

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, September 7, 1954.

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

JURIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

POLICE PENSIONS BILL.

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

QUESTIONS.

AIR TRANSPORT OF BEEF.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—In connection with the "Air Beef" plan mentioned by the Federal Treasurer, Sir Arthur Fadden, a few days ago, the following is an extract from a report in today's *Advertiser* of remarks by Mr. C. W. Smythe, Brisbane manager of Australian National Airways:—

Mr. Smythe said that "Air Beef" would mean the establishment of abattoirs dotted about inland at central airstrips to which station owners would drive their cattle. These abattoirs might cost about £50,000 each.

Has the Premier any information on the possible impact of this proposal firstly on the extension of the 4ft. 8½in. gauge railway line from Telford to Marree to enable the transport of live cattle to the Adelaide market, and secondly on the ultimate completion of the conversion of the line to Alice Springs and the completion of the north-south line between Alice Springs and Birdum, which was part of the agreement made many years ago when the Northern Territory was ceded by South Australia?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Frankly, I think the suggestion that an abattoirs could be established for £50,000 is most ridiculous. Anyone knowing what is involved in the establishment of an abattoirs, and the associated freezing works and other necessary equipment, as well as the housing of people to enable it to function and the provision of adequate water and power supplies, knows that the statement is completely wrong. As to the transport of heavy commodities by air, except under unusual circumstances the cost has been found to be

high. In Australia where long distances are concerned the commodities cannot be carried at a cost based on a rate per pound. We want a rate per ton. I doubt whether the proposal will have any effect on the matters mentioned by the honourable member. There was a solemn obligation on the part of the Commonwealth, whether beef comes down or not, to complete the north-south line. It was incurred as the purchase price of the Northern Territory. In the most recent agreement with the Commonwealth on railway matters the Commonwealth re-stated in legislation its intention to carry out the original obligation. Under these circumstances I have no doubt at all that air beef will have no effect on the proposal. An honourable member mentioned the Marree line some time ago. The matter has been submitted to the Commonwealth but I cannot yet give a reply as to Commonwealth policy on it.

HOUSING TRUST RENTAL PROGRAMME.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—In this morning's *Advertiser* I read that the Orlit company would today begin laying foundations for the first double-unit homes for the South Australian Housing Trust for the new satellite town near Salisbury. That indicates that these will be rental homes. Can the Premier say whether the trust is going to further curtail building rental homes in the metropolitan area now that the building for the satellite town has been commenced?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Housing Trust has had some criticism in this House from members who thought that a larger percentage of houses should be built outside the metropolitan area. As far as I know, the trust has always built as many houses as possible outside the metropolitan area as a means of assisting decentralization. In this instance I do not think it will make much difference because the trust has completed a programme at Salisbury and the builders who were engaged there will be operating at the satellite town.

VICTOR HARBOUR CAUSEWAY.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—I was told some weeks ago that some delay in repairs to the causeway between Victor Harbour and Granite Island might result from a shortage of piles and that until a shipment arrived from Coffs Harbour, New South Wales, the work could not be commenced. Can the Minister say whether the piles have arrived, and, if not, when can they be expected?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—There are no piles on hand, but a requisition for their supply by October has been placed with the Chief Storekeeper, who will call for tenders. If the piles are not available from local sources but have to come from another State, it is expected that delivery would have to be spread over three to four months from the date of placing of the order. Rather than the piles, the commencement of the repairs to the causeway is likely to be dependent on the procurement of sawn hardwood as deliveries of the latter are uncertain and, from experience, will probably take at least six months.

PORT PIRIE TRAIN SERVICE.

Mr. DAVIS—This morning the train that has been known as the "Port Pirie passenger train" was composed of 10 vans and four carriages. When it arrived at Bowmans another trailer was attached. Do the Railways intend to turn the so-called passenger train into a mixed train for all time?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will ask the Minister of Railways to let me have a report from the Commissioner, and I will bring down a reply as early as possible.

POLICE STATIONS IN NEW AREAS.

Mr. JENNINGS—Several newly-developed areas in my electorate are virtually new suburbs but there are no police stations there. I do not doubt that they are regularly patrolled by the police, but that is a poor substitute for a police station, which has a salutary effect on disorderly elements and also a comforting effect on local residents. Is the police force adequate to provide stations in newly developed areas? If so, is it likely that new police stations will be established? If the force is not adequate, what steps are being taken to bring it up to strength?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have not seen a report on the strength of the police force in the last fortnight, but so far as I know it is up to strength at present. Of course, from time to time some officers retire, but others come in. I point out that it has been found that better protection can be afforded the public by having a mobile police force and good systems of communication, particularly wireless. Therefore, the department has been getting more modern transport equipment and additional lines of communication. The spreading of the police indiscriminately in stations is not in the best interests of efficiency of the force or of protection to the public. After all, the ultimate desire of all members—and I am

sure of the honourable member—is to get the maximum protection for the public. I assure him that prompt action will be taken if any lawlessness occurs in his district.

INDUSTRY FOR WALLAROO.

Mr. McALEES—Press reports seem to indicate that the handling of wheat by bulk methods may be introduced at Wallaroo. Seeing that the satellite town near Salisbury is being started, will the Premier provide at least 300 homes there for people at Wallaroo who will be forced to leave that district if a new industry is not established there soon?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think the figures I gave last week about the number of applications for trust homes in the metropolitan area would interest the honourable member. Speaking from memory, the total number was about 18,000, so the honourable member will see that the housing proposed at the satellite town is not proposed at the expense of country housing. It does not alter the fact that if the Government can assist in securing industries in country areas, including Wallaroo, it will be happy to do so. We recognise that Wallaroo, Kadina and Moonta, which were originally founded by the mines that are now out of operation, have a labour potential that would be valuable if an industry could be established there.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONCERTS.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Recently a report appeared in the evening's press stating that a man had made arrangements with various school committees to present concerts for them. The committees were to sell the tickets and he would share in the proceeds. I understand from reports I have received that on an evening set down for one concert the concert party did not arrive. Can the Minister of Education say whether any school committees have been defrauded or lost funds and whether the department has been able to take action to prohibit such exploitation?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—There have been several references in the newspapers, apart from the one to which the honourable member referred. I have been informed that the person, carrying on business under the rather imposing business name of International Productions entered into verbal arrangements with several school committees, or their representatives, in the metropolitan area to produce concerts in their centres. I think there was to be a minimum of 30 artists and 30 instrumentalists. Arrangements were made for such

concerts to be held at Hindmarsh, Kilburn, Largs Bay, Glenelg, LeFevre Peninsula and some other centres. The total proceeds were to be divided equally between the school committees and the promoter. The promoter did produce a programme in one or two of the centres but it was not satisfactory and not in accordance with his promises. In the other cases he did not produce a programme at all and some public-spirited citizens from Glenelg and Kilburn came to the rescue of the school committees and produced some entertainment. After consultation with me, the Director of Education has written to the headmasters of all metropolitan schools suggesting that school committees be requested to cancel all existing arrangements with this promoter and I am arranging a conference with representatives of the School Committees Association and the High School Councils Association to discuss the whole problem. One portion of the existing regulations states:—

Teachers wishing to arrange for school entertainments, bazaars, etc., at which a charge is to be made for admission, must first obtain the approval of the Director, must conform to such instructions as may be issued from time to time, and must keep accounts in the official books supplied.

The regulations do not provide for similar procedure where functions are held under the auspices of the school committees or school councils, and I will suggest to their representatives that some similar procedure be adopted in future: that either the consent of the Director be obtained or that, at least, he be consulted before they enter into arrangements, either written or verbal, with promoters who are going to share the proceeds of these entertainments. Apart from all other considerations, I am very much opposed to school children being exploited in this manner.

GROWERS' BULK HANDLING PLAN.

Mr. HEASLIP—In reply to a question on bulk handling last week the Premier said:—

No figures have been submitted as regards estimated costs, nor is it yet possible to assess whether the type of installation would be suitable. Dual control upon the wharves may be involved and the Harbors Board has not yet reported upon this aspect. In these circumstances my reply is that I have received some proposals but they are not yet advanced to the stage where it is possible for the Government to form an opinion upon their merits.

I understand the Premier has received those figures. Can he say whether he has been able to examine them and form an opinion as to their merits, and if not, how long will it be before he can?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received some additional information from the South Australian Wheatgrowers' Association which indicates that bulk loading facilities can be established at Thevenard, Port Lincoln, Wailaroo, Port Pirie and Port Adelaide for approximately £4,250,000. I am not in a position to say whether the estimates which have been submitted are, in fact, real estimates. I fancy that they have been computed from experience of costs involved in the erection of somewhat similar installations in Western Australia. The estimates certainly do not take into account any costs which would have to be borne by the Government for harbour and railway alterations and there would be additional costs for any storage that had to be established in country districts. Only a limited amount of country storage has been provided for in the £4,250,000 at certain points—I think at 17 points in one zone, for example. The figures are being examined by the Minister of Agriculture, but they do not disclose all the costs involved. They will be examined in due course and when the Government has reached a conclusion on the proposal a statement will be made.

WESTERN DISTRICT SEWERAGE.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Can the Minister of Works indicate when work will commence on the sewerage of the housing area east of the River Torrens and adjacent to it, and south of the Henley Beach Road?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I understand the locality is similar to that in relation to which Mr. Hutchens asked a question about three months ago. The position is much the same as I told him then, that development has not reached a stage sufficient to enable the department to proceed with that work. In this locality the work is very costly having relation to the number of houses that could be served by the use of a given amount of money, manpower and materials.

Mr. Fred Walsh—The area to which I refer does not adjoin that mentioned by the member for Hindmarsh.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I thought it was in the same locality but apparently I have been misinformed. I will have to check my facts and get details on the area the honourable member has in mind.

SALE OF HOUSING TRUST HOMES.

Mr. DUNNAGE—In view of the number of persons prepared to buy Housing Trust rental

homes, has the Government considered, or does it intend to consider, the selling of such houses?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Housing Trust has always conducted, concurrently with its rental programme, a selling programme, and any occupant of a trust home who desires to purchase only has to apply and his application will be considered; if he can pay a sufficient deposit, his application will be approved. However, it is not practicable to sell houses that have been built for rental purposes, unless the whole of that area is to be so disposed of, because an area containing both rental and purchase houses is costly to administer and maintain. In practice the trust has built houses in one locality for letting and in another for sale. Under arrangements which we are now negotiating with the Commonwealth for an amendment to the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement it will be possible, if the Commonwealth agrees to the proposals advanced, for houses to be purchased under much easier conditions than previously.

LARGS BAY RETAINING WALL.

Mr. TAPPING—I have received a letter from the Pt. Adelaide City Council regarding the storm damage in September, 1953, to the concrete retaining wall on Lady Gowrie Drive, Largs Bay. Following the storm an inspection was made by the Minister of Marine, the Commissioner of Highways and the City Engineer, and the question of the replacement of the damaged concrete sheet piling along the Drive was discussed. The Commissioner of Highways said that replacement of the wall was the responsibility of the Highways Department and that, therefore, no grant could be claimed from the Government for storm repair. Since then the council has been advised that the damage would be repaired by the use of the "rip rap" method, a composition of stones and very crude in its make-up. Because Largs Bay is a high standard residential and highly assessed rate revenue area, the council is anxious that it should have a retaining wall of a standard commensurate with its status. Will the Minister of Works take up with the Commissioner of Highways the possibility of constructing a retaining wall by other than the "rip rap" method?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will take up this question with the Minister of Local Government and let the honourable member have a reply.

LEIGH CREEK SCHOOL.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—Today's *Advertiser* contains a letter from the chairman of the Leigh Creek Parents' Committee, drawing attention to the great disability suffered in that locality because of a lack of higher than primary educational facilities, and suggesting that something be done to give the children there the advantage of super-primary education without the necessity of their being sent away from home and the consequent costs involved. Can the Minister of Education say whether his department has any scheme by which educational facilities can be improved at such places as Leigh Creek?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I read the letter referred to and the Director of Education has received a letter on the same matter from the chairman of the Electricity Trust, Mr. Drew, from which it appears there will be about 16 children in Grade VIII at Leigh Creek next year and a substantial increase in that number in 1956. The Director has recommended that the position may best be met by establishing a Grade VIII at the Leigh Creek school as from the beginning of 1955, and appointing a trained assistant to take charge of this class. As soon as the number in secondary grades increases to 20 or more, the Leigh Creek school could be made a higher primary school and steps taken to provide necessary additional classrooms and facilities. These could be available, if necessary, at the beginning of 1956. I have approved of the Director's recommendation, and, on the broader issue of similar facilities to other country areas, I am willing, without committing myself in any way, to take a very sympathetic view, a view in which the Director, the Deputy Director and other members of the administrative staff concur.

PAYNEHAM TRAMLINE LIGHTING.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Has the Premier a reply to my recent question regarding the lighting of trams on the Paynham line?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The General Manager of the Tramways Trust reports:—

The reflective material under trial at the time of writing my reply of July 29 proved unsuccessful. We are securing another type of reflective material which has greater luminosity, and shall conduct trials therewith as soon as supplies come to hand.

PARNDANA RESEARCH STATION.

Mr. BROOKMAN—Can the Minister of Agriculture say what work is being done at the Parndana Research Station on Kangaroo

Island, what methods his department is using to disseminate to the farmers of the district the information gathered, and what works have been published by the staff there?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The honourable member was good enough to advise me of his intention to ask this question, and I have secured a report from the Senior Research Officer and Agronomist. As it is fairly long, I ask permission to have it incorporated in *Hansard*, and I will give a brief resume of the main points.

The SPEAKER—Usually schedules are dealt with in that way, but not paragraphs of reports.

Leave granted.

The report was as follows:—

Reference Parndana Research Centre:

Question 1: What research work has been done at the Research Centre at Parndana?

There are two phases to the research work being carried on at Parndana:—(a) Primary phase experiments carried out on virgin land, and (b) secondary phase experiments on old pasture land.

(a) Primary phase experiments include—

1. Seed bed preparation.
2. Species and strains of grasses and clovers.
3. Seed mixtures and seeding rates.
4. Fertilizer requirements including phosphate, copper, molybdenum, zinc, manganese and copper.

(b) Secondary phase experiments include—

1. Comparison of perennial grasses and seeding rates.
2. Wheat and oat variety trials.
3. Fertilizer requirements including phosphate and trace elements.

(c) In addition to this work, co-operative work with the chemistry and plant pathology sections of the Waite Institute is also in progress.

(d) Summary of results.

1. Pasture growth is as satisfactory on roughly prepared virgin ground as on land receiving more elaborate working. Extra ploughings mean better eradication of eucalypt species and yacca, but have little effect on the re-growth of native shrubs and herbs under normal circumstances.

2. Provision of good pasture cover with associated early grazing is the only real solution to the re-growth problem—this means higher seeding rate of clover and higher super. rates with trace elements.

3. To enable a good pasture to be established a seeding rate of 4 lb. of subterranean clover with 3wt. of superphosphate in the first year, together with 3½ to 7 lb. of copper sulphate and 1-2oz. of molybdenum is required. An application of 7 lb. per acre of zinc sulphate appears to be necessary in the second or third year for best results.

4. The Mount Barker and Bacchus Marsh strains of subterranean clover have proved the most suitable.

5. If perennial grasses are introduced with the initial sowing of clover, these must be sown at low seeding rates of the order of ½ lb. per acre. Perennial ryegrasses, cocksfoot and perennial veldt grass show considerable promise, but phalaris has been disappointing.

6. Cereal cropping has proved successful on old clover land; good crops of both wheat and barley and heavy cuts of oats have been obtained.

It is considered that the research work at Parndana is of the highest standard and represents some of the best in this department.

Question 2: How has this information been made available to farmers—both war service land settlement and private?

1. The officer in charge, Mr. E. D. Carter, has been in residence at Parndana since August 26, 1953. He has been in charge of the research work since its beginning on February 5, 1951, and has had personal contact with the settlers on Kangaroo Island since that date.

2. Each year since 1951, a field day has been held at the research centre. In addition, Mr. Carter has addressed various bureau meetings on the island and has been available to answer any inquiries. It is hoped that a telephone will be installed in his residence in the near future.

3. The Land Development Executive has been kept informed of all findings and Mr. Carter has prepared several reports with recommendations.

4. At least two radio talks dealing with the research work at the centre have been given during the last two years.

5. Several articles have appeared in the press.

Question 3: What work has been published?

Apart from the progress reports and the articles written for the press, no work has been published in a recognized agricultural journal. The main reason for this has been due to the fact that Mr. Carter has been the only trained officer engaged on this very comprehensive programme of work. The lack of suitable accommodation has been partly responsible for this. Single men's quarters have recently been completed and it is expected that this will give some relief to the labour problem. In addition to the research work, Mr. Carter has managed the normal farm activities associated with stocking and cropping and has been responsible for a large developmental programme. In order to maintain this programme of work, it has not been humanly possible for him to prepare his research findings for publication. When more technical assistance becomes available, publication of results will follow.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The work will be undertaken in a more satisfactory manner and to a far greater extent than hitherto by virtue of the new proposals we have in mind regarding extension services to be made available in the future.

MOUNT GAMBIER-MILLICENT RAILWAY BROADENING.

Mr. CORCORAN—The rate of progress of the work of broadening the railway gauge

between Mount Gambier and Millicent has been slow, particularly during the winter period. Now that the dry season is approaching, can there be a speeding up of the work? The people at Millicent and intervening places are concerned because the work is taking longer than they were led to believe it would take.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Government and the Minister desired to expedite the work as much as circumstances would permit, but many delays occurred, all outside the control of the Government. I will get more precise information from the Minister of Railways and let the honourable member have it.

BURRA TRAIN DELAY.

Mr. HAWKER—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked on August 25 regarding a delay that day in the arrival of the morning train from Burra?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Railways Commissioner reports as follows:—

The delay to the up Burra railcar was caused by the failure of the engine on the down Penfield passenger train near Parafield, which required the introduction of a single-line working between Dry Creek and Salisbury. It was the duty of the officer in charge at Salisbury to advise passengers on the railcar the extent of and the reason for the delay. The officer did advise passengers that the railcar would be delayed for some time, but I must express my regret that he failed to fully inform them, as the standing instructions required him to do.

WHEAT BALLOT.

Mr. STOTT—Can the Minister of Agriculture say when his department will send out ballot papers in connection with the wheat stabilization plan? In other States the papers have been handed to growers and they will be returned shortly. If they have not gone out in South Australia, will the Minister expedite the matter?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—We have been working for several weeks very industriously on the preparation of a voters' roll, which had to be compiled from lists supplied by the Wheat Board. We also had to get the names of growers sowing wheat for the first time this year. Practically all the plans are in hand. There are about a hundred anomalies to tidy up. It is expected that we will be able to send the ballot papers by September 17, which will be in ample time for their return by the deadline set, October 15.

STEEL WORKS AT WHYALLA.

Mr. RICHES—I express my gratitude to the Premier for supplying members with a typewritten copy of the report of the Director

of Mines. I am sure all members appreciate the act. Can he tell the House when the proposed conference will take place between the Government and the Broken Hill Proprietary Co., and can he indicate who will be attending the conference and what aspects of the director's report will be discussed?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Speaking from memory, the conference will take place today week. The Broken Hill Pty. Co. will be represented by its managing director and probably one other director, possibly Sir Walter Duncan. I shall attend on behalf of the Government. The matters to be discussed will be those surrounding the proposal for the establishment of additional industries at Whyalla. We do not propose to hold a post mortem examination on the report of the Director of Mines, but we shall see whether the State Government can bring forward any views that will enable the company to establish another industry at Whyalla, preferably an integrated steel mills, if possible.

SECOND QUALITY EGGS.

Mr. DUNKS—I intended to put this question on the Notice Paper, but as the House will be adjourning soon for a week or two I would not get a reply for a fortnight. I ask the Minister of Agriculture whether he will ascertain by tomorrow to what use second grade hen eggs are put. Press reports state that first quality hen eggs return 3s. 9d. to the producer, and cost 3s. 11½d. to the manufacturer. Second quality hen eggs are quoted at 2s. 6d., but I cannot obtain from any merchant the wholesale price to the manufacturer. Can they be purchased by a manufacturer?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I have not a full answer to the question, but I know that second grade eggs are largely reserved for pulping and to meet our overseas commitments. Therefore, they are not available to the general public. After all, there is a limited quantity of second grade eggs. I will get a fuller reply tomorrow.

ATOMIC TECHNOLOGY.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier's attention been drawn to an article in today's *Advertiser* headed "U.S. Atomic Plan." It states:—

New York, September 6.—President Eisenhower announced today that the U.S. and "a number of other nations" had agreed to form an international agency to foster the growth of atomic technology for peaceful use. A Presidential assistant said the nations referred to included Britain, Canada, Australia, South Africa and France.

The Premier has been conducting negotiations with the Commonwealth Government for the use of an institution we have established in South Australia as a national laboratory for the wider investigation of the use of uranium for peace-time purposes. Have those negotiations reached a conclusive stage? Has the Premier any information to give on this subject?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I saw the article, and I believe that the information contained in it is of the utmost significance to South Australia. Some time ago I predicted that if Australia could establish that it had considerable uranium resources that would be the best entry card we could have to get information abroad to assist us in our projects. It is significant that the countries mentioned in the article are those that have uranium resources—South Africa, Canada, Australia, France, and Belgium—and of course Great Britain comes in as a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. The article indicates that the barrier on the supply of information which will be necessary for us to establish a nuclear power station in this State is fast disappearing. I point out that there has never been any reluctance by the Commonwealth to admit that the first nuclear power station to be erected in Australia will be in South Australia. That has always been accepted policy by the Commonwealth and the Atomic Energy Commission; indeed, there is every logical and geographical reason that that should be so. What my Government was anxious about was to get the associated works which would give an impetus to development here and which would be of great value in training personnel for the development of a nuclear fission plant, but we have not concluded discussions on that. However, I have received an invitation from the Commonwealth to attend a function to be held at Rum Jungle at the end of next week. The Commonwealth Minister for Supply has informed me that time will be made available then for a complete discussion of the matters the honourable member has raised. I believe this will enable us to iron out the present difficulties.

ENCOUNTER BAY ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—The Harbour Electricity Company at Victor Harbour has been refused an extension of the existing franchise by the Corporation of Victor Harbour, as it is hoped that electricity will be made available from the trust to the district

via Strathalbyn. There are 80 prospective consumers at Encounter Bay who desire a supply, but as the Harbour Electricity Company has only three years' franchise in which to recover capital costs, it will not extend supplies. Will the trust consider an approach to the Harbour Electricity Company with a view to an arrangement whereby the company can erect poles and wires and give a service to these people, or will the trust come to some agreement that when it takes over, payment at valuation will be allowed the company, so that 80 or more people will get a supply in the near future?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am conversant with the questions the honourable member has raised, and I have discussed them with the chairman of the Electricity Trust, Mr. Drew. As stated by the honourable member, the present franchise in the district of Encounter Bay and Victor Harbour has only three years to run; consequently the present supplier has been unwilling to provide additional plant and reticulation. In an effort to assist, the trust offered, and I think the offer was accepted, to make plant available to maintain supplies. That plant was made available on generous terms, taking into account the fact that it was provided with the object of assisting the district concerned. The extension to which the honourable member has referred is not as simple as he mentioned. I understand that the company desires the Electricity Trust to make available all the materials required for the extension and to undertake the bulk of the work. Under those circumstances the work could only be undertaken at the expense of other approved works in areas where the trust has the responsibility of maintaining power. The trust cannot legally go into this area because it has no franchise to do so. I will follow up the honourable member's suggestions and ascertain whether some satisfactory conclusion can be reached.

LOCKLEYS PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Has the Minister of Education any reply to the question I asked on September 2 relative to the proposed primary school at Lockleys?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I have received the following report on this matter:—

The department has 8½ acres of land at Lockleys for a new school. The present accommodation, however, is adequate for existing enrolments and those that are anticipated next year. The enrolment position is being carefully watched, and provision will be made for new buildings as soon as it is clear that the present accommodation is inadequate.

PORT PIRIE HOSPITAL SEWERAGE.

Mr. DAVIS—Can the Minister of Works say whether any arrangement has been made for the sewerage of the Port Pirie hospital?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Following on my conversation with the honourable member I have ascertained the following facts. The present method of sewage disposal at Port Pirie hospital is by means of a number of small septic tanks. Only certain wastes are treated by these tanks. Ablution and basin wastes are connected with the outlet pipes leading from the septic tanks and the effluent is finally discharged into the Port Pirie river. When the additions to the hospital, comprising a new nurses' home, theatre block and men's ward are completed, the already overburdened sewage disposal arrangements will be incapable of handling additional wastes. At the request of the Architect-in-Chief, therefore, the Engineer-in-Chief has designed a sewage treatment works which will provide for the present and known future requirements and which will handle all liquid wastes from the hospital. The present number of full-time personnel is 400 and the scheme will cater for a total of 800. The estimated cost of the proposed scheme is £24,000 and Cabinet has given approval for the work to proceed.

ELECTRIC POWER FOR WALLAROO JETTY.

Mr. McALEES—Has the Minister of Works any information on the provision of electric power for the Wallaroo jetty?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have ascertained that the contractor has actually started the work and that the proposed date of completion is early in November. I will ascertain, however, if the work cannot be expedited because that seems an unduly long time.

CROYDON PARK NEW SCHOOL.

Mr. JENNINGS—Some time ago, in correspondence with the Education Department, I raised the question of a new primary school at Croydon Park Extension and the Minister promised to obtain a report on the matter. Has he that report?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I investigated the matter and have received the following report:—

A new school, to which the name Croydon Park Extension has tentatively been given, has been under consideration for some time. It is needed to relieve the congestion at Brompton, Croydon, Prospect, Blair Athol and Ferryden Park primary schools. The Architect-in-Chief has been requested to prepare the necessary

sketch plans for submission to the Public Works Committee during this financial year. If the work is approved by the committee it will be considered for inclusion with the Loan Estimates for 1955-1956.

MAINTENANCE OF BUS ROAD ROUTES.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—On September 2 I asked the Minister of Works if privately-owned buses, licensed to operate in the metropolitan area, would be subject to the same contribution for road purposes as that mentioned in an agreement recently concluded between the Tramways Trust and the Minister of Local Government. Has the Minister any information on this subject?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The honourable member asked a further question as to whether the amount fixed for the Tramways Trust was reasonable. The Minister of Local Government has advised me as follows:—

It is proposed to submit to the House during the present session an amendment of the Highways Act to require the Tramways Trust to contribute to the highways fund upon a basis reasonably comparable with the vehicle tax paid by private operators. The present tramways contribution is on a much lower basis. It is not proposed at present to call upon private operators of bus routes to make any further contributions to the highways fund beyond the vehicle taxes at present payable. The extent of such private operation will continue to be taken into account in deciding appropriate grants to assist local authorities.

REIDY PARK SCHOOL.

Mr. FLETCHER (on notice)—

1. Will the Reidy Park School at Mount Gambier be available for occupation for the first school term commencing in 1955?

2. What progress has been made with the sewerage of this school and the Mount Gambier Hospital?

3. Will sewerage be available for Reidy Park School immediately it is occupied?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The replies are:—

1. Yes.

2. A contract has been let for the machinery and an immediate start will be made with construction.

3. Every effort is being made towards this end.

PORT PIRIE RAILWAY TRACK.

Mr. DAVIS (on notice)—

1. What would be the estimated cost of removing the railway track from Ellen Street, Port Pirie, to the back of the Institute, the Town Hall, and the Barrier Hotel?

2. What fundamental alterations to both the existing railway and harbour facilities would be involved?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The removal of the railway track from Ellen Street as suggested would confound the whole of the Harbors Board's plans for improving the shipping facilities at Port Pirie. The wharf alignment would have to be projected into the river, and to compensate for this the channel would need to be widened and deepened.

DIESEL RAIL CARS.

Mr. O'Halloran for Mr. FRANK WALSH (on notice)—

1. How many trial runs have been made with any of the new diesel rail cars?
2. Were any of these rail cars damaged in any way during the trials?
3. If so, to what extent?

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

1. Five.
2. Yes.
3. One of the Cummins engines failed on the return from the trial trip to Mallala on August 27. It was found that piston and bearing trouble had been experienced which resulted in a shunt-down of this engine. The car returned to Islington on one power unit. It was subsequently found that a big-end bearing had failed, resulting in damage to bearing, connecting rod, piston, cylinder sleeve and cylinder block. The cause of the failure was the incorrect fitting of a main bearing by the American suppliers, whose representative was present at the trial. He admitted the liability of the suppliers, who will replace the engine at their cost. Portions of the damaged engine will be able to be used as spare parts.

MENTAL INSTITUTIONS.

Mr. LAWN (on notice)—

1. What is the present number of inmates in South Australian mental institutions?
2. Of this number, how many, in the expert opinion of the Superintendent of Mental Institutions, are merely there because of old age, as distinct from mental ill health?

3. Is it the intention of the Government to continue to put old aged pensioners into mental institutions instead of providing infirmary accommodation elsewhere?

4. At what stage of construction are the following buildings recommended by the Public Works Committee for Parkside and Northfield Mental Hospitals:—(a) New nurses' quarters,

Parkside (recommended March 15, 1948); (b) new female treatment block, Parkside (recommended August 17, 1949); (c) Northfield Mental Hospital additions (recommended March 18, 1952); (d) male tuberculosis block, Parkside (recommended April 10, 1952); (e) new men's admission block, Parkside (recommended June 25, 1953)?

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

1. On June 30, 1954, there were 2,661 patients in the three mental institutions—Parkside Mental Hospital, 1,720; Northfield Mental Hospital, 869; Enfield Receiving Home, 72.

2 and 3. Of the 2,661 patients, 674 were of various ages ranging from 65 to over 95 years. With very few exceptions (the people who are admitted at their own personal request) all the elderly patients had been certified as mentally defective according to the provisions of the Mental Defectives Act. The degree of such mental defectiveness varied from the natural simple mental infirmity consequent upon old age, to the profound deterioration of all the mental faculties. Individuals are not admitted as patients "merely because of old age," nevertheless, a large number of elderly patients are certified as mentally defective and sent to the mental hospitals each year because they are suffering from varying degrees of mental infirmity due to the ageing processes of the physical brain, arteries and other organs. As stated in the annual reports many of these elderly patients are certified and sent to the mental hospitals in the terminal months, weeks or even days of their lives, because of the natural breakdown of the mental and physical states. At the present time I would estimate that some 300 to 400 elderly patients could be cared for, more appropriately, either at home with their relatives or in an infirmary type of hospital.

4. (a) New nurses' quarters, Parkside—Completed except for furnishings, which are in hand.

(b) New female treatment block, Parkside—Almost complete. Anticipated completion date end of November, 1954.

(c) Northfield Mental Hospital additions—Part I—Ward for 80 senile men—plans completed—specifications being prepared. Wards for 80 senile women and 50 children of each sex—working drawings being prepared. Part II—Ward for 40 female T.B. patients—construction.

approximately half complete—anticipated completed by end of June, 1955. Part III—New kitchen—plans completed—specification being prepared. New laundry and boiler house—plans being prepared. New residence for resident medical officer—completed. New staff dining room—construction approximately 25 per cent completed—anticipated completed by December, 1954.

(d) Male tuberculosis block, Parkside—Construction commenced—anticipated completed in October, 1955.

(e) New men's admission block, Parkside—Tenders will be called early in November, 1954.

HOUSING TRUST HOMES, PETERBOROUGH.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (on notice)—

1. What progress has been made in the erection of the group of Housing Trust homes at Peterborough?

2. When will all or any of them be ready for occupation?

3. How many applications have been received by the trust for rental homes at Peterborough?

4. Is it the intention of the trust to build more houses in Peterborough after the completion of the group being erected now?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Chairman of the Housing Trust reports—

1. Second fixings have been completed in the 10 houses under construction.

2. Two houses are expected to be completed in about five weeks and thereafter it is hoped that two houses will be completed each month.

3. 18.

4. The number of applications held by the trust at present would not justify an extension of the present contract as some are unsuitable for selection, and the experience of the trust is that a proportion of its applicants find other suitable accommodation. However, the question of further building at Peterborough will be considered by the trust before the present contract is completed, when the applications then held by the trust will be taken into account.

WATER SUPPLY OF PETERBOROUGH AND TEROWIE.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (on notice)—

1. Has the Engineer-in-Chief prepared the modification of the Peterborough-Yongala-Terowie water scheme mentioned by the Minister of Works in his reply to a question in the House on July 27, 1954?

2. If so, what was the nature of the report thereon?

3. If the report is not available at present, can an indication be given when it will be available?

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

1. The Engineer-in-Chief advises that the scheme has been thoroughly re-examined in the light of a possible reduction in railway requirements at Peterborough and Terowie. Amended estimates are being prepared on this basis.

2 and 3. A full report will be available within the next fortnight.

COST OF PRICES LEGISLATION.

Mr. DUNKS (on notice)—Of the amount of £68,027 expended for the year 1953-54 to administer the prices legislation in South Australia what were the amounts expended under each of the following headings—(a) rent of buildings; (b) interest, if any, on purchase prices of buildings; (c) office staff; (d) inspectors; (e) travelling expenses?

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

	£
(a) Rent of building	2,000
(b) Interest, if any, on purchase prices of buildings	Nil
(c) Office staff	11,976
(d) Inspectors	47,603
(e) Travelling expenses	625
	<hr/> £62,204

MARKETING OF EGGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. DUNKS—I ask leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr. DUNKS—When speaking on the Marketing of Eggs Act Amendment Bill I quoted the price of eggs of "second grade hen" quality as 2s. 4d. dozen. That was a mistake. I was misled by a merchant who told me that 2s. 4d. was the price, but actually it was 2s. 6d. He assumed that the general price had been reduced, but the "second rate hen" quality price was pegged at the original price. I said that the profit for the board in selling a 40 lb. tin of pulp was £1 12s. 8d., but actually, at 2s. 6d. a dozen instead of 2s. 4d. for second grade eggs, its profit would be £1 7s. 8d.

NAIRNE PRIMARY SCHOOL.

The SPEAKER laid on the table the report of the Public Works Standing Committee on the Nairne Primary School, together with minutes of evidence.

Ordered that report be printed.

LOAN ESTIMATES.

Grand total, £27,295,000.

In Committee.

(Continued from August 31. Page 540.)

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I have noted with some concern that the amount provided on the Estimates this year is £30,895,000, which includes £3,600,000 from the Commonwealth Government under its agreement with the South Australian Government for housing. This is a tremendous amount compared with £4,720,000 eight years ago. The Treasurer's remarks on this occasion were more detailed than usual, but after studying them I still wonder what they mean. Similar comments have been made by him time and time again. He has said that we need more large country towns with a population of over 10,000 and more towns with populations between 5,000 and 10,000; also that we must provide a standard of living in the country equal to that enjoyed by city dwellers. We have noticed that there has been an increase in the public debt from borrowing which had as one alleged object increases in the number of large country towns and the provision of amenities, but an examination of the figures will show that there is no reason for satisfaction. The *Statesman's Pocket Year Book* indicates that since 1952-53 the State's population has increased by 13,985, 10,000 of whom were absorbed in the metropolitan area and the remainder in the country. Despite all the talk we have heard about improvements in country amenities, the drift to the city has continued. In 1938, of the State's population 54 per cent lived in the metropolitan area; in 1952 the percentage was 61.08. In 1952 the Playford Government told us the drift would be arrested, but today it still goes on. In his explanation of the Loan Estimates the Treasurer forecast the establishment of a satellite town that would accommodate 25,000 people. The Leader of the Opposition asked how much would be spent on this town and whether a similar sum could not be spent on the development of country towns. The truth is that this satellite suburb must draw on country areas for its population; further, its establishment can only be detrimental to the well-being of our existing city industries.

The Treasurer said £5,575,000 was provided for water services, but £3,167,000 of that sum is to be spent in the metropolitan area. Does that tally with all the Government's talk about

assisting country towns? It is a direct contradiction of the Government's statement that it will assist country areas. The Treasurer's explanation reveals that the money will be spent on the development of existing schemes: nothing will be spent on new schemes. Referring to the current shortage of steel, he said:—

The Broken Hill Proprietary Company has agreed with the Commonwealth Government that it will not object to the importation of structural and other types of steel from overseas during the period up to the end of December next.

In commenting on that statement one Labor member asked, "Who governs Australia?" The Government should encourage decentralization by establishing a steelworks at Whyalla. Steel is such an important commodity today that no industry could function without it, and we could not eat without the use of steel knives and forks. Yet the importance of steel has been ignored by the Playford Government. In New South Wales the steel industry has proved its value ever since 1913 when the integrated steel mills were established on swamp land near Newcastle, 104 miles north of Sydney. That is an example of decentralization the Playford Government could well follow. Recommended by a Mr. Baker, an American, and originally consisting of one blast furnace and three steel furnaces, the steel works there has continued to expand, and with it Newcastle, today a beautiful city, which I visited last year. It is amazing to observe what a steelworks can do in the development of a country quite apart from the effect in its immediate vicinity. For example, while Newcastle, with its capacity of 1,000,000 tons of steel a year in 1953, employs 8,000 men, associated industries employ no fewer than 17,000. The B.H.P. Co. pays out the huge sum of £15,000,000 annually in wages and assists State revenue by £1,900,000 in railway freights. If some of the money proposed to be spent on the satellite town were utilized for building homes in an area where this industry could be encouraged it would do a very great deal towards assisting the development of the more remote parts of the State and curb the influx of people into the metropolitan area.

I commend the Director of Mines, Mr. Dickinson, for his forthright report recently tabled, from which we glean some valuable information. He says, for example, the facts clearly show that the country has never received so little for so much for so long from such valuable mineral resources. Mr. Dickinson points out that in the comparatively few years that the B.H.P. Co. has had the right to take

our ore it has taken over 50,000,000 tons and is continuing to take it at a very rapid rate. In the early 30's, when this industry was founded at Newcastle, there may have been some justification for the generous conditions granted because then it required approximately three tons of coal to make one ton of steel. Today, however, with improved methods the amount of coal and iron ore required are practically equal, which puts an entirely different complexion on the situation. The establishment of electricity power stations at Port Augusta will provide the necessary cheap power required for the steel industry. A good water supply is also available and raw materials of all descriptions close at hand so that if the Government were sincere it should be making some efforts to establish this important industry. Many other industries could be established in country areas. I have in mind the South-East with its great potential as a primary producing area. Eyre Peninsula, too, has to send its fat lambs and skins to the metropolitan area, and quite often because the vessels cannot be unloaded in the time in port, these goods have to be taken back, involving double transport costs and deterioration of the article. No efforts seem to have been made to establish an industry in that area and all the talk by the Government about developing country towns seems to be idle.

The Premier made the startling statement that the Electricity Trust had 118,262 consumers in 1946 of whom 105,954 were in the metropolitan area, or a 45 per cent increase, whereas the number of country consumers had increased by 200 per cent to 23,760. The Premier amazes me; at his age he has just discovered that the percentage rate of age increase of a child of one is greater than that of a man of 90. People are entitled to expect that all this talk should amount to something. We on this side for many years have been pleading with the Government to give some attention to country areas. The people of Gawler only a few years ago, at a by-election, made very clear what they thought about the proposed satellite town. That was the by-election which Mr. John Clark contested for the first time. On the previous election the late Mr. Duncan, who served in this place for many years with great distinction, stood against the same opponent as Mr. Clark, but the question of the satellite town had not then arisen. He won the election with a majority of 490, whereas a new candidate faced with a new question increased the majority by 600, an amazing increase, giving a most definite

answer in regard to the satellite town. The people said in most definite terms that they did not want it. We are told that the satellite town will be established. In 10 years about 6,000 houses are to be built. It is astonishing that the work should be started now. I wonder what will happen to the industries and housing in the metropolitan area. Today questions were asked on the matter and I am glad that other honourable members are alive to the position. Many houses in the metropolitan area are substandard. The housing position is bad. In reply to Mr. Dunnage last week the Premier said that the trust was receiving applications for rental homes at the rate of 95 a week, and for homes for purchase 70 a week. He also said that the most the trust could build was 70 a week. He has also pointed out that there are 1,350 applications for homes for purchase, 12,850 for rental homes, and 6,000 effective applications for emergency homes. That makes a total of about 20,000 applications for trust homes. The occupants of the houses in the satellite town must come from the metropolitan area. The Treasurer also said that recently the trust had completed its twenty thousandth house. That sounds very good but on examination it is found that the trust has built only 1,200 houses each year. Besides the houses in the satellite town there will be hospitals, schools and shops. Other parts of the State will suffer because of the Treasurer's grandiose scheme. It will kill industry in the metropolitan area and penalize people who have long awaited a trust home. It is generally accepted now that the satellite town will be named "Gerrymander." No provision is made in it for a cemetery.

Mr. Quirke.—It will be its own cemetery.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Probably that is right. In every town there should be a cemetery.

Mr. O'Halloran—It will be the graveyard of many country towns.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Great minds think alike. The cemetery should be called "Playford" to establish the fact that the Premier killed all decentralization in South Australia.

Mr. O'Halloran—It would be a pity to spoil a good piece of land for such a dead cause.

Mr. HUTCHENS—The honourable member is correct. In years to come, say the year 3,908, when the population will be shifting from planet to planet, there will probably be written in the history journals of South Australia the period in the margin "T.P. 1-18"

and "A.T.P.". There may be written in those journals the following:—

Year 8 T.P. The peoples of Frome, Stuart, Port Pirie, Wallaroo, Victoria and Gawler came to the Premier crying in voices loud and clear, "Give unto us others to share with us the wealth of the land." The multitudes from Goodwood, Adelaide, Semaphore, Port Adelaide, Thebarton, Hindmarsh, said, "Hear ye, hear ye." The people from Alexandra, Eyre, Gouger, Burra, Rocky River, Yorke Peninsula, Newcastle, Stirling, Albert, Flinders, Onkaparinga and Angas sent forth their pleaders, but their voices were heard in silence for they were smitten of Liberalism. The Premier was greatly troubled and called together his counsellors. He instructed them to bring forth a plan. When they had pondered for 1,059 days, one counsellor known to his associates as "Kneecap" came and whispered unto his master, who in a state of joy commanded his staff to bring to him *Mail, News, Advertiser, AD, KA, DN, CL, and AN*, who came at great speed to receive signs. Departing they went forth long ere the sun did rise until near the middle of the night they called all builders and engineers to a place called the Treasury. At noon they came mounted on steel steeds, fast, strong and able to travel a mile each minute. They assembled. The beating of the drums was great. At a given signal one mighty cheer arose from a man named "Echo." The company was driven by the Premier. After a period of five seconds they halted at a place now called "Gerrymander," a place of great rural production. The Premier, standing in his limited glory, commanded that this be the place of a city. Many were they who were greatly disturbed. They trembled, so great was the shock. The people from afar off, attracted by the glitter of education, amusement, better conditions provided by an Industrial Code, sewerage, water, power, etc., came in great numbers. Those who stayed away were forgotten and plagues befell them. Their water-logged cellars and hovels, that were not eaten with white ants and bugs, decayed and fell upon them, or they died, for little was the food that was grown. In the time of great famine a great army of yellow-skinned almond-eyed men from the north swept down upon this treasure unused, making the inhabitants their slaves. On the first day of the year great was the feast in which they thanked their ancestors for the folly of the great white leader. In the depth of night the white slaves gathered at the grave of the white leader and, cursing, spat thereon.

So much for the satellite town and for what will be written in the future about it. So much for something that will destroy this State and the hopes of many people engaged in industry in the metropolitan area today.

The Loan Estimates have been prepared for the purpose of deceiving. The Government has used its civil servants for this purpose, and many of them who would have rebelled at having to do some of the things forced

upon them and who have become conscious of this gerrymander, when they have stopped to think about what they should do, have seen in their corridors the shadow of the Premier and have said, "What! this man for ever and ever?", and have just bowed to his wishes. I realize that this is a serious statement but I propose to prove its correctness. I noticed with interest and temporary joy a provision for a police station at Flinders Park. However, this building first appeared on the Estimates for 1947-48 grouped with 13 other police stations in an amount of £28,300; in 1948-49 with nine new stations, £17,130; 1949-50 with eight new stations, £15,500; in 1950-51 with 12 new stations, £18,700; 1951-52, grouped with seven new stations, £11,270. In 1952-53 for the sake of variety the proposed station was left out of the Estimates, but it appeared again in 1953-54 Estimates grouped with four other stations in an amount of £9,000. All there has been at Flinders Park is a piece of land almost unfenced since 1946. Why has that line been on the Estimates from year to year? Only to lead the people to believe that they are to get a police station when it was never the intention of the Government to erect it, and I doubt if it is intended to erect it even now. The money provided for it has been used for something else and we have no indication where it has gone. That is a good argument for dismissing the Government. For too long officials have been used to juggle these figures to deceive the people.

A line on the Estimates provides £1,050,000 for school buildings. In 1949-50, £14,000 was provided for the Norwood and Croydon boys' technical schools and it was thought that they were to get woodwork shops, but Croydon school is still waiting for one. We do not know what has happened to the money; all we know is that boys in that school have to walk about three-quarters of a mile to the Croydon primary school and boys in the Croydon primary school walk 1½ miles to the Hindmarsh school.

Mr. McAlees—You had a promise didn't you?

Mr. HUTCHENS—The promises made by this Government are not worth the breath it takes to make them. It is time for the Public Works Committee to see that the Government does not spend money for political purposes, and I ask the House to investigate this. The Public Works Committee had referred to it a proposal for a new boys' technical school at Croydon. An investigation was made and evidence tendered to prove that this school was

urgently needed. The committee in, I think, 1950, or perhaps before, made a recommendation that the school be built at a cost of £66,626, but what has been done? The same old story—nothing, apart from the fact that possibly the Liberal Party received a few donations from industry in the mistaken belief that something was being done to educate future employees. On June 28, 1950, the Public Works Committee's report on the duplication of the Woodville-Henley Beach railway line was tabled, and the evidence given by Mr. Fargher that is printed in the report is of great interest. He said that it was necessary to duplicate the railway for the following reasons:—

1. It is impracticable with single line working between Woodville and Henley Beach to provide a train service to meet the requirements of the travelling public at the times they desire to arrive at or depart from their respective stations. This applies particularly to morning and evening industrial and business trains.

2. Between Woodville and Henley Beach there are passing loops at Albert Park and Golf Links only. The limitations of space and road traffic requirements along Military Road preclude the provision of a passing loop at Grange or between Grange and Henley Beach. The long section of single track between Golf Links and Henley Beach and the necessity to operate trains at reduced speeds along Military Road seriously limit the number of trains it is possible to operate.

3. The very considerable development of the district in the past few years and the prospective future development warrant an improved service, but this cannot be provided until the line is duplicated.

4. By duplicating the line from Woodville to Henley Beach it will be possible to increase the frequency of the service at peak periods and to operate the service punctually. It will also be possible to provide a timetable which will insure that arrival and departure times of trains will be better suited to the needs of the travelling public than at present.

5. The duplication of the Woodville to Henley Beach line is an urgent necessity whether line is to be electrified or not. With single line working it is not possible to provide a satisfactory service with the present steam locomotives and it will also not be practicable with electric traction.

Concerning the necessity for the removal of the railway from Military Road, Mr. Fargher stated:—

1. Owing to limitations in width it is impracticable to duplicate the track on the existing alignment between Grange and Henley Beach along Military Road.

2. It is necessary for reasons of safety, to operate trains at reduced speeds along Military Road for a distance of approximately 1½ miles. But even with reduced speeds, the train movements are a menace to traffic owing to the

narrowness of Military Road, the number of cross streets and the presence of houses on each side of the line.

Much of the railway property between Woodville and Grange is very narrow and duplication of the track would necessitate the purchase of additional land parallel with it. Removal of the line to a new alignment between Grange and Henley Beach would involve the acquisition of land for the right of way.

The estimated cost of the scheme including the purchase of land, was £139,214. The committee recommended:—

1. The removal of the existing single line of railway between the 7½ mile post, *via* Military Road, to Henley Beach station, and the construction of a new line of railway from the 7½ mile post to the Henley Beach Road on the alignment shown in red in plan 3/113.

2. That land be acquired on the said alignment of sufficient width to enable a double track to be constructed should such be ultimately approved.

Since the report was tabled in June, 1950, some land has been acquired at Henley Beach for duplicating the track and certain subdivisions have been carried out, with the result that the Henley and Grange Council has been losing £700 a year in rates. Moreover, a most unsatisfactory railway service on a single track has been continued. The people of Henley Beach are bitterly disappointed. The railway runs down Military Road and almost through some front gardens. It passes the police station, and the court is frequently disturbed by passing trains, which are a menace to the public safety. *Truth* of July 31 states that the railway is a menace and that local residents have protested on the damage and noise caused by trains. The articles states:—

Adelaide's earthquake in the early hours of Sunday, March 1, didn't even worry a lot of people in Henley and Grange—they thought it was merely another local train going by. Some years ago an overwrought ratepayer living near the Henley Beach station evolved his own system of rebellion against engine noises, shunting and rewatering late at night. He set up a loud speaker blaring retaliatory noises at the railway establishments—but was quickly subdued by official action.

If the Public Works Committee is going to be used for political purposes by the Government it is time projects that the Government has no intention of carrying out were not referred to it. There is every reason to ask whether there is any sincerity of purpose behind the Loan Estimates. I agree that there is every necessity to encourage people to live in the country. According to a press report of August 23 Sir Philip McBride stated:—

To defend and justify possession of its vast territory, Australia must be prepared to develop

and populate and extend a helping hand to less fortunate countries, the Defence Minister, Sir Philip McBride, said today.

If I did not know who said that, I would have thought it was the Leader of the Opposition in this State. The latest journal I have received is the *Public Service Review*, which makes some statements that prove my case conclusively, namely, that the Government has no intention of carrying out some of the works referred to the Public Works Committee. I am not sure whether any amount has been placed on the Estimates for Government buildings. Has anything been set aside to start the new Government office block on Victoria Square. This building was recommended by the Public Works Committee in September, 1937, yet no start has been made on it. It is quite clear that the Treasurer is not concerned about accommodation for public servants or facilities available in Government departments. The committee's report, tabled 17 years ago, stressed the inadequacy of Government buildings. It stated:—

The position is that there is a serious shortage of office accommodation in existing Government buildings. Many departments are overcrowded and many are housed in very old buildings quite unfit for offices. Unfortunately, the accommodation provided by Government buildings is not only scattered over a wide area, but is so broken up because of the multiplicity of buildings that it has been found impossible to house the staffs of certain departments under the one roof. The resultant splitting of departments has caused confusion to the public and expense to the State, and is interfering with the proper supervision and control of officers.

The position is the same today. The August *Public Service Review* again points out the Government's neglect. Although this building was recommended 17 years ago, not one stone has been laid nor one piece of timber carted for it. I suggest that this building was proposed for political purposes only. Today various Government department are scattered and officers are working in crowded conditions, to their great discomfort and dissatisfaction. It has led to unjust criticism of honest and efficient public servants and is an example of the maladministration and evil intentions of the Government.

Mr. PEARSON (Flinders)—This debate is one of the most important discussions that take place annually in this House. Primarily it is a discussion which should be undertaken dispassionately and with due regard for the actual facts to which it refers, namely the financial structure of the State and its annual commitment in regard to the expenditure of

borrowed money. The Loan Estimates should be examined from the aspect of the present and future welfare of the State. Too frequently this debate takes a biased political turn. That has been amply demonstrated this afternoon by Mr. Hutchens. I do not think the best results are achieved in an atmosphere of that nature: in fact, I rather feel the reverse can easily occur. Although political considerations must almost necessarily enter into debates, so far as possible they should be relegated to the background and the welfare of the State as a whole should be the paramount consideration in this discussion. I shall refer later to some of the remarks Mr. Hutchens—ill-advisedly, I think—made, which were so provocative as to almost contravene the Standing Orders of this Chamber.

The matters to be discussed in this debate are, first and foremost, whether the amount of borrowed money we propose to use is to be expended on things which will ultimately result in benefit to the State as a whole. We indulge in loan expenditure as a long term investment and it behoves us to ensure that the investments are wise. There are two types of things on which we can spend money—the productive and the non-productive. The first principle should be that it is spent for purposes primarily productive, otherwise how can posterity meet the charges imposed by raising the debt and how long can the State continue to function if money is borrowed merely for non-productive purposes? With that first proviso in mind, I begin to examine the Loan Estimates to see how they measure up to what I consider to be the essential qualification. In our private affairs we find that the person who prospers is he who bears the principle fully in mind that what he borrows must return not only his capital but the interest on the borrowed money.

In looking down the list of items on which money was expended last year, to which the Premier referred in his speech on the first line, I have noted one or two of the outstanding major items which I consider to be of the productive type. For example, £5,000,000 was expended on the Electricity Trust, £1,317,000 on advances for homes, £2,500,000 on the Housing Trust, £2,875,000 on uranium production, £700,000 on the Leigh Creek coalfield, £5,000,000 on water supplies and sewers and £1,500,000 on railways. Every one of those items fulfills the essential requirement that it be productive. On the other side there were also major expenditures. For instance, £600,000

was devoted to the Municipal Tramways Trust, £723,000 for hospital buildings and £837,000 for school buildings. I do not want to be criticized for claiming that those items are non-productive. I suggest they are productive but not in the direct way as, for instance, the Electricity Trust, Harbors Board, railways or home building projects are productive, because those utilities return something in direct revenue to the Treasury and, therefore, whether they pay their way is quite easy to assess. One must consider the long-term investment education provides. After all, the scholastic attainments and technical qualifications of our children in this generation will be responsible for the development of the next generation. It must be admitted that education is an investment which has a value difficult to assess. Hospitals, on the other hand, are not so easy to follow through. I sometimes think that the expenditure of public money on public hospitals is somewhat similar to the provision of a new motor car for a private individual. In other words, the individual who buys a new motor car invariably finds that he goes out more, and if he does that he spends more; and rather than providing him with a productive investment he finds it to be an easy means of expending more of his hard-earned funds. So, the same with public hospitals. The more we build the more the State becomes responsible for staffing, maintenance, administration and the provision of all the amenities attached to such a hospital, for which the State gets no actual direct return. My examination of the cold, hard facts leads me to the conclusion that our public hospitals must be on the debit side of the ledger as regards production, and the provision of more of them only means the provision of greater amounts from our Budget for staffing and running them.

The Hon. Sir George Jenkins—You would not apply those remarks to maternity hospitals, would you?

Mr. PEARSON—That raises a very interesting point and is one I did not think about as deeply as I might. Perhaps I can qualify my remark by saying that I am not quite ready to discuss the matter. Often a maternity hospital lands a father in the same position as I have outlined concerning the State to the extent that he is involved in much expenditure until he gets his children through school. That has been my experience. Until they are 16 years of age they do not return much except pride and joy, and perhaps then the fond

parent might say that he is getting back some of his investment. I believe, and I think other honourable members and most of the public agree, in the further establishment of public hospitals in these days of the welfare State, and that the maximum facilities for the treatment of the sick should be provided, but I cannot agree that it all should be provided free of cost. Perhaps the very establishment of large public hospitals has somewhat conditioned the public mind to the acceptance of that, and to the idea that as free treatment is available why should anyone pay anyhow. Therefore, the pressure on our public hospitals rather than lessening as a result of the additional accommodation provided tends to increase, because people who at one stage never thought of attending a public hospital for treatment now feel they have a right to go there, as indeed I believe they have. The attitude of the public toward this has changed somewhat with the passing of time. I do not suggest that we can ever keep pace with the provision of hospitals to the extent the public demands.

I must confess that I believe that the usual approach by honourable members to Loan Estimates and Budgetary expenditure is often on the basis of what moneys are provided for developmental works in their particular district. I suppose other honourable members in common with myself usually reach the conclusion that the amount provided for works in their district is totally inadequate, and after an examination of the Loan Estimates they invariably say, "There were lots of things I hoped for which I will not get." There are some districts which are making, and deservedly so, heavy demands on the public purse both from borrowed and Budgetary funds. I have in mind such districts as Victoria, the river areas and my own electorate, which are all in what we might call the secondary development stage. The pioneers went into the scrub with a few shillings in their pockets and a lot of faith in their ability to succeed, and faith was by far the bigger part of their assets. They completed the initial work and the present generation is consolidating it in a scientific and effective way. However, with the secondary development there is a tremendous demand for all kinds of services and amenities, both private and public. In my own district in the last eight or 10 years there has been a greatly increased expenditure on merchandise items, such as fencing, water piping and building materials. My check-up with the firms who

supply these items has proved that my conjecture is right. Houses are being built, sheds constructed, water reticulated and fences provided, and there is a general consolidation of the position. The result is an almost immediate increased capacity of the land to produce. In common with these private requirements comes the demand for all kinds of facilities which it is the Government's responsibility to provide. Heavy pressure is brought on members for water schemes, schools, railway reorganization and roads—to name a few of those most insistently demanded. It is impossible for any Government to keep pace with all these requirements. Because the members of the public are able to provide themselves with a certain standard of amenities, they naturally expect that Government utilities will keep pace with private development. The Government is besieged with numerous requests for expenditure in rapidly developing areas. The increased production from the soil requires more railway rolling stock, greater harbour facilities, better roads, increased telephone services and all that kind of thing to enable them to conduct business. These requests are before the Government in a never ending stream. Therefore, in fairness to my constituents I must consider the Loan Estimates from that point of view. I am disturbed to see that nothing new has been provided for the Eyre Peninsula railway system, and it is rather ironical that only one item has been provided for narrow gauge lines—two breakdown cranes. Perhaps it is considered that their use will be necessary. Rolling stock previously used on the South-Eastern line is now in use on Eyre Peninsula, and those engines and trucks, which have been reconditioned, have done a good job so far, but I do not know how long they will continue to serve for they are very old and only reconditioning has enabled them to give good service for a year or two.

Diesel engines would offer great economies in the haulage of goods on Eyre Peninsula, and, because the landed cost of coal at Port Lincoln is greater than at most other South Australian ports, diesel engines could offer even greater economies on the Eyre Peninsula division than in other divisions. I have followed up this matter by way of questions and have been informed that it would be impossible to use diesel engines on the Eyre Peninsula division because of the state of the track. I knew that would be the answer, because I was conversant with the state of the track, at least that in the southern part of the Peninsula. Last Friday morning I

travelled by railcar from Port Lincoln to Cockaleechie, and anyone who does that trip regularly will sympathize with me and every other person who is obliged to use that line as a means of transport. I say, "obliged" deliberately because nobody would use it unless compelled by circumstances to do so. The larger type railcars, which have been equipped with foam rubber seats, are comfortably fitted out and would give a good ride on a decent track, but that track is in a shocking condition. It was laid many years ago with second-hand rails from anywhere and everywhere; it is a 35 lb. track along much of its length; the rails are short; and the webbing of the rails in many cases has rusted out.

Mr. Quirke—Eyre Peninsula didn't get all the secondhand rails.

Mr. PEARSON—There may be some in the honourable member's district, but at least the Railways Department has done him the honour of running road buses so that he need not use the railway.

Mr. Quirke—It must still be possible to get something over your track.

Mr. PEARSON—Yes, but only with much discomfort to passengers. The useful life of those rails has been over for many years, and, if the Railways Department is to continue to serve the rapidly increasing heavy haulage requirements on the Peninsula, a serious attempt must be made immediately to improve the track. I realize that much rail track maintenance has been done throughout the State and that the South-East line has been broadened. The reason for the high priority given the latter work may have been the Commonwealth-State agreement to standardize gauges, but something must be done immediately on the Eyre Peninsula Division or there will come a day when the system will break down to such an extent that traffic will be entirely disorganized. Quite apart from the consideration of passengers' comfort, the system will break down because it will be unable to carry the freights offering. Eyre Peninsula has 500 miles of narrow gauge track, and every mile is in use, except, perhaps, for a little spur line at the Ceduna end. The amount of traffic in the division is astounding; it was never visualized that the system would have to carry the loads and continuous traffic it carries today.

Over the last year or two I have asked many questions regarding the supply of timber sleepers for this division, and I recently asked whether it would be possible to use concrete sleepers. The Minister replied, in effect, that,

taking into account the cost, weight and track installation, their use in this State was not desirable. On Thursday last I asked the Minister whether he would obtain for me the cost of Western Australian jarrah sleepers landed at Port Adelaide, and today he replied that broad gauge jarrah sleepers cost 48s. 6d. and narrow gauge 26s. 8d. each. Although, even considering the difference in size, I cannot understand the great disparity between the two costs, I accept those figures. I have worked out what I think would be the cost of concrete sleepers, and, considering their cubic capacity and the amount of cement and aggregate required, and allowing 10s. a sleeper for steel reinforcing and 5s. for making, I estimate the total cost of a broad gauge concrete sleeper to be 26s. 10d. I realize some of my calculations may be based on guesswork, but I suggest that this matter be further examined, and that, if the cost of a concrete sleeper is 26s. 10d. as against 48s. 6d. for a timber sleeper, the use of concrete sleepers be further considered. I know that successful experiments have been conducted in treating pinus sleepers produced from our South-Eastern forests and that offers some hope for the future. However, we will require a tremendous lot of sleepers in the next 10 years and I doubt whether our forests will be able to keep pace with the demand. As I said earlier, I cannot be quite satisfied that the district I represent has been generously treated in regard to loan money. Some water schemes have been before the department for well over 20 years and there is still no hope of their being put in hand.

Mr. O'Halloran—They have to be old enough to vote before they are considered.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Several million pounds have been spent in your area.

Mr. PEARSON—I know that, and I am exceedingly grateful for it—

Mr. O'Halloran—And out of which the State has greatly benefited through increased production.

Mr. PEARSON—True, but the Leader of the Opposition has not put quite the whole story in that interjection. The money has been spent largely on the provision of trunk mains and we have quite a good system, but the benefit from that expenditure has not been felt to any complete degree by virtue of the fact that the branch mains which actually serve the country have not been constructed, and it is those branch mains that I am concerned about. Until they are laid the benefit of the

capital expenditure in the provision of trunk mains cannot be fully enjoyed in the shape of increased production that follows an ample supply of water. During recent years, particularly in the parts of my district enjoying a better rainfall, sown pastures have proved a magnificent success, resulting in a tremendously increased carrying capacity. However, a farmer with a property west of Cummins told me only this morning that because of the light rainfall this year he has been obliged to sell a large number of his sheep because he has caught no surface water and knows that he would not be able to carry them through the summer. On the other hand, he has ample feed which will simply go to waste because of the lack of water to carry his stock. That is not as it should be; we ought to be able to make use of that production. The scientist has done his part, as has the farmer to the best of his ability, but he is unable to exploit his land to the degree of which it is capable.

As nearly as I can ascertain my district has been allotted about £500,000 to £600,000 of loan expenditure out of a total of £30,000,000. That is, say, 2 per cent. It is difficult to get exact figures because some items are lumped together in amounts set down for the whole State, but I have tried to estimate generously what my district might get. If my figure is correct Eyre Peninsula will get less out of the Loan Estimates than the Municipal Tramways Trust. I am not quarrelling about the £600,000 we are giving to the trust, for we have no alternative, but if we are looking for an investment, £600,000 spent on Eyre Peninsula would return much more than the same amount given to the tramway Trust. I fully realize that much of our loan expenditure is of a State-wide nature and so cannot be criticized on a parochial basis, but when I realize the tremendous potential for development in my district—and in other districts similarly—and the great number of requests for water supplies, electricity, roads, harbours, houses, schools and so forth, I wonder whether loan money could not be spent to greater advantage than on some of the items on which it is proposed to spend so much. Consider, for instance, our expenditure on uranium development; it appears to me that we are a bit uranium-happy these days. Some people blame the Premier, but this Parliament must accept some of the responsibility, because we vote very large amounts for this project almost without criticism or question.

Mr. Quirke—Usually we know nothing at all about it.

Mr. PEARSON—The honourable member will appreciate that there are reasons why we do not make a public song and dance about what we are doing with uranium because it is fraught with too many dangerous possibilities.

Mr. Quirke—But we have to vote the money without knowing what the return will be.

Mr. PEARSON—I have already said that that is what I have in mind, but I am reminded of circumstances during the war years when radar first became prominent. In 1942 radar was, shall we say, the baby of the Air Force, and those of us engaged in other specialist branches felt somewhat jealous of the radar boys because they seemed to be able to get whatever they wanted. I know that radar did perhaps, as much as anything towards winning the war and that our superiority in this department enabled us to be a jump ahead of the enemy most of the time, but I wonder sometimes whether undue emphasis is not being placed on uranium development and whether the sacrifices we are making in other branches of development in order that uranium may have all it wants are not greater than they should be. I know that our expenditure is heavily augmented from other sources and I am not bringing up this matter in a critical mood or in an attempt to use it as a stick with which to beat anybody, but I feel that Parliament might give some consideration to this matter. If the Premier and the Minister of Mines are satisfied that the expenditure is justified, I suppose there is not much that Parliament can do about it. I mention it to bring it to the notice of those responsible. We can be too enthusiastic about a new thing and possibly neglect some of the older and more commonplace things, which, after all, are the things upon which our prosperity rests for the moment. I make the point so that those concerned will realize that there is a degree of thinking going on, at least amongst some of us, about this matter. I know some people can be short-sighted and selfish, and look at the present without having any regard to the future, but many people do become critical when some of the things they value and need are being denied them because money is going in other directions.

I want now to refer to the expenditure of Loan money for road purposes. I have previously discussed this matter. It has been indicated that roads should be paid for out of revenue and that we are not justified in spending borrowed money for the purpose. I

want to examine this according to the premises I laid down at the beginning of my remarks, that Loan money should be spent on productive enterprises. Nothing provides a better return in the way of dividends to the State than the construction of decent roads. I fail to see why roads are not productive and therefore not just as entitled to have Loan money spent on them as railways or electricity extensions. All these things are in a similar category. They are all aids to production and the movement of goods, yet we put £2,000,000 or £3,000,000 into the railways every year, and finance railway deficits, as a matter of routine, because Parliament has become used to it. On the other hand, we are told that Loan money should not be spent on road development, and I mean good solid sealed roads, not dirt roads, because they would be a bad investment. There is a strong case for the spending of a few pounds of Loan money on road development. Perhaps I am wrong, but I do not think so. Perhaps various reasons could be advanced why we should not do it, but I think we should stress that people who have to cover long distances on bad roads, which are essential for transport purposes, should have good arterial roads provided for them. Loan money could be spent on them to the advantage of the State over a period of years.

Mr. Corcoran—They can't spend the money they have already.

Mr. PEARSON—One of the reasons for that is that we are not geared to the expenditure. Road funds have come and gone in the passage of years, and the honourable member will agree that if we could somehow stabilize road expenditure, so that councils and contractors could budget on a continuation of expenditure at a given level, the people could gear themselves to the expenditure, profitably and well, of money provided either from revenue or loan. A good deal of politics has been introduced into this debate and some of the remarks have been rather ill-advised. Mr. Hutchens, like other Opposition members, constantly hammered the poor old satellite town—trying to kill the baby before it was born. It has happened almost *ad nauseam*. I am not very well qualified to argue that point but one remark by Mr. Hutchens I thought rather incongruous. He said that all the population in the country was coming to the city and that nothing was being done to encourage people to go back to the country. He said there were no new water schemes: in fact he gave us the idea that the country was entirely denuded of population.

Mr. Davis—It will be after the satellite town is built.

Mr. PEARSON—The honourable member knows that the population of Port Pirie is increasing. Last year it was proclaimed a city. The populations of Port Augusta and Whyalla are increasing. Since I have been a member here the population of Port Lincoln has been increased by 3,000. Mr. Hutchens spoke about all the population being in the metropolitan area, but there is scarcely a town of any size in the State where the Housing Trust has not built homes, and they are not empty. There is not one member here who does not want more houses built in his district. Therefore, why all this nonsense about the country being denuded of population? Why is country production constantly increasing? The honourable member quoted a lot of material. I do not know whether it came from the Scriptures, or Confucius, or confusion: I think probably from confusion. Then he said the Government was being dishonest in its public expenditure.

Mr. Jennings—So it is.

Mr. PEARSON—I do not think it is proper to say that the Government is dishonest in its public expenditure, or for any honourable member to say, "that public money is being used for political purposes." I think he might have qualified the remark because it savours more of Canberra than of this Parliament.

Mr. Davis—Who said it?

Mr. PEARSON—Mr. Hutchens. I wrote it down as he said it. It savours more of a Parliament for which we have less respect than for our own. I read in this morning's *Advertiser* the description of a "demagogue." I wonder whether it does not fit. Honourable members can read it for themselves. Remarks of that kind are improper in this place. The honourable member said also that public servants were being forced to deceive and to prepare documents of deception. He said it was so because a police station which had been promised for a number of years for Flinders Park had not yet eventuated. If the area has been able to do without a police station from 1947 to 1954, as mentioned by the honourable member, the work should not have been on the Loan Estimates.

Mr. Lawn—But they have not got the police station, so obviously it is needed.

Mr. PEARSON—Obviously they have been able to get on without it, because there have been no outbreaks of violence in that district, and because of that there was no justification for the line being on the Estimates in the first

place. I could have used the money in my district, and it would have produced something.

Mr. Jennings—Mr. Hutchens was referring to the fact that we had voted the money and that it had apparently been used in another direction.

MR. PEARSON—During the war it was impossible to spend money on certain projects because of shortages of materials and labour, and it was used for other urgent purposes. Nobody denies that moneys have been used for purposes not entirely as set down in the original Estimates but to suggest that civil servants are being compelled to prepare documents to deceive is far from the truth. In my contact with Government departments I have found the most responsible civil servants are very happy to be able to do a job that they know has to be done, and they prefer to do a job rather than let the money lay idle. I think that is a sound policy. If the honourable member intended to erect a front fence and had set aside £50 for the purpose, and found that he could not get wrought iron but that he could obtain galvanized iron for a back fence, would he not spend it on the back fence and consider he had done the sensible thing? If works that have been approved cannot be gone on with and the money is diverted to another matter of great importance, what is wrong with that? This matter is not subject to the whims of the departmental Minister or the Premier.

In this State there is a complete examination of all public accounts by the Auditor-General, who is charged with the duty of examining and reporting to Parliament on Governmental expenditure. To suggest there is anything deceitful and criminal, as Mr. Hutchens almost suggested, is to slander the Auditor-General and his officers and to say that he is not doing the job for which Parliament appointed him—I can find no other interpretation for the honourable member's remarks. I was rather concerned at some remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition in his opening speech for the Opposition on the Loan Estimates because they revealed a degree of inconsistency that is not often apparent in him. I know that he was somewhat hard pressed to find real criticisms and because of that he spent a lot of time talking about putting a satellite town near the Flinders Ranges. He stretched the point a little too far. He also referred to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and said:—

The Treasurer referred to the shortage of labour as well as materials and pointed out

the difficulties confronting the Hospitals Department, especially with reference to the completion of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. This, too, indicates that the Government is endeavouring to handle too many public projects at the same time. I am reminded of the fact that, with the continued growth of the metropolitan area and the resultant increase in population, the completion of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital will not solve the problem. I visualize the necessity of another public hospital to provide for those areas south of the city which have been so extensively built on in recent years.

How can he reconcile those two statements? He said later:—

I suggest that a start should be made now to plan proper hospital facilities for the metropolitan area.

Having already said that the Government is trying to do too many things at once he immediately went on to outline the hospital programme in the southern districts and said that a complete survey should be made of the metropolitan area to ascertain its future hospital requirements, and that plans should be prepared forthwith for that purpose. I cannot see how you can stop and go at the same time.

Mr. John Clark—It is hardly the Leader's fault that you cannot see his point.

Mr. PEARSON—I cannot.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—That is the fault of the tongue and not the ear in this case.

Mr. PEARSON—The Leader made two comments about decentralization. For years we have heard that the lack of amenities in the country is responsible for its alleged denudation; we have heard so often that people have left the country and come to the town because the Government has failed to provide amenities. The Leader said:—

Amenities, such as the provision of water, electricity, etc., will not attract an appreciable number of people back to the country. I ask members to peruse the Loan Estimates line by line and they will see, with the possible exception of two or three districts, that nothing is being done to increase the capacity of our vast country areas and result in the permanent employment of many additional persons.

He said that if the Government provided amenities the people would not use them, and continued:—

It ought to be stressed also that most land-owners have their own amenities. The Premier will find that many will not be anxious to have their properties connected with electricity when it is available from an outside main.

That is not my experience. Electricity supplies have been extended rapidly in my district but not rapidly enough for the people who live

there, and there is not one person within reach of an extension who does not want the current laid on.

Mr. Quirke—Some of the surcharges are unduly high, don't you think? They get up to 93 per cent.

Mr. PEARSON—I would not say unduly high, but they are high. However, the people still want the service.

Mr. Quirke—Some with the 93 per cent surcharge do not.

Mr. PEARSON—That may be so, but it does not dampen their enthusiasm for having connections made, and as the honourable member knows, as the consumption increases the surcharges decrease.

Mr. Quirke—But they keep some out of a group.

Mr. PEARSON—The group ceases to be a group and the trust cannot carry out an extension. It has not been my experience that many people are disinterested in these amenities, but rather that when the lines are within reach they want them to go still further. Far from being unenthusiastic, they are all clamouring for further extensions. The Leader said later in his speech:—

If the Treasurer and the Government had been sincere in their efforts to extend more amenities to country areas we should have had many towns with populations of 5,000, 10,000 or more. Just visualize what could have been done with this £20,000,000 spread over a period of years

This is the significant statement. He said:—

Supposing £1,000,000 had been allocated to each of 20 towns—and there are more than 20 towns in this State with great potentialities for development—what would have been the result?

That sounds all very well, but how can Parliament give £1,000,000 to each of 20 towns over a period, and in what way would it be applied? The proposition seems incongruous. If the Leader of the Opposition were charged tomorrow with the job of distributing £1,000,000 to each of 20 towns in a sound and proper manner how would he do it, and to what purpose would he devote the money? Of course, anyone can think of all sorts of fancy schemes to do this and that. If one can create a pool of money many people will help to spend it, but will they spend it wisely and economically? The statements by the Leader of the Opposition were nothing more than kite-flying and window dressing.

I have made some criticisms of the Loan Estimates, but it is the duty of members to be constructive in their criticism. By and large,

the Treasurer has in the past, and again this year, shown a degree of financial sagacity and a long-term outlook that no other Premier in Australia has equalled. The fact that South Australia is the leader in its economic standing in practically every department proves that our Treasurer has for many years exercised sound judgment in the expenditure of Loan money. Although I have asked for some matters to be considered I have not done so with any feeling of being dissatisfied with the general outlook of the Government towards Loan expenditure. We have been accustomed in this State to sound administration and we have little to complain of generally. Perhaps we have been so well treated by our administration that we do not know what bad administration is like. If we lived in some other States and had to put up with the kind of Government they have had we should have a far greater appreciation of our Government. The record of our Treasurer is one which is an enviable one throughout the democracies. I am pleased to say that I find the Loan Estimates acceptable, and I support the first line.

Mr. FLETCHER (Mount Gambier)—I compliment the member who has just resumed his seat on having gone so thoroughly into the Loan Estimates, but I am disappointed, like other country members, at the proposal for a satellite town. While many members have been racking their brains for a suitable name for it I say that it already has a suitable name, "Satellite." The dictionary says that "satellite" is "a small planet revolving round a large one; an obsequious attendant; submissive." Submissive to what? The new town will be submissive to all the big combines of industry and labour. It will start with the proverbial silver spoon in its mouth. It will have bitumen roads, footpaths, sewerage, and electric light, and brand new industries made to order for it. The newspapers tell us (and they must be right as the Premier takes them into his confidence and tells them of these new ventures before mentioning them to Parliament) that £20,000,000 will be spent over 10 years on this town, or £2,000,000 a year. This project will continue while some of our country towns are falling into decay for lack of only a few of the amenities to be given to this charming, young, streamlined heiress adopted by our Treasurer.

Before elections we hear a great deal from both parties about the wonderful advantages of decentralization, but after the elections we hear no more about that. In this State Labor

has not had charge of the Treasury benches for a long time, but boosting the city and neglecting the country is putting the writing on the wall for the present Government. Is there any encouragement for men to pioneer country districts when they can come to a brand new city with everything laid on? What is the Government doing to assist the establishment of industries and the extension of amenities to the country? We are becoming more Americanized every day. We are taking the line of least resistance and accepting big business in a big way with open arms. The Public Works Committee has approved sewerage schemes for some of our larger country towns and cities, but today they are at the cross roads for the want of this necessary service. Why haven't any of these jobs been undertaken? In reply to my question recently the Minister of Works said that the committee had not issued a final report.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—I said that was not the real reason.

Mr. FLETCHER—I know the Minister said he did not want to shelter behind the committee, but what is happening today? The Minister, in reply, put forward a very weak argument, for even those interim reports contained the committee's approval of the schemes. If the Government is awaiting final reports why is £40,000 placed on this year's Loan Estimates for the sewerage of Port Lincoln? The committee has issued only an interim report on that project, yet the Government sees fit to start the job.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—What about the hospital you are getting at Mount Gambier?

Mr. FLETCHER—I am not complaining about that, but about interim reports being ignored. If the Government can accept an interim report on the Port Lincoln sewerage scheme it can accept interim reports on other matters. I do not want to become parochial, because I realize that the problems associated with Mount Gambier apply to many other areas. The biggest problem relates to sewerage. I have been a member of the Public Works Committee for 10 years, and as such have visited many districts in connection with investigations and realize that the conditions in some of those areas are alarming. Some districts are not far from the city. My district has been well treated, but I emphasize that the lack of proper sewerage is retarding its progress. Mount Gambier is a new city, but it is no Jerusalem. Ever since the development of this town began,

nature has provided it with a system which carries away wastes and effluents underground by means of pits and deep bores. For many years tourists from other South Australian districts and inter-state have marvelled at the local drainage system and envied Mount Gambier, but all good things come to an end, and today the business portion could be likened to the bottom of a colander—it is so riddled with pits and bores. This waste is being drained away underground but Mount Gambier's water supply is from underground sources. No-one has yet been able to inform us whether or not we are consuming a large quantity of secondhand water.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—The Blue Lake water is comparatively pure.

Mr. FLETCHER—We know that, but we are not sure whether it may not be affected by the drainage waters. Most residents are fearful of what may result if an epidemic breaks out at Mount Gambier. There is another aspect to this problem. The lack of an efficient sewerage scheme has had a stultifying effect on the progress of the town. That has been forcibly illustrated by recent sales of some of the most valuable building premises to wealthy institutions which could well afford to demolish present out-of-date structures and replace them with two or three-storey modern buildings, but this progressive method of building cannot be adopted because the present sewerage system could not cater for it. The trend today is towards big business and this is greatly exemplified in Mount Gambier. Recently I have been approached by small business people who are under notice to quit premises they have occupied for many years. They are seeking stays of proceedings until they can obtain other premises.

Mr. John Clark—It is keeping industries from the town.

Mr. FLETCHER—Yes. There is no encouragement for persons to build bigger premises because the present sewerage system is inadequate. Some small business people have had to use their own homes as offices in their efforts to continue the businesses they conducted in the main street of Mount Gambier. The majority of big business concerns are controlled from Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney. The Savings Bank purchased Ansett's building and contemplates erecting a building of three storeys, but until such time as provision is made to handle the waste from that building it

cannot do so. The R.S.L. Club, Goldsbrough, Mort and Co., and Bennett and Fisher are in the same position, and the Mount Gambier business area is not progressing. I question whether anyone has been a greater advocate for the town and district than I have, and claim that I have never been parochial in my outlook. If some other town deserved something more than Mount Gambier I have always been man enough to say so. The running of drainage waters underground at Mount Gambier is beginning to have its effects, and has made its presence felt even in the august chamber of the town council. In the *Border Watch* of August 28 appeared a scurrilous attack on me as member of the district, launched by Alderman L. J. Laslett, seconded by Councillor McPherson and supported by the town council. In the article Alderman Laslett states:—

I feel that on this occasion the report of the needs of his district must be one of the weakest ever presented to Parliament by a representative of the district.

In seconding the motion Councillor McPherson said, "Your member is useless to you to get anything you want," and the mayor said, "I am sure the council will give full support to the measure." I have been the representative of Mount Gambier for 16 years and I claim I know how to make a speech and when to make it. Apart from getting a pick and shovel and commencing work on sewerage for Mount Gambier on my own, no one has been in closer contact with the responsible Minister and the Premier than I have. I want to inform Alderman Laslett and his followers that I retract nothing that I said on the Address in Reply debate in regard to deep drainage for Mount Gambier. As stated earlier, the natural drainage of Mount Gambier is good compared with that of other towns listed for sewerage. I was giving recognition to what is an obvious fact. Alderman Laslett cannot be aware that it is not possible to hide the obvious. The approach was based upon the fact that although Mount Gambier had these natural advantages they were now being overtaxed. Further, I used the argument about these natural advantages so that it could not be used against me and Mount Gambier to side-track the issue. As an apostle of gloom, Alderman Laslett reminds me of the donkey that died without anyone being responsible for its burial. The donkey made its presence very obvious, so much so that the parish priest sought the aid of the council for its burial. The council replied that it was the priest's

duty to bury the dead, to which the priest responded that it was also his duty to notify the relatives. I now notify Alderman Laslett and his followers that the Loan Estimates provide for an expenditure of £494,500 for Mount Gambier, a donkey of another colour, which Alderman Laslett's seconder will have some difficulty in disposing of; but I advise him of the facts because I feel it is my duty to do so.

I have been very well treated by the Government in my requests for work to be done in the district, and to say that I am useless and have done nothing is wrong and unfair. Let me remind my critics of what has been done in the district. Capital expenditure on schools alone in the last three years amounted to £202,600 and maintenance £6,800, a total of £209,400; capital expenditure on railways last year was £263,850 and on water supplies in the last three years £135,000, with £66,000 for maintenance, a total of £201,000. I am reminded of what the Minister of Works once said, "Gratitude is for blessings to come and not for those received." There is a lot of truth in that. Buildings which have been completed by the South Australian Housing Trust at Mount Gambier or are in the course of construction cost approximately £750,000 to June 30, 1954. This does not include the value of the land purchased where buildings have not been erected or the 101 homes erected on the seven war service settlements. All that money has been spent in my district, but it is necessary to spend still more in country areas so that country towns may be assisted. In a few months' time Mount Gambier will be declared a city, and

with the development of the amenities to which I have referred it should have up to five-storey buildings in place of the many single-storey buildings there today.

I understand that the satellite town near Salisbury is to be built mainly of red bricks, and I hope that is true. An excessive demand has been made upon Mount Gambier building stone, and soon much overburden will have to be removed to get at it, thereby increasing its cost. In the years immediately after World War I contractors were able to take all the stone that could be supplied, but, after the rehabilitation of the clay brick industry, the suppliers of the stone were left to battle as best they could. In the past few years, however, supplies of the stone have been handled in a more businesslike way.

The Hon. C. S. Hincks—Large quantities of the stone are left?

Mr. FLETCHER—Yes, but soon as much as 10 feet of overburden may have to be removed to get at it, therefore I trust the demand for it will slacken.

The Hon. C. S. Hincks—You are still maintaining the quality of the stone?

Mr. FLETCHER—Yes, and I have no doubt the good quality will continue, but its cost may be increased. I support the Estimates and trust that country towns will be assisted by the development of industries and amenities.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.47 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, September 8, at 2 p.m.