

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.**

Wednesday, July 28, 1954.

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

**QUESTIONS.****FLOUR MILLING INDUSTRY.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I understand that six South Australian flour mills have been closed down in the last 12 months, that other mills are working short time, and that similar difficulties are being encountered by the industry in other States. The decreased production of the milling industry is having repercussions on the dairying and poultry industries, and I have received complaints from my electorate about the difficulty of procuring bran and pollard. I understand that the Hon. F. J. Condon, who is the Federal President of the Federated Millers and Mill Employes' Association of Australia, asked the Premier to take this matter up on a Federal basis and, further, that this has been done. Arising from the recent discussions in Canberra, can the Premier say whether a policy has been decided on to assist this industry?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This matter was raised during the short June session by Mr. Condon, the Leader of the Opposition in another place, and at that time I took up with the Commonwealth Government the question of the flour milling industry, its importance to the Australian economy, and its present difficult position. For many years this industry has provided one of our chief means of exporting wheat. Further, it provides the mill offal so essential to the dairying, poultry, pig, and other industries, so, quite apart from the direct employment it gives, it has been of great value to the Australian economy. This matter was again taken up at last Monday's conference from two points of view: firstly, because it provides a method of extending the overseas market for our wheat products, and secondly, because of the indirect impact on the poultry and other industries mentioned of a cessation of milling in any State. The Commonwealth Government informed me that, consequent upon previous representations, special instructions had been given to our Agents-General and trade commissioners overseas and that there was a likelihood, through those means, of opening up new markets for our flour. It was stated that they were particularly taking up the matter with Colombo Plan nations with whom we have certain

reciprocal agreements, and—what is probably more valuable—the Prime Minister promised that, if the flour milling industry would put up a concrete case and outline the methods whereby that Government could render it assistance, such proposals would receive prompt and, as far as possible, sympathetic consideration. I am, therefore, now to convey to the industry the request that it bring forward specific proposals so that they may be forwarded to Canberra for consideration. If we can get those proposals worked out on a Federal basis, it would be more valuable than if they were to come merely from this State. I will discuss that phase with Mr. Condon, with whom I have already had some discussions on this matter since my return from Canberra.

**WHEAT STABILIZATION PLAN.**

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—Can the Premier say whether, under the wheat stabilization arrangement to which the Victorian Premier, Mr. Cain, has now agreed, it is envisaged that the Commonwealth guarantee will ensure the payment of the guaranteed price to the farmers irrespective of whether the wheat is exported and irrespective of the quantity used for flour milling in Australia?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The plan adopted by all the States at last Monday's conference was that initially worked out by the honourable member who asked the question and the New South Wales Minister of Agriculture. Under the plan the Commonwealth Government undertakes to provide a price for 100,000,000 bushels of wheat for export at cost of production. In other words, if the price of the wheat exported from Australia falls below the cost of production figure, the wheatgrower is guaranteed by the Commonwealth Government the cost of production up to a quantity of 100,000,000 bushels for any one harvest. The States have agreed that the home consumption price for wheat shall be 14s. a bushel or the export price, if this falls below 14s., but that the price shall not be brought lower than the cost of production figure. There are some minor matters in connection with the scheme, but, in reply to specific questions I put to the Prime Minister on the financing of the scheme, I was told that, in connection with the wheat to be exported, the Commonwealth Government is prepared to make advances before the wheat leaves Australia. For instance, a guarantee on export wheat to the quantity of 100,000,000 bushels would be quite ineffective this year when the quantity exported may not exceed 30,000,000 or

40,000,000 bushels; but the Commonwealth Government is prepared, through the Commonwealth Bank, to finance an advance on the export wheat being held from this harvest and also to make advances so that payments can be made to farmers in respect of wheat normally used for home consumption. I fancy that the home market normally uses about 40,000,000 bushels of wheat for flour and local milling purposes and another 20,000,000 for stock feed purposes.

Mr. Heaslip—What about the interest rate to be paid by producers?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—These would be bank advances and I presume they would be subject to a normal interest charge, which would be paid from the respective pools in due course, but I did not go into the question of the interest rate. It is interesting to note that the Commonwealth Government will be providing advances to wheatgrowers through the Commonwealth Bank of about £100,000,000 as initial payments. Members will see how important it is to the stability of this industry that the grower shall know that he can deliver his wheat to an accredited agent of the Wheat Board and in due course get substantial initial advances upon it pending the finalization of the pool. I believe that the agreement reached will be very beneficial to this State and to the stability of the Australian economy generally. I was delighted that it was possible to get complete unanimity between the Commonwealth and all the States. Of course, the scheme will be submitted to wheatgrowers, but I believe we can confidently recommend it to them, because in the unsettled condition of the overseas wheat market it provides stability for them that could not be achieved in any other way.

Mr. STOTT—Can the Premier say what roll will be used for the growers' ballot? Will it be the roll in the possession of the Department of Commerce and Agriculture at Canberra, which shows a duplication of names—and it is proposed that a penalty shall be imposed on any grower using more than one ballot paper—or the roll in South Australia, which is totally inadequate because sufficient applications were not made for enrolment? Of course, it would be much better to use the roll at Canberra.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Premiers were only called into this matter because, over a large number of conferences—I think 10 or 11—unanimity had not been reached in the Agricultural Council. Normally, the question of wheat stabilization would be dealt with by that council, but it became necessary to

get the Governments together on this matter to settle the general outline of the proposal. Having done that, the question of taking a poll was again referred to the normal authority, the Agricultural Council, and the poll will be taken under the direction of the Commonwealth Minister of Trade and Commerce and the State Ministers of Agriculture. I do not know what roll will be used, but I understood that it would be a roll of registered growers. Whether there is any difference between the Canberra and South Australian rolls I do not know, but I will submit the honourable member's question to my colleague on his return from Canberra.

#### LARGS BAY JETTY.

Mr. TAPPING—On two or three occasions last session I asked the Minister of Marine whether something could be done to repair the Largs Bay jetty, or part of it. Has he any reply to give?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have had several conferences with the Harbors Board and have also visited the spot myself on more than one occasion. The difficulty is that except for about the first 450ft., which is in reasonable condition for repair, the structure might be called junk. The repair of that 450ft. would be fairly costly—about £11,400—and under those circumstances the jetty would only extend to a point on the seabed 2ft. higher than the low water mark, which would mean that at the seaward end of the structure the seabed would be dry at low water. Another project was under consideration, namely, the scrapping of the present structure and the building of a lighter one with what was already there, plus new material, but Mr. Meyer and I have been conferring with the board, and he is of the opinion that perhaps the best solution would be to repair the first 450ft. and then extend a lighter and narrower jetty out into deeper water. He proposes to visit the site again with the engineer of the Port Adelaide Corporation and, as early as possible, he will give me a report following on their joint inspection and discussion.

#### REDEX TRIAL SPEEDING.

Mr. HEASLIP—An extract from the *Advertiser* of July 19 states:—

Urged on by the prospects of losing third place in the trail, A. Anderson (car 176) drove his Holden at up to 70 m.p.h. from the city. "The police waved us on," a crew member said. "We had an escort but left him behind." A private motorist who volunteered to escort car 89, a Tasmanian M.G. driven by R. E. Pryor and D. Pinkard, from

Main North Road was stopped by police for speeding. The trial car was allowed to continue.

I ask the Premier how it is that one section of the community, which in my opinion has done much damage to our roads and has cost us much money in motor cars and lost man hours, is allowed to break the law with impunity, whereas the man going about his ordinary work is apprehended?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government's policy has always been that the public highways shall not be made racing tracks. Some years ago we notified all and sundry that we were not prepared to turn our highways into speed car coursing tracks. I have no knowledge of the incident the honourable member has mentioned, but I will get a report from the Police Department through the Chief Secretary and advise him in due course whether the report he quoted is reliable and whether, in fact, the police assisted anyone in speeding over our roads, though I have grave doubts whether they have done that.

#### URANIUM MINING.

Mr. DUNNAGE—I have noticed from the press that there is a big boom in uranium and other shares and that many new companies are being formed and much money is being invested. Can the Premier make a statement on uranium mining in this State? How do the uranium deposits allegedly being found all over Australia compare with the deposit at Radium Hill? What effect will the great quantity of uranium being found have on our deposit, on which we have spent so much money?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member said a large volume of capital was being put into uranium. It would be more correct to say that much capital is being put into speculation on uranium on the Stock Exchange. The boom prices being paid for shares on the Stock Exchange will not be devoted to the development of uranium fields. In many instances the money will revert to persons who purchased shares in the hope they would rise in price. It will not constitute an investment in the industry at all. As regards the second question, it is not possible for me to know what are the prospects of the numerous finds that are reported and that will be reported from time to time while people invest in uranium stock. From reports I have received, including those from departmental geologists, I believe the supply of uranium from Radium Hill will still be required when many of these companies are perhaps in the limbo of forgotten things.

#### AERODROME AT PORT AUGUSTA.

Mr. RICHES—During his recent visit to Canberra was the Premier able to make any representations regarding the establishment of an aerodrome at Port Augusta? This question has been one of long duration and over 12 months has elapsed since the Premier commenced negotiations with the Civil Aviation Department. Is he in a position to make a statement on the matter?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member is rather conservative in suggesting that negotiations commenced 12 months ago. I think it was nearer two years ago. The question was listed for the Premiers' Conference on the basis that normally the Commonwealth takes over aerodromes which have been provided by local authorities, where there is a regular service. That leaves a local authority with the heavy obligation of providing an aerodrome on the speculative chance that the Commonwealth may take it over and reimburse the authority. I asked the Commonwealth whether consideration would be given to amending the general policy, particularly where an air base was required for the Flying Doctor Service. An important Flying Doctor Service centre has been established at Port Augusta but it is handicapped gravely in its work because there is no suitable aerodrome convenient for its planes. The Prime Minister asked me to let the matter lapse, in consideration of which he would personally take the matter up with the Minister for Civil Aviation. I feel that substantial progress has been made with this project, although there was no specific promise that an aerodrome would be established. One of the problems associated with the matter is that if an aerodrome were established on the only suitable site it would involve the Electricity Trust in heavy expenditure in deviating the Port Augusta to Adelaide transmission lines to clear the runways.

#### MURRAY BRIDGE COURT HOUSE.

Mr. WHITE—On June 10 I asked the Premier when the erection of a building in Murray Bridge to be used as a court house and to provide accommodation for the Lands Department and the Department of Agriculture would be commenced. He promised to inquire into the matter. Has he any reply?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am happy to inform the honourable member that money for this project will be set aside in the Loan Estimates soon to be introduced. The plans are well advanced and it is hoped that tenders will be called before Christmas.

### MOTOR CARS FOR SCAFFOLDING INSPECTORS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—In view of the importance of policing the Scaffolding Act can the Premier say whether the Government is prepared to supply motor vehicles to scaffolding inspectors or assist the purchase of motor cars by way of grant or loan and provide the normal allowance paid to departmental officers for the use of motor cars?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The administration of the Act is under the control of the Attorney-General's Department and I am not conversant with the matter. I will obtain a report early next week.

### EYRE PENINSULA WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. PEARSON—The reticulation of water through trunk mains on Eyre Peninsula has been carried out at considerable cost and is sincerely appreciated by residents in that area. Some time ago delays occurred in the further reticulation of water because supplies from the Tod River reservoir were limited. Since then the underground basin at Uley has been tapped and as a result it has been possible to extend a trunk main up the eastern coast to serve another wide area as well as to supplement the Tod River system. In view of the great development occurring both inland and in the township and surroundings of Port Lincoln I foresee that even greater supplies of water will be required, and mains which are now becoming heavily taxed may have to be duplicated. It is understood that in addition to the Uley basin there are other underground basins in that area which contain large quantities of good water. I am anxious that some survey of those resources may be made so that the department may be able to make further extensions to the water system when they become necessary. Are these resources being investigated or is it proposed to investigate them to ascertain what underground supplies in addition to those already tapped may be used?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Some time ago trial bores were put down in the Lincoln basin with promising results. What the honourable member said in regard to the growing requirements of water there is accurate. With the supply of better water from the Uley-Wanilla basin, and the growth of the fine town of Port Lincoln, the usage of water has increased considerably. Whereas a few years ago Port Lincoln used less than 70,000,000 gall. a year, it has now reached a figure of 200,000,000 gall. There is a possibility of obtaining water from

the Lincoln basin for the rapidly growing township of Port Lincoln. I have approved the necessary expenditure for a thorough investigation not only into the Lincoln basin but other basins, such as south of the Uley-Wanilla basin and at Wangary. These investigations will continue at an accelerated rate. When the report is presented it will be made available to the honourable member. There is every prospect of a great deal of augmentation to both these sources of supply.

### SCHOOL DENTISTS.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—The following is an extract from this morning's *Advertiser* under the heading "School Dentists Needed":—

The supply of dentists for school dental work will probably never be sufficient unless dental scholarships are established and graduates appointed to school work. This is stated in the annual report of the Department of Public Health. The report was tabled in Parliament yesterday. The report says the school population has increased by about one half in the past 10 years without any adequate increase in medical staff. Since almost every child needs dental treatment every year, there would need to be about 20 or 30 dentists to attend to those children who do not visit private dentists, the report says. There were three dentists and a senior dentist on school work at the end of 1953 and one of these dentists resigned last January.

Can the Minister of Education say whether the suggestion in the report mentioned will be considered as a means of bringing the dentists employed on school work up to a more adequate number?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to confer with my colleague, the Minister of Health, and let the honourable member have a reply in due course.

### CHILDREN'S WELFARE DEPARTMENT WAITING ROOM.

Mr. HUTCHENS—On occasions a number of women and a few men have to attend at the Prosecution Branch of the Children's Welfare Department to answer inquiries. The waiting room has accommodation for only 12 people, but at times 20 are in it. Most people have to attend there through no fault of their own and they are depressed at having to do so. The room is small and uninviting and dreary in appearance, which adds to the depression. In addition, there is the difficulty that at times men under the influence of liquor attend. Will the Premier see if some improvement can be made to the room in order that people obliged to wait have some privacy and not have their depressed state increased?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will refer the honourable members' question to the Chief Secretary, and if it is possible to alleviate the position I am sure he will take the necessary action.

#### SALE OF AUSTRALIAN WINE OVERSEAS.

Mr. QUIRKE—On the opening day of the session I addressed several questions to the Premier regarding the wine industry. I notice in the press that the industry was discussed at a recent conference at Canberra. Has the Premier anything to report?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—In connection with the questions previously asked by the honourable member I have had discussions with the chief inspector of licensed premises and I am getting out a considerable amount of information on that aspect of the problem. The question of the wine industry generally was discussed yesterday in Canberra and the South Australian Minister of Agriculture asked the Commonwealth to consider a project under which the Commonwealth would make available from the large revenue secured from the industry an adequate sum of money to launch a really effective advertising scheme in the United Kingdom for the sale of wine overseas. For the scheme to be successful we must be able to market a common brand of a high quality wine in a sufficient quantity to make it available in various types, and the advertising must be sufficient to attract storekeepers and others in Great Britain to stock our wines.

Mr. Quirke—As is done by South Africa.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It would be on precisely the same lines taken by South Africa. It has led to an enormous increase in the volume of trade in South African wines in the United Kingdom, whereas our wine trade with the United Kingdom has been falling off until now, I think, it is only about 30 per cent of what it was in pre-war days.

Mr. Quirke—The duties imposed have a lot to do with it.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I accept what the honourable member says, but the duties apply to the South African industry as well.

Mr. Quirke—There are different labour conditions and a much shorter freight distance.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—On the sale price of a bottle of wine the freight difference is infinitesimal. The same duties apply to South African as to Australian wines generally, yet exports from South Africa have gone up by 500 per cent, whereas, I think, the exports of South Australian wine have gone down from

3,000,000gall. to about 1,000,000. No doubt the high duties are an obstacle in connection with the consumption of wine in the United Kingdom, but they are not singularly applied against us. We have a substantial preference over foreign countries. I have made investigations personally on the spot and we made our trade window at South Australia House available for an exhibit of wines from this State. It was an exhibit which would have done credit to any country in the world. People came to South Australia House and said that it was a fine exhibit and asked where they could buy some of the wines, but we had to admit that most of the brands were not marketed in Great Britain at all. Many of them, if marketed at all, were marketed under some brand in a volume insufficient either to win a reputation or ensure continuity of supply. This matter is being examined both from the local and overseas point of view, and anything practical that we can do in connection with it will be done. An examination of South Australian and overseas trade practices and marketing facilities has been made.

Mr. STOTT—I noticed from the press that at a conference at Canberra this week it was suggested that there should be a pool of Commonwealth wines for sale overseas. I understand some consideration was given to increasing the number of wine licences to grocers. Can the Minister of Agriculture say what progress was made in the matter?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The question was generally discussed. The Agricultural Council had before it a resolution from the Wine Board to the effect that the States should be asked to take action to increase the facilities for the consumption of wine in the respective States. It was agreed that it was a matter purely for the States themselves to consider. A suggestion was made by me on behalf of the South Australian Government that a publicity campaign should be undertaken and financed by the Commonwealth from its excise revenues on condition that the wine producers would do what South Africa is doing and pool their products for the purpose of overseas marketing. It was suggested in order that a particular brand of wine could be marketed in the United Kingdom, for instance, of a given standard and acceptable to consumers, and be available in quantity at all times to those who desired it. I understand that at present our wines lose their identity when they reach the United Kingdom and although we may have the best quality wines in our window at South Australia House they

are not available to the people who want them. The identity is lost through the wine being shipped in bulk and bottled by purchasers abroad: they are not sold as Australian wines. It was considered that the proposal should be dealt with possibly at some future Premiers' Conference.

#### KADINA ABATTOIRS.

Mr. McALEES—In reply to my recent question on the proposed Kadina meat works the Premier said that action was being delayed pending a decision on a case in the High Court. Has he anything further to report?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Following on the honourable member's question I discussed the matter with Mr. Sellars of the Metropolitan Meat Company. I asked him whether he was still interested in establishing a project at Wailaroo or Kadina and what was holding it up. He told me that his company was interested in going ahead, but that it could establish an abattoirs only in a district where it was assured of protection within a certain area. One of the points upon which agreement had been reached with the Government was that we would not issue export licences to other export abattoirs within a certain radius of the proposed meat works, in order to enable it to function in the same way as does the Metropolitan Abattoirs. Until the High Court decides who has the jurisdiction to issue export licences we are unable to give that guarantee. Further, Mr. Sellars insisted that his company have the right to bring into the metropolitan area certain quantities of meat rejected for export or some other purpose, so that such surpluses might be disposed of here. I think agreement had been reached on these matters and that a stage had been reached where a Bill could be submitted to the House; then the problem of the export licence arose. I have not lost touch with the project, and, as soon as the High Court reaches a decision I hope we will be able to go forward with it.

#### PETERBOROUGH AND TEROWIE WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yesterday, in reply to my question about the possible extension of the pipeline from Jamestown to Peterborough, the Minister of Works replied that the matter had been referred back to the Engineer-in-Chief for a report on a modified scheme that might prove adequate if the railways converted to diesel electric locomotive power. Can the Minister indicate when that report may be expected?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I cannot give a definite date, for the submission of the report is subject to consideration of other urgent matters. There should be no undue delay, however, and I think it will be available in about three weeks. I have asked the Engineer-in-Chief to go into the matter as early as possible, and I will bring down a report when it is available.

#### BULK HANDLING OF WHEAT.

Mr. HEASLIP—My question is addressed to the Chairman of the Public Works Committee. Section 25 (3) of the Public Works Standing Committee Act states:—

Upon any public work being referred to the committee the committee shall with all convenient dispatch deal with the matter and shall as soon as conveniently practicable, regard being had to the nature and importance of the proposed work, report to the Governor and to both Houses of Parliament the result of its inquiries.

The matter of bulk handling facilities for this State was referred to the committee seven years ago, since when the composition of this House has been changed three times. We are now in the middle of the third Parliament since the reference was made. In view of this fact and the provision I have quoted, will the chairman of the committee assure the House that a report will be brought down within the next month?

Mr. SHANNON (Chairman, Public Works Committee)—I think Parliament is entitled to know what has delayed the consideration of this matter. I make no apology either on my own behalf or on behalf of my predecessor as chairman of the committee. I desire to give members one or two fundamental facts on the costs entailed in a State-wide bulk handling scheme. It would be simple for the committee to submit an unfavourable report on such a scheme; indeed we could have submitted such a report some time ago.

Mr. O'Halloran—About six years nine months ago, when I was a member of the committee!

Mr. Heaslip—The committee is only asked for a report.

Mr. SHANNON—I do not know that that is so. The reference, in this case, was a broad one and gave the committee a free hand to procure information on bulk handling wherever and whenever it might be found. It even secured the services of Mr. Andres, a Harbors Board officer, who, on being sent overseas on a number of matters, was given the special task of investigating bulk handling facilities in

other parts. This he did and presented to the committee much valuable information, but, unfortunately for the State, none of it was of any economic value from the point of view of establishing a bulk handling system. The committee has never felt there was any real problem in the handling of wheat in bulk throughout the country, and there has been no doubt in the minds of its members that something similar to the Western Australian scheme could be adopted for our country sidings, but with regard to port installations the picture is entirely different from that in other States, and the following figures will help members understand this point.

The SPEAKER—I would remind the honourable member that he is answering a question, and the matter cannot be debated. The question is whether you can bring in a report within one month.

Mr. SHANNON—I wish to deal with the question, Mr. Speaker, and then I think the member for Rocky River will be a little more liberal in his time limit.

Mr. Heaslip—After seven years?

Mr. SHANNON—If the honourable member were a member of the committee, he would allow a little more time. I have not been chairman very long. In South Australia we have a number of outports that share our export of surplus wheat. At present our best port, from the point of view of volume, is Port Lincoln. About 8,000,000 bushels, on the average, of wheat and barley is exported annually from Port Lincoln. The latest figures we have had presented to us on orthodox bulk handling show that the capital cost would be about 12s. a bushel. For a plant to handle 1,000,000 bushels the cost would be about £595,000, and it might cost more than that by the time it had been constructed.

Mr. Pearson—In Geelong the cost is only 1s. 2d. a bushel.

Mr. SHANNON—Geelong has this orthodox silo system, and it was installed about 1938, and cost 2s. 6d. a bushel. It had the benefit of putting 28,000,000 bushels of wheat through its installation. Each bushel of wheat put through Geelong has to bear interest and depreciation costs on 1d., but for Port Lincoln these costs would be on 1s. 6d. Members can see that that high cost is not an easy hurdle to get over. This morning I received a letter from Mr. Glowrey, General Manager of Grain Elevators Board, Melbourne, giving me the latest information he had on costs in Victoria. They are constructing bins to take care of carry-over wheat. They are using a different

type of roof construction from any previously attempted. It is an excellent idea that obviates the use of poles.

Mr. Heaslip—Are you giving us a report on bulk handling?

Mr. SHANNON—The information I am giving shows that the committee has not been asleep. It is proposed to construct at Geelong two new bins with a capacity of 9,000,000 bushels each. The total cost, including plant and equipment, will be about £1,125,000, or about 1s. 3d. a bushel. The information we obtained from Mr. Glowrey interested me greatly, particularly in relation to our investigation at Port Lincoln. This information may be of real value to us. If we can get down to a figure approximating even 2s. a bushel for final capital cost I shall be extremely interested. This is the first time we have had any information like this put before the committee. If Parliament wants our report now and does not require us to investigate the latest developments in bulk handling many of the years we have spent seeking information will be wasted. I suggest that members have a little more patience.

Mr. Heaslip—The investigation could go on for another seven years.

Mr. SHANNON—If the honourable member cares to go outside this Chamber he can cash in on what the committee has done, but I shall be going into his district later and I shall have something to say if there are any arguments about this matter. The committee has not been unmindful of the interests of the farmers. I understand that some people have said that farmers could have a bulk handling system almost for thin air. If they are foolish enough to believe that, we can bring down a report giving the data we have collected, and then the farmers can read the facts and figures and decide for themselves. This question is not a dead letter in the archives of the Public Works Committee. It is very much alive, and at the moment we are investigating what may be the answer to our problems.

Mr. HEASLIP—As the committee has been investigating the question of bulk handling for seven years, will the Premier instruct it to finalize its inquiries and bring down a report?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have never been in the position of being able to instruct that committee, which was appointed by Parliament as a watchdog over the actions of the Executive to ensure that money was not spent unwisely. The committee is not under instruction at all from the Government. If it were

it would be as well to dispense with it altogether because its effectiveness, which arises from its independence from the Administration in every way, would be destroyed. The Government is authorized to refer matters to the committee, but has no power to direct the committee when to present a report. Some reports are presented promptly; with others there are sometimes delays.

Mr. Heaslip—Has there ever been a delay of seven years before?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think one matter was delayed much longer. The Government referred the question of water rating in the country to the committee and asked what amounts should be charged. I believe that inquiry extended over three or four Parliaments and finally the committee reported that it was not competent to advise on the matter. I will confer with the chairman of the committee and ascertain whether it is possible to expedite this matter. The Minister of Agriculture, at the recent Canberra conference, raised the question of the amount allocated to this State under the £3,500,000 storage grant made by the Commonwealth. He pointed out that the logical amount to come to South Australia was £750,000 and not £300,000. The Commonwealth promised to investigate the matter and it may be that outside assistance will be obtained in respect of the storage to be installed in this State. I will raise the honourable member's question with the Chairman of the committee on the distinct understanding that the Government has no right to give directions in the matter.

Mr. McALEES—Will the chairman of the committee consider taking evidence from water-side workers at Wallaroo before bringing in a report on bulk handling? There is no doubt that much valuable information may be obtained which would assist the committee's investigation.

Mr. SHANNON—Ever since I have been a member of this committee no person or group of persons has been refused the right to tender evidence on any project, and the policy of the committee will remain the same.

#### CIVIL DEFENCE.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I understand from press reports that there were some discussions at Canberra yesterday on civil defence. Has the Premier anything to report?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I took this matter up with the Commonwealth Government, and one or two other State Premiers mentioned it.

I believe a question was asked in the Commonwealth Parliament about it too. The questions of what action should be taken at present, what organization should be set up, and the various responsibilities of the Commonwealth and State Governments, were discussed yesterday. It was resolved that the Commonwealth should set up a school for training civil defence operatives. The training course may not be more than about six months, but the school will be going continuously and training persons in various duties. This State agreed to participate, and I believe it will be our duty to provide some of the instructors at the school. We agreed that the Commonwealth Civil Defence Commissioner should have access to the States' personnel and that there should be a general discussion and review of the position in each State. Generally speaking, the problems in civil defence are not the same in all States. Some areas are closer to the danger zone, and some may, while others may not, present good military targets. Many of the documents submitted to us were on the secret list, but the tangible thing was that a school will be inaugurated from which a steady stream of trainees will be forthcoming. This will provide a trained nucleus on which to build, if necessary, in the future.

#### COMMONWEALTH GRANTS FOR EDUCATION.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—I have often advocated a specific fund being made available by the Commonwealth Government for education. I understand from press and radio reports that this matter was discussed at the recent Premiers' Conference. Can the Premier say whether there is any possibility of the Commonwealth Government making money available for educational purposes?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am sure the honourable member is not overlooking the fact that the Commonwealth Government already makes fairly large sums available to assist education in certain directions.

Mr. John Clark—That money is not specifically for this purpose.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is specifically for education. The Commonwealth Government provides a substantial grant to the University of Adelaide and to all other universities and makes annual grants for scholarships to enable children of promise to undertake advanced courses of education irrespective of the financial position of their parents. There are many ways in which the Commonwealth assists in education. Another example is the



provision of free milk for school children, although that may come under the category of health. The States requested that additional moneys be made available for education. I think the Commonwealth attitude can be summed up by saying that the Commonwealth does not desire to control the education of the States. It believes that that would be a retrograde step. It also believes that money for education should come through the normal channels of the Loan Council and from tax reimbursements to the States. The discussion was fruitful, although I cannot say that any grant for education, as such, is likely to arise.

Mr. John Clark—Would you agree with the Federal attitude?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The State has certain functions under the Constitution and I think that if the Commonwealth made grants for specific educational purposes it would be abrogating the rights of this Parliament, which decides how the State revenue is spent. This Parliament decides how much of the revenue shall be devoted to the respective services of the State and I think that is constitutionally the proper way.

#### UNDESIRABLE PUBLICATIONS PROSECUTIONS.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Last year a provision was inserted in the Police Offences Act for the purpose of ridding this State of undesirable literature. Can the Minister representing the Attorney-General say whether any prosecutions have been made under that provision and, if so, what papers have been banned as a result?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—From memory, I do not think any prosecutions have been launched under the new Act, but one was instituted under the old Act and a conviction obtained. However, I think that prosecution might well have been launched under the new Act. I will refer the question to the Attorney-General and bring down a reply.

#### PUBLIC WORKS STANDING COMMITTEE ACT.

Mr. STOTT—On June 10 I asked the Premier whether it was intended to amend the Public Works Committee Act which provides that all public works estimated to cost £30,000 or more had to be referred to the committee for investigation and report. I suggested that amount might be increased. The Premier promised to refer the matter to the chairman of the committee. Has he received a reply?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The reply I received was that the committee did not consider it was its function to decide an amount. The matter is now being considered by Cabinet.

#### HOMES FOR PENSIONERS.

Mr. TAPPING—It was announced some time ago that the Housing Trust would construct 108 houses for pensioners. A recent report issued by the trust indicates that 86 homes are already in the process of construction. As applications for these homes total about 500, will the Premier consider recommending to the trust the construction of additional pensioner homes?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will refer the question to the chairman of the trust and bring down a reply in due course.

#### BRIDGE AT BLANCHETOWN.

Mr. STOTT—Some time ago the Premier said that he would obtain reports on the possibility of constructing a bridge across the Murray at Blanchetown and would refer the matter to the Public Works Committee. Has any progress been made and when is the matter likely to be referred to the committee?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A committee has been appointed by the Government to investigate that proposal and as soon as its report is available I will let the honourable member have further information.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

Mr. TEUSNER moved—

That three months' leave of absence be granted to the honourable member for Light (Mr. H. D. Michael) on account of absence from the State on Commonwealth Parliamentary Association business.

Motion carried.

Mr. TAPPING moved—

That one month's leave of absence be granted to the honourable member for Thebarton (Mr. Fred Walsh) on account of absence from the State on urgent public business.

Motion carried.

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

(Continued from July 27. Page 139.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—The speech with which His Excellency the Governor opened this session was similar to the speeches made on former occasions. It contained much historical record and promises

that action would be taken to deal with some of the problems confronting the State at the moment. I agree wholeheartedly with much of what His Excellency said, particularly the reference to the recent visit of Her Majesty the Queen and the pleasure it gave to all citizens. It gave them the opportunity to express their loyalty to the Throne. The speech expressed sincere thanks to the Ministers—and the Opposition heartily supports it—for making the visit to South Australia an outstanding success. I endorse the references made to the appointment of additional Ministers and the consequent re-arrangement of Ministerial portfolios. I am particularly pleased that the portfolio of Education is again in the House of Assembly. I congratulate the new Minister of Education on the vigorous policy he has adopted since his appointment. He finds out things for himself and then makes decisions according to the personal knowledge gained. That will result in increased benefits to the State. I also join with His Excellency in expressing appreciation of the services rendered to the public by the former Minister of Agriculture, Sir George Jenkins. I do not think many people suffer more violently on political principles than the former Minister and I, but I recognize that he rendered long service to the Department of Agriculture and other departments during his political life.

There were some paragraphs in His Excellency's Speech with which I do not agree so wholeheartedly. Paragraph 5 referred to the control of inflationary factors in our economic system and said:—

The inflationary factors in our economy have been brought under control with the result that a large measure of stability of prices and costs has been achieved.

Recently we have had a spate of propaganda from the Commonwealth Government regarding the inflationary forces which are still pressing heavily on the economics of the nation and saying that something should be done about it. That sort of thing is usual from that type of Government. Whether State or Commonwealth, it is always able to bring forward a bogey which is more or less innocuous, and then, after scaring the people, it finds that the world goes on and nothing is done. Whatever the measure of stability achieved in this matter, and it is not a great measure, it has been achieved entirely at the expense of the workers. In the achievement great injustices have been done to them. First there was the pegging of cost of living adjustments, and even if the cost of

living goes up and up the wages remain stationary. That imposes a penalty on all workers, particularly the worker with a large family: the most desirable citizen is the one who suffers most. Then the Commonwealth Arbitration Court said that no increases in margins would be granted because it would cut across the policy adopted in pegging cost of living adjustments. In the Governor's Speech and public statements made by the Premier and other Ministers of Liberal persuasion, State or Federal, are demands for increased efficiency and greater production. If that is expected there must be a reward for the skill required from the workers. It is well known that the reward for skill, which was admitted and accepted up to a few years ago, has almost entirely disappeared in the new wage set-up under the Menzies-Fadden Government. I have not heard of any vigorous protest by the Playford Government. I have not seen any suggestion that it will act towards removing the injustices and I suppose it will be left, as it always is, to the Opposition to take action.

Paragraph 6 of His Excellency's Speech related to primary production and stated:—

As a result of excellent spring rains the harvest of the season of 1953-54 exceeded expectations. Twenty-nine million bushels of wheat were produced at an average of 18 bush. per acre; and a record area of more than 1,000,000 acres was sown to barley and yielded 28,000,000 bush. During the season, over 12,000,000 sheep were depastured in South Australia—the greatest number in the history of the State. Increasing numbers of graziers are running small herds of beef cattle in conjunction with sheep, and last season the beef cattle in South Australia increased by 29,000 or approximately 15 per cent.

The wheat position is very involved at present. The Premiers, State Ministers of Agriculture, and the Commonwealth Minister for Commerce have decided on a home consumption price somewhat higher than the ascertained cost of production figure, merely because it is considered to be desirable that the farmer shall be encouraged to grow wheat. On the other hand, Sir John Teasdale, chairman of the Australian Wheat Board, has seriously suggested that wheat production should be curtailed because we cannot sell it overseas. According to the *Advertiser* of July 21, Mr. Renshaw, president of the New South Wales Wheatgrowers' Union, advocates a drastic cut in production by Australian wheatgrowers. Indeed, he says that any farmer who can carry on without growing wheat should do so to

save the industry and help bring sanity back to it. These statements show how confused the position is becoming, and I will not say much about it this afternoon lest I confuse it still more. I must disagree, however, with Sir John Teasdale, Mr. Renshaw, and any others who advocate curtailment of Australian wheat production. Furthermore, I am not happy about the incentive price of 14s. a bushel. The cost of production figure has been inflated over recent years mainly by the increasing value of wheat-growing land. I remember when the average value of wheat-growing land in my electorate was about £10 an acre, whereas today it is more than £30.

Mr. Shannon—You don't mean the value; you mean the price it is bringing.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes, but that price represents its value to the purchaser because he must recoup that price, and that is one of the main reasons for the continually increasing demand to raise the home consumption price of wheat. I agree with the member for Onkaparinga that the value of

this land is not £30 an acre, and the time is not far distant when it will be selling for considerably less. We cannot sustain artificial home consumption prices merely to support such inflated land prices. Last year the acreage sown to wheat in South Australia was the lowest for sixty years, which is not a good illustration of the maintenance of production. Certainly, the yield was 27,000,000 bushels, giving an average of 18 bushels to the acre, and that saved the situation; but if it had been a lean year or a drought year similar to 1914 what would have been the position? In 1914-15 a yield of 3,527,000 bushels was reaped from 2,500,000 acres—an average of 1.41 bushels an acre. Had that average been reaped from the acreage sown last year, the total production of wheat in South Australia would have been 2,129,000 instead of 27,000,000 bushels. It is only by comparing conditions over a long period that we can arrive at a sound conclusion; therefore I have taken the four decennial periods since 1911-12, which show the following results:—

Decennial period.	Total yield (bushels).	Av annual yield.	Av. annual acreage.	Av. yield per acre.
1911-12 to 1920-21 .. ..	243,000,000	24,300,000	2,370,000	10.3
1921-22 to 1930-31 .. ..	292,000,000	29,200,000	2,920,000	10.0
1931-32 to 1940-41 .. ..	347,000,000	34,700,000	3,273,000	10.6
1941-42 to 1950-51 .. ..	264,000,000	26,400,000	2,035,000	13.0

Had the average yield per acre over those years been the same as in 1914-15, the average annual yield would have been 3,342,000 bushels for the period 1911 to 1920; 4,117,000 for 1921-30; 4,615,000 for 1931-40; and 2,869,000 for 1941-50. I realize that the increased average yield in recent years is partly due to the fact that a considerable area of marginal land has gone out of wheat production and that there is a better rotation of crops than previously; but the primary cause of the increased average yield has been the beneficence of Almighty God. If we run into a lean period similar to 1914-15 we will not be worrying about curtailment of production; if we have no wheat in reserve we will be importing it from other States and even overseas as we did in 1914-15. Despite the temporary difficulties with regard to wheat marketing we have an obligation to the hungry millions in other parts, particularly in other parts of the British Commonwealth, to see that food production is not only maintained but increased, so that the most potent producer of Communism and Communists—hunger—may disappear from the face of the earth!

The number of sheep in South Australia has reached an all time record, and one would think

this would be of some benefit to South Australian meat consumers. The increased sheep and beef cattle production referred to in His Excellency's Speech should mean a better deal for the harassed housewife when she goes to purchase the week-end meat for her family. But what is the real position? Recently, according to the *Advertiser* of July 14, the Premier said that butchers were still having to pay high prices for mutton and hogget at the Abattoirs stock market and that the retail prices of these commodities would be increased by amounts varying from 3d. to 5d. a lb.; therefore, even with this record number of sheep, the price of meat, which was already high, has recently been increased.

What of the beef cattle position? According to the *Advertiser* of July 22, Mr. H. J. Bird, manager of the pastoral firm of S. Kidman & Company, said there would be a shortage of beef cattle in Adelaide during August and September. Of the 2,000 cattle yarded at the Abattoirs sale the previous week only about 60 were in good condition. Despite the increase by 29,000 in the number of South Australian beef cattle, beef is scarcer now than it has ever been, and its price has risen by amounts

varying from 3d. to 6d. a lb. This afternoon's *News* reports that the price of the humble corned beef, which the family used to depend on for a slightly cheaper week-end meal, is to rise by 3d. lb. The increase of 29,000 in our beef cattle is not big when it is realized that South Australians eat more than 2,000 cattle a week; therefore the increase is only about sufficient for 15 weeks, and for the rest of the year we shall have to depend in the main on beef from the Northern Territory and South-western Queensland. A much higher priority should be given to the completion of the north-south line from Alice Springs to Birdum, and full consideration should be given to the proposal put forward in this House recently by the member for Light, namely, that we should build a new railway from Marree to a point about 250 miles along the Birdsville track in the direction of the channel country to assist in bringing cattle from that area at all times. Stock are now brought down by road, but their movement is limited to the number that can be droved in fairly good seasons, and there are not many good seasons in that country. The member for Light, Mr. Michael, has been through that country. Unfortunately, I have not, but he suggested that if the first 250 miles were bridged by rail it would probably solve the problem. Joint action should be taken by the State and Commonwealth Governments on this matter.

I do not share the Government's pleasure at the settlement of ex-servicemen on the land. Paragraph 8 of the Governor's Speech said that great success had attended the co-operative effort of the Commonwealth and State Governments in war service land settlement. It says that the total number of settlers that have been settled is 760, and that there were 915 who had obtained agricultural lands or secured Crown lands, making a total of 1,675 ex-servicemen settled since World War II. Have a look at what happened after World War I. Of course, we did not then have nearly the same population, nor as many ex-servicemen, and there should not have been the same great need for soldier settlement. However, by 1921—three years after hostilities ceased—2,245 had been settled, and by 1928—which corresponds to the present day—2,617. Therefore, results following on World War II. are nothing to be complacent about.

Mr. Brookman—What happened by 1932?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Unfortunately, by 1932 many returned soldiers settled after World War I. had met the same fate as many settlers who had never been in the services, though

they had been on the land all their lives. Bad seasons and low prices sent them insolvent. If the same set of circumstances had obtained after World War II. there would not be any returned soldiers on the land now, because the land secured for ex-servicemen after World War I. was at least made available comparatively cheaply. Only good seasons and high prices have brought about the degree of success attained by those who have been settled. I am not complaining about the way the men who have been settled have been treated, but I complain that not enough have been settled. If a vigorous effort had been made before land sky-rocketed in price, particularly when land values were pegged by the Commonwealth Government, we could have settled two or three times the number of ex-servicemen.

Mr. Hutchens—It is a shame what would happen if we had a recession.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Exactly. We have been told that the administration of the Highways Department will be revitalized under the control of the new Minister. I will say that he has certainly got around and had a look at the roads for himself, and I hope he shows the same capacity for making decisions that the Minister of Education has shown. Then we might get somewhere. I am not happy about the way the money provided by the public of South Australia, particularly the motor-ing public, is being expended. The figures are astronomical. In 1949-50 the amount spent was £3,166,000; in 1950-51 it was £3,384,000; in 1951-52 it was £3,938,000; in 1952-53 it was £3,804,000; in 1953-54 it was about £4,281,000—a total of £18,573,000 in five years. I travel a good deal over roads in all parts of South Australia, but I am not satisfied that we have got value for that huge expenditure. We should have a good look at the administration of road construction and maintenance. We might even have to look at local government policy and practice. To some extent I agree with the statements made yesterday by the member for Mitcham when he spoke about providing interest-free loans to enable country councils to purchase road-making machinery. However, he did not think that a good policy. He recommended that the work should be let to contractors. I remember when practically all country road work was done in this way. There was no day labour system, and because the contractors were so inefficient and because of the extreme difficulty in imposing proper supervision over them, local authorities reverted to the system of making and maintaining roads by day labour.

They pointed out how much they saved and what greater value they got for their money by abandoning the contract system.

Mr. Corcoran—Exactly.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The honourable member has had a long and happy association with local government in the South-East, and he confirms my views. The State should be divided into highway zones, with an engineer in charge of each.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—That has been done.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—To some extent, but the engineer would be responsible for all the road work in his zone. The present system breaks down because the engineers have not been given suitable labour. Houses should be built at appropriate places to provide homes for highway workers and their families. Railway maintenance men have been provided with homes. Notwithstanding the labour shortage that has been endured since the war the railway maintenance gangs have been kept up to strength, mainly because men were prepared to join these gangs in order to get a home for themselves and families. Each highways engineer would take a pride in his own district, and I believe the employees, if given proper housing, would also take the same pride.

Mr. Brookman—These men would be used for road maintenance?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—For both construction and maintenance.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—A construction gang is a big one, and you could not employ the men at the one spot all the time.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—There are such gangs in the railways. The point is that having built homes and obtained permanent maintenance employees there would be a pool of machinery also which could be made available to district councils as well. That machinery would be operated and serviced by competent men. A council may lose the employee driving the grader. It then advertises the vacancy, but apparently few qualifications are required. The council usually has to take the first applicant. A machine costing £4,000 might be put under the care of a man who knows little about it. I wonder how much damage has been caused by employees before they knew how to handle valuable machinery. That is something the new Minister might investigate, as it might avoid the necessity of making substantial loans to councils to enable them to purchase machinery, which often lies idle.

Mr. Brookman—Could not the work be undertaken by private contractors?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I have had experience of private contractors in my district. From what I have been told it is apparent that members of the council or the Highways Department could perform the work far more efficiently and for less cost than the private contractors. We gave the private contractors away years ago because they could not be supervised and we will soon give them away again. Paragraphs 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 22, and 23 of the Governor's Speech which refer to the Electricity Trust, Leigh Creek coalfield, development of mineral resources at Radium Hill, forestry undertakings, new timber mill at Mount Gambier and the proposed acceleration of school programmes, are particularly pleasing. I am not so happy about housing because more people are seeking homes today than 12 months ago. Then there seemed to be a falling off in the demand but the position has changed and members are again hearing stories of genuine hardship. The relaxation of the provisions of the Landlord and Tenant Act is no doubt responsible. It is now easier for owners to obtain premises for the occupancy of their sons, daughters, and relations. I know of a case where a family, which had occupied the same home for 17 years, is to be evicted because the owner requires the house for a daughter and her husband. Another couple occupied a home for 38 years. The husband died a few years ago and the widow is now threatened with eviction because the owner requires the premises for his married daughter, who is coming from a foreign country.

Mr. Brookman—What is wrong with that?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—People who have been housed all their lives in a home should not be dispossessed to make way for married daughters coming from foreign countries.

Mr. Brookman—An owner should be entitled to house his married daughter.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The people of this country are entitled to some consideration. I have the utmost sympathy for migrants but they should be obliged to do something on their own behalf. It is not fair that they should be permitted to purchase homes and dispossess Australians who, in many instances, never had a chance to purchase the houses which are being sold over their heads. In some instances they have not been offered the right to purchase. The housing programme must be accelerated. The programme, after all, is not Liberal policy,

but pure undiluted socialism—a policy which members opposite continually criticize the Opposition for proposing.

Mr. Travers—We are not criticising you for your socialism—we are sympathizing.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The honourable member will never have need of sympathy from the Opposition while he continues his policy of supporting socialism, because it will vindicate itself, as it always has in the respects I have mentioned—forestry, Radium Hill, Leigh Creek, the Electricity Trust and other schemes which square up entirely with the principles of the Labor Party and not with the principles of the Liberal Party. In May last, the Federal Liberal leaders and some State Liberal leaders stormed the country proclaiming their faith in private enterprise and asserting that it should not be interfered with. They said that Governments should only legislate and have no part in the creation of trusts or the development of natural resources. That is the Liberal policy one day but the next we find the efforts of State socialism, or State enterprise, being lauded.

In the *Advertiser* of July 20 Sir Philip McBride is reported as having said:—

Australia had to develop and expand its primary industry at a much greater rate than ever before. Compared with many other countries, Australia was lagging behind. The demand for food was greater in many parts of the world than it was before the war. In Europe the standard of living was about the same but in Asia it was 18 per cent lower.

Asia is the danger spot to Australian security. We must not only restore that 18 per cent of living standard which was lost but endeavour to provide them with a better standard of living. Sir Philip continued:—

Australia's rural production was important not only for the benefit of Australians themselves but for those living in countries torn by war and turmoil. It would help to stop the encroachment of communism.

I entirely agree with those sentiments. In the *Advertiser* of July 21 the Premier, when addressing the Australian Primary Producers' Union, was reported to have said:—

Australia must rely on its primary exports to finance the imports necessary to develop the country. After the war Australia had found eager overseas buyers for its products sometimes regardless of quality and sometimes at prices highly favourable to Australia. That provision had changed. The position of Australia's primary industry was sound but growers had to look to the quality of their products and the costs of production.

I also agree with that principle. We must be careful in examining our costs of production to ensure that we do not adopt the wrong

unit of cost. I have heard it suggested that costs must be lowered in both primary and secondary industries. Those who make such assertions leave no doubt in the minds of their hearers that they mean that wages must be decreased to a standard comparable with low wage countries overseas which are seeking to sell to Australia. It is suggested that if we purchase more from Japan, for example, then Japan will purchase more from us. In Australia there are 9,000,000 people who enjoy a standard of living which has been laboriously built up over the years and the Australian market is the best possible for all types of production. Is it not better to have some hundreds who enjoy a decent standard of living employed in an Australian factory than to have a similar number who live on rice employed in a factory in Japan? Is it not better for the Australian economy that the market should be here rather than that we should hawk to markets overseas? I suggest that our economy must be based fundamentally on an Australian standard. I do not suggest that we should not assist in the development of backward countries but our part must be taken as an Australian gesture. It would not be difficult to do if we used the financial and productive resources of this country simultaneously towards that end.

Sir Philip McBride and the Premier were reported as expressing such beautiful sentiments but there is nothing in the Governor's Speech to give effect to them. Consider the question of land settlement. In 1939 there were 31,280 people obtaining their living as principals on the land in South Australia. By 1951 the number had decreased to 28,698. The number of persons on the land as principal primary producers is decreasing with the passage of years and will continue to decrease because the astronomical prices land is bringing precludes any young man, who is anxious to engage on the land in his own right, from doing so. The men who are on the land as principals are gradually getting older and no young men are being encouraged to take their places. As these men get older they get land hungry, and irrespective of whether they can put it to economic use they purchase more. Then they start to wreck the improvements, no matter how good they are, which makes it almost impossible to re-establish the holdings as individual productive units.

Mr. Brookman—You are talking about your own district?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Anywhere between here and Port Augusta.

Mr. Brookman—It applies more to marginal lands than anywhere else.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—It applies in Booborowie and Bundaleer, and in some of the best mixed farming districts. Apparently nothing is being done in the matter, so we must see that our lands are properly classified and allotted for use in the best possible way.

Mr. Pearson—Who would decide that?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—In our Department of Agriculture and the Soil Conservation Branch there are experts. It is being done in America in an increasing number of States and as far as I can gather it will soon be the popular policy there.

Mr. Brookman—You would compel specified areas to grow certain crops?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—No. I do not believe in compulsion in that way. I would acquire land compulsorily on a fair basis of compensation because anyone has the right to own land and use it as he determines.

Mr. Pearson—What if a man had cleared the scrub and made the land grow something?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—He would be entitled to compensation. I would not unfairly dispossess anyone. I would see that the land carried the maximum number of people, and it is vital that they should be carried. If the land does not carry white people, before we are much older it will carry coloured people who will not recognize land titles.

Mr. Pearson—Do you think the pioneers would have cleared scrub land and produced crops if they thought they would be compensated only for the clearing?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I said that the Labor Party considers that if it is necessary to acquire land compulsorily the owner shall be adequately compensated.

Mr. Hawker—1942 values plus 15 per cent, like New South Wales?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The honourable member cannot get me involved in a comparison with what is done in New South Wales. I am the Leader of the Labor Party in this State and I make Labor Party policy announcements. I say again that we believe in adequate compensation. We do not believe in an injustice being done to anyone. We should get more people on the land and get them there quickly. I would classify the land in broad general terms. Much of it would be suitable for mixed farming. I would not mind what rent was paid. We should first

get the people on the land and then get them producing the maximum without impairing the soil fertility.

I intended to say a few things about trams and railways but I shall leave most of it until the Estimates are before us. I am not at all happy about tramway proposals. Apparently they are being accepted by the Government without much consideration. When we had before us a Bill reconstituting the Tramways Trust it was said that with an expenditure of £1,150,000 the undertaking could be put on a payable basis, but we have already spent £1,400,000 and the position is getting worse. Now it is suggested that we should put in another £6,000,000 to enable the trust to dump its trams and replace them with diesel buses. When I was abroad I saw that trams had been entirely eliminated from London and New York, but those cities have something which South Australia does not possess—a wonderful underground railway system. In London the underground railway carries 90 per cent of the people and judging by the few I saw travelling in buses in New York the underground railway carries most of the people. Should we discard our trams, particularly the Glenelg trams which run on their own track? No doubt in a few years' time after we replace the trams with diesel buses we will get a request for the expenditure of from £30,000,000 to £40,000,000 in providing an underground railway system. I give a warning, and I speak for the Opposition, that more information will be needed before there can be any support for the voting of another penny to the trust. Members on this side will want to be satisfied that the money will be spent wisely and well.

Now I want to refer to the preservation of our natural flora and the creation of a green belt around the city, which is an important subject. On July 22 the press reported that Professor Cleland had said that unless action was taken now to set aside suitable areas as reserves it would be too late. He suggested areas in the Mount Compass district and on Lower Yorke Peninsula as suitable for reserves. Little had been preserved of the native vegetation in the mid-north between Adelaide and the Flinders Ranges. That is only an abbreviation of what he said, but it is substantially the import of his remarks. I agree with him entirely. In the United States of America on every farm an effort is made to preserve an area, certainly only a small acreage, of

natural vegetation and timber, but spread over all farms it makes a magnificent show and provides a great deal of protection to the soil from eroding winds. If the same thing could be done here it would be beneficial, particularly to posterity. At present we are concerned about the proposal to have a green belt around the metropolitan area, but two things have to be properly resolved. First, there is the question of who will find the money, and, secondly, who will exercise the control. When these two questions have been answered perhaps we may be on the way to establishing a green belt.

In conclusion, I want to say that the Opposition, as always, will treat all measures introduced by the Government on their merits, and if the Opposition is satisfied it will agree

to their passage, but if it believes they require amendment it will move to amend them. If it believes they are thoroughly bad it will seek to defeat them. The Opposition will have measures of its own to introduce and it is hoped that they will receive the same impartial consideration from Government members as Government proposals will receive from this side of the House. Then, at the end of the session, we will be able to say that we have made a contribution towards solving some of the problems of the State.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.28 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, July 29, at 2 p.m.