

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, September 20, 1955.

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

MOTOR VEHICLES REGISTRATION FEES (REFUNDS) ACT.

His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the Act.

QUESTIONS.**COMMONWEALTH-STATE HOUSING AGREEMENT.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—According to a report from Melbourne published in this morning's *Advertiser* a new plan is proposed for a Commonwealth-State housing agreement. The report states:—

It is believed in Melbourne that the plan proposes:—

A rise in the interest rate on money lent to the States.

A 20 per cent reduction in State housing programme for two years beginning on July 1 next.

A 30 per cent cut in the following three years.

Has the Premier had any communication from the Prime Minister on this subject and can he say whether the information quoted in the *Advertiser* is correct? If it is, has the Government any plans to overcome the housing difficulty that obviously will accrue if the State's housing programme is seriously curtailed on the lines mentioned in the article?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received a long communication from the Prime Minister on this matter. I read a couple of pages, but that was all I could digest on one occasion. Having digested that amount I sent the communication to the Housing Trust for more critical examination. Now that the Leader of the Opposition is interested in the matter I will resurrect the document and advise him more specifically on all its terms in due course. From what I read, the document provided that the Commonwealth would make money available to the States in future under a new agreement covering a period of five years, with revised rates of interest and with certain provisions relating to how the States are to dispose of the money while they are still responsible for its repayment to the Commonwealth. It seems to be a thoroughly bad principle for us to be responsible for repayment of money which in any case was to be alienated from us under an agreement before we had the spending of it.

That seemed a thoroughly incomprehensible arrangement and at that stage I discontinued reading the document.

FROST DAMAGE.

Mr. TEUSNER—On Saturday morning there was a visitation of frost in the Barossa Valley and other parts of South Australia, which had catastrophic effects, particularly in the lower portion of the Barossa Valley. In yesterday's *Advertiser* Mr. J. P. Jennings, of the viticultural station at Nuriootpa, is reported to have stated:—

The potential loss is terrific, but the damage caused will depend on future frosts and how the frost-bitten vines respond.

I understand that according to the chairman of the Barossa Frost Combating Committee, there is an estimated loss of 90 per cent in the buds and fruit in certain orchards on the floor of the valley, and considerable hardship is likely to be suffered by some growers who experienced a similar frost on September 29 last. Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether any officers of the Department of Agriculture are making a survey of the Barossa Valley and other portions of the State affected by the frost and, if not, will he cause such surveys to be made and bring down a report?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—As is usual in these matters, the departmental officers are alive to their responsibilities and have already made some preliminary investigations. Fuller investigations will be made and a report presented in due course.

Mr. QUIRKE—The extent of the recent frost damage is not yet fully known, but I am sure it will be found to be exceedingly heavy. It is not generally known that there is no form of insurance available for frost or hail damage to horticultural properties that is acceptable to insurance companies. The reason given for this has always been that it is impossible to assess the damage, and seeing that a visitation leads to colossal losses it is not possible for insurance companies to carry such a responsibility. Schemes to meet frost and hail damage have usually been separated when they have been brought forward tentatively, and have hinged upon either frost or hail damage. There are frost-free areas in South Australia where the gardens are at high levels and not normally subject to frosts of, say, 26 degrees. Will the Minister of Agriculture ascertain whether a form of insurance can be evolved to cover both hail and frost damage that would work on a contributory basis whereby a fund could be built up which would not aim to cover the

whole loss on a visitation but would assist, particularly when growers have incurred heavy losses in two successive years? Under the phylloxera scheme a contribution was levied on vinegrowers with a view to counteracting the effects of a visitation of phylloxera so that they could be compensated to the extent that they would be able to replant their vineyards with resistant stocks.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I will examine the matter.

Mr. MICHAEL—Early yesterday morning I rang the office of the Minister of Repatriation in response to a request by soldier settlers in the Cadell area who had suffered severe frost damage on Saturday night, that an officer be sent to the district to assess the damage. Can the Minister now say whether steps have been taken to comply with that request?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Following on the telephone call from the honourable member early yesterday morning I arranged for an officer of the Lands Department and an officer from the Department of Agriculture to proceed to the Cadell district early this morning to investigate the damage. I also arranged for all district officers in the Upper Murray area to investigate the damage within their districts. As soon as I have a report I shall be glad to make it available.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Together with other members representing fruit-growing districts, I was glad to hear the Minister of Irrigation say he had already called for a report on frost damage in the Upper Murray irrigation areas. In obtaining that report can he also get a report from his officers on the likely effect the frost damage will have on the finances of settlers in that area, following on the very poor markets they have had during the past season or two?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I think the honourable member will agree that it would be difficult to get an accurate estimate until the crop had been harvested. When that time arrives, however, the honourable member's request will be considered.

TONSLEY SPUR RAILWAY LINE.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I propose to quote from an article headed "No Purpose in Spur Line Talks" in this morning's *Advertiser* and from a letter. The Marion Council acceded to the Premier's request not to proceed with a conference at this stage. It is reported that a councillor told the Marion Council last night that he did not believe the route proposed by the railways had been pro-

perly examined by the Public Works Committee. Although I have mentioned the matter in this House I do not subscribe to that view because I have more confidence in the Public Works Committee. The important statement is:—

The council decided to submit its plan for an alternative route from Marion station to the Minister of Education and Mr. Walsh for further reference to the Premier.

I expect to receive it soon, probably tomorrow. The letter I referred to is one from the Engineering and Water Supply Department to persons affected by the proposed spur line, seeking permission for a departmental surveyor to enter the properties for the purpose of making a survey. Can the Premier say whether it would be practicable at this stage not to proceed with any further survey until he has had an opportunity to examine the new proposal and, if necessary, submit it to the Public Works Committee for further inquiry?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This involves a question of Government policy. I have had some reports from the honourable member and my colleague, the Minister of Education, regarding complaints made by residents in the area about the acquisition of their land. I informed the two honourable members that if there were a better route that had not been considered by the committee I was sure the Government and the committee would like to hear of it. In due course, no doubt, the council will submit alternative proposals and these will be referred informally to the committee to see whether or not they have been previously investigated. If the chairman informs me that they are new proposals and are worth examining they will be formally referred to the committee. The Government is not empowered to spend money on any project costing more than £100,000 (and this work will undoubtedly cost more) unless it has been reported on by the committee. All work in connection with the matter will be held up pending a decision.

GRASSHOPPER INFESTATION.

Mr. PEARSON—During the week-end it was reported to me that there had been some criticism by Mr. Russell, M.H.R., about the delay or difficulty said to have been encountered by landholders in obtaining supplies of grasshopper bait. As I understand it, district councils have been unable to supply the landholders through some inability to obtain bait from the Government. It appears that there may be some misunderstanding, despite the Minister's very best efforts to make the position clear, as to the source of supply of the

bait for district councils. In view of the criticism, will the Minister of Agriculture reiterate the method to be adopted so that there shall not be any doubt and landholders may have adequate supplies promptly to meet this serious threat to the State?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—If anyone had read intelligently the instructions given out repeatedly through the press and by special bulletins, as well as over the air, he should have no misunderstanding about how the materials are to be obtained. The instructions given were that the district councils themselves had to obtain the necessary materials from the suppliers, both for laying the bait and for getting poison for the spray method of extermination, and the councils then had to supply the landholders, whose duty it is to combat the pests on their land. Under the Act it is definitely the obligation of the landholder himself to apply the methods recommended by the department, that is, to lay baits or to spray in order to control the newly-hatched hoppers. It is definitely not the responsibility of the department to supply the materials. They can be obtained from commercial wholesale houses and the like in the city. It has been indicated that my department will reimburse councils the cost of the materials obtained and actually used in the control of the grass-hopper pest.

BULK HANDLING OF GRAIN.

Mr. McALEES—A Bill has been passed for the introduction of bulk handling of grain and people in my district and surrounding districts are wondering when it will eventuate. According to press reports the business is held up by the Public Works Committee. Plans have been drawn for the building of a silo at Wallaroo and the blame is placed on the committee for the delay in building it. Can the chairman of the Public Works Committee give the reason for the delay?

Mr. SHANNON (Chairman, Public Works Standing Committee)—I am pleased to put the honourable member's mind at rest. The blame for the delay in the installation of bulk handling plant at Wallaroo cannot be placed at the door of the committee. Prior to the passing of the legislation, which gave a valuable privilege to the Co-operative Bulk Handling Company, a report from the Public Works Standing Committee was presented to Parliament. The recommendations, if adopted, would have permitted the promises made during the debate on the measure, which provided for a charter to the Co-operative Bulk Handling Company, to be put into operation for this

coming harvest. For reasons not quite clear the Co-operative Bulk Handling Company disagreed with certain of the committee's recommendations and used its influence to encourage the Government to make a further reference to the committee on the siting of the proposed bin to serve Wallaroo. My committee has given some consideration to this new reference. We have called evidence from the company and its engineering adviser (Mr. Stephenson), from which we did not elicit anything new. There was nothing brought forward in the way of evidence that was not already well known to the committee before it came to its decision that is embodied in the report upon which Parliament acted in granting a charter to the company, and in the interim the Government, in its wisdom, decided to send overseas the two nominees (Mr. Rosevear and Mr. Dean) it selected to represent it upon the board of the bulk handling company during the currency of the Government's guarantee to the bank. Pending their return my committee in its wisdom—and I say this advisedly—decided not to go any farther in deciding where a bin for Wallaroo should be established because we think we should have the benefit of the investigations being made by these two estimable gentlemen. Otherwise the committee could be charged with coming to an ill-informed decision in a matter of such vital importance, although we took full cognizance of the various factors involved in harnessing Wallaroo for bulk handling, and obviously we will not change our opinion without sound and reasonable grounds. Of course, if the committee finds it has made a mistake it will not be so small-minded that it will not reverse its decision, but any reversal will require substantial support from evidence. In regard to the bulk handling company's operations—

The SPEAKER—I hope the honourable member will not argue the question.

Mr. SHANNON—I am not arguing, but giving information in respect to the question by Mr. McAlees. With regard to the bulk handling company's insistence upon proceeding immediately with bulk handling, I point out that by way of an interim report presented to Parliament this session the committee has given the green flag to the installation of bulk handling at Port Lincoln. If the company wanted to get busy it has had the opportunity. The company has not made any objection in regard to Port Lincoln. The committee gave the all-clear for Wallaroo, but the company rejected the proposal. I have not heard yet whether it rejects or accepts the proposal for Port Lincoln.

TAILEM BEND ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

Mr. WHITE—Can the Premier say whether the Electricity Trust is in a position to commence changing the electricity supply to Tailem Bend to A.C. current?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will get a report for the honourable member.

DIESEL ELECTRIC RAIL CARS.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—I understand that the new diesel electric rail cars have proved very satisfactory on many lines, and I ask the Minister representing the Minister of Railways whether he will see whether the Railways Department is considering trying these rail cars on the Strathalbyn and Victor Harbour runs with a view to shortening the long time it takes to make the journey?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I shall be glad to do so.

LEIGH CREEK COALFIELD.

Mr. LAWN—Has the Treasurer any further information in answer to my recent question concerning working expenses on the Leigh Creek coalfield?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Those expenses have been set out in the Auditor-General's annual reports that have been tabled in this House since the inception of the field, but for the information of the honourable member I have had that information collated and now make it available to him in the following concise form:—

The amount of £4,604,595 given as the total cost of establishment and development of Leigh Creek coalfield included only interest, amounting to £88,568, on cost of works during construction. The remainder of the interest—£362,710—and sinking fund—£143,702—in respect of borrowed moneys, have been charged to operation account. The total figures for operating account are:—

	£
Total Working expenses	6,959,459
Interest on loans	362,710
Sinking fund	143,702
Total working costs	£7,465,871
Less Receipts	£ 6,872,278
“ Amount contributed from general rev.	395,000
“ Cwth. sinking fund contribution applied by Treasurer	27,882
	7,295,160
Loss on transactions to June 30, 1955	£170,711

Summary of Annual Results.

	Surplus. £	Deficit. £
June 30, 1944	—	668
June 30, 1945	—	5,641
June 30, 1946	—	10,611
June 30, 1947	—	19,396
June 30, 1948	—	48,514
June 30, 1949	—	173,270
June 30, 1950	—	47,497
June 30, 1951	—	1,739
June 30, 1952	65,169	—
June 30, 1953	8,230	—
June 30, 1954	26,295	—
June 30, 1955	36,931	—
	136,625	307,336
Result to June 30, 1955—deficit		£170,711.

GAOL CONDITIONS.

Mr. JENNINGS—My question is prompted by a recent article in the *News* entitled “Inside Yatala,” allegedly written by an ex-prisoner. Among the statements made in that article are the following: that prisoners are not allowed to look outside their cell windows, except at certain hours, under penalty of losing good conduct marks; that some warders deliberately damage equipment and charge the prisoners for the damage; and that no attempt is made in Yatala to rehabilitate prisoners, only to punish them. If untrue, these published statements are a serious defamation of warders and other gaol officials; if true, they indicate serious mismanagement at the gaol. Will the Premier, representing the Chief Secretary, get a report from the Comptroller of Gaols and Prisons on the statements in the article?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I did not see the article referred to, but on a number of occasions when similar statements have been made and criticism levelled at Government institutions, such as hospitals, I have obtained information to see to what extent the complaints were justified. Reports I have had on the Yatala prison do not justify the criticism of the staff referred to by the honourable member, but I will get a report for him.

ARCHITECT-IN-CHIEF'S WORKSHOP.

Mr. FRED WALSH—About this time last year the Architect-in-Chief's Keswick workshop and surrounds were destroyed by fire. Since then there has not been, to my knowledge, any attempt made to replace the buildings, although I have been told that it is intended to build a new workshop near the Netley area. Can the Minister of Works indicate when that work will be commenced?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Following on the fire, the Architect-in-Chief's Department

arranged for the work usually carried on in that workshop to be undertaken at Finsbury and elsewhere. The question then arose whether it was desirable to erect a new workshop on the burnt-out site. As a matter of fact, that site belongs to the Railways Department which is anxious to retain control of it for its own purposes. No decision has been arrived at whether a permanent structure should be put thereon. In the meantime, use has been made of existing facilities in order that the money available for various school and hospital works undertaken by the Architect-in-Chief's Department should not be transferred to that department for its own purposes. The work has been carried on successfully under difficulties. There is no intention of re-erecting premises on the burnt-out site, but I will ascertain what is proposed.

MOUNT GAMBIER RAIL SERVICES.

Mr. CORCORAN—Has the Minister of Works a reply from the Minister of Railways to the question I asked on September 6 concerning a railcar service to Mount Gambier?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have not received a definite reply, but will confer further with my colleague and bring down more complete data tomorrow.

TASTE OF POTATOES.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to the question I asked on September 6 concerning the quality of certain potatoes being sold?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I have received the following reply from Mr. Strickland, Chief of the Division of Plant Industry:—

It is believed that this question refers to the musty taint that potato tubers may develop if the growing crop is treated with gammexane preparations. Such a taint has even been detected in potatoes from an untreated crop grown on land which was previously cropped with cauliflowers, which had been dusted with gammexane. Whilst the taint is unpleasant, there is no danger to people eating potatoes so tainted. Several instances of gammexane tainted potatoes were brought to notice a year or two ago, but neither the department nor the Potato Board have received any complaints in the past 12 months. It is thought that publicity given to the risks of using gammexane on potato crops has been heeded by growers, and that cases of tainted potatoes are now rare.

BROKEN HILL PASSENGER SERVICE.

Mr. TAPPING—For some weeks a private bus company has been operating a daytime passenger service to Broken Hill on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and a return service

to Adelaide. I believe this will have a detrimental effect on the finances of the Railways Department. This bus service is so popular that for one trip from Broken Hill there was a waiting list of 20 passengers. Will the Minister of Works ascertain whether the Minister of Railways will consider operating at least one day-time express to Broken Hill each week in an effort to recapture the custom lost to private enterprise?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The honourable member has frequently asked questions concerning a daily express to Melbourne and he will recall that that the usual reply from the Minister and the Commissioner of Railways is that we would welcome such a train. I feel sure that in general principle the Railways Commissioner would like to do likewise in respect of a train to Broken Hill. I will take up the question with my colleague and bring down a reply as soon as possible.

GARDEN SUBURBS COMMISSIONER.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked recently concerning the appointment of the Garden Suburbs Commissioner?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—As the honourable member will realize, this question is not easy to determine. There have been requests and counter-petitions concerning this matter and in view of all the circumstances the Government has resolved to reappoint the present Commissioner for a period of six months.

WORKING WEEK IN PRIMARY INDUSTRIES.

Mr. TEUSNER—Yesterday the Minister of Agriculture opened the annual conference of the Commonwealth Chamber of Fruit and Vegetable Industries. He is reported in this morning's *Advertiser* as having said:—

Our primary industries are experiencing difficulties in regard to markets. This can be overcome if we examine our cost structure, with a view to producing higher quality and fairer priced goods.

The article continues:—

Mr. Christian said that one way to achieve this would be for the producer to work a 50-hour week, and employ members of his own family.

Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether the reference to a 50-hour week is a correct report of what he said at that conference?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I regret to say that I have been not fully reported, because obviously I would not say anything like that. I was taken to task on a former

occasion when I was also misreported. It takes me all my time to catch up with these things without getting into bad odour with primary producers. What I really said was that the primary producer had one cost factor under his control to a substantial degree—his own labour. If he cared to work a 50 or 60-hour week and employ his own family he could undoubtedly reduce his production costs considerably. I asked whether we wanted to return to the times when unpaid family labour was employed in these industries in order to furnish cheap goods to consumers, and the answer, obviously, was that we did not.

MOONTA STREET LIGHTING.

Mr. McALEES—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked on September 6 concerning the street lighting at Moonta?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have the following reply from the general manager of the Electricity Trust:—

The charges made by the trust for street lighting are designed to recover only a portion of the system costs. For example, no charge is made for the use of the transmission system and reticulation system nor for power station plant; also no charge is made for the advisory work carried out by the trust's street lighting officers for the various councils. The charges made can therefore be considered as concessional as compared with normal charges made to private consumers for electricity supply. Any slight reduction in the standard burning hours reduces the annual cost of supplying a street light by only the cost of the fuel used to generate the electricity saved; interest and depreciation on equipment and the regular cleaning and adjustment of equipment are not reduced. Until recently there were at least 50 different schedules of burning hours and the cost of adjusting time switches to these various hours and the clerical work involved in maintaining these schedules was not warranted. Burning hours were therefore rationalized to two periods only, viz., half night ($\frac{1}{2}$ hour after sunset to 1 a.m.) and all night ($\frac{1}{2}$ hour after sunset to $\frac{1}{2}$ hour before sunrise). The saving in switching off a 60 watt street lamp one hour earlier at Moonta (less than 2s. per annum) would not warrant the extra supervision required and the trust could not allow any concession in charges to the Moonta council.

WOMEN ON JURIES.

Mr. TAPPING—Has the Premier obtained a reply to the question I addressed to the Minister of Lands on August 30, about conferring with the Attorney-General regarding the appointment of women jurors in South Australia?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Minister of Lands discussed the matter with the Attorney-General. Later it was discussed in Cabinet

and it was decided that the Government would take no action to introduce a Bill on the matter, at least this session.

ROAD MAKING COSTS.

Mr. LAWN—The following is an extract from the Melbourne *Argus* of September 2 under the heading "We'll try 12s. a foot method. Heartache roads may go":—

A New South Wales road making firm using a new road construction process will be invited to Melbourne to experiment on metropolitan street construction. The firm uses a soil stabilization process which slashes street construction costs to about 12s. a foot. Mr. Bolte, Premier, announcing this yesterday said present orthodox road making costs ranged from £3 10s. to £10 a foot.

Can the Minister of Works indicate the cost of road making in South Australia? Has his attention been drawn to the process to be tried in Victoria and, if not, will he investigate it?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will confer with the Minister of Roads but the stabilization process is not new to South Australia. I think it was first tried here at the beginning of the 1939-45 war when Mr. Fleming used it with a great deal of success in areas around Salisbury. After consolidating cement and earth he used it as a stabilizer. Other processes have also been tried. My colleague has consulted Cabinet on what other steps can be taken. I will bring down a reply when there is something further to report. South Australian road authorities are not behind the times in this matter.

COCKBURN ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier obtained a report regarding my suggestion earlier this session that electric power be provided at Cockburn and Mingary by an extension of the Electricity Trust power line from Radium Hill?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received a report from the General Manager of the Electricity Trust. I regret to say that the project is not economical and cannot be recommended because the cost would be prohibitive. The report is as follows:—

The present loads at Cockburn and Mingary are as follows:—

	kw.	kwh.
Cockburn	14	54,000
Mingary	6	11,800

Total say 20 66,000

Of these loads 46,000 kw. hours are used by the railways and the Silverton Tramways. To supply these loads an 11 kw. line from Radium Hill, about 36 miles long, would be required; the capital cost of this line and its associated equipment being about £70,000.

Cost of Supply—

	£
1. Annual charges on line extension £70,000 at 8 per cent	5,600
2. Annual cost of electricity delivered—	
20 kw. hours at say £15 per annum (including losses)	300
66,000 kw. hours at say 1.2d. per kw. hour (including losses)	330

Total cost £6,230

That is, 23d. per kilowatt hour delivered.

In both towns the tariff to private consumers is 1s. per kw. hour and to railway employees 10d. per kw. hour, while in Cockburn the tariff for power to the Silverton Tramways is 8d. per kw. hour. A supply of electricity from the trust mains is therefore entirely uneconomic and is not recommended.

LOCK No. 4 LEVEL.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Has the Minister of Works obtained further information regarding the possible starting time of raising the level of lock No. 4 near Berri?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Yes, an order has been placed for the steel, which I am sure will be available. There is a lot of technical detail to be considered. As soon as river conditions are favourable it is hoped to make a start with the work. Of course, it cannot be done during a high river.

CLARE RAILWAY HOUSE.

Mr. QUIRKE—From time to time we read that in other countries, particularly in European, heavy coats of whitewash have been placed on works of old masters, because at some time somebody has had the idea that a coat of whitewash looks better than a beautiful mural painting. Something of the kind has happened at Clare. The railway station master's house, a big house in an elevated position, beautifully built of dressed stone, evidently cut by master craftsmen, has displeased somebody to the extent that the stone has been covered by paint which I am informed is green, but which, being of Irish extraction, I repudiate. It is a horrible looking colour and the net result is just terrible. Why anybody should paint over dressed stone, a type of work which today would cost a fortune, with one of the so-called pastel shades of paint with the idea that it looks better, I do not know. Will the Minister of Works ascertain who is responsible for it and take steps to restrict his activities?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Many years ago similar questions used to be addressed to the then Premiers, Sir Henry Barwell and later Mr. Gunn, and they were always answered

in this way, "the Railways Commissioner." I am sure he will take the responsibility in this case. That is only one phase in the matter and as far as I can I will see that we do not destroy beautiful work done by master craftsmen by putting on it an inferior cover. We cannot restore the past but we can look after the present.

BUS TERMINUS CONVENIENCE.

Mr. TAPPING—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked some weeks ago about the installation of toilet facilities at the Osborne bus terminus for Tramways Trust employees?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have received the following report from the acting General Manager of the Tramways Trust:—

Toilet facilities are already provided on the Cheltenham-Osborne route for members of the traffic personnel at the following points:—Cheltenham tram terminus, Port Adelaide bus depot, O.P. Whitehorn's shop premises, and Fletcher Road, Birkenhead. We have endeavoured to arrange with owners of private property adjacent to the Osborne bus terminus for traffic personnel to use toilet facilities at their premises, but unfortunately we have been unsuccessful in this regard. It is pointed out that the greatest time interval between toilet conveniences available to traffic personnel on the Cheltenham-Osborne service is 32 minutes. The problem of providing conveniences for the use of traffic employees is one common to the transport industry generally, and we are not relaxing in our efforts to meet the position.

EX-POLICEMEN JUSTICES OF THE PEACE.

Mr. LAWN—Can the Premier say whether it is a fact that some retired police officers have been appointed visiting justices of the peace to various gaols in South Australia and whether the Government believes this to be a good practice? Will the Government see that independent justices are appointed for this purpose and that they are changed at, say, 12-month intervals?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is only in very unusual circumstances that the Attorney-General recommends appointing ex-policemen justices of the peace. Whether there is at present any justice who has been a police officer and who is visiting the gaols I do not know, but I will make inquiries. Incidentally, the fact that a man has been a police officer should not be derogatory to him, for as a policeman he held a most responsible position. The honourable member probably has the same opinion, but I will get some information for him and he will then be able to see that things are just as they should be.

RIVER MURRAY FLOODS.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—It is apparent from reports from other States that the River Murray will be at a very high level in the upper irrigation areas soon. Many of our roads, including the Kingston and Berri roads and the area known as Paringa Paddock, are likely to be out of commission unless steps are taken to keep them open to traffic. The road across Paringa Paddock links Renmark with the area south of the river and I think that in a recent press statement the Minister of Roads said that in the event of the paddock being inundated with water traffic could be by-passed through Lyrup, but that would be a circuitous route. During the last floods in 1952 the settlers themselves kept the road through Paringa Paddock open after the Highways Department had said it would be futile to try. Will the Minister of Works take up this matter with the Minister of Roads and ask him to instruct the Highways Department to keep this road open as long as is physically possible? The settlers take a poor view of having to pay considerable sums to the department in car registration fees if they have to keep the road open themselves.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I think it can be taken for granted that the Minister of Roads and the department desire to keep the road open as long as possible, and I am sure that everything possible will be done for this purpose. In anticipation of a high river every step that can be taken by the Engineering Department has been taken. We are letting water out of Lake Victoria in order to reduce the level there so that when the full flood comes down as much water as possible will be taken into that lake and the water thus spread. It is expected that even under ordinary circumstances high winds might affect the position, and it seems that the flood will be somewhat higher than the 1952 flood. Through the Engineer for Irrigation, I addressed a letter this morning to the liaison committee in each district giving all the data we have on when the high river may be expected and asking for suggestions to reduce damage or inconvenience. I am sure they will have regard to the matter the honourable member has mentioned, but I will take it up with my colleague.

SPEED OF HEAVY VEHICLES.

Mr. PEARSON (on notice):—

1. Has the State Traffic Committee made any recommendation to the Government regarding permitted speeds of heavy vehicles?

2. If so, what were the permitted speeds recommended?

3. Has the Government given consideration to any recommendations?

4. If so, what is the Government's decision and intention as regards implementation of these recommendations?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Government has received several reports from various authorities on this matter but does not propose to alter the present limits as it is not considered that the roads would stand the increased burden of heavy traffic travelling at high speed.

COUNTRY FACTORIES ACT.

Mr. FRED WALSH (on notice)—Which parts of the State are excluded from the operation of the Country Factories Act?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Country Factories Act, 1945, applies only in those parts of the State described in proclamations published in the *Government Gazette* on May 30, 1946, and November, 25, 1954, and it does not apply in any other part of the State. The areas described in these proclamations are as follows:—

1. The corporations of the towns of Port Pirie, Wallaroo, Moonta, Kadina, Gawler, Murray Bridge and Mount Gambier.
2. The district council districts of Kadina, Mount Gambier, Millicent, Penola and Tantanoola.
3. Within a radius of six miles from the Whyalla post office situated in the township of Whyalla, and within a radius of five miles from the Woodside post office.
4. The hundreds of Munno Para and Riddock and the portion of the hundred of Nuriootpa situated within the district council of Munno Para East.
5. Those portions of the hundreds of Port Adelaide and Yatala as are not included in the metropolitan area or the district council district of Teatree Gully.

RAILWAY ACCIDENT, IRON KNOB.

Mr. Davis, for Mr. RICHES (on notice):—

1. Is the Government aware that the report of the Inspector of Mines on the railway accident at Iron Knob in which the late Frank Branford was killed reveals that proper maintenance of trucks was not carried out by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company

and that in fact the truck in question had a brake on which the handle was too low and the shoe worn right through?

2. Were both the traffic superintendent and the quarries officer concerned not available when subpoenaed to attend the inquiry?

3. If so, why were they not called?

4. Was the coroner advised by Sergeant Hann, who appeared to assist him, that evidence of negligence on the part of the company was not relevant to the inquiry? If so, why?

5. Was evidence by a Mr. Ryan that previous accidents had occurred on this line but no safety precautions taken, offered at the inquiry and refused? If so, why?

6. Is it the intention of the Government to launch any prosecution for a breach of mining regulations by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company?

The Hon. A. W. Christian, for the Hon. B. PATTINSON—An investigation is being made of this matter.

FRUIT FLY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN (Minister of Agriculture) and read a first time.

LOAN ESTIMATES.

Grand total, £28,300,000.

In Committee.

(Continued from September 6. Page 751.)

Mr. PEARSON (Flinders)—The Loan Estimates have a peculiar and particular interest for all members, particularly this year, and since the Treasurer explained this year's Estimates certain happenings have to a slight extent clarified the current year's prospects of Loan expenditure in South Australia and other States. The Treasurer was careful to point out that the sum available for Loan works would be governed by the response to the Loan Council's invitation to contribute to Commonwealth loans, and, shortly after he said that, a loan was opened. That loan has now closed and I think that all members were pleased to know that it was somewhat oversubscribed, which to my mind indicates that the Australian public still has some money to lend, that it has some confidence in Australian Governments (both Commonwealth and State), and that there may be a trend away from less secure types of investment into an investment which, after all, is as solid as any that can be

offered. I realize that in the past some people have had some uncomfortable and even sorrowful experiences after investing in Government loans, because in the upward trend of inflation money became worth much less than formerly, and as other investments became more attractive the value of Commonwealth bonds suffered. Consequently, some people who had invested in Commonwealth loans with the idea of putting money away in an investment that could be easily converted into cash found themselves forced to sell at a discount, and for a time that had the effect of turning people away from investing in Government securities. It is rather pleasing, therefore, to observe what appears to be a trend back to this form of investment.

Possibly many investors are beginning to realize that perhaps the peak of the boom is past and that some types of investment which may be attractive while everything is going well may become risky when the crest of the wave starts to recede; therefore, it appears that, if this trend continues and if my assessment is correct, the amount the Loan Council is seeking from the public may be found. That will mainly depend, however, on the income available to people with goods to sell, particularly those primary producers who have been solid supporters of Government securities. If their incomes are reduced because of the lower prices that are already apparent, there may be some diminution in their ability to make such investments, but that remains to be seen. At any rate, we appear to have got away to a good start on the Loan market and to have crossed the first bridge satisfactorily with a little in hand.

In speaking on the Loan Estimates the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. O'Halloran) made one or two remarks on which I would like to comment. He began by drawing members' attention to the great increase in the public debt during recent years—from £117,000,000 in 1947 to £242,000,000 in 1954. He said that represented a colossal increase, and I think all members will agree that to more than double the State's public debt over the short period of seven years is indeed spending Loan money. Mr. O'Halloran said that posterity would be obliged to meet the charges on these debts, and with that, too, we must all agree. I point out, however, that there is always a compensating factor—the increase in the State's earning capacity consequent upon the expenditure of Loan money. It is a fundamental principle in business that it is wise to borrow money if it will produce

more than its cost. Mr. O'Halloran made a rather astounding remark when he said:—

Some authorities have warned that we may be going too far too fast . . . This warning is particularly apt when it is remembered that a large proportion of the Loan expenditure each year is to gratify our Treasurer's love of mighty projects.

To which mighty projects was Mr. O'Halloran referring? The supply of electricity to Radium Hill, the proposed water supply for Peterborough—

Mr. O'Halloran—That is not a mighty project; it is an essential project.

Mr. PEARSON—Yes, but its implementation depends on a mighty project that has cost the State much money, because, without the basic expenditure involved, a water supply for Peterborough would not be possible. I cannot visualize which mighty project we could well have done without. I remember a delightful discussion I had with the Minister of Works when I ventured the opinion that the time to spend Loan money was when there was not much money in the community and that the Government should ease off in good times. The Minister said that, for the purpose of argument, he would agree with that policy and said that he would immediately reduce expenditure on public works, such reduction to apply first in my district. Of course, no member would stand in his place and agree to the reduction of spending on public works in his district. Despite the large sums that have been spent on Loan projects in South Australia there are, in view of this State's production potential, many more projects on which money could be spent. One could spend much time talking about the Treasurer's mighty projects; indeed, it is a subject on which members on this side are proud to talk.

Mr. Jennings—Many of them are imaginary.

Mr. PEARSON—No, they are very tangible. Whatever criticism may be voiced against this Government or its Treasurer, it certainly cannot be said that he has not spent wisely and well. Mr. O'Halloran continued:—

I do not say that the present Loan expenditure is too high—

I do not know what he meant by that. I consider that Mr. O'Halloran's criticism should be taken in part and not in toto, as in that way it can be interpreted more easily, because he back tracks in certain of his statements and there are consequently some contradictions. He continued:—

. . . but I question the results that come from it.

I think Mr. O'Halloran said at that stage that there had been no corresponding increase in the State's productivity, but as *Hansard* does not record that statement, I must have heard him wrongly. I made a note at the time, however, and I thought that was what he said. A study of the increase in South Australia's productivity is rather interesting. I have taken out certain figures, based on the Government Statist's reports, and have compared the State's production, both secondary and primary, in 1945-46 with that in 1953-54, the last year for which figures were available.

In 1945-46 there were in South Australia 2,395 factories, and in 1953-54, 3,597—an increase of 1,182 or 49 per cent. In 1945-46, 63,188 workers were employed in those factories, and in 1953-54, 85,303—an increase of 22,115 or 34 per cent. In 1945-46 the value of output from those factories was £66,223,000, and in 1953-54, £265,311,000—an increase of £199,088,000 or 300 per cent. I realize, of course, that the value of output is governed partly by the value of money, and regard must be had to that factor when using these figures. Further, the value of output, according to the Government Statist's interpretation, comprises the total value of output, and he has another more significant figure (the value production), by which he means the value that the processing of the manufactured goods adds to the raw material. In 1945-46 South Australia's value production was £25,602,000, and in 1953-54, £100,221,000—an increase of £74,619,000 or 300 per cent. That is the story of secondary production, which has probably benefited from Loan expenditure as much as, if not more than, any other section of the community. It is not a bad story in anybody's language.

Mr. Jennings—A story!

Mr. PEARSON—Yes; it is almost becoming the "old, old story" in South Australia, and the honourable member cannot contradict it. It is a true story and not a fairy tale. In compiling figures of the productivity of South Australian primary industries I have used not money values, but volumes, so that the altered value of money does not enter into the comparison. For these figures I have compared the same years. In 1945-46 6,260,711 acres were under cultivation for crops, fallow and sown pastures, and in 1953-54 7,398,205 acres, an increase of 1,137,494. Sheep population in 1945-46 was 8,473,939, and in 1953-54, 11,838,244. The highest before that was 10,370,565 in 1943 before the drought so that the sheep population in 1953-54 was an all-time

record. In March, 1955, there were 12,817,135 sheep in this State, and we have never fed them better than this year.

Mr. O'Halloran—And we have never had a better year.

Mr. PEARSON—I agree, and probably we never will, but the fact remains that a few years ago we thought that if we exceeded 10,000,000 sheep we would be skating on thin ice, yet today we have over 12,000,000, and this will probably be the figure from now on.

In 1945-46 we produced 73,604,000 lb. of wool. In 1953-54 the production was 145,509,000. Meat slaughterings during the same period increased by 289,972. Wheat production increased by 9,375,390 bushels, and barley production by 20,925,147 bushels. Over the same period there was an increase of 177,937 tons of superphosphate used. Who can say that this State is going backward and that we are not getting some results from the money we are spending? It does not matter where you look. The other day I picked up the August issue of the *Bank of New South Wales Review* which spoke in similar terms of what is happening in this and other States. If the investment of public money in public works in this State is not profitable I do not know of any investment that could have been profitable anywhere. The Premier's mighty projects, far from being a mere gratification of his whims, are, to put them in their proper perspective, the crystallized and implemented ideas of a wise and far-seeing statesman and they will continue to be of benefit to this State for many years.

Mr. O'Halloran referred to overseas loans and suggested that the policy was a somewhat doubtful one. I agree with that. There is a good deal of risk, as we saw in years gone by, in tying ourselves too tightly to overseas lending. In the late 1920's the States committed themselves heavily in uncontrolled borrowing from all sorts of places throughout the world and our export values tumbled so severely that it was completely impossible to meet our overseas commitments. We are on very much safer grounds in borrowing funds from within our own boundaries, but a note of warning should be sounded in that there is a tendency on the part of some people to think that we can pursue a policy of local economy that will be self-sufficient in itself and have no regard or relation to what is happening elsewhere. That, I think, is a most dangerous assumption and it is one that has wide credence in our country today. We hear it preached quite often by people who say we should employ

this or that method of financing our public works, so I feel it is necessary that some consideration should be given to the effects of such a policy. After all, we cannot live by taking in our neighbour's washing. It is all very well if you have 10 in the family and he has only two. That is a very good illustration when it is considered that there are very many people who are quite willing to accept any policy as long as they get more out of it than they have to give. We see that in every phase of political and public life, one section pressing for advantage to put it a shade ahead of the other, for the time being at any rate. However, these things level up, somebody else gets ahead and then dissatisfaction and trouble develop. You can only continue to expand the country's economy on sound lines if you have some income coming in from an outside source.

We have done a lot to expand our economy, but I am afraid we have done it under conditions that are somewhat illusory, and on a cost basis that will probably react very heavily to our detriment when we are forced to compete overseas with our primary commodities and manufactured exports. Today we are getting perhaps the first instalment of this very salutary lesson. Discussions are going on about the necessity to reduce our overseas purchases and commitments for the simple reason that the goods we are able to provide in exchange have been reduced considerably in value. There is a tendency to preach the doctrine that, if we are getting short of overseas funds, the primary producers are falling down on their jobs, and active steps must be taken by them to expand their exports so that we shall establish more overseas credit. I agree that there is an obligation on primary producers to expand production to its fullest limits; that in my view is the first principle in the ownership of land. I believe that the person who owns land has an obligation as well and part of the obligation is to use it to the fullest possible extent. However, the whole burden of providing overseas credit cannot rest on the primary producer. It is impossible in the re-organized scheme of things under our somewhat changed economy for him to provide sufficient to feed the expanded population within our borders and also sufficient to meet the requirements of our overseas purchasers in the matter of trade balances.

I do not quote myself as an authority on this matter, but I have read several very enlightening articles recently, in which the writers have called upon secondary industry

to begin to make some real contribution to overseas trade and to export some of their production to assist in providing us with sufficient overseas funds to continue our expanding resources at home. In the *Bank of New South Wales Review* of August last the following appeared:—

Particularly in recent years the main-spring of the Australian economy has been wool and to lesser extent wheat, other grains, and metals, for all of which world demand has been strong at prices appreciably higher than those of most other commodities. Mainly on returns from these commodities have depended the large volume of imports which have supplied consumption and expanded industrial capacity, and from them have flowed the high level of effective demand which has underwritten business confidence in the rapid development of the country. Returns from these commodities should continue, but a greater contribution to export earnings is necessary from secondary industry in order to sustain the increasing demand for imports. Market potentialities are enormous for Australian manufactured goods in the heavily populated countries of south-east Asia if only price and quality factors are right. Establishment of substantial export markets offers secondary industry opportunity for large-scale production, with its resultant economies of overheads, but Australian costs present a formidable threshold.

Then followed some comments that are not particularly relevant, after which this appeared:—

In the meantime of this necessarily slow process, the balance of oversea payments will probably continue to be a cause for concern, because of the strong pressure of demand for imports engendered by the rapid development of the country. In these circumstances, the accompanying expansion of secondary industry will take place largely independently of oversea competition, but it is vital to the economic soundness of the country's development that business and government should foster the particular lines of expansion always in relation to the level of oversea costs.

I have made that point in this House before. It is one that is very easy to disregard in the buoyancy of the economic circumstances we have recently been enjoying. I venture the opinion that we shall not be able to disregard it very much longer and force of circumstances will compel us to have a very real regard to the costs of our products, both primary and secondary, in order that we may be able to sell sufficient of our goods overseas to provide us with the ammunition for expanding our home economy.

There are one or two comments about individual lines to which I shall refer. Housing has become one of the big spenders from our Loan resources. I am very pleased that the Housing Trust is making some emphasis

on the building of houses for sale in addition to or as part of its programme. Every possible assistance should be given to people who are prepared to build or buy their own homes. Recently the secretary of the Home Builders' Club, a body deserving of the highest commendation, approached me with regard to the supply of materials for their project. By virtue of the contribution of the labour of a member in a joint and community effort he will eventually accrue sufficient credits in its books to justify his being next on the list for a home. I have been informed that the work is of the highest standard and has been highly commended by lending authorities. There is every reason why the trust should devote some of its activities to the provision of houses for sale. I know there are very many people who are not able to buy houses and I do not criticize them for their inability to do so. There are people with families who are unable to save very much from current earnings and are unable to do any more than pay rent. I point out that often it requires very little more for instalments than it does for rent. That is an aspect that some people might take more fully into consideration when they decide to pay rent for the rest of their lives whereas, with perhaps very little more effort, they could be buying a home and the money they are paying each week would be building up an equity in a real asset.

I believe that many people who go to the Housing Trust for rental homes should be able to buy homes. Many young couples had been earning money for five or six years before they married and with the rates of pay they earned, particularly as most had only modest commitments for board and keep in their own homes, could well have saved sufficient to enable them to put a deposit on a home when they married. I have been forced to the conclusion that many young people are not alive to the position and when they eventually decide to marry discover that the opportunities of their younger days have been frittered away and that they have not the resources to establish themselves. They decide then to rent a home for the rest of their lives or to pay instalments on furnishings and fittings and thus begin their married life with a handicap that a little foresight could have prevented. If a single person earned £12 a week and could save £3 of it, and his future wife could do likewise, in six years they could accumulate almost £2,000. If they had the singleness of mind to attempt such a scheme they would have a substantial amount to begin married life with. The Housing

Trust does fill a real need for these people by providing good houses for reasonably modest deposits to enable them to have a substantial equity in homes within a few years. Every encouragement should be given to people to buy homes.

The Housing Trust has built about 24,000 homes and as far as I can ascertain from trust reports they cost about £47,000,000, or approximately £2,000 each. I was curious to know what it cost for maintenance on these houses and was pleased to read in the 1954 report the following:—

In the vast majority of cases the houses are very well looked after by the tenants. Many of them will repaint a room or periodically re-kalsomine internal walls. This is encouraged by the trust which will make a free issue of material and hire out brushes at a nominal rate. Wilful damage to these houses is practically nil.

That indicates the sense of responsibility that the tenants of these houses have and they should be commended as a body for behaving in such a way as to enable the manager of the trust to speak so satisfactorily of their tenancy. I am unable to ascertain exactly what the average cost for maintenance is on these houses because the report does not segregate in detail the types of houses built and the number which are leased in proportion to the whole, but in an earlier report I found that 10,000 out of 17,457 homes built at that time were leased homes, and from calculations it appears that the average cost for maintenance was £8 a house each year. That is an extremely low figure and strongly bears out the paragraph I previously quoted.

Mr. Frank Walsh—What about maintenance costs of timber houses?

Mr. PEARSON—I imagine that maintenance costs would increase with time because a new house does not require the maintenance of an older house. In this respect it will be interesting to see what the maintenance of timber-frame houses is compared with those of more solid construction. I think it will be much higher but it will depend on the type of ground. I do not know whether my calculations are correct, but last year the trust received £1,260,000 from about 14,000 houses, which is about £87 10s. a year for each house, or an average rental of £1 14s. a week. If that figure is correct then the rentals being charged cannot constitute a serious burden on the people occupying the houses.

Much could be said about the Loan Estimates. I am pleased to note that the amount provided for afforestation represents an

increase over last year but I again suggest to the Minister that everything possible should be done to broaden the scope of the programme for afforestation in the Wanila forest area and surrounding country. I know he realizes that virtually every stick of timber used for construction purposes on Eyre Peninsula has to be carted there by some means or other, but I believe that we would benefit materially in years to come if some degree of afforestation could be successfully conducted in the higher rainfall areas of that peninsula.

Great savings have been effected by the Railways Department from the use of diesel locomotives and I am pleased that more of these are to be ordered. Mr. Watson, former general traffic manager, told me that from Adelaide to Tailm Bend the cost of diesel is .06d. a ton mile, whereas the cost of a steam train is .266d. a ton mile. From Tailm Bend to Serviceton the cost of a diesel is .02d. a ton mile as compared with .076d. for a steam engine. It seems that the cost of fuel is about four times as great for a steam locomotive. It is no wonder that the Treasurer was able to report last year that diesels were showing substantial savings in railway operations. I strongly urge that the number of diesel locomotives be increased rapidly in order to reduce deficits on the one hand and to provide a much better service on the other. On Eyre Peninsula, where coal costs more than on the mainland and where oil can be landed for possibly the same cost, there is strong argument for the use of diesel locomotives, and I believe the Railways Commissioner is sympathetic.

There is one matter in regard to the provision of capital for the Electricity Trust that I have always found rather interesting. In my experience a number of people who desire to be connected to the electricity undertaking find themselves somewhat out of range of a normal feeder service and offer to supply some of the capital necessary to include them in a scheme. The trust's policy is that a number of consumers are considered as a group and the cost of reticulation to the group is assessed and if the cost falls within a certain range they are connected and the Government provides a subsidy on the unit rate to reduce the surcharge which would have to be paid by these consumers. This is an excellent arrangement which provides country consumers with an electricity service which would have been completely impossible for them but for the subsidy. It means that the Government is paying a

substantial part of their electricity bill each month. Despite this excellent arrangement there are some people outside these group schemes who are excluded because they are too far away from the rest of the group. On many occasions these people have offered to provide some of the capital necessary to carry the main a little further and thereby enable them to be included in the scheme. The reply the trust has always given is that it is unable to entertain such a proposal because it is contrary to policy, and I can see that there are some difficulties in relation thereto. The attitude of the landowner has been that the actual gift, if necessary, of his capital to the trust would be a good investment in that he would be able to get a supply of electricity on the one hand and probably the value of his property would be improved somewhat on the other. I suggest that the Treasurer consider this matter to see whether some arrangement can be made whereby people who are willing to do this may have their proposals entertained.

There are many points which one could discuss from a district point of view. My district is a rapidly expanding one constantly calling for a large expenditure of Loan money to provide the things that are needed and justified. Considerable sums of Loan money are being spent on particular projects and there are several other important ones which are about to commence. Amongst those I refer to is the Port Lincoln harbour project, which is sadly and sorely needed to cope with the increased volume of traffic and particularly the increased volume of exports; also the new office block on Tasman Terrace, Port Lincoln, for the housing of Government departments, particularly the Engineering and Water Supply Department. These projects have been approved by the Public Works Committee and I sincerely hope that some real progress will be made with them in the very near future.

Mr. Frank Walsh—What are they going to cost?

Mr. PEARSON—The printed report of the Public Works Committee on the Port Lincoln harbour project is not yet available so I am unable to tell the honourable member that.

Mr. Frank Walsh—Just keep in mind what they are supposed to cost and what the ultimate cost will be.

Mr. PEARSON—I am very glad to have a favourable report on some projects in my district, as doubtless the honourable member would be in his, and I imagine that the

Queen Elizabeth Hospital will cost a little more than the estimate.

Mr. Frank Walsh—That is not in my district.

Mr. PEARSON—No, but it is very close, and probably the honourable member is very interested in it.

I conclude by saying that I believe the Loan Estimates are a prudent assessment of the State's requirements, and I can only hope that the money required to complete the programme will be as readily available as the present indications suggest. I have pleasure in supporting the first line.

Mr. CORCORAN (Victoria)—I do not propose to discuss the Loan Estimates in detail, but I take this opportunity to refer to the many problems that remain to be solved in the district of Victoria and to which I hope the Government will give some attention during this financial year. I am concerned mostly about roads, drainage, housing in country towns and the broadening of the railway gauge between Millicent and Beachport and Naracoorte and Kingston. I have asked several questions as to the Government's intentions in relation to the Millicent-Beachport section without securing any information, and I take this opportunity to convey to the House that the people of Beachport and the intervening areas are very concerned and are hopeful that the Government will see its way clear to carry out this work. It appears to me, however, that if any priority is to be given to either project the Naracoorte-Kingston section will have first consideration, for I have noticed that quite a lot of the formation work on that line has already been carried out. However, I hope that the Government will favour the Millicent-Beachport section. The Millicent people are also hoping that some special commemoration will take place to mark the completion of the broadening of the Mount Gambier-Millicent section such as was the case in respect of the Mount Gambier-Naracoorte section. I have twice asked the Minister of Railways what the Government intends to do about it and although he said that the proposal was likely to be considered favourably he has given me no definite intimation.

Recently, in company with the Leader of the Opposition, I made a trip through the section of my district between Kingston and Beachport and we received requests from the Fishermen's Associations of Kingston, Robe

and Beachport. At Kingston we met representatives of the local district council, the Kingston Chamber of Commerce and the Fishermen's Association, who asked that we approach the Minister with a view to his consenting to repairs on that portion of the Kingston jetty between the barricade and the second landing. I have twice asked the Minister of Marine what can be done about it but he has told me nothing definite. The Minister seemed to think that I was referring to storm damage whereas I was referring to the general state of disrepair of the jetty due to neglect on the part of the responsible department over a period of years. All the bodies referred to are concerned about it and I want the Minister to realize that I am making representations on their behalf. They know all about the first section, which he said had been made serviceable, and I urge him to do his utmost to see that the other section I have mentioned is put in order so as to gratify the desires of the people of Kingston who are entitled to this consideration. Although no special provision is made in these Estimates for the work I hope that it will be possible to include it under the miscellaneous heading.

I have previously made representations regarding the slipway at Robe and the approach to Lake Butler from the sea. The fishermen of Kingston, Beachport and Robe are in total agreement that the only successful approach to Lake Butler would be by way of a channel. The Minister seemed to be somewhat confused as what I meant when he said that he was glad to know that they were in agreement that improvements to the slipway would serve. What I tried to convey was that the people of those three towns are in total agreement that the only way to provide the approach from the sea is by way of a channel. I have recently had a reply from the Minister advising that the Government will not entertain that proposal, but is reverting to the old idea, by providing extra cradles, winches and so forth. However, I assure the responsible authorities that that will not solve the problem of the approach to the slipway from the sea. In boisterous weather there is no hope of boats getting near it, and however perfect are the means of crossing to the Lake there is still the matter of approaching the slipway. Boats are sometimes lying near the jetty for three weeks at a time because of rough weather and unless a power of money is spent in providing a breakwater nothing can be done about it. One does not have to be an engineer to see

the problem. I asked the Minister to have a look at it, but he declined to do so because he said it would serve no good purpose. However, I feel that he missed an opportunity of learning something about it. I have a number of statements from fishermen, especially at Beachport, which will give some idea of the problem they have to overcome. The secretary of the Fishermen's Association at Beachport said:—

Facilities and amenities are urgently needed for the fishing fleet. Fishermen had to put up with conditions until 1944 when they requested the construction of a slipway at Beachport. The authorities proposed the construction of a slipway at Robe, which, however, did not completely satisfy the Beachport fishermen. The Harbors Board undertook to construct an all-weather slip at Robe and the local fishermen were constrained to accept it for their use also. The view taken by the Harbors Board then was that the proposed slipway at Robe would be the answer to the problems of the Beachport fishermen and that the local people would have to accept it or get nothing. The slipway was ready for use in 1949 but the first 12 months showed that the board had not fulfilled its promise because the slip was not an all-weather slip and could not adequately accommodate Beachport boats. The board turned a deaf ear to the protests of the Beachport men. The association wrote to the Minister of Marine pointing out the inadequacies of the Robe slip and asked for the construction of improvements. After a considerable delay the reply received was to the effect that the Harbors Board considered the slipway was satisfactory. The association then gave all the relevant facts to the member for the district and asked him to request the Minister to visit the South-East to gain the facts at first-hand. The Minister replied that no good purpose would be served by such a visit. A long report was then forwarded to the Minister and finally he replied to the effect that he would not alter his previous decision. The Harbors Board then agreed to spend £5,000 on certain improvements at the Robe slip but it was considered that to spend this money without first providing a breakwater would be a waste of public money. Again the Minister was requested to visit the South-East and again he refused. The fishermen are disgusted at the attitude adopted by the Minister. The association requests the Leader of the Opposition and the member for the district to bring these matters before the House.

Mr. O'Halloran and I visited the area and ascertained all the facts. Another fisherman said:—

The fishing industry has grown considerably during the last few years. Today it is well organized and of national importance. Very little progress has been made with requests for assistance from the Government. There are many problems associated with the handling of the fleet and the industry generally. The Robe haven may be satisfactory in itself but the men at Beachport have had difficulty in

getting their boats into it. It is not an all-weather haven if a boat cannot be put into it. Some days before the recent blow, Mr. Peters desired to put his boat on the slip. The weather was good when he left Beachport but his boat is still at the mooring at Robe. There is need for a more modern slip and more cradles at Robe. When the slip at Robe was first considered there were not many boats in the industry altogether, but now over the whole coastline (about 100 miles) there are approximately 120 fishing boats. A single slipway at Robe is not sufficient now. The Beachport men support the Robe men in their request for the construction of a channel. Although one slipway cannot service all boats in the area a channel will solve most of the difficulties at Robe itself. There is insufficient water at the head of the slipway at Robe. The weather may be favourable for slipping a boat but the tide may be unfavourable, or the tide may be favourable and the weather unfavourable. Some years ago the Harbors Board considered the proposal to construct a slip near the Beachport jetty where there would be no problem of insufficient water with ordinary tides. The need for this facility has greatly increased with the increase in the number of boats operating from Beachport (32). When the Robe slipway was first considered there were few boats at Beachport. The Beachport fishermen have a right to have a slipway at their own port whatever is done at Robe. The greatest difficulty facing the men is the lack of co-operation, in fact any action at all, by the Government. Its cry is always that it has no money or materials. The Government does not expect the railways to pay. In fact, it makes huge grants to them, but the fishing industry gets no assistance. This industry is considerable and brings dollars into the country. The Government has a responsibility to it. It is not an encumbrance on the Government, as the railways are. Taxes on fuel used in the industry are not returned to the industry. Petrol tax is devoted to the construction and maintenance of roads but no similar service is rendered to the fishing industry. In addition, jetty tolls are imposed as well as import duties on materials used in the industry. If there were a slip at Beachport as well as at Robe the difficulties under which the industry is labouring would be adequately overcome, but the Robe slipway alone would not be adequate. A slipway is urgently required at Beachport. Repairs may be required in the peak production period. Many emergencies arise during the fishing season which should be provided for locally. The right type of boat haven has been constructed at Portland. That would be suitable at Beachport. The cradle in use at Robe is unsatisfactory. It is often impossible to get it under the boat. The Victorian Government has done much more for the fishermen of Victoria than the South Australian Government has done for the South Australian fishermen, for example, facilities at Portland, Apollo Bay and Port Fairy. £40,000 was spent on repairs during the previous storm. The Harbors Board had blue prints prepared for a slipway at Beachport some years ago. It was originally the Harbors Board idea to construct one there.

The Government should at least meet the fishermen of Beachport half way. At the present rate of progress it will be years before they get something that is really suitable.

Provision has been made to send along two cradles of the right type to Robe and they may give satisfaction. Another fisherman said:—

There is a considerable amount invested in the industry and fishermen take considerable risks in keeping the industry going. The 32 boats at Beachport are worth about £90,000 without gear. The total value of the boats along the whole South-East coast is about £200,000. Production (Co-operative figures) in 1952 was 1,589,213 lb. In 1955 it was 4,637,299 lb. This could be increased with proper facilities. Beachport produced in 1955, 1,330,408 lb. of fish and 500,000 dollars worth of crayfish was exported last year. Beachport produced 1,260,000 lb. of crayfish in 1954-55. I am giving this information because most members have no conception of the importance of the industry. The fisherman added:—

What the fishermen want are only the barest essentials for their industry. In other countries grants up to 40 per cent of the cost of equipment, etc., are made, for example, England. The Beachport fishermen are merely asking for justice, not charity or privileges. The Government should do everything to encourage the development of the industry along these shores by people of our own country.

Another fisherman said:—

The slipway at Robe has several disadvantages. It is not an all-weather slipway. One boat has been at Robe for 11 days and cannot get on the slip. There is no provision for mooring in the sea or in the lake. A visitor must use someone else's mooring or rely on the boat's anchors. An owner living at Beachport cannot avoid being anxious for the safety of his boat if it is at Robe under those circumstances. The arms of the cradle cannot be secured until the boat is out of the water. The swell can break the rudders. An owner may be advised that the slip is free and the boat may be taken to Robe only to be prevented from going on the slip because of weather conditions on arrival there. In other cases a boat may not be able to go on the slip because others have priority. It takes about four hours to go from Beachport to Robe and the weather can quickly change in this region. On occasion a boat may have to be removed from the slip to allow another to go into the lake. It has been known for a boat to be on and off seven times for this reason. The spur lines are too sharp to accommodate boats when it is necessary to free the through lane to the lake. Work on boats on the slip is exposed to the severe weather coming through the gap leading to the lake from the sea. Considerable loss of time is involved in going on and off the slip. This all costs money.

Another fisherman told us:—

Owners incur loss even when a boat is insured against damage. The cost of towing to Robe is considerable. There can be delay

in getting a boat on the slip if the weather is bad. Most owners cannot afford the loss of time involved. There are various facilities in Port Fairy, including a perfect slip. Portland facilities were repaired at considerable expense. This indicates the interest taken by the Victorian Government. But nothing is done in South Australia. Recently £115,000 was approved for fishing havens on the West Coast. In 1948 a £250,000 programme was instituted, but to 1954 only £46,000 had been spent. If the West Coast deserves harbours, the South-East ports, which produce one-third of the total fish in the State, are entitled to an adequate slipway.

Another fisherman said:—

An owner may lose months of fishing under existing conditions. Beachport must have the necessary facilities. If the weather is good for towing, it is good for fishing. Beachport is the only port where fishing tolls are levied—5d. a bag of crays. Very few boats have used the Robe slip without being damaged. Only a small amount of work may have to be done, but the boat has to be taken 30 miles each way. The price of fish cannot be any lower with all these disadvantages to overcome. Every fisherman would favour a slip at Beachport. At Southend there is no landing and the men have to wade through water with their catch up to their knees and even higher.

That is not a gross exaggeration of the picture and I therefore hope the Government will take up this matter more realistically. The Minister knows that what I am saying is correct and I trust he will take it up with the Harbors Board so that the needs of these people will be met. They are playing an important part in this most important industry.

It is pleasing to notice that provision is made in the Estimates for surfacing portion of the Kingston-Naracoorte road. This work is long overdue, but everything comes to those who wait. It is to be hoped that this work will be done this year. People at Beachport are disappointed that nothing similar is being attempted in their area. A number of councils have suffered reductions in their road grant, and I am told that this is due to the increased activities of the Highways Department in their area. I cannot reconcile myself to the fact that although grants are being reduced the Government is refusing to make use of the main road between Beachport and Millicent, which has served the needs of the people for 50 years, and is building another road alongside, only a chain away. Why does the Government not make more use of existing metal roads and thus prevent the wasting of thousands of pounds? When the roads between Mount Gambier, Millicent and Robe were bituminized use was made of the existing

roads. It will take years before the road now being constructed between Beachport and Millicent is consolidated. If the old road was low-lying and subject to flooding I could understand the Government's action, but I cannot see the need for building a new road. When I see these things happening, I cannot remain silent. The Leader of the Opposition also knows the truth of my statement, as he travelled over these roads with me. When I became a member of this House three years ago I visualized deep drainage being provided for Naracoorte and a water supply being provided for Millicent. These promises were made by the Premier prior to the election.

Mr. Lawn—They are not worth anything.

Mr. CORCORAN—The Public Works Standing Committee gave its blessing to the Naracoorte deep drainage scheme, but much water will run down the Naracoorte creek before anything is done. I do not know who will represent the district if the Bill dealing with electoral boundaries now before the House is passed, but I hope he receives more encouragement than I have had. I have nothing to thank the Government for down there. It talks about the prosperous times through which we have passed, yet despite those prosperous times not one important town outside of Adelaide has been supplied with a deep drainage scheme. When people make promises, we expect them to be honoured.

Mr. Lawn—Not with this Government.

Mr. CORCORAN—If it does not keep its promises, let the people show their indignation at the next election. The Millicent Council is trying to shoulder the responsibilities placed on it by the Highways Department and ratepayers by doing essential works for the area. It has approached the Government on numerous occasions for an interest-free loan, but the Government said it was short of funds and could not make money available. I am not saying that the Minister concerned committed himself in any way. The council thought it was doing the right thing by anticipating this grant before next year and proceeded to arrange to purchase a heavy road grader. The Millicent and Robe councils are the only two in the South-East without such plant. When the council this year tried to get an interest-free loan it was told there was nothing doing and that it should not have anticipated a grant. The Government seems to be penalizing it. I have asked the Minister of Local Government to reconsider the decision and to realize that the council was actuated in getting the plant to do the right thing. It

could not do the work without it. The work is in the interests not only of the ratepayers, but of others who use these roads. I do not like to see the Millicent council penalized and I therefore raise objection to the Government's attitude. I should like it to reconsider the matter, yield to my representations and make an interest-free loan available. One can understand the reaction of the council when it learned recently from the press that the Tantanoola Council had received an additional interest-free loan to purchase road machinery, despite the fact that it was already in possession of heavy road-making plant. The same also applies to Beachport. They received substantial amounts to buy machinery and yet Millicent is left high and dry.

Mr. Lawn—Do you think there is any political significance in it?

Mr. CORCORAN—I do not know, but time will tell. It is no use trying to paint a nice picture about Millicent when the circumstances do not warrant it. I am a realist. There are still many problems to be settled in the South-East. Among them is the settlement of hundreds of returned soldiers and other young men who are qualified to go on the land and are awaiting allotment. However, the Government has not fully exploited its powers to purchase some of the large estates. If the owners will not negotiate on a fair basis the Government should take advantage of its compulsory acquisition powers. By doing that we would be doing something for the future of this country. We have an obligation to exploit our land resources fully so as to increase production. We should not allow sentiment to sway us. We may know that Mr. Brown has had his land all his life, and that his father had it before him, but if that land is not properly developed we shall not hold this country, and we shall deserve to lose it.

I hope the Government will take notice and act on what I have said. If it does not do so the Labor Party will. My Party would not be harsh in acquiring land from landholders. We will not grab people's land, but make them realize that they cannot hold it if they do not develop it. The Labor Party has every respect for private ownership, but when private ownership fails to fulfil its obligations that respect ceases.

Mr. WHITE (Murray)—I draw attention to the large amount of the Estimates, which total about £2,000,000 more than last year. Although Loan expenditure on new works is building up our national debt and alarming some people, South Australia is a very young country and we have a tremendous job of

development in front of us, and if we do not avail ourselves of all the money we can get our development will not be sufficient for national security. There is nothing wrong with borrowing money if, after spending it, we have assets that exceed in value the money borrowed. When we realize what has been accomplished by the Railways Department, Lands Department, Harbors Board, Water Supply Department, Electricity Trust and other undertakings with borrowed money I think members will agree that we have assets that amply justify the money that has been spent.

Some of us may be disappointed that more money has not been allocated to our particular districts, but we must give the Government credit for the way it spreads Loan money over the various State departments. As a result, every department can be kept functioning efficiently and this benefits all aspects of life that are necessary to the progress of a British community. I notice with pleasure that the department which has been allocated the largest vote is the Engineering and Water Supply Department, which is saddled with the responsibility of maintaining our water supplies and sewers. On several occasions I have emphasized the importance of reticulated water schemes in country areas and the important part they play in closer settlement. We are rapidly reaching a stage where country water schemes will be of greater importance than ever in the economy of this State. When we had big prices and easy markets for farm produce there was a tendency for farm activities to become less diversified than when we emerged from the depression of the 1930's. Many farmers have concentrated almost entirely on sheep, and others on grain production, instead of also attempting dairying and poultry and pig raising and other pursuits.

The decline in export prices for our primary produce makes it imperative for primary producers to undertake intensive mixed farming. To do this a permanent water supply is essential. Many water schemes are suggested to the Government but are never carried out because the economics are worked out on the basis of ordinary rating. However, many people interested in such schemes are often prepared to pay more than ordinary rating to get a supply, and the Government should devise ways and means of legitimately entering into agreements with them. Many districts without natural supplies of water could then be provided with this important commodity without any more loss to the Government than that which is incurred today on schemes in more favoured areas. Further,

these places would be able to attain maximum production and the people concerned would have all the amenities in their homes and on their farms that reticulated water can give.

I am pleased that the Electricity Trust has been given due consideration under the Loan Estimates. I was pleased to hear the Treasurer's remarks about the solid progress that this organization is making in extending electricity to many parts of South Australia. I was particularly pleased to hear that electricity will be extended to the Callington area and to places up-river from Mannum. Taillem Bend will get a supply of A.C. current eventually, and when all these extensions are completed there will be very little of the River Murray areas that is not supplied with power. Already the supply of electricity for the Murray areas is beginning to interest industrialists, and the advent of a reliable power supply will encourage the private development of land close to the river for irrigation.

Mr. O'Halloran—Have you any ideas about developing the Moorlands coalfield?

Mr. WHITE—I am just as anxious to see it developed as the honourable member is. I want to see all our natural resources properly developed. The sum of £1,750,000 has been allocated for afforestation. This is another of our large enterprises which has been of inestimable value to South Australia. About 30 years ago I read that a sum was to be set aside by Parliament for afforestation. Apparently the importance of this industry was just being realized and the suitability of the South-East for afforestation was just being recognized. Speakers who supported afforestation projects said that the pine forests envisaged would be a good investment and eventually give South Australia some independence in regard to timber supplies. All that was predicted then has eventuated. Poor land has been placed under profitable production, much employment has been created, and much of our timber used in housing and for fruit cases has come from our South-Eastern forests. It is reassuring to learn that the planting programme is being maintained so that by 1956 we shall have 125,000 acres of planted forests.

It is proposed to make available £4,350,000 to the Housing Trust. The history of this organization, as outlined by the Treasurer, is one of great achievement, and the building of houses in such large numbers is of great national importance. The trust's activities cover a wide range, including houses for sale and for letting, and flats and pensioner homes. It has also erected houses for the benefit of

the agricultural industry. I have always believed that all married couples should aim to own their own homes. This provides a splendid objective, the accomplishment of which is conducive to a sound outlook on community and national life. Therefore, I am pleased that the Housing Trust is encouraging home ownership by giving second mortgages in some instances. I appreciate the trust's action in building a number of homes in my own town of Murray Bridge.

The sum of £1,150,000 has been allocated for school buildings, and I am pleased that a number of craft centres are being established in the country as well as in the city. Many children have little aptitude for study but are keen to develop skill with their hands. These craft centres will provide the facilities they need. The practical lessons are an inducement for children to stay on at school and thereby benefit from other lessons too. Instruction in woodwork and home science is invaluable to people when they reach maturity.

I shall now refer to a problem that affects children in the sparsely populated areas where there is a growing practice for small schools to be closed. The children are conveyed in most cases to an area school by bus, but some children cannot be picked up because roads in their locality are deemed unsuitable for buses. The parents concerned then have to try to persuade the district council to put the road in good repair, but this may be beyond the limited resources of the council, so the road is left, and in some instances the children have to be taught by correspondence and in others conveyed by their parents over the unsatisfactory road. Provided the number of children warrants it, there should be a greater degree of co-operation in such cases between the Highways and Local Government Department and the Education Department. If the Education Department indicates that a school bus should go to a certain pick-up point, a high priority in the allocation of money from the Roads Fund should be given in fairness to those men and women willing to put up with the inconveniences of living in sparsely populated and under developed areas. Further, I believe that if such a policy were adopted it would be a great inducement for people to transfer to and develop such areas. I hope that this vital matter will be considered by the two departments concerned. There are instances of it in my district, and there must be instances in more sparsely populated areas. If something could be done to help these people in providing education for their children, many

more would be induced to stay in outback areas and bring those areas up to maximum production. I have pleasure in supporting the first line.

Mr. HAWKER (Burra)—In supporting the first line I wish to refer to a few important matters. The first has been mentioned by many other honourable members—the provision of roads. The sum of £200,000 has been set aside for roads and bridges. Money supplied for this purpose comes from petrol taxation and motor registration and it has always been held by the Government that we should not borrow money to build roads because interest and sinking fund contributions would have to be found from this revenue; but if good modern sealed roads were constructed the annual maintenance charges would be reduced considerably. Today the maintenance charges on our loose surface roads are very high and the results of such maintenance often unsatisfactory. It would be good economics to spend as interest on the construction of good sealed roads the money now spent on maintenance.

We need more research into road-making methods. This morning I heard a broadcast news item that an agency of the British Government was testing a new method of road-making at Woomera and sending samples of material to England to see what additive was required to make a satisfactory road. It was said that machinery to be used for making the road was to be purchased from America. I am glad to see that in some directions efforts are being made to find better and more economical methods. At present our methods are far from economical. Further, in some areas it is hard to get satisfactory materials. It seems that no research is being made into the location of suitable materials, and I have known of cases in my district where material has been quarried for a main road and later condemned, which has meant that the quarrying expense has been wasted and the project delayed.

I agree with the honourable member for Alexandra (Mr. Brookman) that more private contractors should be employed on road-making. If such people were ensured continuity of work they would get together sufficient road-making plant to do the work. In my district there are roads constructed by private contractors over 30 years ago on which it has been necessary to carry out maintenance work only once. I urge the Government to look into this important matter.

A large sum is to be spent on further work on the South-Eastern drainage project. It was originally estimated that this project would cost £1,280,470 or £4 18s. 3d. an acre to be drained, but £1,680,000 has already been spent on the work and the final estimate is now £3,187,000 or £12 an acre (2½ times the original estimate). I have always doubted the economics of this drainage, and I believe that the Leader of the Opposition has come around to my view that, after spending money on the main drains to take away the big flood waters, we should halt a while to see how the scheme works.

Mr. O'Halloran—I have always held that view.

Mr. HAWKER—Then I am pleased that the honourable the Leader has always agreed with me. Land inspected by the Land Settlement Committee last year and owned by the Koniak Seed Company, has been improved and sown to pasture, but it is now to be drained. I consider, however, that, with loan money as short as it is, the Government should investigate the question carefully and see whether this work should not be stopped. From experience in the Booborowie district I know the possible effect of drainage on pastures, and I see no reason why the same thing should not happen in the South-East. One man there told me that after after a drain had been constructed through one of his good strawberry clover paddocks he had to shift the strawberry clover to another paddock because there was not sufficient water for it in the old paddock.

The Treasurer said that five private contractors were engaged on this drainage work, but I consider that they would be far better employed in building roads. According to my calculations the work is costing about 7s. a yard, which is very expensive for shifting earth considering that a farmer can get dam-sinking done at present for between 2s. 6d. and 3s. a yard. Professor Prescott has said that at Naracoorte the scrub soil takes only 18 inches out of an annual rainfall of 22.6 inches, which means that about 20 per cent of the rainfall is not being used. In the improved pasture land, however, the soil can take 49 inches of annual rainfall—more than double the present rainfall. From those figures it may be seen that once a certain area of pasture is established the build up of water held over the years will be used up quickly.

The Treasurer's speech revealed an extensive conversion of locomotive power in our Railways Department from coal to diesel power, which is

in conformity with general railway practice throughout the world. On my recent visit to England I found that the British Railways were also converting to diesel power. If more people are to be induced to use our railways more comfortable travel must be provided and trains must run on time. In an article in last Saturday's *Advertiser* it was reported that the Americans are making a concerted drive in an endeavour to get back lost railway traffic, and that an officer of the Electro-Motive Division of General Motors-Holdens has designed a new type of train with a low centre of gravity that will haul 400 people at 100 miles an hour using 1,200 horse power, whereas the old type would haul only 280 people at 80 miles per hour using 4,500 horse power. The new vehicle is light and uses air suspension. If we are going to attract people back to our railways we must look very carefully into the rolling stock. I am very pleased to see that diesel trains are being used because the rail cars that have been in vogue almost since Webb's time are completely out of date. It is impossible to read in them, they are uncomfortable and cramped, and on the Clare-Spalding line passengers had difficulty in retaining their seats. I commend the Government on its diesel programme and I hope it will put on comfortable and fast trains that will run to schedule on country lines. I commend to the Government the lightweight air suspension carriages that are being used in America. If they were installed the railways would hold their place here.

This year, as in other years, a large amount of Loan money is to be provided for the Electricity Trust. The trust has been praised enthusiastically and it is often said how it has expanded since it took over from the old Electric Supply Company, but in fairness to the company we should always remember that a large amount of Loan money has been put into the State undertaking. I am not complaining about that, but I want to show that the expansion has been due mainly to that Loan money. Loan moneys made available to the Trust are as follows:—

	£
1947-48	1,412,000
1948-49	2,000,000
1949-50	2,500,000
1950-51	4,600,000
1951-52	11,550,000
1952-53	5,400,000
1953-54	4,200,000
1954-55	5,000,000
	<hr/>
	£36,662,000

Although there are some credits against that the total stands at £31,174,000.

An amount of £100,000 is provided for improvements to the abattoirs, and I do not think this amount should be made available. In the past people have wished to start private abattoirs in the abattoirs area defined under the Act, for killing for export and supplying a certain amount to the metropolitan area. Some of them have been fairly substantial financially, while others have not, but the Government's view has been that as this large amount of public money has been invested in the abattoirs we cannot afford to let private enterprise come in and allow the abattoirs to remain idle. We have seen the very unfortunate spectacle of this big State undertaking lying idle at a time when we badly want goods for export. I am referring to the fat lamb trade. On my trip not more than two months ago I was at the Smithfield market in London where I inspected the meat and had a talk to butchers, and there is no doubt that there is an excellent market in England for South Australian lamb. There was none there then because of the shipping strike, but if one asked for meat at any butcher's shop in London, and asked why New Zealand lamb is considered better than Australian, I am fairly certain that 90 per cent could not distinguish between a South Australian and a New Zealand chop. I am pretty certain the average housewife could not tell. My wife and I have found it is easy to cook frozen lamb. It is very nice to eat and I do not think anyone could tell it from fresh meat. The difference in price between the New Zealand and the South Australian lamb is not more than 1½d. a lb.

Mr. O'Halloran—How much a lb. is it?

Mr. HAWKER—It is 4s. 6d. to 5s. a lb. sterling for lamb chops in a retail shop. I do not like to see the Government extending the abattoirs. After all, we export in a reasonable season a greater value of lamb than the capital cost of the abattoirs and I cannot see that it is any good spending any more public money on that undertaking. Let us permit private enterprise to spend money on abattoirs if it is still willing to do so.

Mr. O'Halloran—Why not permit killing in country abattoirs?

Mr. HAWKER—Yes, but you then get into shipping difficulties. I do not think there are many places in South Australia where a ship could be filled in one loading with lamb. If there were slaughtering in the country a lot

of carcasses would have to go to Port Adelaide for shipping.

On the Continent many cities still have trams. They are antiquated and out of date, and most authorities when replacing them use buses. They have one very great advantage that I noticed on the Continent. Trams or trolley buses have to follow each other like Brown's cows. When a tram is full and it is behind one that is half full, it cannot pass the other, but with buses expresses can be run and the full buses can go straight on. That all helps to clear the passengers. In England a tremendous number of people are shifted by buses. I realize there are underground railways there too, but there are a great number of buses. They are extremely flexible, have an extremely good pick-up and the great advantage of being able to go straight on when they are full.

The Premier said he was doubtful whether Australia would be able to raise £180,000,000 this year for the Loan programme. I point out that our Loan money is dependent on profitable private enterprise wanting to have some place to invest money and on people wanting to invest savings. We are really dependent on profitable private enterprise. That might be rather adversely affected because one of our biggest products, certainly our biggest export at the moment, is wool. The peak Adelaide price of wool was 129.16d. a lb. in 1950-51. At the last September sales in Adelaide wool brought only 52.42d. a lb. In other words the wool prices dropped 58 per cent, a pretty big drop in the exportable income of Australia. From September, 1954, to September this year the wool price dropped 24 per cent. We must look at the matter realistically and appreciate that there will not be as much money about in Australia as there has been in years gone by. In order to get a true comparison we must consider the position in 1949 when the price of wool was 53.171d. a lb. and the State living wage £6 6s. Today, with wool about the same price, the living wage is £11 11s. The Leader of the Opposition referred to national credit and said it was used as a war-time means of finance. It was used successfully then, but we are paying for it now and it is nothing more nor less than inflation. The usual method is to issue Treasury bonds which are discounted by the Commonwealth Bank and that represents more money on the market. If one issues money against our credit resources it is just as well to consider what our credit resources are. We can juggle

money about and use all types of patent methods of finance, but the prosperity of a nation depends on that nation's ability to produce goods which people want in the necessary quantity and at a price they are prepared to pay. No amount of book-keeping will alter that basic fact. I support the first line.

Mr. QUIRKE (Stanley)—There was a time in the history of the world when the value of goods was the goods themselves. There was a time, many years ago, when the article produced was the value that accrued to the nation for the amount of effort expended. Today there is an entirely different principle and to realize that one needs only to peruse these Estimates and listen to the statements of the Treasurer, the Prime Minister and the governor of the Commonwealth Bank, who seems to be vested with an authority I think he should not have. Today Dr. Coombs is telling the national Government of this country how the economy of the country should be run according to his ideas—ideas postulated by the London school of economics. That is his *alma mater*. I disagree and sound a note of warning. I disagree entirely with the concluding remarks of the member for Burra and will deal with them presently. The people of Australia are being told precisely what they were told in 1930 by imported experts. Everything they were told then was fraught with peril, trial and tribulation and they suffered badly under the orders of overseas people, and being ignorant of how to order their own internal economy they succumbed to the advice and orders of outsiders and suffered as a consequence. The whole theory is being repeated today, practically word for word.

Mr. Macgillivray—And with the help of the member for Burra.

Mr. QUIRKE—Evidently he concurs. What is the position today? What are we being told? The Prime Minister is meeting representatives of the banks and discussing the economic future of the country. He will call the big hire purchase corporations together to arrive at a decision as to how much money they will have advanced. Behind it all is the evil genius who says that money is paramount above production—that production does not matter. "You can starve" was the phrase hackneyed around the country in 1930. There was poverty in the midst of plenty. Today that theme will be repeated unless we are prepared to oppose it. We will have a repetition of what happened in 1930. But why?

Is it because we have not sufficient goods? Is it because we are short of the necessities of life? Are we short of food and clothing? No! We have a surplus of wheat, wine, dried fruits and clothing. We are told that because we have a surplus we must go on short rations. The only thing we are short of is correct thought. The man who lacks the correct thought is the evil genius behind this business—the man who has the same thoughts as Otto Niemeyer who came to this country in 1930 and said that because we were producing everything that was necessary for the good of human existence we had to tighten our belts and go without. We did go without and we are being asked to do the same thing today. If there is going to be a first rebel in this country against that form of ideology then he is now speaking. I suffered under that philosophy in 1930, but I am not prepared to suffer under it again, whether it is imposed by Dr. Coombs, Mr. Menzies, or anyone. I know there is no necessity for it. I refuse to believe that because this country has produced beyond its requirements we should pay the penalty of going on short rations.

We are told that the proposals being put to the private banks are that they shall call up overdrafts and restrict credits, particularly in relation to credits required for imports into this country. Let us consider what we import. I will try to trace what will happen when an embargo is placed upon imports. If private banks are ordered to restrict credits on imports—and it is an order because of the control exercised by the Commonwealth Bank—we will have mass unemployment. Many people are employed in the distribution of imports or are engaged in industries which use imported products. We are told, "You must reduce your amount of imports so that you will be able to pay for them with the reduced value of your exports." That sounds all right, but what does it mean internally? Let us examine the pocket year book and consider the imports that come to South Australia alone. Last year they amounted to £51,472,000. Let us consider the various items—apparel and attire, arms and munitions, bags, sacks, bitumen, coffee, cocoa, chicory, drugs, chemicals, earthenware, fertilizers, fibres, fish, glass and glassware, scientific instruments and metal. Imports of metals of all kinds totalled £23,000,000. How many men are engaged in the fabrication of that metal? Are banks going to be called upon to restrict credit to firms which are importing that metal,

and, if so, will it mean less metal and less products in this country and, therefore, fewer men to fabricate those products? The result of this cold-blooded attitude is that we have too many people engaged in non-essential industries. The Housing Trust is building a satellite town near Adelaide and has built thousands of homes throughout the metropolitan area. Are we to segregate the people who are engaged in normal industries from those employed in industries dependent upon imports? What will be done with the man in Adelaide who has purchased or is purchasing his house and who has received a loan under the Advances for Homes Act? Are we going to say to him, "The industry you are engaged in cannot have credit to import its requirements and therefore you will be out of work, but you can go to some scheme at Williams-town or work on a pipeline and earn your living there although your home is here?" Note the cold-blooded attitude in which this distribution of labour is approached. Human values are not considered. It is cold-blooded economics, and mostly wrong. It is said that we should call in overdrafts. We know that practically all businesses work on overdraft. If a firm's limit of £10,000 is reduced to £5,000 it means a reduction in the capacity to earn, and men are thrown on to the scrap heap. That must happen. The machinery being used today is the same as was used in earlier days. We are asked to produce more. In the years from 1928 to about 1933 we were told that more should be produced because prices overseas had fallen. We were told that more must be taken out of an acre of ground in order that the internal economy could be maintained and that until that was done credits would be restricted, which would reduce the internal price.

Mr. Hawker referred to bank credit. Every overdraft in existence is the result of bank credit. If that is restricted the purchasing power of the people must be restricted and they will not be able to buy our primary products. How does anybody reduce an overdraft? In order to reduce an overdraft by £5,000 goods to that value must be sold, and if the purchasing power of the people is reduced it must mean a fall in the internal price. That is what is desired. Human values are not to be considered now any more than previously. I have studied this matter and I sound a note of warning. Mr. Macgillivray and I mentioned bank credit quite a lot when we first came here, and there was always a howl around the Chamber. Other members did

not believe that there was such a thing, and we were laughed to scorn. It was said that banks lend their deposits, but that is an infamous lie. Let me give an example. One report of the Savings Bank of South Australia says that it has invested more than £50,000,000 in Commonwealth funds. It is said to be depositors' money, but has the amount of money invested by the depositors been reduced by one penny? Has there been any reduction in the accounts of depositors because of the investment in Commonwealth funds of £50,000,000? Interest is paid on money so invested. The Commonwealth lends the money back to the State on Loan account. Is there anything more futile in finance? Why not let the State use the money? There is definite proof that every advance creates a deposit. The money lent to the Commonwealth bank comes back through industry, and every penny embodied in profits of a firm, or in the wages of the employee, and put into the Savings Bank becomes a deposit. It is admitted by the Commonwealth Bank, and today that bank says to the private banks that they must restrict bank credit. I give this illustration to show the extreme danger that faces this country in connection with the policy being put forward by the Commonwealth Bank through the agency of the Commonwealth Government.

Hire-purchase businesses are to be brought into this matter. Without hire-purchase, industry in Australia would stand still. There would be no markets for the goods produced. Let us analyse hire-purchase. The manufacturer produces goods and his price is to the wholesaler. The wholesaler's price is to the retailer, and the retailer can sell only if the consumer has the necessary money. Never have the people of Australia had enough money to purchase all the goods produced. That is why we have hire-purchase. The total cost from the mining of the ore to the selling of a refrigerator retail is borne by the man who purchases the article. He is unable to purchase unless money is made available to him. We have the raw material, the manufacturer, wholesaler, retailer and purchaser, and then there is the man who provides the money for the purchase of the goods. No article sold under hire-purchase has a real value of more than 40 per cent. The remaining 60 per cent is profit to someone, and that is a conservative estimate. About one-third is the retailer's profit. I do not disagree with that, but the purchaser could never hope to have the money

necessary to purchase the goods produced, and that is where the hire-purchase comes in. When overdrafts are called in output is reduced. When credit is restricted so is output, and in both cases it means less employment. When advances for imports are reduced it means restricted employment. I dread the implementation of what is proposed today.

Now I come to housing. Houses are provided for protection against the weather and to provide a place for the civilized living of human beings. The first essential for young people who marry is a house. It is proposed that there should be a reduction in the amount of money to be advanced for housing. Is it not realized how dreadful can be the result of such a policy? Have we more houses than we need? There is a dire shortage of them, but in order to improve the position, apparently, we must first make it worse. The amount of money has to be reduced, so we are told. In a press article it was suggested that the maximum amount advanced to the individual under the Advances for Homes Act should be increased, but I have been suggesting that for years and the Premier has said that the amount that can be advanced is the amount that can be made available from Loan money.

(Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.)

Mr. QUIRKE—At the adjournment I was addressing myself to the problem of housing. I now wish to draw attention to just what is concerned in the ramifications of building a house, and the number of allied trades associated with the provision of the necessary materials. I do not need to elaborate all the thousand and one items which go to make up a modern home—from the sand, gravel, cement, foundation rods, bricks, timber and other materials which form the walls, the iron and tiles for the roofs and the joinery for the windows and doors, not forgetting the hardware for the bathroom and the locks and all the other fittings which go to make a modern house. Practically every trade is concerned, and any reduction in the amount of money available for housing must have an immediate impact upon those trades, with dire consequences to all concerned. At the height of the depression in 1931 only 51 houses were built in the metropolitan area. Are we to have a repetition of that? Even if it is not as bad, still any reduction will make it bad enough. Modern industry is not divided into little watertight compartments whereby one is completely independent of the others. Even into the building of a humble home goes

practically the whole of the industrial resources and forces of the country, and any attack on the amount of money available for housing will at once have its impact upon the State's economy.

Time and time again I have stated in the House that the amount of money at present available for building under the Advances for Homes Act is insufficient to build a home. I realize that the Treasurer is the victim of circumstances when he says that the amount of the advances is contingent upon the amount of money made available to him. I am sure he would be willing to see the advances under this Act made equal to those under the Commonwealth war service homes scheme, namely, £2,750, for which it is wellknown that one could not build a suitable home with all the amenities which are not only desirable but the right of those who want to live under modern conditions. There was the time after World War I on the river settlements and in other virgin areas where country was taken up when settlers were quite content to bear the heat and burden of the day in makeshift homes. On the Murray men were proud to be selected to develop the area and live in temporary structures, which were known as Cresco homes and the furniture as Laurel furniture—they were constructed of Cresco superphosphate bags and the furniture was made from Laurel kerosene cases. These men were happy to live under those conditions because they anticipated that consequent upon their labours they would get something better. They have achieved their objective in spite of the vicissitudes of frost and depressed prices, and today these river settlements are among the glories of South Australia. The people who made them so were those who were prepared to live under the conditions mentioned; and today they are proud to acknowledge the circumstances under which they started. Under similar conditions settlers at Loxton are happy and content to live in Nissen huts until homes are built for them. They do not quibble about going into these places.

Mr. McAlees—We have hundreds of wattle and daub houses at Moonta and Wallaroo Mines.

Mr. QUIRKE—It does not matter whether they are wattle and daub, or made from whitewashed superphosphate bags. These people were pleased to start under those conditions, and Australians worthy of their salt would be proud to do it by the sweat of their brow, and gradually build themselves up, but

we know that that type of house could not be accepted in the metropolitan area. People are entitled to the products of the technological advances which makes a home what it should be under modern conditions. Almost all materials are available in full supply, with a few exceptions such as galvanized iron and one or two other items. Notwithstanding this, under the scheme propounded for reducing the advances available for housing, it does not matter whether these materials are mountain high, one just cannot get the money to build the houses. That is wrong. If the materials, labour, skill, administration and the will to do the job are present, then money should not be an obstacle to the housing of our people, because it is something completely extraneous to the realities of a house.

I can remember the first motor car which ran in Adelaide, and the language of the teamsters when it frightened their horses. I look back with pleasure to those days. Let us consider the technological advances in the last 50 years. Are we going to be so absurdly stupid as to think in this year, 1955, that in another 50 years something which is not a reality in itself is going to govern the material worth and the well-being of the people of this country? That should not be so, it is entirely unnecessary, and the Treasurer knows it. I am certain he is sympathetic to my arguments. It is due to the fact that we as a State have given away our powers. I want them back. It has been said that we could not finance our internal economy, but I say that we could. In reply to a question the Treasurer admitted that we could juggle the figures of our internal economy, but when it comes to overseas finance, that is a different matter. If we have the right idea and worked things correctly internally, there would be no obstacle to the progress of this country and it could be worked. One thing which intrigues me is our internal debt which perhaps the Treasurer can explain some time. We have a State public debt amounting to some £214,000,000, the interest of which is nearly £7,000,000. Against that, the total of our State internal collections is only £6,500,000. Where are we to get the money to pay that interest? It is mortgaged ahead. Would any member agree that we should borrow to pay it? We have an interest burden which is greater than our State collections in taxation, and yet all collections from motor taxation go on the roads. An examination of the positions discloses absurd anomalies.

Mr. Macgillivray—Stupidity would be a better word.

Mr. QUIRKE—Stupidity if you like. I do not think any member would deny that under orthodox finance the monetary security of this country is entirely dependent upon the primary producer. If that is not correct, why this talk that our exports are not sufficient to pay for our imports, and all the consequent restrictions. We know perfectly well that the real wealth of this country accrues from the land. Every year the returns from our wool clip, wheat crops and other primary products pay for our imports and maintain our internal economic security. That is the present position. I do not say, and do not use it as an argument, that that is infallible, because I do not think that fundamentally it is strictly true, but under our orthodox method, we accept it as true. Overseas buyers are paying less for our products, so the money that accrues to us is so much less and we are told, "We have been hit by low export prices." There are two classes of people in this country who have no power to pass on their higher costs by asking higher prices. They are the primary producers and the people who work for wages. It has been said time and time again that the primary producer should produce more so that we can equate our exports with our imports, and we are told that if we do not produce enough we shall get into trouble. That is entirely wrong in principle.

Let us assume our exports are worth £10,000,000. If they fall to £5,000,000 we can buy only £5,000,000 worth of commodities overseas, and because of that some people are thrown out of work. Are we going to accept that sort of financial juggling? It is absurd and criminally wrong. It is possible for us to balance our internal economy, irrespective of the prices we receive overseas. It can be done, and ultimately it will be done, otherwise we shall cease to exist as a nation or exist only as a nation having periodical rises and falls according to the prices we receive overseas.

Mr. O'Halloran—We were able to get along very well in two world wars.

Mr. QUIRKE—I am glad the honourable member mentioned that. Experience has proved that the only thing that makes our rotten economy work is a war. During the first world war our Savings Bank deposits were doubled. That was because a war creates a demand for labor to supply goods that no one wants as consumer goods. They are blown into the atmosphere or used to wage war, and when the war is finished they are scrapped. Only one thing remains of them—the debt incurred in their manufacture, and that goes

on forever. The people do not buy guns and shells and other articles of war; what they need is food and clothing. People are paid for producing the articles of war, and they put their money into the Savings Bank. Precisely the same thing happened during the second world war, and today South Australians have Savings Bank deposits of over £100,000,000.

Finance lives on debt. Its profits can only accrue from debt, and in order to destroy the accumulation of profits made by the workers a depression was used after the first world war. No-one will be more pleased than I if I am proved to be wrong, but I think the same attempt will be made again because all the portents are there. Precisely the same arguments are being invoked now, though today the proposals are being made to look more respectable by calling in the interested parties to a conference, but this will not make any difference. The orders from the boys in the back rooms behind the Government are likely to be implemented just the same.

Mr. O'Halloran—But those who do the real work have not been called into conference.

Mr. QUIRKE—And they are not likely to be, particularly the men who produce the wheat and wool and meat. It was never intended under the scheme of things dating from about 100 years ago that the primary producer should ever be a freeholder without debt. He was to be the man to become the backbone of debt. He was to be perpetually in debt; an extraction was to be made from his production by way of the debt over his head. He has probably never been in a better position because of the recent high prices of wool, but he is not in an indestructible position. If there were a drought, plus calling up of overdrafts and restrictions on advances, his economic position could be destroyed within 12 months, and I am fearful of the consequences of this witch's brew that is being concocted in another State and is ready to be foisted on the people.

One of the most vicious features is the proposal to limit the amount of money available for housing. The very security of the people depends on their ability to house themselves. As a result of the present high building costs it is not possible for the vast majority to do this. They depend upon advances to finance housing, but this must be done under the same monetary system that applies to the purchase of refrigerators, washing machines, and other appliances that they need in their houses. An attack is being made on housing and on the

hire purchase system. If we reduce the amount of money available for housing many people in allied trades will be thrown out of work. Again, if we reduce the amount of money that can be advanced on hire purchase many will be thrown out of work. If I am wrong I hope members will show me where. A firm manufacturing refrigerators makes them for sale. If it employs 100 men to make 1,000 refrigerators in a certain time many of them will be thrown out of employment if the programme is curtailed by, say, one-half.

This attack on our monetary system is aimed at the economic welfare of the country, and Heaven knows that the country does not want such an attack today. Recently, I obtained electoral figures for the Assembly districts of Young, Rocky River, Burra, Light, and Stanley. Between 1947 and 1953 the number of constituents in those districts fell by 1,200. In those six years hundreds of young people became 21 years of age and entitled to vote, but many of them are not on the country rolls. Look at the swollen figures of the metropolitan constituencies and you will find where they have gone. No nation can continue long under conditions like that. If we drain our country areas in order to build up the industrial centres of big cities we shall be looking for trouble, and we are heading for it fast. If we want to keep young people in their country environment we must induce industries to go into country districts. I do not say that we must establish blast furnaces or heavy industries, but small industries that could make component parts. This would employ many people in the environment in which they were born. Henry Ford was one who originated the chain system of production. He manufactured all the component parts for his vehicles at one centre, but the Ford Company does not do that today. He was one of the first men to centralize production, and others blindly followed him, but he was the first man to go out of this system. Today the Ford Company decentralizes production. Its component parts are made in many places in Canada, and they are brought to one centre for assembly. The Ford Company is now one of the two or three big motor undertakings in the United States that are perfectly sound. However, if it had not changed its methods it would be out of existence now.

Decentralization is needed in the rural areas of South Australia to stop the country from being bled white and to stop the concentration of industry in the city. I have nothing against the big motor firms, but the people in one suburb may soon find a railway

running through their backyards to serve a certain industry. There is plenty of room in this country where you would not have to take a railway through back yards. Why is it necessary to take a railway through a suburb, chopping into houses and back yards? Assuming that that is done, those people must live alongside a hammering railway that passes within a few feet of the place where they sleep. It is all wrong and should not be allowed. Why is it necessary for that industry to be jammed down there so that the people are within hearing of the whistle? I know a man in Sydney whose daily trip to work is 80 miles through the built-up areas of that city—40 miles there and 40 miles home by car. We, in Adelaide, are getting to that stage. I know a man living at Gepps Cross who works at St. Mary's. Is that an ideal way to live? That man becomes a travelling automaton.

Mr. McAlees—There are people working in Adelaide whose homes are at Moonta and Kadina.

Mr. QUIRKE—That may be, and I wish to draw attention to the basic threat. I accept the Commonwealth Bank's statement that money is nothing more than figures in a ledger, but today it is governing the very life and well-being of the Australian people. I fear that, merely because the figures do not agree, the people will be thrust down and made destitute in order to balance the books. I do not think the Australian people will take to that idea, and I certainly would not wish them to do so. There should be enough of us who went through the last depression to see that the young people of today are not as stupid as we were. With the prices of our commodities falling we shall be thrown to the wolves. There is no necessity for that and there is nothing that cannot be done in this country, given the materials, manpower, will and the administration of the skill, which we have in plenty. The people sitting behind ledgers should not be allowed to become the dictators of our final destiny. Except for some revenue from taxation, these Loan Estimates are based upon debt. We used to say years ago, "We will borrow ourselves into prosperity," but that can be done no more today than it could be 20 years ago, and if we try to do it the same dire results will accrue. Further, if we allow it to be done we deserve those results.

Although roadmaking costs have risen, under a restricted financial policy less money will be made available for this purpose; consequently, we will have fewer and worse roads. I draw

attention to the plight of corporate towns in this respect. Councils have obtained money for a road within their districts provided it could be shown that the road was used more by people from surrounding districts than by local people. In this way it was possible to obtain a grant for a road to a sale yard or a brick kiln, which would be used by heavy trucks from other districts. Now, I understand, even that grant has been cut out. Advances for machinery have been cut out, and machinery can no longer be obtained from the Highways Department under the old terms. The principal advances given to corporate towns are those in connection with main roads. Although such a grant is handy, its provision is the same as saying, "Here is an advance to the Clare Corporation, but it is for main roads." True it is an advance, but it must be spent on the main roads programme.

The position has been reached where it is necessary for some consideration to be given to such councils. Council rates have been raised to astronomical heights in order to meet costs. The fixed commitments of councils have now risen so much that most of the rate revenue is spent in meeting them; for example, salaries and wages. Councils can hardly afford bitumen at its present price, and many do not obtain it unless they go to the limit of their overdraft and then stop work for a while after using it. That sort of thing is going on all over the State. Frankly, under existing conditions I do not know the answer, but I do know that councillors, who render spendid voluntary service, are being harried by rate-payers who do not understand the necessity for increasing the rates. Nevertheless the necessity is there and somebody must meet these increased costs, otherwise the whole economy of local government will fall about our ears.

A terrific toll is being taken by the increased rates. People who 10 or 15 years ago retired from the banks, the Public Service, or the railways on superannuation benefits, have seen the value of their pension dwindle, and those who own their homes must now find the money to pay their rates which have been increased because of the appreciation in the value of their homes. Old-age pensioners are affected in the same way. All these things are pressing heavily on the people.

However sympathetic we may be toward the railways, the fact remains that the majority of traffic today goes over our roads and nothing we will do will bring it back to the railways. Why don't we face up to this position? It is said there is no money for

main roads, but in this country we need arterial highways stretching from Queensland to Western Australia and able to carry the heavy traffic that is at present smashing the roads.

Mr. O'Halloran—Shouldn't there be a limit on the weight of traffic?

Mr. QUIRKE—I am willing to place a limit on the weight of the load and the speed and wheel base of the vehicle. I do not say anybody should be allowed to drive a massive vehicle that will smash heavy roads reinforced by steel mesh; but suitable roads should be built to carry heavy vehicles. The building of main arterial roads is an urgent task; the sooner it is done the better. Once such roads are built the traffic over them should be regulated.

Mr. Davis—The local councils have that power now.

Mr. QUIRKE—If the power exists it should be used. My point is that highways should not be formed from rubble and then carefully compressed by heavy rollers. I do not blame the road engineers; they must do the job according to the money made available to them. I do not think any road engineer wants to build a rubble road with a bitumen skin that has no strength.

Mr. White—Roads are not made that way today.

Mr. QUIRKE—Any number of them are. In the northern districts there is no solid limestone under a shallow skin of soil; there is 20ft. of clay and it is no use merely putting a bitumen skin over rubble on top of that. Mr. White said not many of those roads are made today but I know that miles and miles of them are being made, and if he can tell me where one long stretch of highway is being built with two inches of hard metal I would like to see it, because it is so long since I have seen such a road. I would exclude places around the metropolitan area, although not Marion where, if one gets off the crown of the road one is likely to stay for a week. Our roads are not built to take transport that is not using the railways and will never go back to the railways under any circumstances. Because of that we must concentrate on roads and build them to take heavy traffic.

Mr. Dunnage—What do you think it will cost a mile under your scheme?

Mr. QUIRKE—That is the least of my worries. If £100,000 is spent on a road that is bashed to pieces in six months that money is

wasted. It would be far better to build one-third of the length to a standard that would stand up to the traffic.

Mr. DUNNAGE—But what would it cost a mile to build the type of road you want? You would have a good idea.

Mr. QUIRKE—It could be anything up to £20,000 a mile.

Mr. DUNNAGE—Then we would do very little road-making.

Mr. QUIRKE—Is this State short of road metal, is it short of the capacity to put down stone crushers, or is it short of the capacity to make cement? We have all the physical requirements except money, and that is the only nebulous thing in the whole business.

Mr. DUNNAGE—And that is not very important!

Mr. QUIRKE—It is not very important at all, and the honourable member knows that too. In the event of any emergency it is necessary to build roads of good materials, but with men, materials, skill, labour and everything else available they cannot be built because somebody says there is not enough money.

I shall now deal with the dried fruit and wine industries with which I am most closely associated. Those industries have been hit by natural causes and growers will be sorely pressed. The growers of wine grapes are not millionaires because right through their history they have had to work against the elements. Every conceivable form of the elements—hail, rain, drought and so on—can affect the horticultural industry, and the frost that has now come will hit it very hard. The growers will stand up to it eventually but they may need some help. I am not going to say now how I think that could best be given or extended to them, but I point out that it is only one of the hazards that a producer of primary commodities is always up against. It does not matter what his costs are, the elements can conspire to beat him. He has to contend with droughts, floods, fires, hail, frost and grasshoppers, and is the only producer that has to do so. The recent frosts hit some people extremely hard, and some of them were affected last year. If this industry needs some assistance I trust that this House will treat any applications sympathetically. I do not ask necessarily that money be given to them, because they are not asking for charity in any way, but I ask for some assistance to tide them over. I point out that they are not out of the wood yet because this was an early frost, and if another came in the middle of

October it would mean complete devastation. Some assistance would then be necessary to this industry that has been in the doldrums for a considerable time.

I am gravely concerned at what is happening with those who have been elected to guide the destinies of Australia because I am afraid that if they continue in the way that portents show they will continue they will pull this country down to the same conditions as in 1933. I sincerely hope and trust that the people of this country will refuse adamantly to accept that position, because there is absolutely no necessity for it.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY (Chaffey)—I feel that Parliament has two very responsible jobs in the course of each session: one is the Loan Estimates and the other is a matter that we hope to have before us in about a month. These debates are very important because we are spending money belonging to other people. Quite a number of members have grown up through local government and they know as councillors that their first responsibility to the ratepayers is the manner in which ratepayers' money is spent. I have had that experience and in the years I have been in this place I have always held it as one of my greatest responsibilities to see that the money provided by the taxpayers is as well and wisely spent as the intelligence of this Chamber will allow.

Before analysing some of the points of these Estimates I would like to congratulate my colleague, the honourable member for Stanley, on the very valuable and important contribution he made to this debate. I agree entirely with his concluding remarks in which he pointed out that if those who are responsible for guiding the destinies of the Commonwealth of Australia in Canberra continue the negative policy of finance that they are pursuing they will not help the advancement of Australia but will bring us back to the hungry 1930's. Although I have cited Sir Reginald McKenna as an authority on many occasions I shall do so again, and I am fortified by the fact that he was chairman of the largest banking system in Great Britain, Chancellor of the Exchequer and was acknowledged as a leading financial authority. He pointed out without any equivocation that the amount of money in the community is only altered by the action of the banks. This was brought back very forcibly to my mind by the honourable member for Burra who said that the liberation of credit, the juggling of figures, did not mean a thing but what did

matter was the ability of the people of Australia in both primary and secondary industries to produce goods. That is a fallacy that one could easily fall into because the unfortunate people who have gone through the University, which is used to kill intelligence, are asked to believe that the production of goods produces money. McKenna pointed out that the banks are the only ones that alter the amount of money in the community, and we might have some difficulty in following all the reasons he has given for making that statement, although as ordinary citizens we have no difficulty in realizing the truth of his statement if we think back to the conditions in the 1930's which the honourable member for Stanley said there is a great danger of occurring again. We know that in those days the primary producers produced more wealth than they had ever done before and that secondary industries stocked every shop throughout the Commonwealth, but despite that there were children going to bed in this country, which could be the richest country in the world, with empty bellies and without sufficient blankets to keep them warm. That was no reflection on industry in any shape or form. Producers produce goods for one purpose only, and that is to dispose of them. If they cannot sell them the production is useless. Farmers were asked to produce more wheat, so they bent to their task and the wheat they grew had to be sold at half price. They were denied the protection of the Bankruptcy Court. They were kept producing for the next 20 years to pay off their mortgages. Had they had access to the Bankruptcy Court they could have had their indebtedness written off. The ex-member for Burnside was the first person to draw my attention to the fact that the Bankruptcy Court is designed to protect honest citizens from misfortune over which they have no control. In my ignorance I regarded it as an institution to which only discredited people went when they could not measure up to their obligations. So much for the position in the 1930's which occurred because of a misunderstanding of our financial system.

Many people, when they speak of the financial system, confuse it with the economic system. As I understand it, the economic system means the whole economy of the Commonwealth. In my opinion the economy of this country is good. I do not point an accusing finger at any section of the community. Our workers do a job comparable with workers in any other part of the world. Our employers are honest and fair men who have little to be ashamed of.

Our primary producers can measure up with their counterparts in other parts of the world. When one analyses the position one has great difficulty in pointing at any section of the community and saying, "They are responsible for the Commonwealth not going ahead as fast as it should." The only thing wrong with the whole economy of Australia is that our present financial system grew up at a time when industry was in its primitive stages and when gold was regarded as essential. Today gold is vanishing altogether from the financial system. If we showed any young person under 30 years of age a gold sovereign he would not have the faintest idea what it was.

Mr. Stephens—He would think it was a foreign coin.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—That is so. Despite the fact that gold is vanishing our producers are working the same. It horrified me to read that Sir Arthur Fadden, at a conference in Istanbul, spoke of gold as being a major part of our financial system. He wants the price of gold increased, but what does it matter? Is gold important as a commodity? I understand America buys it and I have been told that she has dug a great hole at Fort Knox and buried it.

Mr. Quirke—They still fill teeth with gold.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Yes, and use it for rings and watches. When one considers the legitimate uses of gold one wonders why it is of more importance than, for instance, potatoes. The member for Gawler asked a question concerning the taste of potatoes. That is an important question and one in which I am greatly interested because I am particularly fond of potatoes. However, what happens in the digging of gold and what is done with it is something about which I couldn't care less. It is of no importance. Unless we adopt a more intelligent approach to our financial system and link it, not with gold but with the ability of our people to produce goods that have to be exchanged, and regard finance as a means of exchange only, we are in for a bad time.

In this debate we have to analyse what the Government proposes doing with the money made available to it. As a country member one matter of major importance to me is the construction of roads and bridges, because unless we have good roads and bridges country transport is definitely limited and in some instances, stopped. I congratulate the Minister of Roads on the highway he has seen fit to construct through my district and the district of Light—the road on the north side of the

river linking with the Sturt Highway. However, there is one weak link in this road—Paringa Paddock—about which I asked a question this afternoon. This road is not very long but the old saying that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link applies, and in this instance the weak link is the $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles of road across Paringa Paddock. In 1952 when there was a danger of this road becoming inundated with rising waters from the River Murray the Highways Department worked on it and endeavoured to keep it open. However, they suddenly threw the sponge in. When they did the settlers and farmers organized a meeting at Renmark and in conjunction with the townspeople kept the road open. They borrowed tractors and pumps and built the embankments up. It is easy for a Government department to say, "This road will be inundated and out of action. We can by-pass it through Lyrup." That would add 20 miles to the distance a farmer would have to travel to get his supplies. Renmark is not only the centre for farmers in that section of South Australia but farmers from Victoria get their supplies there. I hope that with this coming flood, which the Minister estimates will be higher than in 1952, the department will not throw the sponge in. If farmers could keep the road open, surely a Government department with all the resources behind it could do so? I hope that the Government will make every endeavour to keep this road open not only for interstate traffic but in the interests of settlers who depend on Renmark as a centre.

A line in these Estimates refers to the Metropolitan Abattoirs and it is perhaps opportune to express a few opinions about this undertaking in view of what has taken place there in recent weeks. We all know that when fat lambs were ready for processing the employees of the Abattoirs thought it opportune to put forward certain demands. I am not arguing about the rights or wrongs of the case because there is apparently much to be said for both sides, but in this venture there are two bodies with absolute power. The Abattoirs Board has been given a monopoly and the employees another monopoly. There is an old axiom that power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely, and in this undertaking there are two bodies with absolute power so far as the processing of fat lambs in the metropolitan areas is concerned. I am not in favour of monopolies of any kind. I believe in honest competition and I do not think that anyone should be sheltered into incompetence, which can happen under this particular

setup. The Noarlunga Meat Works has been prepared to challenge the monopoly. I am always interested in any David who attacks a Goliath and always like to be on the side of the David, and I hope this David will win, too. I noticed from *Hansard* that the member for Burra (Mr. Hawker), was the first Government member to dare to ask a question about this matter, and in his reply the Premier read a lengthy report on the whole matter. The reply reminded me of a book I read recently by the Chief Justice of England in the course of which he said, in effect, "The trouble with we lawyers is that we are too inclined to see our client's case." That is simply another way of saying that a lawyer, when engaged by someone, is engaged to put that person's case. He is paid to win the case for his client if he possibly can unless, of course, he thinks there is something immoral about it, in which event he does not handle it. That statement by the Chief Justice of England came to my mind when I read the report by the Crown Solicitor, who put up a case for his client, the Government, and not for this Parliament. Some of his statements are interesting. He said, "I have reason to believe that the Noarlunga Company has been financed in this litigation by powerful outside interests." Probably that is correct, because it is not uncommon for people with a common interest to club together. He also said:—

All six States have indicated their intention to support the appeal on the one side and the Commonwealth engaged counsel to appear both in the High Court and in the Privy Council in support of the High Court's decision on the other.

Evidently it is wrong for someone to put the case for the Noarlunga Meat Works, but all right for the six States to stand together. I cannot see any value in his line of argument. If I wanted someone to defend me I would want him to make a better point than that. He also said:—

This can be seen to be an extremely powerful weapon in the hands of the Commonwealth Government bent on nationalization of important industries and the destruction of State independence.

There is a complete answer to that. If the Minister of Agriculture had not refused a licence to the company this matter would not have arisen. No doubt with the concurrence of Cabinet, he refused the licence and then the company took action, and it had the support of other companies who thought their welfare was at stake. Who can blame them for it? The report by the Crown Solicitor is

of no value to Parliament. It is only of use to a Government which came into power on the promise to support private enterprise, yet has belied that promise at every opportunity. The whole story of the Loan Estimates is a story of funds misspent. It has meant the sending of good money after bad money. Money has been used to assist socialistic undertakings that are losing millions of pounds every year. In connection with the Municipal Tramways Trust there is another story of incompetence and the misuse of taxpayers' money. I doubt whether any member would deny that this type of transport is the responsibility of local government bodies. A guarantee was given that in the event of any losses in the operations of the trust an increase would be made in land value rating. If the rating had been increased at the time, say a halfpenny in the pound, it would have been sufficient. Now the Government is more interested in getting votes from people in Adelaide than in the welfare of the State, so it is ready to put unlimited sums of money at the disposal of the trust. A few years ago the Premier told Parliament about the debacle that had taken place in the funds of the trust and said that the Government must rush to its aid. He then suggested that a little more than £1,000,000 would be sufficient to help the trust, but everybody knows how false that statement proved. About £7,000,000 has been advanced to the trust, yet its financial position is as bad today as when it was first subsidized. Trams are to be replaced. I do not know how much of the £7,000,000 they represent. Tram tracks are to be removed. What is to take their place on the balance-sheet of the trust? I understand that the trust has bought a number of buses that are now idle because they are to be one-man-operated. People from Alice Springs and other parts of the State are to be held responsible for this advance of £7,000,000. If we are to have Socialism let us have it and admit that private enterprise has failed.

Men of standing in the transport business in Adelaide assure me that they are prepared to take over the transport system and run it at less cost per mile than the present cost. I do not suggest that the whole of the system be handed over to private enterprise, but some parts of it could. The trouble with Socialism is that it is top heavy. Too many people live on the backs of the workers. It is not the fault of the drivers, conductors, porters and so on, but the people on the big salaries. If

we are to be Socialists let us be honest and say that private enterprise has been tried and found wanting. Let the Government say that only Government-controlled concerns should operate. We should remember what Winston Churchill once said. When the British Empire was fighting for its life he said that we should beware of the time when the only people in the community that matter are members of Parliament and heads of Government departments. We fought a war to protect the little men with initiative, and they are people like the Noarlunga Meat Works and those who want to run private bus services. This is not permitted, not because they are inefficient but because the bureaucrats do not want them to operate. Transport is the biggest problem in the country. It is said that the railways have to carry all the goods offering to them because they are public carriers, whereas road transport only picks the eyes out of the business. That is another of those statements which sound good at first, but the more one goes into it the more one sees how outrageous it is, because today no country carrier is able to develop his business as he would like. He can carry only certain goods over certain roads. Even when a man goes from the country to the city with a load he has to return empty. I have been credibly informed that if country carriers had the right to two-way traffic they would carry superphosphate back to the country more cheaply than the railways can.

Mr. William Jenkins—Perhaps for short distances, but not for long ones.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—At a time when superphosphate was unavailable here, carriers were carting it from Victoria back to Eyre Peninsula. If those in private enterprise had a fair go, and that is all they are entitled to ask, they could give valuable service to the people and cut down overhead costs. Often the railways are so incompetent that farmers and others would be prepared to pay extra to have their requirements delivered on their property. Road hauliers are being blamed for all kinds of things, including the smashing up of the roads. Mr. Quirke thinks there should be controls on the weight which vehicles can carry and also on their speed. We already have controls. If carriers are found to be carrying heavier weights than permitted by law, they can be punished. That is needed under any system. I watch big interstate hauliers going past my home every day of the week and have never seen any yet travelling at an excessive speed. Most of them use diesel engines, which do not give

high speeds. I would estimate the speed of these vehicles at about 30 miles per hour. If that is considered too fast, it could be reduced. Actually, long distance road hauliers are not very interested in speed. The mere fact that they should happen to be two or three hours earlier than expected means nothing to them, but they want to be sure they can deliver their loads safely to their destination. Some of these interstate trucks have eight, 10 or even 12 wheels, and it is only a matter for this Parliament to say how much each wheel should be permitted to carry. We could have a truck with sufficient wheels to enable it to carry 50 tons and it would not cause any more wear and tear on the roads than a certain type of truck carrying only one ton, because there would be only a certain weight permitted on each wheel. If there were sufficient wheels a truck could carry almost any tonnage, provided, of course, that the speed was also kept down. That seems to be the answer to the problem.

Instead of taxing these people off the roads, if we provided a law which was reasonable and just it would be to the immeasurable benefit of country people and the people of the Commonwealth generally. I entirely disagree with those who suggest that road hauliers should pay more taxation. At a meeting in Brisbane hauliers suggested an extra tyre tax. To show how stupid that suggestion is, let us imagine a haulier who buys a new tyre. He might travel only 100 miles before running into something which tears the cover to pieces, and therefore the whole of his taxation on that tyre is exhausted in the first 100 miles. Such happenings are not uncommon. A petrol tax at least is equitable, because one gets a definite mileage out of each gallon, but no-one can forecast what mileage he will get out of his tyres. The question arises who is to pay for any increased costs to the haulier. It would not be the hauliers, because consumers pay for all these extra costs.

Mr. Quirke—With a petrol tax everyone pays for road upkeep in accordance with the use he makes of the roads.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—That is so. A man with a motor bike who gets 80 to 100 miles out of his gallon of petrol, the private car owner who gets 20 to 30 miles and the heavy road haulier who travels only seven or eight miles pay for the use of the roads in accordance with the use they make of them. The petrol tax could be increased to any amount, but do not forget that the road haulier would not pay it. That goes on to the consumer. There-

fore, we would not be helping the little man, but only the Government when it is suggested that extra taxation should be enforced.

Earlier I referred to the building of a bridge across Paringa Paddock. In reply to a previous inquiry I was told that the cost would be about £170,000, and I thought this rather extravagant. Our engineers seem to consider that nothing but steel or concrete is suitable for this type of structure. The bridge would not need to be more than about 10ft. above ground level. A few miles up river there are ample supplies of well-grown gum timbers which could be cut and floated down river and a bridge built which would last 50 years. Surely by then we would have sufficient steel to solve the present problem of shortages. Our engineers evidently feel it a little degrading that they should be asked to work with such a common thing as wood when they have steel and cement. I hope that heads of departments will take notice of what has been said in this debate. I believe they take an active interest in what is said here, and I hope Ministers will examine the statements made by all members on behalf of their constituencies so that some good will accrue from the debate.

The CHAIRMAN—I will put the various items *seriatim*.

State Bank, £1,906,000.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—The sum of £1,450,000 is proposed for advances for homes, but information I have received shows that the State Bank is not in a position to accept further applications for advances because it already has a long waiting list. Further, I believe the bank will not advance money on homes that are available for purchase but have been previously occupied. Many people have advocated through the press that the maximum advance of £1,750 which is now permitted should be increased, but the Treasurer has indicated that if this were done the number of applicants that could be satisfied would be reduced. I am sure that many homes that have been previously occupied are just as valuable as new homes erected by the Housing Trust. In view of the large amount proposed for advances for homes can the Treasurer say whether more applicants will be accommodated and is it the policy of the bank to assist people to purchase a home irrespective of whether it has been occupied before?

Mr. LAWN—The Loan Estimates state that estimated payments to provide for loans for new homes and for purchase and additions to existing homes pursuant to the Advances for Homes Act are £1,450,000, but I am reliably

informed that that statement is incorrect. The State Bank has discontinued its policy of making money available for purchasing homes other than for new houses because it has not sufficient money available. The Treasurer has stated that if we increase the maximum loan of £1,750 the number of applicants that can be accommodated will be reduced. The bank will have £1,450,000 available for advances for homes for the next 12 months, and I have been informed that it cannot accommodate anywhere near the number of applicants. I believe there are some thousands of applicants on the State Bank's waiting list. I take it that those applicants are in addition to the many still awaiting Housing Trust homes. Many Government members do not fully realize the acute housing shortage, but the member for Unley (Mr. Dunnage) earlier this session said that the Government had not done enough to help relieve the shortage. Not only is it not providing sufficient money for prospective home owners, but it is permitting the wholesale demolition of houses throughout the city and suburbs. Its policy in this direction is only in line with that of the Menzies Government in Canberra. The events of 1929 could well be repeated this year.

Mr. William Jenkins—The honourable member hopes they will?

Mr. LAWN—No; I sincerely hope they will not, because I was one of the unfortunates who suffered. The worst feature of a depression is the possibility of being left homeless. The home is a necessity in a civilized community, yet even in these prosperous days people are living in overcrowded houses, garages, tents and even in motor cars. Information recently given by the Treasurer in reply to my question about the number of applications for possession and warrants for eviction issued by metropolitan courts reveals that the housing position is becoming worse than it has ever been. In spite of that, these Estimates do not permit the State Bank to function as it has functioned in the past. Further, the Government intends to ease the control provided in the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act. This Government is not doing all it should do to house the people. If they were well housed they would be far more contented than they are today. Not only are many families living in overcrowded conditions, but the members of some are scattered between different houses. These conditions are helping create our juvenile delinquency problem. A contented community is a contented working

population but people living under these conditions cannot be contented. If the Government wants more production it should assist to provide good living conditions. I trust that it will do its utmost to provide more homes through the Housing Trust, more money through the State Bank, and take steps to see that people will not be evicted as they have been in the past.

Mr. STEPHENS—This may be the only opportunity to seek assistance for the unfortunate people who are badly housed. Members opposite have said that conditions are better than they were, but that is not so in my district. Several cases have been brought to my notice recently. In one case two old ladies had to vacate premises because they were required as a store. In another a returned soldier who has a family of five was put out of his house and the children had to be sent to the country while he slept in a railway truck. In yet another, a family of eight boys, seven of whom served in the forces, were unable to prevent their parents from being evicted. Another man in my district who works at the blind school is living in a house that is unfit for habitation. I do not blame the Housing Trust, which is doing all it can to obtain homes for these people.

The CHAIRMAN—Order! I ask the honourable member to confine his remarks to the item "State Bank." That has nothing to do with the Housing Trust.

Mr. STEPHENS—The State Bank should help more than it has done. I know that there has been a tightening up of money and that people who have asked the banks for loans have been refused because the money has not been available. Building and friendly societies have not sufficient money to lend, either. It was reported in this morning's paper that the Federal Government intends to tighten up on home finance. I ask honourable members to do something to relieve the housing position, because this is the type of thing that causes Communism.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I have been told by people who have applied to the State Bank for a loan that that institution is unable to accept further applications. If they wish to purchase a home from a deceased estate or from a person leaving the State, and it has an equity of more than £1,750, surely the bank could grant a loan of that amount. Will the Premier inform me how much of the £1,450,000 will be provided to finance the purchase of existing homes?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I explained all lines when introducing these Estimates and pointed out that the total amount allocated to the State was entirely absorbed. I also said that every department will be up against it before the year is concluded if they maintain the employment they have at present. Many people seek advances from the Government for all purposes, the reason being that other organizations are not readily making advances. The Government has a limited amount of money and if it were to finance every deserving activity its programme for schools, hospitals and every other project the Government normally finances would cease. Notwithstanding suggestions this evening that money does not matter, at the end of each week the man who has been working, rightly expects payment. If the honourable member desires money to be advanced for the purchase of old homes, which will not increase the number of houses, at the expense of schools, hospitals, mental homes and other Government activities, let him say so. I know of no other State that conducts a similar programme for financing the purchase of homes. In Western Australia a person cannot get money to buy old homes, new homes, or to assist him in building a new home. In South Australia there are three activities, under the patronage of the Government, financing homes. The State Bank is financing homes with a limit of £1,750 as an advance. Every week there is a schedule of houses—and frequently old homes—which are financed for purchase through the Homes Act and there is also an extensive programme undertaken by the Housing Trust. This Government is building more houses per head of population than any other State. Members opposite have discussed what this Government is doing in respect of houses, but the wealthy States of New South Wales and Queensland are not doing nearly as much. According to the recent census the ratio of persons to homes has decreased from four to three and a half since the war. In every district thousands of people have moved into new homes. This Government did not retrench labour when difficulties arose two or three years ago. This was the only State that did not repudiate its contracts in some form or other. These Estimates have been carefully prepared with the object of maintaining the State's services efficiently. As far as this item is concerned it represents a greater amount than was provided last year.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I gather from the Premier's remarks that the Government does not intend to make any provision to enable

loans to be advanced for the purchase of homes that become available from deceased estates or as a result of persons leaving the State. I can appreciate that a high standard would be set before any bank would make an advance for such a purpose, but this item refers to the "purchase and additions to existing homes pursuant to the Advances for Homes Act." If the State Bank were still building under the group homes scheme I could appreciate the desirability of restricting advances, but I know that until recently advances exceeding £1,750 were made through the State Bank, but that source has been curtailed. I do not know whether the bank has received an instruction not to exceed the £1,750. Because of the reduction in the amount to be advanced there must be fewer opportunities to get houses. I realize the need for the advancement of money for the building of new homes because it means the employment of labour, but why cannot houses that have become available for purchase come under this item?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have set out the position clearly. If, with the limited amount of money available, we make advances for the purchase of existing houses it will mean that fewer houses will be built. There has been no direction to the State Bank in this matter. I agree with the bank's policy because it is in the best interests of the people. It is the only policy that will provide more homes. We could spend all the money available this year on the purchase of old houses. Surely the honourable member can realize that the more money we advance for the building of new homes the more it will be to the benefit of the people. The advancing of money in relating to existing homes is not a proper policy, and I could not support it.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I do not agree entirely with what the Premier said about the advancing of money on existing homes. If we agree with the policy of the Government and say that £1,450,000 should be advanced for new homes, why not strike out the reference to the purchase of and additions to existing homes?

Line passed.

Highways and Local Government, £200,000.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Is this amount for the purchase of road-making machinery and plant?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The position is clearly stated. The money is for roads and bridges.

Line passed.

Lands, £80,000; Irrigation and Drainage, £800,000—passed.

Woods and Forests, £1,750,000.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I do not desire to contest any item associated with this line, but the Treasurer will remember that when speaking on the first line he raised the question of the inclusion of the salaries of employees in this department which were estimated to cost during the current financial year £170,000. I remember the circumstances of these salaries having to be paid out of loan. Back in the 1920's this was the only substantial amount paid in salaries from Loans funds, but now, with all the ramifications of Government departments and semi-Government departments like the Electricity Trust and the Housing Trust, I see no reason why the salaries of employees of the Woods and Forests Department should continue to be published in the Loan Estimates. The Opposition agrees that in future it would be desirable that these items be not published.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I appreciate the honourable member's remarks. This practice arose out of a resolution passed by Parliament many years ago, it being the opinion of the House that the salaries of these employees should be shown on the Loan Estimates. On two or three occasions when the matter has come up for discussion during the preparation of the Loan Estimates I felt it would be desirable to discontinue the practice, because no other department had similar treatment. For a long time I have considered it an invidious distinction and that no useful purpose was served. On the assurance of Mr. O'Halloran that the Opposition does not object, I shall instruct that this information does not appear in future Loan Estimates.

Line passed.

Railways, £2,300,000.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—An amount of £75,000 is provided for work on the duplication of the Goodwood to Marino line. The total estimate given for the work in 1950 was £146,192. With other amounts already provided the total is now £417,000, which is rather wide of the original estimate. I am excluding the money paid for the acquisition of land at the Cross Roads intersection at Emerson, which ran into some thousands of pounds. Despite the large expenditure, the duplication is not yet completed. It would be interesting to know whether the £75,000 proposed will enable the

completion of the duplication of the line. We have already spent £417,000 on an uncompleted project.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Since the estimate for this project was prepared there has been a radical change in the value of money, in the standard of wages, and in the cost of materials. We are now confronted with the position that we either finish the work or else lose the benefit of what has already been done. Surely the honourable member would not suggest that we pay those working on the line on the basis of the 1945 wage level? If he does not advocate that there is no alternative but to accept the additional costs to complete the project.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—That is a weak argument. I have no doubt that it was necessary to duplicate the line, and I appreciate that wages have risen considerably. In 1950, I believe, the basic wage was £6 11s. and today it is £11 11s., though it has been pegged for two years. However, some money was spent on the project before it was investigated by the Public Works Committee. It has often been said here that it is necessary to appoint a Public Accounts Committee, but it is also necessary to supply Parliament with progress reports on projects under construction. This would not place any great hardship on responsible officers, and I emphasize that I am not reflecting on them in any way, but I am wondering why the duplication of this line was delayed for so long. Were other projects that were not investigated by the Public Works Committee considered to be more urgent? It seems that there has been some mismanagement somewhere. It is absurd for the Treasurer to suggest that I would ask anybody to work for less than the basic wage.

Line passed.

Harbors Board, £900,000.

Mr. CORCORAN—One item is, "Plant and equipment, floating dockyard, construction and maintenance, £79,150." Can the Treasurer say whether the cost of repairing the Kingston jetty is included under maintenance? The sum of £24,800 is proposed for accommodation for the fishing industry. What accommodation is this?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not think the repair work at Kingston would be included in the £79,150. Items of minor maintenance are usually met from general revenue. The type of maintenance included under Loan Estimates would be, for instance, for permanent deepening of the Port River. Concerning the expenditure of £24,800 I will get

the honourable member a schedule showing that information and supply it to him in due course.

Mr. CORCORAN—With regard to the desire of the Kingston Council, Fishermen's Association, Kingston Chamber of Commerce, and local residents that the Kingston jetty should be repaired beyond the second landing, I have only this evening received the following letter from the secretary of the Harbors Board:—

Further to my letter of the 22nd ult. I desire to advise that the board has now had the opportunity of considering certain additional information in regard to the condition of the Kingston jetty and the use made thereof by fishermen and the public. As a result I am directed to inform you the board has decided that there is no warrant to repair the structure further seaward than the first landing, to which point the jetty has already had attention, and arrangements will now be made for the remainder to be removed.

As this letter would seem to indicate that the board desires to ride roughshod over the wishes of local organizations and residents, will the Minister intervene in this matter?

Line passed.

Engineering and Water Supply, £5,900,000;
Architect-in-Chief, £3,680,000—passed.

Miscellaneous, £10,784,000.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Under the loan of £500,000 to the Municipal Tramways Trust will provision be made for further expenditure on the removal of tramway tracks?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This is one of two amounts to be made available to the Tramways Trust this year, as a further amount will be provided in the Revenue Estimates. The Government has investigated the trust's activities and budget, and the two amounts to be provided will be the minimum to enable it to carry on its public services. Speaking from memory, these grants, together with the expected revenue, will still leave the trust with a debit balance of £145,000 unless economies and improvements are effected; therefore, this is the absolute minimum that I can recommend.

Mr. Jennings—You could take over the trams.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That would still mean that we would be up for the expenditure. All over the world public transport systems are in similar difficulties arising from the increased use of motor vehicles by the community. Although many people prefer to come to the city by motor car, that does not overcome the problem of providing transport for persons who do not or cannot own a motor car. It is true that if we closed the tramway

services the State Government would this year save more than a million pounds, but I cannot recommend that to Parliament, because they provide the transport required by thousands of workers coming to and returning from the city each day. Of course, further saving might be effected by closing down the railways and refusing to spend more money on hospitals and education facilities. It may be suggested that the Tramways Trust could save money by retaining the trams and not converting to buses, but this position has been closely investigated by a commission appointed by the Government and by the most competent persons who could be introduced from overseas. With the density of traffic in Adelaide it has been found that the maintenance of trams will be much more costly than the inauguration of a motorized system. Indeed, the cost of maintaining the trams is so great that the trust is now trying to speed up its conversion plans to obtain a better balance between revenue and expenditure. Be that as it may, I cannot recommend that this form of public transport be closed down or disrupted. Peak loading is far in excess of the normal loading for the rest of the period operated by the service. That in itself makes it a type of system that is extremely hard to operate successfully because, under the awards under which the trust operates, there is a limit to the time over which any shift may be spread. I think that a term of the award is that anyone working a shift must work at least five or seven hours on any one shift. This means that the persons who work on the morning shift cannot also be used on the evening shift, so it is a fairly costly operation. Incidentally, that will apply even when buses are operating. It has been suggested that we should hand over the tramway system to private operators.

Mr. Lawn—Where did that suggestion come from?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—From numerous places and from the other side of the House, but not from the honourable member. That was considered and was recommended by a committee that investigated the tramways. However, I doubt that it is a solution to the problem. It is true that a private operator who operates his vehicle at his own will and discretion, probably on a schedule set out by the Tramways Trust, but not under some strict industrial award, might operate somewhat more cheaply than the trust, which is subject to industrial awards.

Mr. Jennings—They run only on profitable routes.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not accept that; some of the routes have very light traffic indeed. However, they are not subject to industrial awards and can do all sorts of things that are not in strict accordance with awards. I am not saying that is undesirable, but they have the alternative of doing them or not. If we were to have a wholesale departure from the present position in which the Tramways Trust is the employer and we handed the buses over in a wholesale manner it would inevitably follow that there would still be a union involved, there would still be an application to the industrial tribunal and we would immediately find that the new authority, in the course of a year or two, would have built up around it the same industrial requirements.

Mr. Davis—That would be automatic.

Mr. O'Halloran—And also desirable.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not dispute that, but I am merely discussing whether it is possible for private operators to run these buses on a large scale as cheaply as they are operating today; but I do not believe it is. Under those circumstances there is no alternative but for us to recognize that the State will have to give some assistance to transport services. We should insist that reorganization should take place, that transport should be operated effectively and economically and that it should give a proper service to the community. Even if it does that it will still be necessary for public funds to support it for some years at least unless we are to have fares raised to an exorbitant level, which would in itself defeat its purpose because buyers' resistance would eventually set in and passengers would be driven to alternative transport.

Mr. Frank Walsh—Why does not the trust adopt a 3d. section in the city?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It refused that because it would mean a very serious reduction in revenue. From time to time I have compared the schedule of charges in South Australia with those of the more populous States, and I have found that our charges are reasonable by comparison. Just as this Parliament has the obligation to give some assistance to the tramways so also the people who use the tramways have the obligation to pay a fair charge for the service rendered.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I do not propose to engage in a general debate on the relative merits of trams and buses or on the discussion that the Premier evidently anticipated might occur as a result of the appearance of this line.

However, various items have appeared on the Loan Estimates and the Revenue Estimates relating to the financial affairs of the Tramways Trust for quite a few years now, but this House has never been completely taken into the Government's confidence. For instance, we were asked to vote £1,150,000 spread progressively over five years for the Tramways Trust, and honourable members well know that with only three years of that period gone considerably more than that amount has been voted on the Revenue Estimates. We are asked to vote £500,000 as an advance to the trust for the provision of passenger vehicles, buildings and equipment. Last year we voted a similar amount.

The Hon. T. Playford—It may have been £600,000 last year.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—It was a substantial sum. I am more concerned with ascertaining whether there is any reliable estimate of the total amount of new capital which we, as custodians of the interests of the taxpayers of this State, will have to provide for this undertaking. I agree that it must be maintained, but we should know what it will cost. On the other side of the ledger there is an amount of £6,994,803 which I assume is the accumulated indebtedness of the trust. I believe that sum has been used over a long period in establishing a tramways system and tracks over which trams run, but now we propose abolishing trams with the result that whatever asset may be represented by those tracks and that system will be destroyed forever. It is certain that the indebtedness to the State will continue. It is necessary to maintain this public transport system and I will not have a bar of private systems, but we are entitled to more information. I realize that the trust's indebtedness will ultimately be written off and become part and parcel of the dead assets which the taxpayers will eventually have to deal with. If we had more specific information on the capital expenses we will be confronted with in future, it might curtail the debate considerably.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have not that information with me but it has been adequately prepared and I will make it available as soon as possible. I thought it had been provided in some of the public papers already available. Strictly the legal position as provided by Act of Parliament is that if the trust is unable to meet its obligation to the State, the Government may proceed to raise the charge against every local governing body. The councils asked the State to step in and

assist them and the Government did so without interfering in any way with the fixed liability. I do not think that is a practicable remedy, nor would it be politically practical, to rate the community as a whole at present. Many people do not use trams and they would be angry if a general rate were levied against them. That provision was retained because unless there were some ultimate responsibility there would be no check on the demands made for services. It operates as a skid to demands in excess of the requirements of a public service. I think we must accept the fact that there has been an undisclosed loss in the tramways system over the last 30 years in as much as adequate provision was not made for obsolescence and depreciation. Although the amounts collected from the public were sufficient to pay wages and running expenses and an attractive balance-sheet was presented to the councils, who were the controlling authorities at that time, I believe—and I have accurate figures setting out the exact position—that on the books of the trust there is probably not less than £3,000,000 worth of stock so obsolescent that it would be more profitable to scrap it than to operate it. I will see that information is available under two headings, firstly the total anticipated cost of bringing the service up to a modern standard to enable it to operate for the lowest annual loss and, secondly, the cost on the trust's books of plant and equipment considered obsolescent and for which there is no real value.

Mr. LAWN—The Premier spoke of closing services down and of the trust requiring State aid, and said that this provision was the minimum amount required to keep the trust operating. The question of whether or not the services close down or whether the trust requires State aid and the amount necessary could well be considered when the Budget is before the House. These Loan Estimates provide for a loan to the Tramways Trust of £500,000 for the provision of passenger vehicles, buildings and equipment, etc., and that must mean the scrapping of trams and their replacement by buses. I am not opposed to keeping the trams in operation. I do not want to debate the question of providing State assistance because I have referred to it previously. The amount of money being granted to the trust warrants the undertaking being taken over by the Government and its coming under the jurisdiction of Parliament. In answer to questions in this place the Premier or the Minister of Works has said that answers

cannot be given until reports have been obtained from the trust. What a farcical situation! The Treasurer spoke about a report submitted by two overseas gentlemen after they had inquired into the operations of the trust, but that report is not available to members. I do not know whether Cabinet and the Treasurer have seen it. We must take for granted that what the Treasurer says is in the report, but in any case I do not accept it. I disagree with the proposal to replace trams with buses. In Sydney some years ago there was a tramways strike over a weekend. During four or five hours on the Sunday morning buses took people to the beaches but in the evening those buses could not cope with the position when the people wanted to come home in a couple of hours. That shows the fallacy of supplanting trams with buses.

On a Saturday afternoon the crowd at the Adelaide Oval can be moved in a reasonable time with trams. I hesitate to think what would happen if buses had to move it. It is disgraceful what happens when races are held at Victoria Park. There is a mad rush to get into the buses, whereas at Morphettville, where trams are used, the crowd gets away more smoothly. Buses will never move people as efficiently as trams. I suggest to members that they go to the Adelaide Oval or the races next Saturday afternoon and see what happens. Recently I attended in Melbourne a conference of the Australian Council of Trade Unions and was surprised to see that trams are back again in Bourke Street. Some years ago the cable trams in that street were replaced by buses. I was told that the double decker buses had proved too costly to run and were replaced by single decker buses. Now they have gone and trams have come back. The number of people to be carried is so great that in addition to the conductors on the trams there are ticket sellers at the various stopping places in Bourke Street. That shows the number of people who want transportation. The Melbourne tramway officials have proved that buses are not the answer to the traffic problem and have had to dispense with them and revert to trams.

I am asked to vote £500,000 for the Tramways Trust to do something which Melbourne has proved to be no good, and I will not be a party to it. I opposed the amount provided on the Estimates last year for this purpose and will do so again on this occasion. The Treasurer is anxious to get the Estimates passed by deluding us and misleading us into believing that if we do not support this amount

then the tramways will go out of existence and our workers will be left without transportation. I do not accept that. He is only playing politics in putting that argument forward. The money is to be used to remove tracks and overhead wires and buy a fleet of buses. We have the Leigh Creek coal to supply all the power needed for our tram services, and we can also supply our own rails and tramcars. It is necessary to buy the chasses and engines overseas for our buses and also rubber, the cost of which is increasing from day to day, and we also have to import diesel oil. In the event of war, rubber and oil supplies would possibly be cut off. It is a foolhardy policy that is suggested and one which this House should not approve. I only hope that members opposite will think for themselves instead of accepting what their master tells them. They should stand up and tell us what they honestly think.

Mr. DUNSTAN—An amount of £10,000 is provided to complete the temporary housing programme. I have a large number of people in my district living in the most dire circumstances, including women who are expecting babies in the near future, and no temporary housing accommodation is available for them. I am informed that in some cases temporary homes are empty because the land is not suitable and they are to be removed, and I have also been told that some temporary houses are vacant. Precisely what is intended to be done with this £10,000? Is it to be used to shift these houses, or to build more houses, and if so, how many; and is this the end of the programme, or is it to be extended? I want to know this so that the people in my district who are urgently in need of housing will know what is to be done.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—One of the most astonishing statements by the Treasurer was that in effect the Tramways Trust has been presenting false statements. He said that for 30 years the trust had presented statements of accounts which did not show the true position of affairs. That is one of the most damning statements concerning an important organization made by the leader of a South Australian Government. I remember when the Treasurer first suggested that Parliament should accept the responsibility for directing the affairs of this body. At that particular time the Treasurer had a direct representative as chairman on the board. I should like to know whether this responsible officer reported to the Treasurer what was taking place concerning the finances of the trust. If he did, why did

not the Treasurer inform Parliament? The Treasurer has refused to give information to this Parliament to which it is entitled, or his representative on the board has not informed him of the position.

Mr. John Clark—Is he under any obligation to report to his Minister?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Yes. If a Minister has a nominee on a board, whether it is the Wheat Board or the Tramways Trust or any other similar body, and he does not inform him of the true position, he is not doing his duty. I congratulate the Opposition on its contribution to this debate, for it usually runs dead when discussing this question. However, the Labor Party is opposed to any alteration of the city transport system which it criticizes. When private enterprise takes on a job it must bear any loss it makes. It cannot come to Parliament for assistance, as the Tramways Trust does. It would be a good thing if the trust had some opposition. Everyone knows that people do their best when they have competition. If we have a monopoly it is human nature to take the easy way out, and the Tramways Trust has been doing that for years. The Treasurer has said it would not be politically possible to call upon the people who incur the losses to make them good, but he has no hesitation in asking people in the outlying parts of the State to pay for the losses made by the trust.

Mr. Corcoran—They have the advantage of the tramway system when they come to the city.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Many of them never come to Adelaide and use a tramcar. Evidently the Labor Party is in favour of the taxpayers of this State making up the deficits of the ratepayers in the metropolitan area. If the Labor Party believes the taxpayers should meet these deficits on the city transport system does it think that these subsidies should be limited to the city or that country areas should also be subsidized?

Mr. Hutchens—Don't they get subsidies?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—No, they do not. Everyone knows that it is only the metropolitan transport system that is subsidized. I listened carefully to the debate on this matter, and I have concluded that neither the Liberal Party nor the Labor Party know where it is going as regards city transport. I have read the debates on the establishment of the Tramways Trust, which was commenced on the definite understanding that any losses incurred would

never be the responsibility of the taxpayers. It was stated that the tramways would enhance city land values and that a nominal charge would be made against those lands and any losses met by that means. That was sound finance, but for political reasons the Treasurer is not prepared to carry it out. If we subsidize city transport we should subsidize transport throughout the State. If this monopoly is not successful, or if Socialism has fallen down, let us allow private enterprise to come in and obviate subsidies to the Tramways Trust.

Mr. Corcoran—There is no guarantee that private enterprise would succeed.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Apparently many members would rather go bankrupt under the present system than change it for something that may work. It seems that South Australian taxpayers will have to dip more deeply into their pockets in order to bolster up inefficiency. I can see the weakness of both political parties in blindly supporting something that does not work. It is only common sense to try something else. If it works it will solve a problem, and if it does not work we can try something else. The Treasurer is wrong in saying it is not politically possible to change his policy. I have been assured by skilled transport operators in Adelaide that they could run the city's transport more cheaply per mile than it is run at present. If those men take the risk and make a loss they are not able to go to the taxpayers to make it up, whereas the Government can make up a deficit from taxpayers' money. I oppose the whole rotten system.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Can the Treasurer give details of the expenditure of the £10,000 provided for the completion of the temporary and emergency housing programme?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The temporary housing scheme was introduced at a time when we could not get sufficient builders to undertake conventional building and many people were living in most distressing circumstances. With the approval of Parliament and apart from Housing Trust activities, the Government provided a certain number of temporary houses, which were simply designed, easily removed, and rented at a low cost. We are making a loss on them every year because of a rapid amortization charge based on a life of 10 years, although their life will be considerably longer as they are being well maintained. Any person was to be immediately eligible for occupation of a temporary house, the only consideration being the dire emergency

of the applicant. There was no probationary period for prospective tenants. It is not proposed to build additional temporary houses, but, as this is a big scheme, some minor capital cost is involved, for instance in the provision of an additional room for a large family. The programme has been completed and this amount is not for its extension. It is still being used and people in emergency conditions considered. After living in emergency houses for some time many move into permanent houses and leave the emergency homes available for emergency cases. If the honourable member desires it, I can get details of the expenditure of the £10,000.

Mr. JENNINGS—I understand from the Treasurer's remarks that it is not intended to extend the temporary homes programme. All the temporary homes are full and I understand that 4,000 urgent applications for such homes are still outstanding. Because of the relaxation of the provisions of the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act additional urgent cases are coming to the notice of metropolitan members every day and I had sincerely hoped that the temporary housing programme would be extended to meet their urgent needs. The Treasurer has frequently made statements concerning the housing position in South Australia, and, as those statements have been given wide press publicity, they have misled the public and some members of this house. For instance, in another debate a recent acquisition of this House said that South Australia had built more homes than any other State over the last three years. I was so intrigued by that statement that I asked the Government Statist to provide certain figures, and from those figures I find that over the last seven years South Australia in two years built the sixth greatest number of homes per thousand of population of all States, in three years the fourth greatest number, in one year the third greatest number, and in one year the second greatest number. As far as I can see, the third and second greatest numbers were in those two years during which a tremendous number of imported prefabricated homes were erected in South Australia. These figures prove conclusively that instead of building more homes per thousand of population than any other State, our housing programme since the war is something that we cannot be proud of. Tonight we again heard that the census shows that now we have three and one half people in a home instead of four, but that is an unrealistic argument. It is not what is built but what is needed. I noticed

in the press recently that the Premier stated that Queensland and New South Wales have virtually got over their housing problems. South Australia, however, definitely has not, because 15,000 outstanding applications are before the Housing Trust whereas last year there were only 11,400. I regret that the Estimates do not indicate that the emergency homes scheme will be extended even to the small extent of £10,000.

Mr. TAPPING—Members on this side of the House have repeatedly taken the Government to task because of the small number of houses built over a period of years. I can speak with authority on this matter because of the number of people who come to me seeking a home. Since the relaxation of the Landlord and Tenant Act hardship has been caused to people requiring houses. Although the Premier said we have high housing figures, some account should be taken of the fact that people whose homes are required by industry are usually ordered to vacate by the court. If they are taken into account the Premier's figures are not illuminating. Although the Premier has done a great job in providing housing, it has not been good enough, and members have received more people complaining about lack of homes than ever before. That has been caused by migration to South Australia and an increase in population. I believe about 20,000 people are waiting for homes, and the position has not improved for some time. It is difficult for the officers of the Housing Trust to give satisfaction to applicants because of the position that exists. We should adopt the New South Wales system and have a ballot for homes rather than discriminate between many applicants for a small number of homes. Although many people have deserving cases they are not certain when they will receive an allotment, and this places members in an invidious position when these people seek their assistance. A ballot such as I have suggested would make it easier for the trust and for members.

Line passed.

Grand total, £28,300,000—passed, and resolution agreed to by the House.

PUBLIC PURPOSES LOAN BILL.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—

That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to authorize the Treasurer to borrow

and expend moneys for public works and purposes and to enact other provisions incidental thereto.

Motion carried. Resolution agreed to in Committee and adopted by the House.

Bill introduced and read a first time.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill provides for the expenditure of £28,300,000 and is based on the Loan Estimates which have been dealt with by this House. Clause 4 gives power to the Treasurer to arrange for the borrowing of £24,050,000 which, together with repayments to the Loan Fund estimated at £4,250,000, will provide the moneys necessary for the expenditure set out in the first schedule to the Bill. Clause 5 provides for the issue of the amount of £28,300,000 from the Loan Fund, and gives the Treasurer authority to increase the amount for any line if the estimate is insufficient provided that the total loan expenditure for the year shall not exceed £28,300,000.

Clause 6 authorizes the Treasurer to borrow, in addition to other amounts authorized by this Bill, the amount required for the payment of discounts, charges, and expenses incurred in borrowing under this Bill. Clause 7 provides that if at any time insufficient moneys are in the Loan Fund for the purposes of the works set out in the first schedule the Treasurer may use other moneys at his disposal, but any moneys used for this purpose shall be repaid from the Loan Fund as soon as there is sufficient money in that Fund to make the repayment. Clause 8 authorizes the Treasurer to borrow an amount not exceeding £7,000,000 in the year 1956-57 pending the passing of the Public Purposes Loan Act for that year. This authority is necessary because the moneys from the Loan Council are made available on a monthly basis and unless the Treasurer is authorized to receive the amounts made available in the months of July, August, and September, this State would be out of Loan Funds.

Clause 10 (1) gives the Treasurer authority to open a special account and to credit to that account moneys received from the Commonwealth pursuant to the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, and to pay those moneys to the Housing Trust for the purposes of the Agreement. Clause 10 (2) authorizes the Treasurer to receive grants made by the Commonwealth under the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act and to open a special account to take credit for those grants, and to pay the moneys to the Minister of Local Government for the purposes specified in the Commonwealth Aid

Roads Act. Clause 11 authorizes the Treasurer, out of moneys paid to him by the Housing Trust, to pay the Commonwealth the money which the State is required to pay under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. Members will recall that recently the Commonwealth made an agreement which enabled tenants of Commonwealth-State housing homes to purchase those homes. The purchase money came to this State but the State

was required to pay it back to the Commonwealth. Under clause 12 the Public Purposes Loan Act shall commence on July 1, 1955. I commend the Bill for consideration of members.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 11.54 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, September 21, at 2 p.m.