

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.**

Tuesday, November 2, 1954.

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

**QUESTIONS.****METROPOLITAN RECREATION GROUNDS.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—An article in the *Sunday Mail* headed "Our Big Belt of Green" stated that considerable areas have been reserved for public purposes in the metropolitan area, but that in the main they are around the outer perimeter. I ask the Premier whether the Government proposes to take steps to see that playgrounds—particularly those suitable for children who cannot travel long distances to play games—are provided, especially in the more closely settled parts?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—For a considerable time the Government has been purchasing suitable land, when it has been available, for recreation. The honourable member will understand that it is not possible to purchase land in some parts of the metropolitan area because it has already been fully built upon. On a number of occasions the Housing Trust has reserved land after it has been subdivided. In some instances areas that have been subdivided have been bought and reaggregated, one example being "The Gums" at Tranmere. That had been subdivided, but was sold to the Government following on a request by a local authority. The Government negotiated with every landowner and purchased the whole of the area. When any local government authority intimates that it knows of suitable land that it believes can be purchased it will be inspected by Government officers. The inspection is usually made in the first instance by the Tourist Bureau to see whether it is suitable and, secondly, by the Land Board to see whether the cost is reasonable. While funds are available every effort will be made to secure land for recreation. I emphasize that the Government will go beyond immediate requirements because we know from experience that purchases of land for this purpose are usually inadequate in the light of subsequent events.

**MOTOR CAR THEFTS.**

Mr. DUNKS—I notice from today's *Advertiser* that New South Wales is tightening legislation with reference to penalties for stealing motor cars. I have noticed lately that these offences have increased greatly in South Australia, particularly in regard to a certain make

of motor car, and I ask the Premier whether he intends introducing legislation to tighten the law here.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—As far as I know, there is no necessity to alter the law in this State. I have not had requests from any department or outside authority for this to be done, and I do not think, if there is any criticism, that it would be of our laws, which I think provide adequate penalties. In some instances they are much greater than what magistrates impose; but if I receive reports showing that it is necessary to alter our laws they will be considered.

**STEEL WORKS AT WHYALLA.**

Mr. RICHES—Can the Premier make a progress report on the talks he has had with the Broken Hill Pty. Co. Limited about royalties on iron ore and the establishment of a steel works at Whyalla?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—On the question of steel works, I cannot take the matter any further than the statement I released after my discussions with the directors of the Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd. last Friday. The Government's request was not rejected. The company pointed out that since the war enormous demands had been made on its steel-making capacity and it had to extend where it could give the greatest relief to the consumer. The company's chairman of directors is absent abroad and will not be home, I think, until the first week in December. Further conferences on this matter will be arranged after his return. The question of royalties was discussed at some length and the company has offered to pay 18d. a ton instead of 6d. under the present agreement, which, my officers tell me, is an increase about equal to the change in value of money since the agreement was made, though the offer was not based on that.

Mr. Riches—What was South Australia's request as to steelworks?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not think the type of steelworks should be canvassed at the moment because in the course of the discussions the company made it quite clear that, although it was prepared to discuss the establishment of a steel works at Whyalla, the ultimate type and the means of producing it must be determined by the company. Therefore at this stage it would be premature to consider the type of programme the Government should place before the company. In my opinion the talks are progressing satisfactorily.

## MURDINGA WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. PEARSON—In reply to a recent request for a water supply to certain people in the Murdinga district the Minister of Works asked me to obtain from the landowners concerned their approval of the proposed rating. I did this and advised the Minister accordingly. He then undertook to take the matter to Cabinet for consideration. Can he now say whether Cabinet has considered the matter and, if so, with what result? Is he in a position to indicate an early commencement of the work?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—It is desired to continue that work this year if circumstances permit. It is amongst the high-ranking projects in our programme. I hope to have a more detailed reply tomorrow.

## OIL REFINERY FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Mr. McALEES—This morning's *Advertiser* contains a report of the Premier's statement before the Grants Commission that an oil refinery is likely to be established in this State. Can the Premier say whether, if such a project is established, it will be established in Wallaroo, which is the most suitable place in the State for a refinery?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I can only deal with requests the Government has received on this matter. The Government has received two inquiries—both on the same topic—from two companies. One company inquired whether it would be possible to provide 200 acres adjacent to Port Adelaide for the installation of an oil refinery; subsequently it amended its request to 300 acres. Another company requested 200 acres adjacent to Port Adelaide. The largest sales of fuel oil will, of necessity, be near Port Adelaide, and I do not think we would be able to sell Wallaroo as a site. However, if opportunity offers I will see that alternative land sites are available in other places for the consideration of the companies.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier any statistical information on the Australian oil-refining capacity, and can he say whether such information supports South Australia's claim for the establishment of a refinery?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Mines Department has done much work on this matter. One refinery is being established in Western Australia, three in New South Wales and three in Victoria. It is estimated that the enlarged capacity of these refineries will meet Australia's oil requirements only until 1955, and, as it takes two or three years to establish a refinery, there are strong statistical grounds for the planning of further refining

capacity in Australia. Because South Australia consumes about 10 per cent of the liquid fuel used by Australian motor vehicles, provides a large market for the furnace oils and bituminous products produced by a refinery, and must at present import its bituminous requirements either from abroad or from other States, there is a strong case for the establishment of a refinery here from the point of view of crude oil and bituminous petroleum products.

Mr. RICHES—In this morning's press is a report of an announcement by the Premier to the Grants Commission yesterday that the existence of an oil refinery would have considerable significance in the establishment of steel works in this State. Can the Premier say if there is a real case against the establishment of a refinery at one of the Spencer Gulf ports? I do not want to appear parochial in this matter and the district I represent would not wish any word spoken or action taken that would in any way embarrass the negotiations or interfere with the likelihood of a company coming here, but it would like to be assured that the case for a Spencer Gulf port has been put to the company and that there is no reason, geographically or economically, why a refinery should not be established at one of these ports?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This matter came up for discussion at the conference with the B.H.P. Co. last Friday and the directors said that oil is playing an increasing part in the production of steel. If a refinery comes to South Australia it will assist greatly in the negotiations now taking place. The heavy crude oils that would assist in the working of a steel industry are only the by-products of petroleum oils, the large market for which is not at a Spencer Gulf port but near the metropolitan area, where the rail link is much more convenient. The supply of oil to the South-East and the Murray Lands would be almost impossible from a Spencer Gulf port, but much easier from Port Adelaide. I do not think it would be possible to establish a refinery economically at one of those ports, unless transport facilities were available. If there is an opportunity for submitting a number of suggestions the Government will do it.

## WHEAT INDUSTRY SUBSIDY.

Mr. HEASLIP—This morning's *Advertiser* contains a report under the heading "Flour Industry Outlook Bleak," which attributes certain statements to the Federal President of the Millers' and Mill Employees' Association (Mr. Condon, M.L.C.). One paragraph states:—

Mr. Condon points out that the wheat industry, which has rendered valuable service to the

Commonwealth, is subsidized to assist it in its current difficulties. The subsidy is equivalent to 1½d. on a 2 lb. loaf of bread.

My impression has always been that over the past six years the wheat industry has not been subsidized, but has been subsidizing consumers. Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether there is a subsidy, and if so, in what form is the wheatgrower receiving it?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I read the statement referred to and I doubted whether the honourable member to whom it was attributed was correctly reported, because he would know—as we all know—that our legislation provides for a home consumption price of 14s. a bushel. If, however, the International Wheat Agreement price at which sales are being made is the floor price, then the home consumption price would be slightly below 14s. a bushel. If the world export price fell below that figure, our home consumption price would be the world export price, provided at all times that it did not fall below the cost of production figure, which at the moment is 12/7 a bushel. I know of no overseas sales made at a price below our internal price of 14s. In fact, the latest figures I saw were above that level, so at present there is no question of a subsidy in respect of the home price because, until the world parity price falls below the 14s., we are selling wheat on a home market at less than we can secure for it overseas. Therefore, there is no question at present of the consumer subsidizing the wheat producer. What the honourable member who made the statement may have had in mind is the fact that we were being paid something above our cost of production figure of 12s. 7d. a bushel. He may be regarding that excess as a subsidy; but it could by no means be regarded as a subsidy because a subsidy only arises when we are paying internally more than the overseas parity price.

#### WEST BEACH NATIONAL RESORT.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Some time ago, as a result of a deputation that I introduced, the Premier offered to provide a fairly large area near West Beach for development as a national reserve to be used for recreation, provided the councils in the area could reach agreement on their responsibilities and obligations in relation to it. Before I left for overseas I learned of a difference between the councils on that question. Can the Premier say what is the actual position?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member introduced a deputation and as a result

of investigations made and a conference with the Housing Trust the Government purchased a fairly large piece of land, I think 360 acres, for a reserve between Henley and Glenelg, in the area commonly known as West Beach. The proposal made to the three councils adjoining the area was that a trust should be set up, that the Government would make an initial contribution towards the establishment of a reserve, and that the three councils over a period of years would make a similar contribution and have the management and control of the reserve. The Henley and Grange Council has indicated that it does not desire to go ahead with the proposal but the Glenelg and West Torrens councils have accepted it. Legislation for the establishment of the trust is being drawn up and will be presented to Parliament this session. Under it the Government will provide a certain sum of money, which will be augmented by payments by the two authorities concerned over a period of years. They will have control of the area and be responsible for its development and maintenance.

#### LABOUR SHORTAGE.

Mr. DUNNAGE—An article in this morning's *Advertiser* states that the labour shortage in this State is growing acute. It contains some remarks by Mr. F. K. Dwyer, the Regional Director of Employment, who said that most of the vacancies were for men and youths, but there was a considerable number for women in limited occupations. It was said that the Commonwealth Employment Service could place immediately almost 1,200, particularly skilled metal tradesmen, in the metropolitan area and the country. Can the Premier say if the Government is taking any action to bring New Australians or other migrants to this State or doing anything overseas to attract suitable types of men to fill the positions which seem to be so readily available?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Migration is under the control of the Commonwealth Government. I had a letter from the Prime Minister asking for a conference of State Ministers of Immigration to be held on November 29, and I have signified my willingness to attend. In S.A. the nomination system has worked extremely well except that there have been long delays after people have nominated before they have been able to secure a passage to this State. I cannot understand the delay because nominated persons are respected people with work and accommodation offered to them before the nomination takes place. Much of the delay appears to be due to the formalities

associated with the entrance of migrants to Australia. In some instances we have probably set the standard somewhat high because it is not always possible to get the cream of the people to come here as migrants. I think that in the main we must be prepared to accept a wider category than in the past. The matter will be pursued at the conference on November 29.

#### ADVANCES FOR HOMES ACT.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—Under the Advances for Homes Act the limit for a loan for home building by the State Bank is, I understand, £1,750. With a house costing about £3,000 the gap is too wide for most young people to breach financially. Will the Premier give consideration to altering the amount to bring it into line with that lent by other authorities and make it a more realistic sum to meet today's requirements?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That question has been asked on a number of occasions and I have had to reply that the money at present available for the purpose is fully taken up. If we increase the amount made available to each individual applicant it must reduce the number of successful applicants. I believe that under the agreement with the Commonwealth Government provision will be made for more liberal terms to be available, particularly for the purchase of homes. I hope in the near future to give more definite information on the matter. The suggestion was that the amount should be increased to £2,750. If that is agreed to it will meet the position mentioned by the honourable member.

#### MARGARINE.

Mr. SHANNON—There have been disquieting rumours about the illegal entrance of margarine into South Australia and its illegal sale by retailers. As we are at present having difficulty in selling dairy produce overseas will the Minister of Agriculture investigate the complaints and if there is any foundation for them take appropriate action against the offenders?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—We have done that already. We watched the position closely and as soon as I was reliably informed that interstate margarine was being sold in some of our towns I sent an inspector to ascertain what was happening. When he found that interstate margarine was being sold instructions were given that the storekeepers should be told that they were contravening the Act, and in every case they promised to

stop selling margarine and send back their stocks. The trouble first started in some of the river towns where margarine had come from New South Wales and in every case the storekeepers promptly complied with our requirements in the matter. Also, in Mount Gambier margarine from Victoria was being sold, and the same action was taken, with the same satisfactory result.

Mr. DUNKS—Under South Australian legislation manufacturers are allowed to make a certain amount of margarine and the raw material has to be imported and examined first in South Australia. I understand that the quota has already been made and I ask whether it is advisable to send a good imported article away, particularly as many people want to buy margarine and it keeps down their cost of living. Has the Government the authority to tell retailers who want to sell this product to send it away unless it takes action under price control legislation, or should not action be taken against the manufacturer of another State who sells the goods to the retailer?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—Our Margarine Act fixes a definite quota for this State. I believe it is 450 tons a year and that quota had been reached, but not exceeded, by local manufacturers. Therefore, they ceased manufacturing. The quota is for 12 months, but it was fulfilled much earlier, so there is now no South Australian margarine available to meet the demand. Some people were importing a similar product from other States, but our Act does not permit its sale in South Australia, and it is our duty to enforce the provisions of our own legislation. We have power to prevent the sale of margarine manufactured in another State, and that was the action taken. We did not order the margarine to be returned to other States, but asked retailers not to continue infringing our legislation by selling it, and they returned it to other States.

#### SCHOOL RECREATION GROUNDS.

Mr. WHITE—I have been requested by the Murray Bridge High School Council to inquire as to whether the Education Department is prepared to subsidize the cost of upkeep of the oval attached to the school. It is the opinion of the council that a good oval is a very necessary part of a high school, because sport plays an important part in the life of the students. Obviously, the upkeep of an oval is expensive. It has recently been topdressed and must be kept in good trim to be suitable

for play. The cost of doing this eats greatly into the finances of the high school council. No doubt the finances of all high school councils are affected if they have grass ovals to maintain. In the past the councils have not been encouraged by the department in this respect. Can the Minister say whether it is still the policy of the Education Department not to subsidize high school councils in respect of expenses incurred in the upkeep of their ovals?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Departmental policy on the provision and maintenance of school ovals and playing fields is as follows:—

- (a) The Government provides the land required without cost to the school committee, provided this land is already portion of the school site.
- (b) The Government will meet half the cost of such ground formation, levelling, grading and grassing of ovals as may be necessary and approved. In such cases where school grounds are unsuitable for ordinary play purposes (as distinct from an oval) it is usual for the department to meet the full cost involved.
- (c) The Government will meet half the cost of such installations for water reticulation as may be necessary and approved, and
- (d) The Government will accept no responsibility whatever for meeting the cost of maintenance of these grounds and facilities.

That has been the policy of the department for some years, and applies to high schools and primary schools. I realize the strength of the honourable member's remarks concerning the desirability, if not the need, for sport, and the department spends large sums annually and devotes much time to sport under the heading "physical education." It is considered that the department has done much in providing the capital cost. I am personally disappointed that local governing bodies and other interested parties have not availed themselves more frequently of the provisions of the Recreation Grounds (Joint Schemes) Act of 1947. Members in general, and the member for Goodwood in particular, will remember that that Act was brought into being as a result of a request by the Marion Council for the Minister of Education to enter into a joint scheme for the provision of land for the recreation of school children and the public generally. In every case the Minister of Education was prepared to enter into a scheme for a contribution

towards the capital cost of an oval or recreation ground and its maintenance and upkeep, and also the maintenance and upkeep of any improvements.

As seven years have elapsed since that Act was passed it might be well to re-state the position. The policy on land purchased or acquired under the provisions of the Recreation Grounds (Joint Schemes) Act of 1947 is as follows:—(a) Land can be purchased or acquired for the purposes of the Act either by the Minister of Education or the local government body or by both. (b) When the land has been secured a "Scheme" is prepared which provides for the monetary contribution payable by each party, the terms and conditions under which each shall use the land, and the construction, maintenance and repair of any improvements made to or erected on the land.

There is no standard agreement for joint schemes as the provisions of each scheme vary with the local requirements. However, in general the Government purchases or acquires land and pays the initial cost of the land. The local council undertakes to repay at least 50 per cent of this cost over a period of years at the current rate of bank interest subject to review of the rate at specified periods during the term of the loan. The council undertakes to hold free of encumbrance, the whole or such portion of the land as is vested in it unless the Minister's consent is given to sell, lease or mortgage it. The council undertakes the construction and maintenance of an oval and necessary structures (including lavatories for each sex) during the operation of the scheme. Children attending the school specified in the scheme have the use of the oval until the hour of five o'clock in the afternoon on school days and on Saturdays until noon. In some cases an extension of these hours is granted by arrangement with the council. In the event of a scheme being no longer required, a further scheme is prepared to determine the disposition of the land and improvements. The general effect of the Recreation Grounds (Joint Schemes) Act has been to secure for councils and departmental schools an adequate area for physical recreation. The department's subsidy ensures the use of these grounds in school hours and the council is able to secure the land at a reasonable cost and without recourse to a poll of ratepayers.

Mr. Frank Walsh—Have you had many applications under that scheme?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—During my 10 months' term as Minister I have received one application. That scheme was recommended

by me and approved by Cabinet in a short period from the time the request was made. I believe it is an economic method of securing recreation areas, and playgrounds both for adults and children. This has not, perhaps, been a particular reply to the question asked by the member for Murray, but I have broadened the reply because I think it is of importance to the public to know what can be done under the provisions of this Act when there is such a need for securing recreation grounds generally.

Mr. TEUSNER—I believe the lack of interest in this legislation may be because many district councils already own recreation grounds and because there is some doubt whether a scheme of the nature the Minister has suggested can be undertaken when a council already owns recreational grounds. Will he examine the legislation to see whether it should be clarified and whether a scheme such as he has mentioned would be practicable when a district council already has a recreation ground and when a nearby school desires to use it for recreation?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to do so. I think the original Act envisaged the purchase of land jointly by the Minister and a local government body from a third person. I do not know whether it would be possible to comply with the honourable member's request where a council already owns a recreation ground, but I see no reason why the Government should not enter into a scheme with a council owning land capable of conversion into a recreation ground. I will have the matter examined because I consider it is far more economical for the Government and a council to enter into a joint scheme for the purchase of one area than for each authority to purchase an area.

Mr. RICHES—Last year and again this year I applied, on behalf of certain Port Augusta schools, for the implementation of a joint scheme relating to school recreation grounds. That application is again before the department, but I have been told on two occasions that the department's policy has been to enter into a joint scheme for the purchase of land but not for its development after acquisition. Can the Minister of Education say whether that policy has been changed and whether the department is now prepared to subsidize the costs of developing land from its natural state so that it may be used for recreational purposes?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I am not aware of the applications referred to. The only

application I know of was received from a metropolitan council and submitted to me by the Premier. In that case I was able to submit a scheme to Cabinet within three days. Under the Act the Minister may contribute towards the cost of an oval and its improvements, and I do not think it is prohibited to contribute towards maintenance costs. I will, however, examine the position.

#### AUSTRALIAN WHEAT BOARD BALLOT.

Mr. PEARSON—Last week the member for Ridley (Mr. Stott) asked a question relating to persons entitled to vote for the election of grower members of the Australian Wheat Board. Apparently he is unable to be here today and, as I understand the Minister of Agriculture has some information on this matter, I ask him whether he will make it available now, for I think the House should have it as early as possible?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—As I indicated last week, the election of the Wheat Board members is being conducted by the Commonwealth Electoral Office. The Commonwealth Electoral Officer (Mr. Phillips) has advised as follows:—

For the Australian Wheat Board ballot he is using the same original roll as was used for the Wheat Stabilization Scheme ballot. This original roll does not show the names of each member of a partnership. He has not, as I did for the Wheat Stabilization ballot, contacted partnerships for the names of each member of the partnership. Each member of a partnership is eligible for a separate vote provided he enrolls by making application on a special claim form which is available from approximately 300 wheat receiving agents or the Commonwealth Electoral Office. In the absence of a properly completed claim for enrolment from each member of a partnership, one ballot paper has been sent to each partnership. The ballot closes on November 24 next.

Anyone who wants to substantiate his claim for a vote should lose no time in approaching a wheat agent or the Commonwealth Electoral Office.

#### OIL DEPOSITS.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Premier obtained a report in reply to a question I asked a few weeks ago about oil explorations in the Yellecowie Station and Bosworth areas?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Director of Mines reports:—

There is no record in the department of an occurrence of oil shale on Yellecowie Station west of Lake Torrens. If some of the shale, reported to Mr. Riches, M.P., could be forwarded to the department, arrangements will

be made for it to be analysed. If the presence of natural oil is definitely confirmed an inspection of the occurrence could then be arranged. The fact that an exploration licence has been granted over the area in question does not preclude the department from carrying out its normal mineral investigational work.

#### ADELAIDE-MOUNT BARKER ROAD.

Mr. SHANNON—This morning's *Advertiser* contains a report that the Government has acquired the property known as "The Elbow" on the Adelaide-Mount Barker road and that the land is to be surveyed with a view to improving the road at that point. Can the appropriate Minister say how extensive those improvements are likely to be?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The property referred to was offered for auction and the Highways Commissioner reported that extensive work would be necessary to make the road suitable from Glen Osmond up to "the Elbow" and that, if he had to acquire the land from the purchaser after the auction, he would probably have to pay, in compensation and other costs, a sum almost equivalent to the total value of the property. Under those circumstances the Government purchased the land and instructed the Highways Commissioner to survey the area necessary for road development. That will be done and the necessary land allotted to him. The remainder will be taken over by the Tourist Bureau as a reserve. The actual work will be done after the survey has been completed.

#### FREE RAIL TRANSPORT TO PENSIONERS.

Mr. LAWN (on notice)—What is it estimated would be the cost to the Railways Department of granting free rail transport to old age pensioners?

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

We have no way of ascertaining the extent of travel by old age and invalid pensioners as distinct from other rail passengers. However, assuming that these pensioners, who total 38,585, use the railways to the same extent as do the remainder of the population, the cost to the State, of carrying these people without charge, would be approximately £69,700.

#### RENTS OF TEACHERS' RESIDENCES.

Mr. JOHN CLARK (on notice)—

1. What are the factors usually taken into consideration by Housing Trust officers when fixing rents?

2. What variation, if any, was used when fixing the recent increases in rents of teachers' residences?

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

1. Rents are fixed by the South Australian Housing Trust and not by its officers, by whom reports are submitted for consideration by the trust. The basis upon which the trust fixes rents is laid down by the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act. In fixing the rent of any house, the trust, as a starting point, must assess the rent at which the house would have been let at September 1, 1939, taking into account the general rental level for comparable houses in that locality. Thus, the size of the house, the amenities provided, its state of repair, and its situation must be taken into account. If a house is situated in a good suburban street, the rental level of the locality is higher than that of a less desirable locality. If the house is situated in a sparsely settled area, the rental level to be applied is less than that in places where there are community amenities. A house in an undesirable site, for example, in what is called a "factory blighted area," will command less rent than one better situated. A number of other factors set out in section 21 must also be considered. When the 1939 rent is assessed, this is to be increased by 22½ per centum and, in addition, proper allowance must be made for increases in rates and taxes, maintenance costs and other outgoings.

2. Before making recommendations of the rents of Government houses, the trust caused every house to be inspected and took into account its accommodation, condition, amenities, disabilities and situation. In general, when making the recommendations, the trust applied the same principles as it is required by the Act to apply to the fixation of rents of privately owned houses. It is pointed out that the rents recommended by the trust are, in general, less than the economic rents. When letting houses built and owned by the trust, the trust charges economic rents and, in many cases, the rents charged by the trust are in excess of the rents recommended by the trust for Government houses providing comparable accommodation.

Mr. RICHES (on notice)—How many applications have been received from schoolteachers living in the country for transfer to the metropolitan area during the periods January 1, 1953, to December 31, 1953, and January 1, 1954, to October 31, 1954, respectively?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The applications totalled:—

	1953. January 1 to December 31.	1954. January 1 to October 31.
High schools . . . . .	19	18
Technical schools . . . .	11	11
Primary schools (including area schools . . . .)	70	48
	100	77

#### COMPENSATION FOR FLOODING.

Mr. GOLDNEY (on notice)—

1. What amount of compensation on account of severe flooding in June, 1952, was paid to property owners adjoining the railway line near Korunye siding?

2. As these floodings have occurred on a number of occasions since the line was constructed what measures, if any, are being taken by the Railways Department to overcome this difficulty?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The replies are—

1. Three claims were made by property owners in this area. The first, of £1,700 has been paid. The second, of £1,200 has been agreed upon and is about to be paid. The third, approximates £1,000; and is practically finalized.

2. Records show that there have been six occasions since 1870 during which flooding has occurred near Korunye or, on average, once in fourteen years. Estimates prepared of the cost of providing sufficient flood openings in the railway embankment to pass the maximum known flood indicate that the expenditure required would be so great that it would be preferable to meet reasonable claims for damage which may be put forward from time to time.

#### POLICE PENSIONS BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

#### RENMARK IRRIGATION TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

(Continued from October 28. Page 1197.)

Bill taken through Committee without amendment. Read a third time and passed.

#### COMMONWEALTH WATER AGREEMENT RATIFICATION ACT REPEAL BILL.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer), having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to repeal the Commonwealth Water Agreement Ratification Act, 1940, and for other purposes. Read a first time.

#### BUDGET DEBATE.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from October 28. Page 1205.)

Legislative Council, £8,465.

Mr. HEASLIP (Rocky River)—Last Thursday, before progress was reported, I was pointing out that the public first became interested in bulk handling 23 years ago. In November, 1931, Mr. Giles asked the then Treasurer:—

During the recess will the Government make further investigations concerning the bulk handling of wheat with the idea of referring the question to the Public Works Standing Committee?

The reply was:—

The matter has already been referred to that committee. When the committee intends to make this investigation, I do not know, but no doubt the honourable member can ascertain that from the Acting Chairman.

In July, 1934, the Public Works Committee concluded its inquiry and brought in an interim report. The conclusions and finding are interesting. They are as follows:—

The committee, after a most exhaustive investigation, have arrived at the following conclusions:—

1. That provided a sufficient proportion of the crop is put through the system, bulk handling will result in a reduction in the cost of handling wheat.

2. That the issue of warrants on delivery will confer an advantage on the producer, in as much as the warrant will be a negotiable instrument which he can sell whenever and to whom he desires.

3. That although bulk handling will reduce handling costs, the displacement of labour must be regarded as an important factor in assessing its economic value to the State.

4. That the comparatively small volume of wheat available in each terminal zone, and the geographical features peculiar to South Australia, preclude the adoption of what is termed the orthodox system of bulk handling, *i.e.*, concrete silos at sidings and terminal ports, as an economic proposition and that therefore, the scheme recommended by the Bulk Handling of Wheat Sub-Committee is the most suitable one submitted to the committee to meet South Australian conditions.

5. That the Bulk Handling Authority should be constituted and should function as recommended, and, in addition, should be responsible for the installation of the system.

The finding was:—

That in the interests of the wheat producer it is desirable to introduce a system of bulk handling of wheat into South Australia on the lines recommended by the Bulk Handling of Wheat Sub-Committee, but the Public Works Standing Committee recommend that the extension of bulk handling facilities to the Port Adelaide zone be not approved until the Wallaroo system is functioning successfully, both

from the point of view of the farmer and the Bulk Handling Authority.

This finding was agreed to on the following division:—

For.	Against.
Mr. Anthony.	Mr. Condon.
Mr. Blackwell.	Mr. Richards.
Mr. Heggaton.	
Mr. Jenkins.	
Mr. Morrow.	

Messrs. Condon and Richards favoured the following finding:—

That the introduction of bulk handling of wheat in South Australia would seriously affect the labour market by increasing the volume of unemployment and that no scheme which involves the wholesale displacement of labour should be embarked upon until adequate provision is made for absorbing the labour so displaced.

Actually, it was a unanimous report in favour of bulk handling, but in view of the economic conditions prevailing two members voted against it because of the dangers to employment. Those conditions do not exist today.

Mr. O'Halloran—They might exist in certain parts, particularly at Wallaroo.

Mr. HEASLIP—That, unfortunately, is something which cannot be catered for. In certain parts there may be a surplus of labour, but in general any amount of employment is available in the country and metropolitan area and it may be necessary to bring immigrants to South Australia to get the work done.

Mr. O'Halloran—Men are employed in handling wheat at Wallaroo.

Mr. HEASLIP—There are certain things which are not economic. When costs are increased as a result of employing people to the extent the bag system of wheat does, it becomes an uneconomic proposition and is not desirable, particularly when there are so many easier industries—and the handling of wheat in bags is heavy and wasteful work—which could employ those persons.

Mr. O'Halloran—Mr. Richards and Mr. Condon meant that substitute employment should be provided in the areas concerned.

Mr. HEASLIP—I think they said that if bulk handling were introduced there would be a surplus of labour which would increase unemployment as a whole. The position today is the reverse. There is full employment rather than unemployment. Those released from the bag system would be of assistance to other industries which have not the labour to produce to full capacity. Nothing was done about that report of the Public Works Committee.

Mr. O'Halloran—The Liberal Government has been in power ever since that time and still nothing has been done.

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Mr. HEASLIP—I am not talking politics; I am speaking in the interests of the wheat industry and South Australia as a whole. Politics do not come into the question of bulk handling, the introduction of which would result in a reduction of costs. In July, 1934, Mr. Lyons asked:—

Does the Government intend to proceed with the installation of a system of bulk handling of wheat to relieve unemployment and to assist farmers?

The Hon. R. L. Butler replied:—

The Government is studying the report of the Public Works Standing Committee with a view to reaching a decision as to whether a Bill shall be introduced this session.

In August Mr. Lyons asked:—

If the Government does not intend to proceed with the installation of a scheme for bulk handling of wheat, will it permit a private company to do so?

The Hon. R. L. Butler replied:—

I have not yet informed the House that the Government does not intend to proceed with the Bill. The matter is under consideration. In September the economics and the advisability of introducing bulk handling were raised by Mr. Christian, who asked:—

In view of Senator Sir George Pearce's statement at Jamestown last Thursday, as reported in *The Advertiser* of August 31, namely, that the Federal policy for rehabilitating the wheat industry would be in the direction of reducing costs by way of freight subsidies and bulk handling of wheat, will the Premier take the opportunity of discussing with the Prime Minister, while he is in Adelaide, the matter of whether the intention is to make available sufficient out of the £16,000,000 loan proposal for the establishment of bulk handling in this State?

The Hon. R. L. Butler replied:—

I think Sir George Pearce merely gave those as instances how costs could be reduced. I do not think it is worth while taking the matter up until after the elections.

Mr. Christian was apparently not satisfied with that reply, and later in that month, under the heading "Bulk Handling of Wheat," the following appeared in *Hansard*:—

Mr. Christian—After the unwarranted haste with which the Parliament House Bill was rushed through this Chamber—

The Speaker—The honourable member is not in order in reflecting on the procedure of the House.

Mr. Christian—May I say, then, after the unnecessary haste—

The Hon. R. L. Butler—That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. Christian—It may be. When the Bill was rushed through the Chamber authorizing an undertaking which is entirely unproductive in its nature and with which I entirely disagree—

The Speaker—The honourable member cannot debate the question.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—You ought to have been present to express your opinion.

The Hon. R. L. Butler—The honourable member should apologise for not being present, I think.

Mr. Christian—I have very definite reasons for not having been present. Will the Government now turn seriously to the question of giving effect to the recommendation of the Public Works Standing Committee with regard to the installation of an extremely reproductive undertaking—bulk handling of wheat—which will undoubtedly effect a saving of 2d. or more a bushel to a struggling industry in this State; or will the Government by charter authorize private enterprise to undertake the installation?

The Hon. R. L. Butler—There was no unnecessary haste in passing the Parliament House Bill. Every member had an opportunity to speak. No other member desired to speak on any phase and the House passed the Bill. If the honourable member was not here to express his views on it, that is his fault and not the fault of Parliament. With regard to the other question, again his comparison is unfortunate. The question of bulk handling of wheat is a very big one.

Mr. Christian—It is more urgent.

The Hon. R. L. Butler—I am not sure on that point just at present. We have received an admirable report from the Public Works Standing Committee and personally I am inclined to support it, but there are still one or two aspects of the question which have to be very carefully considered. A Bill will be considered in due course by Parliament.

The final report on bulk handling was in the eighth general report published in 1935, which set out the following:—

The committee has made no move in the direction of supplementing its first progress report on bulk handling of wheat, in which it found that in the interests of the wheat producer it was desirable to introduce a system of bulk handling of wheat into South Australia on the lines recommended by the Bulk Handling of Wheat Sub-Committee, but recommended that the extension of bulk handling facilities to the Port Adelaide zone should not be applied until the Wallaroo system was functioning successfully, both from the point of view of the farmer and the bulk handling authority. The committee feels that until legislative effect is given to its recommendations, and the system is working successfully in the Wallaroo zone, no good purpose would be served by working out details of a scheme for Eyre Peninsula and the northern narrow gauge railway zone.

This state of affairs went on from 1931 to 1935 but nothing came out of the report, and unfortunately we are in the same position today. At about the same time, a private company in Western Australia obtained a charter for bulk handling of wheat, and three years later handled 27,750,000 bushels of a

total crop of 33,000,000 bushels, yet in South Australia wheat is still being handled in bags. On May 27, 1947, the Government of the day again referred the question of bulk handling to the Public Works Committee. Questions have been asked in this House time after time seeking a report and asking for something to be done, but they have not got anywhere. After 7½ years the committee still has not brought in a report and during that time Parliament has had its hands tied because when an inquiry is before the committee Parliament cannot deal with the matter. As a result, during that time wheatgrowers have been under the great disability of not having a bulk handling installation. One of the arguments against such an installation has been that we are waiting for another improvement in the method of handling, but if we go on waiting for something a little better to turn up we shall go on in the same old way for all time, because I believe we are making progress and while we are doing that we shall always improve on methods of a year or two ago.

It is interesting to compare present-day costs with the costs worked out by the bulk handling inquiry in 1931. Port Pirie was not dealt with in that inquiry, but only places on the broad gauge; the inquiry was made into installations at Wallaroo and Port Adelaide similar to those operating in Western Australia, which I feel sure would be brought in here today if an installation were recommended. It was found that a system that could deal with 19,000,000 bushels in those two zones would cost £750,127, compared with the most recent estimate for an installation at Port Adelaide alone of £1,089,000, plus another £1,249,100 for Wallaroo, for a total storage of less than 20,000,000 bushels. Certainly if the installation had been made then we would not have had the up-to-date machinery that is procurable now, but at least we would have an installation such as Western Australia has and has paid for, whereas we have nothing; we are still handling wheat by the out-moded bag method. It was stated by Mr. A. Stephenson, B.E.M.I.E., consulting engineer, a man who should know something about the matter:—

It is obvious that this State is wasting at least £1,000,000 every three years until a bulk handling scheme is installed.

This means that in addition to the extra capital cost we are losing this large sum every three years. I do not know what the industry is expected to put up with, but it should have the right to install this system, which

it badly needs to reduce costs. Wheatgrowers have been told repeatedly to keep down costs of production, but what is the use of telling them that when they are not allowed to instal an up-to-date system of handling their products at a time when railway freights and labour costs are high, and they have no control over them? Machinery needed by the industry is produced under the 40-hour week, and the cost is outside the control of wheatgrowers. We have been told to reduce costs but we have no control over them, and the sooner the people who know so much about costs talk to those who can control them the better. I mentioned earlier that there has been a drop in two commodities carried by the railways; I dealt with wool and where it would leave us if we jacked up our charges to the extent that it became uneconomic. Wheat also has produced less revenue for the railways.

Mr. Quirke—Didn't you see Robertson's forecast in relation to wool?

Mr. HEASLIP—I have seen the report, but we all have our own opinions. Last year wheat did not move as freely as in the previous year. Unfortunately a lot of it was not exported but moved from country sidings to central stacks to make room for the new harvest. In addition to that much wheat was stacked in country sidings as far north as Blyth and road transport has since come in, the bags have been tipped into a hopper, elevated into trucks and carried over the roads to a bulk system at Ardrossan, with a consequent loss to the railways and to the industry, and an increase in taxation to every taxpayer because of the wear and tear to country roads, which will have to be put in order again at a time when roadmaking costs are high. The Public Works Committee should bring in some report; I do not care what sort it is, what the system is or whether the report is adverse or favourable, but until a report is brought in Parliament's hand is tied and nothing can be done. I hope that within a few weeks it will be brought in.

Mr. Quirke—Is that a forecast?

Mr. HEASLIP—It is a hope, and, I trust, more than a pious hope. Although the drop in prices of primary products has been considerable, the good harvests we have been getting and the week-end rains have placed the economy of the State on a very sound basis. I have much pleasure in supporting the first line.

Mr. JOHN CLARK (Gawler)—I support the first line and as I have a matter of importance to bring before the House I am glad there are so many present to listen. During this debate many important matters have been mentioned and we have heard some particularly fine speeches. Although I could speak on many matters I wish to refer to only one in detail, and that is the recent large increases in rents of Government residences throughout the State. I shall refer particularly to houses in country areas, for I have more knowledge of them than of others, and I shall refer mostly to teachers' residences. This question may seem paltry to some, but it is of vital concern to those who are forced to pay these increases.

Mr. Dunstan—It is of vital concern to the recruitment of more teachers.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Yes, and that is vital to the State. Children's character is shaped by the teachers who have them in their hands for the greater part of their early life. It is a shame that at this moment, when commendable attempts are being made to recruit more teachers, rents of teachers' residences are being increased. I stress that I have nothing but praise for the efforts made by the Minister of Education in recruiting teachers, for no stone is being left unturned to get them, but these rent increases will throw a big spanner in the works. When the member for Hindmarsh was speaking on the Budget last week the member for Unley made an astonishing interjection. By the look on the face of the Minister of Education he was annoyed at the interjection. I do not think that the member for Unley meant it, for it was a thoughtless utterance. He said:—

What is the good of parents sending their children to school if they don't want to go? Surely that cannot be the opinion of the Government? I think most members appreciate what would happen if compulsory education were abolished. When a small child starts school the first few days are usually not too happy, and if the parents said, "You need not go any more," some would not. School is a happy place nowadays for most boys and girls, but I shudder to think what would happen if we did not have compulsory education. I do not deny that some rent increases on teachers' residences were justifiable. Most Government residences were let at low rentals, but I will show why. It seems that steep increases in charges generally has been the Government's policy during the last 12 or 18 months. For years most rents remained fairly

stationary, but instead of gradually increasing them the Government raised them steeply, which came as a slug and a hardship to those who had to pay them.

The charges for water and sewerage installations were raised steeply not long ago. In reply to a question from me the Premier said that the Engineering and Water Supply Department had been losing money for years on these installations and that the charges should have been increased some time ago. I agree with that. Recently the Joint Committee on Subordinate Legislation, of which I am a member, considered harbour charges. An increase was justifiable, but those charges should have been raised gradually over the years. Last year motor registration fees were increased steeply, but they had not been increased for many years. I understand that water and sewerage charges will also be increased soon. Railway freights and fares were raised steeply not so long ago. I do not say that all these increases were not warranted, but I criticize the Government for not altering them for so long and then raising them steeply.

I have three sources of information about teachers' rents. First, and most important, I have my own knowledge and experience in the department, where I was a teacher for over 30 years. Secondly, I have many friends among teachers and officers of the department who, thank goodness, are not afraid to talk. Thirdly, I have an illuminating letter that has been passed on to me through the courtesy of the member for Stuart that was written to him by teachers at Port Augusta. Many of the points that they have made apply not only to Port Augusta but to the whole State. There are about 600 school residences in country areas. Many people like to live in the country, but we must remember that the city has many advantages, and one attraction for teachers to go to the country has been the reasonable rents charged for country residences. The recruiting pamphlet that was published recently in a laudable attempt to get more teachers stated:—

For married men at nearly all country schools a residence is provided at moderate rental. For other married men at country schools the department has in recent years acquired nearly 200 houses in accordance with its policy of making country service more attractive.

At this very moment when we are seeking more teachers, is that policy a dead letter? I do not deny that some rent increases should have been made; indeed, I think all teachers and Government servants would agree that

they were necessary, but not to the extent that they have been made. I advocate one or two things.

Mr. Jennings— A change of Government.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Yes, but that is not as simple as it sounds. I advocate either an independent appeals tribunal to decide the merits or demerits of each increase, or a general reduction of at least 20 per cent in the rents recently assessed for Government houses. There should also be a rent allowance for Government servants not in Government houses so as to make their rents comparable with those for Government houses. Formerly these rents were fixed by regulation, but now they are fixed by the Minister of Education, through the Housing Trust. I take it that any appeals will be referred to the Housing Trust, which fixed the rents.

Mr. Fletcher—From Caesar to Caesar.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Yes. This afternoon the Premier gave us much interesting information on this matter. I shall refer to special circumstances that should have been considered in fixing these rents. From the Premier's reply it seems that no special circumstances were considered. The letter from the teachers at Port Augusta states:—

We the undersigned teachers at the above school (Port Augusta) hereby lodge a protest against the increased rental charges for departmental residences, and at the same time beg for an immediate review of these new charges to give either an immediate and retrospective decrease or at the very least a concession to the country school teacher. Naturally we realize that the previous charges were on a basis not compatible with modern standards, and that a rise was to be expected, but we consider that the rise decided upon is definitely an unfair one, especially to the country school teacher, who has already sacrificed much to serve a period in the country. Therefore we lodge our protest on four major points: the amount of the increase, the type of residences we are occupying, the factors affecting the country school teacher, and the personal points involving a teacher and his prestige in the district in which he lives.

Obviously, it is desirable for the country teacher's prestige to be as high as possible. He should have some chance of living on the same high standard as his professional friends in country towns. Teaching, of course, is a profession, but these rent increases will not give him a chance to attain that standard. Some teachers will be in such a position that they will be ashamed to invite their friends to their homes. This will not help their prestige. Some rents have been raised £120 or more a year, which may not sound much

to some members, but it creates a hardship in many cases. In Port Augusta and most other country towns there has been an average rent increase of about 300 per cent. Imagine the effect of a sudden, unexpected £2 a week rent commitment, particularly on young married people. It is in the nature of a household catastrophe. Most married couples with young families are fully committed. Obviously, teachers will have to curtail their natural interests, though this is not fair to professional people.

I am sure that the Education Department would not be very happy over bankruptcy proceedings against any of its teachers. A charge of 4s. a week for a garage must be a levy on the man owning, or painfully acquiring, a motor car which is a necessity in most country districts. It would not be so bad if storage sheds were included with most of these residences, but they are not. A garage is not just an extra, but it is a place where all the odds and ends that one cannot get into the house are stored—if there is room to put them in with the car. Consequently it is a real necessity and often teachers have erected garages themselves only to find now that their rent is increased to pay for work they have done themselves. It becomes very obvious to me that a good many Government servants living in Government residences that have a garage will find with this increase in rent that they will be forced to sell their cars because they cannot afford to keep them. It is to be hoped that in these cases at least the so-called garages will be regarded as necessary storage sheds and treated accordingly. Do these conditions make the profession attractive to recruits who are seeking congenial occupations? Frankly, I think the answer must be in the negative.

There are some quite good residences, but there are others that are very bad indeed. I quote again from the Port Augusta letter, and I say that the conditions there are typical of most departmental residences throughout the country. This letter gives details with regard to conditions and types of houses in which teachers are living, and bears out my argument that the general quality of the houses does not warrant high increase in rent. It says:—

These residences are timber and asbestos, which in this climate become unbearable in the hot weather. The outer walls are protected in no way whatsoever from the sun by either verandah or sleep-out. The rooms are very small. This may be allowed by law, but nevertheless there is little enough room to swing the proverbial cat. Visitors in small numbers

overcrowd the rooms, home parties are almost an impossibility, and the taking in of relatives for a short time is an imposition on our wives and the relatives. . . . In a climate like this a sleep-out is a necessity. All newer type private houses have them. The Commonwealth Railways put them on their houses. The banks supply them. Private business firms erect them for their managers.

It appears that the Education Department cannot afford them, and in the future I should say that, although they are needed, teachers will be afraid to ask for them for fear of further increases in rent. Obviously such conditions do not help to make the profession more attractive. A few more details of some of the houses may be of interest. Laundries and bathroom and general conveniences are built on much the same system as I have mentioned already—usually too small and inconvenient for the comfort of a family. In Port Augusta the fences around the residences consist of posts and rails which, of course, give access to stray animals or stray children, and do not provide much privacy. In this town the home construction generally is poor; many of the windows will not open or shut. Floors are rippled with warping and I think members will know just what damage that will do to floor coverings. Ceilings show stains of water leak. These are just a few of the things that do not make some of the houses very attractive, and it is not easy to get repairs or improvements done. With the possibility, and indeed the likelihood, of increased rents teachers will not be very anxious to ask for the houses to be improved so that they can be charged more rent for them.

Now I would like to deal with some other facts concerning country school teachers which may be illuminating to members, some of whom I know are keenly interested in the welfare of our teachers. Country teachers make sacrifices and suffer quite a number of disabilities. To offset these things they have had cheaper rents and I believe, for the following reasons, cheaper rents should be continued. I do not suggest they should revert to the previous level, but they should be much cheaper than the rents that have recently been fixed. Country school teachers have very little choice of purchasing houses and must accept the homes into which they are transferred. On the other hand, city teachers may purchase their own homes and many of them do. If they desire to transfer to another school in the city they have a wide choice. In most country towns if a teacher purchases his own home he can make up his

mind to settle down there for the rest of his life. He is therefore at a disadvantage compared with his city colleague, who can acquire his own house and have it available to him when he retires. This security tends to make him stay in the city if he can, and makes it harder for the country teacher to get a transfer to the city. I am not decrying the city teacher, but simply making the point that because of these sacrifices and others the country teachers' rents should be lower, and the same applies to other Government employees.

Generally speaking, the cost of living is higher in most country towns. If a man wants to take his wife and family for a holiday his expenses are greater. If he needs a specialist's attention for any of the family he usually has to travel to the city and incur extra expense. He makes other sacrifices. The cost of transferring from one district to another is usually heavy. Most school residences are not built to the same pattern, so that upon transfer to another school the teacher usually finds that window blinds and curtains, linoleums and carpets do not fit, and this involves him in additional expense. If a metropolitan teacher is transferred from one school to another he usually remains in the same house and travels daily to school.

A country teacher misses a good deal unless he is prepared to spend much money. He finds it difficult to get to the city to hear the best musical entertainment; he misses first-class sporting events and, indeed, educational lectures by world travellers which would be of advantage to him in his profession. If he wants to participate in these things it must cost him more, and if he has £2 a week less by reason of the increased rents it will not be easy to find the money, and for that reason the profession is going to suffer. Again, if the teacher wishes to obtain further educational qualifications he is handicapped by having to do it by correspondence instead of attending the University and hearing the lectures direct. I speak with some feeling in this matter, because what educational qualifications I have managed to get were gained by correspondence, and typed précis of lectures given by the professor—and it is not easy—indeed, it is very hard for a man with a young family.

Some country teachers have endeavoured, while paying rents, also to purchase for themselves homes in the city with the idea of having them available on reaching retiring age. In view of the altered circumstances I submit that it will be very difficult indeed for them to continue to pay what amounts to two lots of

rent, so that when they have to retire they are going to find themselves again seeking houses at a time when it will be a worry and trouble to them. There are other personal factors I would like to mention. I know that these vary according to the individual, but as I have mentioned in passing, the younger married men, particularly, will be committed pretty heavily. Many of them are purchasing things by instalments—perhaps cars, refrigerators, furniture and the like, and the extra 30s. or £2 a week in rent will make it very hard for them to find the money, but they will have to find it, in fact it is taken from their salary cheque before they see it.

According to departmental instructions these teachers are not supposed to seek other remuneration. It is believed that they lose prestige if they do, and I submit that that is so. If they sought permission to take other jobs at weekends or after school hours I do not think it would be granted. There are one or two anomalies in connection with this question. Some of the better type houses have lower rents than the inferior houses, and in my district I know of two instances of this. One man lives in what I think most members would class as a very poky little schoolhouse. Another man who lives in a superior house is paying less rent; that is an anomaly that should not be allowed. Many teachers are wondering whether they can sublet their houses and take other accommodation. Some are wondering whether their remote living allowance will be increased. I understand the Minister of Education is favourably impressed with the case for an increase, and such an increase would greatly help teachers. The facts and figures I have presented this afternoon apply not only to teachers but also to other Government employees. These increased rents must have an adverse effect on teacher recruitment. The lack of some educational facilities in the country is already hindering decentralization, which is a policy supported by members on both sides. The increase in rents will make the position even worse because skilled teachers will have even less incentive to go to the country—and who can blame them for not going?

For the information of many members who are worried about this matter let me give the case for a review of rents which was submitted to the Premier following on the deputation to him. This statement sums up the case for all Government employees living in houses owned by the Government, and not merely for teachers. Recently the Premier

met a deputation comprising Messrs. C. Ridley and Brown (Trades and Labor Council), D. R. Carmichael (South Australian Public Officers' Federation), D. L. J. Aitchison and H. A. S. Mitchell (Public Service Association), W. O'Connell (South Australian Institute of Teachers), Bishop (Australian Railways Union), F. Nieass (Australian Government Workers' Association), F. E. Murphy (Australian Transport Officers' Federation), Sutherland (Police Association), and S. Byrne (Australian Federation of Locomotive Engineers). The deputation was led by Mr. Ridley and the chief speakers were Messrs. Aitchison, O'Connell, Bishop and Nieass. Following on a cordial discussion between the deputation and the Premier, a written submission was forwarded to him.

Mr. Corcoran—We haven't heard much about it from the Premier.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—No, and we should be given some information because many constituents have been asking members questions about this matter. The written submission makes a case for the rentals to be reduced by an overall average of 20 per cent, which will allow an overall increase to the Government of 61 per cent on rents before the increase, and an allowance in lieu of rental concessions for the houses rented by Government employees from the Housing Trust or private landlords. The submission states:—

Government employees have always had a concession in the rents charged by the Government for the tenancies of Government-owned houses. This has been so because the Government employees of the landlord, and the "employer-employee" relationship has found itself expressed in this condition (a condition which the Housing Trust is not permitted to consider in its fixation of rents). The measure of this concession is disclosed below. The following are some of the principal grounds for the concessions which have existed for well over 30 years:—

- (a) Tenancies are mainly in conjunction with the holding of particular offices; the successor in office becomes the successor in occupancy.
- (b) The occupants are licencees rather than tenants.
- (c) They are not able because of (a) and (b) above to settle and live for their lifetime in the one premises.
- (d) They are not able to continue in occupation upon retirement, the premises then being required for their successors in office.
- (e) In the course of their working life, moving from place to place, they frequently have to occupy places which are:—(i) Unsuitable for their domestic needs (too large or too small).  
(ii) Different in lay-out, involving

expense in alterations of fittings and furnishings. (iii) Different in room sizes making use of furniture inconvenient and sometimes impossible.

- (f) Particularly with properties in country areas:—(i) There is encroachment on privacy by the frequent calling of people on official business. (ii) There is damage to furniture, etc., as a result of numerous moves.

Because there have always been concessional rents ever since the Government has made houses available to Government employees in connection with taking up their duties (particularly in country areas and in institutions) this has become a permanent feature of conditions attaching to such offices. This strongly influences transfers and recruitments to fill the positions concerned; and its disturbance would cause serious difficulties in future recruitments. Also because there has always been a concession and because the grounds on which it has been granted are not within the scope of the Housing Trust it is submitted that the Housing Trust's rents, while they may be used to indicate relativity of accommodation available, should not become the rents because to do so would:—

- (a) Disturb the long standing condition of concessional rents.
- (b) Affect salaries and wages where it is alleged that this condition has been taken into consideration.
- (c) Penalize employees who have taken up positions (particularly in the country) in good faith of the existing concessions.
- (d) Adversely affect recruitment and the filling of positions.

During the last few months a reclassification of school teachers resulted in many teachers accepting promotion and transferring to the country; but had many of them known that these increases in rents were about to be imposed difficulty would have been found in getting them to transfer, for some of the rents have been increased by over £2 a week.

Mr. Quirke—Have any risen to over £3?

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Some have risen to almost that. I have read only a part of the submission, but that is enough to summarize the main points I have advanced today. Regarding concessions, the submission states:—

The reports reveal that the present rents of premises in existence in 1939 (and still let under unchanged conditions) are £530 10s. 2d. per week for houses occupied by teachers, police and public servants (those of railway officers and Woods and Forests Department employees have not been supplied). The rents which the Housing Trust would have recommended as standard rentals for these premises if they had been privately owned and let in 1939 amount to £892 16s. 7d. per week. Accordingly, present rents are 40.6 per cent lower than the 1939 standard rents for the same premises; and as present rents are unchanged and were the actual rents in 1939,

they were therefore 40.6 per cent below the rents of comparable privately owned accommodation at that time. Rents of some Government-owned houses had been cut in the depression years, and the depression cuts had not been restored by 1939. By restoring these depression cuts the 1939 actual rents would have become £605 18s. 8d. and these restored rents would still have held a concession of 32.4 per cent on the standard rents for 1939. The measure of the concession has therefore been between 40 per cent and 32 per cent.

The Premier is now considering the submission and I hope that action will be taken to relieve teachers and other Government officers who have been forced to pay increased rents. I believe that one of two courses should be adopted. The first is outlined in the following proposal made by the deputation:—

For Government-owned houses 20 per cent reduction below the Housing Trust assessment and for all other houses tenanted by Government employees an allowance be made to the employee which will leave him in a position of paying a net rental which will be comparable with the rental for similar equivalent accommodation and would have been the rental if the premises were Government owned.

Failing the adoption of this suggestion the Government should establish an independent tribunal to hear appeals against rent fixations. At present it is a case of appealing from Caesar to Caesar, as the Housing Trust both fixes the rents and hears appeals against its own decisions—a ridiculous procedure. I have spoken on this subject at some length because I believe it is a matter of public importance and interest.

Mr. Riches—It is a matter of grave concern.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Yes; many members have had this matter brought before them by their constituents. I hope my remarks will inspire members to take action to see that rents are placed on a more equitable basis.

Mr. Coreoran—You advocate the appointment of a tribunal?

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Yes, a special independent tribunal which could consider appeals. This would be an ideal solution. Otherwise I fear there may be grave industrial dissatisfaction in many parts of the State. The deputation that waited on the Premier represented various sections of Government employees and they presented a united case. The membership of these organizations would run into many thousands. Not only for the sake of justice, but to prevent hardship and possible unrest I appeal to the House to support my suggestion.

Mr. MICHAEL (Light)—The remarks of some members induced me to make some research. This was a result of their reference to the good treatment South Australia received from Mr. Chifley, a former Prime Minister. I pass no reflection upon this honourable gentleman, because I regard him as one of the greatest leaders Australian politics has ever produced, although I did not agree with many of his views. His leadership was excelled only by a few in the history of Australian Federation. I looked up the 21st report of the Commonwealth Grants Commission and found that since 1944-45 South Australia had received the following grants:—1944-45, £1,200,000; 1945-46, £1,400,000; 1946-47, £2,000,000; 1947-48, £2,318,000; 1948-49, £2,850,000; 1949-50, £4,174,000; 1950-51, £5,332,000; 1951-52, £4,558,000; 1952-53, £6,343,000 and 1953-54, £6,100,000.

Mr. O'Halloran—Are you suggesting that the Federal Government has any influence on the Grants Commission?

Mr. MICHAEL—I suggest that the Government has some interest in what the Commission does, although I do not say it has influenced it any more than honourable members opposite would suggest that Mr. Chifley had influenced it during his regime. South Australia has not been worse off during the term of the present Government than previously. The Leader of the Opposition stressed that South Australia could not expect the good times of recent years to continue. When a member suggested that was something new coming from the Opposition, other members opposite interjected that they followed their leader. I listened carefully to other speakers, but there was little suggestion of anything the Government could do to keep down expenses, although there had been plenty of talk of the Government not having spent enough.

As on a previous occasion, the member for Burra criticized drainage in the South-East. I shall not let those comments pass unnoticed, because I am chairman of the Land Settlement Committee which made recommendations to the Government that resulted in the present drainage scheme being undertaken. I am still of opinion that the development of much of the South-East could not be undertaken without drainage. This year has been one of low rainfall and there has not been surplus water. In fact, many of the swamps had no water in them at all. The development of much of the South-East cannot be carried out without adequate drainage. I believe we shall experience occasional excessively wet years when there will be

surplus water, as was the case in 1946. Without a system of drainage such as that now being installed it would not be possible for people on small holdings in those areas to stay on them without serious loss and disruption of their programmes. About three years ago when the Furner drain was opened I was invited, as chairman of the Land Settlement Committee, to attend. Some people advised me that I should look out, because the people down there would do all kinds of things to me because of the recommendation of my committee. I did attend, but not in fear and trembling, and not one person raised any opposition to the proposal. On the other hand, many told me about the wonderful improvement to the district and the increased production as a result of the drains. I believe that much land around Lucindale and Kingston and still farther north and down to drain LK will not be fully developed until it is drained. I have no fear of over-draining, because the drains can be easily closed, and on the other hand can be opened as occasion warrants.

Mr. Heaslip mentioned the bulk handling of wheat. I shall not go into this matter, because it has been adequately dealt with, but I support the honourable member's view that the time has arrived when in the public interest any information on the subject possessed by the Public Works Committee should be placed before Parliament and the people. The inquiry has been going on long enough.

I rose to speak mainly on the development of the beef cattle industry and the part South Australia should play in it. On June 3 I asked a question in the House on the subject and I was interested to notice that in the Address in Reply debate both the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Burra referred to it and supported the suggestion I have submitted. I appreciated that because both know something about conditions in the outback. In recent years I have made several trips to the interior and derived great pleasure from contact with the people there, and I believe I have some appreciation of the industry's problems. In reply to my question of June 3 I received the following letter from the Premier:—

With reference to the question which you raised in the House on the 3rd June regarding the central Australian railway, I desire to inform you that I took up the matter with the Commonwealth Minister for Shipping and Transport, who has now furnished me with the following reply:—

"The extension suggested by Mr. Michael, namely, the construction of a railway proceeding

250 miles North-East from Marree, forms portion of proposals which have been advanced over a number of years for opening up the channel country, Barkly Tableland and gulf country by means of railway proceeding from Marree east of Lake Eyre and routed very approximately *via* Birdsville, Bedourie, Boulia, Camooweal, Brunette Downs, Newcastle Waters to Birdum. This proposal would provide the north-south, link with Darwin and would have the additional advantage of easier connection to the Queensland western rail terminals at a later date.

More recently in connection with proposals for the development of the Northern Territory, Cabinet called for a report from an inter-departmental committee concerning suggestions put forward for the construction of a railway north-westward from Dajarra ultimately intended to link up with Birdum.

The expansion of the Northern Territory beef cattle production was the subject of an earlier report (1952) by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, and in this full reference was made to the need for integrating the potential breeding areas of the Territory with the natural fattening areas of Queensland, principally the channel country. It was suggested that the construction of a railway on the Barkly Tableland was the best means of achieving this. The matter raised by Mr. Michael closely concerns the marketing and disposal of cattle from the fattening areas and should be considered in the broad outlook for the development of Central and Northern Australia as a whole.

As you will appreciate, the construction of a railway 250 miles in length to transport the cattle offering from the Birdsville region could not of itself be considered an economic proposition in view of the more urgent demands for railway construction elsewhere in the Commonwealth. If it were to form portion of an alternative route *via* the Barkly Tableland to Darwin such a proposition would need some considerable further investigation and would be dependent on a decision in regard to the proposals for a railway traversing the Tableland."

I am pleased that the Commonwealth Government is seriously considering this matter. I want now to give some further information in support of a statement I made earlier. If South Australia is to get her fair and rightful share of the cattle marketing it is essential that the railway be extended from Marree. I have a paper delivered by a Mr. J. W. Fletcher at the Australian Institute of Political Science in January last when the subject of the conference was the development of the Northern Territory. He is the director of several pastoral interests in Northern Australia and was a member of the Payne-Fletcher Commission appointed in 1937 by the Commonwealth Government to investigate Northern Territory developmental possibilities. He is a man with a wide knowledge of Northern Territory problems and he has advocated the

building of railways as the only way in which the beef industry can be placed on a proper basis. The following is an extract from the paper:—

Railways are the first essential requirement towards progress. But we seem to shy away from railways and much propaganda goes forth in support of cattle transport by road vehicle; the air lifting of beef; and the latest suggestion of moving live cattle by air. These transport propositions do not suit the vast area involved and could only lead to progress on a very limited scale and hinder real progress. They should be looked upon merely as auxiliaries to suit particular cases.

He pointed out the wonderful potential production of the Channel country, which as yet is largely undeveloped. Some years ago Queensland built three railways about 500 miles west of the coast, one from Rockhampton, one from Brisbane, and the other from Townsville. In two instances there were suggestions to take the railways farther out, but it did not eventuate. I have been through the country and have seen the earth-works put up 40 to 50 years ago. I think the cost of crossing the Channel country from the east to the west was so great that it was not possible to raise the necessary finance. It was believed at that time that the railways were necessary to serve the country. Mr. Fletcher's paper also said:—

In between Northern Australia and the great cities of the south lies the channel country in south-west Queensland and to a small extent in South Australia. It is a remarkable place. The Mulligan, Georgina, Diamantina, Bulloo and Wilson Rivers and Coopers Creek (so named at the junction of the Barcoo and Thompson Rivers) and Farrars Creek, all flow inland. After flowing for considerable distances along their courses the rivers encounter wide expanses of extraordinary flat land and the flow of water then becomes so extremely slow that the main channels cannot cope with the oncoming streams and thus the excess water floods out over the land. It is reliably estimated that in big flood years, not less than 10,000,000 acres of land are inundated to shallow depths, and as the waters recede a wonderful crop and variety of fattening herbage appears. It is estimated that over all the rivers the pasturage has the capacity to fatten in medium flood years 400,000 bullocks, in good flood years 600,000 bullocks, and in major flood years 800,000; and to fatten them at a young age to a quality which the alfalfa fields of Argentina cannot surpass. The flooded land around Cooper's Creek is the largest in area and the richest in pasturage. The Queensland Department of Agriculture and Stock recently analyzed the clover, which is the predominant herbage, and the Under-Secretary of the department told me that it has a greater nutritive value than lucerne. Viewed from the air in a good season the panoramic view can be likened to a gigantic cane sugar farm. The channel feed is seasonal,

as in six months the great bulk of it has disappeared; water also is abundant during the fattening season, but within six months most of the water holes have dried. Thus to utilize the feed and the water to the best advantage, it seems obvious that this land should be devoted to the fattening of stock. This great area of seasonal fattening country—perhaps the finest natural fattening land in the world—is at its best just when the cattle bred in Northern Australia are ready to be moved. This is most providential, as it permits a first-class developmental plan to be organized for both areas. Producers in the north could become successfully established on much smaller areas than is at present possible—a board could arrange, on owners' account, the transport, fattening and marketing of their annual cattle turnover. The operations would not be difficult, but an efficient, experienced and high class organization would be essential. It would need to be most thorough.

He went on to point out that the irregularity of floods was a weakness and said:—

This irregularity is due to rainfall variations over the water sheds of the rivers. On an average medium to large floods occur about 4½ years in every seven. But in floodless years great quantities of water flow down the main channel and when the water does not flood out it is virtually wasted. The land is so flat over such an extensive area that one feels, before anything else is reviewed, the question of artificial flooding should first be resolved, as the course which future policy and administration should take, both for the breeding country in the north and the fattening country in southwest Queensland, so well situated to distribute fat cattle or beef to most of the big cities of Australia, especially in the months of lean supply, depends upon the answer.

It is said that Thargomindah on the south-eastern side of the channel country is equidistant from Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide. Mr. Fletcher points out that cattle could be distributed from the channel country to any place where there was a demand for it. He advocates a line from Newcastle Waters to Dajarra to Bourke in New South Wales, and also a link-up with Marree. I think there would be a great difficulty in building such a railway but I cannot see any objection to a Dajarra to Birdum railway, because that is the logical way for the cattle to come down. There are erratic seasons but in most seasons cattle can be bred and if there were a railway to get the cattle away quickly it would not be so important to have a railway from Dajarra to Bourke. It would mean a great deal to the economic set-up of South Australia if there were a railway from Marree to the channel country. I wonder whether in the light of the development that has taken place and the possibilities in the channel country it is not time to review the

agreement made 43 years ago. A railway from Marree could take precedence over one from Alice Springs to Birdum. Instead of connecting Alice Springs to Birdum, between which places there is a good bitumen road, a railway could be taken from Alice Springs towards the Western Australian border where there is "store" cattle. I think the time has come to consider whether such a line would not be more advantageous to South Australia than the building of a railway first suggested about 40 years ago. The Commonwealth completed the railway to Alice Springs, but in view of the good road from Alice Springs to Birdum, I think it would be of more value to the State to build a railway along the Birdsville track and pick up cattle directly from the channel country, and to have a branch line towards the Western Australian border from Alice Springs to pick up "store" cattle which cannot be fattened there.

I have a report by a Mr. W. A. Beattie in which he suggests Adelaide as the ideal place for the marketing of export beef. He says that the cattle should come down from the Channel country and that Wallaroo would be a properly equipped port to be considered as the place for an abattoirs in South Australia. Port Pirie and Port Augusta have also been mentioned. Recently, in reply to a question by the member for Stuart, the Minister of Agriculture said that there was not sufficient stock to warrant killing works at Port Augusta. I suggest that if this matter were taken up and South Australia pressed for and was successful in having the line continued to Marree there would be sufficient stock. At present, cattle travelling over that 250 miles of gibber country lose up to 100lb. in weight in dry years. The amount saved would go a long way towards paying the interest on the cost of that line.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—The owners of the cattle would not pay the equivalent of that 100 lb.

Mr. MICHAEL—They might not pay it directly, but indirectly South Australia would benefit. Mr. W. A. Beattie, who has travelled for the C.S.I.R.O. and spent three years in that area visiting almost every cattle holding said:—

It is argued that Adelaide could not cope with more cattle and that prices would fall. Obviously when cattle came in increased numbers, exporters would operate as they do in Brisbane and elsewhere. Adelaide, as a marketing point, has several advantages over Brisbane:—

(1) It is nearer the British market for export beef by several days and is thus more suitable for chilled beef.

(2) Itself a large centre of industry and consequently of consumption, it also has good and direct rail connection for refrigerated trucks with Sydney *via* Broken Hill, and Melbourne, both of which cities are compelled to draw on supplies outside the borders of their States. It has also direct and fast connection with Kalgoorlie, W.A., which at present draws much of its supplies from Adelaide, and at times from New South Wales *via* the Broken Hill line. Tasmania can also be included as it draws heavily from Sydney and Melbourne.

(3) As the trunk lines from Adelaide are the first listed for standardization, no changes of gauge, interstate movement, either of cattle or meat, would be involved and quarantine restrictions would be more easily overcome.

(4) It is in a cooler climate than Brisbane and has better holding country and cheaper treatment costs.

South Australian producers have been urged to go in for greater beef production and the provision of a line from Alice Springs in the direction of Western Australia would enable store cattle in dry years to come here and producers with good pastures in the South-East could get supplies much easier than they can today. At present, many of them bring their cattle from Queensland through New South Wales. I submit this matter for the Government's consideration. I do not claim to be an authority, but I have quoted men who are authorities and who have devoted much time to studying the problems associated with the channel country.

I have asked questions in the House relating to the composting of garbage and sewage. When in South Africa recently I was impressed with what is done in large and small country towns in the composting of sewage and garbage and also in saving of water. Water used in sewerage is reconditioned for use in industry. South Africa, like South Australia, has not a plentiful supply of water. From what I was told, the reconditioning of water is not expensive and the composted garbage and sewage is sold cheaply and does not bring in great financial returns, but returns to the earth material which too frequently is washed into the sea. The Government should examine this matter. I do not know whether South Africa has more knowledge than we have on this question, but I have asked the Premier whether Mr. Hodgson could visit South Africa while he is away and the Premier has promised to make inquiries to see whether that is possible. I support the first line.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—Since I have been a member I have frequently asked the Government questions relating to the free transport of pensioners and the Treasurer has replied

that the State's financial position would not permit such a concession. I have asked whether the Government would make a similar request to the Tramways Trust but received the same reply. I then asked whether the Government would consider granting pensioners the privilege of travelling at half fares on the railways—a position which exists in the eastern States where there are Labor Governments—and would make a similar request of the Tramways Trust, but the Premier again replied that the State's financial position would not permit it. Today, I asked the Minister of Works what the estimated cost to the railways would be of granting free rail transport to old age pensioners and was told that it would be about £70,000. That reply intrigued me because the Premier has frequently said that our financial position would not permit the granting of transport concessions to pensioners. The Liberal Governments of this State and the Commonwealth have claimed that there is a stabilized economy and that our financial position is prosperous. It is apparently so prosperous in South Australia that we cannot make a grant of £70,000 a year to pensioners who, in years gone by, did not work a 40-hour week but much longer in the service of the community. My suggestion that the Government might grant half fares if adopted would cost about £35,000, but apparently we cannot afford that.

Mr. Davis—How did the Government arrive at that figure?

Mr. LAWN—The Minister of Works explained that it was a most difficult question to answer and I agree. This Government, which is concerned only with remaining in office, is not interested in the transportation of pensioners in the metropolitan area. It has revealed a lack of interest in this respect and also in providing accommodation for the aged. It has no policy in relation to homes for the aged, but asks charitable institutions to provide these homes and then subsidizes them on a pound for pound basis. Twelve months ago the Leader of the Opposition, by motion, requested the Government to give greater consideration to this question. The member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) defeated the motion by a smart move whereby the motion of recommendation to the Government became a motion of commendation of the Government. However, the Government realized it did not merit that commendation and granted a pound for pound subsidy to charitable institutions in respect of homes for the aged. However, the Government cannot provide £35,000 to enable

pensioners to travel at half fares and I am sure they will be disappointed at the Government's lack of interest in them.

Mr. Dunstan—The member for Onkaparinga said that the Housing Trust provides homes for them at £3 3s. a week.

Mr. LAWN—The rental is more like £3 10s. a week. The provision of such homes is the only consideration this Government has shown for pensioners. After £3 3s. is taken from a pension there is nothing left and the pensioner must live on fresh air and walk instead of travelling by public transport. This is the most shameful state of affairs in the State's history. When these facts are made known in years to come and it is realized that these conditions existed, people will not be able to comprehend the present political set-up, which only exists as a result of the gerrymander.

Mr. McAlees—And these pensioners are the people who paid for the railways.

Mr. LAWN—Yes, and they worked 60 hours a week to build them. Facts prove that with a lessening of hours fewer were employed.

Mr. McAlees—And in the navy gangs the biggest bullies were in charge.

Mr. LAWN—Yes. Another matter that has caused members of this House a great deal of concern in recent months is the increase in rents charged for Government houses. I wish to place some facts before the House in condemnation of the Government but again it can ignore these facts because they apply to the metropolis. This morning I visited cottages occupied by officials of the Adelaide Gaol. The work of these people is special employment, and I have no doubt that the rent conditions were special because of the nature of their work. At one stage they had free rents because of the nature of their work. The fronts of their homes were in some cases only seven yards from the gaol walls. If they want a visitor they must seek special permission, which will not be granted if the person has a Court conviction, even for a traffic offence. His Honor Mr. President Kelly, in judgments in years gone by, mentioned that the cheap rents and in some cases free rents, were considered in fixing award rates. In addition to having the gaol so close to the front of the homes, these people have no back view because of the trees, and of course those living inside the walls have only cells at the backs of their homes. They have no sidewalks, because practically all the cottages are attached. Another disability is the soot from passing railway engines. I was astounded to see the condition of washing on a line at one of these cottages; it had to be

taken down and re-washed because it was covered with soot. Some of the lounge furniture has to be covered with a plastic cover to keep it clean until the night when the family sits on it. These facts probably were considered by the Government at one stage, but then it went to an outside body known as the Housing Trust and asked it to fix rents, and the trust fixed the rents on the basis it would adopt for a similar home at Prospect or Ascot Park. Some years ago the rents were fixed at 9s. 11d. but recently for homes outside the gaol, they have been increased to a minimum of 25s. and a maximum of 31s. 6d.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Haven't their salaries gone up correspondingly?

Mr. LAWN—No, wages are frozen. The Minister shows an absolute lack of understanding. He is a responsible Minister of the Government, yet he asks whether wages have not gone up correspondingly.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—They have gone up by 300 per cent from the figure of 30 years ago.

Mr. LAWN—It does not matter what happened 30 years ago; last month the Government increased rents from 9s. 11d. to from 25s. to 31s. 6d., and in that period wages have not gone up and are not likely to do so.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Haven't their wages gone up by 300 per cent since the rents were first fixed?

Mr. LAWN—No. The policy of the Government on price legislation has caused prices to go up and the actual standard of living has decreased out of all realization. These people are compelled to live in these homes; they have not the freedom of people in trust homes to go somewhere else if they wish to. Recently a warder was ordered to occupy one of these homes. Many of these people, if not all, would prefer to leave the gaol if they could find other accommodation, but they are compelled to live there. One of the officials I met this morning had been on duty since early on Saturday morning, and he will remain on duty until this afternoon. Because of their employment warders have to be available at all times of the day and night to take the place of someone who becomes sick, or to be ready in case of a special rush of prisoners. Because of this they are required to live in these cottages. I was surprised to hear this morning that the cottages were painted 18 months ago by the Architect-in-Chief's Department; they did not appear to have been painted for 18 years. There is more light in prison cells than in many of the homes. When

children or other members of the family have been laid up from sickness, the lights have had to be on all day, and electricity charges have to be paid by the employees. One wardress employed by the gaol received free rent, but as a result of the recent adjustment she is now compelled to pay 28s. for rent, 7s. 6d. for light and 4s. for some other charge. This means that her wages have been reduced by 39s. 6d. a week.

Mr. Frank Walsh—What for?

Mr. LAWN—To give this Playford dictatorship 39s. 6d. rent. It was only this morning that I fully realized the grievances of some of my constituents, and they are fully justified. It is only because of the political set-up that they exist, and they would not exist in a community in which the citizens have the right to elect a Government of their choice.

A matter that has been before the House and is still a live subject is the control of the licensing of taxi cabs by the Adelaide City Council. Following on the vote in this House on the Bill that proposed that the council should be the sole licensing authority, the council apparently felt that it had lost a lot of prestige, so it decided to see the Premier. Apparently it felt the Minister of Local Government was too unimportant to approach, so it approached the Premier in an attempt to correct some of the statements made by honourable members during the debate. A newspaper article headed "Council to Reply on Taxis" reported a discussion that took place at the Adelaide City Council's meeting held on October 18. It stated:—

Three representatives of the Adelaide City Council would wait upon the Premier with a reply to alleged "inaccurate and incorrect statements" made in Parliament, the council decided yesterday. The decision was made by the council, by eight votes to five, after a lively debate which lasted 80 minutes.

Apparently the City Council's discussions were not quite as happy as its members would like the public to think they were.

The CHAIRMAN—Order! I think the honourable member might keep those remarks until the Metropolitan Taxicab Control Bill is before the House.

Mr. LAWN—The Bill makes no reference to the point I am coming to. I urge the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to investigate the handling of taxi licences by the City Council. Since the Bill was before the House taxi drivers have regained their courage and have made certain public statements. I understand that one of the officers of the Taxi Drivers' Association, who is connected with the

Road Transport Workers' Union, said that some drivers would talk only before a Royal Commission. That suggests that certain things should be investigated, and the appointment of a Royal Commission is the only way to do it.

Mr. Frank Walsh—In other words, those taxi drivers are afraid their livelihood will be taken away from them.

Mr. LAWN—Yes. The council decision was made by eight votes to five. It was no unanimous vote, nor could there have been much unanimity in the discussion. The article continued:—

Councillor Bonnin declared: "I take the strongest exception to this council being made a chopping block. I have read the *Hansard* report of the debate in the Assembly and could take you in detail through allegations made by Mr. Lawn and tear them into shreds."

The CHAIRMAN—I do not think the honourable member should proceed with that because it is a borderline case, if not absolutely outside the Standing Orders. We have a certain Bill on the Notice Paper and the appropriate time to discuss this question would be when it is before the House.

Mr. LAWN—The Bill has passed the second reading. I am now taking advantage of the opportunity I understand is granted to all members to discuss grievances in the Budget debate.

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member has to be careful not to discuss something that should only be discussed in another debate.

Mr. LAWN—This is the Budget debate, and I have a real grievance that I should be allowed to ventilate. A deputation may wait on the Treasurer before the Bill is again considered in Committee. I want to place facts before the Treasurer so he will be aware of them when he meets the deputation. I am not concerned with the Metropolitan Taxicab Control Bill now, but with the appointment of a Royal Commission to investigate the licensing of taxis by the Adelaide City Council.

Mr. Jennings—Why did Councillor Bonnin attack you?

Mr. LAWN—I do not know whether he is attacking only me, but the deputation to the Treasurer will draw his attention to alleged inaccurate and incorrect statements made in Parliament. The article in the newspaper continues:—

There would be very little left of Mr. Lawn's speech if it were pruned of all its inaccuracies. Mr. Lawn, he said, had repeated allegations made by a taxi driver against the council's administration over five and a half years ago, without also mentioning the findings of an investigation committee

appointed to examine the allegations. Mr. Lawn had also said ex-servicemen were "totally disregarded" in the issuing of new licences last year; and that taxi drivers had no right of appeal against a council decision on licences. The whole policy of the council is directed towards an efficient taxi service operating in the public interest, Councillor Bonnin added.

The CHAIRMAN—Order! I am afraid I have to advise the honourable member that in my opinion he is out of order in discussing something in this Committee debate on the Estimates. My ruling is that the Budget debate does not give him the opportunity of speaking on everything, particularly on something that the House still has under consideration. I therefore ask him not to refer to the report of the Adelaide City Council discussions until the Bill comes forward, or until the next occasion that the House goes into Committee of Supply.

Mr. LAWN—I have always understood that a member can use the Budget debate for ventilating grievances, and the statement given by the Speaker to the press in the last few days supports that.

The CHAIRMAN—My ruling is that the honourable member is out of order, and if he thinks I am wrong he can get a ruling from the Speaker. I say that he must confine his remarks to the Budget. He can speak on finance generally, but he has been speaking on a Bill that is on the Notice Paper.

Mr. LAWN—Finance is involved in my contentions because finance will be necessary if a Royal Commission is appointed. I always respect the Chair, but I believe that members have the right to ventilate their grievances during the Budget debate, so I apparently have no alternative but to move that your ruling be disagreed with.

The SPEAKER resumed the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN—I have to report that in the Committee of Supply the member for Adelaide started to discuss the licensing of taxicabs and read a report of a meeting of the Adelaide City Council, and suggested the appointment of a Royal Commission. I told him that in my opinion, under the Standing Orders, he could not discuss that matter, but should wait until the Bill dealing with that matter came forward or, if he wanted to speak on a grievance, he could do so on the next occasion that the Speaker left the Chair and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply. The honourable member disagreed with my ruling.

The SPEAKER—I think that the Chairman's ruling can be well sustained under the Standing Orders. It can be well supported also on the authority of Blackmore, who says that the matter being discussed must not have been included in the provisions of a Bill. Matters of grievance of that nature could be discussed on the Speaker leaving the Chair, and I therefore decide that the Chairman's ruling is in accordance with the Standing Orders and with the practice of the past.

Mr. LAWN—I accept your ruling, Mr. Speaker, but may I say that I was not attempting to discuss matters arising out of the Metropolitan Taxicab Control Bill. Since the debate on that Bill the Adelaide City Council has appointed a committee to wait on the Treasurer and place certain matters before him. I am urging the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the licensing of taxicabs. Furthermore, the city council will not be advised of what the deputation tells the Treasurer. That will be known only to three persons, and members of Parliament will not know whether they are being corrected by the deputation. I am only asking for the appointment of a Royal Commission.

The SPEAKER—We have heard the honourable member's contention, but what he is seeking can only be implemented by passing a Bill. That is the point that the Chairman takes, and it is the point that Blackmore takes, namely, that it is the subject matter of the Bill.

Mr. LAWN—Could I make passing reference to these matters in support of my contention that the Government should appoint a Royal Commission?

The SPEAKER—I think that probably the honourable member has already done that in his explanation. The Chairman says that the matter should be dealt with when the Bill is being discussed, and not during the debate on the Estimates, and I think the chairman was quite right in that.

Mr. LAWN—Would I be in order, Mr. Speaker, in replying to allegations that have been levelled against me and may concern other members?

The SPEAKER—I think the honourable member must have been charged in this House, in which case the matter would concern the House.

Debate in Committee of Supply resumed.

Mr. LAWN—I accept your ruling, Mr. Chairman, but when you reported to the Speaker—

The CHAIRMAN—Order! The honourable member must now proceed with his speech.

Mr. LAWN—I wish to seek your guidance, Mr. Chairman. Before leaving the Chair did you tell me that I could refer to this matter on another occasion?

The CHAIRMAN—I said the next time the House went into Committee of Supply the honourable member might speak to the motion "That the Speaker do now leave the Chair." The honourable member would then have an opportunity of bringing forward any grievance, and if he wanted to talk about a Royal Commission I think he would be in order in talking about it then, before the Speaker leaves the Chair.

Mr. LAWN—Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That was the only matter to which I wished to refer in this debate.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS (Stirling)—Like the honourable member for Light I wish to commend the Treasurer for his 1954 Budget, which is a good one. There has been little real criticism of it. The *Census Bulletin No. 1* contains the following figures regarding the State's population:—

	1947.	1954.	Increase.
Metropolitan area . . . . .	381,454	478,093	96,639
Country corporations . . . . .	65,811	80,421	14,610
Country district councils . . . . .	187,049	217,307	30,258
Total . . . . .	646,073	797,807	151,734

These figures indicate a healthy trend in our population figures. In past debates of this nature I have usually taken the opportunity to mention the needs of my district, but I have done this so often that I will not say much on that line today. I take this opportunity of thanking the Minister of Works for the way in which he and his department have looked after water schemes in my district. At present his department is extending the water supply to Woods Point and Brinkley. The people at Milang turned on their taps for the first time last week; a reticulated water supply has only recently been made available to them. The extension of the water supply to Goolwa is in progress: the chlorination tanks have been installed, contracts let for a power supply, and some 8in. mains laid. Improvements are to be made at the Strathalbyn reservoir, and the Victor Harbour reservoir is expected to be enlarged. My constituents are grateful to the Minister for these works and hope for more in the future.

Electricity supplies are being extended in our rural areas, bringing amenities to our country people. Little progress has been made on

the work on the old Mount Compass-Victor Harbour road, but the Minister of Roads has promised me that in next year's Estimates he hopes to be able to provide over £25,000 to straighten some of the bends and widen the road so that it will more easily take the increasing traffic. That will be a great help indeed. The honourable member for Victoria talked about the development and production of the South-East, and I think his remarks were well warranted. Indeed, South Australians have much to be thankful for to those who have done such a grand job in disseminating scientific information to farmers. The Agricultural Department and other scientific research organizations have done much in the development of our rural areas.

Last week I had an experience that brought home to me just how much we owe to those engaged in agricultural and scientific research. I visited a property at Moonee Hills about 15 miles on the Coonalpyn side of Meningie, which until a few years ago was regarded as worthless scrub. A person could buy as much of it as he wished to for a song, and he did not have to be a very good singer either. By means of improved farming methods, however, 5,000 acres of scrub country has been brought into production over the past three years. In 1951 a Melbourne company took over the property and employed a young ex-serviceman from Victor Harbour, Mr. Colin Humphris, to clear the area and bring it into production. The whole area has now been cleared, fenced with wire netting, and subdivided into paddocks each of 250 acres. Windmills are supplying water which is reticulated through squatters' tanks to each paddock for stock. There are homes for the workmen and a wool shed and sheep yard costing £3,500. The whole area is covered with lucerne, clover, primrose, and perennial veldt grass. The property is now carrying 5,000 sheep and 300 cattle. Recently 14 weeks-old lambs produced on the property were sold at £5 a head. This is an example of what can be done with modern clearing and farming methods: the use of trace elements, superphosphate, and good farming practices has transformed scrub land to productive country in three years. Although this country has an average annual rainfall of 19in. it has received only 15in. so far this year, and irrigation by means of pumping from the lakes would be helpful in opening up more of it. The scientific use of such country will do much to maintain the quality of our dairy produce sold overseas.

The *News* of October 28 contained the following report under the heading "Top Award for Butter in England":—

The Adelaide Milk Supply Co. today won the British Dairy Farmers Association challenge cup for the best exhibit of salted butter produced in the British Empire. First prize in the class for British Empire-produced unsalted butter went to South Australian Farmers Co-op. Union Ltd. of Murray Bridge. Murray Valley Co-op. Dairy Products Company Ltd., of Cobham, Victoria, gained first prize in the class for cheddar cheese produced in Australia.

These results are very encouraging and prove the value of the scientific treatment of our pastures. The opening up of country I have mentioned, which is in the district represented by the Minister of Works, would further improve our chances of successfully competing in overseas dairy produce markets. When the member for Murray was speaking in this debate on farming practices, the member for Port Pirie, by way of interjection, asked him how agricultural workers were treated. Further, the member for Adelaide recently said that many farm workers were paid only 30s. for working 10 hours a day for seven days a week. While visiting the property at Moonee Hills I asked the manager what wages his men were paid, and he told me that a new employee was paid £12 10s. a week for the first month, after which he received a rise. Workmen also received certain privileges such as free supplies of fuel, electricity, refrigeration service, milk and quarters. Some men received as much as 7s. 6d. an hour while engaged on erecting buildings and clearing and fencing the land. Indeed, the average weekly wage received by those workmen was between £30 and £35 a week, so those workers seemed to be getting a fair deal.

Although the Education Department is finding difficulty in meeting the demands caused by the increasing child population, it is doing a good job. I hope that part of the grant for the department provided in these Estimates will be used to provide better ablution and toilet facilities in country schools, particularly where there are, perhaps, four or five men and four or five women on the staff. In some schools in my district there is only one toilet convenience and only a trough in which to wash. In many cases the office accommodation is poor. I hope to be able to point out such cases to the Minister when he visits my district soon.

The sum of £97,335 is provided for the Libraries Department, and I hope that the Government will consider the establishment of

country library branches so that small towns may be given a better service in the distribution of books. This would provide another facility for country people, particularly children, and enable them to procure their reading matter much more easily. The South Australian Museum is to be granted £34,486. A fortnight ago members spent an interesting morning at the Museum and were impressed, I am sure, with the efficient way in which it is conducted. It is an institution of which we may well be proud.

*[Sitting suspended from 6 until 7.30 p.m.]*

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—Prior to the tea adjournment I was referring to the visit of members to the Museum. I was astounded at the lack of a lift between the first and second floors, access at the moment being per medium of a steep winding staircase, which proves difficult for elderly people or those with leg ailments. If provision is not made in this year's Estimates for the installation of a lift, perhaps the Government could see fit to include an amount on the Estimates next year.

An amount of £9,794 is provided for the Fisheries Department. This seems a very small sum to be devoted to what is a most important industry which supplies a most essential diet for the health of our people. However, the cost of fish is beyond the means of many. Fishermen are a hardy class engaged in the production of a food which we cannot do without. Yet they go on from year to year, be the season good or bad. They get no hand-outs or subsidies as are provided for some secondary industries and other primary industries, although they are allowed half registration fees on motor vehicles used in their businesses; but that is their only concession, apart from cancellation of the tax on fishing gear. Cray fishing in the South-East has grown to a lucrative industry and earns important dollars from America. Shark fishing also brings in much money for South Australia by its export in the form of flake to Victoria. I understand about 15 shark fishing cutters operate from Port Adelaide, Port Lincoln and Victor Harbour, some of which are valued up to £25,000 to £30,000. It requires men with knowledge of seafaring, engineering and navigation to undertake this work. Boats of this type are hard to get, and there is a hazard in this industry. These people have to pay high insurance premiums, and sometimes are unable to get insurance cover on their boats. I believe that some form of Government subsidy toward insur-

ance would encourage fishermen to invest their money in boats and gear, including these bigger type of craft up to the trawler class. They could then engage in fishing in the Australian Bight and other deep waters. I have great regard for Mr. Moorhouse, the Chief Inspector of Fisheries. He is a man of much experience and knowledge of fish and their habits in our waters, and is reasonable in his treatment of fishermen and helps them in numerous ways. We must take care of our waters closer home where fish are easily and regularly taken. I have in mind the control of vermin such as shags, cormorants and, particularly seals. From beyond the Pages Islands to the Murray Mouth is a prohibited area in which seals may not be destroyed. Actually the Pages are a sanctuary. There they breed and live in thousands, foraging for miles along the coast and destroying thousands of pounds worth of the best edible fish every day. Recently it was stated by one of the Rumbelows at Encounter Bay that he believes there are 3,000 to 4,000 seals in these waters. For years fishermen have suffered losses of nets and fish through the depredations of these pests. Mr. Palmer, the President of the Game Fishing Association, says that only bull seals rob nets because they are too old to catch their fish elsewhere. Last season and during the present season seals have played havoc. Only the week before last they destroyed many nets at Victor Harbour. Fishermen at the Bluff and Victor Harbour have had up to a thousand pounds worth of nets destroyed this season. Last week it was reported in the press that owing to the scarcity of fish whiting fillets were sold at 14s. 6d. lb. At Victor Harbour two or three fishermen came ashore with only the heads and pieces of salmon and snook which had been attacked by seals, whereas two or three tons of these fish would otherwise have been placed on the market over a period of a few days. The common hair seal or sea lion is useless except for the pelts and oil; the fur seal is rarely seen in southern waters. I believe the best method to destroy the seals is not to shoot them because that frightens them away temporarily, but to hit them on the nose while on shore. If we are to protect our fishing industry there should be an open season once every year or so for the destruction of seals. In this way they could be kept under control, as in England. There they declare an open season every one, two or three years. That is the only way to protect our fishing industry and enable regular supplies of fish to be brought to our tables, and thus meet the ever increasing demand for sea

food. Otherwise fishermen will think twice before undertaking such a hazardous living in which they can expect no protection from such destructive vermin. I support the first line.

Mr. DAVIS (Port Pirie)—I desire to reply to certain statements made by Mr. Macgillivray during the debate. He attacked everyone in the House except Independents. When I first came into this House the voting strength was 17 Labor, 18 Liberal and three Independents. I remember his voting with the Liberal Party on more than one occasion to save his political hide. If he ever voted with members on this side of the House he never did so without first counting the heads. He puts himself up as being a wizard of finance. We have heard his story year after year, and after hearing him and the member for Burnside it makes one wonder why we gather in the House at all. Two such men, who know the solution of all our financial problems, could rule South Australia without the assistance of either the Labor Party or the Liberal Party.

I shall now deal with the unjust betting tax which was imposed on a section of the people two or three years ago. When the Bill was introduced we were told by the Treasurer that the tax would benefit education and hospitals, but after perusing the Bill we found that portion of the tax—I think it was 25 per cent—would go to the wealthy racing clubs. We were also told that if those clubs were able to increase their stakes better horses would compete here. Stakes have been increased, but I doubt whether the class of horse has improved. It was wrong to impose such a tax on one section. If a tax is struck, it should apply to the whole community. A man who bets may have a heavy losing day and yet has to pay a certain tax to the Government. It is possible for a man to invest £200 on a two to one on chance and when he wins he pays a tax on £200 of his own money. That is wrong, and I hope the Government will take that into consideration. I consider the Betting Control Board has been most unfair in its approach to betting in the country. Port Pirie is the only town in the State which has betting shops. After an inquiry the board granted similar licences to Quorn and Peterborough. About two years later another investigation was held and the board decided to cancel the betting licences in the two towns. The reason given was that the volume of betting had decreased. In view of that we should licence more betting shops if we want to stop gambling. I went to Whyalla to give

evidence in support of betting shops there. During the investigation a number of illegal bookmakers told the board of the quantity of betting in the town. No licences were granted because it was said that the illegal bookmakers catered for those who wanted to bet. When the Government realizes what it is losing through not permitting betting shops to operate it will give the matter further consideration. Illegal betting takes place in almost every town in this State. I was in one country town recently when an illegal bookmaker told me that on one day he held as much as £400 in bets.

We have heard a lot about uniform taxation. I was pleased to hear the figures given by Mr. Hutchens showing that a few years ago under State taxation a man with an income of £600 per annum paid a tax of £89 9s. whereas under uniform taxation he would have paid £26 2s. What would be the position today? I think he would pay a State tax of about £200 so how can anyone suggest that the State should again be given the power to impose income tax? Mention has been made of the prosperity of the State and the benefits that our people enjoy. Some of them have been penalized heavily of late. The Arbitration Court has taken from the workers many of the privileges they have enjoyed over the years, yet demands for price increases are still being agreed to. This means that the employees are experiencing a wage reduction. Mr. Dunks said that the rural industry would be seriously affected if certain things happened. He was speaking on another Bill and pointed out that the industry could not pay the wages desired because of the competition primary producers had to meet from overseas where wages were very low, but I remind him that workers in rural industries here have to live in the same way as workers in other industries. Mr. Jenkins said that he knew of a case where the wage paid to one man in a rural industry was £14 a week, with a house provided.

Mr. William Jenkins—I can prove that.

Mr. DAVIS—That is nothing to boast about. A man in an industry handling machinery gets that wage without overtime. We hear much about prosperity in South Australia, but it is a disgrace to any State to ask its people to subscribe towards aiding pensioners because the Commonwealth Government will not give them enough to live on. We are asked to contribute to a fund to help pensioners enjoy their Christmas as other people do. The onus is not on our State

Government because it cannot increase pensions but the members of our Government are members of the Liberal Party as are the members of the Commonwealth Government, and our Government should do all it can to assist the pensioners. I was pleased to hear Mr. Geoffrey Clarke present some figures that were supplied to him. He said that on social services the Government was spending £7 every second. If the Government did its duty to the charitable organizations it would be spending more than that amount a second. Many charitable organizations promote guessing competitions and other schemes to raise money to assist the less fortunate people in the community and it is time the Government realized its responsibility and assisted more. In the *News* of September 23 under the heading "Sorry figures for South Australia," the following article appears:—

The census figures just released are telling evidence of the centralized nature of South Australia. Adelaide population is given as 484,093. There is an enormous drop to the population of the next biggest centre—Port Pirie—which has only 14,233, less than 3 per cent of Adelaide's people. In no State in Australia is there such a violent drop in population between the capital and the next biggest city. Juggling of town boundaries has given an illusion of increased population at Mount Gambier, but the picture generally is an unhappy one. It is an argument not for the provision of a satellite town at Salisbury, which will increase the problems of an already swollen metropolis, but for the creation of new housing areas and industrial facilities in country towns which badly need decentralized industries and increased town populations.

Port Pirie has the equivalent of only three per cent of Adelaide's population and less than 25 per cent of the population of the largest suburbs of Adelaide. When people flock to the new satellite town near Salisbury there will be fewer people in the country. I am surprised that the Government is not doing something to entice people to the country and was astounded this afternoon when the Treasurer, in reply to the member for Wallaroo, said that oil companies had approached him firstly for 200 acres of land and subsequently 300 acres near Port Adelaide for an oil refinery. I do not know where the Treasurer will find 300 acres of suitable land near Port Adelaide. At Wallaroo, Port Pirie or Port Augusta there would be sufficient land available for such an installation. No doubt the Treasurer had this industry in mind when he suggested the building of the satellite town. If the persons to be employed in that refinery are to be taken to

Port Adelaide they must come from the country. Can the Premier say where else the persons to be employed in this industry could come from? The member for Rocky River said that if bulk handling were introduced those employed in the bagging of wheat would be able to go to other industries. If those men were thrown out of work at Wallaroo, Port Pirie and all the sidings at which wheat is stacked they would only be able to find employment in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Heaslip—They would at least be undertaking productive work.

Mr. DAVIS—The only thing one representative of the primary producers is interested in is the profit he can get from his wheat. He is not concerned about taking the bread and butter from the men who handle wheat in bags, but is only interested in how much a bushel bulk handling will save him. The number of men working on the wharves at Wallaroo and Port Pirie is small compared with the number handling wheat in stacks at the sidings. There is no other work available for them in the country because there are no industries in the country. Some members opposite may ask "What about the industry that has been established at Port Pirie?" The Government cannot claim credit for the establishment of that industry in Port Pirie because that was the only logical locality. The ore could not be brought to Adelaide from Radium Hill without greater expense to the Government and the taxpayers. There is a direct line from Radium Hill to the site of the industry which I have been informed will be in operation within 12 months. I only hope that in the near future other industries will be settled in that town. Why does the Treasurer speak of establishing an oil refinery at Port Adelaide when there is suitable land in the ports I have mentioned? There would be no inconvenience to the oil companies because tankers come to those ports regularly and there is sufficient land available. It is the Government's duty to try to settle industries in Wallaroo and the other towns I have mentioned. People are beginning to realize the impossibility of getting this Government to do anything outside the metropolitan area.

Mr. Shannon—You would except Port Pirie?

Mr. DAVIS—When I asked the Government to shift the railway line from the main street I was told it was too expensive and a rough estimate—and I have never heard a rougher estimate—of the cost was £600,000. The Government can spend any amount in the

metropolitan area, but is not prepared to spend anything in the country. The wharves at Port Pirie are in such a deplorable condition that recently one of a group of school children spending a holiday there fell through a hole into the water and almost lost his life. However, I suppose an army of children would have to be killed before the Government would realize there was something wrong with the wharf. There is a notice on the wharf stating that it is not safe to walk on. That is a deplorable state of affairs, yet this port is expected to handle all the ores from Broken Hill and the wheat from surrounding districts. Sometimes ships lie at anchorage for a week or are tied up at the wharves because work cannot be proceeded with, and this is not fair to the State or to the people of Port Pirie. This is a very important port; it has railways of three gauges running into it and can handle anything from any part of the State. It is the most important town in the north because of the amount of shipping it handles. Once it was the fourth port of the Commonwealth, but it has slipped down to eighth place because of neglect by this Government. I hope that what I have said will influence the Government to give to the people in country areas more consideration than they now receive. I support the first line.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Goodwood)—I wish first to refer to the Auditor-General's report, which states:—

In view of the prevailing unsatisfied demand for manpower in the Public Service, both the administration and the legislative machinery for dealing with promotions, transfers, appointments, and grading of salaries should be subjected to drastic overhaul and alteration.

This applies not only to the Public Service, but to the Railways Department. The Auditor-General, in addition to having a big responsibility to Parliament, has major difficulties in obtaining and retaining sufficient staff. He is in touch with all Government departments and, from his long experience and close contact with them, he realizes there is a need for the Government to do better than it has been doing.

Early this year I placed before the Minister of Railways the position of a junior officer who had relieved a class 4 officer in the freights agent's office for 119 days, although the department maintained that it was only for 107 days. Even at the railways figure, the difference between the two rates of pay for the period was £107. Whether in the Railways Department or the Public Service, clerical

officers performing higher duties are entitled to higher pay. In the Education Department teachers must perform higher duties for 28 consecutive days before receiving extra pay, and often they do so for more than this period, but because it is not consecutive they are entitled to no extra remuneration. When an officer has rendered valuable and faithful service he should be compensated for it and when a member of Parliament makes representations to a department which the department does not heed then he is entitled to mention the facts here. The railway officer that I mentioned did not receive any extra payment, yet an acting junior clerk in the secretary's branch received higher duty pay, although he was not a permanent officer, apparently not having sufficient qualifications. The chief clerk in the Traffic Manager's office was called into consultation with the Industrial Officer, and in a report he stated that the application had been refused because the officer had not performed all the duties of a class 4 officer, as he had carried out junior work for part of the time. He also pointed out that while relieving he was gaining experience for future promotion. I appreciate that he would have to be over the age of 21 to become a class 4 officer.

When this man gave notice the General Traffic Manager offered him a position as a class 4 officer when he reaches 21 years of age if he would stay, but I indicated that I was not content with the position. The Railways Department has acknowledged that it has not sufficient staff. This officer entered the service believing he would make a career there and was set a task that a person with much longer experience should have been performing, and he received only a junior rate of pay. Although the department has offered to appoint him to the position that he has been performing for 12 months on reaching the age of 21, he has not been paid any higher duty pay. The Minister referred the matter back to the General Traffic Manager, who said that he regretted that the Railways Department was not able to do certain things. Those regrets were not conveyed in writing, but it seems that the department was sorry to lose an officer of the calibre of this man, only because he was not fairly treated. He entered the railways in the hope of getting promotion later and he would have been a most competent officer. If the Railways Department is not able to review the case sympathetically I believe an *ex gratia* payment should be made to him in recognition of his services in performing higher duties. The Minister of Railways should obtain a full report on this case.

It is proposed to vote £2,449,601 for the Highways Department, an increase of £585,386, and I realize that many roads should be improved. The Police Department is conducting a campaign against road hogs—those who drive in the centre of the road instead of near the lefthand side. The inspector in charge of road traffic said that the police would watch traffic on the South Road, but as I often use that road I know it should be improved. I wonder how much money will be spent on it by the Highways Department. Further, the road crossing the Sturt Creek should be straightened and a proper bridge constructed, thereby encouraging motorists to use the Marion Road rather than the South Road. This would also serve as a direct route to the new airport near West Beach, which will be in use soon.

We often hear that motorists should take greater care in the interests of safety, but the Highways Department should assist by erecting road signs. I have asked the State Traffic Committee to investigate the question of the height of road signs. Modern cars are slung closer to the ground and motorists are asked to comply with the laws on headlights. Headlight tests are conducted annually by the Royal Automobile Association at Kintore Avenue and at country centres. The law states that the main beam should be not higher than 3ft. at a distance 30ft. from the motor car, and many motorists have their lights checked. Road signs should be erected that can be easily picked up by a car's headlights. I believe many accidents occur because motorists cannot clearly see signs at night. Recently I had to make a hurried visit to Wallaroo but I do not recall seeing a sign near the Little Para warning motorists of a deep spoon drain. There was a sign near the bridge over the River Light stating that construction works were taking place, but there are no other signs on the Port Wakefield Road to warn motorists of construction works or loose surfaces on some of the bends.

The Highways Department should endeavour to get uniform road signs at railway crossings. On the main road to Bordertown there are many signs, but on the Wallaroo Road there are few. Can the Minister representing the Minister of Roads say when road signs will be reviewed? I do not think there is one warning sign on the Belair Road, though it winds for several miles. Of course, most people using that road know that it winds all the time, but visitors do not. The Highways Department should face up to its responsibilities. The railway crossing near Kadina is dangerous and

an adequate warning sign should be erected there. I believe that representations have been made for this purpose, but without success. Under the Road Traffic Act the Commissioner of Police has the power to erect stop signs at dangerous crossings, but I contend that a crossing sign that can be illuminated by a motor car's headlights should be placed at railway crossings. Warning signs should be placed both on the righthand and lefthand side of the road wherever necessary.

We should not consider the cost where life is concerned, for in the event of a fatal accident no-one can restore that life. If the Highways Commissioner considers that the erection of more signs would destroy the beauty of the country side this House should instruct him through the Minister of Roads, to erect more signs. The comfortable cruising speed of a modern car is 50 miles an hour, and no person travelling at this speed can take the action necessary to avert a possible accident if a warning sign is erected only 200 yards away from a danger spot. A warning sign should be erected at least a quarter of a mile way from a railway crossing or a road intersection, and there should be another warning sign nearing such crossing or intersection. Such a system would enable the motorist to know that danger lay ahead, and he could reduce his speed accordingly. Many lives have been lost at the Kadina railway crossing and there have been many accidents from which injury has resulted. There may be other crossings at which accidents frequently occur and the Minister of Roads and the Highways Commissioner should consider the advisability of erecting warning signs at such crossings. If they are not prepared to do so, Parliament should legislate in that direction in the interests of public safety.

Mr. Riches—The Railways Commissioner has the power to erect "Stop" signs.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Yes, and the Police Commissioner and the Highways Commissioner also have power to erect signs. More signs should be erected and there should be a uniform code of signs. I have travelled in other States on roads along which warning signs were erected far enough from danger spots to give the motorist sufficient time in which to take action to avoid trouble. I hope the Minister of Works will confer with the Minister of Roads with a view to remedying the defects I have mentioned this evening. Earlier this session members on this side opposed the granting of £500,000 to the Tramways Trust. The only source of revenue for

the trust is the fares paid by passengers carried on its trams and I believe that fares should be reduced and the length of sections increased in order to stop the present drift of passengers from the trams. In his recent report the Auditor-General in speaking of the trust's activities states:—

The Royal visit in March, 1951, created extra revenue estimated at £21,000 and higher expenses amounting to £9,000.

The fact is that during the Royal visit the trust showed a profit merely because more people used the trams. The trust should endeavour to recreate a tram-mindedness in the minds of people by allowing them to travel within the city section for 3d. or even less. The best of our trams are the semi-modern type on the Glenelg run; they are pleasant to ride in and an improvement on any of the buses now operating. The trust should modernize its tramway rolling stock rather than convert tram routes to bus routes. The Government's present policy on the trust's activities was the main reason for the Opposition's refusal earlier this session to endorse the granting of a further £500,000 to the trust.

The Auditor-General also referred in his report to the Housing Trust. It is interesting to note that, if there should be a visitor either from overseas or another State, the Government is always anxious to prove to him that South Australia has a really good housing scheme and to do everything possible to show what the Playford Government has done in the interests of the people; but what is the Playford Government's answer to the Auditor-General's statements about the trust's activities? In saying this I criticize not the Housing Trust, but the Government's policy relating to the trust. The report states:—

During the year ended June 30, 1954, 3,924 houses were completed and occupied, of which 1,084 were sold and 2,840 were let. Of the 1,084 houses sold during the year 835, or nearly 80 per cent, carried a second mortgage to the trust.

It is the only organization approved by the Government either for the erection, letting or selling of homes, or for making advances for the purchase of homes. When we know that 80 per cent of the trust homes sold are carrying a second mortgage, it is no use the Government saying it is unable to amend the Advances for Homes Act, which provides for a maximum advance of £1,750 on a home. The Government has already been responsible for hamstringing the State Bank and preventing it from building group homes, and it

will not lift the maximum loan above £1,750, and yet it permits the Housing Trust to provide second mortgages. The Auditor-General in his report further stated:—

At June 30, 1954, the trust was party to 1,750 second mortgages for varying amounts up to £1,090, and 152 agreements for purchase and sale in respect of houses which it constructed for sale.

I believe that Housing Trust homes are selling today for amounts varying between £2,920 and £3,330. The Government says to the visitors to its housing projects, "This is our housing scheme," but to the State Bank it says "We will hamstring you until such time as you are out of business, although we know you have erected a good type of home having a sound equity." I do not want to be an alarmist, but it is not a very happy picture. In the event of anything drastic occurring I do not know what will happen to people with heavy mortgages on their homes. The rate of interest on a second mortgage is generally higher than for a first mortgage, so how can we expect people to carry a second mortgage to the extent of £1,090? The Government closed down on the organization which was able to build at a lower cost than the Housing Trust. Therefore it is stupid for the Government to laud what it is doing for the people. It will not tell visitors the facts. According to the Auditor-General's report the trust at June 30, 1954, had approximately 10,000 houses rented to tenants and the income from rents for the year amounted to £942,000, an increase of £438,000 for the year. That increase was due to the additional houses let and to an average increase of 5s. a week in the rent of approximately 6,700 homes. There must have been many homes carrying a very high rent, or else many that were not subject to the further 5s. increase. Certain trust homes which were let not long ago at 12s. a week had the rent increased to 17s. 6d. and today it is 27s. 6d. The Government should take more notice of the requirements of the people. In regard to imported dwellings the Auditor-General said:—

Under the Commonwealth States Grants (Imported Dwellings) Act 1950 a subsidy to a maximum of £300 per house is payable by the Commonwealth Government in respect of the excess cost of importation and erection of the imported dwellings over the cost of erection of a comparable local dwelling. The total subsidy, amounting to £1,149,600 on the 3,832 houses imported has now been received by the trust from the Commonwealth.

The cost of a house to the trust, after deducting the Commonwealth subsidy of £300, is about

£295 a square; it is only £245 a square for a solid construction home. The Government has approved of the trust's erecting more pre-fabricated homes of local material. Unless more timber is produced in the South-East a considerable quantity of timber must be imported for these houses. In 1926 the State produced about 100,000,000 red bricks each year; today the yearly production is about 44,000,000.

Mr. Dunstan—About 57,000,000.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Then the position has improved considerably; but that is only about half the production of 1926. I do not want to condemn the brick industry in any way. It has many difficulties to face. The trust has been given a mandate to buy land, to sell land when necessary, to build houses for sale or rental, and in special circumstances to make grants. The trust has explored all the possibilities of getting Mount Gambier stone. I was told last week by the Premier that more cement bricks are to be produced at the Yatala Labour Prison. No doubt these bricks are for Government projects, but those who produce them should get a proper reward for the work done. The trust has been given a job to do and it should find the building materials needed for solid constructions homes. The Auditor-General says that £50 a square can be saved by using solid construction materials. If that saving were made by the trust not so many second mortgages would be needed. The Auditor-General also said:

During the year ended June 30, the State borrowed £4,500,000 from the Commonwealth pursuant to the agreement at an interest rate of 3 per cent per annum. To June 30 last 748 houses constructed from moneys provided under that agreement had been completed and occupied and 1895 were in course of construction.

That money was borrowed at 3 per cent and I have no doubt it was lent at 5 per cent. When we deal with the individual lines I will seek an explanation on the several matters I have mentioned. It is time the Government reviewed the position under the Advances for Homes Act. It is distinctly unfair to permit one organization to lend money on second mortgage up to £1,000 on a unit and at the same time present approved organizations under the Advances for Homes Act from advancing more than £1,750 as a first mortgage. I support the first line.

Mr. QUIRKE (Stanley)—I support the first line and congratulate the Treasurer on having presented a record sequence of Budgets. Whether or not we agree with the policy of

the Treasurer and his Government, we must admit that under his leadership the State has made tremendous strides. No member should be niggardly in his praise of the Treasurer's administration in presenting his 16th Budget. It is interesting to note some of his remarks in presenting it. In referring to the State's finances he said:—

My one serious complaint in this connection, and it is not a complaint against the Commonwealth Grants Commission or its methods, is that the State finances seemed to be precluded from additional benefit arising out of the greatly improved state of our economy. We can be assured of a balanced budget so long as we budget for both revenues and expenditures upon a basis reasonably comparable with other States. But we are not permitted a better result. If, for any reason, we should become entitled to increased tax reimbursement payments, the grant recommended by the Grants Commission correspondingly reduces.

In other words, no matter how we progress, under the existing system between the Commonwealth and the States—a one-track system clearly and cleverly designed—the fiscal powers of the States are being whittled away in the interests of the Commonwealth. I will undertake to show how that system is operating effectively and is being operated by the Socialist Governor of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. It is destroying the power of the people of this and every State to make investments outside those sponsored by the Commonwealth Bank. It is apparent from the Auditor-General's report what type of drift is taking place in relation to State finances. The Treasurer knows full well that the drift is against the best interest of the State, but he is quite powerless to avert the consequences.

Under the heading "Public Debt Charges" in the Auditor-General's report, for the first time there is another heading "Dead Weight of Public Debt Charges." It is interesting to note that the public debt charges in this State exceed the total taxation collected here. The total receipts from South Australian taxation are shown as £6,536,526, but the public debt charges are £8,230,000. In other words the amount we must pay away in interest and debt charges is almost £2,000,000 more than we collect in taxation. Under this system we cannot continue to exist as a separate financial entity. Of these debt charges, £3,280,000 are recoverable by passing them on to the people in some way, but the irrecoverable portion amounts to £4,950,000 and that, today, is being called the "Dead Weight of Public Debt Charges." Members will agree that it is dead weight when the charges that have to

be met exceed, to that extent, the total amount collected from taxation in South Australia. I ask members to examine that angle and to ask themselves "Where are we going, and what is our responsibility as legislators?"

The Treasurer, with all his wisdom of direction, is powerless to avert what is coming to this and every State, and what is clearly the design of whatever Government is in power in Canberra. I do not know what particular infection gets into members when they go to Canberra. They cease to be State representatives but become Party members. That applies even to Senators. They are representatives of a Party and that is the downfall of this country in relation to what is emanating from Canberra and being given effect to through the Commonwealth Bank. The Financial Agreement that was so blithely passed by the people, sounded the death knell of the individual financial liberty of the people. Today we have the tangible evidence of the evil design behind the Financial Agreement. It is true that today the Commonwealth Bank has absolutely prohibited the private banks from lending money for housing, and that it has restricted the private banks to a maximum advance of 50 per cent of their liquid assets instead of up to 90 per cent which was usually permissible. Is it true that the State borrowed £4,500,000 for housing from the Commonwealth pursuant to the agreement at an interest rate of 3 per cent per annum? As that is stated in the Auditor-General's report, it must be true. That is Commonwealth money, borrowed from the Commonwealth while there is a prohibition against banks lending money for housing purposes. In the week preceding October 29, Mr. S. E. Card, general secretary of the United Bank Officer's Association, said:—

Within 20 years trading banks must either go out of business or sell their soul to the Commonwealth Bank. It is time for the trading banks to take a firm stand, make forthright declarations and take full-blooded action to make Australians aware of what is happening. Banking is not just another industry which the free enterpriser can watch fall into the Socialist basket with merely a sigh. Without freedom of choice in finance, there can be no real freedom of any sort.

He said that with his tongue in his cheek because he must have known that when the private banks had control there was no choice whatever. It is going from the devil to the deep blue sea when one side refuses in a time of stress to recognize that any individual has rights to freedom. It is only jumping into the sea to hand the whole framework of a financial policy and its administration to another organ-

ization with precisely the same idea. The Labor Party at one time proposed to socialize or nationalize the private banks of Australia. The people said it should not do it, and the Party was fired. I opposed the proposal, not because I had any brief for the banks during the depression and at other times, but because I knew that the ordinary banking authorities were as ignorant as the Labor Party on what to do to break financial control during the depression. If the policy of the banks was wrong then, the Commonwealth Bank's policy in regard to this State is wrong now. Its policy today under Dr. Coombs brings about enslavement of everyone under a socialistic banner because you cannot get one penny unless it is first authorized by the banks and comes through a State instrumentality. If you believe in that, all right, but it is a Communist line and there is no denying it. That is where we are going today with these people working into Communist hands to centralize the power so that it is easier to take over, and I will not believe that the people doing it are innocent in their intent. In the administration of financial policy today we are in dire danger and it is no use saying that it cannot happen here, because it can just as easily as it has happened in other countries. There is no more direct or insidious way of doing it than to attack and obtain control through one unified source of the financial structure of this country. Nobody knows this better than the Premier of this State, and I give him full credit for his knowledge. At times he has spoken against it but he is powerless. I have a scheme whereby this thing can be smashed utterly in relation to South Australia. In this State we have the State Bank and the State Savings Bank, and in those two organizations lies our power, if we use it properly, to make South Australia independent to a great extent of the stranglehold that is being taken on the banks of Australia through the Commonwealth Bank.

Mr. CORCORAN—The Commonwealth Bank is under a board.

Mr. QUIRKE—It is under a board administered by Dr. Coombs.

Mr. CORCORAN—It is run by the Menzies Government.

Mr. QUIRKE—Yes, but it was exactly the same under a Labor Government. The Menzies Government is just as insidiously Socialistic in what it is permitting Dr. Coombs to do as Mr. Chifley was openly socialistic, and he believed in it. Mr. Menzies is more culpable because he preaches against what he

knows is taking place. I admire and honour Chifley, who attempted to do what he believed to be right, but I disagree with a man who holds out the idea of freedom of the individual yet allows this to take place. Of the two banks I mentioned the State Bank is a small undertaking as banks go. The honourable member for Goodwood said it is not allowed to build houses because it cannot lend more than £1,750, but the trading banks or the Housing Trust can take a second mortgage, and they are the only organizations allowed to do that today. Where are they getting their money? The Auditor-General's report tells us that they are getting it from our own State instrumentality that is not bound by the agreement although it honours the impositions placed by the Commonwealth. The power to break the financial agreement rests in our own hands.

What are we doing with our money in this State? The amount invested in the State Savings Bank is £94,757,000. Of that total £52,000,000 is invested in Commonwealth Government securities. Why isn't that money available for investment in this State? Why is it necessary that £2,163,000 should be invested by the State Bank in Commonwealth securities? The Savings Bank has invested £15,397,000 in debentures of statutory bodies to which it is permitted to lend, in loans guaranteed by the Government £750,000, and has lent to local government authorities starved almost to extinction, only £1,314,000. It has invested in mortgage loans of all classes only £14,500,000 from this colossal sum of South Australian savings. Deposits increased last year by £6,364,000, but what will the bank do with that money? Will it invest it in Commonwealth loans while local government and people in need of housing are starving for money. If it is invested in Commonwealth loans it will come back to us eventually. Is not the Savings Bank paying interest to its depositors and receiving interest from the Commonwealth Government on money it has invested, and are we not borrowing money from the Commonwealth through the Loan Council and paying interest on it? Is there anything so stupid as that? That is called sound finance, and it is not possible to imagine anything more ridiculous or any more damning indictment on the so-called intelligence of the people.

The Savings Bank's income from all sources was £3,056,000, and total interest paid was £1,925,000. A South Australian bank could be founded in the same way that the Commonwealth Bank was. A Commonwealth Labor

Government in 1911 proposed to found the Commonwealth Bank on a capital of £1,000,000 by the sale of debentures, but not one debenture was sold. In 1938 Mr. Casey had the bright idea of issuing debentures to a certain sum and selling them to the other banks thus destroying the Commonwealth Bank, but the people willed otherwise. In June, 1912, Sir Dennison Miller, a prominent official of the Bank of New South Wales, resigned his position and was appointed Governor of the Commonwealth Bank. He did not issue any debentures, but opened savings banks throughout Australia and used the money he obtained as his capital, thus avoiding being indebted or paying interest to anyone but his depositors. That was the foundation of the Commonwealth Bank that today finances to the tune of thousands of millions of pounds, but it does not owe one penny in debentures.

We could do precisely the same thing in South Australia. We could establish a Bank of South Australia and let the Commonwealth Bank destroy the trading banks if they are so supine as to let it. It seems that their destruction is inevitable, for the general secretary of the United Bank Officers' Association says that within 10 years half the trading bank deposits could be immobilized, and that within a certain time private banks would cease to exist. We would then have one central authority on banking governed by the Commonwealth Bank, and we would all be bound by it. If the policy laid down were a sane one I would not disagree with it, but if it were in the hands of one man able to impose his will on the people of this country I would oppose it. He would have tremendous power, greater even than those dictators, Hitler and Stalin. Centralized power in the wrong hands would be detrimental to Australia. However, we are heading in that direction. Dr. Coombs has said he is a Socialist. His actions follow the socialist line. There is as much truth in Socialism as there is in the theory that the earth is flat. We need a financial policy to give to the people of this country financial capacity to meet their requirements.

Can anyone build a house if he has not enough money? He can get only £1,750 from a lending institution, so he must get the rest on a second mortgage, which comes from Commonwealth sources if he buys a Housing Trust home. Are we ever to see the time when a man will be fully financed to build a home? If people were fully financed the housing shortage would rapidly disappear, but it will be with us in perpetuity under the present system. The

lending institutions would not lose by financing people's requirements. Before a house is built plans are drawn up and an architect supervises construction. Thousands of homes have been financed by the War Service Homes Division. The applicant builds a house to his own requirements, but the Commonwealth Government has not lost any money on these houses as far as I know, yet it advances up to £2,750. Progress payments are made when the footings have been put down, when the walls are erected, when the roof and floors are finished, and so on. The War Service Homes Division finances ex-servicemen only, but surely it is possible for the Commonwealth to finance other people as well?

The member for Chaffey and I strongly oppose the present financial system. Surely everyone who can see how it works and who reads the Auditor-General's report and the Treasurer's Budget speech must be opposed to it. How much longer shall we tolerate it? We are opposed to it, yet, when we advance an argument that there shall be money available to the people to buy their full requirements and that money shall be available to purchase the country's production, we are laughed to scorn by both Government and Labor members. It was, however, written into the Labor objectives during the depression and even before that. It was consequential to the founding of the Commonwealth Bank that the credit of the country should be used in the interest of the people, yet when we propose to do that what do we get? Liberal Party members also snigger at this policy, and the member for Onkaparinga even said something about fools. Yet Liberal members are victims of the same cleverly designed schemes. The Labor member for Port Pirie spoke of the poor downtrodden much abused worker; but who in Australia is the worker? Is he the doctor? Is he the lawyer? Is he the water-side worker? Is he the farmer or the man who shears his sheep? All these people are workers, for what Australian is not a worker today?

Mr. Lawn—The man living on investments.

Mr. QUIRKE—That man may be the greatest worker of all. There are people with investments who manage industries and who are the best and finest working brains in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Lawn—Possibly, but a person may live on investments without being a manager.

Mr. QUIRKE—Even conceding that the person with investments need not be a worker, such a person is having a thin time today.

Surely the honourable member would not deny such a man the fruits of his work, because the money invested probably represents the fruits of long years of toil. I do not believe nauseating statements about the starving and killing of the worker. Liberal and Labor members alike are victims of the same pernicious system. With their Socialist programme Labor members say, "We will bring everything down." It is impossible to socialize upwards.

Mr. O'Halloran—The Electricity Trust does not support that statement.

Mr. QUIRKE—That is not total socialization. A total policy of socialization means the socialization of the means of production, distribution and exchange; it means the socialization of land, money and the corner store. It is no use telling me about the Blackburn interpretation because I repudiated it long ago. The mere fact that you have railways, trusts and other State-controlled services does not prove the contention that socialization is beneficial.

Mr. Fred Walsh—You are interpreting Labor objectives the same as Menzies did.

Mr. QUIRKE—If he interpreted them that way he was probably right.

Mr. Dunstan—He happens to be in step with you!

Mr. QUIRKE He may be right on this point, but he is wrong in allowing Dr. Coombs to run the Commonwealth Bank the way he is doing, for Dr. Coombs is the most competent Socialist in Australia.

Mr. Fred Walsh—But Menzies didn't appoint him.

Mr. QUIRKE—Possibly not, but he has left him there. The total of primary products exported from Australia is about £123,000,000 and the total exports of secondary products having a primary product base is about £32,000,000. The only exports in the latter category are ore concentrates, pig iron, and lead and silver bars. It is interesting to note the employment component in those industries. The employment figure for primary production in 1952-53 was about £152,000,000 and for secondary products £89,000,000. That results in a total value of manufactured goods of £234,000,000. There are 38,264 males and 4,955 females (a total of 43,219) employed in primary industry, and in secondary industries 67,114 males and 13,369 females (a total of 80,483). The straight-out production value is £152,000,000 from primary production and £89,000,000 from secondary production which, when manufactured and extra costs are added,

brings it up to £234,000,000. It indicates that in South Australia values still lie in primary production and will so remain for a long time. It is about time we ceased aggregating our population in the metropolitan area. Already the war is on as to whether an oil refinery should be located at Port Adelaide, Wallaroo, Port Pirie or Port Augusta. My bet is that it will be Port Adelaide for the reason that those who are to install the refinery want it there. I have heard people say, "Why don't you encourage industries to go to the country?" So-called workers are as culpable as anyone. You cannot prise them out of the city—nothing is further from their minds than going to the country, and I have ample evidence of that. An oil refinery near the city will provide another target in the event of war and a satellite town with a military ordnance depot alongside will provide still another target. With the working population around industry, it would be obliterated with the industry in the event of war. That is something other nations are not doing. They are placing their population as far away as possible from industry, commensurate with the ability to get them to work speedily. If industries and workers are destroyed at the same time, we are finished. If industries are destroyed they can be built again, but you cannot do that with mankind.

I have asked the Premier about the erection of half a dozen houses at Riverton where a man proposes to set up a small industry. However, he cannot get the finance for the homes, and neither can the workers whom he would employ. Where could they find £3,000 each, and assuming they received a Government advance of £1,750, where could they get the remaining £1,250? If this man could be financed to build the homes, a start on them could be made tomorrow, but it is not just as easy as that. One has to go through a ritual. It will be found that rent charges for a house in the country are higher than for a comparable house in the city. Why should it be? Why should not the Government advance to a man who wants to start in industry the money necessary to build houses for his employees? He could be made responsible for the repayment and would cheerfully undertake the responsibility. That is what they have done in Germany with bombed out cities.

Mr. Fred Walsh—The industries there were financed with American capital.

Mr. QUIRKE—I am not concerned where the money came from, but with the principle.

The honourable member mistakes the shadow for the substance. It doesn't matter whether the money comes from America or from the moon—it is the principle of administration of the money which concerns me. The people in Germany who wish to employ men in industry are given the administration of the money for housing the people.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Does not that apply in every capitalist country?

Mr. QUIRKE—It does not apply here. As an employer, try to get money to build six houses for your employees and see how you fare. A private bank would not lend you a shilling.

Mr. Fred Walsh—The Housing Trust would build the homes.

Mr. QUIRKE—Why should it? Why not make the money available and let the people build them themselves? That is a complete departure from the standards we are gradually accepting as being correct and that is what I am fighting against. There is not one member of the House who would not desire a hand in working out his own plans and building his own home. The majority have done so. I have nothing against the Housing Trust, but I have serious objections to the way finances are being concentrated in the one organization. I have nothing but the highest praise for the trust's administration, but it is the victim of circumstances.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Aren't we all?

Mr. QUIRKE—Of course we are, and that is what I am complaining about. The philosophy we hear today is "Things are bad. Let us make them a damn sight worse." My philosophy is that if things are bad, is there no way of curing them. I want people in the country to be able to build their own homes, and if a man wants to engage in an industry give him the financial responsibility to build the homes for his men and he will be willing to undertake the task.

Despite the low rainfall this year wheat crops in many parts of the State are a credit to those who grew them. One can see the result of the changed methods of tillage, which are paying dividends in a year like this. At the moment we have a wheat surplus. One thing which horrifies us in Australia is to have a surplus of anything, even a non-perishable product like wheat. Our economics and finances are confounded because South Australia has a surplus of 18,000,00 bushels of wheat. We should endeavour always to have the equivalent of a year's crop in reserve, and to that end we should have silo accommodation to hold

it. We could be caught. Even with 18,000,000 bushels of wheat, in one drought year it could be wiped out. We should have sufficient bulk storage to carry practically one year's crop in reserve. If we have that there will not be the need to worry about a surplus. In these days a surplus has a depressing effect on everybody. When we have more wheat than we need we try to depress prices. That is not working now because of the control exercised by the Wheat Board and the various organizations of growers, which are doing a good job. The board type of administration, with growers' representatives on the board, is desirable. During the war hundreds of millions of pounds worth of wheat and wool was sold overseas, and we did not import even one packet of pins in return, yet every producer was paid his money. No money came into Australia, yet hundreds of millions of pounds was paid to the producers. This is further support for the policy I advocate.

If that could be done, it could be done for housing. Apparently the only way to make our rotten system work is to have a resounding war. I remember the reply given by economists in England when everybody was asked to contribute a shilling to the Spitfire Fund. Everywhere there were notices "Subscribe to the Spitfire Fund" and "If you don't subscribe there will be no Spitfires for our fellows to fly." The economists branded this as a lie. They said that by all means there should be subscriptions to such a fund as it was necessary for the people to help in the time of stress, but they made it clear that if no shillings were contributed there would not be one less Spitfire. That was true, and it could be true in Australia in regard to houses and all other amenities. The only inflationary risk is in the profit section, but we have that now in every business. New Zealand is making a determined effort, but it will not succeed the first time. At the next New Zealand elections there will be 80 Social Credit candidates and their leader has said that they will work for the cancellation of wages tax and social security charges without reduction in benefits, an increase in income tax exemptions, an increase to £5 sterling in the weekly benefits for aged, widows and invalids, and the abolition of the means test. It is to be hoped that these people get the opportunity to do that, but it is improbable that they will because times are not tough enough, and in such times the people do not think. I was the only one who said prior to the last Commonwealth election that Dr. Evatt could do what he promised

towards abolishing the means test. Whether it is desirable in its entirety is another matter. He could have done it if he had tackled the matter in the right way, but I do not know that he knew what to do. If Sir Arthur Fadden really meant what he said in one statement over the air I could be very rude in saying where he should be. No responsible person should have said such a thing. In consequence of the statement I wrote a letter to the press. The means are at the disposal of the Australian people to do it, but we will first have to get rid of Dr. Coombs, who does not want that sort of thing. He wants to get a stranglehold on the Commonwealth finances, and he is going the right way to get it. Mr. Chifley wanted to nationalize the private banks, but Dr. Coombs is too clever for that sort of approach. He will achieve what he wants but in a different way.

I congratulate the Treasurer on the Budget he presented. The difficulties mentioned in it are not his fault. He is a victim of circumstance, as is everybody. The difference between the Treasurer and other people is that he knows how far he is a victim and how helpless he is in trying to overcome the difficulties. In spite of them he is performing magnificently in his position.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood)—I would not have risen on this debate had it not been that members said things which required answering. Many members have bemoaned the uniform tax system and the limitations it places upon the administration of the services of the State. Quite frankly I also bemoan the uniform tax system, but I cannot see how we can possibly do away with it under the present system of government in Australia. The fault does not lie with the uniform tax system in itself. That system is the inevitable corollary of a Federal system of government in a unified economy. Either we are going to have an efficient unified government in Australia with decentralization of administration through provincial governments or a Federal system hampered in its administration by the uniform tax system. We can have one or the other, but if we accept the Federal system then we must accept the uniform tax system and all the disabilities it means. Two members in particular have spoken of the undesirable effects of centralization of economic control in Australia. Both the major Parties in Australia by now have accepted in their practice, if not in their preaching, the fact that the era of *laissez faire* has long past. I think it passed effectively with the writing of Lord Keynes.

The Social Crediters in our Parliament and elsewhere seem to have entirely ignored what Lord Keynes has had to say. They are living in an almost antediluvian era of economics, but both Parties, in effect, in the Federal sphere have accepted Keynesian techniques. That is to say, they accept the fact that there must be some central control of credit, and that there must be some planning of our economy through ordinary budgetary techniques. Although at the 1949 elections the Liberal Party said a great deal about removing controls and about the horrors of the Chifley Budget, Sir Arthur Fadden has substantially accepted the same budgetary techniques that Mr. Chifley used in the era when Labor was in power. He reverted effectively to Keynesian techniques in the "horror Budget." I believe that the degree of horror in that Budget was occasioned largely by the previous Budget. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Liberal Party has accepted the same necessities that have been obvious from modern economic writings, especially those of Lord Keynes.

We have heard two speakers suggesting that instead of maintaining a central control of credit and using Keynesian Budgetary techniques, we should, in fact, have a social credit system. Precisely what is to be done under this Social Credit system neither speaker has said, but Social Credit, as I understand it, is a system under which taxation is abolished—and that is Major Douglas's policy—wealth created by issuing bank credit wholesale, and this credit distributed to the people in the community by a national dividend, and inflation prevented by some ingenious discount system by which where a trader would normally sell an article at 1s. he sells at 9d. and the State subsidizes him 3d.

Mr. Riches—It helps if you have a couple of oil wells.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Yes. Although the social creditors here and elsewhere proclaim how magnificent their systems are, they have never been put into effect. In Alberta—the wonderful State they love to quote—although they did attempt to bring in a national dividend at one time when they started to cut down on taxation and tried to institute a national dividend, they ran themselves into a colossal deficit and the Social Credit Government went out of office for a time. It then returned to power, but it has never since tried, except on the one occasion when its moves were found to be entirely *ultra vires* the Constitution, to institute a Social Credit system. It has been a most reactionary government with pre-Keynesian methods of finance and the worst social amenities of any

State in Canada. It has been a hopeless experimental government. No Social Credit Government has ever worked for the simple reason it cannot possibly work. It is too fantastic for words. Of course it is obvious that banks can create credit. The member for Chaffey has chosen to enunciate certain minor truisms as though they were earthshaking and original thought and as if no-one else had ever heard of them. He cited various authorities as though he needed to recite authorities for the sequence of A.B.C. We cannot provide for economics by simply saying that "money is a matter of bookkeeping" or anything of that nature. Banks can create credit, but unless we are going to relate the amounts to the goods and services for which we seek to create effective demand we shall have hopeless inflation. That is so obvious it should not be necessary to explain it to any individual with commonsense.

This Government, and every Government in Australia, has for years used bank credit. I admit that at the last elections I was taken to task for suggesting that we should use a certain amount of bank credit, but the member who took me to task seemed to forget that the Liberal Government during the preceding financial year had used almost four times the amount of bank credit I was suggesting we should use. All Governments use bank credit, but it must be related to the amount of goods and services in the community for which we are seeking to create an effective demand. Major Douglas certainly had this principle in his writings, that the present economic system does not always necessarily distribute sufficient purchasing power to purchase all the products that are produced. That is quite true and as a result there has to be a technique of redistributive taxation and the technique of creating bank credit to provide effective demands in certain circumstances, but not on every occasion. Having said that, we get back to this: that we cannot possibly do away with the present system. If we do away with the present Federal system, with uniform taxation, we shall get back to an entirely chaotic system in which we do away with the basic planning and budgetary techniques that both Parties have had to accept. They have both admitted that these things have to be done and that we must use Keynesian budgetary techniques and have central control of credit. What would happen if we had seven taxing powers in Australia? Each State Government would pursue its own particular necessities and in certain circumstances—if we had, for instance,

a business recession and the State Government found that its revenues were falling off and it increased taxation at a time when it was inadvisable—chaos would result. The Premier knows that one Australian Premier once proposed to use Social Credit, the very thing that the Independents have been talking about, and to use financial measures that would create millions of pounds in social credit. It would have resulted in hopeless inflation if we had proceeded in that way. The honourable member for Stanley suggested that we press on with furthering the interests of the State Bank. I think the State Bank should do more than it does, but to raise capital by means of debentures on the State Bank at present seems to me to be an entirely hopeless proposal in view of the state of the Constitution, which provides that State Governments cannot raise

moneys by public borrowing without the consent of the Loan Council. How are we going to raise debentures on the State Bank? Frankly I think the intrusion of these fantastic social credit theories has been an entire waste of time, and I regret that I felt it necessary in the circumstances to rise and say something about them. I hope that in the future they will be left in that limbo to which they should long ago have been consigned.

#### THE ESTIMATES.

First line passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 10.34 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, November 3, at 2 p.m.