

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, June 2, 1955.

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

QUESTIONS.**NEW MUNITIONS PLANT.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Today's *Advertiser* reports the proposed establishment by the Commonwealth Government of a very expensive munitions plant at St. Mary's, near Sydney. I feel, however, that, particularly from the standpoint of protection in the event of war, a site in South Australia would be much more suitable. The report states:—

An explosives production section had been retained at the Salisbury (S.A.) munitions plant although most of the establishment had been handed over to the Long Range Weapons Establishment the Minister for Defence Production (Sir Eric Harrison) said in the House of Representatives today. Sir Eric Harrison said the Government had "taken a considerable risk" in deciding to build the new £23,000,000 ammunition factory at St. Mary's near Sydney. Sir Eric admits there is some risk in establishing the plant at St. Mary's. Can the Premier say whether the Commonwealth Government approached the South Australian Government to ascertain whether this plant could be established in this State, either by an extension of the works at Salisbury or at some other suitable site?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The South Australian Government was not in any way consulted on this matter; in fact, the first information I had concerning it was when I read the announcement in the press.

WALKERS FLAT PUNT APPROACH.

Mr. WHITE—My question concerns the causeway on the western side of the River Murray leading to the Walkers Flat punt. About two years ago the following proposal was made to the Highways and Local Government Department. It was asked that low patches in this causeway be raised a few feet and that a new crossing over the billabong that is contiguous to the river there be constructed. It was necessary to have a privately owned piece of land to do this work, and the owner indicated his willingness to co-operate. This improvement is asked for because it would be the means, in the event of a flood, of keeping the Walkers Flat punt in operation for a much longer period than at present, and therefore it is a matter of concern to the people who live there and use this crossing. The department at

the outset seemed to be quite interested in the project, but since then the only reply that I can get to inquiries is that plans are being prepared. Will the Minister representing the Minister of Local Government ascertain how far this project has gone, and, if no progress is being made, what the hold-up is?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will take up the question with my colleague and bring down an answer as soon as possible.

ADELAIDE HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION.

Mr. LAWN—In this morning's *Advertiser*, under the heading "Emergency Step at Hospital," the following paragraph appeared:—

Emergency measures were taken at Royal Adelaide Hospital last night to provide extra beds for medical cases, when the hospital's medical wards became full. Accommodation was provided by arranging to discharge patients from the sick nurses' section of Light Ward.

Has the Treasurer any statement that he can give the House regarding conditions at Royal Adelaide Hospital and what steps are being taken to remedy the overcrowding?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Royal Adelaide and Queen Elizabeth Hospitals are being expanded as rapidly as possible. I am sure the honourable member is aware that Royal Adelaide is the only hospital in Australia that does not charge its inmates, and as a consequence, of course, it gets plenty of clients. Wherever services are given free of charge it stands to reason that they will be taxed to the limit.

Mr. Lawn—That is not the only reason.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That is one of the reasons why Royal Adelaide Hospital is always so heavily taxed. The other reason is the excellence of the service given. I assure the honourable member that every step possible is being taken to expedite the expansion of hospitals in the metropolitan area.

NANGULA RAILWAY SIDING.

Mr. CORCORAN—When in Mount Gambier on March 26 last the Minister of Railways agreed to receive a deputation from the district council of Millicent regarding the closing of the Nangula railway siding on the Beachport line. Rumour had it that this course was proposed when the broad gauge line was completed past that point. In an attempt to discover the intentions of the railways authorities I introduced the deputation, comprising the chairman, Mr. Sullivan, councillors DeGaris and Bird and Mr. A. Nitschke, to the Minister of Railways in the Mount Gambier town hall. The Minister promised to take up the

matter with the Commissioner of Railways and advise them in due course when a decision was reached. This morning I was asked by a member of that deputation to inquire about the matter. Will the Minister representing the Minister of Railways refer this question to the Minister of Railways and let me have an answer, possibly next week?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will take the matter up with my colleague and endeavour to have a reply next Tuesday.

NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINEES' ILLNESSES.

Mr. FLETCHER—In this morning's *Advertiser*, under the heading "Trainee Did Not Get Compensation," the following article appears:—

An 18-year-old youth who had caught a virulent disease while doing his National Service training at Woodside, S.A., in 1952, had been refused compensation by the Army, Senator Ryan (Lab., S.A.) alleged in the Senate tonight.

The Premier will remember that on July 22, 1952 I asked a question relating to an alleged outbreak of typhoid at the Woodside Camp. The Federal medical authorities denied that such an outbreak had occurred, but there was definitely something wrong. When in Mount Gambier recently I visited the hospital and saw the boy I had referred to in 1952 who was again in hospital. He had undergone very little training in the Woodside Camp because he had been sent to Daws Road Hospital where he had been operated on, but still the cause of his illness was not discovered. He told me that since his experience a similar illness had been suffered by another Mount Gambier youth. These lads have received no compensation from the Department of the Army or the Federal Government.

The SPEAKER—The honourable member is really dealing with a Federal Parliamentary question.

Mr. FLETCHER—In 1952 four or five boys were affected by this illness. Since then there has been another case—very likely that referred to by Senator Ryan. Will the Premier have inquiries made as to the effect of this ailment on the young men of this State and to see whether such ailments can be avoided, particularly as we cannot afford, from the point of view of production, to have our youths, who undergo national service training, removed from the labour market?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Obviously we cannot inquire into or take action on a matter

which is within the province of the Commonwealth Government, but if possible I will obtain a report from the State health authorities to see if any active steps can be taken from a public health point of view.

CONSOLIDATION OF STATUTES.

Mr. TRAVERS—Nearly 20 years ago the Parliamentary Draftsman, Sir Edgar Bean, did a very admirable job in consolidating the South Australian Statutes, but they have now reached the stage where they need attention again. Will the Minister of Education ask the Attorney-General if he can put something in hand to bring them up-to-date? Each volume contains an excellent index, but nonetheless, with the intervening years, there is a great deal of dead wood which needs pruning and much consolidation should be done.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Let me assure the honourable member that I would not mind in the slightest complying with his request. In fact, I would be delighted to do so, because I have a fellow feeling with him in the matter. I am sure I can anticipate that the Attorney-General will give the request his early attention.

SCHOOL CHILDREN'S BOOK ALLOWANCE.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—The Minister of Education will remember that last year the member for Stuart, myself and possibly other members brought before his notice what we considered the inadequate allowance to parents for children's high school books. The Minister then promised to give it his consideration and thanked me for the information I had brought before the House by which I sought to prove that the cost of books had increased by more than 100 per cent. Has he any further information on the matter?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I recently approved of, I believe, a 50 per cent increase, but I will make sure and inform the honourable member.

SCHOOL BICYCLE SHEDS.

Mr. STEPHENS—Has the Minister of Education a reply to my recent question regarding the provision of bicycle sheds at schools?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I have investigated the position, which is as follows: It is not the policy to provide bicycle sheds at any schools at the sole expense of the Government. The only exceptions to this rule are at the Adelaide Boys' high school and Mount Gambier

primary school where bicycle racks were installed in the basement, and the Mitcham primary school where they were installed in a shelter shed. On the other hand, it is the policy to assist school councils and school committees in the provision of bicycle sheds where the school council or school committee considers they are necessary. In such cases the sheds are provided on the basis of either (a) the department providing half the total approved cost of the shed on a subsidy basis, or (b) the department providing the materials and the school council or school committee undertaking to erect the sheds.

FISHING INDUSTRY.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—It has come to my notice that certain fishing cutters are available for sale, owing to the falling off in the price of flake. Having a great regard for the knowledge and ability of the Chief Inspector of Fisheries, Mr. Moorhouse, and his keen desire to explore our offshore fishing grounds and resources, which up to now have received little attention, I ask the Minister of Agriculture whether any move has been made to procure one of these, in my opinion, most suitable cutters for the department for this work, and, if not, will he examine the possibilities?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—An examination of the possibility of securing a boat for Mr. Moorhouse is being made at the moment, and one of the fishing cutters referred to by the honourable member is on offer to the Government. We are exploring another aspect at present—the possibility of utilizing a Harbors Board boat which can be made available for the work. The Harbors Board is now preparing estimates of costs of conversion and until this and other relevant information is to hand no decision can be made.

GEPPS CROSS MIGRANT HOSTEL.

Mr. JENNINGS—Yesterday the Premier told me that in the view of the Government no extra toilet facilities could be made available at the Gepps Cross migrant hostel because of the expense involved, and because the hostel was available to the Housing Trust only for a limited period. I can understand that because of the uncertainty of tenure no expenditure of this nature might be justified, but as the rents of the flats are on the average £2 6s. a week and those of the temporary homes, to which the flats are more comparable than any other type of accommodation, are 26s. or 27s. a week, will the Premier consider regarding the flats as

temporary homes under the Housing Trust scheme and reduce the rent to a comparable figure? I realize that this would mean direct Government expenditure, because I understand the trust acts only as an agent for the Government for the temporary homes schemes. Nevertheless the precedent is there and I believe it would give some measure of justice to the tenants at the hostel, and the opportunity to save sufficient money to get into homes of their own.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—These hostels belong to the Commonwealth and the rents and conditions were submitted to the tenants then in occupation before we entered into agreement with the Commonwealth, to see whether they desired us to enter into it. The written conditions were approved by the tenants at the time. This is not a State housing activity. We only entered into it at the request of the tenants. Under these circumstances there is no justification whatever for the State and the general taxpayers to be called upon to subsidize the activity. It can be claimed by the honourable member that in the Auditor-General's accounts temporary housing shows a loss each year, and he could ask what justification there is for incurring a loss on temporary housing and not on the migrants' hostel. I will anticipate that question by saying that the loss shown on temporary housing is not a real loss because it takes into account the complete amortization of temporary homes over a very short period—what appears to me an excessive amortization—whereas in fact they will last very much longer and will have a residual value after their occupation as temporary houses has finished. They are constructed so that they can be readily moved.

LYRUP WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. STOTT—Some time ago I asked the Minister of Works a question about the water supply at Lyrup. Has he any further information to give?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—When this matter was raised I was in some doubt who should be the constructing authority. As the honourable member knows, the irrigation system at Lyrup is controlled by the Lyrup Village Association, whereas in other river towns water supply is to all intents and purposes under the control of the Irrigation Department. I have conferred with the Minister of Lands who agrees that under the circumstances it is properly the province of the Engineering and Water Supply Department to construct a water

supply scheme there, and accordingly I have asked for surveys to be taken and estimates made of the cost and the probable revenue. That will probably take some time, but when the information is available I shall supply it to the honourable member.

ADELAIDE AIRPORT.

Mr. FRED WALSH—In the press in recent weeks many complaints have been aired about conditions at the Adelaide Airport at West Beach. As I have travelled considerably I have some knowledge of the facilities and amenities provided at airports overseas and in other parts of Australia, and I am concerned about the very slow progress in providing necessary facilities at West Beach. No serious attempt has been made to provide them, despite questions asked in Federal Parliament by South Australian members on both sides of the House, and in the interests of the South Australian public who use the airport some representation should be made by this State. Will the Premier, as head of the State Government, make special representations to the Minister of Civil Aviation on this matter?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This project was brought into being as a result of requests made by the State Government to the Federal Government for better and more modern facilities in South Australia. For a long time I have felt that the Department of Civil Aviation has given this State a very poor deal in the provision of aerodromes and air travel facilities. Before the West Beach project was in commission the main aerodrome for Adelaide was Parafield, and I think it was the only one serving a capital city that did not have a good runway, and the same position applied with regard to aerial facilities for country districts. On a population basis, particularly as regards Queensland and Western Australia, the department has done infinitely more for other States than it has for South Australia. Years of protracted negotiations have not produced even a suitable landing ground at Port Augusta for the medical air service. For some reason the department does not seem to function as far as South Australia is concerned. I will be pleased to bring the honourable member's question under the Minister's notice and to further it to the best of my ability.

PORT PIRIE WHARVES.

Mr. DAVIS—Has the Minister of Marine a reply to my recent question about improvements to the Port Pirie wharves?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I intimated previously that the terms of reference for this project were being prepared for reference to the Public Works Committee, and they were endorsed by Executive Council this morning. The scheme is estimated to cost the vast sum of £1,523,000. Of that amount, £743,000 will be for dredging, reclamation work, widening of portion of the harbour fairway, and reclamation of Federal Dock. The cost of providing three new 27-ft. low water berths on the new Queens-Barrier wharves alignment, together with new stacking facilities for ores, is estimated at £780,000.

Mr. Shannon—Does the estimate include dredging of the approach channel?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I take it that it does.

MAIN ROADS THROUGH TOWNSHIPS.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yesterday the Minister of Works was good enough to reply to a question I asked last week about the sealing of roads on the main Broken Hill highway where it passes through towns in my electorate. He said that some roads on that route would be sealed in the near future, but no mention was made of Cockburn. I understand that that town was included in the original programme and I ask him now whether it was inadvertently left out and whether it is still intended to seal that road?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—In as much as the Minister of Roads said that the policy of sealing highways through country towns had not been changed, I would say that Cockburn was inadvertently omitted. I am sure that is to be regretted because Cockburn is the first town through which the highway passes from the Broken Hill end and the last town from the Adelaide end. I will take up the honourable member's question and bring down a reply.

TRAINEE TEACHERS' TEXTBOOKS.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked about the alleged shortage of textbooks for trainee teachers at the Teachers College in certain university subjects?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—An investigation of the position regarding the supply of prescribed textbooks for students at the Teachers College has been made and steps are being taken to ensure that no student will be handicapped in his or her studies through not having any prescribed book which can be procured.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from June 1. Page 190.)

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I join with other members in paying a tribute to the two former members—Mr. Stephen Dunks of this House and the Hon. Reginald Rudall of the Legislative Council—who have died since last session. Both those gentlemen were at one time members of this House and both earned the affection of all other honourable members. I was closely associated with both of them; one was a Cabinet colleague of many years' standing and the other the Chairman of Committees in this House. I express my sympathy to their relatives and my appreciation of the magnificent service they gave to their State. Both were men of outstanding character, ability and integrity; both had a tremendous amount of humanity, a high sense of duty, and a great desire to see that the public interest was at all times furthered. They were not men of particular ambition, but they had a keen and earnest desire to see that the functions of the State were maintained, and, by their ability and integrity, they contributed something the loss of which this House will feel for many years.

The Address in Reply debate is an opportunity for the House to consider matters of general policy and is purposely designed to give members the greatest possible freedom to express their views on the various matters they believe should be ventilated in the interests of the State. A number of matters have been mentioned, with which I would like to deal, although I do not propose to deal with every query raised. Members' speeches will be examined by officers of the various departments concerned, and if it is possible to incorporate in our policy any of the views submitted, that will be done. On occasions the Leader of the Opposition has suggested that we should take out the copyright of his ideas, therefore if any of his ideas are adopted on this occasion, I will state that that was done by his kind permission.

Opportunity has been taken by Opposition members to bring a certain amount of politics into this debate; in fact, except for one or two speeches I felt that they did not contribute much more than the politics that they were designed to contribute. In this regard I refer particularly to certain statements, because, although it is very easy to criticize administration and although no doubt members in making such criticism desire to criti-

cize the Government, that criticism frequently falls on somebody else—the officers who do the work and who, while having no interest in policy, have a tremendous interest in the successful operation of their departments. For instance, the member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) made certain statements regarding our mental hospitals, but his statements carried the position no further than the reports which have been furnished by the Government over the last four years and have dealt with the requirements and deficiencies of our mental hospitals and the steps that would be taken as soon as possible to overcome those deficiencies. We, in South Australia, have been singularly fortunate in the calibre of the officer in charge of our mental institutions (Dr. Birch), who has given his life to the work he has undertaken. He is recognized as an authority and his reports over the years have set out fully the requirements of our mental institutions. Indeed, if Dr. Stoller's report did only one thing, it did not do what the honourable member would have us believe, that it criticized mental hospitals in this State; rather, it held them up as infinitely better than those in any other State. Instead of levelling unjustified criticism at the hospitals under the control of Dr. Birch, Mr. Lawn should have quoted Dr. Stoller's comments on conditions obtaining in some mental hospitals in other States, some of which incidentally are not governed by a Liberal Government, nor have been for many years.

Mr. Riches—Now you are getting down to Party politics.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No; I will tell the honourable member in due course why conditions in mental hospitals throughout Australia, irrespective of whether a Liberal or Labor Government has been in power, have fallen below the standard that should be maintained.

Mr. O'Halloran—The main burden of Mr. Lawn's speech was that some people who are in mental hospitals should be housed elsewhere.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—In a number of questions in this House Mr. Lawn has sought to create the impression that this Government has been placing in mental hospitals people who are not mental subjects, whereas, in fact, the Government cannot place anyone in a mental hospital. On one occasion I told the honourable member—and I believe it is still true—that in one of our mental institutions there were 19 persons who were not mental

patients, but they were not placed there; they merely went there because they wanted board and lodging.

Mr. O'Halloran—Because they had nowhere else to go.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That may be so, and I will accept that if the honourable the Leader wants to place that construction on it; but I believe the true construction is that they had no other place as good to go to. If members so desire I can give them hundreds of quotations from Dr. Stoller's report to prove my point, but let me give just one or two. During this debate we have been told that we are singularly unenlightened in South Australia because we have a Legislative Council. So let me take for the purposes of quotation a State which has been subject to Labor rule for many years and one which has no Legislative Council to control or in any way provide a check on the good works the Government of that State might do. This is but one quotation from Dr. Stoller's report that was quoted so frequently by the honourable member. It is contained at page 97 and refers to the Goodna Mental Hospital in Queensland as follows:—

There were 28 wards in the main institution, of varying size and functional efficiency. Overcrowding for the institution was 909 but, with day room space taken over for dormitories, this really represented a figure of 1,173, or an overcrowding percentage of 95 per cent. Certain of the wards were very poorly maintained. All female, but no male, wards had laundrettes. The overcrowding commonly led to beds being placed down corridors and into bathroom space and, in some cases, beds spilled over into dining rooms and floor beds were so placed between other beds, that patients getting out of bed had to step on the floor beds. The overcrowding naturally led to insufficient storage space. Even wards 5A and 5B, a new ward built during the war, had been so overcrowded as to lose the functional pattern for which it was designed; in this ward lockers were provided originally, but these had to be removed to make way for more beds. In one ward, many old ladies lived in chairs in the centre of the dormitory and never got out, being fed on the spot; in this ward, too, there was one shower for 125 senile and infirm patients.

Mr. Lawn—Is that bad?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not know whether it is bad by the honourable member's standards. I pointed out while the honourable member was absent from the Chamber that if Dr. Stoller's report had done one thing it had shown that Dr. Birch's administration had been humane, and in him I believe that we have an officer, and under him a department,

out to give the utmost service to the community. I will freely make the report available to any honourable member who desires to read about New South Wales.

Mr. Lawn—We all have copies.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, but the honourable member forgot to quote it. In his anxiety to make a little bit of political capital out of this subject he forgot to get down to the root question. Let me tell him the difficulty which has arisen with regard to mental hospitals and has led to every State having institutions of which they should be thoroughly ashamed.

The Chifley Government took over the taxing powers of the States and proceeded to reimburse them in various ways for the maintenance of their services by giving them certain amounts in lieu of taxation and a certain amount to assist them with regard to hospitals, and medical schemes were introduced. However, from the outset the most horrid discrimination was made against mental patients. When the hospital scheme came into force, if my memory serves me correctly, we were given 4s. 8d. a day per patient in our general hospitals, but nothing whatever for mental hospitals. Later that 4s. 8d. was raised to 6s. for general hospitals and, after the States had repeatedly approached the Commonwealth Government, the States were given amounts for mental hospitals which fluctuated from as low as 8d. in one State to as high as 1s. 3d. in another.

Mr. Quirke—Which Commonwealth Government did that?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The one in which Senator McKenna was Minister of Health. South Australia received 10d. a day per patient and the highest amount paid to any State was 1s. 3d. After taking their revenue away from the States the Commonwealth Government gave them in its place from 8d. to 10d. a day to fulfil a service which obviously should be at least equivalent to that provided for patients in general hospitals. What is the reason for this horrid discrimination?—a discrimination that has been ventilated by the Premiers time and time again, and, if it is maintained to the time of the next Premiers' conference, one that I will denounce with all my power.

Mr. Quirke—What is the present position?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The agreement has lapsed and for the last six months, I think, we have been given nothing. Now we have Dr. Stoller's report, and it has been computed by somebody—a crystal gazer, I would suggest—that to give effect to the recommendations in

this report would cost £30,000,000. The Federal Government has considered it and made an offer of a sum for capital expenditure, to be provided as the money is expended, totalling £10,000,000. Admirable though that is—and, of course, it is infinitely more than we have ever received before—it still does not provide for the maintenance of our mental hospitals and the care and attention that the patients should have. The member for Adelaide tried to make politics out of the difficulties of these unfortunate people. The system which we have to thank for the sorry situation was introduced by a Labor Government, and the present Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, Senator McKenna, was the then Minister of Health. I am not blaming the Premier of Queensland for the difficulties he is in, for he was the most outspoken at the Premiers' Conferences and predicted exactly what has happened. Hospitals cannot be maintained without adequate finance and it has not been provided.

What I am denouncing today is the discrimination between mental patients and those in general hospitals, and even the honourable member for Adelaide will see that it is not a fit topic for politics, for it is something that is fundamental. I recall that Mr. Hanlon pointed out, frequently that many people in general hospitals are there because of some action of their own over which they had control. In mental hospitals a large number of the patients are there because of things over which they could have no possible control and which cannot be attributed to any personal fault or defect of character; so this discrimination is something that we should denounce and not try to make politics out of. I sympathize with the orderlies and nursing staff of our mental institutions. I can imagine no more unpleasant task than the duties they must perform. They have done the best possible with the resources available and I hope that in the future they will have much more to enable them to carry out their functions.

Many members referred to electoral reform, but did not go into it in detail. The member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) delivered his usual speech on gerrymandering and the member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) informed us that all of our ills were due to this feature of our political life. Other members referred to the sacred doctrine of one vote one value. One member even told us the story of some visitors from an unenlightened country who, when here, said "What! Haven't you an electoral franchise providing for a system of one vote

one value?" They went further and expressed surprise at our still having a Legislative Council. I have tried to find out something about this principle of one vote one value because I have apparently been missing out on something on which I should have some knowledge. I tried to find out how it applied in other States but, quite frankly, in the majority of cases it did not apply.

Mr. Lawn—What about the Federal sphere?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will deal with all the matters raised in due course. The Opposition would lead us to believe that Queensland is an enlightened State because it has abolished its Legislative Council, but I found no system of one vote one value there. The only uses the Legislative Council building has been put to are for the official openings of Parliament and for Prices Conferences. It must be an oversight in that State that it does not enjoy one vote one value. I think the member for Norwood should go there and deliver one of his learned dissertations on the subject. If he does and persuades that State to use this system I will give him a ceremonial garden party on his return.

Let us consider for a moment the latest established Parliamentary authority—the Northern Territory Legislative Council—which was established by that great Labor leader, Mr. Chifley. I do not know why it was given that obnoxious title. In the Northern Territory there is not the beloved system of one vote one value. Half the members of that assembly are not elected to office, but are appointed by the Federal Government. It passes ordinances which have the full effect of law in the Northern Territory. In case it should get too democratic, the Federal Government has provided that its resident officer—the Administrator as he is called—must be the permanent President and have strong control over all deliberations. To further safeguard the position the Federal Government has provided that it shall not be permitted to spend any money and that its ordinances must be subject to disallowance by the Federal Minister.

Let us consider something a little closer to home. I have the Rules and Standing Orders of the Australian Labor Party (South Australian Branch) and of the Australian Federal Labor Party. I must admit it is not the most recent copy, but apparently my membership has expired! This copy is as amended to October, 1951. I have been informed by reliable sources that my copy is authentic and

I have been supplied with a number of amendments since 1951. The passages I propose quoting are still in complete operation in South Australia. So that I will not be accused of misquoting, let me read clause 20 (a). It states:—

There shall be an administrative authority to be called the Central Council which shall meet monthly and be constituted as follows:—25 members and over, one delegate; 250 members and over, two delegates; 500 members and over, three delegates; 1,500 members and over, four delegates; 2,500 members and over, five delegates; 3,500 members and over, six delegates; 5,000 members and over, seven delegates.

There does not appear to be much of the one vote one value system there.

Mr. Dunstan—You won't read the whole of it, will you? You are only trying to mislead, and you know it.

Mr. O'Halloran—It has no relation to the argument.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—In case it may be claimed that this central executive is an authority of no particular merit and has no authority I quote subparagraph (b):—

The central council shall be the governing body between conventions and all members of the Party shall be bound by the decisions of the central council.

Mr. O'Halloran—That is not correct.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I read the clause.

Mr. O'Halloran—Read the whole of it.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have. I am certain that the honourable member has not been looking at it as closely as I have. I will read the whole of the clause because I do not want the Leader of the Opposition to think I am misquoting the rules. Clause 20 (a) provides:—

There shall be an administrative authority to be called the central council which shall meet monthly and be constituted as follows:—

(I have already given the figures and therefore shall not repeat them.) Paragraph (b) reads:—

The central council shall be the governing body between conventions and all members of the Party shall be bound by the decisions of the central council.

This central council is of some importance. I shall not read the whole of the Parliamentary pledge, but only the relevant parts.

Mr. John Clark—Did you accuse us earlier of playing politics?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am replying to the questions raised by members opposite that the State electoral system is wrong because it does not provide one vote one value,

and their assertion that one vote one value is the universally accepted principle. I say that this great universal principle they talk about so much here is not practised when they go home. Then they make their pledge to abide by the authority of a council which is not appointed by this means at all. In the Parliamentary pledge there is what might be regarded as some qualification. It is not a very important one, but it says:—

I hereby agree to be bound by the Federal and State platforms and the Federal and State rules of the Australian Labor Party and by all resolutions of the Federal conference or State convention which do not conflict with the platform and by decisions of the central executive that do not conflict with platforms and rules or decisions of the central council or convention.

The member for Norwood comes in here and flings his arms around and says what he would do, but in many instances he will do precisely what he is told. Where one would expect the sacred principle of one vote one value to apply is at the Federal conference of the Party, but what are the rules of this conference? I do not want to go into the question of the control of the Party as that is outside the ambit of his House, and I am not concerned about what the Party does with its decisions; I am only concerned with this sacred principle which provides that one vote shall have one value. Clause (1) of the rules which answers the question provides that each State shall be entitled to six delegates. Members will not for one moment suggest that this principle is applied at the Party's Federal conference when the little State of Tasmania, with a relative handful of trade unionists and Labor Party members sends the same number of delegates to the governing body as the great State of New South Wales. It is difficult to obtain the relative strength of the Party in the respective States, but I am relying on figures for the 1953 Federal Senate election. I am assuming that the proportionate ratios are fairly accurate. At that election in New South Wales 948,920 first preference votes were registered in favour of Labour, a very magnificent vote. These figures indicate that there was one member at the Federal conference to every 158,000 Party voters. In Tasmania the total Labor vote was 70,613, or one to 12,000. Where, then, are the electoral principles so frequently expounded by Opposition members? The one vote one value principle does not apply in those cases, nor does it apply in this State. I do not criticize the Labor Party for it. We on this side do the same and regard it as a proper and practical thing to do. There must be

extra representation for outlying parts of the country. What I criticize is the lip service given by Opposition members to the principle of one vote, one value, which is really not a principle at all, and which they do not adopt in their domestic affairs. I think I have dealt with this question adequately.

Probably the most important topic raised by Opposition members in this debate is the establishment of steel mills in South Australia, and the industrialization connected with it. I am speaking this afternoon because I know Mr. Riches wants to have the benefit of my remarks before he speaks. The subject was mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition and at least five other members, and when there are so many remarks it is difficult to get a common policy. The Leader of the Opposition made it clear that he and his Party did not believe in repudiation.

Mr. O'Halloran—That is correct.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Then I thought he got into deep water. If I understood his contentions correctly he believes that the State should establish the steel works. Apparently silence gives consent.

Mr. O'Halloran—I am staggered by the magnitude of the misstatement.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not want to over-exaggerate the honourable member's remarks.

Mr. O'Halloran—I said the State should take steps to see that steelworks were established, not do the job itself.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I accept the amendment. We must have iron ore for steel works and that is where the Leader of the Opposition got into difficulties. He said the ore could be obtained from the Broken Hill Proprietary Coy. Of course, there is to be no repudiation, just obtain the ore from the company! Obviously, the company would not be prepared to sell the ore. The public is concerned about the mineral resources of Australia and that includes iron ore and other minerals. Members may not know that at present the company is importing iron ore from outside Australia in order to conserve its resources. That shows that the company would not be a willing seller of the ore which the Leader of the Opposition says we should obtain from it. "Obtain" was a convenient word for him to use. He did not say much about the method. He did not face up to the realities. If the obtaining of a million tons of ore is a practical possibility why has the State been spending over the last three years tens of thousands of pounds to establish deposits

outside the leases held by the company? Why are experts coming here from overseas and flying with highly scientific instruments, at great cost, over all parts of Australia? Of course, it would be a simple matter to write to the chairman of directors of the company in the following terms:—

Dear Sir—We have arranged for overseas interests to produce steel in South Australia and we would therefore be glad if you would make available to us one million tons of iron ore a year, which quantity we consider necessary to maintain the works.

That is fatuous speaking. The Leader of the Opposition found himself in the same difficulties as the State Government did three years ago. At that time it found that the iron ore resources of the State were being steadily depleted. The only justification for establishing steel works in this State is the presence of iron ore. If we take from the deposits 1,000,000 tons every year the justification for the establishment of a steel works is weakened. That was something the Government realized and that is why it started the investigation, which has proved interesting. The Leader of the Opposition did not face up to the crucial question. If a steel industry is to be established at Whyalla and the company is not prepared to do it where are we to get the iron ore? Merely to float over it in a vague way by saying, "We will obtain it from the B.H.P." means either that the whole submission is going to fall to the ground as soon as it is tested or it has to be backed up by something which the honourable member realizes is sinister, something that this Parliament should not contemplate for one moment and something that, apart from the moral issue, would never get us anywhere. It has to be backed up by what the honourable member for Norwood openly advocated last night—complete repudiation.

Mr. Stephens—But your members have accused you of repudiation.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—They may have done that, but I have never consciously repudiated and I will never stand for repudiation. If the honourable member wants it a little more forthrightly than that, I say that I would sooner go out of politics tomorrow than introduce a Bill in this House that would mean the repudiation of a sacred agreement entered into by this Parliament. I hope that is sufficiently definite. If the honourable member wants repudiation—

Mr. Stephens—I do not.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Then we are in agreement.

Mr. Riches—What if the other party repudiates?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am coming to that, because many loose statements have been made on this matter. Last night the honourable member for Norwood quoted a few selected passages taken out of their context. I have examined this question on many occasions and I will now give the most definite statement made by the B.H.P. in evidence without any of the qualifications that may attach to it in some subsequent paragraph. In reply to questions 59 and 60, Mr. Essington Lewis said:—

If, as I presume we all hope, a blast furnace is established it will lead to the establishment of a coke oven plant and a steel works and it will then be necessary to augment our fresh water supply to a considerable extent. . . . Without there being any commitment on my part to try to forecast the future it is a general condition of affairs in the rest of the world that where a blast furnace is established coke ovens and steel works follow. That has been the general trend of things in the countries I have visited. Again without committing myself, I hope I can visualize the necessary coke oven and steel works being built behind the blast furnace at Whyalla. I can give no guarantee of the company's policy or of what might happen in the future but the first step, and the most definite one, is the establishment of a blast furnace.

In reply to question 104, he said:—

If we are going to build up a big industry at Whyalla we want to know how we stand with our iron ore leases. In other parts we can take our iron ore to the coal but you cannot bring iron ore and coal to Whyalla and make it pay. The surer you make the company's position at Whyalla the sooner you will get other industries there. The whole thing is security and when it comes to vast sums of money being spent and exploitation of industries the thing the directors always ask first is, "Are we safe."

That is the most definite of all the evidence given, and it was not given to a tame committee—honourable members opposite had representation on it, and they were able to test the matter. Mr. Dunstan, in his haste to get going last night, read one set of documents only, but this matter is contained in a number of documents and it would have been interesting for him if he had read what the debate in Parliament set out, because the assurances given by the B.H.P. were in fact balanced and weighed in Parliament.

Mr. O'Halloran—And accepted, and a pipeline was built.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will deal with that. The honourable member made one very serious mis-statement of fact about the pipeline,

but I will deal with that question later. I was not on the select committee so I can only quote documents, but I can quote from actual knowledge on the negotiations that led to the establishment of the pipeline. When this matter was mentioned to the Premier of the day, Mr. Butler, he reported to Parliament, and on October 12, 1937, as set out on page 1081 of *Hansard*, he said:—

It is generally realized that iron and steel are key industries, and that wherever they are established other industries must ultimately follow. If steel works had been established in South Australia I am certain that the sheet steel industry would have been located here. Even now I am of the opinion that if the B.H.P. Co. ultimately manufactures strip steel here a branch of the sheet steel works is within the bounds of practical possibility, more particularly as the motor body industry is the biggest user of such steel. It is tremendously important, and the actions of the whole world reveal it that whenever a steel works is established 101 other industries grow up around those works, especially subsidiary industries. I am certain that the establishment of this blast furnace will be followed by establishment of steel works, and I can visualize the development in this State in connection with secondary industries. I am sure that every member will approach the question with that aspect in view. Not only should members consider what it gives to us today, but what it will mean to South Australia in the future. It means a lot today to have a firm prepared to spend approximately £1,500,000 on the works set out in the agreement. Ultimately we can look for the establishment of steel works. No matter to what part of any country we may go, it will be found that once a blast furnace has been established for the manufacturing of pig iron, steel works ultimately follow. That is a natural corollary.

I point out that he did not say that was a province of the company but placed it on the same basis as Mr. Lewis, that it has been intended where blast furnaces have been established. Later, Mr. Butler said:—

The enacting parts of the Bill are merely for ratifying the agreement and requiring the Public Works Committee to inquire into the possible method of securing an increased water supply for the northern areas of the State. The need for this water supply will become apparent when the details of the agreement are considered. The position is that blast furnaces for producing pig iron do not of themselves require a great deal of water and no large Government water schemes are demanded for this purpose, in fact, none; but it has been found in practice that the establishment of blast furnaces is commonly followed by the installation of coke ovens and steel works, and these latter establishments require large quantities of water. If, therefore, the State is to receive the maximum amount of benefit from the establishment of

the blast furnace, we must be in a position later on to supply large quantities of water to the company at an economic price. This clause merely says that if the company notifies the Government of its intention to construct steel works, coke oven plant, etc., the Government will use its best endeavours to supply an adequate quantity of water at an economic price. The clause received much consideration. In the first place the company desired that Parliament should guarantee to it, if it constructed steel works, the supply of a certain quantity of water at a certain price. The only scheme worthy of consideration is pumping from the Murray. We could establish small reservoirs and possibly large ones, but they would be dependent upon the rainfall, and it is absurd to think that any company would establish steel works, spending millions of pounds when, because of the low rainfall, we might at periods not be able to supply any water.

Mr. Lacey, who was at that time Leader of the Opposition interjected:—

We would have to put the water question beyond doubt.

Mr. Butler then went on:—

That is so. That is why we intend to ask the Public Works Committee to make an investigation, feeling sure that ultimately steel works will be established. The company asked the Government to guarantee to supply water at the price mentioned. The price is quite all right and we said, and I think members will agree, that if we were to ask Parliament to guarantee the supply of water, then the company should guarantee to establish steel works in a given time. That is necessary.

The member for Norwood can see from those extracts from *Hansard* that the establishment of a steel works was placed before Parliament as something that was likely to happen, as something that the company and the Government of the day desired to happen, but it was not a definite agreement.

Mr. O'Halloran—But you pointed out some time ago that if it did not happen soon it could not happen. That is what we are worried about.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will come back to that point later. I am now dealing with the contention of the member for Norwood that we should repudiate the agreement because it has been broken. He said it had been broken and quoted from evidence to prove it, though I felt he did not make a very satisfactory job of it.

Mr. O'Halloran—All he quoted was the recommendation of the Director of Mines.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No; he said he agreed with that. In 1937 I was a back-bencher in Parliament, and this is what I said:—

We should totally rule out of order the second part of the proposal, which deals with

the suggested steel mill and water rights, because the company does not undertake to establish anything more than a blast furnace.

Mr. Shannon—Quite correct, too.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Hon. R. S. Richards interjected:—

Does it not mean that if the company puts in a unit the State is under an obligation to supply it with water?

I replied:—

It imposes upon the State a further obligation in respect of what it might be called upon to do.

The Hon. M. McIntosh interjected:—

It says, "will use every endeavour."

I then continued:—

The steel mills can be ruled out. The whole point is whether we are prepared to give away rights under the leases for 50 years in consideration of a company establishing a blast furnace at Whyalla and increasing its royalty by 3d. per ton.

Parliament was under no delusions as to what the agreement meant. Parliament makes mistakes, but taking it as a whole it is not a set of nit-wits. I believe the agreement was honourably entered into on all sides. I do not think the company tried to put a swift one over the Government.

Mr. Riches—But every member who voted on that Bill expected that a steel works would be established.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That is so, but the establishment of a steel works was not part of the price paid for the indenture. The argument of the member for Norwood breaks down completely. Any member's argument which has a suspicion or taint of repudiation breaks down when we consider that this was not an agreement which provided that the indenture should be granted because a steelworks was to be established. The indenture was clear and simple, and as far as I know all the company's obligations under the indenture have been carried out. It undertook to establish a blast furnace with a capacity of 200,000 tons a year, and I think it has a capacity of about 250,000 tons. The company undertook to pay 3d. a ton royalty on the ore up to the time the blast furnace came into operation; after that it was to pay 6d. a ton. It has done that; in fact, it voluntarily increased the royalty to 18d., so members cannot accuse the company of falling down on the terms of the indenture—indeed, it would be prejudicial to its interests to do so.

Mr. O'Halloran—I suppose if it fell down on its obligations the indenture could be repudiated.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Of course. The indenture is the company's security for its

industry, and as far as I know it has scrupulously carried out its undertakings. The member for Norwood, by inference, cast aspersions on the directors of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company, particularly on Mr. Essington Lewis.

Mr. O'Halloran—I do not think that is correct.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have *Hansard* here and I have read it again to refresh my memory. The member for Norwood said that Mr. Essington Lewis was very clever. We have had many citizens of whom we can be proud. In our political life we have had outstanding figures, and we revere their reputation. They may not necessarily belong to our Party, but we are proud of them because they were associated with the public life of this State and because we ourselves are playing some small part in public life. We revere the memory of Mr. Chifley. Although he was not a member of my Party—indeed, his political policies were opposed to many I believe to be right—I consider him one of the greatest men that Australia has ever produced in the political arena.

Mr. Stephens—It was a pity that was not said about him before he died.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I said it about him on many occasions, even during Federal election campaigns; therefore, honourable members should not think my statement is an innovation. In fact, I believe I can claim to have had a greater personal friendship with Mr. Chifley than many members opposite. In our political sphere there have been many figures of whom we may be proud, including the great Fathers of Federation and the Hon. R. Torrens, who has a world-wide reputation. In the same way, in the industrial life of this country there has been no more significant figure at any time than Mr. Essington Lewis. His opinions are respected throughout the world; his integrity is beyond suspicion; he was considered so highly by a Federal Labor Government that it recommended that he be made a Companion of Honour, probably the highest honour ever bestowed on an Australian citizen—and it must be remembered that Labor Governments are not prone to bestow such honours freely. That is an illustrious honour and an order with which Sir Winston Churchill has been proud to be associated. Yet, despite the record of Mr. Lewis, the member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) comes into this House, and by innuendo, tries to belittle him.

Mr. O'Halloran—I do not agree with your interpretation of Mr. Dunstan's remarks.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not desire to place a wrong interpretation on the remarks of any honourable member, but, after carefully reading Mr. Dunstan's speech in *Hansard*, I was able to verify the note that I had detected in listening to him last night. Does any member reject this as being a fair interpretation of Mr. Dunstan's statement. "These people put a swift one over us. They said they would establish a steelworks, but after making that promise they did not do so. We will cut their heads off." Does any honourable member deny that that was the tone of Mr. Dunstan's speech?

Mr. O'Halloran—I do.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Then the honourable the Leader should read the speech. Having read Mr. Dickinson's comments about a repudiation of the leases under the Broken Hill Proprietary Company's Indenture Act, Mr. Dunstan said he entirely agreed with them. I have a great admiration for Mr. Dickinson in many respects; he is a brilliant scientist and has been a brilliant officer of this State. He is my personal friend, but I do not necessarily go to him for advice on moral issues. As Parliamentarians we are trained and it is our duty to judge on moral issues that come before this House and to decide how far we are justified in interfering with other people's rights for any particular purpose. We do not need to go outside this House to do that, and Mr. Dickinson is not the Director of Public Morals, but the Director of Mines. The fact that Mr. Dunstan said he agreed with that policy meant that he was advocating it. He cannot hide behind the Director of Mines, because he comes here and speaks as a member. The honourable the Leader suggested that the pipeline was installed in pursuance of the Indenture Act and that it was a part of the agreement for the establishment of a steelworks.

Mr. O'Halloran—I did not put it that way.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Leader does not like my stating bald facts. This afternoon the member for Stuart (Mr. Riches), by interjection, said, "What about the pipeline?" but let me make the position plain so that members will not make any misstatements in future. Immediately after the passing of the Indenture Act I came into the Ministry as Commissioner of Crown Lands, and after some months I became Premier. In taking over from Sir (then Mr.) Richard Butler I was told by him that among matters awaiting consideration was the proposed establishment by the B.H.P. of a tinplate industry at

Whyalla. There was nothing very concrete about the proposal, but he said it had been mooted for discussion with the company and that I should examine it.

About that time my colleague the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Christian), then a private member, arranged that I go to Eyre Peninsula regarding marginal lands projects, and on the way home, by appointment, I stayed at Whyalla and met the directors of the B.H.P. Mr. Essington Lewis was there and we discussed the proposed establishment of a tinsplate industry in South Australia. The discussions were long and amicable and substantial agreement was reached on all phases. Summarized, the agreement was that the B.H.P. would establish a tinsplate industry at Whyalla, that it would supply the whole of the Australian requirements of tinsplate, that about 4,000 persons would be employed, that a water supply would be required from the South Australian Government, and that the company would enter into an agreement with the Federal Government to sell the tinsplate at world parity prices on the Australian market. The company did not want any tariff protection, but it required an assurance from the Federal Government that, in so far as it was supplying the Australian demand, it would be protected from importations. In other words, it would be prepared to establish the industry and sell the product at world parity prices, but it wished to be protected against dumping.

I wrote to the Prime Minister of the day, Mr. Lyons, and he appointed a subcommittee of the Federal Government, which Mr. Lewis and I were invited to meet to work out details of the project for submission to the Federal Government. A meeting took place in Melbourne, and, speaking from memory, the subcommittee consisted of the Prime Minister (Mr. Lyons), the Federal Treasurer (Mr. Casey), the Minister for Trade and Commerce (Sir Earle Page) and two others. The project was submitted to the committee and the South Australian Government asked the Federal Government for £1,000,000 to assist in providing a pipeline. The committee considered the request and later reported that it was willing to recommend the proposal to the Federal Government; later the proposal, with some details, was accepted by the Federal Government. Although accepting the proposal, however, the Federal Government was not in a position to give effect to it. Because of an honourable agreement it could not provide for

import controls, except after a Tariff Board inquiry.

The Tariff Board held an inquiry and its decision was favourable, but Great Britain objected on the grounds that it had been held prematurely and that the British case had been inadequately presented. Another inquiry was held, and again the Tariff Board's decision was favourable. After a delay of a few weeks owing to Mr. Lyons' death, Mr. Menzies came into office and he approved the scheme. I then told Mr. Essington Lewis that it had been approved; but he said that, during the interval, war had become imminent and that communications from overseas indicated that equipment was no longer available, and therefore the project would be out. I asked him what that would mean, and he said, "It means you cannot have a tinsplate industry, but, as soon as the war begins in earnest, ships will be required as they have never been required before, and the company is prepared to establish a shipbuilding yard at Whyalla if the State is prepared to go ahead with its proposal for a water supply." Therefore any suggestion that the steel works was to be established if we constructed a pipeline is not correct. Sir George Jenkins, who was chairman of the Public Works Committee at the time, can verify this fact: that if we established a pipeline, the B.H.P. would establish the shipyard.

Mr. O'Halloran—But originally the pipeline was associated with the tinsplate works and, prior to that, mentioned by Mr. Butler (the then Premier) in connection with the steel works.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The tinsplate and the pipeline projects were cancelled by the war, and we started afresh with two new propositions. My submissions to the Public Works Committee in this matter are available for all members to read; they were on the basis that, if the State constructed the pipeline, the B.H.P. would establish a shipyard. There is no repudiation by the B.H.P. regarding the establishment of a steel works in relation to the construction of the pipeline. Although I am probably more estranged from this company at the moment than I have ever been, throughout the many negotiations I have had with it over a long period, I am prepared to say that I have never dealt with a company that has so scrupulously honoured its word. That does not mean that I concur with any delay in the establishment of steel works. I believe that, notwithstanding the fact that it was made abundantly clear to members at the time the

Indenture Act was before the House, there was no commitment. I am quite certain that members desired to further a steel works when they voted for that Act.

Mr. O'Halloran—The then Premier had a great deal to say about it in his second reading speech.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I had something to say, too.

Mr. O'Halloran—You were a bit more critical.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I was. I pointed out that we were considering an Indenture Act, and that the things we were providing were all in black and white. Anyone could build castles in the air; the reality was the Indenture Act, as I pointed out to members. Would anyone suggest that Mr. Richards, the then Leader of the Opposition, would not say that the thing we were approving was the Indenture Act?

I believe that this State has a very strong claim, on a number of grounds, for a steel works. South Australia has been extremely generous in its treatment of the company, and in its treatment of the consumers of steel throughout the whole of Australia. They have had the benefit for many years of steel produced at infinitely lower prices than obtained in other countries of the world, even America, with all its great capacity and vaunted efficiency, or Great Britain, Belgium or Germany; none of them have had the great advantage of steel on the basis that we have had in Australia, and there is not the slightest doubt that these things have been brought about by a number of factors, one of the most important being the availability of high grade ore—some of the richest iron ore in the world—close to the sea shore; an iron ore, moreover, extremely easy to treat and containing enough manganese to make it really high quality. Indeed, I believe at one time the industry was even embarrassed by the percentage of manganese, and some of it was exported. There is not the slightest doubt that this State has contributed to the soundness of the Australian economy through making its ore readily available under reasonable conditions, without interruption and without red tape.

The company has had the privilege of carrying on an industry with a minimum of outside interference, and the Australian economy as a whole has benefited in a remarkable way. I believe, therefore, that we have a claim upon the company, for its welfare has been largely advanced by the consideration that the Governments and Parliaments of South

Australia have given it; it has had security and honest treatment under our laws, and these things merit consideration. I believe also that we have a claim because of the effect on the Australian economy. In the first place, consumers have had a manufactured material at low prices. More than that, the industry itself has been developed to a large extent—though not entirely—from the profits derived from the operations of the company, notwithstanding the low prices it has charged for its steel. Every year, almost without exception, the company has been able to pay reasonable dividends to its shareholders and at the same time to plough back profits into improvements and extensions, so that today the assets of the company, if they could be valued—which I very much doubt—are undoubtedly infinitely greater than the share capital. This arises from the fact that year in year out there has been a ploughing back of profits arising out of the use of our raw materials, and this constitutes a ground for a development in this State.

On numerous occasions I have been asked to give some details of the proposition we submitted to the company for the establishment of steel works at Whyalla. The basis of our proposition was this: handling facilities of modern character are already established at Whyalla; there is already a blast furnace capable of some production; as far as we know structural steel is still an item for the manufacture of which there are inadequate plans in Australia. I am not in the company's confidence as to its future programme. I have tried on a number of occasions, with a view to seeing what our position was, to try to get some details. As far as I know its present programme is to complete the enormous project it has commenced at Port Kembla; beyond that I know nothing. Although from time to time we have heard pronouncements of various things to be produced, I have never seen, nor have any of my officers been able to find, any reference to the production of structural steel in Australia. The latest bulletin issued by the illustrious Department of National Development, 203 Collins Street, Melbourne, gives a resume of these things. It is not very helpful, as members will see, but it does have a few comments to make upon the position regarding structural steel and merchant sections. This is what it says:—

The demand for structural and merchant sections is steady at a high level. Supply, although short, is not acutely so at present, as heavy imports made towards the end of 1954 and the first part of this year boosted to a

considerable extent the inadequate supplies from local sources.

Owing to a world increase in demand, particularly in the United Kingdom, the high level of imports is unlikely to be maintained. Overseas orders are difficult to place, and deliveries extend into 1956. In the circumstances the supply position may become more difficult towards the end of this year.

Plans are in hand to expand the local capacity to produce merchant steel, but overall Australia is likely to be dependent upon imports for a significant proportion of requirements for an indefinite period.

Members will see that although there are some plans for merchant steel, as far as we know there is no programme for the extension of the manufacture of structural sections. The original idea came to us from some recommendations by the company itself. They were given confidentially to the Commonwealth Government during the war when, I am reliably informed, the company itself made a proposition to the Federal Government pointing out that the manufacture of structural steel should be encouraged. Therefore, we believe that the company considers that structural steel production is a necessary thing.

Turning to the other side of the picture, the present price of structural joists in Australia is £33 10s. a ton against the English price of £56, c.i.f. & e., so that there is a difference of £22 10s. a ton in favour of Australian production. Other prices are:—

	Austn.			English (c.i.f. & e.)		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Galvanized iron	82	12	6	101	10	0
Black sheet, 17 to 20g	65	0	0	73	0	0
Merchant steel	35	0	0	60	0	0

These are, incidentally, the recent new prices, and I quote them because the disparity that exists between overseas and Australian prices had a big bearing on the second part of the proposal I put up that anyone who is fortunate enough to buy Australian steel gets it infinitely cheaper than if he has to import it from overseas. It is in the interests of the Australian producers to boost their production to meet Australian requirements. Instead of a new company being formed, requiring port facilities, blast furnaces, handling gear and so forth, I submitted a proposal to the B.H.P. that it extend its present operations at Whyalla by establishing coke ovens and structural steel works and that the Australian price be loaded by a reasonable amount to permit that expansion. I believe it was in the interests of the company to accept that proposal. It did not have to take the responsibility for any increase in price nor did it have to call upon its

shareholders to provide the capital. I was taking that responsibility. The company would have had a unit that would inevitably be profitable and for the life of me I cannot understand why the proposal was not accepted. It was eminently fair to all concerned.

Mr. O'Halloran—Except, perhaps, to the Australian consumer to whom the price of steel would have been loaded.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Australian consumer is paying the imported price and will continue to do so. If the Australian price were loaded to the extent of £2 a ton to provide this additional unit, would not our national economy be built up? Would not production be built up? Would we not get all the advantages of an additional avenue for employment? We have more or less become careless of the question of providing employment for our workers because we have a surplus of jobs over labour at the moment, but members have a short memory if they imagine that that condition will last for ever. I sometimes hear the criticism from members opposite that we have gone in for too much industrialization, but the day will inevitably come when we shall be glad that we have these factories able to provide employment for our people.

Mr. Fred Walsh—I do not think you have heard that from this side of the House.

Mr. O'Halloran—It is an echo from behind you.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is not only an echo from behind me. We hear it from various sources and at various times. For many years I believed that I had personal friends in the directors of the B.H.P., but at the moment I feel estranged from them. My great regret today is that Mr. Harold Darling has passed on and that Mr. Essington Lewis, through advancing years, is not able to take a more personal control of the B.H.P. If those men could stretch a point in favour of this State they would do it, but unfortunately times change and new men take control. If I were asked where the State stood today with the B.H.P. I could not answer. The document I was handed at the last meeting with the company staggered me. It was not addressed to me and it commenced with the words, "That the Premier of South Australia be informed." We have never experienced that type of negotiation with the company before. It may be that the company feels that it has been unjustly criticized and that Mr. Dickinson, as an officer of the Mines Department, should have been silenced and his reports edited. The Government has taken the

view—it may not be a correct view—that where Parliament has provided that an officer shall present reports to it, these reports should be presented unedited. The Leader of the Opposition asked me whether Mr. Dickinson's report represented the views of my Government, but I assured him that it did not.

Mr. Macgillivray—What were you informed by the company?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have a copy of that document. In effect, it said that the company was unable to proceed with any further activities at Whyalla until 1960 and that the matter would then be considered. There was no commitment in it.

Mr. O'Halloran—Because it was fully committed at Port Kembla and Newcastle.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. I have the document, but cannot find it at the moment. However, to enable members to see it in its entirety, I move:—

That the document from the B.H.P. Co. be incorporated in *Hansard*.

The SPEAKER—I do not know what the House thinks about that. It involves a big question. The document is not to be read but is to be incorporated without members hearing it or having an opportunity to rebut it.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think the document should be printed, in fairness to the company. It is a matter of considerable public importance. I was bitterly disappointed with the decision because I thought the project was in the interests of the country as a whole and should be accepted. I believed it to be in the interests of defence and it was definitely in the interests of the company and its shareholders. If the company had said, "We regret that at the moment we cannot undertake this work; our technical men and resources are wrapped up in another project already under construction, but we will accept this proposal as soon as possible," I believe the people of this State would have accepted that as a reasonable attitude.

The SPEAKER—On a point of order, Mr. Premier. Is it not the usual procedure to lay such a document on the table and move that it be printed? If we adopt the other procedure the position you may well be confronted with later is that some member will want to have an unread speech incorporated in *Hansard* and you may seek the protection of the Chair.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I thought the decision of the House was that a copy of this

document should be incorporated in *Hansard* without my reading it. I am not suggesting that a speech should be incorporated, merely this document, so that members may see its contents.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, it has been the practice on occasions when Ministers reply to questions, and the replies are of undue length, that for the information of members the reply is printed in *Hansard* without it being read. Could not the same principle be applied here?

The SPEAKER—Answers to questions, in the form of tables or statistics or other factual information, by leave of the House, may be inserted in the official reports of the Parliamentary debates without such tables being read. That is the latest addition to the Standing Orders made in 1952. I am only drawing attention to the importance of this move because I feel there is some difference between incorporating answers to a question and incorporating matter which may be offensive and state all manner of things. If we admit this document without its being read and later members seek the protection of the Chair in regard to some such admission I would be powerless to give it. However, leave has been granted but I have made the position clear and members know what has been done.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The position is that negotiations have now broken down and I presume that the company is not prepared or in a position to resume those negotiations until some future date, probably toward 1960. It may be that it will examine the matter more maturely at some other time. I have now found the document referred to and it is as follows:—

That the Premier of South Australia be informed—

1. That a careful review has been made by our officers of our forward construction programme and its relation to the likely Australian and New Zealand demand for steel products.

2. That the work at Port Kembla and the less amount of work at Newcastle must be given first priority both from the point of view of getting increased steel to the Australian market as expeditiously as possible and from the point of view of supplying it at a reasonable cost.

3. That our officers believe that the completion of the Port Kembla programme and the carrying out of some necessary works at Newcastle will not in themselves meet the forecasted Australian and New Zealand demand for steel, and that the deficiency in 1965 may be sufficient to justify the establishment of further major steel-making units.

4. That so far as we can now see, it will be 1959 or 1960 before the programmed works at

Port Kembla and Newcastle will be sufficiently advanced to permit any active steps being taken to erect additional facilities in readiness for this forecasted shortage in supply.

5. That the question of whether these increased facilities should then be erected will depend on the raw material position, the then condition of the steel market and other economic considerations, all of which will require a further close survey at or about the time the question is to be decided.

6. That a material factor in a decision to provide further steel-making units would be the iron ore position, and that on our present knowledge it appeared that the ferruginous quartzites near Whyalla were one of the more likely sources of iron for Australia's future needs. Given reasonable co-operation by the South Australian Government we were prepared to investigate fully the extent and treatment of these deposits.

7. That the directors confirm their continued interest and support for expansion in South Australia, but in order to avoid misunderstanding and premature commitment emphasise that the actual commencement of a further major venture in South Australia must be influenced by the work being carried out at Port Kembla and Newcastle and be subject to the economic conditions and the practicability of the project.

The document does not take us quite as far along the road as the evidence of Mr. Essington Lewis given at the time when the Indenture Act was passed.

Mr. O'Halloran—The major point is that by the time they get around to considering it there may not be any iron ore.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I put it to the conference that when the Indenture Act was passed there had been no survey of the iron ore deposits in South Australia, and I do not think there had been a national survey. Since then we have made a survey of the deposits and find they are by no means inexhaustible. At the rate of consumption of 3,000,000 tons a year, they do not constitute more than a reasonable reserve. If an industry is to be established at Whyalla two things are fairly evident. The first is if an industry is to be amortized over a relatively reasonable period it must be established in the near future. The longer you go the less argument you have for its establishment. The second point is it would be completely uneconomic to establish a steel industry at Whyalla unless it was backed by reasonable reserves of ore. You lose your argument on the one hand and it becomes an impracticability on the other. I had to tell the directors, and His Excellency has advised the House since, that we reject that as not being a reasonable and fair proposition.

Several courses are open to us. For three years we have been conducting a very intensive

investigation, but made no progress except that we proved enormous deposits of low grade ore. It would be hopeless to try to work them in competition with high grade ore, but they do constitute a reserve for an industry already established. If the industry had been established and the capital costs had been amortized, there would then be a basis for a continuation of that industry with the large reserves of low grade ore.

Mr. Pearson—Would that increase the price of steel?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I would not know. When I was in America I got from the president of the Iron and Steel Corporation of America some figures regarding the cost of the product of a blast furnace. Our product is infinitely cheaper than anywhere else in the world. According to the figures given to me the product of the blast furnace in Australia is only one-twentieth of the cost of the average American undertaking. The product from Whyalla must be very much cheaper than the cost of the product from Yampi Sound as the ships have to travel twice the distance compared with Whyalla. In addition the Yampi Sound ore has been found to be very difficult to use and I believe will involve the company in major expenditure in having to cinder it to make it suitable for blast furnace use. I understand that the iron ore deposits near Whyalla have produced an iron as cheap as in any place in the world, and I believe, and I have evidence in support that, if we could locate an attractive deposit of iron ore, overseas companies would be interested. I have that from an official and an unofficial source. I have received numerous inquiries. Some are anonymous, but some come from highly accredited people and I believe that if we had a deposit of iron ore which would give security to an industry the Australian market would be an attractive investment for overseas capital and a company would be interested in it. That remains to be seen. I do not want it to be inferred that I have a client who has a pen in his hand just waiting to sign a document. Obviously, that could not be the case as it involves an expenditure of some £50,000,000. I have had a number of inquiries from people, some of them larger concerns than the B.H.P., and they are people of substance and world reputation, and these inquiries lead me to believe that if we could establish security of materials they would be prepared to consider the establishment of works here.

I reject both suggestions made from the Opposition benches that either we should

compulsorily take over the leases or that we should compel the B.H.P.—and it would be a form of repudiation—to hand over ore which it probably would not be prepared to hand over. Apart from anything else, I do not advance this as a real reason. The real reason is a moral one. Supposing we had by Act of Parliament established a steel industry in this State. Do members believe that any other enterprise outside Australia or in another State would think of coming here if they had no confidence in us? The big Chrysler motor company is coming here, but what kind of reception would there have been if on the day they landed they saw published across the front page of the daily press—"The B.H.P. Indenture Act repudiated"? I direct this to members opposite, including the honourable member who was so anxious last night to get on to the band waggon and follow Mr. Dickinson.

Mr. O'Halloran—The public acquisition of the Adelaide Electric Supply Company did not frighten people.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The compulsory acquisition of public utilities is something that is accepted the world over, and the Adelaide Electric Supply Company franchise provided that it was subject to acquisition and the acquisition was expressed as a local government acquisition. We also compulsorily acquired wharves. The compulsory acquisition of land required for a railway or a hospital is something which is understood.

Mr. O'Halloran—You will have to acquire some land from the B.H.P. for a port at Fitzgerald Bay.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The B.H.P. does not own Fitzgerald Bay. If any company were prepared to establish works there we would be quite happy. We would welcome the action, so we are not in trouble there. The Indenture Act protected the position in relation to the development of other industries. One obligation of the company was that it had to haul materials over any railway line constructed. Other companies had the right to put in crossings. There were safeguards sufficient to enable the establishment of other industries. At present we have not been able to establish enough deposits of iron ore to justify other people entering the industry. To date the investigation has not been a failure, because we have discovered enormous quantities of low-grade ore. Recently we have been able to make progress in the proving of high-grade deposits. Earlier we thought we had an interesting discovery of 30,000,000

tons of high-grade ore. Eleven out of the first 15 holes bored penetrated ore. Some of the penetrations were good. We had two penetrations in ore to a depth of over 250ft. Probably the discovery will be about 10,000,000 tons of high-grade ore, but whether there is more there we do not know. The quantity of low-grade ore discovered was astronomical, between 5,000,000,000 and 7,000,000,000 tons. The high-grade ore at Iron Knob showed over 60 per cent, and the low-grade 38 per cent. There were difficulties which did not enable calculations to be made in accordance with these percentages. At present there are no less than six diamond drilling plants and three percussion scouting plants on the field. We are making a thorough geophysical survey of Eyre Peninsula. The only real steps to be taken, at this juncture are to try to establish deposits that are sufficiently encouraging.

Mr. Lawn—How long will it take to establish that?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I cannot say definitely. We looked for uranium ore in the Flinders Ranges for about three years and found nothing worth while. Then we moved to Radium Hill and found good deposits. Now we are investigating in the Crocker Well area, where we have been for about two years. We can say that there is one spot which justifies development. More recently in the area a project previously discarded now looks as though it will be worth while. The investigations made already have given us something on which to bargain. I believe the full story of the Middleback Ranges has not yet been written. We get interesting results from the use of geophysical instruments. In some instances it will be costly to prove anything. We are trying to prove a deposit on Yorke Peninsula where there seems to be an enormous anomaly. We put a diamond drill into part of the anomaly and found nothing to justify it. We could find no heavy or magnetic material. We know it is there, but the drill proved nothing. Ultimately we will have to drill more holes. North of Iron Knob geophysical conditions are extremely good. The first hole bored showed an iron ore deposit at a width of four feet, but did not justify the geophysical survey results. I am sure that careful investigation will give us something worth while. I can assure members that the matter will not be allowed to rest. I do not think any member can criticize the Government for not trying to develop the State. Wherever there is a possibility of developing resources the Government will be active.

Mr. Riches—Has the Government considered requiring the company to use low-grade ore?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—We have no power to do that. The Indenture Act says that all the rights of the company will be preserved to it during the term of the Indenture.

Mr. O'Halloran—The Act goes further than that.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Indenture provides for an extension for 21 years. The company has the right to mine the ore on the leases it holds and to use the ore. If we passed legislation compelling it to use only some of its high-grade ore it would be repudiation.

Mr. Riches—I meant that the company should use low-grade as well as high-grade ore.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It will not use low-grade ore willingly. We could compel the company to do it only by Act of Parliament, and that would take away one of the rights of the company. Too frequently we try to break down first principles. On many occasions Mr. Macgillivray has spoken about first principles, and I agree with him on that matter because we cannot build up on wrong principles.

I now propose to refer to some remarks made in connection with housing, and also the grouch that Opposition members seem to have. They say they are not in office because the electoral districts have been gerrymandered against them. Mr. Dunstan said:—

They say one thing one moment, do another the next and the result is that in South Australia there is not a clear-sighted policy based upon the first principles normally understood, but an incredible muddle expressed quite clearly in the Premier's speeches. He produces a jumble of inconsistent alleged reasons and his main purpose appears to be making a virtue of inconsistency. What has that meant to the public of this State?

This is what it has meant to the public of South Australia. During the life of this Government the State has gone from the lowest production value per head of population in the Commonwealth to vie with the rich State of Victoria in having the highest. That applies in both primary and secondary industries. The State with the lowest value production per head is Queensland, where the Legislative Council has been abolished. That State has the greatest potential wealth of any State and the lowest standard of living. What do the people of South Australia get out of the policy of my Government? It has always endeavoured to protect the public against exploitation, which falls heaviest on

the man with the family and the man with the lowest income. Let me give a comparison between prices in Adelaide, Melbourne and Perth:—

	Adel.		Melb.		Perth.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
2 lb. loaf of bread—						
Delivered	1	1½	1	2½	1	3
In shops	1	1	1	2	1	3
Milk per pint	0	8½	0	8½	0	8½
Eggs per dozen	5	5	6	3	5	6

Mr. Macgillivray—Are you helping the poultrymen in South Australia?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I thought the honourable member would make that interjection, so I obtained the relevant prices received by poultrymen. The wholesale price in Adelaide is 4s. 10d. and the retail is 5s. 5d., but in Perth, where the wholesale price is a penny less, the retail price is a penny more. The figures continue:—

	Adel.		Melb.		Perth.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Potatoes	0	4½	0	5	0	5½
Tea	7	5	7	5	7	9
Honey per 2 lb. jar	3	5½	3	10½	4	4½
1 lb. butter	4	1½	4	1½	4	2
Table margarine	2	7½	2	8½	2	9
1 lb. salt, loose	0	2	0	3	0	3½
1 lb. matured cheese	3	3½	3	6	3	7
Semi-matured cheese	3	0	3	2	3	4½
2 lb. self-raising flour,						
phosphate	1	5	1	5½	1	8
Self-raising flour,						
cream of tartar	1	6½	1	7	1	10
Plain flour	0	5	0	6	0	7
Rosella tomato sauce						Not
26oz.	3	11½	4	1		obtain-
Icing sugar	0	11½	1	0	1	0½
Beef sausages, per						
pound	1	6	1	9	1	10
Shellite, 26oz.	1	10½	2	0½	2	2
4 gall. tin kerosene	15	4	16	4	17	5
Petrol	3	3	3	3½	3	4
Men's haircuts	3	3	3	9	—	

It must be remembered that in Perth, where the prices of kerosene and petrol are higher than in Adelaide, there is a refinery. I have not been able to obtain the prices of haircuts in Perth. Superphosphate, which is very important to our national economy, costs in Adelaide in new bags £12 3s., in Melbourne £11 14s. and in Perth £13 7s. 9d. Victoria has been able to bring about the lower price because it has double the quantity of production. The retail price of beef or mutton in Melbourne and Perth is much higher than in Adelaide, and the market prices in Victoria and Adelaide are very similar. In Western Australia the market prices are higher. Paints sell at varying prices but Adelaide is generally

below any capital city in Australia. With beer we miss out slightly. In Adelaide the price of bottled beer is 2s. 7d., Perth 2s. 7d. and Melbourne 2s. 6d. Warrnambool blankets, 81 x 99, in Adelaide cost £12 1s. and in Perth £13 5s.

Mr. Macgillivray—What about the freight?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is 6s. 4d. Onkaparinga blankets of the same size cost £12 5s. in Adelaide and £13 7s. 6d. in Perth. For the honourable member's benefit the freight is still 6s. 4d. Laconia blankets of the same size cost £13 in Adelaide and £13 19s. 6d. in Perth—once again the freight is 6s. 4d. I could give quite a number of other figures but I will summarize by saying that since price control was dropped in Western Australia—

Mr. O'Halloran—Was price control dropped or was the Government defeated?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Does the Leader think the Government could not put its policy into operation? Is that the standard that honourable members opposite stand for? If a Government cannot carry out its policy it has no right to occupy the Treasury benches, because if it does it has to take responsibility for the laws.

Mr. O'Halloran—What did you do with the Town Planning Bill last year?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This House passed it, and we will have another go at it and get it through. Honourable members think it is finished, but it is not. On major matters it has been a long accepted principle of Parliamentary Government that if the Government cannot carry out its policy it goes to the people. What was the position when the Government brought in a Bill to acquire the Electric Supply Company?

Mr. O'Halloran—It was defeated, and you did not go to the country.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It was defeated just before Christmas. If the honourable member will look up the Votes and Proceedings he will find that the Government called a special session of Parliament in order to pass the necessary legislation, and did it. The Government said that was a vital matter. The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Norwood said the welfare of the people must be a vital matter. The Government said it had definite views about rent control and submitted them to the Legislative Council, and that Chamber accepted them.

Mr. O'Halloran—With qualifications.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Last night the member for Norwood said "What has the present Government's administration meant to the

people?" It has meant that since controls have been dropped in Western Australia the basic wage there, computed on the C series index, should have gone up by 22s. The relevant figure for South Australia is 6s.

Mr. Fred Walsh—It is more than that.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Those facts can be verified from the Commonwealth Statistician's published figures. Price control was dropped in Victoria.

Mr. Macgillivray—And in New South Wales.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, and there is no Legislative Council in that State! They have something instead that is nominated by the Government. The one vote one value principle does not apply there. The evolution of Parliamentary Government and the Legislative Council in New South Wales is enough to make a cat laugh if it were not so ridiculous. It was the policy of the Labor Party to abolish that Chamber, but when it got into power it said, "We can appoint one we like, so why abolish it?" I don't care what line Opposition members like to take to judge this Government's reputation. The question of housing has been mentioned, but I have some figures on that. Last night Mr. Dunstan quoted brick production figures. I think he said gross production of red bricks was about 78 million in the 1920s.

Mr. Dunstan—It was 89,000,000 in 1923-24.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—When members on this side said "What about cement brick production" he said that was insignificant. I shall give red brick production in 1930-31, the last time Labor occupied the Treasury benches.

Mr. Dunstan—That was during the depression.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A gross production of 89,000,000 red bricks was achieved in the 1920's, but the production in 1930-31 was only 6,900,000 and in 1931-32 it was 6,000,000. At that time there were people walking the streets looking for work, and there were materials galore.

Mr. Stephens—And the banks withdrew money from circulation.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think we had Labor Governments in every State and in the Federal Parliament at that time. The Premiers' plan, that interesting document that has become historical and merited much criticism over a period of years, was signed by no less a person than the Labor Premier of South

Australia and by every other State Labor Premier. The latest figures I can get on the number of houses completed are for the year 1954. They are:—

State	Government houses built.	Ratio per 1,000 population.
New South Wales . . .	5,724	1.67
Victoria	3,957	1.61
Queensland	2,023	1.53
South Australia . . .	3,454	4.33
Western Australia . .	2,420	3.78
Tasmania	664	2.15

Mr. O'Halloran—Those figures do not mean anything unless you quote the number of people waiting for houses.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have some figures on that too. I have heard the honourable member frequently say that the housing problem has been solved in Queensland.

Mr. O'Halloran—No, in New South Wales.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I accept that. At the last housing Ministers' conference I was told that the problem ceased to exist in Queensland. That was interesting to me, so I made some investigations. The population of New South Wales last year was 3,423,718, and the number of occupied houses there was 912,971, which gives an average of 3.75 persons per dwelling. I am not taking the total number of dwellings, even though those figures would be even more favourable for this State, but I have taken the number of occupied dwellings to give a comparison. In South Australia, with a population of 797,159, the total number of occupied dwellings was 215,329, which gave an average number of persons per dwelling of 3.70. Therefore, there are fewer persons per dwelling in this State than in New South Wales, which was quoted by the Leader of the Opposition by way of interjection. The average number of persons to each occupied dwelling in the other States are: Victoria 3.71; Queensland 3.88; Western Australia 3.92; Tasmania 3.92.

Mr. Stephens—You have taken the whole State, but if you had taken only the metro-

politan area your figures would have been different.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable Leader quoted the State of New South Wales, and I have produced figures showing a comparison between New South Wales and South Australia, so members opposite cannot quibble. The fact remains that over a number of years South Australia has built more houses per head of population than any other State, and its lead is increasing. This State has a higher average Savings Bank deposit, more motor cars, more wireless sets, and more domestic electrical gadgets per head of population than any other State. Wherever we look the fact remains that this Government may be judged by the record of State prosperity. The reason why the member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) is not a prospective Cabinet Minister is not the gerrymander that he so frequently talks about, but that this Government has done a reasonably good job and set out to help the people. It has not preached class legislation; it is trying to give every section a fair deal. Consequently, many people who at Federal elections vote Labor, at State elections vote Liberal.

I thank honourable members for the consideration they have shown me, and I assure them that their suggestions will be examined and, if practicable, accepted and their source acknowledged.

Mr. STEPHENS secured the adjournment of the debate.

HAWKERS CREEK RECLAMATION.

The SPEAKER laid on the table a report by the Public Works Committee, together with minutes of evidence, on Hawkercreek Reclamation.

Ordered that report be printed.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.27 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, June 7, at 2 p.m.