal and Country League has occupied the Treasury benches ever since.

Mr. Fred Walsh—But not in the Federal sphere.

Mr. SHANNON—The Labor Party aims at gaining office there next year, but I advise members opposite not to bet on it, for I think that the present Federal Government is doing an equally sterling job to that being done by the Treasurer of South Australia. When speaking on the first line many members recapitulate what they said when speaking on the Address in Reply. I would not have risen at this stage but for certain statements made on both sides of the House, but I shall make one further comment, not by way of criticism, but by way of friendly advice to the Government. From evidence being tendered by various departments to the Public Works Committee it seems that public finance is becoming much more stable, with regard to both material and labour costs. A big programme of public works has been approved by the committee, but it would not be possible to complete it within the next five or six years, for physical rather than for financial reasons. The Government should make a careful review of the expenditure of every department. When a gang goes out to lay a water main or a railway line about six or eight men are taken, but one rarely finds more than about two working at the same time. The same applies to Electricity Trust gangs. One man drives the lorry, and he has finished his job when he gets the men to the site, though he may connect the posthole borer to the engine. Then there is an overseer, who merely supervises the work. Perhaps one man sinks the hole, and then another lays the concrete. The others merely watch. The onlooker gets the impression that there are twice the necessary number on the job. No business could possibly continue on such a system; it would be out of business in no time.

I am not suggesting that this applies to all Government departments. We have in our Government service men with the capacity to do what most business houses do, namely, conduct an internal audit and indicate where savings can be effected. Were it not for that particular aspect of commercial life, many businesses today would not be as flourishing as they are. In these days of keen competition most businesses live on efficiency, whereas the State does not have to. If need be, it can tax the people a little more and still balance its accounts. We have reached the stage when we should ascertain whether any savings can be effected by using the brains in the Government service. I know that one very highly regarded public servant gave the Government some very sound advice concerning the Tramways Trust, on which it acted. This was the result of a direction by the Treasurer, and I give him high marks for taking the necessary steps. The same could be done with all Government departments. Where savings can be effected that should be done. There is no need to put people out of work, as there is plenty of work for all, but we want reproductive work and value for the money spent. If we have that it will be for the welfare of every citizen.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—I have listened with a great deal of interest and at certain times with indignation to the remarks of the member for Onkaparinga. He must surely believe that some of us have very short memories if he expects the House to accept his reference to so-called facts regarding the budgetary position of the Hill Government and the Governments which preceded it. I came into this House as one opposed to the Hill Government, but I can remember during the election campaign and in speeches delivered in this House its being said that when the Hill Government came into office it found the Treasury absolutely empty, and shortly after had to borrow money privately to carry on the services of the State. I think *Hansard* shows that it had to borrow money from Sir Langdon Bonython in order that public servants' salaries could be paid. The first action of the Butler Liberal Government on coming into office was to reduce teachers' salaries, which were supposed to have been fixed by arbitration, by 10 per cent. If that is considered to be to its credit, it can have all the credit coming its way.

When a Liberal Government comes into office and it is up against it for money, its first attack is always against education. That can be proved over and over again. The

remarks I propose to make would have been unnecessary but for the attempt by Mr. Shannon to draw red herrings across the track. I remember an *Advertiser* leading article in 1933 summing up the policies presented to the public by representatives of the Hill Government and the Butler Liberal Party. It said that one was Tweedledum and the other Tweedledee. The Labor Party was in opposition to the Premiers' Plan and all it stood for. I should like to know where Mr. Shannon stood in those days. One of his first acts on being returned was to support legislation reducing the salaries of teachers, but leaving untouched the salaries rightly determined by Parliament for those on the higher scale. I suggest that the less we say about those days the better. I can remember Mr. Shannon and his colleagues telling us again and again that the measure of our prosperity was determined by the export prices received for wheat and wool. In those days wheat was 1s. 6d. a bushel and wool about 13d. a pound, but let us look at the prices for those commodities today and see whether a comparison can be drawn. I am not saying anything about the overall economic position of Australia, because I do not profess to be qualified to discuss it at length.

I can only look at the Budget from the point of view of the ordinary citizens—those who have to balance their home budgets. As far as I can determine, the Budget represents a fair distribution of the moneys which the Treasurer advises us are available to him, although there are one or two exceptions to that. Each item represents approximately the same distribution which applied last year, but generally there is an increase of about seven per cent. I should like to have seen a higher proportional increase in the education grant. I notice that the increase in the number of students is 10 per cent. In my opinion the amount made available to this department is not sufficient to provide the services we have been accustomed to, or the services the people look to the Government to provide. I think it was the member for Gouger who said that the department can only carry out its work in accordance with the finances made available by the Government, to which the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Education, said "No, not by the Government, by Parliament." I have heard officers of the department attending school functions say that better provision should be made but that Parliament refuses to make the money available. It is time people outside this House

realized that Parliament has no say in the matter, that it never sees the requisitions made out by departmental officers, and that it never knows the amount for which those officers ask to maintain services. We know that such requests are made but apparently they are pruned by the Government before the Estimates come before us.

No member would be a party to any substantial reduction in the education vote. The Education Department stands high in the esteem of members, and with the possible exception of the member who expressed concern at what he called luxurious spending in the department, every member wants to see that those to whom the education of our children is entrusted are provided with sufficient funds to do the job properly. The amount of money provided should be increased from time to time. Not only do we look for growing attendances at our schools and consequent increased expenditure, but we should see that each generation has better opportunities than the preceding one. The Education Department has not been treated generously this year for it has been asked to handle a 10 per cent increase in scholars although its grant has been increased by only 7 per cent.

Mr. Pearson—Whose vote would you reduce so that the Education Department could have more?

Mr. RICHES—I would reduce that of any department except the Hospitals Department, for education is one of our primary responsibilities. In his report the Minister of Education not only gives the percentage increase in enrolments in high and primary schools, but also makes this interesting comment:—

The proportion of primary school pupils in the schools of the metropolitan area has been gradually rising during recent years. In 1948 48 per cent of the total number of pupils in primary schools were in the metropolitan area. By 1951 this proportion had risen to 51 per cent, and in 1952 it was 52.9 per cent.

That seems to indicate a trend that is not healthy. A greater expenditure on schools in the metropolitan area is required, and I do not quibble with that while the children are in the metropolitan area to be taught, but it shows that we are getting nowhere with the policy of decentralization despite promises made by the Government from time to time. Not only the adult but also the junior population is crowding into the metropolitan area. Whatever statistics we care to look at we find Adelaide is growing more rapidly than or as rapidly as any other Australian city. The position is

worse with regard to children attending secondary schools, for they cannot obtain secondary education to the extent to which they should be able in the country. I do not know of any country high school that will take a child beyond the leaving standard, and when a child wants to proceed beyond that standard he must come to Adelaide. Not even the Whyalla multi-purpose school will take scholars beyond that standard. This matter is important for it is having a greater effect on the number of people leaving the country for the city than any other factor of which I know.

I have made it my business to ask people their reason for leaving my district for the city, and in 80 per cent of the cases I am told it is to give their children the advantage of higher education. When a child passes the Leaving standard the family must face the necessity of finding finance and accommodation in order that the child may be sent to Adelaide or the family must transfer to the city, the father sacrificing his job. Some parents give up their country homes to be with their children. The State has grown to such an extent that education beyond the Leaving standard is warranted at country high schools. At the break-up of a Whyalla school last year it was suggested that teachers could be trained at the Whyalla Technical School and thus a further enticement given to young people from the northern areas to receive their advanced education at a northern town. Certainly hostels would have to be provided, but, if this provision were made in any one of our northern towns, people living at Leigh Creek, Woomera and other northern centres would not have to face up to this problem which represents a crisis and often means breaking up a home or sending the children to the city.

Under the heading "Hollywood Writes Off Australia" last Saturday's *Advertiser* contained the following report:—

Hollywood has apparently written Australia off as a location for producing American-made movies. Major film studios have asked the Australian Government, through Washington, for permission to transfer their Australian earnings to Britain. The transfer would change about £300,000 Australian into sterling to finance American production in England. Hollywood's only Australian venture "Kangaroo" was a poor money-earner. The entertainment trade paper "Variety" says the negotiations with the Australian Government have been hush-hush.

When the film "Kangaroo" was contemplated we expressed pleasure at it being filmed here

and those in charge of production were welcomed with open arms by the Government. The facilities of every Government department were placed at their disposal; building materials were made available and the Waterworks Department provided a water supply. Irrespective of shortages they received first priority and complete co-operation. The Premier said he had good reason to believe that other films would follow the production of "Kangaroo" which he hoped would have the effect of advertising some of the natural scenery and advantages of Australia. "Kangaroo" was an absolute let-down and wash-out so far as advertising was concerned. It portrayed the American conception of Australia as a land of droughts and bush fires. There has been no attempt to honour the implied promises that serious consideration would be given to the production of moving pictures in Australia. I hope the Federal Government will not agree to the transfer of that money and that the Premier will draw attention to the importance of holding the money in Australia and telling the film interests that we expect them to stand up to some of the undertakings they gave. When this film company came here the Chief Secretary was optimistic about the future. The only reason for "Kangaroo" being such a failure was the stupid story, born of ignorance of local conditions and written in Hollywood. There were some scenes that might have been included in the film to make it more acceptable but they were not. I believe that not one day was lost in the filming of that picture and there was certainly no delay in providing all the requisites for filming it. For America to say that it is summarily writing off Australia without providing reasons is not playing fair. Unless the Premier was taken for a proper ride—and I do not think he was—he must have been given some undertakings before he made his optimistic statements.

Mr. Dunnage—You had something to do with that film.

Mr. RICHES—I co-operated, as did all the people of the north, in meeting every request that was made. Three contractors left Adelaide to erect buildings required by the film interests. Representatives from the Lands Department went to survey the site and the land was cleared before it was known to whom the land belonged. In a time of shortages the film interests were well served. There was a shortage of cooks but they were inundated with applications: such is the glamour of the film industry.

During the last four or five years I have repeatedly referred to the flying doctor service and I want particularly to refresh the memory of Mr. Dunnage.

Mr. Dunnage—Why refer to it? We have heard it all before.

Mr. RICHES—There is no provision in the Estimates this year for a grant to aid the flying doctor service which operates in the district I represent and districts adjoining it—the service that puts a doctor down at the Andamooka opal fields and Coober Pedy for consultations with old people. Those people require a little more than the assurance of an ambulance when serious injuries or illnesses may occur. The comfort and security of a regular consultation is a great boon but the service that is provided is still ignored by the Government.

Mr. Dunnage—Are such services subsidized in other States?

Mr. RICHES—The service to which I refer is based at Ceduna and operates only in South Australia except where it crosses the border into Western Australia at Rawlinna. The flying doctor service at Broken Hill is supported by the New South Wales Government and this Government supports to the extent of £1,000 a year a flying doctor service at Alice Springs that is associated with the Broken Hill service and which is part of the same network. That service has had land made available to it at Port Augusta and is building a radio base for a flying doctor service which it is expected will eventually be established at that centre. That does not alter or lessen my advocacy of a subsidy for the service which operates from Ceduna to the benefit of people along the East-West railway line and on the opal fields. The Port Augusta service receives subsidies from the Commonwealth and State Governments, but the other service does not get a brass farthing. I have had three reasons given to me for that, but not one is acceptable. At one stage the Premier said he would not subsidize the Ceduna service because it was associated with a religious denomination. Then he changed his views and subsidized hospitals conducted by the organization. Then he said it was not a service normally rendered as a medical service. I am speaking about a service which is more important than an emergency or ambulance, and I think the Treasurer should support the payment of a subsidy rather than oppose it. The Broken Hill service is subsidized by the Commonwealth and New South Wales Governments, and it operates in a portion of South Australia. On the Estimates there is an amount of £1,000 for the

service which operates from Alice Springs and will operate from Port Augusta when a landing ground, doctor and aeroplane are available. I will not be silenced until the Ceduna service is recognized.

Mr. Dunnage—Is there not to be an amalgamation in some way?

Mr. RICHES—On a previous occasion Mr. Hawker said he had read a report that there was to be an amalgamation. At the time I could not refute it, but now I can say it was not correct.

Mr. Dunnage—I think you are wrong about that. There was something in a publication about a grant.

Mr. RICHES—I know enough of the service to know that no grant has been received.

There is a line dealing with continuance of the grant to the St. John Ambulance Brigade to enable it conduct a service in the metropolitan area. I pay a tribute to its work, and acknowledge that since the last Budget debate the Port Augusta ambulance service has received through the brigade a grant of £200. Country people should have some relief from the heavy ambulance costs they incur. The Government subsidizes the transport of country polio cases to the city, if the local board of health meets half the cost. In some cases it has subsidized the transport of polio cases from outside local government areas. The subsidy should be a general one. The justification for a subsidy in connection with polio cases is as great in relation to cases of serious accident or illness, and the payment of a subsidy would give country people a greater degree of security. In my area two ambulance services operate, one at Whyalla and the other at Port Augusta. The first charges 1s. a mile and the other 1s. 6d. a mile, as against 2s. 6d. a mile when an ambulance comes from Adelaide. If an Adelaide ambulance is used the transport of a sick person from my district to the city costs about £50, as against £30 and £25 if the transport is done by either of the two northern services mentioned. We do not expect the Government to pay all the cost of ambulance transport, but it should subsidize.

I pay a tribute to the Electricity Trust for its work in extending country services. Many northern country areas have been looking for a service and I hope it will not be long before it is provided. The trust adopts two methods in supplying electricity in northern districts. It supplies current direct to consumers in some of the smaller country towns, but at Port Augusta, Port Pirie and other municipalities

energy is supplied in bulk and the local council becomes the distributing authority. Where the Electricity Trust provides energy direct to the consumers I understand that the services available in the metropolitan area also apply in relation to the renting of electrical appliances in homes. Although I may be wrong in this I believe that in the majority of houses in the metropolitan area electric stoves and similar appliances are not purchased, but can be rented from the trust, whereas in the country centres not directly supplied by the Trust they must be purchased outright. Representations have been made to the Government seeking the establishment of a fund to enable country organizations to purchase electrical appliances to be let out on hire in a manner similar to that followed by the trust, or that the trust itself should be provided with finance or authorized to let them out on a rental basis in districts that are not directly supplied by it. This would be a sound economic proposition because there is a reasonable return from such rentals, although if there is not, the rental could be fixed to allow a reasonable amortization over a period. This suggestion would be a real service to our country towns, and I ask the Government to give it serious consideration.

I will now refer to the situation in which the municipality of Quorn finds itself because of the decision of the railways authorities to build a new line on the western side of the Flinders Ranges and the announced decision to close that portion of the railway between Hawker and Brachina. This has not yet had any serious effect on Quorn, apart from the effect it must have had on confidence in the town's future. Quorn is suffering from lack of confidence, not necessarily on the part of its present residents, but by those who might be prepared to invest in businesses or properties, or those who contribute to advancement in the district.

In order to meet the situation that will be experienced when the programme drawn up by the Commonwealth railway authorities is put into effect and about 300 railways employees are transferred to Stirling, the citizens of Quorn have asked for a comprehensive geological survey of the whole district to determine whether some industry could be established on the basis of its mineral resources. It is felt that there has not been a thorough exploration of those resources. They have also asked that consideration be given to the retention of the present line and the opinion has been expressed to me by men in the Railways Department with a knowledge of that

line, that it would be advantageous to both the Commonwealth and the State if both lines operated, both from the defence point of view and to handle the large volume of traffic which will ultimately be drawn to it. In his report the Chairman of the Railway Commission expressed a doubt whether the Commonwealth would have the right to take up that line from Hawker to Brachina. Speaking as a layman, it appears to me that under the agreement the Commonwealth has the right to operate a north-south railway line. The agreement that this Parliament entered into with the Federal Government recently authorized an alternative route, but I doubt whether there is any authority for the Commonwealth to conduct two railways or to pull up one line; this view was expressed by the Chairman of the Commission. That doubt, however, should be resolved, and I want South Australia to have some part in resolving it. Correspondence is to hand from the Prime Minister admitting that there is such a doubt, but stating that it will be resolved by Parliamentary action. Presumably the action referred to will be taken by the Federal Parliament, and I ask that this Parliament consider the legalities of this situation to see whether this Parliament has to be consulted or whether complementary legislation will have to be introduced and that everything possible will be done to preserve the interests of Quorn and district.

I also support completion of the north-south line on broad gauge from Leigh Creek to Alice Springs to ultimately cater for the cattle from the Northern Territory. Several years ago I stated that it was important for South Australia to cater for the potential beef market of the north, because if we did not, Queensland would. Queensland seems to be more energetic in this direction, irrespective of the fact that South Australia offers closer markets and better prices in the main to the cattle producer. Although growers in the Northern Territory are looking to us, we do not appear to be taking any interest in their representations made through the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association and other organizations. These approaches have been falling on deaf ears. Queensland is continuously advocating construction of railway lines to link this area with the outports of that State. South Australia will be missing out if it does not secure its share of this trade. Consideration should be given to the construction of an abattoirs at Port Augusta or in the vicinity of that town to cater for this traffic. Port Augusta has a port for the exportation of

stock. It is about 400 miles nearer the area than any Queensland port, and 200 miles nearer than Adelaide. It could relieve the pressure on the Metropolitan Abattoirs, and open up markets for the stock of upper Eyre Peninsula. Many stockowners there admit that there is a danger of overstocking, because there is no adequate means of reducing the number of their stock. Transport arrangements are not satisfactory and the prices obtained at the Metropolitan Abattoirs represent less than the value of the skins. South Australia would gain greatly by constructively approaching the problem of catering for the needs of the Northern Territory and offering a market for its produce.

I have frequently mentioned the plight of the natives who were at one time located at Ooldea. I expressed appreciation of the department's action in concurring in the purchase of Yalata Station as a new home for these people, but I have also expressed concern that they were not established at the station. It is time the Minister made a statement about the actual position regarding Yalata, saying why the natives have been made to scatter far and wide. They are now nomads, and without a home.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—They are not nomads, because the Lutherans are looking after them at Yalata, and they are being reimbursed accordingly.

Mr. RICHES—My latest information was that they were not at Yalata, but were wandering all over the place, but I would be glad to hear from the Minister that they are now settled.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—It was never intended that they should be imprisoned at Yalata.

Mr. RICHES—And they were not imprisoned at Ooldea. It was intended to transfer them to Yalata and give them a sufficient area on which to live and hunt.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Those that want to stay at Yalata can remain there, and we are reimbursing the Lutherans for those under their care.

Mr. RICHES—When we get to the lines I shall ask for further information from the Minister, and he might inform me of the number of Ooldea natives now at Yalata, and how they are being cared for.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—The children are at Koonibba.

Mr. RICHES—The dispersal of the natives, after they left Ooldea, did not reflect credit on anyone. I am not reflecting on the Minister

now, for I know he has been concerned about the situation, but the problem should have been resolved long ago. I am greatly concerned because pressure is being brought to bear to give the aborigines less and less at Yalata, but more and more for white occupation. When it was first suggested to the Protector of Aborigines that Yalata would be a suitable place for the Ooldea natives many condemned it, saying it did not have sufficient game or water, but to the credit of the department, after it inspected the area, a very acceptable purchase was made. Now I am afraid, perhaps unjustifiably, that all the good areas at Yalata will be handed over to white people and that once again the aborigines will be required to live where no white man can exist.

I join with other members in expressing the hope that we can look forward to improved country roads. However, I am not as optimistic, from reading the Estimates, as other members, but I accept the Treasurer's statement that the increase in motor revenue, which will be very heavy, will make more money available to the Highways Department and councils for improving roads throughout the State.

I hope the Government will consider the petition presented to Parliament last year from residents in my district asking that special attention be given to bituminizing Pichi Richi Pass, particularly in view of the altered railway policy. This would be one means of affording Quorn some compensation for the effects of that policy. It might have the effect of enticing some railway men to continue to live in Quorn and travel the 19 miles to Stirling North to get to their work. Many people live at Gawler and work in Adelaide, so the improvement of the Pichi Richi Pass may partially answer the problem of Quorn residents. I know I have the support of the member for Port Pirie in this matter. I was disappointed he did not mention it in this debate, because he was good enough to come into my district and tell the people that this road was the worst he had ever traversed. In view of the material available, I think as good a job as can be reasonably expected is being done, but it will never be a satisfactory road until it is bituminized. If more funds for roads are to be made available, I hope that this road will receive the early attention of the Highways Department. I say "if," because in looking through the Budget I find that in nearly every instance there is a general increase of 7 per cent, but there are two very substantial reductions, and

one is for the Highways Department of something over £700,000 compared with last year.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—We put through that amount just before last year ended in a special appropriation.

Mr. RICHES—We put £500,000 on the Supplementary Estimates, but in reading through the speech delivered by the Minister of Lands, who was then acting on behalf of the Premier, I find he said that the money was required for urgent works then.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—But it has not yet been spent.

Mr. RICHES—I notice that the amount to be made available this year has been reduced by about £700,000, which indicates to me that even if this amount is made up from other sources the overall amount available for roads will be approximately the same as last year. Perhaps that can be explained. However, if that is the case, despite any alteration made in the Ministry, if finances are not available

we shall not get the roads. I believe that the present Minister and his department would effect improvements in our roads if given the finances. I have not found the Highways Department difficult to get on with. With the finances available to him, I do not think the Minister has done a bad job, but whoever was in his place, unless the finances were available, he could not do a better job. Last year we needed all the money Parliament voted for roads, plus the £700,000 voted in the Supplementary Estimates, otherwise the House was misled in voting that additional sum. We will need at least the same amount this year and not less. I believe that the whole State is hoping for increased expenditure on roads, but that is not being provided in this Budget. With those few remarks, I support the Budget.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 10.36 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, October 21, at 2 p.m.