

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, November 1, 1955.

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

NOXIOUS INSECTS ACT AMENDMENT ACT.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated that the Lieutenant-Governor had assented to the Act.

QUESTIONS.**TIMBER HOUSE PROGRAMME.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I noticed from the *Advertiser* of last Saturday that a fairly ambitious programme for the building of timber houses for sale had been approved. Can the Premier indicate the cost to the purchaser, the terms under which they will be purchased, and the deposit required?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Several types of houses are involved, and the price will fluctuate according to type and locality. The Housing Trust tries to cushion the effect of the locality, but that is not always possible. I will get a complete report on the price of the various types, and if possible on locality prices and the financial arrangements that can be made for purchase.

GUMMOSIS IN APRICOTS.

Mr. TEUSNER—On numerous occasions I have drawn the attention of the present Minister of Agriculture and his predecessor to the great losses suffered year after year by horticulturists, particularly apricot gardeners, in the Barossa Valley and other parts of the State, as the result of the disease known as gummosis dieback, which is rampant in orchards, particularly apricot orchards. The growers were elated when it was announced over a year ago that a Mr. Carter had been appointed plant pathologist at the Waite Research Institute to do research work into the incidence of the disease. This morning's *Advertiser* stated that the investigations made by Mr. Carter had solved the problem of the gummosis disease in apricots. Can the Minister confirm this information and make a statement on the work done by Mr. Carter?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I saw the article in this morning's press and obtained a report from Mr. Strickland, chief of the Plants Division of the Department of Agriculture. For some time I have followed personally, with interest, Mr. Carter's work and have furnished the honourable member from

time to time with his reports. The last was issued about two months ago and it gave the clue to the spread of gummosis. Mr. Carter has not issued a further report but I believe he was interviewed by a press reporter and as a result the statement appeared in this morning's press. Whether it actually reflects the view of Mr. Carter, I do not know. The following are Mr. Strickland's remarks on the report—

The report in the *Advertiser* of November 1 concerned one aspect of a joint programme of apricot gummosis investigations carried out by the Waite Institute and the Department of Agriculture. A valuable research finding at the Waite Institute establishes for the first time the full life cycle of the gummosis fungus. It has discovered the source of the suspected airborne spores of the disease and confirms the long standing recommendation that dead apricot wood should be systematically gathered and burnt. The department will examine the practicability of an all out campaign to clean up dead apricot wood and the likelihood of such a campaign making a significant reduction in airborne infection. It must be realized, however, that the first line of defence against gummosis rests in protection of trees from infection. In this connection modified pruning methods worked out by the Department of Agriculture and publicized recently in the *Journal of Agriculture* must remain the major feature of the grower's gummosis control programme.

BRICK PRODUCTION.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I read in the press that Mr. Dickinson, Director of Mines, has told the Commonwealth Grants Commission in evidence that the Government contemplated making further investigations into shale deposits with a view to an increase in brick production. Can the Premier say whether any particular firm is interested in extending its activities or whether a new firm intends entering brick production?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A report was made to the Grants Commission by the Director of Mines, and it dealt with investigations that the department had made into shale deposits that may be suitable for brick production in the metropolitan area. After the report was received an interest representing master builders in this State planned a project for the establishment of a brickworks of some size and a call was made for the necessary finance. The Government was approached to see whether assistance under the Industries Development Act could be obtained, and I agreed to submit the project to the committee if it had matured sufficiently to enable the committee to investigate it. I believe the original arrangement was that the people interested would subscribe a share capital of £100,000 and require £250,000

from the Government. However, I think only £50,000 was actually promised by the people concerned, and the project was modified and the Government asked for additional assistance to make up the leeway. I replied that I would submit the project to the Industries Development Committee, but that the State could not find the additional finance directly, seeing that so little was being found by the promoters, although it would be prepared to give a guarantee. I subsequently learned that the company promoters did not desire to go ahead with the project. We have established that there are suitable materials, but as far as I know there is no firm interested in their development.

STRATHALBYN ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—Last week's issue of the *Strathalbyn Argus* contains an article under the heading "Trust Electricity Fails—Town in Upset over 16 hours Period." It states:—

We trust the Electricity Trust to keep up an unbroken supply of electric power. If the trust fails to do this then our confidence in it has been sadly misplaced. This confidence was badly battered on Thursday of last week, when the transformer adjacent to the *Argus* office failed, and was out of commission for about 11 hours. Then our confidence was very nearly shattered altogether when the current again failed for about six hours on Monday of this week because of a fault in the line near Blackwood Park. Sixteen hours or more is a lengthy period to be without electricity for any community.

Then the article gives comments of business people who were affected. They were:—

Verner & Nancarrow.—The breakdown on Monday seriously affected us. We could do no welding, drilling, grinding; our air compressor was out of use, and our pumps were out of action. We are particularly busy now with hay machines and general farm plants, and every stoppage of power counts.

Gilbert Motors.—We could do no electrical work, our pumps were out of action and had to be hand-operated. Fortunately, we have an auxiliary plant for our air compressor.

Roberts Bros.—Being a Monday we did not need so much power. Had it been any other day we would have been seriously affected.

Mr. Brealey.—Our business was most inconvenienced in that our bread-mixing machinery was out of action, and we had to resort to the old-time method of hand mixing in order that the public should receive their bread.

Flour Mill.—Mr. Laucke said that he estimated that his mill would be about 50 tons of flour behind schedule on an urgent overseas contract. The same remarks apply to a degree to Langhorne's Creek and Milang.

I, and the people of my district, have been extremely pleased with the way the Electricity

Trust has expanded in the district. Will the Premier ascertain from the trust whether it is possible for it to have a mobile breakdown van centred in Strathalbyn to deal with breakdowns, as it has in the city? I believe these vans can replace transformers in a few minutes.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The trust has already established services to deal with breakdowns in all sections over which its transmission system extends, and I have no doubt that there is a properly organized breakdown system in the honourable member's district. Unfortunately, during bad storms there may be a number of interruptions to services over widely separated places. The trust is extremely sorry that this happens, but it has no control over storms, and it does not want to unnecessarily cut down trees along the public roads. Under these circumstances, occasional interruptions to services are bound to occur, but the trust will do its utmost to see that they are as infrequent as possible and are repaired as quickly as possible.

BLANCHETOWN BRIDGE.

Mr. STOTT—Can the Premier say when the Public Works Committee is likely to take evidence about the proposed bridge over the River Murray at Blanchetown? The terms of reference have been with the committee for some time, and district councils and people in the Upper Murray area are anxious to know when evidence will be called.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not know when the committee will hear evidence. I understand there was some public objection to the project from the district, and that when that became known another district asked whether the project could be transferred there. I believe that both those proposals are now before the committee.

GRASSHOPPER MENACE.

Mr. HEASLIP—A great amount of spray material purchased by district councils has been used in combating the grasshopper menace. In my district one council has spent £4,000 to £5,000. The rates notices have just been issued, but the money has not yet come in, and I suppose councils' bank balances are at the lowest for any part of the year. Overdrafts are mounting and if councils are not reimbursed the amount they have spent on spray material they may be in financial difficulties with their banks. Can the Treasurer say whether prompt attention is being given to the repayment of these amounts so that district councils can carry on without being embarrassed?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The necessary documents for the payment to councils have been signed, and I am certain that the Minister of Agriculture will speed up payments as much as possible on getting the necessary information. In fact, I believe that he has already made substantial payments and that there is no hold up in the matter, provided the necessary information and documents are submitted.

WATER DISCOLOURATION.

Mr. TAPPING—Last Thursday evening I attended a meeting of the Semaphore electorate committee and was directed, by resolution, to draw the attention of the Minister of Works to the discolouration of the water in the Largs Bay and Semaphore area. At the meeting a number of members claimed that it was a dirty brown colour and had a most unpleasant odour. Can the Minister say whether the cause of this complaint will be eliminated soon?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—With his usual courtesy the honourable member let me know of his question in advance, and that enabled me to bring down a reply. Only one complaint of dirty water in the Largs Bay district has been received in the last six weeks. This complaint was made by the Taperoo and District Progress Association towards the end of September, 1955. The complaint was investigated and it was found that the discoloured water was due to an increase in the demand which gave higher velocities in the mains and resulted in the disturbance of sediments in the pipes. During the winter months, when large intakes into the reservoirs occur, the water is somewhat discoloured and as it enters the trunk mains and reticulation system the discolouring material in it is deposited in the mains due to the low winter velocity. At the beginning of nearly every summer, when the demand increases, higher velocities in the mains occur. This disturbs the sediments on the bottom of the pipe and pockets of discoloured water occur in many areas. Trouble of this nature is usually of short duration. It is likely that the complaints received by the honourable member from residents in the Semaphore and Largs Bay districts are due to this cause. An investigation will be made by the District Engineer and the mains will be scoured if it is considered that this will improve the conditions complained of. From experience in my district I believe that great benefit may accompany the cleaning out of the mains and removal of the discolouration of the water arising from the conditions stated

by the honourable member as the summer progresses. The discolouration is the result of a scouring out. It is only iron rust, and I think conditions will improve. If the honourable member wishes the Government to follow the matter further in any particular area, that will be done to see what improvements can be made.

FROZEN FISH.

Mr. SHANNON—I understand that South Africa is sending deep frozen butterfish into this State to be retailed at 3s. 9d. for 12oz. which is 5s. a pound. As these fish are free from bones and ready for the housewife to place in the pan, this seems to be a cheap source of a desirable foodstuff. I do not know whether the Fisheries Department knows anything about this development in South Africa, and if so, whether it thinks it would not be applicable here; but from time to time we have large catches of fish that have to be discarded because, for one reason or another, they cannot be processed, and it seems to me that this processing method might provide a channel for the marketing of such fish, because apparently, when processed, they keep indefinitely in a refrigerator. Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether the Fisheries Department has investigated this process?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—Australia has been importing fish from South Africa for a long time—previously mostly in the smoked form. I have not heard of the form now referred to. We have many factories which process sharp frozen fish, mainly whiting, but so far no market has developed for the freezing of cheaper forms of fish, and these are mostly canned. It is in the canning of fish that operations have broken down as the canneries have been unable to cope with large intakes that occasionally take place and necessitate that fish be scrapped. I will have the matter examined.

OVERLOADING OF VEHICLES.

Mr. FRED WALSH—In giving evidence before the Commonwealth Grants Commission the Commissioner of Highways (Mr. Richmond) said that, despite increased fines, many commercial vehicles were still being overloaded, and in many cases transports were compelled to remove the surplus and were immobilized until arrangements could be made for additional transport. Having regard to the serious effect of these heavy transports on our roads, particularly interstate, and particularly when overloaded (and the evidence

seems to indicate a glaring contempt for the laws), will the Treasurer consider amending the legislation to provide for still heavier fines for those responsible for overloading vehicles and the suspension of the licence of a driver where it is proved that the overloading was done with his knowledge and approval?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will have the two suggestions examined and advise the honourable member in due course whether the Government will accept them.

NEW UNLEY HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. DUNNAGE—Has the Minister of Education a further reply to my question of last week concerning progress on the new Unley High School?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes, but it may not be as pleasing to the honourable member as he hoped. Through the Director of Education inquiries have been made of the Architect-in-Chief and he has ascertained that a start had not yet been made on the detailed drawings of the school. The architects consider that in view of the other plans now being drawn, it will be the end of the year before they can make a beginning.

GRASS AT RAILWAY CROSSINGS.

Mr. JENNINGS—I have noticed lately at railway crossings in the northern suburbs that the high grass is becoming a distinct traffic hazard because it hampers visibility. I know the usual practice is to burn off the grass at a suitable time, but this year, owing to the abnormal season, the grass is much higher than usual, and possibly it will be much later before it can be burnt off. Will the Minister of Works ask his colleague, the Minister of Railways, to take up with the Railways Commissioner the advisability of clearing at least the grass on railway property at crossings so that motorists may have a clear view?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Yes. From experience I know that the persons to answer that question are the Railways Commissioner and his staff, who are aware of the danger and I am sure will not be remiss on this occasion. If any reminder is required I am sure notice will be taken of the honourable member's remarks.

COMPENSATION FOR ACCIDENT.

Mr. FLETCHER—On September 22 I asked the Premier a question concerning workmen's compensation to a woman who was permanently injured in an accident. The Premier

requested that I supply him with particulars. I did so and received the following letter from him:—

With reference to your letter of October 5 in regard to Mrs. — I have perused the documents which you forwarded. I think you will agree with me that, as the accident to her occurred in 1949, it is impossible for me to re-open a case which is over five years old.

That does not answer my question. Can the Premier say whether she would be entitled to compensation under the Workmen's Compensation Act?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I secured from the honourable member information as to the identity of the woman and sought to establish whether a claim would have been acceptable under the Act, but because of the lapse of time it was impossible to find out whether her case would have had a chance of succeeding. It was six years old and it was impossible for me to establish the circumstances; I understand from my solicitors that the case would, in any event, be Statute-barred. I know that there are other persons who have more information on this topic than I, but speaking generally any person who suffers any accident in his employment comes within the scope of the Act provided that his gross income is less than, I think, £35 a week.

IRON KNOB RAIL FATALITY.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Minister of Education obtained from the Attorney-General the information I sought as to whether the recent coronial inquiry at Iron Knob into a fatal accident was broad enough to encompass an inquiry into negligence which may have been a contributing factor in that accident?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—My colleague, the Attorney-General, has supplied me with the following information:—

Section 10 of the Coroners Act, 1935-1952, is not broad enough to include an investigation into negligence leading up to the cause of death. When this section was enacted in 1952 it was part of a scheme to divest the Coroner of his jurisdiction to inquire into or to make findings as to offences. As he is forbidden to make such findings, the question whether any person has been guilty of negligence leading to death is irrelevant to any matter in which the Coroner is permitted by law to investigate. The clear purpose of the 1952 amendment was to divorce questions of criminal responsibility from coroners' inquests and to leave them for prosecution in the appropriate courts. The change was made after full investigation and followed a report by a distinguished English committee. The new system has worked satisfactorily in practice and there does not appear to be any reason for further amendment.

RETARDED CHILDREN REPORT.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Last week I asked the Minister of Education whether it was intended to print the report of Mr. Lumsden, an inspector of British schools, on retarded children. Has the Minister any further information on this matter?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—As I said earlier, the report by Mr. Lumsden is very valuable as it relates to the facilities for educating and the care of mentally handicapped children in South Australia. I thought it more expeditious to have the report duplicated. Copies were ready today and will be made available to any member of Parliament or of the public who may be interested.

DIESEL ENGINE EXHAUST FUMES.

Mr. QUIRKE—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked last week concerning the source of fumes from diesel-operated vehicles?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The State Traffic Committee is under the control of the Premier's department, but I have been advised that the committee intends to meet on Friday, November 11, when this question will be considered.

BARRIER HIGHWAY.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked some time ago concerning the progress, if any, being made in sealing the Barrier Highway where it passes through towns and when we can anticipate that the road through Whyte-Yarcowie will be sealed?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—My colleague has supplied the following information:—

Of the townships between Burra and Cockburn, the following have been bituminized:—Mount Bryan, Hallett, Terowie, Oodla Wirra, Olary. As previously reported, it was hoped that of the remaining towns, Whyte-Yarcowie would also be sealed with bitumen during the current financial year. However, recently a request has been made, through the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. O'Halloran, by the residents of Terowie and district, for the improvement of a dangerous railway crossing at the northern end of Terowie. Both the improvement of the railway crossing and the reconstruction and sealing of the streets in the township of Whyte-Yarcowie would have to be carried out by the District Council of Hallett, and it is not known at this stage if that body is capable of undertaking both projects, if the improvement of the railway crossing is considered to have a greater priority than that of the streets of Whyte-Yarcowie. It is proposed, however, as soon as the district council is able, to reconstruct the main street of Whyte-Yarcowie with a bituminous seal.

BALING WIRE SUPPLIES.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—This season in my district was one of the best for pasture and I have advocated to producers cutting extra hay as a form of insurance against a likely grass-hopper plague, but they say it is almost impossible to procure hay-baling wire. Is the Minister of Agriculture aware of the position and can he do anything to expedite supplies?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I do not know the position in regard to supplies of tie wire, but as an alternative binder twine can be used for baling hay. I do not know what the position is regarding supplies but I will have the matter investigated.

TONSLEY SPUR RAILWAY LINE.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Can the Premier say if the new reference to the Public Works Committee concerning the Tonsley spur line includes the proposal submitted by the Marion Corporation, or is it an entirely new proposal? If the latter, will the committee consider both proposals?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The proposal placed before the committee arose out of the representations made by the Marion Corporation, the Minister of Education and the honourable member. The Railways Commissioner examined it and submitted an alternative. The proposal is not the one previously considered by the committee, nor the one recommended by the corporation. I believe it provides for a shorter route and does not involve the acquisition of so much property. I understand the committee intends to call evidence from local authorities on the new proposal. One problem associated with making the proposal public is the prejudice to the Railways Department, particularly if a person purchases a property for the purpose of making a quick profit on the investment. The publicising of a proposal enables people to hop in and hold the Government to ransom. We will deal with the present owners in the natural way.

BERRI FERRY.

Mr. STOTT—The Minister of Works is aware of the problem of Loxton people not being able to cross on the Berri ferry because of the high river. There was a proposal to build up the road so that the ferry could be used. Will the Minister of Works take up the matter with a view to building up the road and making it available for use by Loxton residents?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Yes.

ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL.

Mr. TAPPING—I have had numerous complaints from outpatients at the Royal Adelaide Hospital regarding the delays experienced in receiving attention. The hospital is doing an excellent job from 8.30 a.m. to 5 p.m., but delays occur. Will the Premier consider the matter of staggering appointments with a view to obviating delays, some of which are for as long as four to five hours?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The matter has been considered on numerous occasions and I assure the honourable member that the Government and the Minister are anxious to give as expeditious a service as possible. In many instances it is not possible to treat patients according to a timetable. Necessary attention must be given, irrespective of time, when emergency cases intervene. Some steps have been taken to schedule appointments, but I will follow up the matter to see if anything further can be done.

STIRLING NORTH TO QUORN ROAD.

Mr. RICHES—A few weeks ago the Premier announced that he would ask the Commonwealth Government for a special grant of £100,000 spread over two years for the purpose of bituminizing the road from Stirling North to Quorn. Has he received a reply?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The negotiations were entered into with the late Senator McLeay. In addition to writing I had an interview with him. Since his death I have written to Sir Philip McBride, Minister for Defence, asking if he will take up the matter but I have not yet received a reply.

INDUSTRIAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—On October 12 I moved the second reading of the Industrial Code Amendment Bill and the Premier secured the adjournment of the debate, but owing to his absence from the House on important affairs of State he has not been able to continue the debate. I understand he will not be here tomorrow, which is private members' day. Could he indicate when he will be able to give the views of the Government on the measure?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I regret I have not been in a position to continue the debate on the Bill that the honourable member introduced. Unfortunately, I have to go to Canberra tomorrow, but I assure him that I will be in a position to debate it on the 9th. I have had some investigations made by the Department of Industry and have found that this Bill, as with

so many that the honourable member introduces, is like the curate's egg—good in parts.

TUCK-SHOP PRICES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Premier obtained a report about prices being charged to school children by a shopkeeper in my district?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The commodities being sold by this shopkeeper are not under price control but, at my request, the Prices Commissioner interviewed him and, as a result, he has voluntarily agreed to reduce the prices by 2d. or 3d. on the respective items so as to bring them into line with those charged by other shopkeepers. I have a list of the commodities concerned if the honourable member desires it, but I assure him that an equitable arrangement has been worked out.

PORT AUGUSTA-WOOMERA ROAD.

Mr. RICHES—When he is in Canberra tomorrow will the Premier take up with the appropriate authorities the question of making the road between Port Augusta and Woomera an all-weather road? This matter has been raised from time to time and the Minister representing the Minister of Roads stated that it was entirely one for the Commonwealth Government. It seems to me that the Commonwealth should provide the finance but that the State should do the work. This matter has been held in abeyance for a long time and many people have been seriously inconvenienced. If the Premier will not take it up in Canberra tomorrow will he take it up subsequently?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have not much direct information on this matter, but I know there has been conflict of opinion about it. I understand that the Commonwealth Railways Commissioner believes that heavy equipment being sent to Woomera might well be transported over his railways. Last week there was a request that an all-weather bitumen road be built by the State Government out of its funds, but I had to reply that owing to lack of funds and heavy demands in other directions we could not finance it at present. However, I said that if the Commonwealth made the necessary funds available we would undertake this work expeditiously on its behalf, and that is where the matter rests. In view of the density of traffic to Woomera compared with that on other roads, and the fact that we have adjusted motor taxation to deal with outer district areas on a more equitable basis, the State Government cannot finance this job, which would use up a large percentage of our road money.

COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENTS.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (on notice):—

1. Is the Government aware that the Australian Council of Trade Unions has lodged an application before the Federal Arbitration Court for the restoration of quarterly cost-of-living adjustments to the basic wage?

2. Is it the intention of the Government to intervene either in support of the application or against it, or not to intervene at all?

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

1. No official advice has been received, but newspaper reports indicate that such an application has been filed.

2. The Government is a respondent to a number of Federal awards, so that if the application referred to in question 1 is made in respect of any of these awards the Government would be summoned to attend before the court. Consideration of intervention would, therefore, not arise.

NATIONAL PARK ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS (Minister of Lands) 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 amend the National Park Act, 1891-1935.

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

THE ESTIMATES.

(Continued from October 25. Page 1215.)

In Committee of Supply.

THE LEGISLATURE.

House of Assembly, £13,080.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Can the Treasurer say why the switchboard attendants in Parliament House have not yet received increases as other clerical workers have consequent on the metal trades decision last year, and why no allowance has been made in their rate of pay for the shiftwork they perform?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I will get a report for the honourable member.

Line passed.

Parliamentary Library, £5,247; Joint House Committee, £9,832—passed.

Electoral Department, £59,459.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—The sum of £40 per annum is provided for each returning officer of a Legislative Council district, and £50 for each Assembly district. Some electorates, particularly those in the country, cover a great area and necessitate the arranging of many postal and absent votes. Could these fees be increased? In the metropolitan area many public servants perform part-time electoral duties and they are doing excellent work. I am concerned about the practice that has developed since 1938 of postal votes delivered after the week-end of the election being taken to the home of the electoral officer for counting, whereas the Electoral Department office in Adelaide, or the divisional or district council offices in other centres, could be used for the purpose. After all, visitors may be coming and going all the time at the electoral officer's house; moreover, it may be inconvenient for a scrutineer to take part in a count held under such circumstances.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will have those matters examined.

Mr. TAPPING—I am concerned about the inadequate lighting of polling booths at State elections. Despite representations by the Commonwealth Electoral Department the position has not improved. Some old folk with failing eyesight cannot see well enough to fill in their ballot forms properly. I do not suggest that poor lighting is responsible for all informal votes at elections, but if better lighting were provided the percentage would drop. Will the Treasurer consider my suggestion?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes.

Mr. DUNSTAN—I consider the expenditure on the Electoral Department is unfair in that under our State Constitution it provides for a disproportionate distribution of electoral expenses over the whole State. The same amount is not spent on every person in the community. Under our present set-up there are twice as many country members as there are city members in this House. If there were a fair distribution of electoral expenses all persons in the State would have exactly the same amount spent on them because they would have, in effect, one vote of equal value. I register a protest at the continuance of the system that has operated in respect of this House for many years. I am fortified in that protest by the views of members of the Treasurer's own Party. Although my membership of the Liberal Party lapsed many years ago I am apparently still on the mailing list because I recently received a document intended only

for circulation among members of the Liberal Party of Australia. The document is headed "The Liberal Case for Electoral Reform."

The CHAIRMAN—I do not think the honourable member can deal with electoral reform on this line. He must confine his remarks to the line.

Mr. DUNSTAN—There are 39 returning officers and the distribution of expenses in the various districts is surely related to this line.

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member must adhere rigidly to the line and not start a debate on electoral reform.

Mr. DUNSTAN—With respect, surely I am permitted to advert to the question of whether the overall expenditure of the amount mentioned in this line is fair.

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member must relate his remarks to the proposed expenditure contained in the items of this line.

Mr. DUNSTAN—The expenditure represents payments to presiding officers and clerks at polling booths and to returning officers in the various districts. Under the present set-up the expenditure is distributed over 39 districts in an unfair manner, and it is to that I am adverting.

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member should confine his remarks to the line. If he does he will be in order.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Am I in order in establishing reasons why I believe the expenditure is unreasonable?

The CHAIRMAN—As I have already indicated, the honourable member must confine his remarks to this line. If he can connect up his remarks with the items he will be in order.

Mr. DUNSTAN—I thought I had already connected my remarks to the items by suggesting that the expenditure was distributed over 39 districts in an unequal manner. It is to that inequality that I am now referring and I propose to give reasons to show the injustice of that inequality.

The CHAIRMAN—I will allow the honourable member to make a passing reference to that, but it opens a wide subject which I do not think the honourable member would be in order in debating.

Mr. DUNSTAN—If I am not in order at this stage I will reserve my remarks until a later occasion.

Line passed.

Government Reporting Department, £33,119; Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, £3,709; Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement, £3,525; Miscellaneous, £36,789—passed.

CHIEF SECRETARY AND MINISTER OF HEALTH.

State Governor's Establishment, £6,218; Chief Secretary's Department, £15,740; Statistical Department, £58,677; Audit Department, £58,972; Printing and Stationery Department, £230,644; Police Department, £1,568,704; Sheriff and Gaols and Prisons Department, £244,250—passed.

Hospitals Department, £3,250,000.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Under the heading "General" £100 is provided as payment for indigent patients in non-subsidised hospitals. Last year £100 was voted and £52 expended. I understand that when an indigent person becomes sick he must be transferred to a Government hospital or to a subsidised hospital if one exists in the locality. It is only when it is impossible to transfer patients to a Government or subsidised hospital that other hospitals, not in receipt of Government assistance for maintenance, receive payment for treating them. It will be realized from the small amount spent last year that few indigent patients were treated in other than Government or subsidised hospitals, or, if they were, the hospitals responsible for their treatment neglected to claim from the Government. At Terowie there is a large community of working people and occasionally indigent cases require immediate attention and are admitted to the Terowie Community hospital. I appreciate that the ruling is that they should be transferred to the Peterborough subsidised hospital about 14 miles away. I do not disagree with that as a broad, general principle, but there has been at least one occasion in recent months when such a transfer would not have been possible because of the shortage of staff at Peterborough, whereas at Terowie there was an adequate staff to treat the patient. The Government should seriously consider the inadvisability of transferring seriously ill persons from their own locality and away from friends and relatives to subsidised hospitals in those areas. In proper cases the Government could make a small annual subsidy to community hospitals to enable them to treat indigent patients as they are treated in Government subsidised hospitals.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The question of paying subsidies to hospitals and establishing public hospitals is dealt with under an Act which sets up a rating system and the method by which the Government finances hospitals generally. A number of hospitals do not come under the provisions of that Act and I think Terowie is in that category. Actually, the district is rated for the Peterborough hospital.

Mr. O'Halloran—Peterborough has voluntarily surrendered some of its rate to help Terowie.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think Terowie hospital was established to deal with urgent local matters and possibly to provide some facilities for a resident medical officer. I will place the Leader's suggestions before the Minister of Health.

Line passed.

Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department—£495,000—passed.

Department of Public Health, £129,858—passed.

Miscellaneous, £1,608,466.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Last year £32,500 was provided for ambulance services, and was all spent. This year it is proposed to provide only £20,000. I think I am right in saying that this provision is a subsidy to enable the St. John Ambulance Brigade to co-ordinate and provide ambulance services throughout the State. Perhaps the work of providing ambulance services has so progressed that a reduction is warranted, but I would like an assurance on this before I agree to the line.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—When the Government arranged with the St. John Ambulance Brigade to undertake this service it gave that organization an assurance that it would provide financial assistance. Frankly, I cannot give the Leader the reason for this reduction. It may be that last year we provided an additional amount for the purchase of ambulances for capital expenditure. An elaborate central office has been established in the Invercarton district; perhaps an additional amount was provided last year for that. I will obtain the reason for the fluctuation for the Leader. There has been no change in the policy in this matter nor any desire to be repressive of an extension to the service.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—An amount of £500 is provided for a grant to the R.S.S. & A.I.L.A. towards burial costs of ex-service personnel. Will the Treasurer explain that?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This amount has been provided to enable indigent soldiers who served overseas to be buried in one of the war memorial cemeteries. Although it will not cover the whole of the expense it will assist the League in undertaking this work. From time to time there has been a distressing case of an ex-serviceman who, through his circumstances at the time of his death, could not be appropriately buried. The League has asked for assistance to help such persons,

and the grant is for that purpose. There will be an annual grant and it will probably be of the same amount as this year. This will enable people who have served their country on the highest plane to be buried in other than paupers' graves.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—An amount of £200 is provided for the Australia Day Council of South Australia. I approve of this grant, but I suggest that the council consider observing some other day. The day now observed commemorates the landing of Governor Phillip in Botany Bay on January 26, 1787, but as Australia as a nation was not thought of at that time, the observance of that day has no significance constitutionally. It was not until the latter part of the nineteenth century that any Australian spirit developed towards Federation. I suggest that the Treasurer ask the Australia Day Council to consider using Australia Day to commemorate the inauguration of Federation. There would be no need to observe this day on January 1, because it is customary to observe official days when convenient, so I suggest the birth of Australian nationhood on January 1, 1901, be commemorated on a day when school children could participate.

Mr. RICHES—This year £1,350 is provided for ambulance fees and rail fares for poliomyelitis sufferers. The Government has agreed that, after a means test, it will meet half the cost of ambulance transport from country centres in district council areas to the city. However, many poliomyelitis cases are brought from places outside these areas. Will the Government be prepared to meet half the cost in such cases, or will some special consideration be given to them?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government would obviously give the same assistance to people from outside district council areas as to those inside these areas. Subject to a means test, the Government pays half the cost of transport provided that the local governing authority pays the other half; in the case of people outside council areas, there is the question of who would pay the other half. That would require special consideration and a special decision by the Minister of Health. I assure the honourable member that even in those cases, if the urgency is such that a person's well-being requires that he should be conveyed to the central hospital and he has not the means of paying, the Government would not exclude him. People outside district council areas will receive at least the same consideration as those inside.

Mr. RICHES—Last year £1,000 was voted towards maintenance of the Flying Doctor Service, but £1,500 was paid. This year £1,000 is provided. Can the Premier inform me whether the service actually received £1,500 last year? Is he satisfied that the £500 provided for the Bush Church Aid Society (Flying Doctor) service is an adequate subsidy in view of the work carried on by that service? I believe that South Australia should hang its head in shame at the small subsidy given to this service, and I urge the Government to give further consideration to its treatment. Although nearly every hospital this year has received an increased grant, not one institution in my district has received any increase. The Tarcoola and Cook hospitals have never received any increase. Possibly they have not lodged claims, but the grants are out of keeping. Has the Premier at his disposal an excess warrant or some means of making a more liberal grant to these country organizations that have proved their need for an increase?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—In all these grants the Government has sought to give an equitable distribution of the money at its disposal. The extra £500 provided last year for the Flying Doctor Service of Australia was to be paid to the Bush Church Aid Society (Flying Doctor). But as they did not pay it over to the Bush Church Aid Flying Doctor service provision was then made to pay it direct. The Government looks at the relative values of services performed and tries to see that any worthwhile project is adequately provided for. I have had the figures taken out, and if there were any valid criticism it would be rather that the Flying Doctor service has been inadequately helped, as the number of institutions it supports would possibly be twice as many as those supported by the Bush Church Aid Society (Flying Doctor). We have the authority of Parliament to the extent of £400,000 on all the lines, providing that £100,000 only shall be spent on new lines. More to the point is the fact that the Government's financial resources this year are already heavily committed.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—On page 39 there is provision for £7,500 for the Royal Institution for the Blind, which is the same as was voted and expended last year, and £10,000 for the South Australian Institution for the Blind, Deaf and Dumb, also the same as last year. Elsewhere in the Estimates there is provision for £10,000 for assistance to Townsend House, which is also an institution for the purpose of educating blind, deaf and dumb children.

Strong representations have been made to me about what has happened in connection with another voluntary organization which was formed, I think in 1953, known as the Friends of the Blind League. I understand that this organization was largely the result of the enthusiasm of Messrs. P. W. Culley and A. O. Richardson. The league received a permit under the Collections for Charitable Purposes Act and raised funds to establish a kindergarten to assist in the education of blind children, and to provide various forms of therapeutic training. It was felt that, while existing institutions were doing excellent work in their own spheres, there was a probability that much greater assistance could be afforded those handicapped by blindness if the means adopted in older countries, particularly in England, were adopted here. Mr. Richardson carried out research for a considerable period and found that in England many blind folk had, as a result of special schools established for the purpose, been trained as physiotherapists and in various other avocations which enabled them to take a much fuller part in the life of the community than they could if simply employed in basket and mat making, on which we have concentrated in teaching our blind folk. Although the Government must have been satisfied in the first instance with the constitution, aims and objects of the league, after it had raised a considerable amount of funds the permit was cancelled, and with it, of course, the authority to expend the money so that it had to be refunded to the donors. I have a sheaf of letters from donors complaining about the Government's action which prevented what appears to be on the face of it a worthy organization from continuing its work. I think it would have been wiser had the Government tried to co-ordinate the league's potential activities with those of one or more of the existing institutions. I admit I have heard only one side of the case, but I suggest that the Government might consider making some use of these people who desire to render what I think is a great service for the blind.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This matter is not directly in my department so I have not all the details at my fingertips. However, I understand that the advisory committee, from whom the Minister has to obtain a report before he can deal with these matters, in the first place recommended the granting of a licence and subsequently its withdrawal. The Act was designed to deal with two problems,

one being that of people collecting money from the public and not applying it to the purpose for which it was allegedly collected.

Mr. O'Halloran—There is no suggestion of that in this case.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That is so. I believe there was a little competition between the various associations dealing with the problems of the blind in raising funds and in all probability the desire to prevent overlapping was the motive behind the committee's report. However, I will check it up and let the honourable member have a full report. There is no desire on the part of the Government to avoid its obligations. In point of fact the Estimates this year amount to an increased obligation of not less than £10,000.

Mr. FRED WALSH—The Mile End Emergency Maternity Hospital was established during the war years and a representative committee, of which the secretary of the Department was chairman, was set up to manage it. This hospital fulfilled a necessary service and continued to do so until last year when, possibly because of a waning lack of interest on the part of the management, the payment of the rental of £10 a week, which the Government had undertaken, ceased. In addition certain equipment was supplied, but whether that was by the Government or from other funds I do not know. When it was found that the department was withdrawing the rent subsidy the doctors associated with the hospital interested me in the matter and I endeavoured to get the Thebarton Corporation interested with a view to establishing a community hospital and getting a Government subsidy. Unfortunately the corporation did not show much enthusiasm and the proposal was dropped. There was a considerable demand by the residents for the continuance of the hospital and doctors decided to endeavour to raise sufficient money to purchase the property. I think the purchase price was about £9,000 or £10,000. Finally sufficient money was raised to buy the property at a reduced price and the conduct of the hospital is meeting with the approval of local residents. A valuation has been placed on the equipment, which is the property of the department, but the doctors think the valuation is too high, because the equipment is secondhand. I think a Mr. Bury of the Architect-in-Chief's Department said that with the exception of two machines the equipment could not be used in other hospitals, so it would be valueless to the department, although of value to those carrying on the hospital. The department feels it has been generous in its valuation,

but I believe a further offer has been made by the doctors for the purchase of the equipment from the department at a lower price. Will the Government give favourable consideration to the offer of the doctors, because there is a need for the hospital to continue.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will have the matter examined to see what assistance the Government can give, and advise the honourable member in due course, but I point out that under the Act relating to the Supply and Tender Board the Government must purchase its requirements and sell its surpluses through the board.

Line passed.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT.

Office of Minister, £17,580; Registrar of Companies' Office, £28,803; Crown Solicitor's Department, £34,541; Parliamentary Draftsman's Department, £7,895; Public Trustee's Department, £54,000; Supreme Court Department, £68,460; Adelaide Local Court Department, £30,357; Adelaide Police Court Department, £31,981; Country and Suburban Courts Department, £54,000; Coroner's Department, £4,526; Registrar-General of Deeds Department, £94,269—passed.

Miscellaneous, £13,781.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—An amount of £4,000 is to be granted to the Law Society for cost of administration in connection with legal assistance for poor persons. Frequently old age pensioners seek this assistance. Would it be possible to avoid the process of first making an appointment and then having to undergo an examination as to whether or not the assistance should be provided? When an old age pensioner is concerned, could not the decision to give assistance be made immediately?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to convey the honourable member's remarks to the Attorney-General to see if it is desirable to do as he suggests.

Line passed.

TREASURER AND MINISTER OF IMMIGRATION.

Treasury Department, £37,254; Superannuation Department, £43,088; Motor Vehicles Department, £184,974; Agent-General in England Department, £32,403; Land Tax Department, £90,217; Stamp and Succession Duties Department, £30,509—passed.

Publicity and Tourist Bureau and Immigration Department, £226,260.

Mr. TAPPING—At Fort Glanville the Tourist Bureau has done a good job with a view to inducing more tourists to come to the

Semaphore district, where it is difficult to get space for parking caravans. Can the Premier say when the bureau intends to complete the work at the fort so that more space will be made available for caravans?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member will notice that it is intended to spend £300 on repairs and alterations to buildings, £2,500 on construction of roadways, etc., and £750 on installation of lighting.

Mr. DUNSTAN—The sum of £25,000 is provided as subsidies for municipal authorities for developing tourist resorts. Other lines deal with the construction of swimming pools, but they are not large grants. In my district there is a proposal to erect a caravan park, including a swimming pool, for which money must be provided by the Tourist Bureau. In the Kensington area a good playground has been developed by the council. Along the creek which runs through Norwood, is an area which is a harbour for rats. The council has done excellent work in making sections of it into playing grounds. One was for St. Ignatius College. The council proposes to build a caravan park that will be closer to the centre of the city and to many of the activities in which tourists indulge, than any other caravan park. In addition, it will be a good recreation place for residents of the district, and a good site for a swimming pool. The estimated cost is about £15,000 and the council will spend a further £2,000 for general development and layout of a garden. I understand from the council that the only suggestion the Tourist Bureau could make for a subsidy for this plan was £1,500 towards the swimming pool. That means the brunt of the expenditure will fall upon the council. The £1,500 is inadequate in view of the benefit that would accrue not only to ratepayers in the Kensington and Norwood area, but to people all around, the Education Department and children attending private schools in the area. A swimming pool would serve 11 departmental schools and about five private schools. St. Peter's College is the only school in the area with a swimming pool, but it is not available for other organizations which have no place in the district to learn swimming. The cost of the project would be more than recouped in the value of lives saved by children having learned to swim. In view of the attitude of the Education Department in favouring swimming instruction, I ask the Treasurer to reconsider the proposal of advancing £1,500 to the council and see if a larger grant could be made in

view of the inestimable advantages to the people of the area and others in the eastern suburbs.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The subsidy for tourist resorts is not an educational vote. This item was established some years ago when I was Minister in charge of the department to assist local authorities in attracting and catering for tourists. It is difficult to draw the line where a particular thing would be applicable to tourists or of some benefit to the community as a whole. We have tried to construe the vote liberally, and made grants to assist local authorities to provide swimming pools, which can be extremely costly. Applications have been made for such projects running into thousands of pounds. The whole vote of £25,000 this year would not be sufficient to construct one swimming pool, and to provide the greatest good to the greatest number this year we have restricted any grant to £1,500. That does not prevent the honourable member's district from applying for a grant for a caravan park. I find that useful swimming pools have been established in certain tourist areas for about £3,000 provided there is a little local assistance in the construction.

Mr. SHANNON—I commend the Government for its increase of about 30 per cent in its advertising vote for the Tourist Bureau. This is a step in the right direction. South Australia has sadly failed to apprise visitors of our tourist attractions. It is through this vote that the problem can be dealt with. We all appreciate the work being done by the Education Department's staff in organizing swimming lessons, much of which is done by the teachers themselves. The Government's approach to national pleasure resorts and their development is the right one. On numerous occasions I have been requested to submit to the department swimming pool projects which would serve only a limited area and a limited number of people. Most of the school children in my district have to travel to Loftia Park or Mount Barker to learn swimming, a distance of about 13 miles. What is wrong with the sea in which to learn swimming? The average distance to the beaches is not very great. I would be opposed to any large expenditure from this vote for swimming facilities for children already well provided for. Attention should be given to children who have not the natural advantages of those living in the metropolitan area. I am pleased that the Treasurer has seen fit to extend the vote for caravan park accommodation. This is appreciated particularly by interstate travellers, who

spend much money in this State. If the whole vote were directed to securing an influx of people to spend money in South Australia, there would be a handsome profit to the department and we would find it one of the best money spinners. Some countries almost subsist on their tourist traffic.

Mr. WHITE—An amount of £22,600 is provided as a grant to the Murray Bridge Corporation for the purchase of land and the development of the river front. I thank the Government for its help in this matter. It indicates that it is anxious to do what it can to develop our beauty spots. Encouraging tourists is probably a cheap way of advertising our State, and is a good business proposition. The development of the river front will not only benefit Murray Bridge, but provide a watering place for people from many places. Therefore, this item comes under the same category as the grant to Glenelg and Brighton for foreshore improvements. Many spots on the Murray are becoming popular holiday resorts. Some now have up to 50 or 60 week-end shacks for people who want to get away from the city, or from country areas, and get near the water and enjoy fishing and swimming and other recreations.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—The vote for advertising the State has been increased from £12,600 to £16,500. Is the increase for the purpose of advertising the State's beauty spots by films to be released in other States and overseas?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Sums for advertising the State are spent mainly on literature for tourists visiting this State, and some literature is distributed in other States and overseas. Only a small proportion is spent on advertising on the screen because that is not nearly so effective as advertising through literature.

Mr. FLETCHER—Mount Gambier benefits greatly from the tourist trade, and the Tourist Bureau has done much to assist my town. It started by stimulating interest in Dingley Dell, but I want to draw attention to the proposal to provide a swimming pool in Mount Gambier. The project was discussed by one of the largest meetings ever held in that town. It will cost about £22,000, and will be equal to any in the metropolitan area. The pool will be adjacent to the new Reidy Park primary school, and will be very useful for teaching children to swim. It will also serve several schools within a radius of 10 miles of Mount Gambier. There will be a paddling pool three

or four feet deep for children, and a deeper pool for adults. Many people are generously supporting the scheme, and one man has promised to do all the excavation work. Others have offered to assist in its construction. Is the Minister of Education interested in this project, seeing that it will be of great assistance to school children?

Line passed.

Prices Control Department, £66,704—passed.

Miscellaneous, £5,424,271.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—The State Bank has 28 branches and 16 agencies, and although it made a profit of over £100,000 for the last financial year, some of the homes it provides for employees are not up to standard. Sometimes it has been said that the State Bank does not provide any assistance to the Housing Trust under the Advances for Homes Act, but a publication issued by the trust this week gave me the impression that it does. If that is so the State Bank should reconsider its attitude on advances for homes and revert to the group building scheme. I believe that the houses built under that scheme had more equity than similar houses built by the Housing Trust at greater cost. Should not the State Bank revert to the policy it pursued previously? Are we to ignore the remarks of the Auditor-General on this important subject? He reported that 56 per cent of the homes sold by the Housing Trust during the last financial year carried a second mortgage; therefore, either the homes are getting too costly or sufficient money is not being advanced on first mortgage. Further, the person who builds a home privately finds it difficult to do so with an advance of only £1,750 under the Advances for Homes Act. The Government is evading its responsibility to the home builder. Many more ex-servicemen may wish to borrow money under this legislation now that the War Service Homes Commission is not lending money as freely as formerly, and the Government should consider raising the upper limit on loans under its Act.

What proportion of the 44 per cent of the purchasers of trust homes last year who did not require a second mortgage obtained a loan from the War Service Homes Commission? Have the Commonwealth and State Governments decided what assistance the trust is to receive this year as a result of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement? Will part of the money advanced under it be made available to tenants of timber frame rental homes who wish to purchase those homes? Will part of the money be used on the trust's rental home programme? Has tomorrow's visit to Canberra by the

Treasurer anything to do with the agreement? What can this Government expect from the Commonwealth Government this year under the agreement? Will the interest rate be reduced? Will money be advanced only on the condition that the Lottery and Gaming Act is amended so as to make additional finance available? Until recently the Savings Bank was willing to advance up to £2,000 to certain home builders, but apparently the Treasurer was instructed by the Prime Minister to reduce that maximum to £1,750, even though this imposed a hardship on those desiring to build homes. As a result of the Treasurer's visit to Canberra tomorrow, can we reasonably expect that the amount that may be advanced under the Advances for Homes Act will be increased to £2,750? Can the Treasurer say whether the chairman of the State Bank Board has reported to him on the criticism levelled in Parliament that the accommodation the bank has provided for its employees is not up to standard? Will the Treasurer also ascertain from him why, in appointing staff to senior positions, the board has hand-picked persons instead of appointing those with greater experience?

Mr. TAPPING—An amount of £105,850 is provided for the Housing Trust for temporary housing accommodation. This exceeds last year's grant by £37,221. I understood that the construction of temporary homes ceased about three or four years ago. Can the Treasurer indicate the reason for this heavy increase, particularly as it relates only to maintenance and administration costs?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is necessary to maintain our temporary homes in good condition and we must provide for their regular painting and maintenance. The Auditor-General's report reveals that a substantial loss is made on the temporary housing scheme, but that does not represent a true picture of the position. Because they are temporary houses we provide for their amortization in a short period, but at the expiration of the 10-year period they will be as valuable as when they were erected. For instance, they would provide excellent temporary accommodation for farmers during harvest operations and would bring a good price if sold for that purpose.

MR. GOLDNEY—An amount of £5,000 is proposed as grants to the Electricity Trust under the Electricity Supplies (Country Areas) Act. I understand that Act was designed to enable electricity supplies to be provided in sparsely populated country areas. It sometimes happens that homes are situated near aerodromes and consequently the electricity lines

must be laid underground at additional expense. Will the Treasurer give sympathetic consideration to increasing the grants in respect of such supplies?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Act referred to was provided for the purpose of enabling extensions of electricity to be undertaken by local authorities in places where it is not feasible for the trust to extend its activities. However, in the case mentioned by the honourable member, the Electricity Trust would provide the supply. In certain circumstances the trust makes the supply and the Government provides a subsidy towards the annual cost. I think that would be the position in respect of the matter raised by the honourable member.

Mr. FRED WALSH—It is proposed to make a grant of £570,000 to the Tramways Trust. I do not criticize the proposal, but I think it is necessary for the trust to seriously consider increasing its revenue by taking over certain private bus routes, particularly the Ascot Park and Edwardstown routes. About three or four years ago when Sir William Goodman gave evidence before the Public Works Committee he indicated that it was the trust's intention to take over the more remunerative private routes and stated that those two routes would be the first. Can the Treasurer indicate the trust's policy in respect of taking over such routes?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have no direct information upon this topic, but will obtain a report from the trust as to whether it intends to take over these routes and will advise the honourable member in due course. The amount provided in this line is merely for running expenses and not capital expenses.

Mr. LAWN—I do not oppose the grant to the Tramways Trust, but criticize the trust's policy. This year we propose to make a grant of £570,000 which, with last year's grant of £600,000, makes a total grant of £1,170,000 in the last two years. In that period the trust has received as loans from the Government a total of £1,000,000. In reply to a question on September 27 the Treasurer said that during the period July 1, 1953, to August 31, 1955, the trust spent £460,000 on the purchase of buses, £40,000 on the restoration of roadways and £120,000 on the construction of a new bus depot at Hackney. In other words, during that period the trust spent £620,000 on its policy of converting from trams to buses. Had it not embarked on such a policy either the grants made by the Government or the

loans obtained from the Government would have been sufficient to enable the trust to maintain its operations. What is Parliament getting for these loans and grants? I take it the municipal councils own the stock of the trust but this Parliament appoints the trust to administer the system and makes these grants and loans available. I have no objection to the proposed grant. It cannot be regarded as a complete loss, because if fares are kept down, the workers are assisted and the cost of living in the metropolitan area is thereby kept down. However, these continual grants and loans seem to keep drifting on.

Yesterday I read a letter in the press from the president of the Electric Traction Society in which he said that the trust has not made clear to the public the basis for its change from trams to buses. The report of the American investigators has been tabled but has not yet been printed, although the Premier stated that it was available some time ago. I have attempted to get that report but I was told that the only copy in Adelaide is in the possession of the Tramways Trust. We are getting nothing for the money that has been made available to the trust. With the money we have provided the trams have been scrapped and replaced by buses, but from the passenger's point of view tram travel is far better because buses sway and because of the bad state of the roads they give a very bumpy ride and are not as comfortable as trams. There is no programme to improve the roads and we all know what happens when they are not cared for. In addition, the loading facilities of buses is not as good as that of trams. Even in the three-door buses entry must be made through the rear door, with the result that as soon as passengers start to board the late comers rush in and push ahead of those who have been waiting. Even with the saloon type tram there are two main entrances and an entrance at every row of seats. The drop centre trams have separate entrances, and the Glenelg type have two double entrances. It is noticeable that more people stand in buses than in trams because the capacity is not as great. Instead of having spent £620,000 since July, 1953 in pulling out tram lines and installing buses the trust could have rendered a greater service if it had taken over some of the profitable private bus routes, such as Kilburn, Ascot Park, Paringa Park, Dover Gardens, Daws Road and Edwardstown, all of which are well patronized. If the trust had maintained all its trams and had taken over these bus routes its deficit would have been much less.

It is not providing any more services but has only changed over from trams to buses on some routes.

The Federal Government has restricted imports and that will make it difficult for the trust to import bus chassis, tyres, tubes and diesel oil. These matters should be considered, because Leigh Creek coal can be taken to Port Augusta and used for generating electricity at a cheap rate. Also steel rails can be made at Whyalla. With the atomic energy that is expected in a few years, trams could be run by that means, but by that time there will be no trams. I think the policy of the trust is wrong. The Government has no initiative because it appoints committees and thereby passes the buck, and it is then able to say that it has no control over the trusts and boards that it appoints.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Over the last few years I have been concerned about the very high surcharge that many country people are forced to pay for electricity supplies. I have helped residents in my electorate to obtain electricity. The Government has assisted them by granting subsidies to decrease the surcharge, but a number have found it difficult to pay the surcharge. Last week some residents of a district three or four miles from Gawler came to see me. They have to pay a 100 per cent surcharge, but at Gawler ordinary charges are paid. The following is a paragraph from a letter I have received:—

Approximately two years ago a group of 16 landholders approached the Electricity Trust with the idea of being connected with light and power. The Electricity Trust interviewed each landholder with the view of ascertaining approximately what their requirements were or how much electric current would be used. They advised that they would erect the line and connect the houses at a surcharge of 70 per cent, for which each landholder signed an agreement to be a recipient of this amenity. It cost the writer approximately £100 to have the house wired and it was duly connected in May 1954. Other expenses were a refrigerator, wireless, washing machine, toaster, iron, jug, radiator and the hire of an electric stove from the trust. After 12 months ending last June the surcharge remained at 70 per cent and since I have had notice that for the ensuing 12 months the surcharge is to be 100 per cent. We had a meeting on Tuesday last and one of the trust's representatives was present and informed the meeting that the revenue fell short by £132 and the trust was reluctantly forced to put the surcharge higher to pay the interest on the capital cost.

I do not reflect on the trust in this matter for I realize that the residents in the group, probably in their eagerness to obtain electricity,

over-estimated the number of machines they could buy and the electricity they would use. They are mostly on small blocks and will find the 100 per cent surcharge difficult to pay. If the object is to encourage people to obtain further electrical equipment and use more power it may not be successful. I am worried about these surcharges because I can see no end to them. In order to get them reduced the people must use more electricity than they are capable of using. The people of whom I am speaking are three miles from Gawler and 22 miles from Adelaide. They are paying double the Gawler rate for electricity. I am rapidly coming to the conclusion that another system, although I do not know what it might be, is necessary to replace the present system of surcharges. Could there be a further subsidy so as to lower the surcharges, particularly in the cases I have mentioned?

Mr. HUTCHENS—On a number of occasions, by correspondence and by the presentation of a petition, I have asked the trust to provide a bus service for residents at Kidman Park by extending the Findon bus service, but I have not received a definite reply. Some weeks ago I wrote to the Minister of Works, who attends to his correspondence promptly, but apparently he has not been able to get a definite reply from the trust in this matter. The Woodville Council also approached the trust, but it obtained nothing definite. All sorts of evasive answers have been given. In the interests of the people living in the area will the Treasurer ascertain whether a service to Kidman Park can be provided, and, if so, when?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes.

Mr. JENNINGS—I protest against this grant of £570,000 to the trust without Parliament having any say in its expenditure. We are reaching the stage when tremendous sums of money are being voted by Parliament without its having any control over its expenditure. Parliament is becoming nothing more than a rubber stamp in this matter. I cannot object to the money being voted to the trust because we have insufficient information on which to decide the matter. A number of private people are operating bus services at a profit. Could the Tramways Trust, in its report to Parliament, supply a copy of the balance-sheet of these private bus operators so that we will know whether or not it would be advantageous for the trust to take them over?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That is private information and there would be no opportunity to get it.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—The Auditor-General's Report says that the trust subsidized one bus operator to the extent of £2,822 in 1954-55. I think this must be the Westbourne Park bus service. If it is, I can say that the operator has done a good job. Mr. Fred Walsh referred to the Edwardstown bus service through to Darlington. Frequently there are breakdowns in that service. Earlier I referred to the possibility of the South Road bus service being taken over by the trust. I wondered whether the service could be given a subsidy to carry on or whether the trust could take it over. I was told that the then manager of the Tramways Trust would take over the Edwardstown bus service and run trolley buses when the Hilton Bridge was put in a safe condition. The Minister of Railways indicated that the bridge would be rebuilt when railway unification was completed. At least a 21-year contract should be given to the Edwardstown bus operator so that he could provide a modern standard of buses to convey people from Darlington to Adelaide. The buses now being used should have been replaced five years ago as they are not in a safe condition to transport the public. The residential area is growing right through to Darlington and is becoming industrialized from Edwardstown and beyond. According to the annual report of the Auditor-General, during 1954-55 the Tramways Trust's loan indebtedness to the South Australian Government increased by £1,062,008, and the amount outstanding at June 30 was £6,779,418, of which sum £3,408,782, or more than 50 per cent, has been lost. Now we are asked to provide another £570,000. We would not mind that so much if we really knew where the Government was going in respect of its Tramways Trust policy. During the last session we protested and a further protest is necessary if we are to get anywhere with the trust.

Recently in company with another member of this House and four members of the Legislative Council I attended a council inspection at Mitcham. It was indicated that the road was not built for the type of bus being used, and but for the surface between the tram tracks it was doubtful whether the bus service could be carried on today. The Treasurer should be in a position to give a more satisfactory explanation of the amounts provided for the trust. Can he give any information in the interests of the public, because they will be

demanding how a tram and bus service can be run in the principal street of Adelaide. It is difficult if travelling in a motor car to pass a tram when a bus is keeping towards the centre of the road. The Government is backing the trust in its proposal to run buses in King William Street, travelling north and south. I think the Government, after appointing representatives on the trust, had the idea of revolutionizing the Adelaide transport service.

Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—The Auditor-General's report states that the Tramways Trust subsidized one private bus operator to the extent of £2,822 in 1954-55. Can the Treasurer say how long these subsidies will be paid? The Auditor-General also said:—

During 1954-55 the trust's loan indebtedness to the South Australian Government increased by £1,062,008. The amount outstanding at June 30, 1955, was £6,779,418, of which sum £3,408,782 (more than 50 per cent) has been lost.

Is there any solution to the losses?

Mr. O'Halloran—Any end to the losses!

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I accept that. Does the Government intend asking the Opposition to continue to assist this undertaking, and will Parliament have any authority over the tramways? Another problem is the maintenance of roads upon which buses will be run instead of trams. Does the Treasurer consider it will be satisfactory to have buses running down King William Street, where there is such dense vehicular traffic?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The criticism of the vote for the tramways has been from different angles. Two or three members complained that the Tramways Trust had not extended its activities by taking over private bus routes, others have criticized grants to the trust to carry on its existing services. Members opposite should make up their minds. The Treasury is hard pressed for funds, and if they want grants to the tramways to be curtailed I assure them that their desire will receive due consideration. For many years the tramways were carried on under the Municipal Tramways Trust Act. The councils concerned established the Tramways Trust and maintained it on money borrowed from the Treasury, but they ran into the same problem that tramway authorities all over the world have encountered. I investigated this problem in densely populated cities, such as Glasgow and San

Francisco. One factor is that many people have motor cars in which they drive to work, and also take their friends. Tramway patronage has therefore diminished, and this has been the experience all over the world.

We have three alternatives: to make public transport charges so high that they would become prohibitive, to subsidize the tramways, or scrap the public transport system and allow private enterprise to take over. Experience has shown that an increase in fares is not a solution because that only results in further diminishing patronage. We must enable workers to get to their place of employment at reasonable cost.

Mr. Fred Walsh—That is our responsibility.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Then there is no alternative that I know of to subsidizing the public transport system. Certainly no alternative has been suggested by members opposite. I have no doubt that there will be further complaints that the tramways are not providing adequate services, and there will be further debate on trams *versus* buses, but they are merely incidental to the main question—whether or not we shall continue to subsidize this undertaking. I cannot understand why members opposite continue to criticize subsidies for the tramways. On the same line we propose to vote £3,250,000 to the railways towards working expenses and £800,000 towards debt charges, but there has been no criticism on that, yet they continue to criticize the undertaking that transports people who have no transport of their own. Several authorities have been appointed by the Government to investigate tramway finances, and their reports indicate that losses will be smaller if trams are replaced by buses. To maintain our public transport system it will be necessary for us to provide further assistance to the tramways. It is true that we could hand over our routes to private enterprise and thereby obviate the payment of subsidies to the tramways. Indeed, one authority that investigated this matter reported that it would be advantageous to allow private enterprise to take over routes with light traffic, but I told the Government's representative on the Tramways Trust that I thought that was not desirable. Private enterprise can function only on a profit-making basis. No private operator would run buses only to lose money.

If buses are run on a profit-making basis any service that does not provide for at least a full return on working expenses will inevitably be discontinued. The lines on which at

present there is a 20 minute service would enjoy only a 40 or 45 minute service if operated by a private firm. The small bus operator today enjoys some advantage because his industrial conditions are not laid down so precisely as those under which the trust works; many operate one-man buses and do most of their running at peak period. Indeed, they supply a good peak period service, but not such a good one in the off-peak period. I believe, however, that the advantages enjoyed by small private bus operators would in the course of time evaporate because, if they took over the whole of the service, they would eventually amalgamate and become employers of labour. They would then be subject to arbitration court awards the same as other employers, and we would return to the position we have today under the trust, except the service would be run on a profit-making basis. If honourable members desire to eliminate the item of £570,000, I merely say that that I always like to give effect to their wishes if possible.

Mr. O'Halloran—I have not suggested its elimination.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have waited for the Leader to speak, but he has remained silent. His followers, however, have criticized this item for the last two hours.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Not I.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No, the honourable member said it has not been extended far enough, but the last speaker to resume his seat visualized the confusion that will exist with more buses on the road, whereas everybody else knows that most countries have changed from trams to buses.

Mr. Dunstan—Not all.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No, there are places even further behind than we are in this matter. Although there is some dislocation in changing from an obsolete to a modern system, the ultimate advantage far outweighs any slight temporary difficulty experienced during the changeover. That, however, also applies to the alteration of the gauge on the north-south railway line, yet I have not heard the member for Goodwood (Mr. Frank Walsh) criticize that alteration: he merely criticizes the worker's transport, and I cannot understand his attitude. This line on the Estimates is essential to industry, and, if and when the Commonwealth Arbitration Court again makes quarterly adjustments in the basic wage, it will become not only a subsidy for the worker but also of greater importance to industry. When I heard

the member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) criticizing the Tramways Trust, I could imagine no item on the Estimates more important to his district, because half the revenue derived by the shops in Adelaide is derived because of the cheap form of transport from the outer suburbs. I have kept a close watch on the finances of the trust and am confident that it is making important economies. It is changing over as rapidly and effectively as possible, and I believe that ultimately it will give a better service than we have enjoyed in the past. There will always be some people who are obliged to go to their work by public transport, and it would be wrong either to scrap the present organization, which is owned by the community, or to raise the charges to a prohibitive level.

Mr. QUIRKE—I support the member for Gawler (Mr. Clark) in his remarks about the £5,000 to be granted to the Electricity Trust under the Electricity Supplies (Country Areas) Act. Certain money is made available to the trust to meet the heavy cost of extending power lines into the more isolated country districts, and when the subsidy has been fixed, surcharges are calculated. They are extremely heavy compared with charges in the city. The main factor contributing to the high cost of supplying electricity to the country is the tremendous cost of the power lines and transformer. The amount allowed today under the subsidy scheme is far too small compared with the cost of those lines. People are asked to forecast how much power they will consume in a given period, and in order to be given the reduced surcharge of 73 per cent or 80 per cent it is necessary for them to consume quite an amount of electricity, which means that they will have to use all the electrical appliances possible and spend £1,000 initially in order to provide that equipment. Further, there is the cost of the power lines, and after all costs have been computed the surcharge is calculated. If there is a case for subsidy it is for subsidizing land lines because of their tremendous cost. We fix the amount of money available for direct surcharge, but we have never been able to fix the cost of the land lines. The two are now completely out of proportion and the cost to isolated country consumers is reaching that point where little expansion is possible on today's costs.

In explaining the Electricity Trust of South Australia Bill some years ago, the Treasurer said that the city had the whole milk and the country the skim milk, and that the legislation was designed to give a measure of whole milk

to both. Today the whole milk in the city is of a fairly high standard, but although milk comes from a sub-standard cow the consumers are charged cream prices, and something must be done about that. Can the Treasurer say what progress has been made with the subsidy scheme to enable a surcharge to be reduced to 70 per cent, 80 per cent or 100 per cent, and is there any possibility of a reduction in the tremendously high charges to country consumers?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—When the Electricity Trust was formed no country extensions of any description had been made by the previous company and consequently many heavily populated areas were available for extensions. The trust naturally served the areas with the greatest populations first. The position is that over 90 per cent of the people of the State are served by electricity and the trust is now able to extend its activities into the more sparsely populated areas. Every fortnight a list is presented to Cabinet for approval of subsidies in respect of certain extensions.

Mr. Riches—Are they granted under this line?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—They are granted under the Act to which the honourable member for Stanley referred. About 50 extensions a fortnight are approved and most of them are successful. The Government is committed to pay a subsidy for an extension if the line is not profitable. This system enables the trust to supply electricity to the country at a much cheaper rate than it could be supplied by any other means. The trust will not supply a service that will be more expensive than any alternative service. I can recall one extension service which failed rather badly. A number of people in an area on the Murray River signed up in a group scheme to take large quantities of electricity for pumping purposes, but ultimately did not convert their pumping units. As a result the surcharge was fully called upon. If a person fails to use his quota of electricity the group as a whole is that much worse off. It has been suggested that we should make the surcharge an individual liability rather than a group liability.

Mr. O'Halloran—And then the trust would lose all its customers.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not agree. In most country extensions the amount of electricity consumed exceeds that quoted for and as a result the costs are much lower than originally estimated. All electoral districts—

with the exception of that represented by the Minister of Agriculture, in which the trust does not operate—have benefited from the scheme. The charges are heavier in country areas and there are a number of zones each with a graduated charge. Actually, the consumers in the metropolitan area are making a subsidy for electricity extensions to country areas. In densely populated areas transmission costs are relatively low, but in country areas they represent the bulk of the charge. I think the average cost of a unit of electricity is about 2.55d. and the generating cost included in that is approximately .8d. It is the Government's desire to supply electricity to country areas and to provide amenities there to enable decentralization to take place.

Mr. DUNSTAN—I would point out for the benefit of the Treasurer that no member of my Party has ever suggested any opposition to the granting of subsidies where necessary for the operating of public transport. The Treasurer waxed eloquent about our opposing the grants to the Tramways Trust.

The Hon. T. Playford—Why do members opposite always delay the passage of the line that provides for such a subsidy?

Mr. DUNSTAN—The reason is that we, being democrats, are concerned—

Mr. William Jenkins—Sez you!

Mr. DUNSTAN—If the honourable member wants to hear about democracy I will deal with it shortly and it will be the type espoused by the Young Liberals, who incidentally agree with the principles espoused by members of my Party on this particular topic. My Party believes that any concern which is operating for the benefit of the public—a public utility or an industrial enterprise—should be responsible to this House. The Tramways Trust treats members of this House with complete arrogance. Public utilities should be subject to the people's views and we should be able adequately to scrutinize the trust's policy. The trust continually provides evasive answers to questions asked by members and no Minister is responsible for the trust to this House because it is an allegedly independent authority. That is our quarrel with the trust. We do not quarrel about the spending of money to enable the trust to continue its operations. In the past the trust has granted the privilege of free travelling on its services to its retired employees who had rendered valuable service to it. That concession has been revoked without any compensating arrange-

ment. It was a concession to which men who entered the employment of the trust looked forward on retirement and this revocation is causing much dissatisfaction. Will the Treasurer take up this matter with the trust? Another matter which affects many people in my district concerns aged and invalid pensioners who receive no extra concession on public transport. They are given no allowance. In other States they are given such an allowance. I would not normally raise a matter of this nature because I believe that pensions should be adequate to cover all the needs of pensioners and they should not have to come to this Government for specific allowances. At the moment the aged and invalid pensions are at such a level that some pensioners in my district cannot travel because they cannot afford to pay even the small amount charged on our public transport. Although they received some increase this year it was not enough to catch up with what they had already lost because of increased cost of living since the last pension increase, without allowing for an increase in rents due to the Government's policy of increasing rents twice in 12 months. This Government should make an allowance for pensioners using public transport similar to that made in other States, not only for good administration, but in the interests of common humanity.

Mr. RICHES—An amount of £5,000 is provided for grants to Electricity Trust for country electricity supplies. I take it that this line has relation only to the amounts granted to local government bodies.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The amount is purely provisional so that if any applications are made by local government bodies we will be in a position to deal with them under excess warrant.

Mr. RICHES—Last year £5,000 was voted but no money was spent.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—We had no applications. The Act gives the trust authority to extend services into country areas under a subsidy provided by the Government.

Mr. RICHES—Under that Act, £20,000 was voted the year before last, none of which was spent; £5,000 was voted last year, none of which was spent; and £5,000 is provided this year. Where subsidies have been granted they must have been granted under some other line. When applications have been made for supplies to the country for industrial purposes, it has been held by the trust that those supplies are not within the scope of the

Act or the intention of Parliament. I cannot see in the Act any differentiation between the rural or agricultural consumer and the industrial consumer. Can the Premier give an assurance that he will consider that matter and consider applications for a supply for industrial purposes in country areas in the same light as he would consider applications for a supply for primary production purposes? The chairman of the Electricity Trust has expressed the opinion that Parliament did not intend that this facility should be available for industrial purposes, but I think Parliament did intend that.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There are two methods under which the Government set out to assist the supply of electricity to the country. One was by subsidy to local government authorities to enable them to increase or extend their supplies. That has occurred at Ceduna, where provision was made to enable electricity to be extended to Thevenard and at Bordertown, where the council was assisted to extend its activities to Keith. Assistance was given at Renmark to enable electricity supplies to be extended over the river. This had nothing to do with the trust.

Mr. O'Halloran—And there was no restriction on the purposes for which the electric supply could be used.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There was no restriction, but it naturally followed that the subsidies were granted in places where the service could not normally be undertaken at a profit, otherwise there would have been no call for Government assistance.

Mr. Riches—That is the type of assistance that this line visualizes.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That is so. The Government does not know whether it will get an application, but if there is a nominal provision of £5,000 in the Estimates the Government will be able to go ahead if necessary.

Mr. Quirke—What would be the amount expended in one year?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It would depend on the applications made. Last year, as far as I know, no application was made.

Mr. Riches—Or the year before, according to the Estimates.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think an application may have been made then. We may have had eight or 10 applications during the history of the Act, but we have not had many because councils have not had the desire to extend. Many people would extend if some-

body paid half the money, which is not an ungenerous contribution. The other provisions in the Act that assist the extension of electricity supplies are those referred to by the honourable members for Gawler and Stanley. Where the trust extends into an area that would not normally be economic because of an assurance by the Government that it will pay a certain percentage of the cost if called upon, an annual amount is paid to the trust if required. The trust has been generous in this matter and has not called upon the Government to make contributions, but it could if it felt that its financial position warranted it.

Mr. Riches—Would there be anything to stop Quorn applying?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I know of nothing. Some time ago the Department of Mines recommended that a project to purify barytes at Quorn could be established, and a recommendation was made that a suitable place for this establishment would probably be at Port Augusta, the nearest seaport to the mine. The Government considered that project, and its view was that as the material would be going down *via* the Quorn line it would be a good opportunity to extend some assistance to Quorn by establishing an industry there. As a consequence, it suggested to the company concerned that it consider Quorn for the site. Immediately it was said that Quorn would require electricity. I discussed the matter with the trust, which expressed willingness to provide electricity. As far as I know, the trust negotiated with the Quorn council to establish an electric supply without any subsidy at all.

Unfortunately, I shall have to break off for a few moments, but I will resume in a few moments if some other member will keep the debate alive.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—This afternoon I raised the matter of the Commonwealth-State housing agreement, but I have not received an answer to my queries. I pointed out earlier that under the Advances for Homes Act the sum of £1,750 could be advanced, whereas under the proposed Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement £2,750 could be obtained, which would enable a second mortgage to be avoided. I understand a major dispute occurred when it was suggested that a reduced amount be made available to the Housing Trust so that more money could be made available to building societies.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—In connection with electricity supplies, the trust negotiated with the authorities at Quorn and I think they reached an amicable agreement. The question was referred to the Industries Development Committee and the last information I had was that the only matter in abeyance was the establishment of a siding, and I took up that matter with the Commonwealth Railways. So far as I know, there is no outstanding matter, and the rate charged would not justify the inclusion of the subsidy provisions, which operate only when there is a rate higher than that which will apply at Quorn. In connection with the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, after having secured money from the Commonwealth the State is required to pay interest at the rate of three per cent on the outstanding balance and must pay each year a certain proportion of the principal, so that the loan will be repaid over 53 years. Last year the Government repaid £35,616 in principal, and this year £65,000 will be paid. Last year the Government paid in interest £187,964. This year the amount will be £290,000. The agreement runs until June 30, 1956. No decision has been reached regarding an agreement to follow the present one. I reported to the House that at the last conference the States opposed money being diverted to other channels and that another conference would be held early in the new year after the Commonwealth had further considered the matter.

Mr. QUIRKE—The Treasurer's reply to my question regarding the trust left me mystified. He said that no applications had been made this year for a subsidy. I have arranged petitions for the supply of electricity to country towns. The trust operates fairly but throws a considerable responsibility on the member for the district who attends meetings of the petitioners at which trust officers are present. Meetings have been held at Hoyleton, Rhynie, Stanley Flat and other places. I heard it said at Hoyleton by trust officers that the surcharge would be 105 per cent, but that the application of the subsidy would reduce it to 73 per cent. That applied also at other places. Trust officers have said that without the subsidy the whole thing would be uneconomic. Can the Treasurer tell me the total amount of subsidy paid to the trust under this scheme? I suspect that the subsidy scheme is not operating as was intended. It seems that country people are paying too dearly for the service. I would like to know whether any application has been made, because I know of

three places where a heavy surcharge is being carried.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have already told the honourable member, but he would not take the trouble to listen carefully to what I said. There are two types of assistance to increase the supply of electricity to the country. The £5,000 on the Estimates referred to by the honourable member is a nominal amount in case a council which is supplying electricity desires to extend its services. It has nothing to do with the Electricity Trust. The subsidy provided under that particular scheme is 50 per cent of the capital cost of the installations approved. As far as I know it has no bearing on the honourable member's district. The type of subsidy in which he is interested is not in the same form, but a guarantee by the Government to make up to the Electricity Trust, when called upon, half the loss of certain installations which would not be undertaken except for this guarantee. There are a number of lines which are uneconomical, but if someone will give a bond to pay half the loss on them, under those circumstances the trust is prepared to undertake them. I will bring down a sample of the documents to show how they work out. They are signed by me and are a guarantee to pay to the trust by way of grant half the loss made on the specific lines mentioned in the guarantee. A guarantee could be called up by the trust at any time, but last year it did not call up any. They are now assuming big proportions. While there were small amounts, the trust was not particularly interested in calling them up. However, because of the number of installations the demand is greater, and obviously these amounts will have to be met by the State in accordance with the bonds entered into. I could get for the honourable member the total of the bonds, but if I were guessing I would say they would probably amount to £50,000 a year. To enable electricity services to be extended, the State undertakes to pay the trust half the loss on these services. I do not want honourable members to think this is a subsidy scheme under which the Government is giving a service without payment. The consumer has not been asked to make up any payment.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—In the case I quoted this afternoon where a group failed to meet its obligations, and their surcharge was increased, I think by 30 per cent, does the subsidy operate on that increase or does it go off after that increase?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The amount quoted to the consumer by the trust is based upon the transmission costs of the line. The Government will give a guarantee to pay a certain proportion of that cost and a figure is worked out to the group. It is provided that if the group uses so many units of electricity the price will be so much, but if the consumers use more the price is correspondingly reduced, whereas if they use less the price is accordingly increased. If the honourable member gives me the particular extension he has in mind I will get the figures and show how they are worked out and what modifications, if any, are necessary because of the altered consumption rates.

Mr. STOTT—I support the idea of a subsidy for country electricity schemes. The Government has entered into an arrangement with the trust to supply rural areas with electricity. The trust sends its officers to make a survey and contact the various people to be served. They are given a total cost for the scheme on a kilowatt consumer basis and each consumer is shown what he will have to pay. The more electricity used the lower the surcharge because the return to the trust is sufficient to offset the capital expenditure and the running costs. That does not always work out, so the Government introduced a scheme whereby country people can get the benefit of electricity by a guarantee to the trust from the subsidy fund. The trust interviews the people and asks for an estimate of the electricity likely to be used for the year, and then the charge is worked out. Each individual is assessed and the total calculated and then the trust is able to indicate what the charges will be. The weakness is that no guarantee is given by the individual in the group that he will undertake to consume the amount of electricity stated. If one of the individuals in the group falls down on his contract, that is so much less power used, resulting in an increased cost to the man using above the quantity for which he was assessed. The more who fall out of a scheme, the greater the charge on those remaining. Some people in my district have installed diesel motors. They undertook to use electric power, but because they are not now using it others have to pay a surcharge of 75 per cent. Because of that many others will not install electric motors at all, and we cannot blame them. Those who have carried out their obligation to the trust to use electric power have to carry a heavy burden. The Government should examine this matter, and I think it will

get the Electricity Trust to re-examine the whole question as a result of the statements made by a deputation that I introduced to the Treasurer.

In my district the Electricity Trust has installed transmission lines that will serve areas when they come into production in five or six years. Young settlers will then be able to afford electric motors, they will use a considerable amount of electric power, and there should then be a fall in the surcharge. My point is that those who are now using electric power should be supplied at a lower charge. The costs of taking electric energy into country districts should be spread over a long period so as to relieve the burden on present users. The maximum surcharge should be about 50 per cent, and those who become consumers later should be called upon to contribute towards the capital cost of country electricity schemes. The present scheme of subsidising the Electricity Trust to take electricity to sparsely settled areas is an excellent one, for without it many rural areas would not have electricity today, but it is unfair to expect the original consumers to pay a surcharge of up to 90 per cent, so I hope the Government will examine my suggestions.

There is an item "Wallaroo Distillery Buildings—caretaking, insurance premiums, maintenance, £600." I understood that the distillery had been acquired by a company. Why is this amount on the Estimates?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—These premises were leased to an engineering firm as from July 1. However, the Government decided to paint and renovate the premises at the commencement of the lease. That is why this sum has been placed on the Estimates, but all further maintenance expenses will be borne by the lessee.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I understand that the grants to the railways will enable the department to meet working expenses and I ask you, Mr. Chairman, whether I would be in order in discussing employment in the railways?

The CHAIRMAN—If the honourable member's remarks are related to the working of the railways he will be in order.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I understand that 500 to 600 members of the Amalgamated Engineering Union are engaged as tradesmen at the Islington Workshops, about 50 of whom are apprentices, and that they are concerned about apprentice candidates taking examinations at the workshops. The

union desires to reduce the present ratio of apprentices to tradesmen on condition that the fifth year apprentice receives the adult male wage. Will the Treasurer, through his colleague (the Minister of Railways), ask the Railways Commissioner to arrange a conference to consider this matter?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will have the matter investigated.

Line passed.

MINISTER OF LANDS AND MINISTER OF REPATRIATION.

Lands, £580,981.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Recently, at the invitation of the Ex-servicemen's Land Settlement Association (Loxton Zone) a **Parliamentary party**, comprising the Hon. F. J. Condon, the Hon. C. R. Story, and the members for Alexandra, Ridley, and Chaffey, and me, visited the Loxton area to meet members of the ex-servicemen's committee and hear complaints regarding their conditions. I was impressed with the fine type of settler in the area and congratulate the Minister of Repatriation on the selection of the men. They have great faith in the settlement, great courage, and hope to develop what was formerly barren land into a valuable asset not only for their own sake, but for the sake of the Commonwealth. On our return we met and decided by a majority decision to bring the following matter before Parliament. There was a divergence of opinion as to whether it should be brought before Parliament, but while the matter was being considered a telegram addressed to the member for Ridley was received from the secretary of the association asking that it be dealt with on a Parliamentary level. I do not criticize anyone in regard to this matter at this stage, but I believe no person is more desirous of seeing that settlers get a fair go than the Minister of Lands. It was agreed that the member for the district should be the first to raise this matter in the House.

The settlers have many problems, but drainage is one which is creating great financial difficulties for them. I have studied the Land Settlement Committee's recommendation and, on the advice of experts, it was believed that with the establishment of an overhead watering system there would be no need for a comprehensive drainage system in the Loxton area for about 20 years. We have seen that there is a real necessity for drainage in that area. Because of seepage the vines are beginning to die. Two years ago about two acres

of a large swamp area of non-ratable land were covered by seepage, but today about 40 acres are affected. This must eventually have a detrimental effect on the entire area. Local drainage has been installed in some blocks, but while specifications have been drawn up for the installation of such services the fullest consideration has not been given to the various soils in the area. We saw a number of drains, the tiles of which were set in clay which prohibited the water from draining into the pipes. The drains were not operative because the water was well above them. We were told that many of the drains that are laid are not inspected. These drains cost about £14 or £15 a chain. The drains lead to a well on the individual blocks. The sump goes down varying distances and costs between £4 and £5 a foot to sink, but many of them only last two years. We inspected one drainage system that had been laid as settlers now desire all their drainage to be laid. It was on Mr. Jim Scott's property. The sump was put down for 30 or 40 feet and at the bottom there was a bore going down to a soil strata similar to that at Waikerie. The settlers claim that such a drainage would result in a considerable saving of money. I think all members of the party would agree that that sump is working effectively at the moment. Only time will tell how long it will continue to so work. The Hon. Mr. Story asked the main witness for the Drainage Committee, "If we recommend the putting in of a drainage system similar to that operating at Waikerie, would you, the settlers, be satisfied for the time being?" and the answer was, "Yes, we would be very happy." The settlers at the moment want that type of drainage because they appreciate that even if a comprehensive system is eventually necessary they must have some immediate relief.

It has been suggested that members of this settlement have been told to refrain from bringing this before their representatives in Parliament. I have been questioned by two settlers as to whether this statement was made during the course of the conference. In fairness to the member for Ridley I will not say that his statement was incorrect. I am confident that having said he would give the names to the Minister, he will do so. I never heard any suggestion of that nature made at Loxton. The scheme has not worked out as was expected and the settlers are in trouble because of the lack of a proper drainage

system. I was pleased to see that Mr. A. C. Gordon acknowledged that it has not worked as expected. I realize that these people have had two unsatisfactory years, but from what we have been told they have been put on their own too soon and therefore need some relief. The accounting of the department is confusing to me, and the settlers also have some difficulty with it.

The Hon. C. S. Hincks—I think their accounting is more difficult to understand.

Mr. HUTCHENS—That may be so, but I asked a qualified accountant to look into the method, and he could not understand it. Evidence was submitted as follows:—

I wish to point out some of the difficulties experienced by settlers in the Loxton irrigation area regarding the "assistance period" and finance. The general complaint of growers is that in the majority of cases they are being placed on the "assistance period" too soon to give them an equitable chance of success. The financial position of such growers is an invidious one, through no fault of their own. If, for instance, a grower does not realize the departmental valuation of his crop, he is in an embarrassing position to meet his commitments, and secondly, if he has distillery fruit, for which he only receives delivery payment of £4 8s. a ton up to June 30 he again cannot meet his commitments, as it will possibly be some years before he can expect final payment from this fruit.

In the first case—of the crop being less than was estimated through no fault of the growers, the department will advance the amount they consider necessary to continue to work the holding. This amount is debited to a grower's current account and bears interest at the rate of 3½ per cent. You will readily agree that, in the case of a settler who has been placed on the "assistance period" too soon, it is an added burden that is going to be most difficult to carry. Regarding the distillery fruit, where only delivery payment is made, the department will take a procuration order on this fruit against a settler's commitments, and at present this also bears interest at the rate of 3½ per cent. To give you facts and figures, I am prepared to submit my own case, which is as follows:—

I was placed on the "assistance period" from July 1, 1954. The estimated net proceeds from my 1953-54 crop was £154, which is arrived at as follows:—

Estimated value of crop, £1,281; less harvesting expenses, water rates, 1953-54, and estimated expenditure July 1, 1954, to June 30, 1955, £1,127; net proceeds from crop, £154.

As the net proceeds from the crop are less than the living allowance grant, a special advance of £262 (subject to adjustment when actual crop value is known) will be made, which will bring the net proceeds to £416. This amount has been allocated as follows:—Current account as at July 1, 1954, £298; held against future commitments, £118.

My allowable expenses were as follows:—Harvesting expenses, £246; living allowance £576, less Commonwealth grant, £416, £160 (in monthly instalments); district council rates, £4; cultivation allowance estimated, £97 (monthly instalments); general wages £132; manures, £210; sundry expenses, £42; spraying materials, £29; Lands Department water rates, £207; total, £1,127; Lands Department current account £36; total, £1,163.

From the above figures it is apparent that I have been placed in a false position from the start as portion of the Commonwealth Grant has been used to place me on the "assistance period" instead of the block producing sufficient return to make it a business proposition. To further worsen my position, I recently received my water rates as at September 28, 1955, which amounted to £372 2s. 6d. for my 21 acres which is an increase of £165 2s. 6d. above the scheduled water rates of last year.

These men are prepared to bear with the department provided that they can feel they have a chance of getting out, but some are physically and financially broken at the moment, and frustrated because they cannot see any help forthcoming. I urge the Minister to give some information that will encourage them to carry on.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS (Minister of Lands)—I will not try to answer in detail the various problems that have been passed on to me in no less than 90 foolscap pages of typed information, but there does seem to be great conflict of opinion even between the two members who have already spoken. Any member who has any idea of irrigation must realize the very great problems associated with it. At one time there was difficulty in getting water to the block, but now the difficulty is to get rid of it. Various schemes have been devised, some of which have been successful, others not so successful. Not many weeks ago, with departmental officers, I discussed problems with the drainage committee at Loxton. I suggested that it visit other States to obtain information. This was done and I hope advantage will result. There was a suggestion that our drainage contractors were not competent. I agree that drainage contracts should be advertised in other States so as to attract contractors to Loxton.

Mr. O'Halloran—And having got them, their work should be properly supervised.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yes. Good work has been done, but there must be exceptions. In one case it was found through the slushing of a drain that there was a fault that could have been overcome by the settler. I do not intend to discuss this matter fully tonight. Mr. Stott has asked me to have a reply ready

by Tuesday morning to the matters that have been put forward and by that time I hope to have answers that are satisfactory to the committee and the settlers. If any of the growers are financially embarrassed and want assistance I will see that they get it, provided that have played the game. I would be surprised to know that any of the growers needs assistance. Most of the proceeds of their crops are in the hands of the Loxton Distillery, which so far has not paid a big return to them, and that is causing their financial embarrassment. We advance money to settlers because none can be obtained from the distillery, and on the money so advanced we charge 3½ per cent interest. We ask for procurement orders in order that we may be recouped for the advances made. If it can be shown that through no fault of their own the growers are suffering a loss I will recommend that the loss be charged to the development account and not be carried on from year to year. Practically all the matters raised by honourable members will be considered when the valuations are made. I will do all I can in this matter, if it is proved that a settler has made a loss through no fault of his own. During the sustenance period, that is while the trees are growing, a settler is paid £8 a week, but in many instances settlers have made from £500 to £1,000 extra through growing other crops. Last year some of the growers lost a good deal and this year they experienced frosts. They cannot be blamed for these things, and the losses should be charged to the development account. We cannot be fairer to the settlers. I agree with Mr. Hutchens that they are good settlers. I have said that before regarding soldier settlers generally, and as far as I can I shall assist them. I shall be pleased to discuss the various matters with the committee on Tuesday morning.

Line passed.

Government Motor Garage, £31,350.

Mr. JENNINGS—I understand the Government Garage is responsible for inspecting vehicles licensed by the Transport Control Board to carry passengers. I have heard that a licence is granted for 12 months, but in that time the vehicle may travel thousands of miles and carry thousands of passengers. Will the Minister enquire into this and see whether a licence should not be issued covering a certain number of miles?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I will inquire into the matter.

Line passed.

Advances to Settlers, Vermin-proof Fencing and Loans for Fencing and Water Piping, £1,033; Miscellaneous, £106,316—passed.

MINISTER OF WORKS.

Public Works Department, £7,602—passed.

Engineering and Water Supply Department, £2,026,000.

Mr. STOTT—Has the Minister of Works any information concerning the progress of the water schemes at Swan Reach and Karoonda?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH (Minister of Works)—I think no other works have taken priority over those schemes. Karoonda is almost completed, and Swan Reach is also nearing completion. The work will be proceeded with expeditiously.

Line passed.

Architect-in-Chief, £250,000; Government offices, £123,500; Cemetery, £17,700; Public Stores Department, £117,961—passed.

Aborigines Department, £177,301.

Mr. DUNSTAN—It appears to be generally agreed by the Aborigines Protection Board and the Minister that the aim of the department should be the assimilation of the aboriginal population into the community, but I feel that the administration of the department is not adapted to that end. Many of the detribalized aborigines who are not exempt from the provisions of the Act are in various aborigine stations, such as at Point Pearce. We do not have there or at any of the other stations a model aborigine community, but a sort of workhouse. It employs non-exempt aborigines when they have grown up and married, and on this station they do not receive a wage comparable with that of anyone living outside, but a part wage and certain rations. They live in pretty crowded circumstances on the station, certainly not under circumstances we would consider satisfactory in the ordinary community. The staff does a great deal toward improving these, but they still remain unsatisfactory. At Point Pearce they have an excellent staff of teachers, devoted to their work. When an aborigine grows up within that community he goes to a very good school, but when he leaves he is without vocational training, although he has had a good primary education. However, there is nothing for him on the station. He is not employed there until he is grown up and married, but remains idle on the station. Conditions are not sufficiently attractive to hold him there. I understand it is the board's policy not to make conditions on

the station attractive enough to hold him there, but rather, as far as possible, to force him off the station like a mother bird kicking the fledgling out of the nest. When the non-exempt aborigine leaves the station and goes to the city there is nothing much for him except the West End. He has not much chance to live in the community and adapt himself to the circumstances he will meet there. He is not allowed to live on the same basis as the average person outside the Point Pearce community. He has no chance to gain sufficient contact with the remainder of the community and be easily assimilated into it. As a non-exempt aborigine he may not associate with exempt aborigines. If an exempt aborigine goes back to the station he is not allowed to stay there and cannot associate with his own people, even his relatives. Some do go back, but they have to do it secretly. I understand that the board does not want exempt aborigines to live on the station, but that policy is bad. If an exempt aborigine comes to the city with whom can he associate? He cannot associate with others here.

Mr. Riches—What is to stop him?

Mr. DUNSTAN—A provision under the Police Offences Act that no person who is not an aborigine may consort with an aborigine, and the legal definition of "consort" is "associate with for the purpose of companionship." Some people associating with aborigines have been warned off. An aboriginal family in a country town occupied a Housing Trust home. A daughter of the family had been going out with a young man who did not come from an aboriginal family. There was nothing improper in the relationship, but the police told him that if he did not cease going out with the girl he would be up for consorting. How are we going to get our aborigines assimilated in the community under that policy? I appreciate that the board is doing what it thinks best, but I cannot see how it will achieve its objective if aborigines cannot associate with anyone in the community into which they are supposed to be assimilated.

Mr. Pearson—In most cases of consorting it would be with undesirables.

Mr. DUNSTAN—There have been several instances of boys being warned off for consorting with aborigines, but there was nothing undesirable about those cases. Members may have been interested in an Australian Broadcasting Commission broadcast of interviews with people concerned in these cases, and there was no suggestion of anything undesirable in

those companionships. These aborigines are Australian citizens with the obligations to vote and pay taxes. They should be assimilated into the community and enjoy the same rights as anyone else. If we expect boys and girls from Point Pearce to take their place in the community we should have some kind of vocational training for them. I know it will be alleged that some years ago some boys were asked what they wanted to become, and some said rabbit trappers and others shearers; but what chance have they to gain a knowledge and a liking for other occupations? They attend primary school at Point Pearce, but are then left idle on the station until they marry. Then they are given occupations on the station or they may be forced into a community for which they have not been trained. Surely we should not have the kind of work-house community that now exists at Point Pearce. They are deliberately kept at their present standard of development at Point Pearce in order to try to edge them out. We should have model aborigine communities with some self-government and with adequate facilities. Appropriate industries could be developed. Social welfare and vocational guidance officers should be appointed and technical training given to the boys and girls.

Mr. Pearson—They would then remain there and not be assimilated in the general population.

Mr. DUNSTAN—I do not think they would remain there. They would reach the stage where they would be far more ready to go out into the community.

Mr. Pearson—Many people with experience of aborigines would not agree with you.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Of course, there is much difference of opinion on this topic, but the suggestion I am putting forward has never been tried. I know that some members of the board and others working on missions do not agree with what I am saying. There are, however, trained anthropologists and welfare workers among the aborigines who agree with the point of view I am advancing: that a satisfactory assimilation is far more likely if the aborigines have a model community from which they can step with pride.

Mr. O'Halloran—In other words, when they leave that community they become citizens of Australia.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Yes, and while there, they are citizens of Australia, can come and go as citizens, and can point to that community as one that can show the rest of the people a

thing or two. I am convinced that that can be accomplished, but the opportunity has never been taken to give the aborigines the sort of assistance I have outlined. That is where the board is breaking down, and the resentment harboured by a large section of our aboriginal population stems from this policy of the board. I believe the Commonwealth Government has developed, in the Northern Territory, a system much more along the lines I have outlined. The aborigine there is to be exempt from protection unless he is declared subject to protection for cause. That is a policy that this Government might well investigate. Certain missions, the Ernabella mission for one, have gone a long way along the lines I have outlined. I think that is the only way we can get anywhere for, while we maintain aborigines as second class citizens (as the present policy does), we shall not assimilate them into our community, and they are entitled to that as of right.

Mr. RICHES—Members are indebted to the member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) for drawing attention to the great need in South Australia of a means whereby the aborigine can enjoy an education beyond grade 7. Workers amongst aborigines say that, given equal opportunity, the young aborigine can take his place with the white person, but very rarely is he given that opportunity. Generally speaking, outside such centres as Point Pearce the aboriginal child does not start his education until he reaches the age at which the white child expects to leave school, and then he is educated only on a part-time basis.

Making allowance for the difficulties of educating the aborigine, and his natural handicaps, we cannot but be amazed at the results obtained, but having passed through grade 7 there is nothing further for him in South Australia. That was the complaint of the missionaries associated with the Ooldea natives: they could not find employment or vocations for the young aborigines who had been trained. I understand that problem faces the Koonibba mission. The fault is not all with the Government; it lies with the white people who are not willing to make room for the aborigine in their society. I agree with everything that Mr. Dunstan said, except that I am not convinced that the best place to give aborigines their technical training is on a mission station, which is set up as a refuge for people not fully equipped to take their place in society. I cannot see, however, why provision could not be made for them to be trained under appren-

ticeship conditions as our own white children are trained. Given that opportunity they would hold their own in our workshops and factories. For those reasons provision should be made for them to continue in secondary education. Housing near Adelaide is needed so that aborigines could attend city schools together with white children, because I am not convinced that segregation is a good thing.

Mr. O'Halloran—In other words, you do not believe that we should adopt the policy of the deep South in America?

Mr. RICHES—No; I believe that the aborigine can be assimilated and that the first essential is the education of white people.

Mr. Dunstan—But police officers do not help by warning off all white people.

Mr. RICHES—I was amazed to hear that, because I believed that the law regarding consorting operated rather in the reverse direction. Unfortunately, there are some white people who will exploit the aborigine at every turn. In my district I have never found anybody warned off for helping aborigines, and I would resent action along the lines that Mr. Dunstan instanced. On the other hand there are people who take advantage of aborigines. The power the police have is necessary, but I would not like to see it misused as the member for Norwood stated it has been. I have seen young aborigines mixing freely with white people and the white people have been proud to have their company.

Twelve months ago when the South Australian Symphony Orchestra visited Port Augusta there was a poor response to its concerts and to ensure that it would have a better reception this year greater publicity was given to its forthcoming visit. The first 16 reservations made last week were by children from the Umeewarra Mission from their pocket money, notwithstanding that they will have an opportunity of hearing the orchestra free of charge in the afternoon. They are invited to every picnic held at Port Augusta and their conduct is exemplary. When they reach school-leaving age we should be prepared to make congenial employment available for them. Those who work with aborigines try to encourage them to be proud of their background and not to regard themselves as inferior, but as soon as they leave that atmosphere they encounter people who do not feel so sympathetic to them. Some special provision should be made to train these young people for employment. The member for Norwood mentioned Ernabella and the wonderful work that is being done

there and at Hermansburg, but both those missions have the same problem. They do not know what will happen to the young people when they leave the stations. Ernabella deals with tribal aborigines. We were pleased to have a number of them outside this House when Her Majesty visited South Australia. They were of fine physique and held their heads high. They were proud of their colour and their position and had every reason to be.

Mr. Pearson—It is generally recognized that the further away they come from white influences, the better types they are.

Mr. RICHES—That is so. They are the type we should encourage to be assimilated, but the white population is not prepared to assist them.

Mr. Heaslip—Would you be prepared to let your sons and daughters intermarry with them?

Mr. RICHES—No, I would not like that, and neither would the aborigines. I do not think that is necessary. I do not object to mixed marriages, but that is not the issue at all.

Mr. Heaslip—Is not that assimilation?

Mr. Dunstan—Assimilation does not mean breeding the aborigines white.

Mr. RICHES—That is the old idea that the white person is a superior class and that the aborigine cannot take his place with him unless his skin changes colour.

Mr. Travers—Why do you prescribe for other white men something you are not prepared to do yourself?

Mr. RICHES—I do not. I have always taken a keen interest in aborigines and am quite prepared to give them a place in the community.

Mr. Travers—To give them a place with every other white person but yourself.

Mr. RICHES—I would give them a place beside me. I have been to a mission near Port Augusta on several occasions and on one occasion the old man who was head of the people—Jimmy Captain—placed his hand on my daughter's head and said, "She is a lovely baby." He put his hand on the head of a full-blooded aboriginal girl and said, "She is a lovely child, too." He then put his hand on the head of a part aborigine and said, "Make me sick down here," and rubbed his stomach. The answer to the problem is that the aborigine should be as proud of his colour as we are of ours. I do not frown on mixed marriages, but I do not

accept that as an essential to giving the aborigines an opportunity to live as decent members of the community.

Mr. Heaslip—If you do what you advocate, you cannot stop it.

Mr. RICHES—Why not?

Mr. Heaslip—It is human nature.

Mr. RICHES—Why throw that up at me? Why ask whether I would be prepared to have my daughter marry an aborigine? What is important is that these people should not be denied the privileges of Australian citizenship because of their colour. We have exploited them. The problem is with the white people and it can only be solved if we give them a full opportunity to enjoy our way of life. Those who work among them want the aborigines to be given the chances to which they are entitled. We should endeavour to provide some avenue of useful employment for them, not as an inferior, but as an equal with the young people who come from white homes.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I congratulate the members for Norwood and Stuart on their contributions to this debate. I would not have risen but for some of the interjections from Government members. I remind members that the aborigine, as we call him is the only native Australian in this country. The white people came here, but did not treat him very well after taking his hunting and tribal grounds. The honourable members for Norwood and Stuart suggested that we should do something more than we are doing. I do not criticize what we are doing, but suggest we should do a great deal more than we have done. We house aborigines in certain mission stations and after they reach a certain age we turn them out to fend for themselves in a world dominated by people of the European race. My feeling on this matter is fundamental. I believe that the aborigine, like those of European race, is one of God's creatures, that he has his place in the scheme of things and a soul to be saved just as we hope our souls will be saved, though perhaps it might be a difficult job for some of us. I have seen, particularly in the U.S.A., how the question of the coloured race is handled. I know the problem has not been solved and that there are difficulties in the deep South about complete integration, citizenship and electoral powers, but I know that in the greater part of America the coloured people, who after all, are not natives of the country, but the descendants of slaves who were imported in the bad old days to

be exploited by the English capitalists. Since the Civil War that gave them freedom they have multiplied until there are now 38,000,000 in a total population of about 150,000,000. They now occupy seats of learning as university professors, doctors and dentists, and they run a hospital in Washington staffed by members of their own race. I know that difficulties have arisen about mixed marriages just as difficulties will arise here, but I am not prepared to put the blame on the aborigine, but rather on the white responsible for the marriage. I have heard it said that the sooner the last aborigine dies the better it will be for Australia, but I remind people who think on those lines that the aborigine is doing a useful job on a number of stations scattered throughout Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory, and that they are excellent stockmen, drovers and citizens. In this State they are segregated in mission stations. I do not advocate the abolition of those stations, but I think it would be a good idea to consider whether we should abolish them altogether and make proper provision for the absorption of the remaining aborigines in this State in our population.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I appreciate the remarks made about aborigines because I am sure they were entirely objective. However, I point out that this year there is an increased vote of £20,533. During the last few years a station has been acquired and placed under the control of the Lutheran church mission. In the southern district Campbell House has been acquired to educate the young people and give them an environment that might lead to better things. We have endeavoured to make young aborigines apprentices where they can be accepted in the engineering trade, and to do everything possible to assimilate them. Generally speaking, the work done by the board has been acceptable, and I am sure the comments made today will be accepted by the board in the spirit in which they were made, namely, that we can do not too much but too little.

Mr. DUNSTAN—I have always found it extraordinary in this community that anybody should say that they are opposed to their children associating with people whose skins happen to have a different pigmentation because of the fear that there might be a marriage between them. I grew up in a community with a majority of dark people; I had them as my associates, and I was proud of that. Some of my closest and dearest friends are people with a different pigmentation of skin from

mine, but that makes no difference to the type of individuals they are. That should be the attitude of any individual in the community, and when I hear people saying that somebody should not associate with aborigines it makes me thoroughly ashamed of my race.

Mr. Heaslip—Did anyone from this side suggest that?

Mr. DUNSTAN—It was the obvious inference from your remarks. As to whether I would like any of my children to marry a person of a different colour, my only worry would be that some people in the community might adopt the attitude that evidently is being adopted by members opposite. The young people would have to face the social difficulties created by such an attitude, which could be an obstacle to a chance of a happy marriage. That would be the only question I would worry about because I can see no difference between individuals, whether they have a dark or white skin, or straight or slanty eyes. They are human beings, and that is all that concerns me. It has been reported to me that female aborigines at Point Pearce cannot be accommodated at the nearby Maitland hospital and have to go some distance to get accommodation. I have heard that because of that some expectant mothers have had their babies whilst on the way, and then, because the hospital is at such a distance, it is difficult for their friends to visit them. Could they be given hospital treatment at a nearer point? I have been told a non-exempt aborigine was given a Housing Trust house in a country area, but when he approached the Protector to get an exemption he was informed that if he got one he could not continue to live in the house. I would like to know whether the houses allotted by the trust to the board are available only for aborigines subject to exemption. If that is the position, it is a wrong policy.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Even in the best-regulated families babies are sometimes born before the mothers reach hospital. As far as I know, there is no prohibition of aborigines at any hospital. Recently we made houses available only for aborigines, who have a priority over white people. If the honourable member gives me details of a case I shall investigate it. The aim of the board is to increase the number of houses available in the community for well-conducted aborigines.

Mr. Dunstan—Exemption does not make any difference?

The Hon. McINTOSH—An aborigine getting a house would be an accepted person with full rights of citizenship.

Line passed.

Public Works, £966,220; Miscellaneous, £31,289—passed.

MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

Education Department, £5,943,282.

Mr. TAPPING—Can the Minister explain the line of £250 for part cost of sewerage installation at Taperoo school?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON (Minister of Education)—The item arose out of a deputation introduced by the honourable member to me, and then discussions between the Minister of Works and myself. Finally the matter was referred to Cabinet, which directed the Education Department to meet 5 per cent of the cost of the installation. The £250 represents the 5 per cent.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—I have previously brought under the notice of the Minister the fact that two or three contractors for the carrying of children to school in my district have complained that they are running their services at a loss and urgently require an increase in the contract rates. They have said that unless they get an increase they will leave the work, which will mean that the Government will have to run the services. Has the Minister anything further to report on this matter?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I have given this matter serious consideration over a lengthy period and have received applications from groups of operators and various associations. On one occasion I said, "I can only repeat that I am prepared to consider any individual case," and I have considered many of them. Since then I have agreed to a very large number of recommendations from the Transport Officer (Mr. Harris), whom I regard as a very able, efficient and conscientious officer. His recommendations go through to the Director or Deputy Director, but in the final analysis the decision is mine. I am only too pleased on every occasion to see that justice is done. I have complete confidence in the Transport Officer and I think that is shared generally by honourable members and the public.

In order that justice may be done and seem to be done I have had several discussions with the Director and he in turn has discussed the matter on my behalf with the Public Service

Commissioner, who has appointed a committee consisting of Messrs. G. G. Poole (Engineer for Construction, Engineering and Water Supply Department), F. D. Jackman (Chief Engineer, Highways and Local Government Department), and H. E. Kay (Investigating Officer, Department of Industry), to report on various aspects of school bus services. Messrs. Poole and Jackman have both had considerable experience of mechanical workshops and the fixation of hire rates for departmental and private contractors' units, and Mr. Kay has had previous experience in the costing of motor vehicles and mechanical units. The terms of reference in relation to private contractors include—(1) Is the present method of calling tenders and letting contracts the best means of providing services? (2) Are the present rates paid to contractors reasonable? (3) Should disputes, complaints, fluctuations of rates, etc., be referred to an independent body? (4) Are adequate precautions being taken to ensure the safe conveyance of children? In relation to departmental buses the questions are—(1) Whether the running costs are reasonable? (2) Is the remuneration paid to teacher-drivers adequate? (3) Is adequate maintenance being carried out on the buses? (4) Are adequate precautions being taken to ensure the safe conveyance of children? The setting up of this small expert committee is in no way a reflection on a very able and efficient departmental officer, but I think it will be in the best interests of the Education Department and of country children. If there are any feelings of lack of confidence the investigations of this independent committee will reassure honourable members and the public, and particularly the parents of the large numbers of children who are being conveyed upon these buses.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—I am delighted at the appointment of the committee. After hearing the terms of reference, I realize that the subjects mentioned by the Minister are the very things some of us have been concerned about for some time. Will this committee be calling evidence and, if so, will bus contractors be able to give evidence?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—At present it is not proposed that the committee will be calling evidence. It is an unofficial committee to advise me, but it will take evidence if it sees fit. There would be no objection to contractors either giving evidence or supplying information to the committee.

Mr. PEARSON—Two items in the Estimates appear to be somewhat redundant or overlapping. Under the Architect-in-Chief's Department appears an item for repairs, renovations, painting and alterations to school buildings, whereas under the Education Department contingencies is an item for repairs and improvements to school buildings. It would appear that the two departments are involved in repairs and improvements to school buildings. Whether the items listed under the Minister of Education are reimbursements to the Architect-in-Chief's Department, I do not know, but I presume not. It is a big problem to get repairs and renovations to school buildings, particularly for the smaller type of schools in the remoter areas. School committees have been anxious to co-operate to get these small jobs done, and I know the Minister would like to assist in achieving this.

The Architect-in-Chief's Department is concerned with many and varied projects, some of which are extremely large, and I do not think it is sound policy for it to be bothered with many little jobs which could very well be done through other agencies more promptly and possibly more effectively. There seems to be some reluctance on the part of this department to relinquish control of these small items of expenditure. They occupy much time of officers of that department, when possibly they could be better occupied on the larger and more important works. I suggest that as a matter of policy the Government might well consider granting wider powers to the Minister of Education in relation to repairs and renovations of school buildings, particularly the smaller type of schools where the amount involved is not large and where school committees are prepared to get local quotations from competent tradesmen, who could do the work promptly and possibly finish it before the Architect-in-Chief had even got to the point of calling tenders, which after all have to come from the same tradesmen and the same agencies as the local committees are able to contact. I do not suggest that the Architect-in-Chief has not done his best to cope with a large volume of small jobs. However, I see no reason why he should have to do this work, but good reason why the Minister should have the authority to get these jobs done. I know that control of expenditure is an important factor, but our schools could be kept in better repair and relations with tradesmen maintained on a better basis if

what I have suggested were the policy of the Government.

Mr. RICHES—I congratulate the Minister on the statement he made in last Sunday's *Mail* concerning the expansion of the Correspondence School's activities in the outback, particularly in districts covered by the Ceduna Flying Doctor Base. Earlier this year I visited Mulgathing Station and other centres and heard parents' views on a scheme submitted by the Reverend Tom Jones after he had consulted Miss Vickers of the Correspondence School. The proposal is to give Correspondence School lessons over the Flying Doctor network. Much work has been put into the formulation of the scheme, which has been accepted by the department, and I understand that it will come into operation early next year. An ordinary transeiver costs about £180, and few people could afford that much. However, technicians devised a set costing about £40, and the originators of the scheme formulated a proposal under which sets could be purchased and then hired out. Children will be able to listen to a qualified teacher, and they will be able to converse with the teacher and with each other. In addition, an attempt will be made to fly a Correspondence School teacher to the outposts of the Flying Doctor Base every year so that the children may have personal contact with the teacher. The new scheme will also be of great advantage to new Australians living on the East-West railway.

The Postmaster-General's Department has regulations that no transmitter may be installed where there is a telephone, but the department waived that provision so that this scheme could be inaugurated. I am pleased to congratulate all concerned in the formulation of this scheme and I hope that it will eventually cover all Correspondence School children. It is one of the biggest advances that have been made for outback children in recent years.

Mr. Pearson referred to the difficulty that some schools are having in getting repair work or additions carried out. Earlier this year the Director of Education met every school committee or high school council in my district and outlined a scheme that was a distinct advance on anything attempted before. If a school committee thought that repairs or additions were necessary and that was endorsed by the head teacher and the district inspector, and if a contractor could be obtained who would do the work satisfactorily at a reasonable price, the director would then recommend

to the Minister that the school committee be authorized to let the contract at the department's expense. However, since the director's return to Adelaide something has gone wrong. He did not fix any limit on the amount of work that could be undertaken under this scheme, but he made it clear that minor work could be carried out. I understand that the Architect-in-Chief's Department does not view the scheme favourably and has not helped very much; consequently, I know of no work that has been put in hand under the scheme. Can the Minister say whether the proposal still stands?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—What the Director of Education outlined was merely a proposal. Although it has been put into operation in limited cases, it does not operate generally as it has not received Cabinet approval. I hope that later some modified scheme may be implemented whereby minor works may be carried out with greater expedition than in the past.

Line passed.

Libraries Department, £105,302.

Mr. DUNSTAN—The speech with which His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor opened Parliament this year contained the statement that a Bill was being prepared to enable subsidies to be paid to district councils willing to establish and maintain libraries. Can the Minister say whether such a Bill will be introduced this session?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Because of the subsidies involved I would not be the appropriate Minister to introduce the Bill referred to, but I still hope that such a Bill will be passed this session.

Line passed.

Museum Department, £37,045; Art Gallery Department, £16,015—passed.

Miscellaneous, £993,535.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Can the Minister say whether the £10,000 provided for the Townsend House school for deaf and blind children is to be used to establish a kindergarten for blind children?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—No; the grant arose from a report of the committee that inquired into the education, training and assistance of deaf and hard-of-hearing children in 1953. That committee reported, in effect, that the Government should take over the school part of Townsend House in relation to the teaching and training of the deaf and hard

of hearing. I submitted two alternative recommendations to Cabinet—either that the Government should act on the committee's report or that it should agree to pay the salaries of the staff in this school and in return have the right to appoint representatives on the committee of management. I suggested that the Government representatives might include an accountant and two senior officers of the Education Department. Cabinet agreed to the second recommendation. The estimate of salaries was £10,000 and it was decided to make a grant of that sum to carry that recommendation into effect. Townsend House is concerned with the training and education of the blind as well as the deaf and hard of hearing, but the grant relates to the education of the deaf and hard of hearing.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I appreciate the explanation, but it does not touch on the question of establishing a kindergarten for the pre-school education of blind children. While I do not expect an impromptu reply I suggest this matter should receive the serious consideration of the Government.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The question of a proposed kindergarten for the blind has already been discussed by the Leader of the Opposition and the Treasurer. It does not come within my purview. The subject matter really came within the jurisdiction of the Chief Secretary.

Mr. O'Halloran—I thought you were Minister of Education.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The particular subject matter raised by the Leader some time ago did not come within my jurisdiction because it was a question of a charitable licence and that came within the purview of the Chief Secretary. I am intensely interested in the education of the blind and that does come within my purview. I have had several discussions and much correspondence with the particular association to which the Leader referred. I believe I still have the honour of being patron of that league and I regard it as a great honour to be associated with such estimable gentlemen as Mr. Arthur O. Richardson and Mr. P. W. Culley who is the State president of the Fathers Association. I sincerely hope that in the future something will be done for the education of blind children on the same basis as we are seeking for the deaf and hard of hearing. A few days ago I received a communication from the National Council of Women on this matter. Portion of the letter stated:—

We heard with pleasure of your having set up an advisory committee for the hard of hearing and following a request from one of our affiliated societies the matter of the education of the blind was discussed recently at some length by our executive for it was felt that the matter of the useful employment of blind people along modern lines—such as on telephone switchboards, etc.,—was something which merited study. There are many people in the community who are interested in the welfare of the blind, but as it would seem that there are differences of opinion even among themselves as to the whole matter of the education and training of the blind it was decided at a meeting of the full council to ask you, as Minister of Education, to set up a committee to inquire into the existing methods of educating the blind with a view to finding whether these, as at present constituted, are sufficiently comprehensive to meet the needs of blind children and adults in this modern society.

It may well be that I may be in a position later to submit to Cabinet that I be given the opportunity of following the precedent of my predecessor, the late Mr. Rudall, in setting up some committee to advise on what could be some further, better and more modern system of educating the young blind.

Mr. WHITE—An amount of £100,000 is provided for the Kindergarten Union of South Australia. This represents an increase of £12,390 on last year's grant. At Murray Bridge there is a pre-school centre, but I was informed by the organizing secretary that it only receives a partial subsidy from the Kindergarten Union. I believe that some pre-school centres in Adelaide receive a full subsidy. Can the Minister indicate why it is that some centres are fully subsidized while others receive only a partial subsidy?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The education of pre-school children—those between the ages of three and five years—is not the responsibility of the Education Department or the Government. It has never been accepted as a State responsibility. The Government is very interested in this desirable form of education of the young and has been fortunate in having the Kindergarten Union of South Australia—a most efficient and responsible organization. That union was founded in 1905 and the Government of the day showed its confidence in that body by making a token grant of £50. Token grants were made for many years until the ramifications of the union grew to such an extent that in 1945 a substantial grant of £3,000 was made. The amount of the grant has been increased rapidly during the last 10 years and last year it was £87,610. This year it has increased to an all-time record of £100,000. The full control

of kindergarten centres lies with the Kindergarten Union, which has 30 branches and 60 affiliated centres under its supervision, and we do not interfere with its allocation of the subsidy. The union submits reports, balance-sheets and statements of revenue and expenditure to us, which are examined by me and the Treasurer, but the allocation of subsidies is a matter for the discretion of the union.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—This year £1,750 is provided for the Workers' Educational Association. For some time we have been promised that a report will be furnished on adult education. On October 4 the Minister of Education said that he had referred this matter to Cabinet, and that the Treasurer would make an announcement in due course. This association wishes to expand; it wants book shop facilities and also an assistant secretary. It has done a great job, but with more assistance could do even better. Can the Minister inform me whether the report has produced any results, or whether any further information is available?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—This grant has been increased to provide for the appointment of an assistant secretary and for the payment of additional tutors' fees. It has been increased by £900, the amount asked for by the association. I considered the matter in conjunction with the Director of Education and approved of it for submission to the Treasurer, who in turn approved of it. There is a provision of £8,000 for tutorial classes, an increase of £2,000 over last year's amount. That may not be sufficient, but there are so many definitions of what constitutes adult education, and I think there has been so much undue criticism of what is considered to be a relatively low amount provided for it in this State, that I point out that provision has been made for technical schools, the Libraries Department, Art Gallery, Museum, Institutes Association and various other learned, cultural and professional associations; and that, unlike other States, South Australia does not bring all its activities under one control and vote the requested funds under the one heading of adult education. Under various headings, particularly the Education Department, we are spending an increasingly large sum each year on adult education. I do not think I can take the matter further, because no further sums other than those to which I have referred have been allocated.

Mr. RICHES—This year £100,000 is provided for the Kindergarten Union. Will the

Minister ask the union to reconsider the practice of discontinuing grants to country kindergartens that are unable to obtain the services of fully qualified teachers? At Port Augusta, Woomera and Whyalla kindergartens have been set up and have operated for a time under fully qualified teachers, but for family or other reasons the teachers have had to resign and no other qualified teachers have been available, so the union has cut off the allowance entirely, although the kindergartens have carried on with people who have done a good job, although not fully certificated. That is unjust. I acknowledge the value of having fully qualified teachers, and I think the union is right in insisting that they should be employed when available. For that reason I think it is justified in reducing the grant, but withdrawing it altogether is imposing an unnecessary burden. The number of children being taught in free kindergartens outside the union is increasing. The Minister knows it is impossible to obtain the services of enough qualified teachers for his own department, so I am sure he will appreciate the difficulty of replacing kindergarten teachers. Will he have this matter investigated, and make representations to the union to see if it can give some alleviation to enable these kindergartens to carry on until they obtain the services of qualified teachers?

Mr. DUNSTAN—In reply to a question asked by me on October 4 about a report that the Minister submitted to Cabinet in relation to the Workers' Education Association, the Minister said:—

I propose to refer this matter to Cabinet. It was referred to the Treasurer and I have no doubt that he will make an announcement later.

Is further information to come from the Government about general policy on adult education, or must we be content with the increase mentioned in these Estimates?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I cannot give information about a definite policy on the matter because it is still being considered by the Government. The Minister of Education has said that in this State it has not been the practice to provide the education through the one source. In South Australia adult education is given in various ways. Whether there should be one central authority is a matter to be considered carefully. Some of our institutions do a remarkably good job, and have good public support and administration. I hope to have a decision to pass on to the honourable member soon.

Line passed.

MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT.

Department of Industry, £79,805; Factories and Steam Boilers Department, £49,586; Miscellaneous, £4,700—passed.

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF FORESTS.

Minister of Agriculture Department, £8,688—passed.

Agriculture Department, £550,079.

Mr. HAWKER—Can the Minister say whether the Department of Agriculture is fully staffed in connection with research and field officers? I refer particularly to officers associated with research into animal health, soil conservation and animal husbandry. In the last two years the Estimates have not given the number of field officers employed. For the year ended June 30, 1954, in connection with soil conservation the Estimates said four officers were employed, previously five.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN (Minister of Agriculture)—I believe we are up to strength in connection with agricultural advisers, but our total strength for field and departmental work is down by about 26. I cannot say how many vacancies there are in the field staff. We could employ more soil conservation officers. Our present work is cramped because of the lack of expert personnel. We could create more soil conservation boards if additional personnel were available.

Mr. Hawker—Is there any particular reason for the shortage?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—If the honourable member thinks it is important, I will get information for him.

Mr. BROOKMAN—Good work has been done by the re-organization of the extension services of the department in the last few months. It will make a considerable difference in the distribution of new and authoritative information to producers. What is the policy regarding research stations putting out publications? Some have not distributed any publications. I do not think the Kangaroo Island station has published any works. It has held field days, and another is to be held shortly when a large number of people will attend. Good work has been done by these stations, but it would be interesting to know when works are to be published. The Kangaroo Island station should not be regarded as of value only to the Island because it must be of value to other parts of the State. Is it intended that

works should be published regularly, or are they distributed only when time can be found to prepare them?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The general policy is that when finality is reached with some special project on a research station the result is published in the *Agricultural Journal*. I remember the time when work at Kybybolite on the best mating time for ewes reached fruition and it was published in the journal. I do not think we need have a special publication for these things. Departmental officers also make these things known at bureau meetings and conferences throughout the State.

Mr. BROOKMAN—I have not looked through all the *Agricultural Journals* in the last four years, but I doubt whether the Kangaroo Island Research Station has ever published anything in it. Those who have benefited have done so by attending field days or reading what has happened in various journals. I can remember reading reports on the reactions to the use of trace elements. I do not think anyone claimed that they were final results. The C.S.I.R.O. issues official pamphlets when researches are completed, and also have rural research publications in which is given all the latest knowledge on a subject. I do not wish to overlook the very valuable achievements of the Parndana Station.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The officer in charge of the Kangaroo Island Research Station has been extremely busy in developing it and has not had sufficient time to devote to writing up records, but recently he has been given clerical assistance so he may be in a better position to do a little more bookwork. I will take into account the comments of the honourable member and see what further can be done.

Mr. QUIRKE—Can the Minister tell me what is being achieved by the isolation of Ligurian bees at Kangaroo Island? Are the returns from the sanctuary commensurate with the outlay, and what are the conditions of supplying queen bees to the mainland?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The purpose of the bee farm is to maintain a pure strain, and that can be done only by isolation. The project was established as the result of money provided by Parliament, but whether the policy should be reviewed in the light of achievements and profits is a matter we will have to consider. If the honourable member looks at the Revenue Estimates he will see what are the receipts from the farm.

Line passed.

[Midnight.]

Agricultural College Department, £98,995—passed.

Produce Department, £225,066.

Mr. PEARSON—I understand that the Port Lincoln freezing works has a works manager who is not the general manager. Is it the intention to again have a general manager, who would supervise the works, and also an officer in charge of the office?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—It is not proposed to depart from the present arrangement, which is working satisfactorily. We have a works manager, and also a chief clerk in charge of the office.

Line passed.

Fisheries and Game Department, £32,850.

Mr. TAPPING—The sum of £8,000 is proposed for the purchase of boats. How will this sum be used? Another item is “Research—deep-sea fishing, £9,500.” There is no doubt that there are many opportunities to assist deep-sea fishing, and I commend the Minister for including this item. How will the money be spent?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The £8,000 is to cover the cost of purchasing the *Weerutta*, a boat that was owned by a Mr. Sheridan. That vessel will be used in prospecting fishing grounds to find what types of fish are available and for experimental work on the best methods of catching fish. We have also acquired a Lampara net that can be used for catching anchovies and other small fish that will be useful as live bait for catching tuna. Some years ago the Fisheries Department had a number of boats for policing fishing grounds, but they were acquired by the Commonwealth during the war and the department now has no boats. We propose to bring out next year two American experts on tuna fishing, and have guaranteed their expenses. They will use Haldane’s vessel *Tacoma*, but if we get sufficient tuna most of the expenses will be liquidated. I think 130 tons of tuna would be required to liquidate the expenses, but if the experiment is a failure the State will have to stand the costs of about £11,500.

Line passed.

Chemistry Department, £42,919—passed.

Miscellaneous, £114,563.

Mr. WHITE—The sum of £4,000 is proposed as a grant to the Fauna and Flora Board, which is doing a fine job, but the reserves should be properly fenced so that vermin do

not get into neighbouring properties. One man who lives next to a reserve complained to me that rabbits from the reserve are becoming a menace to him. If the reserves are not fenced people can get into them and cause damage.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The annual grant to the Fauna and Flora Board has been increased from £1,500 to £2,000 to provide for additional labour on Flinders Chase. The balance is necessary for fencing on the Chase. The policy of the department is to fence reserves as funds become available. Last year a sum was provided for this work on Flinders Chase, but it was not fully absorbed, because of a shortage of labour and materials. I have noticed, however, that in some places where a fence has been constructed people have broken it and entered the reserve, therefore a fence is not a good guarantee that people will not enter. It is one of the disabilities of these reserves that, with little manpower available, they harbour vermin, but that is not always the fault of the Government because they frequently become a harbour for vermin not destroyed by holders of adjacent land.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—About a week ago members of the Fauna and Flora Committee visited Younghusband Peninsula to investigate the possibility of growing grasses to prevent erosion. Is it intended to fence this area in order to keep out the vermin?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—This line deals with the Fauna and Flora Board, which controls Flinders Chase. The Fauna and Flora Committee advises the Minister on fauna and flora reserves other than Flinders Chase.

Mr. CORCORAN—The sum of £8,308 was spent last year on extinguishing peat fires, and £100 is provided for that purpose this year. Can the Minister say whether these amounts relate to the fires in the Rendelsham district?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The sum last year was spent principally by the Engineer-in-Chief’s Department following on the disastrous fires in the Rendelsham district. The sum of £100 is merely a nominal figure to deal with any recurring expenditure.

Mr. DUNSTAN—One of my constituents who interests himself in a number of country projects has frequently suggested to me that dams could be constructed on creeks in the Mount Lofty Ranges to store water with which to fight bush fires, but apparently one of the obstacles to such a scheme is that landowners downstream

may object to the damming of water upstream. He suggested that the Minister might introduce legislation to enable dams to be built on streams in areas previously adversely affected by bush fires so that water could be more easily supplied.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—That is a matter under the Bush Fires Act rather than under these Estimates. The advisory committee on bush fires recently considered amendments to that Act, and I hope this session to introduce a Bill on bush fires generally.

Mr. QUIRKE—In the Ironstone Ranges near Clare are some of the last remnants of an ancient type of flora known as the red cord string bark, and it has been suggested by knowledgeable people that it would be in the interests of the State to preserve something that otherwise would go out of existence forever, although I believe there is one small patch of it in Victoria. Can the Minister say whether this flora could be preserved?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I do not know anything of the flora referred to, but I will discuss the matter with officers of my department or the Fisheries and Game Department.

Line passed.

MINISTER OF IRRIGATION.

Department of Lands, £430,000.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Periodically over the years we have faced the dangers caused by River Murray floods. These Estimates provide a certain amount for drainage of areas along the river. I suggest that rather than wait for floods to cause serious damage, as has happened in past years, a policy should be devised to build up embankments to protect main roads and valuable areas from the effects of flood waters.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS (Minister of Irrigation)—For the reclaimed area, provision has been made to enable banks to be built up. I feel that the Leader's suggestion relates to other localities and I will examine the matter and advise him in due course.

Line passed.

MINISTER OF MINES.

Mines Department, £683,000—passed.

MINISTER OF MARINE.

Harbors Board, £1,454,000.

Mr. TAPPING—An amount of £573,582 is provided for maintenance of wharves, etc.

For the last 2½ years I have advocated the restoration of the Largs jetty and a number of my constituents argue that because the area has developed so rapidly in the last four years the work should be undertaken. Housing on LeFevre Peninsula has increased by over 300 per cent, and industry there has also developed considerably. Each year about 1,000 people from Broken Hill attend a camp controlled by the Zinc Corporation and as a result much money is circulated in the Semaphore and Largs areas. Can the Minister indicate if the Largs jetty restoration is included in this amount.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH (Minister of Marine)—Not as an item in itself. The Largs Bay jetty is one of many that has been considered by the Harbors Board and the Government. The present proposal, subject to finance being available, is that the existing jetty to a distance of 450ft. from the shore end be preserved and that the remaining 1,050ft. be demolished and in its stead a new timber structure be constructed for a length of 740ft., of which 660ft. would be 12ft. wide and the final 80ft. at the sea end 24ft. wide to provide for a scenic shelter and accommodation. This would provide a jetty 1,190ft. in length with a depth at low water of 3ft. 6in. compared with a depth of 9ft. with the old jetty. The plan has been discussed with the chief engineer and town clerk of the Corporation of Port Adelaide. The town clerk was authorized by the mayor to agree that the scheme would have the corporation's full support. The cost of the work is estimated at £22,240. The matter is now being considered in relation to the repair of other promenades and non-earning jetties. This jetty would have a high priority among the works to be undertaken on non-producing jetties. It is work we contemplate doing.

Mr. DAVIS—An amount of £2,500 is provided for rents and rates payable to the corporations of Port Adelaide and Port Pirie. Can the Minister indicate what amount is paid to the corporation of Port Pirie and in respect of what property?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I cannot give that information offhand, but will obtain it for the honourable member.

Mr. CORCORAN—Can the Minister say whether included in the amount provided for the maintenance of wharves, etc., is provision for the construction of the Cape Jaffa fishing jetty and for repairing the Kingston jetty?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Speaking from memory—and I think accurately—£5,000 has already been appropriated for the purpose of making a landing at Cape Jaffa for use by fishermen. So far as Kingston is concerned about 1,000ft. of the jetty has been reconstructed, but at the present time it is not proposed to extend that reconstruction. As a matter of fact, it is not really reconstruction work so much as building a new jetty.

Mr. DAVIS—Is there any provision in that line relating to the wharves at Port Pirie?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—A vast amount of money has been spent on Port Pirie.

Line passed

Miscellaneous, £5,500—passed.

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS.

Railways Department, £15,051,268; Transport Control Board, £19,122—passed.

MINISTER OF ROADS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Office of Minister, £5,795; Highways and Local Government Department, £262,189—passed.

Miscellaneous, £326,399.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—An amount of £250,000 is provided as a contribution to the highways fund towards the cost of developmental roads in country areas and maintenance of country roads. What roads will this be expended on? This week I received a letter from the secretary of the Australian Labour Party conveying to me a resolution, carried by the Leigh Creek Sub-Branch, requesting that the Parliamentary Labour Party endeavour to have all roads outside the hundreds sealed in the near future, particularly the road from Leigh Creek to Hawker, which carries a very heavy volume of traffic. I have recently driven over that road, and although I compliment the minister and his engineers on the job they are doing in an endeavour to maintain it in a trafficable condition, I think they are fighting a losing battle because of the increasing traffic and continual rainfall. I suggest the Premier take up with the Federal Government the question of whether some of the defence expenditure could not be used to improve the Port Augusta to Woomera Road, the Hawker to Leigh Creek Road and the Barrier Highway. We know that the Woomera Road is a defence road, that the road to Leigh Creek is the lifeline for supplies that keep the coalfield working and that the Barrier Highway was considered during the last war as an alternative lifeline to bring concentrates from

Broken Hill to Port Pirie. Will the Premier take up this matter vigorously with the Commonwealth Government with a view to improving and perhaps sealing these roads.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This matter was the subject of a question asked in this House this afternoon when, with regard to Woomera, I said that I had already advised that we would be prepared to undertake the work if the Commonwealth would make the necessary financial advance. I have already made an application to the Commonwealth for an annual grant over a number of years to start a bitumen road from Port Augusta to Quorn which is, of course, at the lower end of the road to which the Leader referred. If an industry could be established at Quorn and the road could be bituminized, I believe it would have a big effect in stabilizing the position there, because it would enable better transport for the workers who have to go from Stirling North.

Mr. DAVIS—This year there is a grant of £2,190 to the Corporation of Port Pirie towards raising the height of tidal embankments. Why is there a decrease from last years vote?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I think it is self-explanatory. Last year's amount was unexpended, and the balance will now be available.

Line passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2).

The Estimates having been adopted by the House, an Appropriation Bill for £26,376,784 was founded in Committee of Ways and Means, introduced by the Hon. T. Playford and read a first time.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It is for the appropriation of £45,376,784, details of which are set out in the Estimates which have just been dealt with by the House. Clause 2 provides for the further issue of £26,376,784, being the difference between the total of the three Supply Bills passed (£19,000,000) and the total of the appropriation required in this Bill. Clause 3 sets out the amount to be appropriated and the details of the appropriations to the various departments and functions. This clause also provides that increases of salaries or wages which become payable pursuant to any return made by proper constituted authority can be paid and that the amount available in the Governor's

Appropriation Fund shall be increased by the amount necessary to pay the increases. This provision has been included in legislation for the last five years to ensure that when wage increases are granted the Government can pay them without delay.

Clause 4 authorizes the Treasurer to pay moneys from time to time authorized by warrants issued by the Governor and provides that the receipts obtained from the payees shall be the discharge to the Treasurer for the moneys paid. Clause 5 authorizes the use of loan funds or other public funds if the moneys received from the Commonwealth and the general revenue of the State are insufficient to make the payments authorized by this Bill. Clause 6 gives authority to make payments in

respect of a period prior to July 8, 1955, or at a rate in excess of the rate in force under any return made by the Public Service Board or any regulation of the South Australian Railways Commissioner. The Bill is similar to previous Appropriation Bills and covers the amounts set out in the Estimates.

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

PHYSIOTHERAPISTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 12.52 a.m. on Wednesday, November 2, the House adjourned until 2 p.m. the same day.