

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, November 3, 1953.

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

QUESTIONS.**PRICE CONTROL POLICY.**

Mr. DUNKS—I was delighted to read a press report that Tasmania had given a lead to other States by abolishing price control, but further reports state that price control has not been abolished in respect of copper. Can the Treasurer say why the price of copper is still controlled?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I cannot agree that price control was abolished in Tasmania as a matter of principle, because, as the honourable member said, copper was left on the list. The reason for its retention was that special arrangements have been made whereby the Mount Lyell Company, with large copper deposits of low grade ore, receives special prices which enable the mines to be maintained, and without that substantial assistance the position of the company would be doubtful. Frequently Prices Ministers' conferences have been told that, unless special consideration were given to the Mount Lyell Company, the position of that large employer of labour would be endangered. The favourable consideration given the company is the reason why the price of copper has not been decontrolled in Tasmania. Actually it is receiving £30 a ton more for its low grade copper than the consumer is paying for copper.

HOUSING TRUST AMORTIZATION PERIOD.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Treasurer a report from the Housing Trust on my question of last week relating to the amortization period on trust rental homes?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have a report on the matter which I will make available to the honourable member if he desires it. The trust points out that under its Act the amortization period of 53 years applies in all cases, whether the houses be stone, brick, or prefabricated structures.

PREVENTION OF GOITRE.

Mr. SHANNON—In a recent report of the National Medical Health Research Council reference was made to the control of goitre. There are well-defined belts throughout the Commonwealth where goitre is endemic. It is

a preventable disease, iodine being the answer to it. The council's report suggests that bread treated with iodized salt might be a sufficient deterrent in the areas affected, but I understand that difficulty is experienced in allocating such bread to those areas. I believe that the addition of one part of iodine to 10,000 parts of table salt would be adequate to form the necessary protective medium against the disease. I suggest that the Treasurer have inquiries made through the proper channels to ascertain whether it would be possible to apply that to all table salts used in this State, which I understand would have no harmful effects on people living in those areas unaffected by the disease and might be in the interests of health generally. Can the Premier say whether this would be a practical approach, the cost, I am informed, being negligible, and whether the harmful effects which some people fear from the use of iodized salts are, in fact, non-existent?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will obtain a report from the Minister of Health. The question has been recently brought under my notice in a couple of letters from my own district, and I understand that the problem exists in some areas where tank water is used because that water has no mineral containing any iodine.

NEW DEPOTS FOR C.M.F.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Yesterday's *Advertiser* contained the following report under the heading of "New Depots in South Australia for C.M.F." :—

Provision this year of 32 new C.M.F. training depots at a cost of £1,047,000 had been approved, the Minister for the Army (Mr. Francis) announced today. Mr. Francis said that the new depots were necessary to meet rapid C.M.F. expansion. Three new depots would be erected in South Australia—at Port Lincoln, Gawler and Murray Bridge. Mr. Francis said that proposals for several other training depots, some of which might be included in the programme for the current year were still under consideration. Preliminary work on some of the 32 new depots had begun. Work would be carried out in two stages: the first stage—provision of the main hall, offices and stores accommodation and sanitation; stage two—lecture room and theatre, officers' mess and sergeants' messes and men's recreation room.

I realize that this is a Federal matter, but my attention has been drawn to it because Gawler is to be a site for a camp, and as responsible people in the town seem to have little knowledge of the position can the Premier give any information, and, if not, will he obtain it?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have no knowledge whatever of the matter. The Commonwealth does not consult the State Government in military matters. I will forward the question to the appropriate authorities and ask them to communicate with the honourable member direct.

EGG PRICES.

Mr. TEUSNER—Has the Minister of Agriculture any further information to give on the question I asked on October 20 regarding egg prices?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I have received the following reply from the chairman of the South Australian Egg Board:—

With regard to the export of eggs in shell to the United Kingdom this season, since 1939 until season 1952 inclusive, all surplus eggs in shell to the United Kingdom were sold under a long term agreement between the Commonwealth of Australia and the British Ministry of Food. However, the United Kingdom Government this season decided that they did not desire to extend the contract system for eggs in shell and arrangements were made between the Commonwealth Government and the United Kingdom for the disposal of eggs in shell from Australia commencing with season 1953. The British Ministry of Food is the sole importer of Australian eggs in shell this season and the agreement was to the effect that Australia would receive the full realization for the Australian eggs in shell less a small charge taken by the Ministry of Food for the above arrangements. Following this, the Commonwealth Government at the commencement of the season paid an advance price to State Marketing Boards of 4s. 6d. per dozen for the 16 lb. pack and 4s. per dozen for the 14 lb. pack which works out at an approximate average of 4s. 3d. per dozen. However, the early shipments of Australian eggs did not realize the amount of the advance and the advances were later reduced on October 3rd to 4s. 4d. for the 16 lb. pack and 3s. 8d. for the 14 lb. pack with a further reduction on October 10th to 3s. 2d. for the 16 lb. pack and 2s. 6½d. for the 14 lb. pack. Following the reduction to 3s. 2d. and 2s. 6½d. the South Australian Egg Board immediately ceased packing eggs in shell for export.

However, since the reduction of the advance, the English market has shown progressive increases and the latest advices concerning realizations are that they have now reached a return to State Marketing Boards of approximately 4s. 1d. per dozen with a firm market and prospects of further increases. It is pointed out that this season being the first season under which eggs have been sold on a free market, the commencement of the market was disorganized, but all indications are that the market has made a good recovery and is now in a firm position. It is expected that with the new season's harvest poultry keepers will be able to reduce their cost of production by changing over from the feeding of wheat as a grain to a proportion of both oats and

barley. Experimental feeding tests carried out at Parafield Poultry Station over a period of years have shown that satisfactory results can be obtained by the feeding of the two above-mentioned grains in lieu of wheat.

SUGAR FOR CANNING.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The Premier is probably aware that the fruit harvest will soon be with us and the ability to can certain tree fruits depends largely on the supplies of sugar available. Can the Premier say whether sufficient sugar is likely to be available in the coming season, and if so, how will the price affect the canning of fruit? I understand there is competition in this line and sugar plays an important part.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have heard no suggestion of a restriction this year on the amount of sugar available for the canning industries, but there is at present considerable difficulty in connection with the fruit industries. In the first place the sales of the produce in South Australia and Australia generally have dropped back considerably owing to consumer resistance to high prices, and sugar is one of the contributing factors. In regard to the overseas market for canned fruit, the latest information I have is that the British Government has agreed to purchase the canned fruit pack this season, but I understand the fruit industry is working at a disadvantage in having to pay a higher price for sugar than overseas competing industries. There is a sugar concession committee and a rebate is made on the price of the sugar used for export commodities, but I do not believe that the price is brought back in strict parity with overseas prices. I have been informed, but I have not checked the position, that the Australian canner has to pay a price equivalent to the London price, plus the cost of bringing the product to London from Australia. That is considerably above what is obtained for sugar sold by Australia overseas. Negotiations are proceeding between the canning industries and the sugar concession committee and until a further report is issued I cannot give further information.

PROSECUTION OF MILK VENDORS.

Mr. PATTINSON—I refer to the recent prosecutions by the Metropolitan County Board of retail milk vendors in the metropolitan area for delivering to householders milk alleged to be deficient in solids, not fat content. If the milk is so deficient it is received by the retailer in that condition from the wholesale distributor who receives it from

the producer. I ask the Minister of Agriculture, firstly, is it not manifestly unfair for the retailer to be obliged to suffer the bad advertisement and damage to his business through no fault of his own, and secondly, if it is impossible at certain times of the year for producers to produce milk of ample solid content, can retailers receive some protection from prosecution?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—This matter has been under consideration for a considerable time. The Dairymen's Association and milk vendors and wholesalers are all concerned, as well as the primary producers. It seems that at certain times of the year a great number of cows in this country, and possibly elsewhere, produce milk that is deficient in solids not fat and not up to the standard of 8.5 per cent prescribed under the Act. A committee was appointed to investigate this matter, consisting of officers of the Department of Agriculture, the Metropolitan County Board, the Dairymen's Association, and other interested bodies, such as the milk vendors. They discussed the matter amongst themselves, but so far as I am aware were unable to arrive at any solution. As far as distribution of milk is concerned, prosecutions come under the Metropolitan County Board because the Milk Board does not control distribution in the metropolitan area. I understand the Chief Secretary is receiving a deputation this week from interested bodies and I have forwarded to him any information that has come to me from the sources I have mentioned in order to enable him to discuss this question fully with the deputation to see whether some solution fair to all parties can be arrived at.

ROYAL VISIT.

Mr. RICHES—Will the Minister representing the Minister of Education take up with his colleague the possibility of having the Monday during the Royal Visit declared a holiday for country schools? School children in the north will visit Whyalla on the Saturday of the Royal Visit, but many parents would like to have their children visit Adelaide for one day in order to see the decorations. They believe Adelaide will probably never again be similarly decorated in their lifetime, and they would like their children to see the decorations as well as get a glimpse of Her Majesty. They believe this cannot be done unless a school holiday is granted. I understand city schools will be getting a holiday on the Friday of the Royal Visit.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will take the matter up with the Minister of Education and bring down his reply as early as possible.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—Thousands of motor cars will converge on Adelaide during the Royal Visit. Can the Premier say whether the committee in charge of the arrangements has made any inquiry into the use of the parklands for car parking during that period?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I understand considerable attention has been given to traffic problems, but I am not aware of the precise details. I will get the honourable member a report.

Mr. CORCORAN—Has the Premier any further information to give following on the question I asked on October 6 as a result of a letter I had received from a constituent about seating accommodation for elderly and crippled people during the Royal Visit?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The matter has been referred to the committee concerned and I will get a report in due course.

TRAP SHOOTING OF PIGEONS.

Mr. JENNINGS—Has the Premier obtained a report in reply to the question I asked some time ago about the trap shooting of pigeons? Has he received any report or representations from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals on the subject?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received a voluminous report from Mr. Moorhouse, who is in charge of the Fisheries and Game Department and matters connected with the protection of animals. He visited one of the pigeon shooting competitions, and I can bring down his report and make it available to the honourable member. In view of the contents of his report the Government will not take any action this session on this matter.

Mr. JENNINGS—Has the Premier received a report, a deputation, or a request for a deputation from the R.S.P.C.A. on the matter of trap shooting?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—In the last two or three weeks I have received several letters on this matter, but whether they came from the R.S.P.C.A. I cannot at the moment say. I will make a check and let the honourable member know. During a day I receive from 300 to 400 letters and it is not possible for me to keep in mind the names of all the people who send them.

COUNTRY SEWERAGE SCHEMES.

Mr. FLETCHER—There is much discussion in the larger country towns about sewerage schemes. As the schemes have not been implemented the progress of several country towns has been delayed. Will the Government consent to the raising of semi-governmental loans in these areas to enable the schemes to go ahead?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I know of no difficulty in the way of local government authorities undertaking this work out of their own finances and under their own schemes. It would not be necessary for them to obtain Loan Council approval for any loans they desire to raise, for such loans are not subject to Loan Council approval, but it would be necessary for the councils to obtain the approval of their own ratepayers if the amount exceeded the statutory limit provided under the Local Government Act. However, I doubt whether councils would have the necessary trained staff to undertake the work, but it might be possible for the Minister of Works to give some assistance in regard to plans and specifications.

MOVEMENT OF WHEAT, EYRE PENINSULA.

Mr. PEARSON—Has the Minister of Agriculture obtained a report from the Australian Wheat Board in reply to the question I asked last week regarding the shipment of wheat from Port Lincoln?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I forwarded the question to the Wheat Board and have received the following report:—

During the past few months there has been a considerable reduction in the shipments from all States. This has been due primarily to reduced interests on the part of the importing countries in purchasing supplies for importation. The reason for this lull in buying is chiefly that the importing countries are at present well stocked for supplies. We expect that interest will be renewed in purchasing substantial quantities within the next month or so. Another important factor as far as South Australia is concerned, is that the demand from importing countries is practically all for bulk shipments. There is very little inquiry for bagged cargoes. It would seem that in disposing of this State's surplus in the present circumstances, we will have to cut bags for shipment and at the moment we find difficulty in inducing shipowners to grant us options for loading bulk wheat *ex* bags when we have considerable quantities of bulk wheat in other States available for shipment. Notwithstanding the volume of wheat which we are carrying in the various divisions of your State, we do not anticipate much difficulty in making adequate arrangements to

accommodate new season's receipts. We quite agree with Mr. Pearson that the railways have done a very good job, and have co-operated with us to the greatest extent possible, and we regret that owing to the circumstances described herein, the continuity of movement has been temporarily upset.

ROAD TRANSPORT LEGISLATION.

Mr. STEPHENS—Can the Premier say whether the Government intends to amend the Road Transport Act this session?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I can bring to mind no amendments that are necessary or any suggestions made for any amendment, but if the honourable member wants any particular amendment considered I shall be pleased to have it examined.

GALVANIZED IRON SUPPLIES.

Mr. CORCORAN—I have been approached by a number of my constituents who say they are unable to get supplies of galvanized iron and have asked me to make representations to the responsible authorities. Can the Premier say what is the position, whether supplies are likely to improve, whether Australian galvanized iron has been sent to New Zealand, and if so, what is the Government's attitude in that regard?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—When the Building Materials Act terminated outstanding orders of galvanized iron amounted to about 1,400 tons, but I understand at present they total about 18,000, indicating a considerable deterioration of the position. It will be a considerable time before Australian production will catch up with our requirements. Alternative roofing materials are available.

Mr. O'Halloran—But in many localities they are not suitable.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Suitability is governed chiefly by cost. I agree that tiles are too costly for country use because of transport costs, but where cost is not a predominating factor tiles are procured from the metropolitan area for country homes. I have heard no complaints that the tile position is not satisfactory.

Mr. Quirke—Is there an export of galvanized iron?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There has always been a small export to islands close to Australia, some of which are Australian mandated territories, and throughout the war and since there have been token shipments to New Zealand. Imported galvanized iron is more costly and many consumers prefer to place orders for Australian and wait.

PILOTS' SALARIES.

Mr. TAPPING—I have received the following letter from the secretary of the Merchant Service Guild of Australasia (South Australian section):—

In February, 1951, a log of claims to seagoing, pilotage and harbour maintenance was submitted to the Federal Arbitration Court. The pilotage claims were in respect of the South Australian pilotage service of the South Australian Harbours Board. The seagoing part of the claims referred to have not yet been finalized and it may be yet some considerable time before that can be brought about owing to a doubt as to the jurisdiction of Judge Foster as to the hearing of the remaining claims.

The South Australian pilots are very restive about the long delay in their claims being heard. The late Capt. Lawrence made approaches to the South Australian Government with a view to the pilots obtaining a State award, but this was negatived because under the South Australian law the particular group applying must have a minimum of 20, and the total number of pilots in South Australia could not make up this number. At present all pilots in South Australia come under the conditions laid down by the Public Service Board of South Australia.

The present rate of remuneration for Melbourne pilots is £2,050 per annum as against the Port Adelaide pilots £1,330. Therefore, as you will see, the South Australian pilot, whose duties are more severe than that of his Melbourne brother, is so much worse off so far as remuneration is concerned. Therefore, I have been requested by the South Australian section of the guild to formally request the Government through you to amend the Act and so give the South Australian pilots access to the State Court where their just claims for better conditions and remuneration comparable with pilots in Melbourne and Sydney can be heard.

Will the Minister of Marine consider the request?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—As a matter of policy is involved I will have it discussed by Cabinet and bring down a reply as early as possible.

COUNTRY ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.

Mr. QUIRKE—In 1950 Parliament passed the Electricity Supplies (Country Areas) Act, section 3 of which reads:—

(1) The Treasurer may from time to time make grants to the Electricity Trust for the purposes mentioned in this section.

(2) Every such grant—(a) shall be made upon terms and conditions agreed upon between the Treasurer and the Electricity Trust: (b) shall be used by the Electricity Trust to defray expenditure incurred by the trust in generating electricity for supply to consumers in sparsely settled areas, and in transmitting and distributing electricity to such consumers.

In the debate on the Bill the member for Burra asked the Premier a question regarding

people in sparsely populated areas living a maximum distance of $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Spalding who, because of the high surcharge, found the supply uneconomic, and he asked if they would be able to get assistance under the Act. The Premier replied “Yes, and the surcharge will not be so high.” I know of an instance where the surcharge quoted is 110 per cent and the distance from the main $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Can the Premier say whether the principles embodied in the Act have yet been applied and whether it is possible for such people who form a group of 20 or more to obtain the relief from the surcharge which was envisaged under the Act?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I made a full statement on this topic during the debate on the Estimates last Wednesday evening, and if the honourable member will refer to that he will see the circumstances set out as fully as possible. In a number of instances assistance has been given to local government and other authorities outside the Electricity Trust to spread their supplies, but the problem is more difficult with regard to the trust's supplies, for we had to arrive at a formula which would not infringe the conditions usually imposed by the Grants Commission.

SALE OF CANNED MUTTON.

Mr. STOTT—This season the Metropolitan Abattoirs has done a magnificent job in the slaughtering of lambs, but I understand there has been some difficulty in relation to the boning of the meat of the older ewes and in the disposal of this type of meat. As I understand that at least part of the difficulty of processing the meat of the older ewes to produce canned mutton is due to the Australian Meat Board, will the Minister of Agriculture take up with the board the possibility of arranging with the United Kingdom authorities for the importing of this type of canned mutton into that country?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I shall be happy to take up the matter with the board, but I cannot hold out much hope in this regard, for I understand that some big meat processing companies have on hand considerable quantities of canned meat, particularly canned mutton, which they are finding great difficulty in selling.

COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCES.

Mr. LAWN—Can the Premier say which State wage-fixing authorities have followed the lead of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court in freezing wages?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received no communication on this matter from any State and have read only the reports in the daily press, so perhaps I am not up-to-date on it, but I understand that Victoria has definitely decided to introduce cost of living allowances into State industrial awards and has arrived at some agreement with an independent group for its support on the understanding that the cost of living allowances must work both upwards and downwards. I understand that no decision has been made in New South Wales. I do not know what the position is in Tasmania, but the Industrial Commissioner in Queensland has decided that he will not immediately introduce cost of living allowances. I am not sure of the position in Western Australia, but that State has not been quite so closely tied to the other States on industrial matters.

SHORT WEIGHT SALES.

Mr. PATTINSON—Last week a well-known and highly respected storekeeper at Glenelg was accused of, and will probably be prosecuted for, selling over the counter a packet, short in weight, of a brand of breakfast food popular throughout Australia. Legal advice has been supplied to some associations of retailers that they should demand from the wholesaler a form of warranty in respect of goods supplied by the wholesaler to the retailer. Wholesalers, in turn, have been advised that, if they give the warranty, they make themselves liable not only for giving a false warranty, but also to a claim for damages by the retailer, if the goods are supplied by the producer or manufacturer deficient in quality or short in weight. Will the Premier consider the possibility of giving some legislative protection to retailers who, in all good faith, sell goods in the same order and condition as received from the wholesale distributor?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I recognize the injustice suffered by a retailer, particularly if he is a reputable person, who having bought a certain commodity in packages branded as a certain weight, finds himself prosecuted for something of which he is in no way guilty, but it is rather dangerous to get into the position of allowing any person to sell underweight commodities, for that involves a form of legislation which it would be difficult to police. At present the law states that any one who sells any commodity under weight or under a certain standard commits an offence, and the proper method of dealing with the matter mentioned is probably to examine

more accurately the matter of policing the standards of the goods coming from the warehouseman in the first place. That would probably give the retailer the protection necessary. I will inquire whether it is possible to check the leading brands and if we find them underweight we can take up with the manufacturers the question of redress for the public.

SUBSIDIES FOR TREE PLANTING.

Mr. TAPPING (on notice)—Is it the intention of the Government to make available subsidies to local governing bodies throughout the State for the purpose of encouraging the planting of trees in their districts?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—This matter is being examined.

FORMER CHAIRMAN, TRAMWAYS TRUST.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY (on notice)—

1. Was the chairman of the former Municipal Tramways Trust Board a member of the South Australian Treasury Department?

2. Was this officer placed in this position because of his knowledge of finance and financial procedure?

3. Was one of his responsibilities to report to the Treasurer on the financial position of the trust?

4. Did he report at any time on the loss of £3,371,175, against which there are no tangible assets, as disclosed in the Auditor-General's report?

5. Did he report to the Treasurer that the Municipal Tramways Trust Board had undertaken the responsibility of a staff superannuation scheme without making financial arrangements for the scheme, thus incurring a further indebtedness of £137,414?

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

1. Yes.

2. He was selected as a fit and proper person to be so appointed.

3. No. The financial responsibilities for the undertaking were vested in the constituent councils.

4. He did report a loss of £1,332,321, but the additional amounts shown in the Auditor-General's report arise out of the policy decisions of the new board to abandon trams in favour of buses.

5. Financial provision was made for a superannuation scheme and while the full liability was not included in the accounts special reference was made to it in a footnote

to the accounts. The Government believes there was no attempt by the old board or the chairman in any way to fail to disclose proper accounts which were duly audited and certified by chartered accountants.

QUORN HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. RICHES (on notice)—

1. Is there an urgent need for additional classroom accommodation at the Quorn High School?

2. Is there a danger of a class being closed if additional classrooms are not provided?

3. Is a portable building listed for erection early next year?

4. If so, will the new building be a double-unit structure consisting of two rooms?

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

1. There is need for an additional classroom at the Quorn high school, and provision for this has been made in the list of portable rooms to be erected by the end of January, 1954.

2. No. Anticipated enrolments for 1954 are 79 children, while opening enrolments for 1953 were 74 children.

3. See 1 above.

4. Yes. The proposed prefabricated wooden building will provide for craft work and for a dual purpose drawing and classroom.

LAND AGENTS' ADVERTISEMENTS.

Mr. TAPPING (on notice)—Is it the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill on similar lines to Victorian legislation to prevent land agents advertising in "wanted to buy" columns under *noms de plume*?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member is requested to see reply given by the Attorney-General, as reported in *Hansard* of October 27, 1953.

TAXICAB LICENCES.

Mr. LAWN (on notice)—

1. How many taxi licences granted by the Adelaide City Council are held by—(a) private persons, (b) taxi companies?

2. What charges are made by the Adelaide City Council for taxi licences?

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

1. (a) 159 "B" schedule.
337 "C" schedule.

496 Total.

(b) 90 "B" schedule.
19 "C" schedule.

109 Total.

2. £10 per annum, "B" schedule; £3 per annum, "C" schedule; £3 14s. per annum for hire cars not being taxis (seven passengers), "B" schedule.

THE SAVINGS BANK OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend The Savings Bank of South Australia Act, 1929-1949.

Motion carried.

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

PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

THE ESTIMATES.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from October 28. Page 1225.)

MINISTER OF LANDS AND MINISTER OF REPATRIATION.

Lands Department, £501,459.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The £40,900 proposed for War Service Land Settlement (World War II.) is a considerable increase on the expenditure last year of £14,221. This increase is extraordinary, for the department's work has fallen off in recent years. If one were to judge the department on the results of the World War II. settlement schemes he would find it has done a poor job. I quote a statement from a source that is not generally regarded as an adverse critic of the present Government. It states:—

In the interests of the men still awaiting blocks, and also of rural production it is to be hoped that the plan can be realized.

This was a plan put forward by Mr. Kent Hughes, Federal Minister for the Interior, who is responsible for the development of the internal economy of Australia. The statement continues:—

But optimism will be tempered by the knowledge that in the past eight years only about one quarter of the Australian applicants deemed suitable for work on the land have been placed on holdings. Some critics of the programme contend that, at the rate of settlement since the war, 25 years will be spent in placing all the qualified applicants.

Some people may think that is pessimistic, but I think it is optimistic. Unless the Government alters its policy it will not be 25 years before the last man is placed on his property; he will never be placed, for every year that passes makes that possibility more remote. The member for Stanley and myself have battled year in and year out on behalf of qualified ex-servicemen, but we have been kicked from pillar to post, not only by members of this House, but by organizations who accept money from ex-servicemen to look after their interests. One official of a leading ex-servicemen's organization stated in the press that what I had said about soldier settlement was breaking down the morale of applicants. I shall read not what I, or the member for Stanley, said, but a statement in the Commonwealth Parliament by Mr. Kent Hughes. On September 9, in introducing a Bill providing for the raising of loan monies amounting to £7,000,000 to finance war service land settlement, he said:—

This money will be advanced under approved conditions, to the three agent States to be used by them for the acquisition, development and improvement of land for subdivision and allotment to classified ex-servicemen and for providing those ex-servicemen with working capital and finance for purchasing structural improvements, stock, plant and equipment. A small amendment of the State Grants (War Service Land Settlement) Act, 1952, to permit grants to any State, has been advised by the Commonwealth legal authorities. This amendment, which will substitute the words "a State or States" for the words "the States" will be effected under another measure. The Loan Acts of 1950, 1951 and 1952 authorized the raising and spending on war service land settlement of loan moneys amounting to £15,625,000, Expenditure to the 30th June, 1953, was £14,666,000 leaving a balance of £959,000 at the beginning of this financial year.

That last sentence contains an important point because, as the Minister pointed out, there has never been any shortage of money for soldier settlement. Almost £1,000,000 had not been used up to June 30. The Minister continued:—

Gross expenditure during the financial year 1952-53 was £7,136,000 of which £5,684,000 was new money and £1,452,000 was the re-expenditure of repayments received during the year of amounts expended in previous years. The proposed appropriation is required to meet an estimated expenditure this financial year on war service land settlement in the agent States of £7,000,000 which will be supplemented by £1,591,000 which it is estimated will be received during the year from repayments of advances made previously to settlers and from other sources.

That obviously refers to monies the settlers have paid back to the Commonwealth Government, which is using the money to develop

further soldier settlement schemes. The Minister continued:—

Honourable members will notice that the sum of over £8,500,000 which is to be expended this year, is at least £1,000,000 greater than that which was allocated last year.

In explaining how this money will be spent by the three agent States Mr. Kent Hughes said:—

In South Australia, originally 2,796 men were classified. Allotments have been made to 536 men, leaving 2,260 still awaiting allotments. I should say that at least 50 per cent of those men are still eager to obtain blocks of land. The percentage may be higher than that. At present, 230 farms are under development in South Australia. So there is still some way to go in that State before we shall be able to say that we are getting near completion of war service land settlement there.

In Western Australia, originally 1,593 men were classified. Allotments have been made to 863 men, or to slightly over 50 per cent, and 730 are still waiting allotments. It is estimated that about 500 of them are still genuine seekers of land. The number of farms under development but not yet allotted is 313. So in Western Australia we are getting closer to the goal at which we are aiming.

In Tasmania, 232 men were classified, 136 allotments have been made and 96 men are still awaiting allotments. It is estimated that 90 of those men are still in the market for land. The number of farms under development is estimated to be 696. Therefore, if the schemes in Tasmania that are in various stages of development are completed, there will be a surplus of farms. But I have no doubt that they will be taken up by returned servicemen from neighbouring States who have not yet been satisfied.

When we, as returned men, were vigorously criticising the Government we stated that South Australia was the most backward of all the States as to soldier settlement schemes, and we were kicked from pillar to post by the Minister in charge and those who sit behind him. Now we have conclusive proof from an impartial source to support our claims. As near as I can work it out, in South Australia we have placed a miserable 19 per cent of the qualified men on the land, Western Australia over 50 per cent of its applicants and Tasmania has made provision not only for its own returned men, but also to absorb others from the mainland States. The only thing I fear is that the Federal Minister has come into the picture too late. It will be difficult, if not impossible, for many of the older men, no matter how able or anxious they are, to be settled. A large percentage of those who could have been settled successfully cannot be settled now. Our Federal Minister seems to be more fully seized with the importance of

developing our primary industries than some of the Ministers I know. He points out that rural production is an essential factor in the development of the Commonwealth as a whole.

Mr. Quirke—Could it not have been done under the single-unit system?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The statement that the eastern States were now following the example of South Australia in as much as they are no longer concentrating on single-unit farms, but developing under-developed properties, is contrary to what is taking place. Actually, the eastern States had a vigorous policy of acquiring single-unit farms for qualified ex-servicemen. Victoria made it illegal for anyone to sell a farm until it had been refused by the Government for a soldier settlement scheme. New South Wales had a project whereby any number of settlers, knowing of a property coming on the market, could approach the Government and say, "We think we could develop this property as a home maintenance area," and the Government could undertake the project. There the soldier settler was encouraged to be his own agent, but in South Australia the opposite is the case. Not one penny has been spent on single-unit farms if it could possibly be avoided. The money obtained by South Australia from the Commonwealth Government was used, as far as humanly possible, to develop under-developed parts of the State which could not have been developed without using the name of the returned soldier. It is a grave reflection that the South Australian Government, and everyone supporting it should have allowed this to take place. The ex-serviceman was used as a stool pigeon in the development of those parts of the State which could not have been developed without the free assistance received from the Commonwealth Government under the scheme. Other members and I have from time to time approached the Minister of Lands and drawn his attention to single-unit farms coming on the market. He will remember one case where I had been informed that a well-established farmer, although he already had seven properties, was acquiring another farm in order to avoid income tax, and yet returned men in the district could not get a single piece of the land for which they had fought. Under our legislation the Minister could not do anything about it.

When New South Wales and Victoria started to develop under-developed areas it was only after they had acquired all the single-unit farms they could get at a reasonable price. Had the South Australian Government followed their lead hundreds of qualified

returned men would now be settled on properties with all their capital charges paid off, because at that time prices were moderate, but there has since been tremendous inflation in wheat, wool and land prices. Settlers who got in on the ground floor in the eastern States have been able to pay off either all their commitments or their major commitments; whereas our settlers have been unable to pay off anything. Can the Minister explain what the Government and his department propose to do to expedite the £8,000,000 five-year plan mentioned by the Federal Minister, who pointed out that it had never been a question of finance, but one of Government policy. It can be done if the desire is there, but I am sorry to say the desire has not been very obvious.

Mr. QUIRKE—On page 59 appears the line "Contribution under clause 7 of the War Service Land Settlement Agreement Act, 1945—amount payable to the Commonwealth, £25,000." Clause 7 of the agreement reads:—

In making the valuations, the officers shall have regard to the need for the proceeds of the holding (based on conservative estimates over a long-term period of prices and yields for products) being sufficient to provide a reasonable living for the settler after meeting such financial commitments as would be incurred by a settler possessing no capital.

I take it that this amount of £25,000 is involved in meeting such contingencies. Clause 4 of the agreement provides:—

The Commonwealth shall make a capital contribution in respect of each holding of an amount equal to three-fifths of the excess of the total cost involved in acquiring, developing and improving the holding over the sum of valuations of the land and improvements.

I take it that if the cost of purchase and development exceeds the economic capacity of the property, the excess will be written down and the cost borne in the proportion of two-fifths by the State and three-fifths by the Commonwealth. Is the amount of £25,000 involved here? I wish to make a plea, as I have done in this House before, for certain types of soldiers who have been placed on the land. I have in mind particularly country at Wanilla, which is low fertility land, and also land being developed on Kangaroo Island. It is known by practical men who have undertaken the development of this land that what inevitably happens is that in the first flush of natural inherent fertility, which is very small, remarkable results are obtained for the first two years after sowing, and then there is a sudden decline until one wonders where the pasture has gone. That has happened on the Wanilla holdings, and inevitably

will happen on the Kangaroo Island holdings. The explanation is comparatively simple; it depends on the capacity of that land to build up nitrogen which will carry grasses. It has a low nitrogen potential naturally, and it is only when up to half a ton of phosphate to the acre as a minimum has been added that the nitrogen cycle can commence and be maintained. We have evidence of different forms of production and development on that land. Trace elements such as zinc and copper are lacking, but on some of the land, particularly between Coonalpyn and Meningie, development has taken place on up to 30 feet of sand. According to accepted techniques that was not possible, but under the right type of pasture it is. The Minister of Works, the Hon. M. McIntosh, and his son have carried out such work with marked success and have shown that these deep sands can be developed with lucerne and primrose to carry 2½ sheep to the acre all the year round. Lucerne is a legume providing the pasture and primrose provides the alkaline type of pasture. The combination of the two gives a delightfully balanced pasture.

At Wanilla the proposition is different and subterranean clover and grasses are grown, but the sands are lacking in fertility in the same way. Whereas on Mr. McIntosh's property the deep roots of primrose and lucerne penetrate the sand and pull from the 30ft. deep clay the elements necessary to enrich the surface, at Wanilla the pasture depends on grasses and clover. On the West Coast an adequate amount of phosphate must be put into the soil, and the association of calcium and phosphate will enable the nitrogen cycle to work, but it will take a minimum of eight years following the two years' natural flush which comes from the natural inherent fertility of the soil. The commitments of the settlers should be considered in relation to that eight year period. I have evidence that the annual return from one of the Wanilla properties has fallen back to about £1,900, against which must be offset 45 tons of superphosphate costing £600, rents and repayments on capital improvements between £600 and £800, fuel £250, and a reasonable allowance of £10 a week for living. They are inescapable charges involving £1,950—£50 more than the annual return. That settler finally met his commitments, but only after obtaining the necessary money from a stock company in anticipation of the future. I hope those anticipations are realized, but, if he is in the third year of production, he can look for a very slow

process of building up, and on those figures he will be heavily in debt over the next four or five years.

I appeal to the Government to give the settlers on these low fertility lands a chance. The land should be given an opportunity to build up on a process which will take a minimum of eight years before the settler will be able to meet his full commitments without placing himself in circumstances of perhaps dire distress. The War Service Land Settlement Agreement provides for writing down in proportion of two-fifths by the State and three-fifths by the Commonwealth, and I take it that that covers the circumstances I have mentioned. It is impossible to impose the full charges on these men because they will inevitably pile up arrears, for the land will not at present have the full capacity to produce, although it will have it later. The Government should give recognition to these men who in the first flush showed an altogether unrealistic return which must inevitably fall off in the third year and then gradually start to build up. When I was a member of the Land Settlement Committee I said that it would be 10 years before these settlers could realize full production from their land and the same thing will apply to the A.M.P. project at Keith which is being developed under clover and grasses. It will not apply to country such as that developed by Mr. McIntosh, for that land will give a quicker return as the plants search for fertility in the deep sands and bring it to the surface. The nitrogen content is important and it is usually hard to obtain in the sandy soil.

These remarks are not meant as a criticism of the whole soldier settlement scheme but as a plea on behalf of these settlers who will be in trouble until the full fertility level of the land is reached. Can the Minister say whether the £25,000 shown as a contribution under clause 7 of the War Service Land Settlement Agreement Act will be used as the two-fifths contribution by the State towards a writing down of the capital cost of such properties as I have mentioned? If not, for what purpose will it be used? Will the Minister have my statements in regard to the production of these properties analysed by his departmental experts, and, if it is shown that they are correct, will recognition of that correctness be transferred to the settlers in order to give them the chance they will need?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS (Minister of Lands)—I assure the member for Stanley that it is true many settlers have not yet

received their final rental accounts, and will not until we know the final production from their blocks. The position is being watched closely, and I accept his statement as fair criticism. Last year £30,000 was voted on this item, and this year it is proposed to make £25,000 available for any writing off on properties. The department considers there will be no writing off in respect of properties in Nos. 1, 2 and 3 zones in the South-East or in No. 4 zone at Tumby Bay and Wanilla, but I would not like to forecast that there will be no writing off in the No. 5 zone in the western division of the South-East or in No. 6 zone on Kangaroo Island, for the additional costs of labour and superphosphate may necessitate writing off there. There will be a considerable writing off in irrigation areas.

I can hardly accept some of Mr. Macgillivray's criticism as constructive. I take it that his figures with regard to settlement in the three States were quoted from Federal *Hansard*, but I remind him that, although New South Wales figures have formerly been quoted, they were noticeably absent today. Probably the honourable member knows why. It is because the New South Wales figures do not compare favourably with the figures of other States. The honourable member said that there were over 1,500 applications in Western Australia. That is correct now, but earlier a number of the applications were written off. The honourable member may be pleased with the Tasmanian position. He said that there were 232 applications. There are still 96 persons to be settled. Tasmania had land developed but could not get Tasmanians to settle on it, so the Government had to advertise on the mainland for settlers. Mr. Kent Hughes has only quoted the number of leases issued. We have slightly more than 700 men on the land.

Mr. Macgillivray—Mr. Kent Hughes quoted 536. He said that originally 2,796 persons were classified.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—That is correct. With the approval of the Returned Soldiers League we circularized all classified persons to learn if they were true applicants for land, and as a result the number of applicants was reduced. We had difficulty in securing sufficient good land in good rainfall areas; that is why the circulars were sent out. After summing up the position, it was decided to notify about 450 applicants that their chances of being settled were poor. Apart from the 450, there were about 232 live applications, and a

few of these applicants will eventually not want a block. Of the 450 I think at least 200 would not be interested even if land were available. I do not think that altogether there are more than 500 true applications for settlement in dry lands areas.

Mr. Quirke—How many will get land within 10 years?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Perhaps the honourable member could help us to get suitable land. The two Independent members have always talked about single unit farms. I give them credit for suggesting about one block each. It is easy to talk about these things. As far as irrigation settlement is concerned, which matter the two honourable members never mentioned, very strong representations were made by the Government and its officers and the Commonwealth Government agreed, provided suitable land could be found, to make blocks available for all live applications.

Mr. Macgillivray—Do you suggest that I did not support the Government in this matter? You made an insinuation.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Can the honourable member show me in *Hansard* where he referred to land suitable for single-unit farms? He asked questions about further land being available, but right through it has been the Government which has fought the matter. A previous Commonwealth Government said it was useless asking for further land for irrigation purposes, but a later Commonwealth Government, after representations by the South Australian Government, agreed to make land available. One member has said that some of the applicants got tired of waiting, but it was difficult for sufficient land to be developed in time to please all applicants. It was not until 1946 that we got six secondhand tractors, and some time after that before we got really big tractors.

Mr. Macgillivray—You would not take them.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Seven hundred men on the land, which meant an average of a little over two settlers every five weeks, was not a bad accomplishment.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The Minister has adopted his usual practice. When any one criticizes his Ministerial capacity he says the criticism is not constructive.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I said that Mr. Quirke's criticism was constructive.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The Minister insinuated that my criticism was not constructive. I have been a returned soldier settler for 30 years and I have forgotten more about settlement

matters than the Minister is ever likely to learn. Not once since I have been here and he has been Minister has he taken notice of any criticism I have made of a major problem. He has gone to his departmental officers and if they said "Yea" he said "Yea," and if they said "Nay" he said "Nay."

The Hon. C. S. Hincks—That is why the honourable member went to the Premier to get what he wanted.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—We have to go to him because we realize there is only one Minister in South Australia; the rest are simply dummies. On one occasion when I made a suggestion the Minister made a statement, which I think was made in ignorance because he was the tool of his departmental officers. I went to the Premier because I thought he would appreciate the initiative, but I was wrong. I have been here under three Ministers of Irrigation and I have always had a better deal from the others than from the present Minister. I got attention from them, which I have not had from the present Minister, who twitted me about not giving information concerning New South Wales. We are debating what has taken place in South Australia, not in New South Wales, and that is why I did not mention the position in that State.

The Hon. C. S. Hincks—You quoted Tasmania and Western Australia.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Yes, because they are States comparable to South Australia. The other States are in a different category. I pay a tribute to the work done by Mr. Sheehan when Minister of Lands in New South Wales. He put everybody interested in soldier settlement on the right path. When he was in office it was held that it was not possible to acquire a single unit farm for a specific returned soldier, because all land had to go into a pool. Mr. Hawker who was interested in the matter, said it could not be done.

Mr. Hawker—Mr. Dedman made the statement.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The head of the Commonwealth Department of Repatriation told a conference of returned soldier's organizations that it could not be done, but Mr. Sheehan asked the Prime Minister why. The Prime Minister said he did not know, and that as far as he could see it was possible. If the figures I have quoted are wrong, that is the fault of Mr. Kent Hughes, because he provided them. However, they cannot be very far out, because the Minister has admitted that 2,796 is correct, but says that 700, and not 500, have been put on the land.

The Hon. C. S. Hincks—Seven hundred on the land and only 550 waiting is rather a good percentage.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—There is a difference of 200 between the figures given by the Minister of Lands and the Commonwealth Minister responsible for soldier settlement. That in a total of 2,600 is not very much.

The Hon. C. S. Hincks—On what date did he quote those figures?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—September 9.

The Hon. C. S. Hincks—I approved another 19 this morning; it is going on all the time.

Mr. Coreoran—What about large properties that have been available.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—On the figures supplied by the Federal Minister, only 19 per cent of the qualified applicants have been placed on the land in South Australia. Does the Minister consider that satisfactory?

The Hon. C. S. Hincks—There are not that number of applicants willing to go on the land. Of the 2,000 odd, hundreds have never applied for land.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—That would be possible.

The Hon. C. S. Hincks—I do not know if they could properly be called applicants, although they were classified.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I know of many who, although classified, did not apply for land because they could see that the position was hopeless. When questions have been asked in this House on the possibility of these men obtaining land, the Minister has always said that he did not know, and that he could not inform the House of any method that could be adopted to put them on the land. It is quite correct that hundreds of classified men have never put their names down. The member for Victoria was right in saying that very large estates and properties that have come on to the market have not been acquired for soldier settlement. The Minister twits me with not helping him with single unit farms, yet I have placed before his department information about at least six irrigation properties that were for sale. Of course it is very easy for the department to say that the prices were too high, yet people have purchased them and made a success of them. I have always understood that it is a function of a Government department to implement the policy of the Government, and the policy of the Government in this State has been unfavourable to single-unit farms.

Mr. Hawker—Does the honourable member realize that at about the time Mr. Sheehan

clarified the position about single-unit farms our Premier wrote to the Minister asking that they be considered by the Commonwealth?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I know the Premier made a statement in this House opposing them. Mr. Sheehan was the first man to bring this matter into the open, and I was the first in this State to mention it. I have always said that the best method of putting men on the land is by way of single-unit farms, but that has always been opposed by this Government. I previously mentioned the case of a farmer in the Middle North, and I asked the Minister whether he would adopt the Victorian and New South Wales practice of examining all land coming on to the market as to its suitability for soldier settlement.

Mr. Pearson—The Government in New South Wales took land away from people.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I was not suggesting taking land from anybody.

Mr. Pearson—I do not suggest that: I only said that land was taken away in New South Wales.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I would say that could be justified in certain circumstances. I asked the Minister of Lands to do something which I thought to be of use, because he has never implemented with vigour a policy for ex-servicemen. If that is not constructive criticism I cannot help it. I am paid to come here and state my opinions publicly, and I have been supported in every instance by returned soldiers in this place until the time came to vote; what matters is the voting, and the returned soldiers mentioned have voted against me every time I have endeavoured to alter the present procedure.

Mr. GOLDNEY—Although I do not know the date, land near Hoyleton was offered to the Government by Mr. Duncan-Hughes. This land had previously been inspected by the Land Board and the Soil Conservator. Although there was a certain amount of erosion caused by phenomenal floods in about 1941 it should be taken into account that such floods occur only once in a generation. When the Land Settlement Committee had to decide whether this land should be recommended for purchase by the Government, only two members were in favour, and one of the members who has spoken so strongly about the Government's policy voted against it, and the two members who voted for the proposal—and who could be expected to know most about the locality—were the late Mr. Lyons and myself. It is all very well to be wise after the event, but nobody could foresee the tremendous increase

in primary production prices. Had this land been acquired, it would have met with the approval of returned soldiers in that locality, and would have been a profitable venture for this Government.

Mr. QUIRKE—I was a member of the Land Settlement Committee at that time and I am glad that the land was not acquired for soldier settlement, because it could have been used only in conjunction with land contiguous to it. It had bare upper slopes that the Soil Conservation Branch advised would have to be contoured at very high expense to make it into wheat growing property. It shed water like a galvanized iron roof, and had creeks which overflowed at regular intervals, making it impossible to work it except up and down the hill between the creeks. To mention who votes for and against proposals is a new departure.

The property was too much for one settler, and not enough for two because of the way it was cut about by creeks; that is the main reason why it was turned down. However, someone with land contiguous to it could have used it for grazing if he could have kept the water off. This Government has always been and still is opposed to the purchase of single-unit farms. It is useless for the Minister to say that propositions were not submitted to him, for we would not put up straw men for him to knock over. With the exception of properties at Loveday, how many single-unit farms were acquired by the Government for soldier settlement prior to the decontrol of land prices by the Commonwealth Government? After that it was easy for the Government to say it was sympathetic to single-unit holdings but they were too dear.

Mr. Corcoran—If there were a single-unit farm policy how could there be full utilization of land held in large holdings?

Mr. QUIRKE—The Government has power to acquire freehold land provided the area is drained. When land becomes subject to drainage it is not acquired at the current price, but at the price obtaining before it was subject to drainage. The basis of the agreement with the Commonwealth is that if the South Australian Government agrees that land is economic for single-unit farms it does not matter whether that land is fully developed or not. The Government does not have to purchase only undeveloped land. It has never been the Government policy to favour single-unit farms and the Premier has never indicated that he has lifted his opposition to them. The Minister of Education, in another place,

denied that it was possible to apply the conditions of the War Service Land Settlement Agreement to single-unit holdings. Prices for land are so high today that it is easy for the Government to say, "We will consider single-unit holdings for war service land settlement, but can you bring us one at an economic price?" The Government contends that they are all uneconomic. If they are, how do the people who have purchased them get on? I do not know of a tremendous landslide into primary producer bankruptcy at present. Had land been acquired before the decontrol of land prices hundreds of settlers now waiting for land could have been accommodated and because of the high prices for primary produce could probably have paid for their land. The rental values at Wanilla vary between £242 and £359 per annum. Add to that £650 as charges for improvements and installations of plant and one can realize that the average commitment at Wanilla is between £600 and £800 per annum. In other words, between £12 and £16 a week has to be paid by the settlers. Settlers soon will not be able to meet those charges. That is a tentative and provisional assessment, but can the Minister explain it? Is that assessment based upon the full capital cost today—the full capital cost of development plus the rental? If that is the tentative and provisional assessment, under what circumstances will the settler know his definite commitment?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—It has been suggested that this Government rejects single-unit farms *holus bolus*. In every instance, where a single-unit farm is offered to the Government, the Land Board and the Commonwealth authorities confer and if they agree that it is not a good proposition, naturally I do not approve of its purchase.

Mr. Quirke—How many single-unit holdings have been accepted?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—About 30. All offers of single-unit farms are thoroughly investigated. In regard to the rentals at Wanilla, within a short time the settlers will know their definite rental commitments. They will be lower than what they are paying at present and settlers will receive a rebate on any amounts paid above that during the last few years. We fixed the tentative rentals at the request of the settlers themselves so that they would have some idea of what their annual commitments would be. They were advised of their tentative rentals and have complained that they are too high. Mr. Pearson, M.P., and Mr. Wilson, M.L.C., have

approached me concerning many of the points raised by Mr. Quirke and have asked whether the settlers can be assisted during periods of difficulty. The tentative rental was fixed partly for this purpose and within a few weeks the settlers will know the exact rentals and in almost every instance refunds will be made. Mr. Quirke referred to the variation in annual rentals, but the rental of £359 applied to a larger holding on which there had been greater development than on other holdings. Rent will be based on buying costs and development and in these localities there will be no writing off at all. We are prepared to help the settlers during difficult years. For instance, in the South-East we split up one block in order to make other areas bigger so that the settlers could get a living, and we will do that in other areas, if necessary.

Mr. Quirke—If a settler got behind £200 in his commitments owing to the failure of his pasture would that sum be held against him as arrears?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I should think so. However, we would help a man in every way if he got behind through no fault of his own. Recently, we supplied £600 worth of super-phosphate to re-establish one man's pasture, but that was not charged to the farmer, but to development.

Mr. Quirke—To development over the whole area?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yes, and that is the great advantage of the zoning system.

Mr. CORCORAN—If we adopted the principle of purchasing single-unit farms as a general policy it would tend to retard the development of areas that are under-developed and not being utilized to the full. In nine cases out of 10 single-unit farms have been developed almost to full capacity. They are merely transferred from one man to another, taking us no further along the road to the further development of the country. After World War I. it was general policy to acquire single-unit farms, but the Government has learnt the lesson of excessive costs being a burden on settlers. I am anxious for the Government to take over areas that are held by individuals but are not being used to full advantage. There may be odd cases where single unit farms could be purchased without the settler being exploited, but the trouble after World War I. was that, in many instances, the Government paid the landowner whatever he wanted for it. The perpetual lease method is a much better proposition, for it helps a man who has not

much money to eventually establish himself, and it eliminates the re-aggregation of estates. Generally speaking, there is not much room to complain about the Government's soldier settlement schemes, though there has not been enough activity. Most of the settlers in the South-East will overcome their problems. Perhaps the Government could consider reducing the sizes of the areas allotted, and this opinion is shared by people I represent, though it is better to have a holding a little too large than too small. Reducing the sizes of holdings would result in getting more settlers on the land.

Line passed.

Government Motor Garage, £22,761.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—There are now nine chauffeurs whereas previously there were seven. Are the two extra chauffeurs for the additional Ministers? The line for the purchase of motor cars has increased by £1,555. I take it that is for the purchase of two new vehicles. The line "Payments to dependents and officers retiring or resigning—long service and recreation leave" has increased from £51 to £1,090. That is a big increase. The vote for the Government Motor Garage of £22,761 seems a large sum. I should think most of the vehicles would be practically new and in good condition, so they should not require much servicing.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I do not know how many vehicles are checked by the garage, but there would be hundreds. Two new cars will be purchased this year, and the extra chauffeurs are for the additional Ministers. I know the manager is retiring this financial year, and his long service and recreation leave would be included in the £1090 proposed. I will get more details for the honourable member if he wants me to.

Mr. LAWN—Can the Minister say under what award the employees of this department work and whether they are paid for overtime? What amounts, if any, are paid to drivers when away from home, and does the department purchase Australian vehicles in preference to imported vehicles?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The Ministers' drivers are paid a special rate. For instance, although they are paid for six days a week, they are usually at the garage for only five. If they work a few hours on Sundays they get a full day's pay, plus a day off. I think they are happy with their conditions. I understand the mechanics are paid under the award covering their class of work. I had hoped that we could get a fleet of the same make of vehicle, as this would help the mechanics and enable the interchange of spare parts,

but it was not possible. We have to purchase whatever suitable cars are available. We are now purchasing two vehicles. I believe one is a locally made Dodge and the other a Chevrolet.

Line passed.

Advance to Settlers, Vermin-proof Fencing and Loans for Fencing and Water Piping, £1,981—passed.

Miscellaneous, £75,056.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Last year £250 was spent on the destruction of rabbits on Crown lands, but this year only £200 is proposed. Does the reduction in the vote indicate that the Government, like many private individuals, is relying too much on myxomatosis to do the work? If not, what is the reason for the reduction? I believe that rabbits are very much more plentiful this year than last year, when myxomatosis proved much less effective than in the first year it was tried. I therefore assume that rabbits are becoming immune to the virus to a great extent and it may not be effective in controlling the pest. Unless something stronger is found I should think that much more expenditure is required to combat the pest.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The small amount provided is to enable grants to be made to district councils to deal with the destruction of rabbits on Crown lands within their areas.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—An amount of £2,100 was voted last year and £3,000 is proposed this year towards the cost of aerial baiting of wild dogs. I understand there have been discussions between the States contiguous to the channel country and the Lake Eyre region, particularly Queensland, as to whether they should make some contribution towards the cost. Have these discussions resulted in any finality, and is it a joint operation in conjunction with Queensland and New South Wales, or does South Australia have to bear the whole cost?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—There has been correspondence and a conference with the Queensland Government, and also much discussion as to the merits and demerits of this method of destroying wild dogs. Queensland feels that aerial baiting is doing much good, and I contend that it is bringing results. I have spoken to the airman who drops the baits and he has noticed the results of the operation. I think we should continue the experiment for three years in order to arrive at a conclusion.

Mr. SHANNON—I am perturbed at the indiscriminate dropping of baits, because it is

impossible to ensure the baits being taken only by wild dogs. People well informed on wild life fear that we may upset the balance of nature by the destruction of much bird life. I doubt whether this is the best method of attacking the dingo. Before this practice is adopted universally the position should be examined by people competent to assess the results to ascertain whether valuable native fauna are also being destroyed. I notice that £100 is to be voted for the planting of soil-binding grasses in areas subject to drift. If there are such areas on Crown lands known to departmental officers action should be taken now while we are enjoying good seasons, thus enabling the grasses to become established. It would be wasting time and money to wait until we get a low rainfall year to attempt protection against drift. Had private owners in the Murray district not taken the opportunity in good seasons to establish soil-binding grasses in good years, drift in those areas would have been much worse.

Mr. WHITE—An amount of £1,520 is proposed for the purchase of land in the Mount Lofty Ranges for a Botanic Gardens annex. Is this area to be a subsidiary part of the Botanic Gardens, or is it proposed to transfer the Botanic Gardens from the present site?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—In reply to Mr. Shannon, the small amount provided for planting grasses as protection against sand drift is for use by district councils on Crown lands within their areas. The amount provided for the purchase of land in the Mount Lofty Ranges is for the completion of the purchase of land as an annex to the Botanic Gardens and will be used for growing sub-Alpine and temperate plants which cannot be grown properly at the Botanic Gardens..

Mr. MICHAEL—I have heard much criticism levelled against aerial baiting for wild dog destruction. Last year I made a trip through from Marree to Birdsville, the western districts of Queensland and Camooweal. In every camp we stayed at we heard criticism not only from pastoral owners and managers, but even from half-castes who collected dog scalps. Not one favoured the practice, although some were cautious and did not express an opinion one way or the other. Among the reasons given were those already referred to by Mr. Shannon. I was accompanied on that trip by the chairman of the Pastoral Board, who travelled incognito; therefore the people did not know his position, and it amused me greatly to have him listen-

ing to the criticism. In South Australia a committee has been formed, and a pastoralists representative accompanies the bait-dropping aeroplane on most of the trips. Pastoralists are invited to discuss with departmental representatives the areas in which the baits should be dropped, therefore I do not think the risk of danger expressed by the member for Onkaparinga is great, but care should be taken. Birds known in Queensland as kite hawks are looked upon with favour for they are the scavengers which clean up the offal in western Queensland. If aerial baiting resulted in the wiping out of those birds it would constitute a serious menace.

Mr. HAWKER—From a report I understand that aerial baiting is not carried out unless the owner of the property is first consulted. It is usually carried out outside and along the dog proof fence and at low altitudes so that the pilot can see where the baits are being dropped. I understand this has resulted in aerial baiting being effectively carried out in this State, although I do not know the position in Queensland. The danger of poisoning birds, especially the scavengers, is always present to some extent, but as far as possible the baiting is carried out in those areas where dingoes concentrate.

Mr. FRED WALSH—It is proposed to grant £2,000 for the maintenance of the Botanic Park. Prior to the replanting and general re-organization of the park adequate seating accommodation was provided around the rings used as public meeting places, but it has not been provided on the site of the new rings. As between 200 and 300 people usually attend public meetings in the park on Sunday afternoons and because elderly people in particular should not be expected to stand for 1½ to 2 hours, will the Minister take up with the Botanic Garden Board the question of providing adequate seating accommodation around the rings?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yes.

Line passed.

MINISTER OF WORKS.

Public Works Department, £6,982; Engineering and Water Supply Department, £1,711,824—passed.

Architect-in-Chief's Department, £189,170.

Mr. RICHES—Will the Minister investigate the possibility of having tradesmen from the department permanently stationed in strategic country centres to carry out work in those areas?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH (Minister of Works)—The Government has already adopted that idea, and it is expected that in the near future tradesmen will be stationed at centres in the north and south-east.

Line passed.

Government Offices, £111,118—passed.

Cemetery, £16,995.

Mr. LAWN—The allowance for the maintenance of the crematorium, roads and buildings has been reduced by £144. City residents are concerned at the disgraceful condition of the West Terrace crematorium. In reply to questions the Minister said that two applications had been received to build crematoriums in the suburbs. Evidently the Government intends to wait until some other authority has built a crematorium before effecting any improvement at West Terrace. When called into use the outmoded crematorium belches smoke over grief-stricken mourners in the cemetery grounds and over nearby parts of the city. I understand that in the crematorium the coffin slides directly into the furnace, whereas in other States a dignified service is followed by the gradual movement of the coffin out of the sight of those present. Often heavy smoke persists for an hour after the cremation, whereas in other States there is no smoke because electric or some other power is used. I understand that on one occasion during the past week, because a brisk wind kept the smoke at ground level, three-quarters of an hour elapsed before it cleared away. At the same time the traffic on West Terrace was passing through clouds of smoke. I understand that the Centennial Park crematorium will not be commenced until next year and not completed until the following year, therefore it will be several years before we have a modern crematorium. The Government should show more consideration to the people in the metropolitan area and make the West Terrace crematorium more modern.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Government of the day showed such foresight that it was the first crematorium in Australia. It was so far ahead of the times that there was no patronage. Years went by and then the Government offered the control, and any profits, to the councils. We realize that it is out of date, but if we try to improve it there must be an expenditure of thousands of pounds, and it would be there for all time. About 20 years ago it was decided to allow the cemetery to gradually go out, so we cannot erect a new crematorium and nothing can be done with

the present one. The Centennial Park people have assets and backing, but the expenditure of a large sum of money is involved, and the Government suggested that it would not be wise to appropriate men and material to establish a crematorium whilst the Government had one, even though it is not efficient. The department has advisedly not spent money on the crematorium, except to keep it in working condition. I do not think Enfield has the necessary funds to establish a crematorium. If we spent money on improving the West Terrace crematorium there would be no need for other crematoriums. The Government believes it is the obligation of councils to establish them.

Mr. LAWN—I was surprised to hear of the change of policy by the Government. The Minister said that a previous Government erected the first crematorium in Australia, but apparently the present Government considers it to be the duty of councils to bury the dead. When a child comes into the world there is financial assistance from the Commonwealth, the State Government spends money on his education, then he is passed over to private enterprise to make a profit out of him as best it can, and then the Commonwealth has the responsibility of paying him a pension, but who has the responsibility of burying him? I cannot see why the State Government cannot improve the West Terrace crematorium instead of allowing it to get out of date and passing the responsibility on to councils.

Line passed.

Public Stores Department, £100,646,—passed.

Aborigines Department, £95,619.

Mr. RICHES—In the Budget I referred to the dispersal of the Ooldea natives and their ultimate transfer to Yalata Station. The Minister promised to get a statement as to the number accommodated. He said I was wrong when I said that the natives were wandering about the country without being cared for at Yalata, and I accepted that, because I thought the Minister had more information than I did. Has he anything further to report on the matter?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I think I said I would give a statement, not get one. Parliament appropriated money to purchase Yalata Station as a home for the aborigines, and I think it was one of the best purchases ever made by the Government. Not long after it was purchased the people at Ooldea in charge of the natives were involved in a dispute, and the natives were left to the mercy of the

world. The Aborigines Department got in touch with the Koonibba Lutheran Mission and it nobly came to the assistance of the State. The 450 natives and children found a home at Yalata or at Koonibba, and the children are being cared for whilst the older natives go walk-about whenever they want to. I said it was never intended that the place should be used as a prison for the older natives. Amicable discussions are now taking place between the Aborigines Department and the Lutheran Mission. The honourable member said that many people thought that white settlers in the district would have assistance in preference to the natives, but I assure him that will not be so. The Government intends to carry out the primary conditions of the purchase and any surplus of money is the subject of discussion between the Lutheran Mission and the Aborigines Department. The interests of the natives will predominate. I hope on Thursday to be able to report that a conclusive arrangement has been reached for the station to be used for the purpose for which it was purchased.

Mr. RICHES—I am glad to have the statement from the Minister, and I join with him in expressing appreciation of the work done by the Lutheran Mission. I want to correct the remark that mission people at Ooldea left the natives to wander. I was closely associated with the work at Ooldea and I pay a tribute to those people who gave many years of their life to live with the natives under conditions which were not acceptable to other people.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—The Government had to arrange matters so that the Lutheran Mission could take over the natives.

Mr. RICHES—I dispute that. I have statements and photographs showing the actual handing over. This is not a controversial matter, but I am not prepared to allow aspersions to be cast upon people who lived and worked amongst the natives.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Neither am I, but the people who worked amongst them were withdrawn.

Mr. RICHES—They left only after it was demonstrated that they were not to be permitted to continue to look after the Ooldea people when they were transferred to Yalata. It is not a fact that the children were left to wander about. I am glad to know that the department is coming to an arrangement with the Lutheran mission for the conduct of that station. During the filming of "Bitter Springs" I met some of the natives from Koonibba, and they were a credit to the mission. Although the Government has done

good work under the circumstances, I hope that the settlement will be preceded with speedily, because it is long overdue. This settlement will enable the natives to be placed on a footing so that they can be assimilated into our way of life. These mission stations should have some form of grant towards the cost of feeding the children, because too many of them are now dependent on Federal child endowment. At Umeewarra mission there are many orphans who would not be alive today if they had not been taken there and they had to be maintained on child endowment and on gifts provided by sympathetic people throughout Australia. I acknowledge with gratitude the grant of £1,000 towards cost of additional accommodation there. I know that the department has been giving some thought to the request for some grant towards their feeding.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Government agrees with the honourable member's viewpoint, although obviously the amount depends on what the other people are prepared to do. I am sure the public would not want us to maintain the mission completely, because it would then cease to be a mission and become a Government institution. All children in these missions will be subsidized to the extent of 25s. a head.

Mr. O'Halloran—Is that in addition to child endowment?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—It is a State contribution, and has nothing to do with child endowment. Although I would not say it is an over-payment, it is a considerable contribution. We believe that missions should not be run on business lines, but on spiritual lines. Negotiations are proceeding, and the State subsidizes not only Koonibba but all others to the extent of 25s. a head, provided they do not reduce their spiritual efforts by a like amount. Subject to that being confirmed, the Government will be prepared to pay the extra amount of money.

Mr. TAPPING—I commend the increase of £115 provided for the training of half-caste girls for domestic service, but ask the Minister how this operates, and if more girls are to be tutored than last year? Can the Minister also provide information about the £16 for assistance to fishermen and rabbiters for purchase of boats, traps, etc.?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The amount provided for training of half-castes as domestics is only an intelligent guess, because the amount required will depend on the number who will apply. The Government is prepared to sponsor

the training of those girls. In the past the Salvation Army has been the only body to take them in and train them as such. Although we are prepared to deal with all who apply under this heading, unfortunately a lot of the girls do not intend to pursue a course other than the direct one just ahead. Many years ago I conducted a census at the mission stations, asking girls and boys their objectives in life, and found that 90 per cent of the boys wanted to be rabbiters or shearers, which are practical avocations. Although some people who have regard to higher education might think that reply was not intelligent, I point out that they are particularly adapted to this type of work, and could make a good livelihood from it. The reply given by the girls was that they wanted to get married, and I believe that reply too, was a very wholesome one. There have been one or two cases of half-caste boys coming to Adelaide and entering into apprenticeship, and although they have done well, such cases are rarities, because it is hard to turn a nomad into a stool-sitter in one generation. All that can be done has been done.

Line passed.

Public Works, £1,019,890.

Mr. STOTT—Although channels have been provided for irrigation at Loxton, no provision has been made for domestic water supplies, and the settlers there have been perturbed for some considerable time about this. Can the Minister say whether any portion of the £11,000 provided for preliminary surveys for water supplies and irrigation schemes is to be provided towards this?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—This line does not necessarily apply to Loxton. It is for sundry works, services and investigations, and is a fairly large sum for that work. A final conclusion will not be reached until surveys have been made in each department. I am sure the honourable member will agree that both the Irrigation Department and the Public Works Department have done very handsome work there. Although perhaps not everything the settlers require has been done, they have some supply now. The amount is for overall investigation of all country works, and is not confined to one particular area. I can provide details for the honourable member.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Recently, I visited the Magill Old Folks Home, and, although I noticed a very satisfactory dining room, the rest of the home was in a state of disrepair, particularly the kitchen, which, although

partly renovated, was very much in need of repair. Will the Minister inform me whether it is the intention of the Government to carry out repairs to this institution from the £192,500 provided for repairs, renovating, painting, etc., to other Government buildings?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—So many items are involved in that expenditure that it would be impossible to refer to them all. I believe that a subsidy is paid to the Old Folks' Home which undertakes all repairs and improvements. However, I will ascertain the facts and let the honourable member know.

Mr. WHITE—An amount of £50 is provided for eradication of water hyacinth in the River Murray. Water hyacinth is one of the most dangerous weeds in the world and when first discovered in the Murray serious efforts were made to eradicate it which I believe were successful. Why is this item included in the Estimates?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The honourable member should be pleased to see it. It is included to keep the line alive.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Under the heading "Other Government buildings, etc.," an amount of £192,500 is provided for repairs, renovating and painting, etc. Does that amount include a sum for improving the Government offices in Victoria Square in which the Minister has his office? The total amount would be insufficient to rectify the unsatisfactory condition of that building and the time is long overdue for a complete overhaul of its facade. Unsuccessful attempts have been made to repair the cornices with cement and sand. Any section of the facade could completely collapse because of the fretting of the stonework and the only place it could fall is on the footpath and injury could result to passersby. The interior of the building is also in an unsatisfactory state of repair, the floor being constructed of bluestone and slate. An amount should be devoted to improving the facade, in the interests of public safety, and to renovating the interior.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I pass through the door of my office at least four times daily and agree with the honourable member that the cornices of the building are fretting away. I have asked the Architect-in-Chief to make a report but I believe that little expense would be involved in rectifying the position where fretting has taken place. Most of the floor of the building is of slate or old bluestone, but as large sums of money must be devoted to schools and other vital

projects not very much can be done to improve it. I agree that the frontage of the building is a positive danger and I have asked that it be improved.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—It is proposed to spend £34,000 on reconditioning an old wing of the Yatala Labour Prison, but I question whether that amount might not be better spent on the Government offices in Victoria Square. That building represents a definite danger to the public who frequently go there to pay their water and sewerage rates. I realize that there is some need for improvement at the Yatala Labour Prison, but more at the Government offices. The entrance to the building is in a poor condition and the amenities provided for the public are not in keeping with the amount of revenue paid in that building.

Mr. STEPHENS—The amount to be spent on repairs and alterations to hospital buildings represents an increase of almost £17,000 over last year. There is no resident medical officer at the Casualty Hospital at Port Adelaide because proper accommodation is not provided. The Casualty Hospital serves Port Adelaide and Semaphore and caters for a large industrial and shipping district. There are frequently as many as 12 or 13 boats in port at the same time and many men are employed in working them. If an accident happens and a person is injured he is taken to the Casualty Hospital but frequently there is no medical officer in attendance. The position is even more serious at night.

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

Mr. STEPHENS—It is proposed to vote £192,500 for repairs and additions to hospital buildings, an increase of £16,952. I realize this is not an opportune time to make many additions to buildings because many people are living in deplorable conditions owing to the shortage of building materials, though we should not have been so short if the Government had established its own cement works. Many serious accidents occur at Port Adelaide, but there is no resident medical officer at the hospital there and it is often difficult to get a doctor to treat injured people promptly.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—This line is not for new buildings. We have passed the Loan Estimates.

Mr. STEPHENS—Yes, but additions could be made to the hospital at Port Adelaide to provide a home for a medical officer. It is not necessary for us to borrow every time we want to build or add to a building. That only adds to our heavy interest bill.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Major additions come under the Loan programme.

The CHAIRMAN—I think the honourable member referred to this matter when speaking on the first line. He had plenty of latitude then, but unless the repairs, renovations and additions to hospital buildings apply to the Port Adelaide hospital he is out of order now. However, he could ask the Minister to which hospital the additions apply.

Mr. STEPHENS—Can the Minister say whether any of the £192,500 proposed will be used on additions to the Port Adelaide hospital? There is little accommodation for patients at the hospital, and sometimes they have to be placed on the footpath awaiting admission. Another line covers repairs and renovations to police and courthouse buildings. The police station and courthouse at Port Adelaide are over 100 years old. They are a disgrace to Port Adelaide and to the State, and should be removed from the main street. Last year £2,824 was spent on improvements and replacements of furniture at the women's hostel at Woodville. It is proposed to spend £1,300 this year, but that seems a lot to spend on furniture. What is the hostel for? The sum of £15,000 is proposed for alterations and repairs to rented buildings, but the Estimates do not disclose how much is for rent and how much for alterations.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—It often happens that on a long lease basis we have to provide for alterations to premises. As we spent only £6,981 on rented buildings last year we have to try to catch up the back lag in repairs this year. It is often cheaper to acquire rented premises in bulk and alter them according to our requirements than to provide up-to-date premises with all necessary facilities. We were unable to spend all the money voted last year for repairs and renovation to hospitals. This year we may be able to spend the £192,500 proposed and carry out the improvements wanted by the honourable member. The work will be undertaken in order of priority, and the honourable member's suggestion will receive consideration. We hope to be able to find contractors to carry out renovations and repairs at reasonable prices. I do not know for what purpose the women's hostel at Woodville is used. The Public Works Department is only the constructing authority, not the department that controls the institution, but I will get full details for the honourable member.

Line passed.

Miscellaneous, £26,044—passed.

MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

Education Department, £4,672,461.

Mr. STOTT—I do not think it is generally known to the Committee that Victoria adopts a practice different from that adopted in South Australia for the conveyance of children to area schools. A much more liberal view is taken of contracts there. I have received a letter which says that a Victorian contractor, whose run is 46 miles a day, receives £1,887 a year, whereas the writer, with a similar type of bus, but carrying more children 86 miles a day, receives only about £1,260 a year. He says that most Victorian buses are modern and well kept, and whereas the rate in South Australia is 1s. 6d. a mile, bus proprietors in Victoria receive up to 4s. Another letter, from a man outside my district, stated:—“I doubt whether any contractor was able to buy a new bus when contracts began, or has been able to save anything towards a new bus. I venture to say that 90 per cent of privately owned buses are practically wrecks.” The time has come when the Minister of Education must consider the amount paid to bus proprietors for conveying children to area schools. In some instances he has become seriously perturbed at the increased cost involved. Often a request is refused because increased expenditure is not warranted to pick up an additional two or three children. That may be the prudent way to look at it, but the department still has the responsibility to see that country children are transported to school, especially as it has become the department's policy to go in more for consolidated schools. Some bus operators are receiving so little that they are unable to put money aside to meet depreciation and buy a new bus. Some buses now in use are by no means modern, having been converted from open trucks. I have been informed that some of those operating in South Australia would not be allowed to operate in Victoria. More money should be made available by the Government to provide improved bus services. Some of the roads are in such a bad state of repair that the school buses using them are shaken to pieces. Unless the department adopts a more realistic attitude in satisfying bus operators people will not tender for the work.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—As far as I know no children are denied the opportunity of education because there are insufficient to patronize a bus service. The honourable member mentioned that in Victoria up to 4s. a mile was paid to bus operators, but the circumstances in such a case would be unusual. I

have been told that an effective service cannot be provided because some of the roads are so bad. When I have asked whether they could give a service if the road were improved, invariably the answer was “Yes.” If the honourable member has any particular case in mind I shall be glad to take it up with the Minister of Education. As Minister of Local Government I have provided money to improve roads so that a bus proprietor could run his vehicle to convey children to school.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Formerly we had a Superintendent of Rural Schools, but since Mr. Hosking's death there has been no appointment to this office. I was wondering whether that represents a change in departmental policy. The department has a capable acting superintendent, and I thought he would have stepped up to the position of superintendent. The amount provided as wages for cleaners has risen by almost £20,000 to £180,426, which seems an extraordinary increase. Could not this expenditure be pruned? In the smaller country schools the children and the staff did and still do all the necessary cleaning.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—That is not a general rule.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Even if it is not, why should it not be more general? Would it not be far better to spend this amount on improved educational facilities than on a job that could be done just as well by the children? The grant of £240,000 for the conveyance of pupils by bus and that of £18,180 for the purchase of motor buses must be considered together. The conveyance of school children is a very vexed problem in country districts and many private contractors are giving up the work because it is impossible to carry on at the rates allowed. Although I do not quarrel with the Minister's policy of trying to cut his garment according to the cloth provided by Parliament, I wonder whether his estimates are sufficient in any one year to cover all the contingencies which are bound to arise. These include certain increases in costs such as fuel and drivers' wages. The conveyance of school children is a matter of life and death because many country people, faced with the prospect of their children being denied primary education, because a bus service has ceased to operate or cannot be extended to their district, have the choice of remaining in the country or going to the city where educational facilities are provided as a matter of course. If we want to retain our country population who are holding the outback in the interests of the

State, we should be a little more liberal in allowances for transport of children. At one place on the West Coast six families provide a subsidy to keep the bus service running, and two of those, resident in the small township, do not require the service but contribute in order to keep the school open in the interests of the whole community. In this and similar cases the transport officer should have the discretion to give a little extra allowance so as to relieve such a community of the burden which they are at present forced to carry.

Last year £39,007 was spent on the purchase of motor buses for the conveyance of school children but this year only £18,180 is proposed. Is Government policy in this direction to be changed? One departmental officer recently told members of school committees in my district that his instructions were to liquidate the departmental buses as soon as possible. I hope that is wrong, because I was expecting to see some increase in the number of departmental buses because of the difficulty of maintaining bus services under the contract system. In quite a few cases in my district children have been left without transport services for months on end because no fresh contract could be arranged, and in such a crisis the only alternative seemed to be the use of the departmental bus driven, if possible by one of the teachers. I would rather see expenditure on more departmental buses than on the insecure system of relying on contract buses.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The best indication of what will take place is what has happened. Last year the Committee voted £15,000 but the Government spent £39,007 on this line, and, having spent that money, surely the Government can be expected to run those buses this year. The Government is now asking for a reduced amount because it has taken up the lag, but it will maintain that system. It does not want to run buses in opposition to private people, but, if children are to be denied education because of the isolation of the district and the greediness of the contractor, it is Government policy to put in a bus service. This year it is proposed to spend £240,000 on the conveyance of pupils by bus—an increase of 15 per cent on last year's figure. As the number of school children has not increased by that percentage, this shows the generosity of the Government in meeting the demands of people who have said that, because of the condition of the roads, they could not run buses.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I agree with some of the remarks made by honourable members, but disagree with Mr. Christian. The conveyance of school children should be looked at in the proper perspective. I was in this place when the policy was first begun and it was said then, and I believe it still applies, that it is cheaper for the Government to provide the conveyance of children in smaller schools to the larger schools than to send teachers to the smaller schools. In some areas the Government bears all the costs of conveyance, but in other areas a subsidy is paid, with which I do not agree. If it is right to convey some children to the larger schools at no cost it should apply to children of parents in less fortunate circumstances. I hope that as a result of the increased expenditure this year no more subsidies will be paid. Departmental buses should be provided wherever arrangements can be made for the driving to be done by the teacher, because then the children would be under supervision from the time they left for school in the morning until they returned later in the day.

I wonder whether it would not be possible for the department to assist private contractors to purchase buses either through making them a loan or arranging for hire on a fair basis. The stumbling block with these private contractors usually is the lack of capital to buy a suitable bus. I do not think that children attending a large school should be expected to do the cleaning work. I went to a small country school, where the average attendance was about 12, and the cleaning was done by the scholars; that would be difficult if there were 50 to 70 in a class, and would be perilously close to making use of child labour. The position should be looked at seriously if the State is so poor that it cannot afford to pay wages to cleaners. The Grants Commission has never questioned the payment of cleaners' wages, because it is an established practice throughout the world. There would be great difficulty if a teacher had to determine the three or five children out of a class of 50 or 70 to do the cleaning work on a given afternoon.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—To some extent I agree with Mr. Christian. I have swept many small schools with the help of the boys and girls, and I believe that the cleaning is done in this way still in a number of small schools, but surely it is not an argument in favour of children doing the work. If it were permitted in order to avoid paying wages to cleaners it would be the worst form of cheeseparing. Usually cleaners have some physical disability and if

they could not do this type of work they would be deprived of their livelihood. If practicable cleaners should be appointed to all schools. In reply to a question I asked on August 27 the Minister said that additional guidance officers were not necessary, but I think we should have three or four more. They represent one of the more important adjuncts of our education system. They investigate and establish facts from psychological, aptitude and intelligence tests, general school results and the general history of the family from which the pupil comes. The latter is an important factor and has a large bearing on other factors. From the results it is possible to make inferences on what future work is best suited to the pupils' present shown aptitude, or what they may be best adapted to in the future, because of some potential possibilities which may be obvious only to an expert investigator. Obviously, the duties of guidance officers can be carried out only by trained people, because a great deal of experience is necessary. It needs much ability to proceed, on the facts found by such officers, to assumptions and conclusions which, although sometimes incorrect, are usually correct. They are more likely to be correct if the officer concerned is capable of drawing conclusions from known facts. At present there are one senior and two other guidance officers to carry out work in connection with all our schools. The number of pupils is growing, partly because of a large influx of New Australians, who have been in some ways a problem to both guidance officers and teachers in endeavouring to find out just what they know and do not know. A few can understand when it suits them, and often it does not seem to suit the children.

The work of these people, who are trying to do what is really semi-psychological work, can be successful only if it is done thoroughly, and the future of our young people, if this scheme is followed to its logical conclusion, need no longer be a haphazard thing. We all know that the futures of some of us were decided haphazardly in our school days and the years immediately following; and perhaps with this type of assistance some of us would not have come to this House. Our teachers are valiantly attempting to assist guidance officers who cannot cope with all the work that has to be done, but of course they have not the necessary training, the special qualifications or the spare time to carry out this work. Constant collection and collation of facts and details, plotting of graphs and so on must be

undertaken, otherwise the conclusions drawn from the data could be wrong. If the information is not completed, it is difficult to give satisfactory advice to pupils or their parents. This work is important, because the advice given by these officers can make or mar the future of our young people. I hope it will be a constantly growing part of our Education Department, because it will be of more and more benefit to girls and boys who are growing up.

Mr. Brookman—How many guidance officers does the honourable member consider there should be?

Mr. JOHN CLARK—From general observation I consider there should be at least three more. The present guidance officers, although they are doing a splendid job, as are also the teachers assisting them, are finding the burden a heavy one. I appeal to the Government to examine the situation further with a view to appointing more guidance officers.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Although £475,170 is provided for salaries of high school teachers and £365,192 for technical schools, country technical schools, etc., I regret that no provision has been made for caretakers in secondary schools. Colossal amounts of money have been spent in the establishment of these schools. The Public Works Committee recently recommended the construction of a boys' school at Croydon to cost £66,626, and a girls' school has been commenced which will cost approximately the same amount; added to these figures will be the cost of equipment, which will amount to several hundred pounds. At a school in my area, a Mr. Taylor has given his services as caretaker free of cost for the last eight years. He has gone to the school at all hours, and has driven off undesirable people, thereby saving the department many pounds. On one occasion he was able to detain, until the police arrived, a number of boys who had caused damage, and because of his action the department was able to secure reimbursement which would otherwise have been lost. As the Government should not expect these civic minded people to continue this work indefinitely, I ask the Minister whether the department has considered supplying caretakers, particularly for secondary schools, owing to the great value of the equipment there.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—In my district are three schools, Currency Creek, Tooperang and Victor Harbour Primary schools, the yards of which need bituminizing. Will the Minister inform me whether portion of the £175,000 under Contingencies will be used for such work?

Mr. CORCORAN—I heartily agree with the honourable member for Eyre on the importance of bus services for children in remote parts of the State. Many proprietors of these services, however, have been reluctant to continue their contracts because of depreciation on their vehicles owing to the state of some of our country roads, and also because in some cases where the services are subsidized the driver has to collect money from the parents, which he sometimes fails to do. I do not believe in penalizing the people living in sparsely populated parts of the country, but believe that we should provide a free bus service where numbers warrant it. I hope that the Government will give serious consideration to the point raised by the Leader of the Opposition with regard to free bus services for all, because there is a tendency for people to leave the country so that they can educate their children more easily. Another matter to which I will refer is the policy of the department in regard to the conveyance of children to private schools. Frequently buses transporting children to high schools are not filled to capacity and could convey children to private schools in the same town. I hope that the Government will consider providing free bus services to all schools. I am emphatically opposed to the suggestion that children be required to undertake the cleaning of schools. Children attending some area schools have to leave home early in the morning and do not return home until late at night. They have homework to do at night, and should not be asked to assist in cleaning the school because it would overtax them physically and mentally. If it is impossible to employ persons to do the work and the teacher is compelled to do it he should be remunerated for it, but where the services of other persons are available they should be used.

Mr. DUNSTAN—An amount of £175,000 is provided for primary, higher primary and area schools. Until recently the opportunity classes at the Norwood Practising School, which is a primary school, were housed in two damp, ill-ventilated and ill-lit rooms at the rear of St. Bartholomew's church hall. The accommodation was inadequate for the activities of the opportunity class, and on occasions when it was required to teach the students manual work they had to go out into the rain and do it. The teachers were doing a most satisfactory job, but under disadvantageous circumstances. Those rooms have been hired on and off by the department for 20 years. After my representations to the Minister the opportunity classes were temporarily moved to Osmond Terrace,

where accommodation was available because of the transfer of some students to the new technical school. No further building at the new technical school is to be undertaken this year, with the result that, because of the estimated influx of pupils to that school, the accommodation made available to the opportunity class will be required for them. Unless something is done about it there will be an item in next year's Estimates for rent for the rooms at the rear of St. Bartholomew's Hall. These children should not be compelled to return to these most unsatisfactory and unsuitable premises and some provision should be made for accommodating them at Osmond Terrace.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have noted with appreciation the remarks of members, but I will not attempt to answer all the questions, except to say that most of the points have been covered by the increases in expenditure in most lines. I am prepared to discuss the points mentioned by members with the Minister of Education and obtain specific replies. The member for Eyre suggested a means of ensuring the cleaning of schools, but that suggestion has been answered by the Opposition. The reply coincides with the view of the department that children cannot be expected to do the work of the department. Although it is proposed to spend less this year on the purchase of buses for school transport it is obvious that we do not have to provide the same services two years in succession. I will obtain replies from the Minister, and if further information is required it can be ascertained by means of further questions.

Line passed.

Libraries Department, £93,188; Museum Department, £33,357; Art Gallery Department, £15,073; Observatory, £50—passed.

Miscellaneous, £690,062.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Last year £853 was voted for the Workers' Educational Association and £853 was spent, but this year it is proposed to spend only £500, a reduction of £353. I am disappointed with this reduction, because I consider the work of that association to be of great importance to the State. I wholeheartedly believe in adult education. The association has been in existence for many years and though its activities have not perhaps been as extensively used as they might, because of the limited amount of finance available, it has played an important part in sponsoring adult education. I hope there is a good explanation for the reduction, although

the only explanation which would be satisfactory to me is that a larger sum has been made available in some other line of the Estimates. If not, I suggest that the Government immediately retrace its steps and vote the amount provided last year—£853.

Mr. STOTT—An amount of £425,000 is proposed as an additional general purpose grant to the University of Adelaide. I am concerned with the number of students at the University engaged in the different courses, particularly those studying general science as compared with agricultural science. In the last 12 years the respective numbers have been:—

Year.	Agricultural Science.	General Science
1942	6	217
1943	6	238
1944	21	284
1945	34	362
1946	60	467
1947	70	511
1948	52	505
1949	49	441
1950	39	439
1951	30	375
1952	34	318
1953	36	322

The following table gives the percentages of the number of students enrolled for agricultural science compared with the numbers enrolled for all science subjects:—

Year.	Percentage.
1942	2.77
1943	2.52
1944	7.39
1945	9.39
1946	12.85
1947	13.70
1948	10.30
1949	11.11
1950	8.88
1951	8.00
1952	10.69
1953	11.18

During those 12 years 4,479 students were enrolled for science courses, but of these only 437 or 9.76 per cent took agricultural science. For some time I have been concerned about the insufficient numbers taking agricultural science courses. Great advancements are being made in agricultural science. The Minister realizes that many advances are being made in the use of hormone sprays, in weed killing and in dusting crops, but there are not sufficient students taking the course at the university, so before long we shall not have enough agricultural science teachers to pass on technical knowledge. I have been told that lack of students is caused by the unattractive salaries offered to graduates.

Mr. RICHES—The press recently printed an extract from the *Medical Journal* which complained that more doctors were being trained in South Australia than could be absorbed. It stated that the faculty of medicine should consider restricting the number of medical students. I hope the Government, in making a grant to the university, will insist that no restriction shall be placed on any young person with the necessary qualifications to take up the medical course and that no restriction shall be placed on a graduate practising. The allegation of a surplus of doctors makes unpalatable reading to country people. Recently, the House passed legislation to enable public servants to be employed after reaching the retiring age because there are no trained doctors to take the place of certain medical officers in our institutions. It has been alleged from time to time in high places that there is a coterie in the medical profession that controls examinations, and, by insisting on a very high standard of examinations, restricts the number entering the profession. Any such allegation requires investigation.

The CHAIRMAN—How does the honourable member link up his remarks with the Estimates?

Mr. RICHES—Obviously, the grant to the university is to enable students to take up courses there, and if the money is not being spent to the advantage of the people generally I can justifiably criticize the grant.

The CHAIRMAN—There are no restrictions as far as the university is concerned.

Mr. RICHES—I am alleging there are, but I should be glad if the Treasurer could assure me there are not. I am pleased that it is proposed to increase the grant to the Kindergarten Union, but I should be pleased if the Treasurer would take up with the union the question of the standard demanded of teachers at pre-school kindergartens. I do not say the standard should be reduced, but some kindergartens may have to be closed because they cannot obtain teachers with the required qualifications. Those that cannot get qualified teachers will lose their subsidy. That is wrong and some discretion should be allowed to the Kindergarten Union, which should be able to devise means to meet such circumstances as will arise at Port Augusta this year. Woomera has to conduct a pre-school kindergarten without any assistance. The women there are doing work comparable with that done at pre-kindergarten schools in the city. Whyalla has two pre-school kindergartens, one with the

services of a qualified teacher, which thus receives a subsidy, but the larger school has been unable to get the services of a qualified teacher and therefore receives no subsidy. While there is such a shortage of teachers in the Education Department, it is more desirable that trained infant teachers should make their services available to the department than to pre-school kindergartens. I know much can be said for the attitude adopted by the union. No-one likes to think that there is a lowering of standard in any branch of education. Will the Treasurer take up with the union the question of facing up to the problems arising in various parts of the State?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—The most disturbing feature of the amount provided for the university is that it is a reduction of £40,000 compared with last year. Like the member for Ridley and the member for Stuart, I am perturbed about the number of students in agricultural science and the number of doctors, respectively. There is an element of doubt in my mind regarding the administration of the university, and one would like to know whether harmony exists there at the moment. From remarks I have heard it would appear that there is some dissatisfaction, which could become serious if allowed to develop. The question arises whether the Government grant is sufficiently large to enable the university to fulfil its programme, maintain the present standard, and at the same time adequately remunerate professors and tutors.

Mr. DAVIS—At present the School of Mines and Industries conducts a course at Port Pirie with one full-time and one part-time instructor, and the residents are anxious that it shall continue, as it serves not only the people of the town but also those of adjacent northern areas. Can the Treasurer say whether the £135,000 granted to the School of Mines includes provision for an extra instructor at Port Pirie? At present difficulty is being experienced in arranging the conveyance of school children from nearby country areas to Whyalla on the occasion of Her Majesty's visit, and I understand that Port Pirie has been cut out of negotiations for such conveyance. Does the £15,000 provided for the children's demonstration on the occasion of the Royal Visit include the cost of transport of children to the city or to the nearest country centre which Her Majesty will visit?

Mr. TAPPING—I express my appreciation and that of officials of the South Australian Amateur Swimming Association for the grant of £300 which is an increase of £100 over that

of last year. The annual average loss of life through drowning in this State is 33. The members of this association in attending carnivals throughout the State, pay their own expenses and make many sacrifices.

Mr. GOLDNEY—Can the Treasurer say whether the grant of £4,500 to the National Fitness Council includes provision for assistance to the many youth clubs affiliated with that body?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The grant to the University is based on a budget prepared by it for the calendar year commencing January 1, and the decrease of £40,000 is accounted for by the fact that the University's accounting year is different from that of the State Government. Today probably 75 per cent of all students doing full time university courses take advantage of either State or Commonwealth scholarships. Students select the courses they desire to take. The reduction in the number of graduates in agricultural science is rather perturbing. I will try to ascertain why agricultural science is not so attractive as other subjects. The Government does not control the University. Parliament's control of the institution is not through the Government, but through the Parliamentary representatives on the University Council. It is not fair to the University to say that its policy is the outcome of an article written by authorities completely separate from the institution. The medical course is the most difficult of all courses. In the United States of America it is impossible for any person to become a doctor of medicine under 30 years of age. Here it is possible at 22 years of age. Not only do we provide for South Australian medical requirements, but for Western Australian and Tasmanian. Some students come from outside Australia. The figure quoted does not represent persons who would practice in this State. I do not think the University Council would countenance raising the standard in order to fail a student. I realize the seriousness of the matter, but I have not heard of any suggestion that that sort of policy would be introduced. One University problem has been accommodation for medical students at the Royal Adelaide Hospital for finishing the course. The Western Districts Hospital will provide an outlet because it will be a training school associated with the University.

I do not know whether the increased expenditure of £2,160 in connection with the School of Mines will mean extra staff at Port

Pirie. The School of Mines also has a council to control its activities and it prepares a budget in the same way as the University, and it has always been found to be realistic and acceptable to the Government. I have no doubt that the council will do its utmost to provide facilities. I will see that the queries raised by members are brought under the notice of the Minister of Education. I have received some correspondence in connection with the W.E.A. grant, but it arrived after the Estimates had been finalized. The amount provided last year was above the normal grant of £500. I will take up the matter with the Minister and see that an early decision is made and conveyed to the Leader of the Opposition. I will bring Mr. Riches' remarks under the notice of the Kindergarten Union, which is doing its utmost to train teachers. I feel that all teachers should be qualified, if it is possible to obtain them. I will obtain the information sought by Mr. Goldney about the activities of the National Fitness Council and the assistance they give in the matters he mentioned. Letters have already been sent by the Education Department to all country schools outside the areas which are being directly visited by Her Majesty the Queen, asking whether those schools propose sending children to the demonstration, because it will be necessary to make arrangements for accommodation for them. The demonstration will be held at the showgrounds' oval at Wayville, and it is the desire of the Government to give children from both State and private schools first call on accommodation.

Mr. Davis—What about transport?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government is not able to undertake the obligation of providing transport, although the question of school organization of transport is being considered. Apart from these children, we have to arrange transport for about 7,000 children who are actually taking part in the demonstration. I am certain that transport will be arranged where possible.

Mr. Davis—Free of charge?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It will be probably at excursion rates. People driving the trains or providing fuel for them do not do so free of charge; somebody has to pay for the services provided. Excursion rates will be provided, and the best possible arrangements made. The amount of £15,000 is to provide for the staging of the demonstration and the incidental expenses.

Mr. Riches—Is anything available for demonstration in the country?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This amount is not for a demonstration in the country, but at the Wayville showgrounds. It is not practicable to arrange them in country centres.

Mr. Riches—But demonstrations are being arranged in Whyalla and other places.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government is providing assistance in all country areas that will be visited by Her Majesty. These areas are already privileged over those not receiving a visit, and there are many centres that would be only too pleased to take on the organization without receiving any assistance at all.

Mr. Davis—I do not think the Treasurer is right there.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I know that I am right because of the applications received. It is the desire of the Government that every child who desires will be able to attend at one place or another to see Her Majesty the Queen. It is proposed that Her Majesty will visit the demonstration at the Wayville showgrounds, which will provide an opportunity for students in the metropolitan area and closer country districts to see the Queen, and children in four country areas that will be visited will also have the same opportunity.

Mr. Davis—How are they going to get there?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The school committees are being contacted, and where public transport is available, concession fares and other assistance will be provided. It appears that the number of children will be so great that accommodation will be taxed to the very limit. I am sure the country schools will desire to bring children down to the city, because this will be perhaps the finest thing schools in this State have ever taken part in; it will be a great thing for Her Majesty and for the children.

Line passed.

MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT.

Department of Industry, £54,515.

Mr. LAWN—As far as I can recollect, there has been little alteration in fees allowed to members of industrial boards and the Board of Industry since the end of the war, and having regard to the present level of costs and wage and salary increases, it seems to me that the Government might well increase them. The president of the Board of Industry is in a different category to the members. Members of the Industrial Boards, including the chairmen, frequently perform their duties

late in the afternoon or evening after they have completed their day's work. The Premier and Government members often refer to the lack of industrial strife in South Australia and that position must be attributed to these boards. Will the Government consider increasing the fees paid to members?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Minister of Industry and Employment)—I will examine the matter and let the honourable member have a reply. I must confess that the position has not been brought to my notice and I do not know the schedule of fees paid.

Line passed.

Factories and Steam Boilers Department, £43,196.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—An amount of £11,230 is provided for 12 inspectors of factories, shops, inflammable oils and scaffolding. I am deeply concerned about inspectors of scaffolding because I recently asked the Treasurer whether the inspectors appointed to police the Scaffolding Act had other duties to perform. Are any of the 12 inspectors referred to in this line qualified to police that Act? The Scaffolding Act provides that a person must have certain qualifications before being appointed as an inspector under the Act. From memory I believe he must have at least four years' experience of scaffolding. Can the Premier indicate whether there is only one inspector at present policing the Scaffolding Act and whether applications have been called for an assistant?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This question was first raised in the debate on the Building Control Bill and I promised to obtain a report on the matters raised. As I understand the position, the inspectors of factories, shops, inflammable oils and scaffolding are appointed under all of those Acts and are capable of performing the work under all of them. The line preceding the one under discussion refers to 12 inspectors of factories, steam boilers, inflammable oils and lifts who receive a slightly higher salary. They also are competent to perform the duties under those Acts. I will have the information available for the honourable member tomorrow when the Building Control Bill is to be further discussed.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—The Scaffolding Act provides that an inspector must have at least four years' experience of scaffolding. Does the Treasurer claim that all the inspectors mentioned in this line are capable of carrying out investigations in compliance with the principal Act? The first schedule of the Scaffolding Act

provides that an inspector may not necessarily be appointed to police the Early Closing Act, although I believe some years ago a scaffolding inspector was empowered by his chief to inspect certain shops and small factories. My information is that retirements and transfers of officers have left the department in a precarious position. I understand that two of the officers covered by the third line under Factories and Steam Boilers are qualified to inspect scaffolding. Can the Treasurer say whether any of the remaining ten are capable of this work?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A minute received recently gave me the impression that 12 of the officers enumerated in the Estimates have been appointed scaffolding inspectors, and that another 12 have not been so appointed, but I will get a full report for the honourable member in time for discussion of his Bill tomorrow.

Line passed.

Miscellaneous, £1,450—passed.

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF FORESTS.

Minister of Agriculture Department, £7,146—passed.

Agriculture Department, £514,707.

Mr. HAWKER—A large number of field officers, advisers and inspectors are employed by the department. According to information the Minister gave me last year, he found it difficult to get qualified men to fill the positions covered by the Estimates, though I think he obtained some from Holland for special jobs. Is the department now able to obtain suitable men as field officers, inspectors and advisers?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS (Minister of Agriculture)—We have always had considerable difficulty in finding people to fill these posts, but we are better off to-day than we have been for some time. The three young men who came from Holland were attached to the Soil Conservation Branch, which has perhaps been the most difficult department in which to keep officers employed because the work generally takes them into the country and many people prefer the gaslight area to rural districts. We have also been able to employ promising men from Great Britain. The director closely watches the progress of students at the Roseworthy Agricultural College and those taking the agricultural science course at the University. There are not enough of those students, however, and employment in the department is always available to them on graduation.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—It seems that the Horticultural Branch now has eight advisers, whereas previously there were nine. I have always thought that this department has been looked upon as the poor relation of agriculture. Some years ago this branch had advisers that could give instruction on the use of irrigation waters and on viticultural and horticultural matters generally, but now there is only one officer available to settlers on the whole of the north side of the Murray from Cooltong to Barmera and Cobdogla. I should imagine he would have 25,000 to 30,000 acres to supervise, which makes it impossible for him to carry out his work properly. I remember the time when settlers were visited regularly by horticultural officers who came on the properties and discussed problems first-hand with settlers, a large number of whom have not seen an adviser in the last six or seven years. Much of the officers' time is taken up in departmental duties for the head office and conducting surveys. I believe that one of these officers will be occupied for months on a survey for the head office on peach trees. Will the Minister go into this matter with the Horticultural Branch and see if help can be given to these officers? When I saw a little while ago that the Commonwealth Government was making money available to the various States I had hopes that the Horticultural Branch on the Upper Murray would not be forgotten, but apparently it has been overlooked. In reply to a question, the Minister said that two officers were carrying out demonstrations and doing advisory work in the Lakes district, being located at Milang. I am not suggesting that that is not important work, but out of the money made available additional men should be placed in the Upper Murray areas. I consider that the Horticultural Branch is understaffed. Will the Minister see if it is possible to augment the number of men engaged in this important work?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I think the honourable member rather exaggerated the position on the Upper Murray, because one officer is stationed at each of the Loxton, Berri and Waikerie areas and we hope to fill a vacancy at Renmark.

Mr. Macgillivray—I was referring to the north side of the river between Cooltong and Barmera.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—When the Renmark officer is appointed he will look after Cooltong. This branch of the department has not been overlooked, starved or

treated as a poor relation. I think the honourable member will realize that from the class of officers employed. They are fully competent to advise on the problems affecting horticulture in the river districts. It must not be overlooked that the officer in charge of the experimental orchard at Berri is always available to offer advice to those seeking it. I should say that growers in the districts mentioned are getting as good a deal as those in any of the dry land horticultural areas.

Mr. WHITE—I should like to know how the amount of £696 for tractor testing is used. I have been asked by people in my area to express their appreciation of the work being done by the Government in the destruction of the fruit fly. Horticulture is an important occupation in my district. We have a big settlement at Mypolonga, which produces the largest tonnage of apricots of any one settlement along the Murray. Between Walker's Flat and Mannum there are 41 irrigation projects, most of which are used for horticulture, and there are a number around Murray Bridge. It is obvious that the people connected with these projects are very anxious for the eradication of the fruit fly in the metropolitan area. The fact that the pest has not spread to other areas is proof that the methods being adopted are sound, and I feel that eventually it will be stamped out, thus saving the industry from being debarred from certain markets. I know there is a certain element in the metropolitan area that would like to see the methods being adopted considerably curtailed. That would be a step in the wrong direction. I believe we have almost achieved victory, and it would therefore be a false step to ease up at this juncture.

Mr. MICHAEL—An amount of £9,600 is provided for aid to herd testing associations, an increase of £4,000 over last year's allocation. I should like to know what is to be done with the extra amount. For a considerable time there has been dissatisfaction among owners of dairy herds, particularly stud herds, with regard to assistance given in this matter by the South Australian Government compared with that given by other State Governments, and I believe that this increase is the result of a deputation. The dairying industry is important and can be increased only by the breeding of the best type of cattle and the extension of herd testing. Can the Minister say how the £9,600 will be spent?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The matter of tractor testing was raised at the

Agricultural Council because it was felt that some tractors being sold in Australia were not up to the standard expected. Consequently, it was agreed that tractor testing work should be done in Victoria and each State contribute its share towards the cost. On the completion of a test a certificate is issued that the tractor conforms to certain standards. Considerable difficulty has been experienced in maintaining sufficient herd testing societies, particularly with regard to stud herds. This is a costly matter for the Government for, although it was originally understood that the cost should be shared by the Government and the owners of stud herds, as costs have risen the Government has been obliged to meet a greater share. Although the fees paid by stud herd masters have increased from time to time, the Government has been obliged to find more money than it should be obliged to find; therefore it was decided to combine the work of the stud herd testing and the grade herd testing societies, as a result of which all herds requiring testing will be tested and grade herds which were previously missing out, will be tested.

Mr. BROOKMAN—I have heard some criticism of the Coromandel Valley orchard which I understand undertakes research into horticultural problems, and I hope the Minister will be able to justify the existence of that orchard. If there is any doubt whether the orchard is doing a useful job, I would rather see it get the benefit of that doubt. Can the Minister say what work is being done at the orchard? I also ask if the results of research work are being passed on to the growers. After scientific information has been ascertained, some people between the scientist and the farmer tend to assume that the farmer is not capable of using that information until it has been broken down into simple language, but I believe that the average farmer can understand much more than he is given credit for. Scientific information should be passed on to the farmer for his use immediately it is ascertained. Can the Minister say whether the results of the work being done at the Coromandel Valley orchard are being published for the benefit of horticulturists?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The Coromandel Valley orchard was established primarily as an apple orchard, but it outlived its usefulness because many of the apple varieties were found to be of no value to South Australia, so that type of work was discontinued. Through erosion troubles the position at the orchard became difficult and the

Government decided to undertake experimental work on irrigation. The necessary plant was installed and is now being used. I hope to pay a visit to the orchard shortly. There is much experimental work being done in connection with the refrigeration of fruit. This year tests have been carried out on wrapping citrus fruit to learn what is necessary to enable the fruit to be marketed overseas in a satisfactory condition. At present I am using oranges which have been in store for six weeks wrapped in a special kind of chemical paper. They have kept remarkably well, are still firm, and are palatable. As we get information about new developments out to every agricultural adviser goes a news service, which he passes on. The department is not backward in this respect and is doing all it can to ensure that agriculturists get all the satisfactory information we get. Before passing on any information we must be assured that it is sound and that it has been tested thoroughly. I do not think we can do much more than we are doing now. Any successful experimental work is published in the *Journal of Agriculture*. I suggest to the honourable member that he attend the agricultural bureau conferences held from time to time and there he would see that the modern agriculturist is thirsty for knowledge, and is quite different from the man on the land of years ago. Persons who have given technical lectures in the country have been surprised at the calibre of the question put to them by our young agriculturists.

Mr. MICHAEL—There is a line dealing with experimental work and compensation in connection with liver fluke, and one dealing with the testing of cattle for tuberculosis. Some graziers are experiencing trouble because of diseases in their animals. Can the Minister explain the work being done under these two items?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—Experimental work is being done in connection with liver fluke in sheep, and where the disease is found compensation is paid, and the £500 is to cover the expenditure. The work of testing cattle for tuberculosis is being done by the veterinary service amongst cattle in the area covered by the Metropolitan Milk Board.

Mr. QUIRKE—I notice that provision is made for 13 cadets in the department. Previously we had only two. Are these 13 being trained to become agricultural advisers? Between Jamestown and Balaklava there are

only two field officers operating at present. One is at Balaklava and the other at Jamestown, and they are both splendid officers. It is not fair to expect them to cover such a large area. In the area there should be at least two more. An officer of this kind should not be in the one place awaiting calls on him, and in the main that is what is being done at present. If the 13 cadets are later to be appointed as agricultural advisers it will fill a long-felt want. There is no horticultural adviser at Clare, but one is stationed in the Barossa Valley. I am in favour of such men being appointed. Are the cadets the men who will ultimately fill the positions that are vacant today, and how many will go into horticulture and how many into agriculture?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—Because it was difficult to get the officers required the Government has embarked on a policy of training them. These cadets are young men being trained to fill the various positions, but I cannot tell the honourable member how many will be drafted into any particular branch or activity of the department. However, they will go into the branch most in need of their services from time to time.

Line passed.

Agricultural College Department, £100,141.

Mr. QUIRKE—I do not wish to be niggardly as to the amount of money advanced for this college, because I have a great deal of admiration for it. According to the report of the Auditor-General, there was an excess of payments over receipts of £81,345, and although that is not an undue amount, I am surprised that the total receipts from the sale of farm produce, fruit and wine is only £14,875. This seems rather a small amount in view of the size of the college farm, the high prices of produce today and the fact that the country is particularly good.

The Hon. Sir George Jenkins—It is not a particularly good area; only ordinary farming country.

Mr. QUIRKE—It is good farming country, and it has a fair rainfall. Even if it were poor country, we could expect at least the maximum return from similar land to be obtained by the State's agricultural college, which should obtain better results than the ordinary farmer without special knowledge. Can the Minister inform the House why the return from that area is so small?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The area of the college farm is approximately

2,000 acres, and a return of £14,000 from a farm of that size is not unsatisfactory. The honourable member should realize that the college is not a farm in Hill River; it is not as good as many of the farms in the mid-north or the Wasleys area. I was a student there, and know that its fertility has been built up by good farming practice. A great deal of the produce of the farm is used in providing food for students, and I do not know whether the Auditor-General took that into account.

Line passed.

Produce Department, £215,294—passed.

Fisheries and Game Department, £10,657.

Mr. TAPPING—Last year an amount of £55 was provided for cultivation of fish and oysters, of which £25 was spent. This year a similar amount is provided. Can the Minister inform the House how that meagre sum of £25 was spent? I believe we should devote more attention to the cultivation of oysters, because of the lucrative returns being obtained from their sale. Most of the oysters consumed here emanate from New South Wales, and some attention should be given to their cultivation here to enable us to become self-supporting.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I have not the information the honourable member requires, but will obtain it for him.

Mr. BROOKMAN—The total amount provided for this department represents a decrease of £3,046 on last year's expenditure. The major portion of that decrease is due to a reduction of £2,510 for research in deep sea fishing. I believe that research should be conducted in the fishing industry to ascertain the best methods of using the fish available without depreciating stocks in the coastal waters. Can the Minister explain the decrease in expenditure on research for deep sea fishing?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—Last year Haldane Bros. commenced deep sea fishing at Port Lincoln and the Government assisted them in obtaining equipment for their operations. This year the Government has not been asked to assist to such an extent, and that accounts for the reduction. The department does not conduct scientific research work in connection with deep sea fishing. That work is carried out by officers of the C.S.I.R.O. with whom our departmental officers are in constant communication.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—I understand that the Piscatorial Council is desirous of replenishing supplies of fish in fresh water streams and of introducing a stronger strain

and requires financial assistance in this work. Members of that council and the Anglers' Association would be prepared to pay a registration fee of 5s., from which the Government could recoup any amount expended on fresh water fishing.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—Members of that council have waited on me on various occasions and generally we have reached a satisfactory agreement as to what the Government should do. We have not been able to satisfy the council's desires in all respects. I will have the matter investigated and obtain the information required.

Mr. STEPHENS—Last year an amount of £100 was voted for the purchase of boats, but nothing was spent. The same amount is provided this year. What type of boat does the Government contemplate purchasing for £100? Is it intended to provide a boat for inspectors to patrol and ascertain whether any breaches of the law are being committed? At present an inspector has no chance of discovering whether small fish and crayfish are being returned to the sea in accordance with the Fisheries Act. It was provided that during certain periods of the year persons were not permitted to take female crayfish, but inspectors cannot be expected to enforce that provision unless provided with a decent boat.

Mr. TAPPING—I regret that there is a reduction in the amount to be spent on research for deep sea fishing. The Minister said that the reason for the decrease was that Haldane Bros. had been supplied with the equipment they required. The population of this State is growing and we should do everything possible to increase supplies of fish. Fishermen now have to go farther afield to catch fish. The additional population has increased the demand for fish, so we should do all we can to promote research and attract more fishermen to this State to step up production. Fish is an essential item in the diet of many people and greater production would result in lower prices. Many people needing fish find it is beyond their financial resources to buy it.

Line passed.

Chemistry Department, £34,647.

Mr. QUIRKE—Some time ago I directed a question to the Minister of Agriculture about the spate of bottled fertilizers in stores. According to advertisements boosting their sales they are miracle workers. I think the Minister replied that legislation to control these fertilizers would be brought down this session.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I said a Bill was being prepared, but I did not undertake to introduce it this session.

Mr. QUIRKE—It is not fair to the general public to have these preparations foisted upon them if they cannot do what the advertisements say they can. One line costs 4s. 6d. for a 12oz. bottle, but I suspect it is only sulphate of ammonia in water. If that is so the people are being exploited, for they can buy sulphate of ammonia and apply it much more cheaply and effectively. The department should investigate all these lines and tell the public whether they are as good as the advertisements claim them to be. If they are not and the people still buy them they have only themselves to blame for being exploited. I used one line on lettuces and found it made no difference. Does the Minister intend to bring down a Bill dealing with these mixtures?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—A Bill has been in course of preparation for some time, but it cannot be introduced this session because Cabinet has not yet had an opportunity to consider it.

Line passed.

Primary Producers' Assistance Department, £5,657.

Mr. STOTT—Why should there be an increase in the vote for this department? I was informed some time ago that the secretary was being transferred to another department because it would be closed. Two years ago it seemed that there would be no further work for the department. Has not the time arrived to close it?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The department has been abolished and the staff transferred to other departments.

Line passed.

Miscellaneous, £84,510.

Mr. STOTT—An amount of £171 is provided for an "*ex gratia* payment to W. Angliss and Company in lieu of a swine compensation claim." Can the Minister explain this?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—Owing to a mistake by a member of its clerical branch, the company did not make a claim for compensation within the requisite time required by the Act, and Cabinet decided it would make an *ex gratia* payment of the amount which was due to the firm for compensation.

Mr. HAWKER—Can the Minister say how many veterinary lodges receive Government grants? An amount of £1,400 is provided for veterinary scholarships. I understand great difficulty has been experienced in getting sufficient men to undertake the veterinary course,

and that that is the reason for the scholarships. How many are studying the course and what grant is paid by the Government to the scholars?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—Only one veterinary lodge is receiving a Government grant. The scheme, conceived with great hopes, was not a success. The Government is providing additional veterinary scholarships this year. I do not know how many are studying this course at the University, but I will get the information for the honourable member.

Line passed.

MINISTER OF IRRIGATION.

Department of Lands, £459,078.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Earlier in the debate the member for Adelaide, when I mentioned certain money provided as a gift to the Tramways Trust, suggested that I should have quoted losses in the Department of Lands. I know that considerable losses have occurred in irrigation operations, and that matter was brought to a head last year when the member for Glenelg moved a motion dealing with it and the Treasurer came to the defence of settlers. I admit there have been losses, but I feel they could have been lessened if more use had been made of the services of settlers themselves and some of the responsibility, which they are well qualified to carry, placed on them, instead of leaving everything to the department. Had Mr. Lawn been present I would have pointed out that such losses were what one would expect from a socialized undertaking. He is always pushing Socialism down our throats, contending that if the Government took over all industries we would have no more worries; whereas, in actual practice on every occasion I can think of when the Government has taken over any industry there have been tremendous losses. I am sorry the Minister of Irrigation did not accept my suggestion and place more responsibility on the settlers themselves. As an instance of their ability, the packing shed at Berri, managed by the producers themselves, handles more than £1,000,000 worth of production each year. Whenever I have suggested anything and my views conflicted with those of departmental officers, the Minister has turned my views down; so I can say now, as representative of the district, that much of the responsibility has been taken from my shoulders.

From time to time the Minister has assured me that he is interested in getting a permanent water supply for the township of

Winkie. I do not doubt his intentions, but here again, foolishly I think, he took the advice of his departmental officers. In pleading with the Minister for this water supply I pointed out the difficulty I had in getting a water supply for Glossop, but instead of doing what I suggested he acted on the advice of his departmental officers and wasted time. Now the Minister cannot go on with the matter because there are not enough applicants. These people feel it would be useless for them to lease land on which to build homes unless a water supply is connected. They cannot be blamed for refusing to risk the expenditure of more than £2,000 for a house in these circumstances. Although the irrigation settlement at Chaffey was the only settlement able to pay its annual charges on the water supply, the settlers there have been carrying on for more than 30 years under the most primitive reticulation methods. For years they have pleaded with the department to concrete the channels so that the water could be supplied more easily. In reply to my recent question the Minister said that the concreting of the channels had been discussed by the Secretary for Irrigation with the settlers and that when the funds were available the work would be carried out, but the Government has plenty of money to spend when it wants to spend it. For instance, it can make a gift of £600,000 to the Tramways Trust, but when returned soldiers from World War I. asked for improvements and amenities which should be provided as a matter of course the Minister says no money is available. This kind of treatment is no encouragement to these settlers. Why should they be refused treatment given to the bigger settlements at Berri, Barmera and Loxton?

Much has been said about the big incomes being received by primary producers, but I point out that water rates for irrigation settlements were recently increased by 18 per cent, representing a total of £58,400, at a time when producers' incomes had been materially reduced. Prices paid for wine grapes and dried fruits had dropped considerably and the bottom had dropped out of the citrus fruits market. A return forwarded to me by a settler who sent 38 cases of standard Washington navels to the city market shows a gross total of £27 14s. 9d. out of which must be paid £3 17s. 7d. for freight, 9s. 6d. as a levy, and £12 7s. as packing charges, leaving him a net return of £9 3s. 6d. Therefore, although he must keep the citrus fruits in production for 12 months of the year he receives only about one-third of the total

proceeds of the crop, whereas those handling the crop receive about two-thirds.

Mr. William Jenkins—What was the average price he received for his crop?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Those figures would be a fair average for sales throughout the river areas over the last few weeks during which time the Washington navel crop was handled, and some settlers have received less. City people are paying the tremendous price of 3d. an orange, but the grower is not receiving the money for it is going to an intermediary. This matter is of vital concern to the settlers on the Murray, particularly to those young settlers whose trees have produced for the first time and who could have expected a return of between 20s. and 25s. a case. It is useless to continue asking the producer to produce more and at the same time reduce his costs of production, for over practically every cost he has no control.

Mr. STOTT—The channel running down the Bugle Hut road is cracked in a number of places. Some of the cracks are large enough to put in a long-handled shovel. Will the department have the channel repaired, because it at present adds to the seepage problem?

Mr. WHITE—The maintenance of embankments and the restoration of approved levels has some reference to the levees associated with the reclaimed swamp areas in my district, and to the work done during the flood period which lasted mainly from last August to March. I pay a tribute to the officers of the department stationed in my district and in charge of the Goolwa Barrages for their fine work in managing the flood and getting the water through without any of the reclaimed swamp areas being flooded. On these areas there are thousands of dairy cattle and if there had been a flood it would have been necessary to send most of the cattle away for agistment, which would have meant a drop in production and an upset in the management of the dairy herds. If there had been reduced production there would have been some unemployment, so the efforts of the officers averted a major catastrophe in the area. The dairy-men were so appreciative of the work that a dinner was tendered to the departmental officers at Murray Bridge not so long ago. I also pay a tribute to the work done by the secretary and president of the committee elected from the dairymen. It had to attend to the preparation for meeting the flood.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS (Minister of Irrigation)—I am happy to speak about the position at Winkie. Mr. Macgillivray said I was sincere in wishing to do something in the locality. That is true, and in June, 1950, I met a deputation from the Progress Association and the R.S.L. It put forward a good case for a township area. It was suggested that it might be possible to establish an area if 20 people were willing to build. I inquired into the matter and found that there would be a considerable loss if there were only 20, and it was suggested that more applicants might be found. A further three names were obtained, and a number of those who had applied for one block wanted a second block, which meant that altogether 43 blocks were sought. This information was supplied to the honourable member for Chaffey. On October 2, 1951, the honourable member suggested that we should make building blocks available as soon as possible, and not wait until the department was in a position to provide water supplies. In 1952, because of the reduction of Loan funds, a decision was made to delete that amount. It was immediately taken up again with a view to placing an appropriate amount on the 1953-54 Estimates. This was done, and applications called for the land to be made available which the department had secured with some difficulty. Applications were called, and only one applicant made a firm offer for a block of land. Tenders were called for the necessary plant so that everything would be ready to commence the work immediately.

Mr. Macgillivray—Was that for the Winkie water supply?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The sum of £9,000 is provided for that area. I had hoped that we could do something about the lining of the Chaffey channel, but I am sure the honourable member will agree that, with a limited amount of money, it is necessary to spend where it is most urgently needed. I asked the Secretary for Irrigation to discuss this matter while he was in this district and to explain it to the people personally instead of by letter, and, although they were disappointed, I believe he explained the matter to their satisfaction. The Government is doing a considerable amount of work in the river areas. Works in progress along the river will cost over £184,000, and proposed new work £245,000. We are carrying out the work we consider to be most urgent. The settlers in the area represented by the member for Murray worked night and

day during the flood period and did a magnificent job; it was a case of the department and the settlers working in absolute cohesion. When I received a call to visit the area and meet the committee, I thought some difficult problem had arisen, and was very surprised to find that I was required to receive the thanks of the settlers for the co-operation of the department in preventing a serious catastrophe. An amount of £10,000 is provided for building up the river banks, and we are happy that with this money we can provide greater security and safety for the settlers in that area.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The Minister said the money it was hoped to spend in 1951 on the water supply at Winkie had been taken off the Estimates, which shows there is difficulty in obtaining money for important works in that district. The Minister said the same thing about the concreting of channels in the Chaffey area. He did not argue that these works were not necessary, or that they would not be of advantage to the department. The concreting of channels would make water supplies go very much further, because water would not be absorbed by the soil. The Minister said money was not available because it had to be spent on more necessary works, yet these two jobs would cost only about £20,000, but he does not consider that the sum of £600,000 provided for the Municipal Tramways Trust this year, with a total of £1,500,000, too much to rehabilitate the transport of the city of Adelaide. The Minister should resign from his position if he cannot get the Treasurer to give him more money to carry out essential works in developing river areas. People are always being asked to go to the country to boost up our rural industries and produce more food, yet the Government is not prepared to do anything about such schemes. If money had been spent at Winkie it would be a prosperous town by now. Although the Minister was sincere, in my opinion he is not firm enough in applying for sufficient money for the settlers. Instead, he is bending the knee to various other pressures.

Line passed.

MINISTER OF MINES.

Mines Department, £611,000.

Mr. STOTT—Increases of £27,267 are provided for uranium investigation under "salaries," and £45,436 for similar investigation under "contingencies." The uranium development at Rum Jungle and particularly at Radium Hill, and what has transpired at Woomera, have become a major part of the defence of the Commonwealth, and in my

opinion most of it should be a Commonwealth expense. This matter raises the question of how much this Government intends to develop uranium deposits for industrial purposes, and how much it will affect the people of South Australia, particularly at Radium Hill and probably at Port Pirie, when the concentrates are sent there, and either shipped overseas or developed further for the purpose of industrial development? Unless this money is to be spent on industrial development in South Australia these items might more properly be included in the Commonwealth Government's defence programme.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The amounts mentioned are largely designed for ascertaining whether additional areas of uranium ore are available in South Australia. The amounts are itemized in the Estimates and include costs of drilling and mining and of undertaking metallurgical, analytical and chemical examinations and research. If new deposits exist we must ascertain whether their exploitation is justified. I shall not engage in a long dissertation on atomic power because there is no provision in the Estimates relating to atomic power. The items do not refer to Port Pirie or Radium Hill and have nothing to do with the defence vote. They are for additional investigations and ultimately I think we shall obtain a great benefit from them.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Last year £2,360 was spent on "expenses of overseas visit of geologist" but this year only £200 is provided. An amount of £147 was spent on "expenses of overseas visit of assistant metallurgist" and this year £200 is provided. I am unable to understand the provision of such small amounts, nor can I account for the expenditure of £147 last year. Will the Premier explain the lower amounts this year?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Visits by officers overseas are usually under an exchange arrangement. Overseas officers are stationed in South Australia and our officers go overseas to gain experience which is beneficial to the State. The amounts provided should not always be taken as indicative of the total cost. In some instances the overseas authorities have paid the travelling expenses of our officers. Government planes travel between Australia and overseas countries and on occasions our officers have been afforded free passages. It sometimes happens that an officer is stationed overseas for as long as 12 months and the amount expended is larger because we must pay his salary and a living away from home

allowance. We have sometimes had to send officers abroad to obtain special information relating to problems that have arisen.

Mr. STOTT—The Premier has explained that the items I refer to are designed to meet the costs of further investigations, but is the State reimbursed to any extent by the Commonwealth Government? Is it possible to obtain a grant from the Commonwealth Government, for ultimately the Commonwealth must benefit from the discovery of uranium?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Long before the Commonwealth became directly interested in uranium research, this Government passed legislation providing that all uranium in this State was to be the property of the State of South Australia on behalf of the Crown. Any advantage derived from the mining of uranium in South Australia is, of course, a benefit to this State. We have not asked the Commonwealth for grants for this work, and I should hesitate to do so because if assistance were granted it would automatically follow that the Commonwealth would have some control over our operations. We have received valuable assistance in other ways, but we do not propose to mortgage our uranium resources in any way.

[Midnight.]

Mr. HAWKER—Has this State received any money from the sale of uranium to offset the considerable expenditure that has taken place?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—We have been asked to keep confidential the figures about the production and supply of uranium because that information would be helpful to any enemy of the free nations. We are undertaking a big programme for the production of uranium, but it has not yet been completed.

Line passed.

Miscellaneous, £3,700.

Mr. DAVIS—Does the line "Reinstatement of roads at Port Pirie" include work on roads within the municipality of Port Pirie other than main roads?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This item is to cover the cost of repairing roads damaged by vehicles used in the construction of the chemical treatment plant at Port Pirie.

Line passed.

MINISTER OF MARINE.

Harbors Board Department, £1,393,372.

Mr. TAPPING—Can the Minister give me any information about the appointment of additional assistant superintendents at the coal handling plant?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Provision has been made on the Estimates to cover the salary of the additional assistant for the full year.

Line passed.

Miscellaneous, £250—passed.

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS..

Railways Department, £14,765,027.

Mr. STOTT—Many people in country areas do not patronize passenger trains much. Some country trains run to a daily timetable but carry few passengers. Perhaps this is because the journey takes far longer than it does by other forms of transport. Will the Government consider discontinuing passenger trains that are not patronized much and substituting a modern bus service? These railways are necessary for certain types of goods traffic, but railway revenue could be increased by the installation of modern bus services. Instead of forcing the people in the Upper Murray districts to travel by bus to Morgan and then by train to Adelaide, could not the Railways Department run a fast modern bus service right through? This would bring in more revenue from passengers than the present service.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH (Minister of Railways)—A similar question was raised by the member for Stanley and has been investigated. In some cases it would pay for passengers alone, but in addition we have to consider the transport of parcels and other urgent goods. I can assure the Committee that the Railways Commissioner and I have gone thoroughly into the matter, and I hope that in the near future it will be possible to give a better service to the community at less cost. The Transport Control Board has been charged with the responsibility of considering this question, and is now analysing some of the West Coast and East Murray routes. I think its finding would be that what would be gained on the one hand would be lost on the other, because trains cater for certain things for which buses could not cater.

Line passed.

Transport Control Board, £17,100—passed.

Miscellaneous, £3,462.

Mr. HAWKER—An amount of £100 is provided for surveys in connection with a deviation between Peterborough and Jamestown. Can the Minister indicate whether the line is to be shifted and when? In one case the route passes between the house and a shed on the one property and the owner is in a quandary to know what to do—whether he should shift his homestead now or continue to make improvements.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Until the best route has been ascertained by survey I cannot give an answer. After the survey, the next step is to give notice to occupiers of land affected. A mutual arrangement is entered into wherever possible.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I understand that the proposed regrading of the line between Jamestown and Peterborough has something to do with the conversion of the line between Broken Hill and Port Pirie to the standard gauge. If, after the survey has been completed, it is decided that a new route shall be adopted between Jamestown and Peterborough, will it be necessary for this Parliament to authorize the deviation, or is there sufficient legal authority in the unification agreement to enable that to be done? I think the matter should come before this Parliament because there are interests which should be considered by it which are somewhat outside railway practice. At Belalie North all the roads have been surveyed to bring the produce of the district into the siding, and if the line is deviated it will result in considerable hardship to those who now send their produce *via* this siding.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—If any deviation is made, obviously it will affect some people prejudicially, and I do not think any Government would agree to that without taking the matter to Parliament. I do not think for a moment that any serious deviation is involved, but, if it is, Cabinet will consider whether it should be decided by Parliament, either by a Bill after consideration by the Public Works Committee or by way of a line on the Estimates.

Mr. GOLDNEY—Can the Minister say whether the £500 provided for the survey of the Korunye area subject to flooding will be used in an effort to devise a means of overcoming the periodic flooding in that locality?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Yes. In that flat country even a minor flood causes considerable damage, and it is a question of whether another route can be taken so as to obviate that danger. The surveys not being completed, the Government is asking for another £500 to do further work.

Line passed.

MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Highways and Local Government Department, £189,814—passed.

Miscellaneous, £51,509.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—As the Committee has already voted £20,000 for the extension of electricity supplies by the Electricity Trust, can

the Treasurer say for what purpose the £15,000 shown as grants to councils pursuant to the Electricity Supplies (Country Areas) Act will be used? Should this grant be made from the Highways Fund when that fund is inadequate for its intended purpose? Our roads have deteriorated tremendously; in fact, Eyre Highway is the worst in the world and something should be done to improve it. More adequate funds should be made available to improve our more important roads which assist so much in the development of the State.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The amount of £15,000 referred to by Mr. Christian is not a charge on the Highways Fund, but is a grant to local government authorities for the extension of local electricity supplies, whereas the amount of £20,000 already passed was a grant to the Electricity Trust for extension of its supplies.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Can the Minister of Works say what land the Government intends to purchase in connection with the Glenelg-Brighton foreshore improvements?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH (Minister of Local Government)—The committee appointed to inquire into the acquisition of land in this area recommended the purchase of certain land. Parliament has accepted the principle that recreational areas should be provided in our suburbs, and this grant of £1,000 gives the Government authority, in collaboration with the municipalities of Glenelg and Brighton, to purchase any land required.

Mr. CORCORAN—Can the Minister of Works say why the amount provided for developmental roads in country areas and repairs and maintenance to country roads has been reduced by £500,000?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—A special grant of £500,000 was made in last year's Supplementary Estimates in order to provide for essential road works. I have a detailed account of roads on which it is proposed to spend the unspent balance of that amount and shall be pleased to let members have any information they may require on this subject.

Line passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2).

The Estimates having been adopted by the House an Appropriation Bill for £28,736,402 was founded in Committee of Ways and Means, introduced by the Hon. T. PLAYFORD, and read a first time.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It authorizes the expenditures in accordance with the Estimates which have been considered by members. Clause 2 provides for a sum of £28,736,402 which, together with the amount of £12,000,000 provided by Supply Acts Nos. 1 and 2, is the amount required to meet expenditures set down in the Estimates. Clause 3 makes provision for the appropriation of general revenue to the extent of £40,736,402, and sets out the amounts available for each of the departments and purposes within the Public Service. Clause 3 (2) provides for the payment of increases of salaries or wages which may become payable during the financial year and which have not been provided for in the Estimates, or otherwise in this Bill. Clause 5 gives authority to use moneys out

of the Loan Fund or other public funds, or moneys raised by way of bank overdraft, if the general revenue is insufficient to make the payments authorized by this Bill. Clause 6 authorizes the Treasurer to make any payments which may be brought forward prior to the 1st day of July, 1953, or to pay any salary or wage in excess of the rate provided by the Public Service Board or the regulations of the South Australian Railways Commissioner.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 12.43 a.m. on Wednesday, November 4, the House adjourned until 2 p.m. the same day.