

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.**

Thursday, June 10, 1954.

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

**QUESTIONS.****TEROWIE SCHOOL RESIDENCE.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The fence around the Terowie school residence has been in poor condition for a number of years. It is urgently in need of repair, and I ask the Minister of Education what steps, if any, have been taken to repair it?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Following on representations made to me by the honourable member approval has been given for the fence to be repaired, and prices are being sought from the Architect-in-Chief.

**JERVOIS OVAL WATER SUPPLY.**

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—Some time ago the Minister of Irrigation officiated at an opening ceremony at the Jervois Oval and he said he would inquire about a water supply for the oval. Has any progress been made on this project?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have received a report from the Engineering Department that this matter is now receiving the attention of the Engineer-in-Chief, and when his report has been received the committee at Jervois will be advised of the department's requirements and the conditions under which water will be made available.

**BUDD CARS ON PORT PIRIE LINE.**

Mr. DAVIS—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Railways a reply to the question I asked last Tuesday about the use of Budd rail cars on country lines?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Through my colleague, the Minister of Railways, I have been supplied with the reply from the Railways Commissioner, who states that the rail cars will be used in the country passenger services on those lines where the use of steam trains is not justified. As the Port Pirie line carries heavy traffic steam trains are necessary to cope with the passenger traffic. Therefore, it is not intended to use the new rail cars on this line. That means that the railways can give better service to Port Pirie with steam trains than with the Budd cars.

**BOTANIC PARK ROAD.**

Mr. TRAVERS—Considerable money was provided on the Estimates for the construction of a new bridge and the repair of roads in the Botanic Park. Formerly the road was open day and night and provided a convenient means of access to the city for many people in my district. For some time now it has been closed and I should like to ascertain, if possible, whether it is intended, when the new bridge is erected, to again open the road for day and night traffic and, if so, when is that likely to be?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think the road was closed at night by the Botanic Gardens Board because it was considered that the bridge was narrow and unsafe. I should think it would be very desirable to have this extra means of getting into and out of the city, and I will take up the question with the board and advise the honourable member later.

**MOUNT GAMBIER SCHOOLS.**

Mr. FLETCHER—During his recent visit to Mount Gambier a deputation waited on the Minister of Education requesting the establishment of a technical school building there. Has he any information on this subject?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I haven't any report, but, following on the deputation which waited upon me in company with the honourable member, I asked for one and for the Superintendent of Technical Education to visit the town and follow up the request. Substantial agreement has been reached between the council and the Education Department, and I shall let the honourable member have a written reply as soon as possible.

Mr. FLETCHER—Has the Minister of Works any information regarding tenders called for the erection of a new primary school at Mount Gambier East?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Tenders have been called and received and are on the lines of the departmental estimate. However, the Auditor-General has not yet reported on the relative merits of each particular tender, and until that is done no information can be given as to what tender, if any, will be accepted.

**WALLAROO JETTY LIGHTING.**

Mr. McALEES—A long time ago approval was given for better lighting on the Wallaroo jetty, but nothing has been done. Employers and employees are anxious to know when the work will proceed because the lighting is very poor and the trimming of bulk barley is being hampered. The power is inadequate for the

trimming machine. The Electricity Trust has done its part in supplying power, but the Harbors Board has failed to carry out the work promised. Can the Minister of Marine say when it will proceed?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I deprecate the honourable member's statement that the board has failed to carry out the work. He asked for certain work to be done and, speaking from memory, he was told that it would be undertaken. Obviously, it must take its turn; with every respect to the honourable member, Wallaroo cannot be placed ahead of other places that may have been waiting longer for similar facilities. The work having been promised it will be undertaken with the greatest possible expedition, and if there is any hitch or anything to be overcome by the Harbors Board I will ask it to see what can be done.

#### PETERBOROUGH HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Can the Minister of Education say whether anything has been done to improve the position regarding the wiring for power equipment used both for manual instruction at the Peterborough High School and also by students at the technical school, and to provide an extra light which has been suggested by the Peterborough High School Council to facilitate the holding of its meetings at night in the school grounds?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Difficulty has been experienced in this connection and it has been necessary to change the wiring to three-phase. Tenders have been called for this work and they close on June 23. As to the question of lighting, the Architect-in-Chief has been requested to place as soon as possible a light on the south-western corner of the main building to facilitate entry into the building at night.

#### PORT LINCOLN HARBOUR IMPROVEMENTS.

Mr. PEARSON—For some time Port Lincoln people have been awaiting the development of a harbour project there. Can the Minister of Works say whether the project has been referred to the Public Works Committee for consideration?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Yes. Executive Council this morning referred it to the committee. Initially a plan was prepared which did not visualize bulk handling as being a major portion of the work of the port. Following upon a visit by the Premier and representation made, an alternative plan was pre-

pared showing how the port could best be improved either by one method or the other. After going thoroughly into the matter Cabinet decided to refer it to the Public Works Committee to see which of the two plans should be adopted, either in its entirety or with modification to suit the future requirements of the port.

#### ANGLE VALE SCHOOL.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—This morning I received a visit from the chairman of the Angle Vale School Committee, which for some time has been concerned about the limited area of the school playing grounds. There is only a small yard which is abutted by the head teacher's residence, and gardens have gradually encroached on the area. The committee is very anxious to obtain about half an acre next door to the school, and at one time this was under consideration by the department, but the owner is not anxious to sell. Only last year the school sports had to be conducted on a road some distance from the school. Will the Minister of Education call for a report as to the possibility of obtaining more ground?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to do so.

#### NEW HILLS ROAD.

Mr. SHANNON—I should like some information from the Minister of Works regarding plans for widening other portions of the Mount Barker Road after the present section is completed?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—After the present section is completed it is proposed to extend work towards the Crafers Summit, through land purchased for that purpose. Work is also proposed on portions of the road towards Glen Osmond where further facilities to traffic may be provided with moderate expenditure. There are, however, sections where conditions are difficult, and which will require considerable further investigation before plans can be finalized. The date of completion cannot be stated. This is dependent on the amount of funds and effort which can be devoted to the work, having in mind the many demands from all other parts of the State. I will keep the honourable member supplied with information as to the progress of the work.

#### TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Will the Minister of Education explain the seeming contradiction in the recent statement by the Education Department, which on the one hand sets up a

Chair of Education so that a teacher can obtain a degree of education and at the same time arranges for a three months' training course for teachers to staff the primary schools? Is it correct that approximately 50 per cent of the primary school staff is composed of temporary teachers, and that Western Australia has sufficient students in training to meet its requirements?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—If there is any seeming contradiction there is no real contradiction as far as the Government is concerned. The Government has not set up a Chair of Education as suggested by the honourable member, but I understand that the Council of the Adelaide University is proposing to appoint a Professor of Education.

Mr. Macgillivray—Financed by the Government?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—That is something perhaps to be decided if and when the appointment is made. I have no present knowledge, other than what the honourable member informs me as to a Chair of Education. There are at the Teachers College at present 500 students. Of these only 43 do a one-year course, 151 do a four-year course and the remainder study for courses of either two or three years. The small group being enrolled for a three months' training course consists of educated persons who are urgently needed to staff vacancies in Primary Schools. It is not correct to say that approximately 50 per cent of the primary schools' staff are temporary teachers. The figure is 33 per cent of approximately 4,000 teachers. Of these more than half are classified teachers, many of them holding the teacher's certificate, the highest certificate required from a primary school teacher. The remainder, numbering 619 only, or 16 per cent of the total are teachers who have been carefully selected and given a short, intensive course of training to enable them to teach the lower grades of the primary schools. I do not know whether Western Australia has sufficient students in training to meet requirements, but I understand that the position in regard to teacher recruitment in that State is somewhat better than in this State. However, the total increase in the school population in the last five years in South Australia has been 47 per cent. In Western Australia it is 34.2 per cent. The problem of staffing is, therefore, much greater in South Australia than in the Western State. In fact, it is greater here than in any other State. For the last five years the increase in total numbers of pupils has been:

South Australia, 47 per cent; Western Australia, 34.2 per cent; Victoria, 34 per cent.; Tasmania, 33.6 per cent; Queensland, 29.5 per cent; New South Wales, 27.1 per cent. I would have been much happier if everyone of the 4,000 teachers in our schools had been highly qualified, but I am sure the honourable member and every other honourable member will appreciate the great difficulties under which the department has laboured in recent years and is still labouring.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The Minister does not seem to know whether the University intends to establish a Chair of Education, although a statement to that effect appeared in the press. When the Government makes money available to the University does it stipulate how it shall be spent?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, and I believe in meeting situations as and when they arise rather than speculating as to what may or may not happen. Whatever report may have appeared in the press concerning the establishment of a Chair in Education, to the best of my knowledge it has not yet been established. The University Council purposes to appoint a Professor of Education. As the honourable member suggests, the University makes its statutes and regulations, which must be approved by the Senate, but they do not have the force of law until signed by the Governor in Executive Council.

Mr. Macgillivray—Were you consulted about the Chair in Education?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I may have been informed as to certain proposals, but, as Minister, I have not been consulted. In the final analysis it is the Governor who decides these matters, and it is the Treasurer who controls the financial purse strings of the State. I understand that grants are made for specific needs of the University as and when they arise.

#### APPLE PRICES.

Mr. LAWN—I understand that apples, which are not subject to price control, are in such plentiful supply that permits are being issued to transport apples by road to Sydney. Further, I understand that the price of apples was this morning increased by 3s. per case, and from 6d. to 7½d. per pound to the consumer. Is the Premier aware of these facts, and can he say whether the price has been increased to pay the transport costs to Sydney? Will he review the advisability of recontrolling the price of apples?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—At present the prices of no fruit and vegetables, other than potatoes, are controlled: they have been left subject to the vagaries of the market. Sometimes they bring a good price and at other times a price not so favourable to the producer. The present price of apples to the producer is completely unprofitable, and, if it were not for better prices at other times, I doubt whether the producer could carry on. Some sales of South Australian apples have been made in Sydney, and possibly these have tended to slightly firm the market here, but henceforth apples sold in the metropolitan area will be increasingly supplied from the cold stores, as supplies from the normal unrefrigerated sheds become exhausted. Storage charges must be paid on apples from the cold stores, and their price to the public must be higher. I assure the honourable member that the quantity of apples to be disposed of in South Australia is so great that there will be no unduly high price to the public, and there is certainly no need to control their price.

#### NORTH OF THE RIVER ROAD.

Mr. MICHAEL—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question as to the progress on the north of the river road?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The reply I have obtained from the Commissioner of Highways states:—

The north of the river road is comprised of the following sections:—No. 22—Eudunda-Morgan M.R., 36 miles; No. 94—Morgan-Renmark M.R., 47 miles; No. 268—Overland Corner-Cobdogla M.R., 2½ miles; district road connecting Sturt Highway and M.R. No. 268, 2½ miles.

Of these lengths:—

No. 22.—The district council of Eudunda has commenced work on the reconstruction of a section between Eudunda and Sutherlands. It is anticipated that this council will reconstruct approximately 3 miles during 1954-5.

No. 94.—Two departmental gangs are working on this section. At the eastern end 3 miles is completed with bituminous seal. A further 7 miles is completed with the exception of of the bituminous seal and the gang at this end is continuing work towards Morgan, using a departmental crushing plant. Another gang is camped at Morgan and has commenced reconstruction from Morgan towards Renmark. A crushing contract has been let for the supply of crushed metal in this area. It is anticipated that the departmental gangs will reconstruct approximately 25 miles of road during 1954-5.

No. 268.—This length is completed with the exception of ½ mile at the North Lake bridge which has not yet been sealed.

District Road.—This length is completed with a bituminous seal.

#### MOUNT GAMBIER TO MILLICENT RAILWAY.

Mr. CORCORAN—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my question of Tuesday on the broadening of the gauge from Mount Gambier to Millicent?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Railways Commissioner reports:—

An amount of £750,000 was allocated for expenditure during 1953-54 on the conversion of the lines in the South-East to 5ft. 3in. gauge. It is anticipated that the actual expenditure against this allocation to June 30, 1954, will be £730,000. It will be seen, therefore, that the progress has been consistent with the allocation of funds. I should mention, however, that great difficulty has been experienced throughout the year in maintaining the labour forces required for this work, and that even if more funds had been allocated, we would not have been able to make greater progress. With regard to anticipated progress during the forthcoming financial year, this will depend upon the monies allocated as well as on the labour position, but it is hoped that progress equal to that made during the present financial year will be maintained.

#### PORT PIRIE HARBOUR.

Mr. STOTT—Can the Premier say whether the Government has received representations from any authority, semi-governmental or otherwise, on the deepening of the channel in the Port Pirie harbour beyond the present 19ft. in order that overseas vessels may be fully loaded at Port Pirie? The Government and Parliament have become involved in the development of uranium deposits at Radium Hill, and the construction of a concentrates plant at Port Pirie would mean that the concentrates would be loaded there into overseas vessels bound for the United Kingdom and other parts. This is a highly important matter to South Australia, as well as to other countries. Has the Government considered the matter of deepening the channel on that account?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Recently we had a deputation led by Mr. Davis, the member for Port Pirie, on that matter. Obviously the maintenance of a great depth of water involves the expenditure of a large sum of money, and there is also the relationship to alternative ports. It has been suggested that Port Pirie has lost some trade because ships have been diverted to Wallaroo where there is deeper water. So far as the State is concerned, it was not of importance whether the ships were loaded at Port Pirie or Wallaroo. They must be related to one another economically. The matter is the subject of close investigation by the Harbours Board engineers.

### ABATTOIRS AT PORT AUGUSTA.

Mr. RICHES—There is a strong feeling in Port Augusta, supported by the Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association and other organizations, that abattoirs for the export of meat should be established at Port Augusta. It is felt that such an installation would assist producers on upper Eyre Peninsula, could cater for the increasing demand for meat from Western Australia, Kalgoorlie in particular, and could assist the proposed further development of the Northern Territory. Because of the proposal to standardize the railway line from Leigh Creek to Marree and open up stock routes, the matter has been increasingly brought under our notice. Could the Minister of Agriculture set aside an officer of his department to conduct a survey of the number of stock that might be available in the event of abattoirs being established at Port Augusta? It is realized that no one can form an opinion until someone conducts an adequate survey of the position. No one knows the extent of the development likely to take place in the Northern Territory or what steps should be taken to entice stock southwards.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The subject raised by the honourable member was referred to the Government before I assumed office. The Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association requested that abattoirs and killing works be established at Port Augusta. I have not yet had time to look into the matter sufficiently to say what the possibilities are, but I shall be glad to make the examination the honourable member requests as to the number of stock which could be brought to such works.

### WINE INDUSTRY.

Mr. QUIRKE—As I indicated on the opening day of this session, and as will be seen in today's *Advertiser*, the wine industry is in a difficult position, but it is by no means insurmountable; we have had difficult positions before. Because of the increase in production and the many hundreds of thousands of pounds that have been spent in the production of wine grapes, the position today is more difficult than it has been in the past. Today it calls for alleviation by the provision of greater outlets of sale; the existing outlets are far from adequate. When I propose this I know I come up against existing legislation, such as that dealing with local option polls, but with all these things in mind I ask the Premier whether the Government will consider (1) granting grocers' wine licences to approved applicants, (2) amending the local option

legislation to provide that grocers' wine licences shall not be subject to local option polls as such licences are not for the sale of liquor to be consumed on the premises, and (3) amending the existing local option legislation to provide that polls shall be taken in the area local to the site of the proposed licensed premises?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—In answer to a previous question on the subject I gave my personal views. Since then I have met a deputation from the wine industry and the matter is before Cabinet now as one of policy. Under these circumstances I cannot give the honourable member much further information than I gave him previously. The topic he has raised is one with particular difficulties. For many years the people of this State have governed the issue of liquor licences under a system of local option polls, and it is a right that I believe they would vigorously defend if anyone suggested taking it away. I believe that right has been valued highly, both by advocates of additional liquor licences and by those who advocate fewer licences. Figures submitted to me by the deputation show that apart from the overall problem of increased production the consumption of wine has been reduced very materially in Australia. That indicates to me that the industry is facing increased competition from other beverages, that the retail margins of the commodity are unduly high, that there is a buyers' resistance, or that some other factor operates quite apart from the licences. However, I assure the honourable member that a complete investigation is being made, and I hope that, if he asks a further question when the House reassembles, I shall be able to give him a more definite reply.

### PORT PIRIE SCHOOLS.

Mr. DAVIS—Owing to the large numbers of children attending the Port Pirie schools they are becoming most congested. We have not had a visit from the Minister of Education for seven years, but I assure him that if he went there he would be made most welcome. Will he visit Port Pirie in the near future, and can he say when the new school at Risdon Park will be started?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I have been Minister of Education for only about six months, so I have some excuse for not having visited Port Pirie, but I appreciate the honourable member's cordial invitation and hope to go there. I have satisfied myself that a new school is urgently required at Risdon Park.

Plans have been completed and the Architect-in-Chief is preparing estimates of costs prior to submission to the Public Works Committee. This school has a very high priority in the current building programme.

#### YANKALILLA AREA SCHOOL.

Mr. BROOKMAN—Can the Minister of Education say what progress has been made with the building of the area school at Yankalilla?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The Public Works Committee approved this work, I think about two years ago, but it has been deferred from time to time for more urgent works. However, complete plans and specifications have been prepared by the Architect-in-Chief and approval has been given for the calling of tenders for the construction.

#### PETERBOROUGH HIGH SCHOOL RESIDENCES.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Can the Minister of Education say whether finality has been reached about a proposal that has been under consideration for some time to build two houses in Peterborough, one for occupation by the headmaster of the high school and the other for one of the masters?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—These two buildings have been included in the programme for 1954-55. The Architect-in-Chief has been requested to prepare sites for the two houses to enable the Housing Trust to erect them.

#### COUNTRY ELECTRICITY EXTENSIONS.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—A few days ago the Premier replied to the member for Gouger's question about the 50 per cent subsidy for country consumers of electricity. Will that subsidy apply to the people at Flaxley on whose behalf I approached the Premier sometime ago?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am not able to identify the case the honourable member has mentioned, but in the latest list of extensions that the trust sent for approval on Monday there were a considerable number of areas in his district. That list was approved and there were probably over 200 subscribers in the honourable member's district. I can let him have those details, and if they do not provide the answer to his question I will have further inquiries made.

#### OVERSEAS LOANS.

Mr. DUNKS—During the Federal election campaign a statement was made that the Commonwealth had borrowed money from Switzerland. Can the Treasurer say why it was

necessary for the Commonwealth to go outside Australia to borrow money? Was this the first loan obtained from foreign countries in recent years, except from the International Monetary Fund? As the Loan Council will meet very shortly and there is ample money available in Australia, will the Treasurer advocate borrowing within Australia, except in special circumstances?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I believe that the Commonwealth Government arranged a small loan with the Swiss National Bank, or an authority such as that. I do not know the reasons that actuated that loan, but it was a small one and I doubt whether it will have any material effect upon the welfare of this country. Perhaps it was necessary to get some Swiss currency because it is extremely hard currency. We require many things from Switzerland, such as precision instruments, that we cannot get elsewhere. I have always felt that if it is possible to raise sufficient money in Australia for national development we should borrow internally, as this does not lead to the problem of unbalanced exchanges. That will be my policy at future discussions with the Loan Council.

#### LE FEVRE PENINSULA PROJECT.

Mr. TAPPING—I was invited to attend a meeting of the Taperoo and District Progressive Association on June 2, to discuss the question of the acquisition of land by the Government on Le Fevre Peninsula in the Osborne area because of the Harbors Board improvements scheme. In a letter to me the Minister of Marine stated that approximately 90 per cent of the properties required had been purchased by the board and that negotiations were continuing with owners of the remainder who had resisted the board's offer. Can he say what is the position regarding that 10 per cent?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—This matter would not come to me direct, but I will ascertain what progress has been made and advise the honourable member accordingly.

#### KADINA PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Mr. McALEES—Some time ago a deputation from Kadina waited on the Minister of Education regarding improvements required at the Kadina school. I know of no school in Australia which is more neglected. I have complained about it from time to time and small improvements have been made, such as the

provision of water. My question now concerns the workshop and a division fence between the primary school and the high school. Will the Minister consider this matter as urgent?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The request from the deputation introduced by the honourable member is receiving attention. I have had a discussion with the Deputy Director of Education and hope to let the honourable member have a reply in the near future.

#### MOONTA SCHOOL HEADMASTER'S RESIDENCE.

Mr. McALEES—I have been asked by the chairman of the Moonta Primary School Committee to see what can be done to renovate the home of the headmaster. Has the Minister of Education any information on the subject?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—This is new to me, but I will take it up and treat it as urgent.

#### MURRAY BRIDGE COURTHOUSE.

Mr. WHITE—Last year money was set aside in the Budget to commence the building of a courthouse at Murray Bridge. Toward the latter part of the year a communication was received from the Architect-in-Chief's Department suggesting that instead of erecting a building just for a courthouse a larger place should be built to provide office accommodation, also for officers of the Lands Department and the Department of Agriculture stationed at Murray Bridge. This proposition was placed before the corporation and it was agreed to wait for the larger building. This all happened some seven or eight months ago. Can the Premier indicate when this building will be commenced?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—As honourable members know, the Loan Council has not yet met to decide this year's loan programme, and it is not certain what funds will be available and whether they will be sufficient to finance all the works included in the programme. I will advise the honourable member as soon as possible.

#### ALBERTON EVICTION.

Mr. STEPHENS—Has the Premier yet secured the report I asked for concerning an eviction case at Alberton?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A report has been called for, but is not yet to hand. As soon as it is received I will see that the honourable member is advised.

#### PRICE OF POTATOES.

Mr. LAWN—Recently the price of potatoes was reduced from 4d. to 3½d. a pound for lots of less than 6 lb. and to 3d. for over 6 lb. Can the Premier say whether, before the alteration was made, the Prices Commissioner received representations from the Potato Board and, if so, what was their nature?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The wholesale price of potatoes is governed almost exclusively by interstate prices. The South Australian price cannot go above or materially below the interstate price without disrupting the market. The wholesale price was fixed by the Potato Board in accordance with its powers, and this price is based largely upon interstate parity. When the retail price was being considered there were suggestions that it should be 3½d. a pound, but to give a fair margin to the retailers would involve a price of approximately 3½d. a pound. As we do not deal in farthings, the Prices Department examined the position and decided that the price in small transactions, involving much weighing, would be 3½d. lb. and where less weighing was involved, 3d.

#### SEPTIC TANK SYSTEMS.

Mr. QUIRKE—Can the Premier say whether his Government has considered my suggestion of last session that country residents who cannot afford to pay in full for septic tank systems following on a compulsory edict for their installation, should be allowed to purchase them under a deferred payment system, and whether money could be made available for this purpose?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I made some inquiries on this subject and found that the then Chairman of the Public Works Committee had been examining the feasibility of installing septic tanks in some country towns rather than undertaking a full scale deep drainage programme. I expect that some of that committee's reports will deal with this topic. From the Government's point of view, provided the installations were satisfactory, I believe that the financing of septic tank systems would be less expensive, generally, than deep drainage, but in many places the nature of the soil would be unsuitable.

#### CHANNEL OVERFLOW, LOXTON AREA.

Mr. STOTT—Has the Minister of Irrigation a reply to my question of Tuesday regarding the cost of the additional work to channels "D" and "G" in the Loxton Soldier Settlement area?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have not obtained a report, but I will secure it as soon as possible and let the honourable member have it.

#### DUPLICATION OF MORGAN-WHYALLA PIPELINE.

Mr. RICHES—Can the Premier say what progress has been made on the proposal to duplicate the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline and whether the new pipeline will be taken east of the Flinders Range?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Now that the requirements of the Woomera Rocket Range must be met from the pipeline, the Engineering and Water Supply Department firmly believes that it will be necessary to duplicate at least one section of the pipeline in five or six years' time, and the department, with the concurrence of the Minister, has examined the problem and also the alternative routes so that the maximum benefit of the pipeline may be given to people not at present served. The scheme has not reached the stage of detail and cannot yet go before the Public Works Committee; it will have to be further considered as expansion occurs within the next five or six years.

#### CLARE RENTAL HOMES.

Mr. QUIRKE—Can the Premier say whether the Housing Trust has succeeded in obtaining land at Clare for the construction of a group of rental homes?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The trust has sought to purchase land for housing in or adjacent to the Clare township, but it has been unable to secure any satisfactory offers.

#### GOVERNMENT PRINTING STAFF.

Mr. LAWN—In some industries there are two awards covering the same type of work, and I understand that in the Government Printing Office the staff may be covered by either the Graphic Arts Award or the Newspaper Award, which provides higher rates of pay. Will the Premier, after consulting with the Secretary of the Printing Trades Union, examine the possibility of applying the conditions of the more advantageous award to the employees in the Government Printing Office with a view to stopping the alarming number of resignations from that staff?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The real question is whether we are honouring the proper award for the industry. We cannot pick and choose awards from day to day, for that would lead to considerable difficulty. I will have the

position examined to see whether we are observing the appropriate award of the industry, and if not, take steps accordingly; but, having decided on the appropriate award, I cannot influence my judgment merely because another award may be more attractive. I shall advise the honourable member in due course regarding the position.

#### NUMBERING OF MOTOR VEHICLES.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The matter of numbering motor vehicles has been brought to my mind by a photograph in the press recently showing a motor car with the number 400,000. That is a comparatively easy number to remember, but most numbers containing six figures are not. With the increased number of motor vehicles on the road we will soon have astronomical figures. Although I have driven a motor car for almost a quarter of a century, except for the time when I had to write the number on a coupon in order to get petrol, I have always had difficulty in remembering it. If we followed the system adopted in other States and used letters as well we could get our numbers down to three figures. Can the Premier say whether that matter has been examined, and, if so, what is the opinion of the Government on it?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is true that if we had commenced with a system of letters we would by now have two letters and three figures instead of six figures. I have examined the matter, but I hesitate to take any action because an alteration would involve every motorist in the State purchasing a new number plate, which would be expensive.

Mr. Macgillivray—It must be done sooner or later.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Probably that is correct, but before having to use another figure, present registrations will have to be increased about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times. In view of that I do not know that we would be justified in putting the owners of vehicles to the expense of getting new number plates.

Mr. Macgillivray—Why not start off now with a letter and figures?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will have that matter examined. We could start off with A1 and if the system were adopted I think the honourable member would be entitled to that number.

#### PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE ACT.

Mr. STOTT—When the Public Works Committee Act was passed in 1927 it provided that all public works estimated to cost £30,000 or



more had to be referred to the committee for investigation and report. In that year a substantial building could be erected for £30,000, but since then costs have increased considerably. Does the Premier intend to introduce legislation this session to increase the limit to a figure more closely related to present-day costs?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government discussed the matter with the chairman of the committee, who referred it to committee members. From memory I believe that they felt it would be inadvisable to alter the present limit. Although a considerable number of larger references to the committee are outstanding, on smaller urgent matters the committee has been able to present reports quickly, particularly if the Government has suggested that there was some priority in connection with them. I cannot say that any important works, such as schools, have been held up because of the limitation. I will again refer the matter to the chairman of the committee and see whether the view is still the same.

#### MOTOR VEHICLES DEPARTMENT.

Mr. DAVIS—Last session I asked the Premier about the advisability of having branches of the Motor Vehicles Department in

the country, say at Port Pirie, Port Lincoln and Mount Gambier. Has the Government given further consideration to the matter?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government has given it more consideration, but I cannot say that the proposal has been accepted. Although it would convenience the three towns mentioned, it is doubtful whether there would be any great advantage to residents of other towns, because they would still have to travel a considerable distance or post applications to the central office. I cannot give the honourable member any assurance that we will undertake the expenditure that would be involved.

#### SUPPLY BILL (No. 1).

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

[*Sitting suspended from 3.25 to 4.45 p.m.*]

#### APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1).

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.47 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, July 27, at 2 p.m.