

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, August 24, 1954.

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

### QUESTIONS.

#### REDUCTION IN COMMONWEALTH GRANTS.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—As the amount provided in the Federal Budget for grants to South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania has been reduced from £15,400,000 to £12,300,000, can the Premier say whether he has had any indication of the effect that will have on the grant to South Australia and, because of that, the effect on the financial position of the State?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received a telegram from the Prime Minister stating that the amount recommended for South Australia this year by the Grants Commission is £2,225,000 but I have not yet received an indication from the Commission as to the basis of its report, so I hesitate to make a pronouncement at the present time upon it. It will be examined in due course and I will then advise the House on the matter.

#### SUPREME COURT ACCOMMODATION.

Mr. TRAVERS—Last week I addressed a question to the Minister of Education, representing the Attorney-General, relating to the lack of accommodation at the Supreme Court and he promised to obtain a report. Has he any further information?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I conferred with the Attorney-General last week, as promised, and I have received a report from him as follows:—

I have noted the comments of Mr. Travers, M.P., in Parliament in regard to the need for rooms for witnesses, counsel, and the interviewing of accused persons. I have been aware of the need for such accommodation for some time, and have consulted Mr. Justice Reed, the Master of the Supreme Court, and the Architect-in-Chief with a view to providing the necessary accommodation, but it is impossible at present to make any accommodation available in the existing building.

The Architect-in-Chief has been asked to prepare plans for the building of a new library wing at the Supreme Court which, with alterations to part of the present rooms, will enable the required provision to be made. Every endeavour is being made to expedite the preparations of the plans so that the necessary approvals can be obtained to proceed with the work which will involve a reference to the Public Works Committee. In addition

to this library wing which will also include accommodation for the Sheriff and his staff, plans are being prepared for another building which will provide additional Criminal Courts and the necessary accommodation for staff, witnesses, and counsel.

#### SATELLITE TOWN NEAR SALISBURY.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Last Thursday, in reply to a question concerning the Gawler sewerage scheme, the Chairman of the Public Works Committee said:—

I understand that the department first wants to know what are the ultimate requirements of the proposed satellite town near Salisbury which is to be built in the near future, as I understand the department believes it will be able to connect the satellite town, North Salisbury and Gawler with the one treatment plant. Recently there has been a transfer of labour from the Housing Trust because there has not been a continuity of work for some builders. I do not know whether the Chairman of the Public Works Committee has more knowledge of the satellite town than the Premier, but can the Premier indicate how soon that proposal will be commenced, particularly as land for building is getting short and there is not sufficient employment to retain certain building operatives until the Housing Trust's programme in and around the metropolitan area has been revised?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—What the honourable member said is correct. The trust is at present short of land available immediately for building in the metropolitan area, and has arranged to extend its operations to the new satellite town adjoining the main road at Smithfield. The Government hesitated to release the plan of the new proposed town until legislation was before the House controlling the operations of subdivision. That Bill is now before members and in due course the Government will release the plan so that people can see what is contemplated. It was useless releasing it if it would give rise to a crop of speculative land acquisitions, many of them of the type not desired in the overall planning of the area. Water and sewerage requirements have been investigated recently, and both these activities will have to come before the Public Works Committee. In one instance the estimated cost is about £700,000, and I fancy in the other about £750,000.

#### URANIUM DEVELOPMENT.

Mr. DUNKS—A report in yesterday's *Advertiser* referred to the sale of uranium from Australia to the United States of America and referred to an atomic pool arrangement first

proposed by General Eisenhower. The part dealing with Australia said:—

Officials have been unwilling to name the countries which would, at first, be principally involved in discussing the scheme, but, apart from the Soviet Union and the United States, only Britain and Canada are in a position to contribute fissionable material. Australia, Belgium and South Africa, however, are important producers of uranium ore, and are known to be interested in any plan in which they would receive finished atomic products in return for providing the raw materials to the United States.

From what I have heard and read I believe South Australia is in advance of the other States, and probably the Commonwealth itself, in the processing of uranium ore. Can the Premier say whether we are in a position to sell concentrates to America or under what conditions we must send it?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It would be uneconomic to ship ore to the United States of America except, perhaps, very small parcels of high-grade ore, because of transport charges. This, of course, applies to other countries beside Australia. In the main, uranium is usually processed in the country where it is established, and it is then sent forward to the combined agency in a processed form, usually as uranium oxide of varying degrees of purity. That reduces the cost of transport, and does not include the very high cost of making the uranium oxide into a fissionable material. That is a later and more costly process. What is contemplated in South Australia is to produce the uranium oxide and then send it forward as a fairly pure concentrate. I am not able to say how far advanced other Australian projects are, except that I have seen in the press that the Commonwealth proposes to start large-scale production in the near future.

#### WATER AND SEWERAGE CHARGES.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—On August 19 a paragraph appeared in the press to the effect that there was to be an increase in the charges for water and sewerage connections, which must be regarded as excessively high. They were in accordance with regulations under the Sewerage and Waterworks Act. For water connections they were—for  $\frac{1}{4}$ in. pipe £8 instead of £3 12s. 6d., an increase of over 100 per cent; for  $\frac{1}{2}$ in. pipe £10 instead of £3 17s. 6d., an increase of nearly 200 per cent; for 1in. pipe £12 10s. instead of £4 10s., an increase of nearly 200 per cent, for  $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. pipe £17 10s.; for  $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. pipe £21 and for 2in. pipe £27 10s. I do not know the percentage increase of the last three,

but they are probably in proportion to the others. The new sewerage scale will be for  $\frac{1}{4}$ in. pipe £17 instead of £5, an increase of 240 per cent, and for  $\frac{1}{2}$ in. pipe £22 instead of £6, an increase of over 260 per cent. In view of the hardship that these charges must impose on future householders, can the Premier give the reason for the very steep increases, and say how much additional revenue it is estimated will be obtained?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Those are increases in charges by the department for work done inside the boundary of the property of the person who has applied for a water or sewerage connection. Of course, there is no obligation on him to go to the department. If he likes, he can have the work done privately. The present charges were fixed about 25 years ago and have not been altered since. In consequence, year by year, as wages and costs have increased, the losses to the department in making the connections have risen steeply until today they approach £100,000. That is a direct subsidy by the State towards the erection of houses. There is no justification for it, because it is done with borrowed money and it means that everybody has to meet an interest bill for all time for what is really a private undertaking. There is no question of addition to revenue: all the increased charges do is to minimize the losses. Under the new regulations, instead of there being a loss of about 80 per cent, in future the loss will only be about 20 per cent.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Following on the question asked by Mr. John Clark, will the Premier ascertain from the Housing Trust the extra charges to be met by the trust up to June, 1955?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. It will not be difficult to ascertain that amount because it will be only a matter of multiplication. I give an assurance that the increased charges will not curtail the activities of the trust.

#### STERILIZATION OF HOTEL GLASSES.

Mr. Wm. JENKINS—Has the Premier an answer to my question of August 11 regarding the sterilization of hotel glasses?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have a reply from the health authorities in which they state that inspections will be made and that this matter will be supervised in the future.

#### DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES ON SEMAPHORE LINE.

Mr. TAPPING—Is it the intention of the railways to run diesel electric locomotives on the Adelaide-Semaphore line as a means of

improving the service and thereby inducing greater patronage?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A considerable time ago Cabinet approved the purchase of a number of diesel engines to be used for the improvement of both the metropolitan and country services. Some initial difficulties had to be overcome with the transmission systems of these engines, and this held them up for some time, but I understand that has now been satisfactorily adjusted and that these diesels will be run on both metropolitan and country lines and will give a greatly improved service.

#### MOTOR SPARE PARTS PRICES.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked some time ago about the price of a piece of tubing to connect a motor car engine to the exhaust box?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have had this matter investigated. The fitting concerned was rather more than what the honourable member had been informed. It was not just a straight pipe, but a tapered one which had a branch connection on it, and it was rather intricate. The cost of this fitting has gone up about 800 per cent since price control was taken off spare parts. I believe the charge was excessive and I have instructed the Prices Commissioner to take up the charge with the principal company. As soon as I have received a reply from the company I will advise the honourable member what action can be taken. Motor spare parts are not controlled in any of the States now, quite contrary to the advice that the South Australian Government gave in this matter, for we held that there was a prospect of serious overcharging. Other States did not take that view, and as the price was de-controlled in other States and spare parts are mainly manufactured outside South Australia, it was not possible for us to retain control here. What the honourable member has brought forward only substantiates what I said when de-control took place.

#### HIDE AND SKIN PRICES.

Mr. HUTCHENS—The *Sunday Advertiser* of August 21, under the heading "Shoes will be Dearer but Better," states:—

Decontrol of hides and skins would eventually force up the price of shoes, but they would be of better quality, the president of the S.A. Shoemakers' Association (Mr. W. J. Holdcroft) said today. Better quality skins previously reserved for export would now become available and manufacturers would have a wider selection, he said. The increase in the price of men's shoes would be considerable, because high-grade leather was used in making them. A price increase in skins and hides was

expected at the Adelaide sale on Monday afternoon, but makers did not foresee that prices for yearling and calf skins would rise 100 per cent as they had in Melbourne during the week.

I ask the Premier:—(1) Is it a fact that hides sold in Adelaide yesterday at prices 2d. and 4d. a pound above the recent appraised prices? (2) Is it correct that 9 to 12 lb. yearling hides increased in price from 15½d. under the controlled appraisal system to 23d.; 13 to 19 lb. hides from 14½d. to 22d.; 20 to 27 lb. hides from 13½d. to 22½d.; and calf skins from 18½d. to 30½d.? (3) Is it a fact that under the controlled appraisal and allocation system local tanners were purchasers of the greatest percentage of hides and skins? At yesterday's market exporters purchased almost the entire offering, leaving a few inferior lines for local tanners. If the answer to the above questions is in the affirmative, can the Premier give an assurance that the Government will take steps to protect local tanners and purchasers of shoes, harness, belting and other leather goods from possible increased prices for inferior qualities?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—In the last few days the prices of hides and skins have been decontrolled in all States. This arose out of the fact that the Commonwealth has repealed the export regulations which control hides and skins to the Australian market and which, in fact, provided to the various local tanners an assured supply of some 75 per cent of those offering at a price which was regulated by the Hides and Leather Board. Consequent upon the export regulations being repealed, the local tanners now have to compete with outside people as far as prices are concerned. Under these circumstances the States had no alternative but to decontrol the prices of hides and skins, but control is still being maintained over leather and leather goods, particularly shoes. Whether that can be effective now I am not in a position to say, but I do not agree with the statement that the honourable member read that better quality goods would be available. I believe it is much more likely that competition from outside will take more of our high quality skins away than previously, and I also think that the local tanning industry will be up against much sterner competition. The honourable member will realize that these matters are not within the control of this Parliament.

#### SECONDHAND CAR PRICES.

Mr. JENNINGS—Has the Premier's attention been drawn to an article in yesterday's *News* which disclosed that secondhand cars of

a certain make are in short supply and are being sold at a price higher than the new price? Does he consider that in these circumstances certain people are exploiting the shortage of this make of car, and will he consider reimposing price control over secondhand cars?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I saw the article and I have no doubt that it was accurate. Obviously, some people in a hurry to buy a motor car are prepared to pay for what is virtually a new car a price in excess of the new price. They are prepared to do this to get immediate delivery, but I do not think any official action can be taken in this matter, nor do I believe any law has been broken.

Mr. LAWN—Will the Premier refer the question of recontrolling the price of motor cars to the next Prices Ministers' Conference, particularly in view of the high prices of motor cars? There have been some reductions in price but the public is not satisfied that they are sufficient. In view of the legalized sharking taking place—the Premier said he knew of no law being broken—will he refer the matter to the conference?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Personally, I do not think that any useful purpose would be served by the course suggested. Consider, for example, the case mentioned in the press report referred to by Mr. Jennings. There is not the slightest doubt that any purchaser of that vehicle would be aware that the price asked was in excess of the price of a new vehicle. He would also know that if he waited his turn he could obtain a new vehicle at the correct price. The only person who would pay the price asked for that vehicle would be a man wanting to buy at short notice and prepared to pay an excessive amount to obtain it immediately. In that respect I do not think it involves an element of exploitation. He gets immediate delivery of something he is not prepared to wait for.

#### MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF ACCUSED PERSONS.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Has the Minister representing the Attorney-General a reply to the question I asked last week about the medical examination of accused persons by their own doctors?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I have a reply, but it is not an answer at the moment. I conferred with the Attorney-General, who called for a report from the Crown Solicitor. He is examining the position, and as soon as I obtain a reply I shall let the honourable member know.

#### MOUNT GAMBIER RAIL SERVICE.

Mr. CORCORAN—My question concerns the proposed Budd rail car passenger service which is to replace the present daily service to and from Mount Gambier. Can the Premier indicate the approximate date of the trial run on that line?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member is incorrect in using the term "Budd" car. A Budd car is a vehicle manufactured by a particular company, whereas the cars proposed to be used on the Mount Gambier line are being built at Islington. I have not the precise date of the first trial run but it is in the near future. I will get the information.

#### SHIPMENT OF WHEAT.

Mr. McALEES—Last week I asked the Minister of Works a question relating to the shipment of wheat from Cowell to Port Victoria by ketches and thence by road to Ardrossan. He promised to bring down a report. Has he that report?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I have obtained the following report from the State Superintendent of the Wheat Board:—

A movement of wheat is in progress by ketch from Cowell to Port Victoria, thence by road transport to the Ardrossan bulk silo for shipment to New Zealand. All other avenues were explored for disposal of this wheat and the programme now in operation was the most economical. Large stocks of wheat are held at Wallaroo and our difficulties would be accentuated if we transferred Cowell wheat and re-stacked it at Wallaroo. There is no immediate shipping in sight for Wallaroo, Port Lincoln or Port Adelaide. The above movement of wheat is the most economical in relation to freight charges, as to bring it around by ketch to Ardrossan would incur an additional cost of just over 6d. per bushel. In addition, the ketch owners do not desire to go round the Althorpes.

#### POLICE OFFENCES ACT PROSECUTIONS.

Mr. TRAVERS—A section in the Police Offences Act relates to indecent and improper publications. That section has been in operation for six months and it was mentioned in this House recently that there had been no prosecutions under it. There is a peculiar provision in the section which requires that proceedings can only be taken by the Attorney-General or with his approval. What is everybody's business may turn out to be nobody's business, because if the police are prosecuting they will go out and get evidence and prosecute, whereas the Attorney-General cannot be expected to go out and get the evidence himself. Can the Minister representing the Attorney-General indicate how

many cases, if any, have been considered by the Attorney-General during that six months with a view to bringing prosecutions and, secondly, what instructions, if any, have been given to the police in the matter of obtaining evidence under that section with a view to bringing cases before the Attorney-General for prosecution?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—During the absence of the Attorney-General through illness, this matter has been referred to me on a number of occasions. A number of cases have been investigated and quite recently I authorized a prosecution under the new Act, but we were confronted with the position that the document concerned had been printed in another State and circulated from there and it is necessary to send police officers there to obtain the information upon which the prosecution can be based.

Mr. Travers—Merely having it in possession is an offence.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That may be so, but the circumstances under which this document came into the possession of the Government did not, in the opinion of the Crown Solicitor, constitute an offence, and he did not advise action in connection with it. In addition, a routine check has been made of a number of publications. In some instances, where publications have been passed by censorship committees in other States as being fit for distribution we do not hold with that official approval. We were advised that because official approval has been given in another State it is not to be considered as holding in this State. Any distribution of the literature in South Australia will be dealt with as we see the law and according to what we think is desirable for distribution. I assure the honourable member that the closest watch is being made on the matter. Routine checks are made of the literature circulated and prompt action will be taken if thought necessary. Whether we will be successful in regard to the interstate case has yet to be proved, but I assure the honourable member that no expense is being spared in the matter.

#### MARION CORPORATION RATING.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I had a series of telephone calls this morning from people in my electorate who are ratepayers of the Marion corporation. They are a little perturbed over some business of the council, as reported in this morning's press. There was a suggestion of a series of rates being imposed, but the council

was unable to make up its mind last night. A rate of 5d. was mentioned. During the campaign which took place 12 months ago that was the rate indicated. A rate of 6d. was defeated, and a preferential rate was also defeated. The people concerned want to know whether the normal council facilities will be continued while the council is trying to make up its mind on the matter of the rate. Could the Premier obtain a comprehensive report from the town clerk and ascertain if the council will be able to carry on its functions?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is not usually the policy of the Government to interfere with a council in the fixing of a rate, nor the methods by which that rate is fixed, provided they are in accordance with the law. My answer to the question must be in the negative. The Marion council was elected by the rate-payers and it is its duty to decide the rate to be levied.

#### REPORTING OF MEMBERS' SPEECHES.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—Mr. Speaker, my question relates to the reporting of speeches in this House. On three occasions in the last two years I have taken up and used in my speech a remark made by an honourable member in this Chamber, but I have subsequently found to my dismay that the remark was not in *Hansard*. Is there a rule in the reporting of speeches that where one member takes up a remark of another that remark shall appear in the speech of the member who made it?

The SPEAKER—I always understood that the official reporting by the *Hansard* staff was a fairly full coverage of what a member said. If there should be an occasion when a speech is not fully reported the member concerned can go to the Leader of the *Hansard* Staff on the matter. If there has been a question arising as to whether a speech has been fully reported, or words actually said or not, and there has been disagreement between the Leader of the *Hansard* Staff and the member, the custom has been to have a conference with the Speaker on the matter. Usually there has been agreement as to what occurred and what should be reported. Now that the honourable member has raised the specific point I shall discuss the matter with the Leader of the *Hansard* Staff.

#### SALES OF TEA.

Mr. DUNKS—Last week a question was asked in this House regarding grocers being able to sell tea at the new price. I understood the Premier to say that checks had been made

in regard to stocks held. Can he say what the position is today and whether grocers may now sell at the new price?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A little over a week ago checks were made of stocks held by grocers and on the average it was for 2½ weeks. A constant check is made of the position. Regarding the latter part of the question, no new retail price for tea has been declared.

#### HOUSE FOR URANIUM EXPERT.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—On August 12 I drew attention to an advertisement in the press indicating that some person was prepared to pay up to £8,000 for a house for a uranium expert from the United States of America, and the Premier suggested that probably it was not a *bona fide* advertisement. I then suggested that before anyone could enter the business of buying and selling houses he should be a member of the Real Estate Institute. I asked whether this person was a member of that Institute and, if so, whether he was breaking the principles of that body, and, if not, whether he was liable to prosecution. Has the Premier a reply?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have a report from the Crown Solicitor and have personally made a check on the facts in the advertisement. No name was mentioned in it, only a telephone number. On the face of it I could not know whether the person concerned was a land agent or not. I have some doubt whether it would be proper to ask the police to identify him, for under present conditions he has not broken a law. What is more useful is to see that a proper standard of morality is maintained in the conduct of business of this sort, and in this connection consideration is now being given to a suggestion by the Land Agents Board that the Land Agents Act be amended to compel agents to use their names in all their advertisements. I think that that would probably clear up all the difficulties that the honourable member has mentioned. If this was an advertising dodge, making it necessary for a person to disclose his identity in future in an advertisement of that sort should clear the matter up.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—With all due respect, I am not impressed with the Crown Law Department's reply that it was inadvisable to prosecute this person simply because he did not disclose his name in the advertisement. I should think it a reason why he should be prosecuted. If the department considers that the police should not follow up the case I

respectfully suggest that the person's name could be obtained quite readily from the newspaper office. I am not opposed to the proposed amendment of the Act, but we may have passed legislation which gives the public a false sense of security, for land agents must put up a fidelity bond and people thereby think that all agents are reputable, but some person could evade the point simply by not putting his name to an advertisement. Will the Premier again take this matter up with the Crown Law Department and see whether an offence was committed against the law?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The report from the Crown Law authorities did not encourage taking action. Perhaps the proposed amendments will make the position clearer. I understand the present laws cover fraud, but it must be proved. In this case it was not a fraud to issue an advertisement and there is no proof that the advertisement was in fact issued by a land agent. In the "For Sale" columns of the newspapers people often do not put their names when telephone numbers are mentioned, and there is no law against anyone offering his house for sale. I think the honourable member will see that the proposed amendment will protect the public against advertisement dodges. However, I will consider the question again.

#### CLEARING LAND IN SOUTH-EAST.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to the question I asked last week about the necessity to safeguard the public interest in the clearing of large areas of land for pasture improvement and closer settlement, particularly in the South-East?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The position is as I thought last week, namely, that section 12a of the Soil Conservation Act, 1930-1947, requires all persons to give three months' notice of their intention to destroy vegetation on scrub land, as defined in the Act. During this three months all land intended for clearing is inspected by either a soil conservation officer or a Lands Department inspector. Any land considered unfit for clearing is reserved either voluntarily by the landholder or compulsorily as allowed for in section 13 of the Act. The legislation operates throughout the State.

#### SOUTH-EASTERN SOLDIER SETTLEMENTS.

Mr. FLETCHER (on notice)—

1. How many settlers, of their own free will, have surrendered their blocks on Eight Mile Creek?

2. How many Eight Mile Creek settlers have been unable to meet their commitments?

3. What percentage of settlers are in arrears with their commitments to the Lands Department?

4. What is the position with regard to arrears of settlers on the following settlements:—(a) Pareen; (b) Coola; (c) Mingbool; (d) Clover Estate; and (e) Pleasant Park?

5. Are all settlers on these settlements making a success of their holdings?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The replies are:—

1. Two.

2. Seven. It is expected that three of these will pay in full by March, 1955, by monthly instalments. The other four are making satisfactory progress.

3. 30 per cent in arrears at Eight Mile Creek.

4. (a) Pareen, 13/14, 93 per cent paid in full. (b) Coola, 13/13, 100 per cent paid in full. (c) Mingbool, 12/12, 100 per cent paid in full. (d) Clover Estate, 2/5, 40 per cent paid in full. (e) Pleasant Park, 9/9, 100 per cent paid in full.

5. Pareen:—Except in one case all settlers are expected to be successful. Coola:—Settlers are in every case doing well. Mingbool:—All settlers are expected to be successful. Clover Estate:—With the exception of one settler, all are expected to succeed. Pleasant Park:—Settlers are in every case doing well. These figures are to April 30, 1954, which is the end of the settlers' financial year.

#### WINE LICENCES.

Mr. QUIRKE (on notice)—

1. Is it the intention of the Government to introduce legislation to amend the Licensing Act to provide for new forms of licence, particularly grocers' single bottle licences, to provide increased facilities for the sale of wines?

2. If so, will the legislation be introduced during the present session?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Certain investigations are being made in connection with this matter. Information which has been obtained to date does not support an alteration of the Licensing Act.

#### JOINT COMMITTEE ON CONSOLIDATION BILLS.

The Legislative Council intimated its concurrence in the appointment of a Joint Committee on Consolidation Bills.

#### SUPPLY BILL (No. 2).

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

#### LOAN ESTIMATES.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended the House to make provision by Bill for the appropriation of such amounts of the revenue and moneys of the State as were required for the following purposes:—

(a) The repayment with interest of the sum of £24,595,000 to be borrowed for the purposes mentioned in the Loan Estimates for the financial year 1954-1955, and of any other sums to be borrowed pursuant to the Public Purposes Loan Bill, 1954.

(b) To make payments from the Loan Fund of repaid loan money and surplus revenue for the purposes mentioned in the Loan Estimates for the financial year 1954-1955.

(c) Any other purposes mentioned in the Public Purposes Loan Bill, 1954.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the Loan Estimates for the year ending June 30, 1955, as set out in Parliamentary Paper No. 11.

Motion carried.

In Committee.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—These Estimates provide for an expenditure of £27,295,000. The Commonwealth Government is also making available to the State, pursuant to the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, £3,600,000. This makes a total of £30,895,000 available for expenditure on capital works during the year, as against a gross expenditure last year of £30,013,201. At the Loan Council meeting in June it was considered likely that £180,000,000 should be available from the loan market and other sources to finance the capital works programme of the States, including housing projects under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. The Loan Estimates now before the House are based on the premise that this amount of £180,000,000 will be available, but it must be borne in mind that £180,000,000 is considerably in excess of the amount of £125,000,000 actually raised last year. It must be remembered also that the Commonwealth Government is not guaranteeing the finance required for the States' works programmes this year. Last year the Commonwealth contributed £75,000,000. There is, therefore, no certainty at all that the full amount necessary to finance the full extent of the works shown in the Estimates will

be available this financial year. The Loan Council will review the situation in December, when, in the light of the results of public flotations to that time, it will be possible to more accurately assess the amount that will be available.

Expenditure last year on capital works exceeded the expenditure during 1952-53 by £4,611,180, and a considerable amount of progress was made. The following are the principal projects on which money was expended during the year:—

	£
Electricity Trust—Loans made to the trust by the Government	5,000,000
Municipal Tramways Trust—Loans made to the trust by the Government . . . . .	600,000
Advances to State Bank . . . . .	500,000
Loans to producers . . . . .	307,264
Hospital buildings . . . . .	723,927
School buildings . . . . .	837,305
Police and courthouse buildings	49,374
Other Government buildings . . . .	94,111
Harbors accommodation . . . . .	743,618
Advances for homes . . . . .	1,317,578
South Australian Housing Trust—Loans made to the trust by the Government . . . . .	2,500,000
Temporary housing . . . . .	29,821
Irrigation and reclamation works	162,826
South-Eastern drainage works . . .	424,875
Mines Department—for purchase of equipment for pilot plant, boring, laboratories, etc. . . . .	241,642
Uranium production and working capital . . . . .	2,875,489
Leigh Creek coalfield . . . . .	700,000
Produce Department—For buildings and plant . . . . .	137,526
Railways Department . . . . .	1,508,147
River Murray weirs, dams, etc. . .	200,000
Water supplies and sewers . . . . .	5,335,000

Materials have been in more plentiful supply during the year, more so than for many years past, except in the case of steel, where it has been necessary to resort again to importation of certain types and sizes of steel which are unobtainable, with any degree of certainty, from the Broken Hill Proprietary Company. The company has agreed with the Commonwealth Government that it will not object to importation of structural and other types of steel from overseas during the period up to the end of December next. The Government and the Electricity Trust have had to place orders overseas for steel to avoid delay in proceeding with capital works.

When the Loan Estimates for 1953-54 were framed—about June-July, 1953—labour could be obtained more readily than it can today. There was practically no unemployment, but men were looking for security of employment

and were content to stay put in Government jobs. About August-September, 1953, the labour market tended to become very tight, and the movement of labour from one job to another again became common. Consequently work on many of the projects which the Government had hoped would proceed smoothly during the year was delayed due to labour shortages and the inability of departments to obtain labour at award rates. The present prospects are that only by migration will the position be relieved in the year 1954-55.

The demand on public undertaking such as railways, electricity, water supplies, sewers, harbor facilities, housing and many other services which the State is required to provide, still continues. This, in part, results from the migration policy, and demands the extension of public utilities from year to year. Unless the Government can expand public utilities it is impossible to maintain the standard of living to which the Australian people have become accustomed, and to which they are entitled—a standard to which our people resident in the country are also entitled. The Government desires, as speedily as possible, to extend many of these utilities to the country in order to give country people the same facilities as those enjoyed by people in the city and metropolitan areas. By making modern conveniences available to people in country areas the Government can foster in the people a desire to live in the country and thus assist in stopping the drift of population to the city. I have said before in the House that we need more larger country towns. This is very evident when the cost of social services in this State is compared with that in some of the other larger States such as Victoria and New South Wales with their larger towns and greater density of population. We need more towns with a population of over 10,000, and we need many more with a population of 5,000 to 10,000 people. We cannot hope to achieve this unless we provide services to country towns and their surrounding districts so that the people can have a standard of living which is comparable with that enjoyed by city dwellers.

One of the greatest problems to be dealt with in this State, and especially in the country, is the supply of water. We have only one river worthy of the name, and that is the River Murray, which only flows through a comparatively small portion of the State. We are not richly endowed with natural water facilities and we have therefore had to provide water by long lines of reticulation. These



water facilities are extremely costly, but mainly as a result of our labours in this direction we see that our State has the highest value of production per head of the population in Australia. This is very gratifying to the Government and to the people, but this high production rate has been accompanied by large State expenditures on public works and services, which have been necessary to enable this production to be achieved. Under the system of uniform taxation the benefits arising from increased taxable capacity as a result of this high production accrue to the Commonwealth Government and not to the State Government.

One of the services which it is desirable to give to country people in order to make living in the country more attractive is electricity. The first essentials of an adequate supply of electricity are two-fold, namely, an adequate generation system, that is, adequate capacity at the power stations; and an adequate transmission system coupled with an adequate system of sub-stations. Unless these things are properly planned, and kept well ahead of the distribution system, and connections to consumers, we would reach the stage where the number of people connected to the system would be too great for the amount of power which could be generated, or the amount of power which could be transmitted over the main transmission system, or dealt with by the sub-stations for distribution to the consumers. The Electricity Trust is directing its energies to these important matters. It is interesting to note that the number of consumers in September, 1946, totalled 118,262; 105,954 of these were in the metropolitan area and 12,308 in the country. At June, 1954, the total number of consumers had increased to 188,936; 152,796 in the metropolitan area and 36,140 in the country. You will note that the total increase in consumers was 70,674 from 1946 to June, 1954; of which 46,842 took place in the metropolitan area and 23,832 in country districts. The percentage increases were as follows:—in the total number of consumers 59 per cent, consumers in the metropolitan area 45 per cent, and consumers in country districts 200 per cent.

Before proceeding with the details of the Estimates for 1954-55, I will deal with some of the main items of expenditure during the past year. During the year the Housing Trust completed the construction of its 20,000th house. This is a significant achievement by any authority and I am sure members will join with me in congratulating the Housing Trust. The author-

ities which deal with housing for the Government are the South Australian Housing Trust and the State Bank. The bank operates as an agent for the Government in connection with advances for homes under the Advances for Homes Act. During the year these two authorities either constructed or financed 4,166 completed houses. Of this number 3,547 were constructed by the Housing Trust, and 619 under the Advances for Homes Act. The Housing Trust completed for rental purposes 2,551 houses; 1,115 being of red brick and 1,436 timber framed. The two authorities also completed 1,050 houses for sale; 996 were completed by the Housing Trust and 54 under the State Bank group scheme. In addition, the State Bank financed the completion of 565 houses by private persons.

The Engineering and Water Supply Department was very busy during the year on many major works, the most important of which was the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline, where work on the pumping stations has been well advanced and the inlet from the River Murray completed. Except for minor items of work the pipeline from Mannum to Birdwood was completed. Immediate plans are in hand to complete a of mile of main from Birdwood to Angas Creek to enable water to be pumped into the River Torrens, and thence into Millbrook and Hope Valley Reservoirs. The 9-mile section of main from Hope Valley Reservoir to Findon is about three-quarters complete and is expected to be finished about the end of September. Completion of this main will improve the distribution of water to industry and householders in the western districts, and will also contribute to the improvement of water pressures throughout the greater part of the metropolitan area. River Murray water will be available to Adelaide and suburbs this summer.

During the year just passed the Engineering Department, in addition to other major works, has laid 114½ miles of water reticulation mains and has provided 8,500 new water services. It has also laid 46 miles of sewer mains and made 5,865 new sewer connections. The Jamestown water scheme, which supplies water to Jamestown and Caltowie, and rural areas between Spalding and Caltowie, was nearly completed; and the Uley-Wanilla scheme, which will augment the Tod River scheme and water supply to Port Lincoln, Cowell and Cleve, was also well on the way to completion. At the South Para reservoir the diversional channel and the coffer dam, and foundation preparation were completed. The main embankment

will be commenced within a month or two and steady progress is expected on this work during 1954-55. Good progress has been made on the South-Eastern drainage scheme, four contractors and departmental labour being employed on this work. Work has been carried out on Reedy Creek drain at Furner, Bray and Biscuit Flat drains near Lake Hawdon South and Konetta, enlarging drain "L" on the east side of Lake Hawdon North, and the excavation of Wilmot drain near Comung. The work includes drain excavation and construction of many road and occupation bridges.

During the year the Harbors Board completed construction of concrete wharves 8 and 9 at Port Adelaide, and also constructed sheds and stacking areas at these wharves. Work was commenced on the concrete construction of No. 6 berth, and this progressed during the year. The extension of the coal handling wharf at Osborne to provide an additional berth was also undertaken. This plant is being extended to permit quicker unloading of ships at the Osborne wharves. At Kingscote, on Kangaroo Island, the board commenced the construction of additional shipping facilities, extending and widening the existing jetty and excavating the foreshore to provide additional cargo handling facilities at the shore end. With the rapid development on Kangaroo Island, greater facilities are required to handle the larger amount of materials, etc., which are taken to the island by the shipping that serves it.

In the South-East the Woods and Forests Department continued with its programmes of planting pine forests, and sawmilling. In addition, the Department has commenced construction of a large mill adjacent to Mount Gambier. Contracts were let for the mill building, workshops, stores and timber sheds. Work was commenced on grading and levelling the site, and this year the mill buildings will be completed, and the installation of the plant commenced. This mill will handle about 35,000,000 super feet of logs per annum which will be milled into boards and fruit cases principally for the River Murray fruit industry. It is also proposed to erect a timber preservation plant for treating pine railway sleepers, and it is expected that the output will be about 1,000 sleepers per week. Also, poles and fencing posts will be treated through this plant.

During the year the Electricity Trust expended approximately £7,500,000 on capital works, £5,000,000 of this amount being found by the Government from the Loan Fund Account. Further money to finance the programme was raised by the trust from the

Savings Bank and the public. During the year the trust connected 11,002 consumers; 7,567 of these being in the city and metropolitan area and 3,435 in the country. As I have previously pointed out the basis of a reliable electricity supply is a power station system with a capacity adequate to meet the consumers' demands and transmission lines and sub-stations to enable the power generated to be sent out for use by the consumers. A large part of the year's expenditure was on power stations, transmission lines, and sub-stations. At the Osborne Power Station, No. 4 turbine was brought into commission and the boilers required for this turbine were also commissioned. The Osborne "B" power station now consists of four 30,000 kilowatt turbines and eight boilers.

At Port Augusta, No. 1 turbine, with a present capacity of 15,000 kilowatts, was commissioned, and one boiler was also brought in to serve this turbine. The second boiler is well on the way to completion and is expected to be commissioned to serve No. 1 machine before Christmas, giving the machine an installed capacity of 30,000 kilowatts. The second machine of 30,000 kilowatts has been delivered at Port Augusta, and, as members will remember from their visit there in July, the general construction work is well advanced, and within a few months the second machine, with one boiler to serve it, should be ready for commission. It is noteworthy and significant that during the year, for the first time in the history of the State, electricity was transmitted over the transmission system at 132,000 volts.

At Leigh Creek, whence fuel for the Port Augusta power station will be supplied, the erection of the retaining wall at the Aroona Dam progressed satisfactorily. It is expected that the wall will be completed to a height of 24ft. by the end of October, and, should the catchment area have rain, sufficient water will be impounded to serve the field during the coming summer. The new gauge railway to Marree, if constructed on the route of the narrow gauge line would seriously interfere with the working of the field, and would make it impossible to excavate a large amount of coal which is conveniently situated for open-cut mining. To overcome these difficulties it has been decided, in co-operation with the Commonwealth Government, that the broad gauge line will skirt the coalfield on the eastern side, and that, as this work will cost approximately £80,000 more than if the original narrow gauge route was followed, the earthworks, etc., in connection with the

diversion to the eastern side of the field will be carried out by the Electricity Trust employees at Leigh Creek. Earth-moving equipment which is on the field is admirably suited for this type of work, and a start will be made on the earthworks almost immediately.

Last year capital works carried out on the field consisted of further houses for employees and their families, progress payments on new excavators. The field is now equipped with two 5-yard dragline excavators and the 10-yard machine which is used for moving overburden, and in addition several smaller shovels for coal work. With the commissioning of the Port Augusta power station coal will be used from the north field at Leigh Creek. This will necessitate the erection of a new grading and coal handling plant, and new rail sidings for loading on the 4ft. 8½in. gauge railway. This plant is on order. Some of it is being prepared on the field and it will be ready for use when the railway is completed and the demand for coal steps up at Port Augusta.

During the last 12 months new sources of uranium have been found at a number of widespread localities, namely, Myponga, Port Lincoln, Mount Victoria, and Yudnamutana. Production on a small scale has commenced at Myponga. Drilling has been carried out at Mount Victoria and has revealed worth-while reserves. Drilling has commenced at Port Lincoln and the initial intersections are encouraging. Plant will shortly be dispatched to Yudnamutana. These discoveries will unquestionably add to the uranium production potential of the State. The Radium Hill mine and treatment plant are practically completed and in October it is planned to start large scale production. Concentrates produced will be stockpiled to form a reserve for the Port Pirie chemical plant, which is scheduled for completion early in the New Year. The treatment processes for Radium Hill ore are very difficult and are possibly amongst the most complex in the world.

A tribute must be paid to technical officers of the Mines Department for outstanding work in connection with these recovery problems. The laboratories established in this State are capable of undertaking work not only for South Australia, but should also be used for this type of work in connection with uranium development in other States, and Commonwealth territories. I say emphatically that any duplication of these laboratories by any authority in Australia would be a public scandal, not only as a waste of money, but also because there is insufficient technical staff available. The wealth of

information obtained from our laboratory and pilot plant work on the many aspects of uranium treatment, and on the costs of treatment, has also assisted the Commonwealth in the establishment of the Rum Jungle Plant. The efforts of the Mines Department will now be directed towards the study of utilization aspects and also to the problems of improving the efficiency of extraction of uranium from ores from Radium Hill and other areas. The Mines Department is now well equipped with laboratories and personnel required to carry out research work on uranium ores, and even when the uranium production plants of the State are operating there will still be ample scope for research, and, in establishing the laboratories, the Government has not overlooked the fact that facilities must be available for research associated with the commercial use of uranium.

At the Loan Council meeting held in June, the programme of works for all the States was fixed at a maximum of £200,000,000. Of this amount this State was allotted £23,176,000. It was, however, considered by the Loan Council that possibly not more than £180,000,000 could be raised from the market, and as the Commonwealth was not prepared to continue its guarantee of States' works programmes the estimates which are now before the House have been framed on the basis of a total works programme for the States, and Commonwealth housing, of £180,000,000, of which this State will receive £20,858,000 for State works and £3,600,000 for housing. The Leader of the Opposition will see from the figures I have mentioned that I have not brought down the Loan Estimates on the basis of a £200,000,000 programme. I doubt whether £200,000,000 will be available. Last year the loan market was fairly buoyant, but it raised only about £125,000,000. In my opinion to go beyond £180,000,000 would only authorize the commencement of works some of which might ultimately have to be slowed down.

Mr. O'Halloran—Assuming the £200,000,000 were raised, what would South Australia do with its proportion?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member will see in a few moments that the Loan programme I am setting out today takes into account other moneys which are available to the State. If the £200,000,000 is raised we shall use our proportion of that money rather than draw on our other amounts available which in my opinion, should be used only if actually required. The total amount proposed to be expended on capital works in this State from

the Loan Fund is £27,295,000, and this will be financed as follows:—

	£
From loans raised in Australia . . . . .	20,858,000
Funds available from the overseas loan being raised by the State . . . . .	2,500,000
Repayments to the Loan Fund . . . . .	2,700,000
From moneys in the hands of the Treasurer . . . . .	1,237,000
	£27,295,000

Full details of the works proposed for the year are set out in the Loan Estimates for the information of honourable members, and I therefore intend to confine my further remarks to the main works and purposes for which provision has been made.

STATE BANK, £2,340,000.—The main lines for which money has been provided for the State Bank are as follows:—

	£
Advances for homes . . . . .	1,350,000
Loans to producers . . . . .	432,000
Advances to settlers . . . . .	50,000
Advances to State Bank . . . . .	500,000

It is expected that under the Advances for Homes Act the bank will complete the construction of 18 houses under its group scheme; this will terminate that scheme. At June 30 the bank was providing finance for 730 houses under construction by private contractors as separate from the bank's group scheme. Finance will be found from the funds proposed to be made available to complete these houses and to finance the construction of further houses, and for the purchase of houses under mortgage or agreement for sale and purchase by applicants under the Advances for Homes Act. This year the bank estimates that it will expend approximately £20,000 on the completion of the group scheme houses; will advance a further £580,000 to persons who are constructing their own homes, and will require £750,000 for new advances. Under the provisions of the Loans to Producers Act, advances will be made for the construction of and additions to cool stores, and for the purchase of fishing boats and further extensions to fruit packing sheds, milk product factories, wineries, distilleries, etc. Most of the amount provided in the Estimates is committed in loans already approved by the bank board.

HIGHWAYS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT—ROADS AND BRIDGES, £100,000.—The Government is confident that the road programme can be considerably stepped up if local authorities have the plant necessary to enable them to take part in the State's road programme, and with this end in view the amount

mentioned is being made available for loans to local authorities for the purchase of road-making plant.

Mr. Shannon—Will that be on the same basis as in the past?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes.

Mr. Frank Walsh—Some councils are buying secondhand equipment from the Highways Department.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This policy has been in force for a number of years. I think that in the last two or three years we have advanced about £500,000 to councils to enable them to buy roadmaking plant. This has made councils much more efficient in road construction, and the £100,000 proposed for this year is in pursuance of a policy which, I think, members will agree has been beneficial.

IRRIGATION AND DRAINAGE, £726,000.—This amount will be divided between irrigation and reclamation works, £200,000; loans to lessees, £1,000; and South-Eastern drainage, £525,000. Last year £162,826 was expended on irrigation works, and it is proposed this year to make £200,000 available for this purpose. The main works contemplated are electrification of pumping plants at Berri, reclaimed areas, Cobdogla and Moorook; work on channels, pipelines and drainage works at Loveday, Nookamka, Mypolonga, Cobdogla and Chaffey; town water supplies to all areas; embankment sluices in reclaimed areas; headworks at Chaffey and Monteith; and purchase of minor items of plant; and £10,000 for minor urgent works. In the South-East, £525,000 is expected to be spent on the construction of drainage works and acquisition of land in the western division, construction of bridges over existing drains and construction of petition drains; and surveys of drainage proposals in the western division of the South-East.

AFFORESTATION AND TIMBER MILLING, £1,300,000.—Last year the expenditure by the Woods and Forests Department amounted to £1,075,361. The main purposes for which provision is made this year are:—

	£
Land purchases . . . . .	20,000
Preparation of land and planting . . . . .	78,000
Maintenance of existing forests . . . . .	112,000
Erection of employees' homes and other buildings; improvements and maintenance; water supplies . . . . .	40,000
Working expenses of sawmills . . . . .	379,000
Erection of employees' homes and other buildings in connection with sawmills . . . . .	106,000
New plant and machinery . . . . .	109,000
Felling and hauling mill logs . . . . .	126,000
Construction of central mill at Mount Gambier . . . . .	175,000

Forest operations will be maintained on the same level as in 1953-54, and the establishment of a further 4,800 acres is planned. The estimated log production for State forests for 1954-55 is as follows:—

Sawmills—	Super feet.
Private sawmills—mainly used for case production by privately owned sawmills . . . .	60,000,000
Departmental sawmills for production of flooring and cases . . . . .	51,000,000
Plywood manufacture for furniture trade and veneer for match splints . . . . .	4,000,000
Pulpwood— . . . . .	10,000,000
Total . . . . .	125,000,000

In addition, 3,000,000 sup. ft. of hardwood logs and 30,000 tons of firewood is estimated to be produced from State forest reserves. It is planned to increase production in departmental sawmills and the estimated output from the 51 million sup. ft. of log is:—

Flooring and other dressed timber . . . . . (lin. ft.)	20,000,000
Undressed timber . . . . . (sup. ft.)	600,000
Veneer for match production (sq. ft.)	2,000,000
Fruit cases . . . . . (cases)	3,000,000
Case flitches . . . . . (sup. ft.)	3,000,000

Flooring and other dressed timber is used almost exclusively in connection with the housing programme, and the undressed timber for furniture manufacture. Fruit cases are supplied mainly for use in the citrus, apple and dried fruit industries. Flitches are sold mainly for case production in the metropolitan area.

**RAILWAYS, £2,176,000.**—Last year the Railways Department expended on capital works £1,508,146. Of this year's provision Ways and Works is expected to absorb £653,000, mainly on ballasting, buildings, platforms, and stock-yards, station yards, signalling and safety devices, main lines, bridges and culverts, drainage, etc., new cottages, duplication of the Goodwood to Marino line, and betterment work in connection with widening the South-East gauge. Rolling stock will absorb approximately £1,500,000: this will mainly be concerned with the provision of 14 diesel mechanical rail cars, 10 750 h.p. diesel electric shunt locomotives, 12 suburban diesel rail cars, six joint stock coach cars, and two roomettes and two twinettes, 40 50-ton hopper waggons and 100 40-ton bogie open cars. During the year the railways operating results improved by about £842,000, and it is only by the provision of up-to-date rolling stock and improvement in the track that the Railways

Commissioner and his staff can maintain the good work that has been carried on by the railways for many years. The Railways Department has been hard pressed during the year to carry all the freight offering, and the fact that they have been able to cope with requirements of customers is a tribute to the high standard of work which is always forthcoming from the Railways Commissioner and his staff.

**HARBORS, £800,000.**—Last year Harbors Board capital expenditure was £743,618. The amount provided this year will be expended at Port Adelaide Inner and Outer Harbours on the reconditioning of wharves at berths 1, 6, 8, and 9 (including the provision of cargo sheds and rail tracks), seamen's pick-up centre, roads, drainage, water service, electric light and conveniences, and purchase of land. At Osborne the coal handling plant is being reconstructed, together with an extension of the wharf to provide another berth, and £80,630 is expected to be expended on this work. Miscellaneous construction and electrical works, buoys, beacons, etc., will absorb £83,720. At Kingscote, Kangaroo Island, £125,000 is provided to improve harbour facilities. An amount of £15,000 is being provided for accommodation for the fishing industry.

**WATERWORKS AND SEWERS, £5,575,000.**—Last year expenditure on these projects amounted to £5,335,000. The main items of expenditure this year are expected to be in the Adelaide Water District on the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline, for which £2,012,200 has been provided. As I have already stated, the department expects to pump water from the Murray for use in the city and suburbs during the coming summer. The sum of £152,000 is provided for work on the South Para reservoir; £138,000 in Adelaide water district and £14,000 in Barossa water district. Services and mains are expected to absorb £345,000. In Barossa water district £11,000 has been provided for extensions of mains and equipping bores in the Salisbury district; £1,000 for chlorination works; £4,000 for cement lining of mains; and £15,000 for mains, services and minor works. Warren water district will take £138,000 for enlargement of trunk main; £9,000 for Angaston water supply; £4,000 for cement lining of pipes; and £17,000 for mains, services and minor works.

An amount of £197,500 is being provided for water supplies for Milang, Meningie, Karoonda, Paringa, Loxton, Jamestown-Caltowie, Swan Reach, Warooka, Woods Point, and the Nairne Pyrites project. Bores and

pumping plants are being provided at Naracoorte and Bordertown, and improvements to supply in Goolwa-Middleton, Encounter Bay-Ocean View West Areas are envisaged. Mount Gambier pumping plant and rising main will be improved and Murray Bridge will have the pumping station electrified, and tank provided. Improvements will be made at Loxton, Morgan, Mount Barker; and a further £67,800 is provided for mains and services and minor works. In the Tod River Water District the Uley-Wanilla scheme is expected to absorb £32,000 and water supplies in the hundreds of Bonython and Goode will take £18,500. The sum of £23,700 is being provided for the scheme in the hundreds of Cootra and Caralue; and, in addition, mains, services and minor works are expected to account for £20,150.

Beetaloo, Bundaleer and Baroota water district has a provision for £780,000 set aside for the Yorke Peninsula scheme, and it is anticipated that real progress will be made on this work during the year. Cement lining of pipes is estimated to cost £20,000; and £52,000 has been made available for Port Pirie mains. Replacement and extension of mains in the hundreds of Howe, Boucaut, Port Pirie and Crystal Brook have been provided for to the extent of £25,000. Provision of £12,000 has been made for storage tanks in the hundreds of Birds Hill, Caltowie and Kulpara. Under Adelaide Sewers, treatment works extensions at Port Adelaide are expected to cost £6,600; reticulation sewers and miscellaneous extensions, £220,500; and pumping stations at Islington, Queensbury, Ethelton and Glenelg, £28,900. The Glenelg Treatment Works will be modified and extended at a cost of £16,200. With regard to country sewers, work has already commenced at Salisbury, and it is anticipated that work will commence at Port Lincoln during the year. The water conservation scheme is receiving attention from the Government, and £80,000 has been set aside for tanks for county Buxton, and £7,350 for mains, services, minor works, and for plant and machinery.

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS AND LAND,  
£2,570,000.—During last financial year  
£1,707,084 was spent on Government buildings  
and land, made up as follows:—

	£
Hospital buildings . . . . .	723,927
School buildings . . . . .	837,305
Police and courthouse buildings . .	49,374
Agricultural college . . . . .	2,367
Other Government buildings . . .	94,111

For the current year it is expected that  
£1,250,000 will be spent on hospital buildings,

the main works in connection with this programme being:—Royal Adelaide Hospital £198,420, which will mainly provide for finishing the new nurses' block, new dental hospital wing, and purchase of Ruthven Mansions in Pulteney Street for nurses' quarters; Casualty Department lift and lifthouse, alterations, improvements to present dressing rooms, etc., will absorb £16,500; Magill wards—alterations and additions—£2,750; and alterations and additions to various buildings at the hospital and the purchase of new equipment will account for a further £29,650.

To facilitate the completion of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the Government engaged a firm of Melbourne architects and a firm of Adelaide architects to take over the construction of some of the hospital. These people are engaged on finalizing the plans, and tenders will be called for the work later in the year. The Architect-in-Chief will continue the supervision of portion of the work now in hand and will look after the provision of some of the services. At Parkside Mental Hospital £189,810 is expected to be expended, mainly on finishing the nurses' home, female treatment ward and admission block, new male T.B. ward, male treatment and admission block, rebuilding carpenter's workshops and occupational therapy workshops, new water mains and roadways; alterations and additions to various buildings; new equipment; and reconditioning main roads. Northfield Mental Hospital provision is £224,550, to be expended on additional accommodation for 300 patients, female T.B. ward, new residences, alterations and additions to various buildings.

Bedford Park will require £9,400 for alterations and additions to various buildings and for purchase of new equipment. Morris Hospital, Northfield, requires alterations and additions to various buildings, and new equipment, which is estimated to cost £34,340. At Enfield Receiving Home alterations and additions to various buildings will be carried out, a residence provided for medical officer; and these are expected to run into an expenditure of £11,190. Mareeba Babies' Hospital alterations and additions to various buildings will cost £2,690. At Barmera Hospital the alterations and additions are expected to cost £1,760. It is proposed to expend £98,700 on the Mount Gambier Hospital, made up of £1,000 on new children's ward, £50,000 towards starting the new general hospital, £20,000 towards new sewage treatment works and water supply, £10,000 for new boilers, and £17,700 for a new residence, construction of a road and footpaths, and alterations and additions.

At Port Augusta Hospital, the alterations and additions to various buildings, and new equipment, will cost £9,950. Port Lincoln Hospital has been provided with £26,490 for additional accommodation and sewage disposal scheme. Port Pirie Hospital provision of £70,600 is to be expended on a new theatre and men's block, alterations and additions to nurses' quarters, extension of laundry block and new equipment, isolation block conversion to children's ward, sewage treatment works, etc. For Wallaroo Hospital, £4,800 has been provided for additions; and an amount of £36,500 has been set aside for urgent accommodation as may be required by the various hospitals.

**SCHOOL BUILDINGS, £1,050,000.**—For primary and infant schools £307,050 has been provided, and this is for new primary schools at Enfield, Ferryden Park, Hampstead, Morphettville Park, Mount Gambier, Northfield, Renmark, Dover Gardens, Hectorville, Macclesfield, Mount Gambier East, Nairne, Payneham, and Risdon Park; and for new infant schools at St. Leonards, Highgate, Plympton, and Ridley Grove. Alterations and additions to primary and infant schools which are detailed in the Estimates will cost £77,600. It is proposed to spend £55,650 on the new Nailsworth Boys' Technical School and new workshops at the same school; craftroom at Port Adelaide Girls' Technical School; additional classrooms at Norwood Girls' Technical School; and alterations and additions to technical schools at Kapunda, Norwood Girls', Thebarton, Apprentice Trades School, Thebarton Boys', Adelaide Technical College, Croydon, Norwood Boys', Le Fevre Boys' and Goodwood Boys'.

An amount of £38,784 will be expended on area schools; this includes a new school at Yankalilla, new craft block at Cummins, new block at Oakbank, and alterations and additions at Cleve, Wudinna and Penola. In the high school section of the department £125,450 is expected to be used on new schools at Naracoorte, Minlaton, South Road and Loxton; alterations and additions at Balaklava, Birdwood, Brighton, Enfield, Gawler, Jamestown, Millicent, Mount Barker, Urrbrae, Adelaide girls', Booleroo Centre, Nuriotopa, Kapunda, Port Pirie, Norwood, Renmark and Mannum; and on a new wing at Port Pirie high school. Expenditures to the extent of £33,500 will be incurred for woodwork centres at Port Augusta high, Murray Bridge high, Woodville high, Enfield high, Riverton high, Ascot Park primary, Challa Gardens primary, Mannum higher primary and Largs Bay primary; and for

domestic arts centres at Findon primary, Enfield primary, and Woodville primary.

Portable buildings have been very necessary during the period of shortages of building materials and it is proposed to expend a further £244,000 on these buildings as required for the Education Department. The installation of septic tanks will be continued and £42,070 has been set aside for this purpose. Grading and paving of school yards is expected to absorb £46,994; and £50,400 has been provided for new residences, and alterations and additions to residences for school teachers.

**POLICE AND COURTHOUSE BUILDINGS, £100,000.**—New police stations will be commenced at Crystal Brook, Darke Peake, Enfield, Naracorte, Flinders Park, Hallett, Loxton, and Seaton Park, for which £16,900 is provided. Additions and alterations to residences, garages, offices, cells, etc., are expected to cost £48,450. New courthouses at Barmera, Berri, Murray Bridge, and Salisbury are estimated to cost £17,000. Additions and alterations to courthouse buildings at the Supreme Court, Port Lincoln, and Port Adelaide, will absorb £5,650. An amount of £12,000 has been included for residences.

**OTHER GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, £150,000.**—Among the most important under this heading are those required by the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department, which include a new building at Lochiel Park, staff quarters and new laundry at Seaforth Home, new residence at Struan Farm School, and alterations, additions, and equipment for Magill Home, Magill Reformatory, Glandore Industrial School, Struan Farm School, Vaughan House, and Flinders Street offices. Alterations and additions and further equipment will be made available at the Adelaide Gaol; and at Yatala Labour Prison provision is made for residences for staff, alterations and improvements to cottages and laundry. Further gaol accommodation is required by the Sheriff, and improvements and alterations to buildings are being made at the Gladstone Gaol—a new workshop is being provided, and also a new steam laundry and additional lavatory accommodation. At Port Augusta Gaol, additional staff accommodation is required, and provision is also made for the installation of a septic tank system and improved bathroom and laundry accommodation.

**PRODUCE DEPARTMENT—BUILDINGS AND PLANT, £50,000.**—The Port Lincoln works require extensions to slaughtering facilities, refrigerating, and treatment plants, and

£38,400 has been provided for this. At Light Square, alterations and additions to refrigeration are expected to cost £11,600.

**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HOUSING TRUST,** £1,000,000.—In addition to this amount the Housing Trust will also have made available to it under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement £3,600,000 from funds made available to the Commonwealth by the Loan Council. The amount of £1,000,000 from the Loan Fund will be required for the following:—£760,000 to finance second mortgages on house sales; and £240,000 for the purchase of land and stores for future operations. The programme of the trust for the year is for the completion of 3,500 houses. It is estimated that over 1,000 of these houses will be built for rental or for sale in the country. The year's programme will include about 180 flats.

**LEIGH CREEK COALFIELD,** £400,000.—The programme of the Electricity Trust for the coalfield will, it is estimated, be in the region of £1,000,000. All of this amount will not be required from the Loan Fund as the trust has £681,000 as at June 30 last on hand to finance capital works in 1954-55. The main works to be carried out during the year will be township buildings (including houses for employees), roads and railways. As I have already mentioned, work to divert the railway to the eastern side of the field will be undertaken. By far the greater amount of the provision, viz., £347,000, will be spent on the Aroona Dam, where it is expected that the work will be sufficiently far advanced before the summer to enable water to be stored from the summer rains. The power station is expected to cost a further £120,000. Distribution of electricity around the township, and for working in the open cut, will require an amount of £15,000. General machinery, including shovels, excavators, and draglines, are estimated to absorb £107,500, and coal handling £150,000. Although the programme is for and treatment plant at the North Field £1,081,000, only £400,000 will be required from the Loan Fund this year.

**ELECTRICITY TRUST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA,** £5,000,000.—The total capital works programme of the trust for the year is £7,870,000. It is estimated that only £5,000,000 will be required from the State Loan Fund: the rest of the requirements being obtained from loans to be raised by the trust, investment of depreciation funds, and use of materials, stores, and moneys already on hand. The trust proposes to spend this year on the

Osborne "B" power station £1,220,000, the details of which are set down in the Estimates. The work to be carried out will provide for raising the capacity of the station from 120,000 kilowatts to 180,000 kilowatts by 1956. At Port Augusta "A" station, it is proposed to expend £1,720,000 to raise the capacity of the station from 15,000 kilowatts at present to 90,000 kilowatts by 1957. This will entail the installation of three 30,000 kilowatt machines, two of which are already on the site, and the construction and erection of the boilers necessary to service these three generating machines. For Port Augusta "B" station £110,000 has been provided for commencing work on constructing the coffer dam, installing sheet piling, earth filling, and dewatering in preparation for foundations. At Port Lincoln, £211,000 is proposed to be spent on the power station with a view to increasing the capacity to 7,500 kilowatts by 1956. This will be done by the commissioning of two 2,500 kilowatt steam turbo-alternators, in addition to the 2,500 kilowatt diesel plant now serving the area. At Mount Gambier it is proposed to expend £181,000 on the new power station which is being erected in conjunction with the Woods and Forests Department's mill adjacent to the town of Mount Gambier. This power station will be of a capacity of 6,000 kilowatts, ultimately being extended to an installed capacity of 12,000 kilowatts. It is expected that the Mount Gambier power station will be commissioned during 1956. The total amount expected to be expended on power stations for the year is £3,442,000; and for transmission lines £598,000 is being provided. This will include the completion of the 132,000 volt line from Port Augusta to the metropolitan area, and country expansion of 132,000 volt lines to Mannum for the Lower Murray and the 66,000 volt line to Strathalbyn.

The sum of £1,306,000 is expected to be expended by the trust on sub-stations. The expansion of power stations and transmission lines are two very important aspects in connection with being able to supply additional power to existing consumers and to expand the number of consumers, but without sub-stations to regulate the supply, break down the high voltage to lower voltage for distribution, the trust would be unable to meet the demands of its consumers. A large sub-station is to be built at Northfield, and some part of this work has already been carried out and is in operation. Other sub-stations are also required



in the metropolitan area and in country districts in order to meet the demands of consumers. Consumers' plant and appliances (which include meters, time switches, ranges, water heaters, wash boilers, bath heaters, and installation costs) are expected to cost £630,000: included also in this item are the changeover costs from D.C. to A.C. in some country towns. The distribution system will be further expanded by the expenditure of £1,714,000, of which £639,000 has been provided for the purpose of extensions to consumers in country districts, and £757,000 will be required for cost of mains for new consumers and main improvements. The sum of £180,000 will be expended on the purchase of cranes, trucks, trailers and cars, mainly replacements of plant which it is no longer economic to retain in use.

**MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS TRUST, £500,000.**—The trust has under order 70 diesel fuel buses of a modern type which will be largely completed during 1954-55. It is at present calling tenders for a further 95 vehicles, but it is unlikely that any deliveries of these will be made before July, 1955. The vehicles will replace tram rolling stock which is already so old as to require extremely high maintenance and operating costs, and this will also permit the abandonment of permanent way which is likewise over-age and uneconomic. The sum of £350,000 is apportioned this year for vehicles, whilst a further £150,000 is required, partly for restoration of roadways and in part towards the re-construction and re-equipping of workshops. The board, which was appointed about 18 months ago to control the trust, has arrived at the conclusion that the finances of the undertaking cannot be appreciably improved, and at the same time the public adequately served, unless the undertaking is re-equipped with modern and efficient vehicles, workshops, and depots.

**METROPOLITAN AND EXPORT ABATTOIRS BOARD, £100,000.**—This amount is being provided in the Estimates for loan to the board for extension of chilling facilities, slaughtering accommodation, roadways, sewers, boilers, and housing.

**MINES DEPARTMENT, £200,000.**—This amount is required for the purchase of plant and equipment for the Metallurgical Branch, for the Chemical Engineering Branch, and for the laboratories, and for general plant and equipment, including transport, boring, rotary and diamond drilling equipment, scientific instruments, etc.

**URANIUM PRODUCTION, £3,000,000.**—This amount will be used in connection with the operation of the Radium Hill project for mining, metallurgical treatment, and for the capital costs of the chemical treatment plant. The Radium Hill mine is expected to come into production within the next few weeks and the chemical treatment plant will be in production early next year. The construction work at Port Pirie is proceeding satisfactorily. Part of the amount of £3,000,000 will be required to finance the working capital and purchase of spare parts and stores. Under the agreement with the Atomic Energy Commission of the United States, the State is required to provide working capital. I move the first line of the Loan Estimates.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

#### BUSINESS AGENTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

#### ANATOMY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

#### TOWN PLANNING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 19. Page 428.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This Bill, as I interjected when the Minister of Lands was giving his second reading speech, represents another stage in the Government's conversion to the principles which we on this side of the House have been expounding for many years: a very direct step towards co-ordinating the system of town planning, both as regards immediate needs and long-range policy, embodying the reservation of beauty spots, green belts and all those delectable things that have been so much spoken of in the press and at public meetings and so forth in recent months. I do not think this would be an inopportune time again to express the view that if, instead of tardily proceeding along the route of Labor's policy, the Government were to have a consultation with those of us who are responsible for that policy, we might be able to show it that, instead of half measures, a full measure, such as the adoption of a greater Adelaide scheme, would overcome much of the trouble it is encountering in what to it is a new and uncharted road. We have before us three Bills dealing with the metropolitan area—this one, the Bill to

provide for an overall form of transport control for the metropolitan area, and the third to set up a uniform system of controlling and licensing taxi cabs. In addition we have, of course, the provision in the Loan Estimates for pouring more of the taxpayers' good money down the sink of the Municipal Tramways Trust. If we had had a Greater Adelaide scheme some years ago all this confusing, and in some instances almost contradictory legislation, could have been avoided, and this Bill would have been unnecessary. Legislation to provide for a greater Adelaide scheme should have been introduced years ago but it could not be expected that the Liberal Party would progress so rapidly. This Bill could have been introduced earlier. It is now a matter of closing the stable door after the horse has gone. We have seen extraordinary industrial development in the metropolitan area and a large number of houses have been built to accommodate people attracted to it because of that development. Some of that development could have been directed to country towns and thereby brought about decentralization.

Mr. Shannon—Do you suggest that people should be forced to go to country towns?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—There are ways of directing people other than compelling them. If some of the water and sewerage services supplied to the metropolitan area, and at great cost in new areas, were established in country towns compulsion would not be necessary to attract people and industry to those towns.

The other day Mr. John Clark pointed out that an established industry in his town could not expand because the Government had failed to provide sewerage. Probably the Bill is the result of the haphazard development that has taken place in recent years. It may be likened to an effort by the Premier to protect himself from himself. We have seen how work in the new Housing Trust area at Gilles Plains has proved more expensive than was first estimated. There have been other instances, but I will not go into them now. Other aspects require consideration, but they have had only desultory consideration by Parliament. The removal of the slum areas was provided for in legislation passed in 1942 or 1943 but it has not been possible to do much in this matter because of the great shortage of accommodation that has existed since that time. There is much scope for planning and reconstruction in most of our older suburbs developed 60 to 80 years ago in the days of horse trams. Housing conditions in them have not been improved since. In view of the effort to

implement that legislation it is a matter for conjecture whether the Government intends to pursue a policy of orderly development under the Bill or merely exercise control over individual subdivisions.

The Bill establishes a committee to work in conjunction with the Town Planner. It will have great powers of control over subdivisions of land. It will have power to insist on streets being formed and sealed in conformity with the highways in the area generally, and so enable traffic to flow from one suburb to another and finally to its destination. It has not yet been suggested what qualifications will be required for membership of the committee. We have not been told whether persons with the necessary qualifications are available, or whether persons will be appointed because for some reason or other they have become eligible for a favour from the Premier. From the Premier's speech we can expect that much time will elapse before the committee will be able to draft a master plan. Whilst that is taking place much uncertainty will exist amongst owners of land potentially capable of subdivision. Much of the land may be prevented from subdivision whilst the master plan is being prepared, and that looks like an injustice to land owners.

I hold no brief for people who subdivide land and make a large profit out of it. We have had a few instances of it and not much credit has been reflected in the operations of one or two organizations. Although I hold no brief for them they should be treated fairly but that will not be the position if the land has to be held for some time before it is subdivided. If we are thinking along these lines, and I do not say it is wrong to do so, we should not put the financial responsibility on the owners of the land. If it is necessary to prevent subdivision in order to fit in with the master plan, the land should be acquired by perhaps the authority set up under the Bill and held by the community at its cost until it can be used as intended, the cost being recovered from the subdivisional sales. The Bill says that the land must be suitable for the purposes for which it is to be subdivided. That is a delightfully vague term. It may be subdivided for residential, industrial or business purposes.

Mr. Shannon—There would need to be a blanket proposal to cover everything.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Precisely. Under the Bill there will be much uncertainty amongst landowners whilst awaiting the decision of the committee, and that is an unfair burden to place upon them.

Mr. Shannon—No plan could be presented to Parliament unless approved by the committee.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The Bill provides that if a subdivision is approved by the committee a report must be made to the Minister, and once a year the Minister must report to Parliament. That is a fairly circuitous route in order to get something done.

Mr. Shannon—Parliament will know what is going on.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes, at some stage. Would it not be possible to eliminate the possibility of long delays?

Mr. Shannon—That could not be done.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I think it could. Instead of putting the responsibility on the owners to hold the land until the committee had made a decision the land could be acquired by the community, which would then be responsible for its own betterment throughout the adoption of the plan. I agree that sewerage and water supplies and other amenities should be considered by the committee in assessing the worthiness of a subdivisional proposal. I would go much further, and set a limit to the size this city should be permitted to grow and say that anyone who wanted to build outside that area would have to provide his own facilities. I know it is a ruthless proposal, but I think that common safety measures will force it on us in the not distant future. We in Australia should stop herding our people in such large numbers in the few capital cities around the perimeter of the continent, all vulnerable to atomic attack, because in a few raids we could lose more than half our population and nearly all our industrial potential.

Mr. Quirke—In a few minutes.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—There might be synchronized raids on the capitals, and apparently this is something that no-one is bothering about. The danger to the north of us should not be under-estimated. It is no use merely talking about it. We have to act, and the most effective action would be to start now to decentralize our population and our industries.

I am not particularly happy about another point in the Bill, although I agree with the principle sought to be established, namely, that the subdivider is expected to provide for adequate reserves and playing fields. That may be going a little too far. As I understand the provision, unless there are reasonably adequate reserves in existence at the time the subdivision is proposed the subdivider will have to provide for them. That might involve a very considerable area of the land to be subdivided. There should be a limit. Under the old Act a

council could require the subdivider to include up to 5 per cent for this purpose, and I suggest consideration should be given under this Bill to limiting the area to be provided by the subdivider to the same percentage. If for any reason it was necessary to acquire a larger proportion, then the owner should receive compensation for the area so acquired.

Mr. Shannon—Why should he not receive compensation for any area?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I hesitated to suggest that, because we have had the provision in the old Act for so long that I thought that if I suggested compensation should be paid for all the land acquired it would be too revolutionary. However, my honourable friend may be prepared to move an amendment on those lines, and if he does I will give it serious thought. The broad scheme of the Bill is worthy of sympathetic consideration. It is intended that we shall prevent the subdivision of land which is subject to inundation and not suitable for residential sites, and that we shall have some areas reserved for recreational and other purposes. In this regard the crying need in most of our suburbs is not so much for ovals where adults can play games as for small playing areas where children can play near their homes without travelling great distances at considerable cost, and not arrive at a playing area to find it already monopolized by adults. I do not suggest that they should be equipped with swings and sand pits and so on, but there should be small areas where the kiddies could get together and kick a football or belt a cricket ball as McDougall did of yore.

Mr. Quirke—What happens to land which the committee refuses to subdivide?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—It is not subdivided, but remains broad acres. That opens up another aspect. There is provision in the Bill for the area covered by the Bill to be extended by proclamation. We might find a future Government extending the area covered by this legislation and thus bringing under the control of the proposed committee land which this Parliament did not intend should be controlled. We might consider the wisdom of not giving that power to a Government, but allowing Parliament to decide if and when the time arises that the area covered by the legislation should be extended. I think the purpose of the Bill is a good one, but I am not so happy about the machinery to be used to accomplish that purpose. I have the horrible feeling that the measure is not intended to work, but is mainly an answer to all those clamouring for green

belts, playing fields and the reservation of beauty spots, and that it is not intended to be a very effective piece of legislation.

Mr. John Clark—It is a sop.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes, to what appears to be public opinion at the time. I would much prefer to be speaking on a more comprehensive measure for the setting up of an authority so that the possibility of injustices would be removed and the scheme would have some chance of success in perpetuity. I support the second reading.

Mr. TRAVERS (Torrens)—I understood the Leader of the Opposition to suggest that the Premier had in some way stolen a part of his policy in introducing this Bill. I want to make it clear that the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition are perfectly welcome to this Bill, and that I will not enter into the contest of claiming any part in it. This Bill is an extremely unsatisfactory piece of legislation. For many reasons it ought to be withdrawn, reconsidered and tackled from a much more workable angle. I understood the Leader of the Opposition, in his concluding remarks, to say something to the effect that the Bill was never intended to work. I have not heard that before, but I can only say that if that is so I am sure the Bill has admirably achieved its object.

Mr. Shannon—You would not charge the Premier with bringing in a Bill never intended to work?

Mr. TRAVERS—No, but I think that that was what the Leader of the Opposition said. The reaction to this Bill has been in some quarters the type of reaction that you sometimes find when people say, "Here is a plan, let us support it; a plan is a good thing." I point out that there are many kinds of plans: some good, some bad, some indifferent. I want to make it quite plain that until I see the plan I am not prepared to say whether I regard it as good, bad or indifferent. I regard myself as having been sent here for the purpose of looking at any plan submitted, examining it, amending it if required, and supporting it if I think it warrants supporting. I am not prepared to sign a blank cheque in the form in which this Bill appears. It is an extremely unsatisfactory proposal. Every-one of us has been sent here for the purpose of legislating, not for the purpose of delegating his powers and shelving his duties. We must look at any plan and decide upon its merits or demerits. To indulge in any kind of passing the buck is not desirable. The

Bill has a number of very objectionable features which ought not to be found in any Act of Parliament. I am not suggesting that there should not be a town planning scheme, but I am not prepared to join with those who say, "We have a plan, therefore it must be a good thing."

We should examine any plan on its merits. I should be one of the last to say that we should not have experts to help us on matters such as town planning, but having got their assistance then let us start considering what lines the legislation should follow. First of all, a committee should be appointed, a committee of experts, but the Bill does not assure us of that. We are not told who the members of the committee are to be, or what their qualifications will be. They may be representatives of this, that, or the other interest; the Bill does not say. I am sure that the Government would appoint people well qualified for the job, but the Bill should say that they are to be men with expert knowledge. They could prepare their plan, and it could then be brought down and debated in Parliament. Only then should we attempt to decide what the law will be. If this Bill is passed an unknown committee will set out to deal with an unknown area. One clause states that the metropolitan area may be expanded or extended by proclamation, and this House has no power to revoke or vary the proclamation. The committee will produce an unknown plan. They are to be given an assignment in which the sky is the limit. If they chose—to take an absurd example—they could bring in a plan providing that all land beyond four miles from the G.P.O. and within  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles of it shall be expropriated without compensation. Under the Bill Parliament is given no power to amend the plan. We can only reject portion of it, or ask the committee, in effect, graciously to reconsider it. I am not prepared to subscribe to legislation of that kind. The plan will automatically become law in a certain number of days after it is tabled if no action is taken to reject it in a certain time. That is extremely undesirable. Unless there is a majority of this House against the plan, instead of a majority in favour, it will automatically become law.

Mr. Stephens—This House cannot amend it?

Mr. TRAVERS—It cannot. It can reject it or refer it back for reconsideration. We cannot alter it or add anything to it to make it workable. Every member has a responsibility to his electors to show why a certain town planning provision became law. Some members

may have to face a problem when asked about any town planning under a Bill such as this if they have to say, "Really, I do not know why I signed a blank cheque. I authorized someone else to do my job. We asked some committee to bring down a grand plan." To be asked to appoint an unknown committee, with unknown qualifications, to have powers in an unknown area, to bring down an unknown plan, is rather like the futile pastime of watching a black man chasing a black cat in a dark room on a dark night: you don't see anything. In looking at this Bill you don't see much either, except that we are asked to delegate our authority to someone who has not been elected to do a job for which we have been elected. I do not dispute that it is desirable to have a master plan, but we should hear the experts first. Let the committee make appropriate inquiries and then bring a plan before us for our consideration. Arguments based upon matter of convenience, such as that it would take a committee too long to produce a plan or that we could not get agreement on a plan in Parliament when it was produced, should not count for anything. From day to day Parliament has to deal with problems as important as town planning, in fact, more so.

By and large, I think the community trusts Parliament to do a job of a standard acceptable to it. Therefore, I see no reason for supposing that when Parliament gets the advice of the experts it cannot then set out to do a job of a similar calibre on this subject. There seems no reason why this type of legislation should be introduced in relation to this subject any more than in relation to any other subject. Does anyone suggest that we should solve our problems on the licensing law or on trotting by appointing a committee of five and committing ourselves in advance to whatever plans were introduced? We can foresee the result that would be achieved by that. This Bill is not the proper approach to this or any other subject that comes before Parliament. This Bill provides that a subdivision shall be rejected by the committee if it does not provide for parks, roads and so on; no discretion is given to the committee in the matter. Consider the case of a subdivision of an acre or two alongside a public park. Why should any more of this land be split up into parklands or thrown open for roads if there is no need for them? All these matters should be at the discretion of the committee, but they are not. The measure provides that the landowner, presumably at his own expense, shall provide certain reserves. Is that to be at his own expense, is

it on the 5 per cent basis referred to by the Leader of the Opposition or is even that basis to be abolished? Presumably the master plan would tell us about that, but it is too late then; that is the time when we should be starting to discuss the matter, not finishing it. It is one thing to deal with the plan when we have it before us and have to decide whether we are going to convert it into the law of the land; it is another thing to take a plan which is, so to speak, an accomplished fact and which will automatically be the law. We cannot amend it and send it back; we accept the plan as it is, or disallow part—we have no authority to substitute anything for the parts we disallow. All we can do under the Bill is to refer it back to the committee.

Section 31 takes the matter somewhat further still by enabling the committee and the Minister to perpetuate the situation by the committee submitting to the Minister from time to time any further variation of the plan that it may think ought to be made, so we are not finished with it when the plan comes forward—it can still go on from year to year or day to day with further amendments brought about through the medium of the committee making representations to the Minister, the Minister laying on the table of the House an amendment and the amendment automatically becoming law until and unless it is disallowed. This is an extremely unsatisfactory form of legislation, and highly desirable though it is to beautify still further our beautiful city and surrounds, let us get back to first principles and appoint a committee, see what the experts say, consider their findings on their merits and then start dealing with the Bill to decide which part will become law.

Mr. JENNINGS secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 19. Page 436.)

Mr. JENNINGS (Prospect)—I am very glad to support this Bill; my only regret is that I am not supporting a measure to make price control a permanent feature of our legislation. This Bill extends control for only a specific period. Governments throughout Australia, including this Government, have acknowledged the necessity of price control. The members for Mitcham and Burra, although opposing the Bill, did not give very substantial opposition, and I think I am fair in saying

that their opposition really provided good support for the measure. Price control has been recognized as necessary by all Governments throughout Australia over the last few years; isn't it reasonable to believe that it is more necessary now that wages have been pegged and workers are not in a position to be recompensed for increases in prices? In the last Federal Budget no increase was provided for pensioners, and only 2s. 6d. was granted them in the previous year. Prices are increasing all the time, not because of lack of price control but because of lax administration. Tea will rise in price in the next few days. I realize that the Prices Department has no control over that matter, but prices are going up, showing clearly that those who are dependent on fixed wages or pensions will be in a bad way unless a measure of price control is continued to give some protection from exploitation by people who are prepared and able by monopoly control and grouping together for trade purposes to exploit the purchasing public. This Bill was opposed by Mr. Dunks and, strangely enough, after he spoke somebody introduced pies and pasties into the discussion. I do not know why it is that whenever this House discusses an extension of price control these particular delicacies always intrude into the debate. Presumably it is because a prominent member of this House is prominent in the provision of pies and pasties. The member for Goodwood referred to this topic in the House and was reported fairly fully in the press. On the same evening, in the A.B.C. news, the member for Mitcham was described as "Dr. Dunks."

The SPEAKER—The honourable member should not indulge in personalities, as they frequently lead to reprisals. I hope he won't pursue that course.

Mr. JENNINGS—I was pointing out that the member for Goodwood mentioned this subject. In yesterday's *Advertiser*, under the heading "Pies mostly P.P. and F.A." the following advertisement appeared:—

A legislator stated pies and pasties "were mostly puff-pastry with fresh air underneath." On the other hand it is acknowledged that ZAC ingredients are of the highest quality.

I was wondering whether the member for Mitcham was a doctor of P.P. or a doctor of F.A. In answer to a question today, the Premier mentioned that in one industry in this and other States there have been increases of over 800 per cent in prices since the abolition of price control. Hides have also drastically increased in price and it is fore-

shadowed that shoes will do likewise. It is reasonable to believe that if control is completely abolished we will experience drastic price increases, which are regrettable at all times and certainly detrimental to our economy. The Federal Treasurer, our Treasurer and the Prime Minister have been warning us about the dangers of another inflationary spiral.

Mr. John Clark—We have been told that this is the most prosperous year in our history.

Mr. JENNINGS—According to the Premier, every year is our most prosperous year. Mr. Dunks also claimed that this type of legislation discouraged competition and Mr. Hawker said something similar. It should be obvious to all that price control does not necessarily discourage competition. The fixed price is the maximum price and if traders want to compete they can reduce prices. That is so obvious it should not have to be explained to persons as intelligent as members of this House. We cannot depend on competition these days to reduce prices because there is virtually no competition. If there is not a straight-out monopoly there is certainly a combination of traders who are keeping prices on a level to suit themselves.

The only other matter I desire to refer to is the claim by Mr. Dunks that price control legislation should be discontinued because a Liberal Party conference had carried a resolution opposing it. Are we going to get to the stage in this State where, if a resolution is carried at a political conference, it must automatically become law? What a claim to put before members—that because a resolution was carried at a conference of the Liberal Party then the Government of the day should automatically and immediately give effect to it in legislation. I do not doubt for one moment that Mr. Dunks would like to see the laws of the land being made by the Liberal Party conference and not being debated by this Parliament, but most people do not want that and have made it perfectly clear. Not even Mr. Dunks' colleagues have made such a claim in this House. I join with the Leader of the Opposition in his plea for this legislation to be made permanent so that each year we will not have to renew it for a further 12 months as we have done in the past and which, despite the members for Mitcham and Burra, we will do again. I hope it will become permanent so that we will always have authority to control prices when it is necessary to prevent the public from being exploited by a minority who would profit from such exploitation. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY (Chaffey)—I feel that this is not legislation that a member can oppose, because no matter what one's personal feeling is, Parliament has for many years accepted it as a basic principle. It is unfortunate that we should have to keep passing such legislation, but there is a minority of individuals in business who need to be controlled, otherwise they would be fleecing the community to the utmost of their ability. They seem to think that the price of anything is the most you can get for it. Quite frankly, I have been generally opposed to these controls because they impose a tremendous expense upon the taxpayer. Governments departments are not run without considerable expenditure and the staff could often well be employed in other directions. Members know that I have been asking questions on behalf of one of my constituents who was charged a price for a comparatively small part for his motor car which the Premier said was 800 per cent above the price of that article when price control was in operation. The Premier also said that on the whole the people were being ruthlessly exploited on spare parts for cars. If that is so it is an indictment of some of our business people. If they had a sense of decency and were prepared to accept reasonable profits it would be unnecessary for Parliament to pass restrictive legislation of this kind. But that statement can be applied to every section of the community; I suppose 90 per cent of the laws we pass deal with only a small proportion, possibly 10 per cent or less.

Mr. John Clark—But the laws are nonetheless necessary.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Quite so, and it is the people who exploit the situation who are responsible for this type of law. Earlier in the session I drew attention to what the merchants, agents and retailers of citrus fruit were doing to the consumers and producers. By statistics I showed that while the citrus fruits were in the hands of these agents for about a week they got more than the growers who had to care for the trees for a whole year. Although Ministers of the Crown go out and advise the primary producer that he has to be a little more efficient I have never heard of a Minister going to those people who exploit the consumers and telling them they must cut down their profits. I wonder why the primary producer should always be singled out as the man who has to mend his ways, cut down his expenses and tighten his belt. This type of legislation is too rigid as it applies to people who do not need to be

controlled. If we had something more flexible, something that functioned in the way of rent control, for example, where a person who feels he has been exploited has some court of appeal it would be much better. Under this legislation there is no protection for the consumer unless the whole of an industry is named, and why should an industry, 99 per cent of whose members are doing a good job and only one doing wrong, be named? The Leader of the Opposition said that in Queensland there is a Fair Prices Board. I have not had an opportunity to examine the set-up, but it conjures up in my mind a board to which any person can send an account which he feels is too high and ask whether the board considers it to be a fair charge. Many firms are rendering first-class service to the community, but they are blamed for something for which only a small section is responsible. For instance, the whole of the spare parts and the secondhand car trade are apparently accused of ruthlessly exploiting the consumer because of questions asked in this place and through statements in the press, and many of them are very hurt by these generalities. Those who are guilty of offences against the law or of exploiting the consumer should be held responsible, but I do not believe in the overriding power of this sort of legislation. If the Government would set up a board to which the consumer could appeal for protection it would be much better.

I listened with considerable interest to two members behind the Government who opposed this measure and in the Committee stages I should like to hear them justify those individuals who do the things I have mentioned. If we have to support the principle of freedom of trade, on which we have all been brought up, against concrete cases of exploitation the position will be very difficult indeed. Further, I have never been able to understand the argument that the present form of price control is not a control of prices but a control of profits. That seems merely to be playing with words for if we control prices we automatically control profits—it is simply cause and effect. The butcher says that the price of meat to the public is controlled by the price he has to pay for it. When he goes to the market he finds no control and has to pay whatever is asked for meat. Price control in that respect would help him and not be disadvantageous. The practical butcher should be able to calculate within a reasonable number of pounds the weight of an animal, and all he would have to do would be to remember the price he could charge and then calculate what

he could pay for meat. That would provide him with a stability. Parliament should examine the possibility of controlling individuals so that they could be charged if they exploited the community. It is said that people do not have to buy goods from any particular shops if they do not want to, but everybody is more or less governed by organizations. If a person does not want to buy from one butcher and goes to another he finds that the price of the meat is the same, and therefore he is governed to some extent in his buying.

Mr. BROOKMAN (Alexandra)—I do not oppose the Bill. No member will say that some form of control of prices has not been necessary in the past, but it has now become a matter of how long we should have that control. Some members say it should be a permanent feature of our legislation. I feel that the administration of price control should be relaxed far more quickly than has been the case. Many goods are in plentiful supply and there is no need to control their prices. I do not know that there is need to control meat prices. In Australia we produce large quantities of meat and it seems wrong that the prices should be controlled. Mr. Macgillivray said that the butcher could make use of price control. He said that the butcher would have a price over which he could not sell and that would enable him to make a proper estimate of the price he could pay for the meat he bought. When we relax price control we sometimes find that there is a tremendous difference between the fixed price and the

actual market value. This applies particularly with meat, the production of which is seasonal. The price of potatoes has been released from control recently. Potatoes are in over supply at present and are being sold officially at £14 a ton, but it is obvious that many tons are sold at a lower price and many tons allowed to rot because they cannot be sold. The price of superphosphate has had a far-reaching effect on the community, much greater than is generally realized. Superphosphate is produced by relatively few companies, but they all seem to have played the game and as they have good reputations they could be allowed to fix their own price. There would be no flagrant breaches and in any case price control legislation could be introduced at any time if there were any exploitation. I cannot give any information in regard to petrol prices. It is a subject which seems to be so far reaching that it is difficult for us to get a clear picture of the position. I would hesitate before agreeing to releasing petrol from price control. That is one reason why I believe the Act should be continued. The time is not ripe to completely eliminate it. Although a number of commodities could be released, there are some—relatively few—which still need to come under control.

Mr. HUTCHENS secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.42 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, August 25, at 2 p.m.