

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, May 8, 1956.

The House met at 11 a.m. pursuant to proclamation issued by His Excellency the Governor (Air Vice-Marshal Sir Robert George).

The Clerk (Mr. G. D. Combe) read the proclamation summoning Parliament.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

At 11.2 a.m., in compliance with summons, the House proceeded to the Legislative Council, where a commission was read appointing the Hon. Sir Mellis Napier (Chief Justice) and the Hon. Sir Geoffrey Reed (a Judge of the Supreme Court) to be Commissioners for the opening of Parliament.

SWEARING IN OF MEMBERS.

The House being again in its own Chamber, at 11.10 a.m. His Honour Sir Geoffrey Reed attended and produced a Commission from His Excellency the Governor appointing him to be a Commissioner to administer to the House of Assembly the Oath of Allegiance or the affirmation in lieu thereof required by the Constitution Act. The commission was read by the Clerk, who then produced writs for the election of thirty-nine members for the House of Assembly.

The Oath of Allegiance was administered to and subscribed by all members except Mr. O'Halloran and Mr. Stephens, who were absent.

The Commissioner retired.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I remind the House that it will be necessary next to proceed to the election of a Speaker, and I have much pleasure in nominating Mr. Teusner.

Mr. SHANNON seconded the nomination.

Mr. TEUSNER (Angas)—Pursuant to Standing Orders, and according to the best traditions of Parliament I submit myself to the will of the House.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Acting Leader of the Opposition)—I have pleasure in nominating Mr. Lawn. The Opposition has given much thought to the matter following on the result of the elections. It believes that the aggregate votes received by Labor Party candidates, more than those received by Government Party candidates, warrants mature consideration by the Opposition to the filling of this important

office and the Opposition believes that on this occasion the Government should be challenged in the appointment of a Speaker.

Mr. TAPPING seconded the nomination of Mr. Lawn.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—In compliance with Standing Orders, and the best traditions of the House, I submit myself for election.

There being no other nomination, a ballot was taken and Mr. Teusner was declared duly elected, the voting being:—Mr. Teusner 24, Mr. Lawn 13.

Mr. Teusner was escorted to the dais by the mover and seconder of his nomination.

The SPEAKER (Hon. B. H. Teusner)—Standing here on the upper step, which has rightly been described as the traditional approach to the Chair, I am deeply sensible of the high honour conferred on me by my election as Speaker. I express to the mover (the Hon. the Treasurer), the seconder (the honourable member for Onkaparinga), and all other honourable members my appreciation and thanks for the confidence reposed in me by their choosing me for this high office, an office that not only carries with it great responsibility but is vital for the effective and smooth functioning of our Parliamentary system. Though I feel that honourable members may have over-estimated my ability, I nevertheless assure them that it shall be devoted to their service, and that my exertions shall be directed to the upholding and protection of their undoubted rights and privileges and to the conscientious and impartial discharge of my duties, for I realize that no Parliament can function successfully unless there is implicit confidence in the impartiality of its Speaker.

For many years this House has enjoyed throughout Australia an enviable reputation for the decorum and dignity of all its proceedings. That reputation, of which we, as Parliamentarians, are justly proud, it behoves us to maintain. With that end in view I appeal to all honourable members to give me the same whole-hearted support and assistance to maintain the Standing Orders and the dignity and prestige of this House as they accorded to my illustrious predecessor in office, the Hon. Sir Robert Nicholls. His impartiality, exemplary conduct, devotion to duty and many other fine personal attributes won for him the confidence, esteem and respect of honourable members and the public generally. It is a tribute to him that never was the prestige of this House higher than during his

record-breaking term of devoted service. Humbly to follow in the indelible footsteps here left by him in the sands of time shall be my earnest endeavour.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier)—Every member, especially those with previous knowledge of you, Mr. Speaker, will be happy to congratulate you on the high honour bestowed on you today. You have already had experience as Chairman of Committees and have shown by your ability in that office the capabilities you will display as Speaker. I am sure that every honourable member who has had previous acquaintance with you will have the greatest confidence, not only in your impartiality, but also in the dignity and knowledge you will bring to the Chair. I feel that I can speak for honourable members on both sides of the House in offering you, Sir, our sincere congratulations.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Acting Leader of the Opposition)—On behalf of the Opposition I join with the Premier in congratulating you, Mr. Speaker, on your election to the Chair. You have had considerable experience in Parliament, and although it may be well to remind ourselves on this occasion that a high standard was set by your predecessor, the Hon. Sir Robert Nicholls, I am sure, Sir, that that standard will be maintained by you.

Mr. STOTT (Ridley)—I support the remarks of the Premier and the Acting Leader of the Opposition in congratulating you, Sir, on your election to this high office. It is indeed a very high honour and I have every confidence that you will carry out the duties with great discretion and in accordance with the Standing Orders. I am one who will miss the presence of the previous Speaker, the Hon. Sir Robert Nicholls, whose impartiality was wellknown to all of us. I regret that the people were denied the opportunity of saying, under the principles of real democracy, whether he should remain a member of this illustrious House. However, he did not contest the recent election, and now you, Sir, have the honour of being in his place. I have no doubt that you feel some diffidence in approaching this high office and in trying to emulate the excellent example set by Sir Robert, to which you yourself referred. He was held in high esteem throughout Australia; indeed, he was wellknown in the Mother of Parliaments and in the Empire Parliamentary Association not only for his personality but also for the impartial way

he conducted the sittings of this House. However, I am sure that you will carry out your duties with ability, impartiality and dignity, and that all members will assist you in observing Standing Orders and upholding tradition.

The SPEAKER—I acknowledge with gratitude the very kindly references made by the Premier, the Acting Leader of the Opposition and the member for Ridley. I assure the House that it shall be at all times not only my duty, but my earnest desire to serve the House to the best of my ability. I should like the new members to know that, as Speaker, I shall at all times be ready to give them whatever assistance I can on any problems that may arise relating to the Standing Orders, and I am certain that all possible assistance will also be offered them by the Clerks at the table.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have to inform the House that His Excellency the Governor will be pleased to have the Speaker presented to him at 12.40 p.m.

[Sitting suspended from 12.5 to 12.35 p.m.]

The SPEAKER—It is now my intention to present myself to His Excellency the Governor, and I invite as many members as may desire to do so to accompany me.

At 12.36 p.m., attended by a deputation of members, the Speaker proceeded to Government House.

On the House reassembling at 12.50 p.m.

The SPEAKER—I have to inform the House that, accompanied by a deputation of members, I proceeded to Government House for the purpose of presenting myself to His Excellency the Governor. I informed His Excellency that, in pursuance of the powers conferred on the House by section 34 of the Constitution Act, the House of Assembly had this day proceeded to the election of Speaker and had done me the honour to elect me to that high office. In compliance with the other provisions of the same section, I presented myself to His Excellency as the Speaker, and in the name and on behalf of the House laid the claim to members' undoubted rights and privileges and prayed that the most favourable construction might be put on all their proceedings; whereupon His Excellency expressed satisfaction at the choice of a Speaker, and assured me of the confirmation of all the constitutional rights and privileges of the House of Assembly.

[Sitting suspended from 12.52 to 2.15 p.m.]

SUMMONS TO COUNCIL CHAMBER.

A summons was received from His Excellency the Governor desiring the attendance of the House in the Legislative Chamber, whither the speaker and honourable members proceeded.

The House having returned to its own Chamber, the Speaker resumed the Chair at 3.10 p.m., and read prayers.

SUPPLY BILL (No. 1.).

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended the House to make provision by Bill for defraying the salaries and other expenses of the several departments and public services of the Government of South Australia during the year ending June 30, 1957.

DEATH OF HON. A. W. CHRISTIAN AND MR. H. D. MICHAEL.

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

That the House of Assembly expresses its deep regret at the death of the Hon. A. W. Christian, former Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Forests and member for Eyre, and places on record its appreciation of his public services; and that, as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased member, the sitting of the House be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

All members who were associated with the late Mr. Christian will, I am sure, join with me in expressing deep regret at his untimely passing. Mr. Christian came to this House first in 1933, and from the outset established a reputation for earnestness, ability and capacity for work. I believe that during the whole of his political life he did not make one personal enemy in this House. He stated his views firmly and fairly, and was a man of high ideal and high principle. He served his district conspicuously and the State in a way that was creditable to him and beneficial to South Australia. I personally greatly regret the loss of an earnest colleague who could at all times be relied upon to do the proper thing with zeal, intelligence and firmness.

In addition we have suffered the loss of a member who recently retired, Mr. Michael, who had been chairman of the Land Settlement Committee. He was a member of long standing in this House, and I am sure all members would want me to express appreciation of his services to the State and deep regret at his untimely passing.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Acting Leader of Opposition)—I second the motion. During my 15 years in this place I found the late Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Christian, possessed

of all the qualities mentioned by the Premier. I also join with the Premier in his expressions of regret at the death of Mr. Michael. I am able, on behalf of the Opposition, to pay a special tribute to these men. Their death reminds us that public life imposes a strain upon the human frame. In addition to their ordinary work as members, Mr. Christian was for years chairman of the Public Works Committee and Mr. Michael chairman of the Land Settlement Committee. I sometimes wonder whether the responsibilities of public life, as it is today, do not overtax the human frame.

Mr. FLETCHER (Mount Gambier)—I join with the Premier and the Acting Leader of the Opposition in paying a tribute to these late members. For about 12 years I served under the Hon. A. W. Christian when he was chairman of the Public Works Committee. I express the view of the members of that committee when I say that he was a wonderful chairman and always interested in its work. He was a man of outstanding value to the State. He served only a short term as Minister of Agriculture, but his death was a decided loss to the State. The late Mr. Michael endeared himself to all members by his quiet and unassuming ways. The State and their families suffered a great loss in their death.

The motion was carried by members standing in their places in silence.

[Sitting suspended from 3.22 to 3.50 p.m.]

NEXT DAY OF SITTING.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD moved—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Wednesday, May 9, at 2 p.m.

Motion carried.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD moved—

That Mr. Dunnage be Chairman of Committees of the Whole House during the present Parliament.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I move:—

To strike out the name "Dunnage" with a view to inserting the name "Riches" in lieu thereof.

Mr. Riches' long service, competency and knowledge qualify him for the office.

The House divided on the amendment—

Ayes (13).—Messrs. Bywaters, John Clark, Corcoran, Davis, Dunstan, Hutchens, Jennings, Lawn, Loveday, Riches, Tapping, Frank Walsh (teller), and Fred Walsh.

Noes (20).—Messrs. Brookman, Geoffrey Clark, Coumbe, Dunnage, Fletcher, Goldney, Harding, Heaslip, Heath, Hinecks, Jenkins,

King, and Laucke, Sir Malcolm McIntosh, Messrs. Millhouse, Pattinson, Pearson, Playford (teller), Quirke, and Shannon.

Pairs.—Ayes.—Messrs. O'Halloran and Stephens. Noes—Messrs. Bockelberg and Hambour.

Majority of 7 for the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived; motion carried.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

The SPEAKER—I have to report that, in compliance with a summons from His Excellency the Governor, the House attended this day in the Legislative Council Chamber, where His Excellency was pleased to make a speech to both Houses of Parliament, of which speech I have obtained a copy, which I now lay upon the table.

Ordered to be printed.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended the House to make appropriation of the sums set forth in the accompanying Supplementary Estimates of Expenditure by the Government during the year ending June 30, 1956, for the purposes stated therein.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer), having obtained a suspension of Standing Orders, moved—

That the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider a further Supply being granted to Her Majesty.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Acting Leader of the Opposition)—We have just returned from hearing the Governor's Speech, in which he said:—

During the present financial year the economic position of South Australia has remained sound, and we have been less affected by the inflation of recent times than Australia as a whole. Since August, 1953, the rise in the cost of living in this State, as indicated by the C series index, has been about 16 per cent less than the general rise throughout Australia.

Had the Governor's Speech indicated that the Government intended to restore, by legislation, the cost of living adjustments in accordance with the C series index I would not have risen on this motion. Since 1953 the people of this State have not been granted the normal cost of living adjustments, though some years ago Parliament provided for uniformity between the State and Federal basic wages. Now, however, other State Governments have indicated that they support the restoration of the cost of living adjustments, and they have introduced the necessary legislation. Since August, 1953, the State living

wage has been £11 11s. a week, and we have often been told that it should remain at that amount in the interests of prosperity and to prevent inflation. Because the living wage has been pegged South Australian workers are now receiving 15s. a week less in their pay envelopes, for if the cost of living adjustments had been effected the living wage would be £12 6s.

Some members may wonder why I have made these remarks on this motion, but I stress that a man is entitled to just wages in order to feed and care for himself and his family. He must also provide a home for his family and acquire the necessary furniture and appliances to make life tolerable. We have often been told that Australia, and particularly South Australia, enjoys a high standard of living, but how can the Government say it prescribes a just wage for workers if they receive 15s. a week less than they should? Certain adjustments were made recently to the salaries of highly paid employees, but not for those on the lower range. The Government should have intimated through the Governor's Speech that it would introduce legislation to restore the C series index adjustments. It is not only unjust, but also unchristian, to deny these adjustments to the workers. We do not like to accuse people of stealing, but from the Christian point of view it is stealing if we do not pay proper wages to people in industry.

Mr. Heaslip—What about the primary producers, the people who really count?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I do not want to be side-tracked, but members representing primary producers do not even provide an award for primary employees, apart from the shearing and dried fruits awards. When will the member for Rocky River be prepared to allow the workers to approach the Industrial Court for an award governing primary industries?

Mr. Jennings—He will not say any more because the Premier has just told him to keep quiet.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I doubt whether many members opposite understand what I have just said.

Mr. Heaslip—I don't!

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I am not responsible for the honourable member's powers of thought. In addition to this important question of pegging the basic wage, we must also consider what has happened under price control. From the *Government Gazette* of July 28, 1955, I gather that it was necessary to re-impose

control upon a number of items, including clothing, because of public discontent. Up to October, 1954, 430 items had been under price control, of which 382 had been decontrolled and 136 re-controlled, leaving a total of 184 controlled in October, 1954. In the *News* of May 3, under the heading, "Menzies is Failing to Halt C.O.L. Rise," the Leader of the Opposition revealed how prices have risen. He referred to such commodities as meat, potatoes, eggs, fuel, pies and freight. Consider the price of potatoes. Under the Potato Marketing Act the Potato Board has wide powers. Section 20 of that Act states:—

(1) The board may make orders providing for all or any of the following matters:—

- (a) fixing the quantity of potatoes or the proportion of his crop of potatoes which a grower may sell or deliver at any time or place specified in the order;
- (b) otherwise regulating and controlling the sale and delivery of potatoes;
- (c) fixing maximum and minimum prices at which potatoes may be sold;
- (d) fixing the terms and conditions on which potatoes may be sold;

The board may fix maximum and minimum prices at which potatoes may be sold, but is the Potato Board subordinate to the Prices Commissioner in the matter of price? Consumers have recently been charged fantastic prices, which operate adversely against workers with large families for whom the potato is the staple diet. These men are obliged to pay excessive prices for potatoes whilst denied the right of an additional 15s. a week in their pay envelopes. It has been announced that the Prices Commissioner will double the number of inspectors to police the sale of potatoes, but that is no compensation.

It is interesting to note that when there is to be a decrease in the price of certain commodities the Treasurer announces it, but when there is to be an increase the Prices Commissioner, Mr. Murphy, announces it. I suggest that this situation is designed to give the Premier favourable publicity and the true facts are not presented to the public. Recently in the Federal Parliament what has become known as the "horror Budget" was introduced. It revealed that there was to be an increase in interest charges. Immediately the new rates apply those who intend to purchase their own homes will suffer. Their numbers will increase, because the Governor's Speech indicated that the number of homes to be made available for purchase would greatly exceed those being built for rental purposes. We cannot accurately gauge the trials and tribulations of the people

in this matter, apart altogether from the other things mentioned in the "horror" Budget. In future interest rates may be increased by approval, which indicates there is likely to be a greater hardship imposed on home purchasers, who will find it more difficult to balance their weekly budget. Under legislation the Housing Trust can average its rents, and, if it has to pay more for the money it needs for building activities, legislation is likely to be introduced this session that will make the position of many people more difficult. I could speak at great length on this matter but I will conclude by saying the Government should reconsider its previous decision and restore cost of living adjustments, to which the workers are entitled.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—I support the remarks of the Acting Leader of the Opposition. His Excellency's Speech covers seven foolscap pages, but there is nothing in it that could not be obtained from the office of the Government Statist. Apart from facts and figures there is nothing in it. The Government has occupied the benches for many years and claims that the State has the highest production per worker of any State, yet there is no reference in the Governor's Speech to industrial legislation. Last session the Premier said that economically South Australia was as good as any other State and that the production per employee here was greater than in any other State. Our workers who are covered by Commonwealth and State awards are being filched of 15s. every week. Commonwealth statistical figures show this to be so. By Commonwealth action basic wage adjustments have been frozen, but all State Governments with the exception of South Australia and Western Australia, where there is a hostile Legislative Council, have passed legislation in order that adjustments may be made. So far this Government has done nothing in the matter and according to the Governor's Speech intends to do nothing.

In other States, with the possible exception of Western Australia, workers, whether employed by the Commonwealth, State or private firms, are entitled to 13 weeks long service leave after 20 years of service. The Governor's Speech does not deal with this matter. It is supposed to put forward Government policy, but it contains a policy that could be expected only from the type of Government we have. Because of a gerrymander designed to keep Labor from office our workmen are being robbed of the right to receive long service leave. They resent the position and showed it at the last State

elections when a majority of the votes supported Labor Party policy. They are being swindled of the right to elect the Government they want, and they cannot get rid of the present bad Government. The only other place that provides for such a thing is Russia.

Mr. Shannon—How did Nancy Buttfield get in at the last Commonwealth elections?

Mr. LAWN—You would not like me to say how Nancy Buttfield was elected.

Mr. Shannon—I would not object.

Mr. LAWN—The honourable members wants to keep quiet about the election of Nancy Buttfield. The pre-selection ballot in her case smelt.

Mr. Shannon—I am interested in knowing why the electors put her in.

Mr. LAWN—I will deal with that later.

The SPEAKER—Order! Interjections are out of order.

Mr. LAWN—During the debate last session on workmen's compensation legislation I tried to say how Nancy Buttfield would be elected. It was all organized by the Government Party.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, is it proper for a member to refer to a member of another place without giving the correct title.

The SPEAKER—I rule that it is out of order. A member of another place should be referred to in the proper way.

Mr. LAWN—I was just following the interjector. I was referring to Senator Nancy Buttfield.

Mr. Shannon—My apologies to Senator Buttfield.

Mr. LAWN—The Anti-Communist Party was organized by the honourable member's Party in order to elect Mrs. Nancy Buttfield instead of the third Labor Party candidate. Last session I tried to deal with the matter but you, Sir, then Chairman of Committees, ruled that I was out of order. The Anti-Communist Party was organized by the Liberal Party in order to elect Senator Buttfield, because in no other way could she be elected. When the mouthpiece of the Anti-Communist Party in Victoria, Mr. Joshua, announced that the Party would contest the elections in this State the Liberals got busy; it was organized within the precincts of the Supreme Court library, but the Government Party will not tell the people the facts. They make sly interjections here when they know they organized that Party so as to split the vote that otherwise would have been

recorded for the Australian Labor Party candidate, Mr. Sexton. I come back to this question of long service leave. It is something greatly valued by all people who work, and I do not necessarily mean only those who vote for the Labor Party. I have travelled widely in other States and I know how concerned the people there are about the challenge to the Victorian legislation. While some of them are supporters of the Australian Labor Party many are supporters of the Liberal Parties in the eastern States, so I suggest to the Government that this is not merely a question of Party politics; long service leave is being enjoyed by workmen and work women in practically every other State in the Commonwealth and the workers of South Australia want to know why it cannot be enjoyed here, especially as the Government admits that our workers are achieving the greatest production per head in the Commonwealth.

Turning to another matter, South Australia has practically the worst Workmen's Compensation Act in the Commonwealth. Some say that it is the worst, but I can say without fear of contradiction that it is at least one of the two worst, and there is no attempt on the part of the Government to give the workers of South Australia the same standard as is enjoyed by those in other States. Last session a Bill was introduced to alter the electoral laws of the State and one of the strong points made by the Premier was that it would bring about uniformity. I know that the Premier is not much concerned about how he handles the truth, and on that occasion he was not either, because the people of the other States can change a Government if they wish; it has happened quite often in Victoria in recent years, and we have seen changes in the Federal Government and in Western Australia. Although the Premier claims that he wants uniformity he has no intention of giving it. If he wants uniformity in electoral laws why does he not apply the same principle to industrial laws in respect of long service leave, the unfreezing of the basic wage and workmen's compensation? I do not ask for more than the other States are giving, not that I admit that they are giving sufficient. I do not think that this country sufficiently looks after the wives and families of those who lose their lives in industry or by reason of injury are unable to continue working, but all that I am asking is that those in this State should be the recipients of the same amount of compensation as their counterparts in other States. I think the Government's attitude was typified by a

remark by the member for Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip) this afternoon, when he said by way of interjection, "Who really counts?" The inference was that it is only the country people who count in South Australia. That is why the Government will not give the workers in both the city and the country the legislative consideration they deserve.

I now turn to the Government's policy in regard to accommodation for Government departments. As a result of the Playford dictatorship members learn from a newspaper report that the Government has purchased Foy and Gibson's building in Rundle Street for £450,000, in order to utilize it as Government offices. Members of this House will be asked to vote that sum of money; it may be included in the Estimates which will come forward within the next few hours, I do not know; but we as representatives of the people should have some other source of information than newspapers when it is proposed to spend half a million pounds on a white elephant in the eastern end of Rundle Street. Consider the position of 10 citizens of this State who have business with various Government departments. The citizen who has business with the Land Tax Office must go to the western end of North Terrace whereas another who must visit the Motor Vehicles Department must go to the eastern end of North Terrace. The person who has business with the Agricultural Department has to wind his way around the city into Gawler Place and anyone who wants to find the Public Trustee's Office must go to an upper floor of the State Bank building in Pirie Street. The Public Welfare Department is in Flinders Street.

Mr. Dunstan—A rabbit warren.

Mr. LAWN—It is indeed a most disgraceful building. Its appearance outside is not the best, but that gives no indication of what it is like inside. As Mr. Dunstan says, it is no better than a rabbit warren. There are various other Government departments scattered here and there and I would like to know whether it is the Government's policy to buy buildings wherever they become available for the purpose of conducting the State's business, and, if so, whether those purchases are to be restricted to the city, or whether the Government proposes to commence buying properties in the suburbs. I challenge its wisdom in this matter. I have had some experience in industry and I know that some firms regret that they have scattered their workshops. The most efficient factories are those whose

premises are concentrated. I could instance firms well known to Government supporters, and they would know that what I am saying is true. I know of one firm which is trying to rectify its position and this Parliament has to approve money to see that its objective is achieved. A business undertaking with a centralized organization is much more efficient and gives greater service to the public. It would be better if all Government offices were situated at Victoria Square instead of being placed haphazardly around the city. I forgot just now to mention the Highways Department, which is in Currie Street. We have Government offices at the eastern and western ends of North Terrace, the eastern end of Rundle Street, in Currie Street, Gawler Place, Pirie Street, Flinders Street, and Victoria Square. I would rather see the Government sites in Victoria Square properly utilized instead of the Government purchasing more land and buildings in Adelaide and elsewhere to carry out its functions, and I am sure the majority of citizens would agree with that. Instead of the Government's spending more than £400,000 to purchase the Foy & Gibson building and perhaps £500,000 to buy out another firm in future, it would be better for it to build on the sites now occupied in Victoria Square. Then, it would not be necessary to buy land but only to build, and the public could go to Victoria Square to do business with any of the Government departments.

I am particularly concerned that this haphazard policy, or shall I say lack of policy, to accommodate Government departments should be taking place in my electorate. The Government does not pay rates to councils as ordinary citizens do. This naturally results in a loss of revenue to councils, with consequent increased charges to ratepayers. The people are therefore very incensed, and they agree with me that the Government should build on its Victoria Square sites rather than be running here and there looking for additional properties. These things could not happen if the people had the right to change a Government when dissatisfied with it and elect another, but because of the gerrymander in this State, which was designed by the Liberal Party in 1936, Labor cannot occupy the Government benches. As it was then said by that Party "This will keep Labor out for 20 years." Although there was an alteration to the electoral law last year, the objective was to bring the swindle of 1936 up to date. The result was that in 1956 the majority of

the people voted the Government out of office, but as in Russia where they can not change the dictatorship, the dictatorship here cannot be changed while our present electoral laws prevail.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood)—I should not have risen on the motion had it not been for the fact that there were some extraordinary statements and omissions in the Governor's Speech. The welfare of the ordinary people of this State must be of concern to any Government, but it appears from the Government's statement that it sees fit to show no concern for the economic position of the ordinary person in the community. It is in view of the statements it has made, and the fact that it does not produce the legislation that is necessary for the ordinary welfare of the people, or does not intend to produce it, that I rise. We have had in the Governor's Speech today again one of those Hans Andersen's efforts of the Premier, with which we are becoming so well acquainted in this House. He told his usual fairy story, aided no doubt by a series of statistics which are not intended to bear any true relationship to the economic position of the State.

Paragraph 3 of the Governor's Speech refers to the economic position of South Australia as remaining sound, and the reason assigned for this is that the increase in the C series index has been about 16 per cent lower than the general record through Australia. This is no more an accurate picture this year than it was last year. What is the criterion? It is not what was the general increase in the price level, but how much is in the pockets of the ordinary working man to meet the increases in the price level. That figure is quoted in the Monthly Review of Business Statistics of the Commonwealth Statistician. He analyses the real wages in Australia and not the nominal increases in the C series index. He compares the increases in the index with how much money is in the pockets of the people to meet them, and according to him the real wages in this State are the second lowest of any State in the Commonwealth. Only one other State is worse off—Western Australia—where although the people have elected a Labor Government with a policy designed to combat these price increases, it has been unable to put that policy into effect because of the hostile Legislative Council of the same political complexion as that of the Government here. It has refused to the people the policies they have voted for at the elections time and time again.

Mr. Lawn—And they call it democracy.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Democracy is one of the words we rarely hear from the lips of members opposite. Another thing mentioned by the Premier, and it is the usual one trotted out by him, is that the Savings Bank deposits per capita in South Australia are higher than in any other State. That is no criterion. We are one of the only two States which have a State Savings Bank. The Commonwealth Savings Bank operates throughout Australia, but it does not have the same policy of seeking business as that of the State Savings Banks. That is its deliberate attitude. It is a facility provided in a few capital cities and in post office branches as an auxiliary activity, but that kind of business is not sought after by the Commonwealth Bank. In only the two States where there are State Savings Banks is Savings Bank business sought; therefore, to say that the Savings Bank deposits per head of population in South Australia are higher than in any other State is no criterion when considering the prosperity of the State, because the money which in South Australia finds its way into the Savings Bank would in New South Wales find its way into the Rural Bank and the private banks, and in Tasmania into the trustee banks.

Government members have said that the people of this State are more prosperous than those of any other. Certainly they produce more per head of population, even though they receive the second lowest level of real wages in the Commonwealth, but where are the measures designed to give to the ordinary people of South Australia the things they need, satisfactory security and living standards? They are not here, nor is it intended to introduce them. No doubt we will divert ourselves with lengthy debates, in which I shall be pleased to join, on habitual criminals, criminal law, company legislation, justices, limitation of actions and other matters, but apparently the Government is not concerned about the true welfare of the people.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—I join with the Acting Leader of the Opposition and other members who in accordance with the custom that has been handed down to us from the Parliament of King Charles, have sought before granting Supply, to bring to the notice of the Government matters needing redress. Although the action of the Opposition this afternoon is not in line with the procedure followed in recent years, it has plenty of precedent to back it up, and all members on this side are anxious that the Government

should fully consider the real grievances of South Australians. For instance, although wages are pegged, prices have been allowed to rise until housewives, dependent on the earnings of ordinary wage-earners, are at their wit's end to make ends meet. References such as those contained in His Excellency's Speech regarding the alleged prosperity of the people of this State have no relevance when considered in the light of the economic situation of the ordinary housewife.

It was no pleasure to members on this side to listen to the recital of His Excellency the Governor this afternoon. Members who have taken full note of such speeches on previous occasions could not fail to note certain significant omissions today, and the Premier or some other Government member should explain the reason for those omissions. Paragraph after paragraph of the speech made by the Lieutenant-Governor last session has been revised and brought up to date, but let us look at some of those not brought up to date. Firstly, not one paragraph in today's speech would bring a word of comfort to the ordinary citizen who finds himself in a state of economic unbalance and uncertainty in these days when we hear the Premier and his supporters repeatedly refer to the prosperity this State enjoys. Paragraph 4 of the Governor's Speech states:—

Notwithstanding the prosperity enjoyed by our citizens, my Government is faced with heavy financial commitments

Opposition members believe that this "prosperity" is more fancied than real and that the ordinary housewife is faced with heavy financial commitments produced by pegging wages on the one hand and failure to control prices on the other. So long as these conditions obtain, these grievances and much discontent will result. By their recent vote at the polls South Australians voted overwhelmingly in favour of the policy of restoring cost of living adjustments, and Labor members take this early opportunity of expressing their opinion on this matter.

Mr. John Clark—Why did the Government peg the living wage?

Mr. RICHES—Obviously the Playford Government has ceased to have regard for the real needs of the people for its whole programme is to legislate for those from whom they draw their chief support. Paragraph 3 of the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech last session stated:—

A feature of the Australian economy, however, which gives special concern to my Ministers is the strong pressure to increase interest

rates. Merchants, manufacturers, and financiers—in particular, those engaged in financing hire purchase transactions—have entered the loan market seeking large sums for the extension of their businesses, and, in a number of instances, are offering high rates of interest.

Twelve months ago the higher rates of interest were worrying the Government, but His Excellency's Speech today contained no word on this subject. Apparently the Government has accepted the increased rates, and its attitude in that respect makes the Opposition's grievance even more important. Why is the Government unwilling to consider the impact of the higher rate of interest on the cost structure and the inevitable result in placing necessary goods and services beyond the reach of the ordinary citizen? The attitude of the Government on this matter, which is demonstrated by its omission from His Excellency's Speech, is a matter of grave concern to all members on this side. There are other references in the Governor's Speech, particularly to the erection of a steel plant, with which we shall deal later. I wish to indicate my support of what has been said earlier in this debate and to inform the Government that I do not accept any motion to go into Committee to vote further large amounts without giving voice to grievances and bringing before the Government the needs of the people we believe it has neglected.

Motion carried.

In Committee of Supply.

The CHAIRMAN—I shall read from His Excellency the Governor's Opening Speech, in which he said:—

Supplementary Estimates for current expenditure not provided for in last year's Appropriations and Estimates of Expenditure for the coming financial year will be laid before you.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I move that a Supply be granted to Her Majesty.

Motion carried.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Before I introduce and discuss the Supplementary Estimates, I shall deal with two or three matters raised by the Opposition on the motion to go into Committee of Supply. The honourable member for Stuart was quite correct in saying that it is the traditional right of Parliamentarians to raise any issue on a motion to go into Committee of Supply, because it is an historic privilege to ventilate grievances before we pass the necessary money. I assure members opposite that the Government has not the slightest objection to that practice; in fact, I propose to assist members by dealing briefly with two or three matters raised which appear to have been agitating members' minds.

I shall first deal with the most substantial objection, that raised by the Acting Leader of the Opposition regarding the pegging of the basic wage. He said that no reference was made in His Excellency's Speech to any legislation to deal with this matter. Let me say at the outset that a State Parliament is not competent to deal with the basic wage. It is outside its constitutional power to legislate in this matter, which is determined by the Commonwealth Arbitration Court. A State Parliament has power to deal with the living wage, which is determined under State legislation. Is that point quite clear to the honourable member?

Mr. Jennings—Tell the other half of the story.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am going to tell the whole story if honourable members will have the patience they sometimes appear to lose in the heat of the moment. At the present time the matter of the basic wage is before the Commonwealth Arbitration Court, which has heard evidence from employers, employees, the Commonwealth Government and various State Governments, including the Government of this State, which gave its views on the matter.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—May I ask that interjections cease?

The CHAIRMAN—Will members please remain silent.

Mr. Fred Walsh—What do you mean by "Please remain silent?"

The CHAIRMAN—Honourable members will remain silent.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This Government gave evidence in connection with the C series case now before the Arbitration Court. Some years ago this Government passed legislation that enabled the State tribunal to accept the Arbitration Court's decision as a decision with regard to the living wage. For many years, as a result of that legislation, the State Industrial Court has determined that the Commonwealth basic wage shall, for the purposes of State legislation, be the State living wage. However, if anyone objects to that he has the right of appeal to that court. In fact, certain industrial unions did file an application, but this was withdrawn before any decision could be given.

The basic wage and the living wage are not the same thing. The State Industrial Code provides for a living wage to be determined, and that that living wage is to be determined

on the cost of living. The basic wage, however, has been partly determined on the cost of living and partly on many other things. For instance, from time to time over a long period the Arbitration Court has taken into account a number of things that have had no relation at all to the cost of living. On one occasion it took into account the value of wool, and made a determination for shearers that gave a prosperity loading because wool prices were high. As members know, the price of wool has come down somewhat, and the Arbitration Court has, as a result, withdrawn some of that prosperity loading, and as a result, there is now a dispute in the shearing industry. The basic wage is not determined on the cost of living alone, because it has been argued and accepted by the Court that it is to be based partly on the cost of living, partly on the prosperity of an industry and, in some instances, partly on the general economic prosperity of the country.

On one occasion the Arbitration Court awarded a general prosperity loading of £1 a week. The State living wage is something entirely different from the basic wage. When the Acting Leader of the Opposition said this afternoon that there was nothing in the Governor's Speech about C series index adjustments he was dealing with something entirely outside the jurisdiction of this House. I am quite happy to inform members of the Government's policy on this matter. The Government has stated often that we cannot expect to have industrial peace or a fair distribution of the wealth of the country if we do not either hold down the inflationary forces or have regard for increases which are made from time to time in the wages of the workers. That is the evidence that the Government gave at the last hearing before the Commonwealth Arbitration Court in Melbourne.

Mr. Riches—In other words, you opposed any increases?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No. My Government said that we did not oppose alterations in the cost of living being taken into account. Our evidence, however, was opposed by both the employer and the employee, but the court decided to accept the evidence and called upon the Commonwealth Statistician, who agreed with what we submitted, namely, that the C series index does not now constitute a document that can be accepted as reflecting the real cost of living in Australia today. The Commonwealth Statistician of his own volition, over several years, has been prepar-

ing a new index which he considers will be more satisfactory.

Mr. Lawn—To whom?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is significant that my Government's submissions to the court were opposed by both the employer and the employee.

Mr. Jennings—No-one trusts you.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think that neither of them have studied the case sufficiently to know whether they would get an advantage out of our submissions. The C series index does not take into account rentals paid in respect of Government houses, yet there are many such houses. I have no doubt that in some States wages would be considerably increased if these houses were covered by the C series index, though I think that in this State they would have little effect. I stress that the real point at issue is the effect of the level of wages on production costs. South Australia has to compete on a home market with other States. We are now the most highly industrialized State in the Commonwealth per head of population, and we depend on eastern markets for much of our trade.

Mr. Riches—The eastern States have cost of living adjustments.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Some of them have some sorts of adjustments, but none of them has a basic wage adjustment covering Commonwealth employees because they are outside the ambit of State jurisdiction. Tasmania has provided for cost of living adjustments for people employed under State industrial tribunals, but they exclude those employed by the Tasmanian Government itself. My Government does not oppose the consideration of cost of living adjustments to wages; in fact, we advocated that this should be determined by the Commonwealth Arbitration Court. I assure members that if it is done by that court this State will do everything possible to bring people under State industrial tribunals into line with the Commonwealth Arbitration Court decisions. At present either employers or employees can apply to the State industrial tribunals for a living wage, and that is a direct answer to the point raised by the Acting Leader of the Opposition.

It is not correct that the basic wage is pegged. It has never been a maximum wage, but it is the minimum wage that may be paid. There is nothing to prevent any employer granting or any employee receiving amounts in

excess of the basic wage. Indeed, the Statistician's figures reveal that although quarterly adjustments have been discontinued, from time to time increases have taken place, particularly in margins.

Mr. Lawn referred to the Government purchase of Foy & Gibson's building. This has been a matter of some comment in the press and Mr. Lawn desires to know why the Government made the purchase and what its future policy will be. He was concerned as to what rates the Adelaide City Council might lose as the result of the purchase. The position is that for a long time the Government has been conscious that its public servants are inadequately accommodated and that departments have been scattered with the result that the public has been gravely inconvenienced. In fact, we have experienced the unsatisfactory position on numerous occasions of members of the public being interviewed in public in some departments. Every member will appreciate that that is not proper and should be discontinued. Prior to the war the question of staffing the Public Service had been considered by the Government and a proposition for the erection of a multi-storey building in Victoria Square was submitted to the Public Works Committee. During the war, because of Commonwealth building regulations, the proposal had to be deferred. When re-examined after the war the cost had increased to such an extent that to have provided the necessary space would have meant the serious curtailment of either our educational, hospital or housing projects. Another point which emerged from consideration of the Victoria Square project was that all the accommodation that would have had to be demolished was being used and it was vital to continue using it because all Government departments were seriously overcrowded.

In due course I will submit to members the Loan Estimates for this year, but I can indicate now that the task of financing public works this year will be extremely difficult because, quite apart from our normal activities and expansion, we must provide for one or two additional costly projects which cannot be avoided. If we proposed spending £1,500,000—and it would be at least that—on a multi-storey building in Victoria Square we would be unable to finance other projects. The space that we would provide would be extremely costly and would not be available for a long time, whereas there is an urgent need for accommodation that can be provided relatively cheaply.

Foy & Gibson's building has been purchased at a price which provides space at approximately one-third of the cost involved in erecting a new building. The capital cost of the building will be largely offset by the fact that we will continue to use the ground floor in Rundle Street as a shop in respect of which the Adelaide City Council will no doubt receive rates. The building will also provide a show-room for the Electricity Trust. This has been urgently required for a long time and should be in a shopping area. I am rather surprised that there have been objections to this purchase because the Government has been occupying a large part of the building for the last 15 years and no one seemed to object; nor has anyone objected to land and estate agents occupying the building. However, now that we are able to provide decent accommodation for the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department, which has been operating under shocking conditions, it suddenly becomes a pernicious matter that the Government should occupy the upstairs portion of this building.

Estimates prepared by the Architect-in-Chief's department indicate that the space available can be cheaply converted into public offices. We will be able to bring together a large number of departments which are at present scattered. Some departments are actually separated in five different areas in the metropolitan area. The purchase of this building will enable us to consolidate our departments and to discontinue the occupancy of high rental offices. The Government takes possession of the building early in July and a committee, headed by the Under-Secretary, Mr. Pearce, is already working upon the amalgamation and re-adjustment of departments. Consideration will be given to those persons who had businesses in Foy and Gibson's building. If they are merchandising businesses and are prepared to provide reasonable terms they will get preference as far as the ground floor space is concerned.

Mr. Tapping—What about the loss of rates to the council?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—We have heard a lot about that, but the Government does make a contribution of £19,000 to the council. The Adelaide City Council receives very much better treatment than any other corporation in Adelaide or the country. As far as I know, no other corporation gets free water or sewerage. The Adelaide City Council is given £19,000 to help maintain roads through the parklands. It has no need to be concerned, because it has had consideration and will continue to get it. On read-

ing the *Advertiser* this morning two thoughts came to my mind. The first was that it seemed that a municipal election was in the offing, and the second was that if we were converting premises which had not been built for office purposes we were only following the lead of the city fathers themselves, because they are converting a hotel for their own headquarters. However, I notice the matter has been conveniently shelved by referring it to one of their committees. They did not even propose to wait upon the Premier, a course sometimes adopted in such circumstances. I assure the honourable member for Adelaide that as far as the Government is concerned his corporation—

Mr. Lawn—It is not mine, it is yours.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I thought the honourable member was speaking on behalf of the council. I notice that he supported its action.

Mr. Lawn—I did not say that.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member must look at *Hansard* tomorrow. In the meantime I assure him that the corporation which he now disowns gets favourable consideration. It always has, and it will continue to get it. Indeed, it receives more consideration than Port Adelaide, for example, or any other suburban or country corporation.

I now turn to the matter raised by the honourable member for Stuart. The question of interest rates is a matter of very much more moment than the other two matters I have been discussing. It is a fundamental problem about which I am very concerned. We are a young and developing country, which means that for many years a very substantial part of our development must be undertaken by means of borrowed money. One only has to look at the Budgets which the States present every year to realize that the development of a State can be advanced rapidly only by substantial borrowing. If we had to rely upon the moneys which we could provide by revenue, our housing programme, for instance, would be negligible because we already have deficits. This question of interest rates must give very great concern to us all. The British Treasury bank rate has risen sharply on two occasions. There has recently been a tendency for finance with alternative avenues to wander away from Australia. If we want investment from abroad it is necessary that we provide some guarantee to investors that they can take some of the advantage of their investments home with them. Banks have little hope

of accruing deposits unless persons making deposits know that they can take out some of their finance when they want it. It is fundamental that if we want to attract overseas money there has to be some free play of money in and out of Australia. The central Government can control imports to some extent, but the fact remains that it is not possible to peg down to this country a lot of the funds which have alternative avenues of investment. The Federal Government was confronted on the one hand with the fact that overseas rates had risen very much higher than the rates in Australia, and on the other with a strong demand for consumer goods, and that demand has been further stimulated by hire-purchase finance. Honourable members have pointed out that there was no mention in the Governor's Speech of any legislation to deal with hire-purchase finance.

Mr. Riches—There was a reference last year.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, but there was no promise last year that the Government would introduce legislation. There are certain pros and cons with regard to this question which I think this House may be called upon to consider this year. Hire-purchase provides an avenue whereby people with low incomes can secure certain commodities which otherwise would not be available to them. It is a method of finance which is readily available to those people.

Mr. Riches—It is an essential part of our economy.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is an essential part of the economy of many people on low incomes. These people cannot find the money to purchase goods outright, but they can make a deposit and purchase articles over a period of months or years. The Commonwealth Government has introduced a drastic Supplementary Budget. I do not intend to debate it, but it has had a tendency to slow down the present momentum of prosperity. Western Australia has a rising number of unemployed persons. A number of the workers there have come to this State seeking employment. Over one period there were no less than 350. Employment there has sagged rather badly and I understand there has been a sag in other States. South Australia is susceptible to any reaction in connection with hire-purchase business. Our factories manufacture the durable goods that largely come within the scope of hire-purchase. We have hesitated to introduce anything that might later prove to be ill-advised or ill-considered.

Mr. Frank Walsh—What do you consider is best in connection with hire-purchase—an interest rate of five per cent on the daily balance or the interest rate usually charged?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not intend to go into that matter because I do not know much about it. The trouble has been caused not by the people engaged in hire-purchase business, but by those financing the companies who do engage in the business. Money has been borrowed for this purpose at rates of interest much in excess of the present bond or semi-governmental rates, and it has been causing embarrassment. Semi-governmental borrowings in other States appear to have the backing of the Treasurers there and they are causing embarrassment, because practically any interest rate is paid. The rate of the loan now before the public is fixed in accordance with the rates applying with semi-governmental loans. Sometimes they are £5 10s. plus charges. It is a matter that must be tackled quickly if we are not to get into serious financial difficulties.

I turn now to the Supplementary Estimates before the House. They provide for an expenditure of £1,008,000 on urgent and essential matters. When I presented my Budget in October last I estimated that expenditure would exceed revenue by £748,000. Subsequently it was necessary to seek the authority of Parliament for the expenditure of £150,000 to finance measures to destroy the swarms of grasshoppers which infested many areas of the State during the late spring and summer. The further expenditures now included in these Estimates will mean that the deficit for 1955-56 will be of the order of £2,000,000.

The moneys provided in these Estimates are required for social services, full and efficient State services, and essential maintenance. In each of these activities this year has seen labour of various types more readily available. More accommodation has increased operating costs of Government social services, and at the same time costs have continued to rise, although not as rapidly as in previous years.

Turning now to the Estimates I will give members explanations of the expenditures proposed therein.

STATE GOVERNOR'S ESTABLISHMENT, £1,500—The sum of £1,500 is provided under State Governor's Establishment to meet payments to certain Government House staff. This arrangement is made to bring conditions as regards certain Government House staff into conformity with conditions applicable at other State vice-regal establishments.

PRINTING AND STATIONERY DEPARTMENT, £29,000.—In order to meet urgent commitments it has been necessary for the Government to pursue an active policy of recruitment of printing staff, and to this end a number of compositors—sixteen—have been engaged from overseas. Further, increased and increasing demands for school books, for the *Children's Hour*, and for publications for Mines and Agriculture Departments have necessitated increases in binding staff. At the same time paper costs have been steadily rising.

HOSPITALS DEPARTMENT, £321,080.—Provision is made for payment of marginal increases which have been granted to nursing staff. Costs of foodstuffs and hospital provisions have risen more than was anticipated when the Budget was prepared and these increases are reflected in the increased provisions now sought for the various hospitals mentioned in the Estimates. The Budget Estimates provided for salaries and wages for Hospitals Department amounting to £2,102,318, and further provision of £121,000 is now required. The following amounts are provided to cover extra cost of provisions, medicines, medical comforts, equipment, etc., at the hospitals mentioned:—

	£
Royal Adelaide Hospital	98,000
Royal Adelaide Hospital—Northfield Ward	14,905
T.B. Services—Morris Hospital, Northfield	5,000
Mental Hospital, Parkside	49,000
Mental Hospital, Northfield	23,000
Port Pirie Hospital	3,000

Expansion of facilities at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital maternity section requires additional funds for operation, and £7,000 is provided in the Supplementary Estimates for this purpose.

CHILDREN'S WELFARE AND PUBLIC RELIEF DEPARTMENT, £24,000.—The additional provision for this department is required to meet the costs of relief granted to a greater number of applicants than was the case last year. This is not unemployment relief, which is the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government, but relates to relief for deserted wives and children for whom the department has been unable to recover maintenance. Inability to recover maintenance arises from a number of causes, chief of which are that the husband or father has changed his address and cannot be located, or that he is in gaol, or that he is sick or out of work for varying lengths of time and unable to make payments to the department, which is then required to give relief to the dependants.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, £14,897.—An amount of £1,397 has been included for the purchase of equipment for the Deafness Guidance Clinic, £2,500 for expenses associated with the poliomyelitis services, and £11,000 for the purchase of special caravans which will be used in the proposed anti-poliomyelitis vaccine campaign.

CHIEF SECRETARY—MISCELLANEOUS, £15,949.—Under this section are detailed special grants which have been approved by the Government. They are:—£7,500 to the Anti-Cancer Campaign Committee towards the purchase of the linear accelerator which the committee is installing in a building which the Government is providing for the purpose at the Adelaide Hospital; £649 subsidy to the Kalyra Sanatorium towards equipment for carpentry shop; £6,000 to the Elizabethan Theatre Trust; £750 to the S.A. Oral School Incorporated towards the cost of erection and equipment of an Assembly Hall; and £1,050 for the purchase of a land rover for presentation to the Flora and Fauna Board. As to the grant to the Anti-Cancer Campaign Committee, it will be remembered that some years ago the Government subsidized an appeal to the public by the committee for donations to purchase a linear accelerator. At the time the Government made a substantial donation. When tenders were called for the machine it was found that the amount raised was insufficient, and another £7,500 is necessary to complete its purchase. I believe its actual cost is between £80,000 and £90,000 and that it is equal to the finest type of machine to be found in Australia. The cost of establishing it is about £120,000, apart from the building, which the Government is providing. The machine will be housed at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

Mr. Dunstan—How much was the Government's previous subsidy?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I believe it was more than £20,000, or an amount equal to the public donations. The appeal was very satisfactory and at the time the committee believed it had enough money to carry out its programme. However, costs were higher than anticipated and the amount of £7,500 now provided is to meet the additional cost.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL—REGISTRAR-GENERAL OF DEEDS DEPARTMENT, £7,534.—The volume of business transacted through the Registrar-General of Deeds Department has been higher than was expected when the Estimates were framed, necessitating the provision of this further amount.

PUBLICITY AND TOURIST BUREAU AND IMMIGRATION, £6,671.—This amount is required for the purchase of land at Nuriootpa. This land is known as Coulthard's Reserve and consists of 74 acres which will be converted to a pleasure resort. This is by no means the total area purchased by the Government or total subsidies provided for the purchase of land this year. Numerous areas for recreation purposes have been bought in various parts of the State, but the amount now sought is that in excess of the vote already passed by Parliament.

TREASURER—MISCELLANEOUS, £11,000.—Government vehicles are exempt from the provisions of the Road Traffic Act which require all other vehicles to be covered by what is known as third party liability. The Government has decided to effect insurance and to cover itself and its drivers against claims from persons who may suffer bodily injury as a result of collisions or some other vehicular mishap. There have been a couple of cases in this regard. Where a Government employee has been driving in the course of his duty there has been no difficulty. The liability of the Government to pay the third party insurance would be clear and no complications created, but there have been cases where vehicles have been used without the Government's sanction, and that meant that the vehicle has been upon the road uninsured, and the liability of the Government under those circumstances is not defined. On the other hand, a person driving such a vehicle may be an employee who would have neither the funds to meet the claim or could meet the claim only with a very great hardship. I believe there was one accident near Whyalla which first brought this matter under the Government's notice. To cover this point the Government has decided that although it is exempt under the Act it would have all its vehicles covered by third party insurance as a matter of policy. I think that members will see that there is justification for such action.

MINISTER OF LANDS—MISCELLANEOUS, £350.—An amount of £350 has been provided for the Botanic Garden Board as a grant for resurfacing roads and paths in the Botanic Garden.

ENGINEERING AND WATER SUPPLY DEPARTMENT, £206,319.—The biggest item under this heading concerns Adelaide water district where the Budget Estimate presumed that it would not be necessary to augment metropolitan water supplies by River Murray water during this financial year. As members are aware, water consumption during the past summer exceeded

all previous peak consumption and it was necessary to resume pumping through the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline. This is provided for in the £103,000 shown for Adelaide water district in the Supplementary Estimates. Better availability of labour has necessitated provision of an additional £43,000 for salaries and wages, whilst the higher costs associated with operation of this department require the provision of £20,000 for general office expenses, reimbursement of travelling expenses etc., £14,000 for Adelaide sewers, and £8,000 for maintenance work in connection with the Morgan-Whyalla water scheme.

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

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—An amount of £18,319 is provided to refund to the Broken Hill Proprietary Limited an amount paid by the company in excess of the correct amount due for water usage. This overpayment occurred as a result of a defective meter measuring water drawn off at Whyalla, and the refund now made covers overpayments over a period of five or six years.

ABORIGINES DEPARTMENT, £15,000.—This increase is brought about, in so far as the £10,000 for "Provisions" is concerned, by the decision of the Aborigines Protection Board to grant relief on a scale similar to the Public Relief Department to unemployed natives. At Point McLeay heavy expenditure has been incurred in reconditioning and repairing tractors and other farm implements in an endeavour to provide facilities for putting greater areas to pasture and, in addition, an increased scale of rations has been on issue to natives on the Station. The sum of £5,000 is provided for this purpose.

PUBLIC WORKS, £106,000.—In the years which have succeeded the termination of World War II the Government has been faced with a very difficult problem as regards maintenance of Government buildings in that it has proved very difficult to let maintenance contracts because of labour and material shortages. This problem has been heightened by the fact that accommodation shortages have forced the Government to make use of timber-framed structures in many instances. These timber-framed structures have met many problems very admirably but they constitute a constant and recurring maintenance problem. During the current year the Architect-in-Chief has found a greater readiness among contractors to tender for these maintenance jobs and the result is that some arrears of maintenance have been overtaken. The funds originally provided are exhausted and the additional

moneys are required to carry on with maintenance, as under:—

	£
Education buildings	14,000
Hospital buildings	39,000
Police and Courthouse buildings . .	14,000
Other Government buildings (which includes all Government offices)	39,000

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, £51,500.—This amount is required to meet increased costs associated with the Education Department. The sum of £19,000 is required for salaries for additional teachers engaged since the Budget was submitted, and the following amounts are needed for the purposes set out for the various schools:—

Primary schools: £12,000 for subsidies and for the cost of swimming campaign.

Boys and girls technical schools: £4,000 for subsidies and for cost of swimming campaign.

Technical education of apprentices: £2,000 for purchase of additional material and equipment.

High schools: £4,000 for subsidies and for cost of swimming campaign.

Visual aid section: £3,000 for the purchase of additional documentary films.

In addition £2,500 is provided to meet the cost of bringing additional teachers from England, and £5,000 to meet payroll tax on salaries and wages over and above the amount provided for in the Budget.

MINISTER OF EDUCATION, MISCELLANEOUS, £74,200.—Grants made to the University and the School of Mines are made on the basis of a budget submitted by these institutions for each calendar year and approved by the Government. The amount of £55,000 now provided as an additional general purpose grant to the University of Adelaide and the £10,000 to the School of Mines and Industries for payment of salaries and expenses of management are additional to the grants authorized by the Estimates which were passed by this House with the Budget. These amounts are necessary to carry on educational work at both the University and the School of Mines until the end of the current financial year. When the Budget was dealt with by the House a grant of £100,000 was authorized for the Kindergarten Union of South Australia. I have received an urgent request from the Kindergarten Union for a further grant for this financial year, and the Government has decided to make provision for an additional amount of £9,200 for this purpose. The Kindergarten Union carries out a very necessary part of the education system; the salaries of its teachers have been increased and its activities

have been greatly expanded over the last few years.

DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, £17,000.—The sum of £5,000 is required for salaries for positions filled in this department since the Budget. The principal item concerns expenses in connection with bringing appointees to the Public Service to Adelaide from overseas and interstate, and £12,000 is provided for this purpose. In the main these appointees are professional men, engineers, architects, and draftsmen required to fill vacancies in the Public Service which could not be filled from persons in South Australia.

AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT, £10,000.—During the summer just past a further outbreak of Queensland fruit fly occurred at Unley, but fortunately prompt preventive measures avoided a widespread infestation. Provision is made in this Bill to meet the costs associated with that preventive action.

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, MISCELLANEOUS, £40,000.—The grant for the Waite Agricultural Research Institute is actually paid through the University on a budget submitted by the Council of the University. The grant now provided, viz., £25,000, is in addition to the amount provided in the Budget Estimates, which amounted to £90,000, and is required to meet the expenses of the Waite Agricultural Research Institute until the end of the present financial year. An additional £15,000 is required for payments associated with the destruction of noxious insects in connection with the grasshopper campaign.

MINES DEPARTMENT, £56,000.—The sum of £56,000 is required for the Mines Department in addition to the amount originally provided in the Budget Estimates. Additional drilling has been carried out at the Middleback Ranges in exploration of iron ore deposits. The drilling results outside the B.H.P. leases are encouraging. Scout drill holes are being put down on Yorke Peninsula in connection with oil exploration which is being carried out by the department. Provision has also been made for drilling and testing uranium prospects within the State. I move the adoption of the first line.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

REPORTS OF PUBLIC WORKS STANDING COMMITTEE.

The SPEAKER laid on the table reports by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works on West Terrace trunk main, Royal Adelaide Hospital—McEwin Building additions (final), Royal Adelaide Hospital

radiotherapy treatment block (final), Croydon Park Extension primary school and Elizabeth (Area 2) primary school, together with minutes of evidence.

Ordered that reports be printed.

REPORTS OF LAND SETTLEMENT COMMITTEE.

The SPEAKER laid on the table reports by the Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement on land development in the hundreds of Monbulla and Macgillivray.

QUESTIONS.

HOUSING TRUST PROGRAMME.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—In his opening speech His Excellency the Governor said that the South Australian Housing Trust expects to complete about 3,200 houses during 1955-1956, and that it will build about 3,000 houses during the next financial year. He also said that any reduction in the houses built for letting would be offset by its building more houses for sale. Can the Premier inform me how many of these homes will be built in the new town of Elizabeth and how many in the metropolitan area, and whether there will probably be any increase in the rates of interest charged home builders?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There is a paragraph dealing with this matter in the Governor's Speech. At present the whole question of renewal of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement is in the air. In the new agreement, the Commonwealth submitted to the States two or three requirements that it desired to be considered, since it is finding the money. Two conferences have been held; the last broke down because some of the States rejected the Commonwealth's proposals outright. The Commonwealth proposed to make the money available to the States at an interest rate three-quarters of a per cent below the bond interest rate. At present the bond interest rate is approximately five per cent, so the money would be made available at four and a quarter per cent. The Commonwealth also required that a number of houses be provided for defence force establishments and some of the money allocated to building societies for building houses for sale. As I say, some States, including New South Wales, rejected those proposals out of hand. As a consequence, whereas we have been enjoying £30,000,000 a year for housing, the arrangements for next year's programme are not yet finalized.

The remarks in the Governor's Speech about the housing programme are based on the assumption that we shall ultimately get the States to agree to a satisfactory housing agreement; otherwise we would be forced to provide for our housing programme out of our normal Loan expenditures, and in that case the amounts available to the States would probably be much less than previously. However, I am optimistic that we will have another housing agreement. This State has always built a good proportion of houses for sale, in excess of what the Commonwealth desires, and has always given some assistance to the Commonwealth for defence establishments. Therefore, I believe that the two points of requirement can be met in this State without difficulty. The matter that gives us more concern is that there has been a slight increase in the interest rate, and so far the total volume of the programme has not been finalized.

GOVERNMENT OFFICES.

Mr. LAWN—What is the Government's intention with regard to office accommodation for its various departments? Does it intend to continue having offices scattered around the city, or is that a temporary arrangement because of shortage of accommodation, and is it the ultimate intention to extend office accommodation at Victoria Square?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government intends providing as good office accommodation for the Public Service as possible and at the cheapest possible cost to the taxpayer. At present, as I have already stated, it is not within the power of the Government to provide the enormous sums that would be involved in erecting a tall building of the type proposed for Victoria Square. Its cost would put it outside the range of the Government's Budget unless we cut down severely upon housing or school buildings or other essential services. We propose to occupy Foy and Gibson's building to consolidate our departments conveniently, but not to occupy the ground floor shop frontages. This accommodation will be much cheaper and more advantageous than anything we could build at present. We have long-range plans for a large office block in Victoria Square, but before we could undertake that we would have to be able to vacate the present buildings that are occupied in Victoria Square and demolish them.

Mr. RICHES—Two things have puzzled me as a result of the Premier's reply. If accommodation has to be built by the

Government there must of necessity be an inquiry by the Public Works Committee. Can the Premier say whether there is a committee to which the purchase of a building has to be referred? When a building costing more than £100,000 is contemplated we require a report from the Public Works Committee, but apparently the Government can spend over £500,000 in purchasing a building without any inquiry by a committee. The second point deals with the free water supply to the City of Adelaide. I am interested to know the circumstances surrounding the supply of free water. I think country municipalities would be interested in the matter.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Under Act of Parliament the Public Works Committee inquires into any public work to be undertaken by the Government if the cost exceeds £100,000. I think that is a residue of the days when it was fashionable—it is not so now—for members to advocate all sorts of extravagant works in their district, purely from the point of view of those districts getting the advantage of having public works established in them. I think it was first the Railways Standing Committee, which dealt more particularly with the problem of putting railways through land which might be owned by certain sections of the community. It was provided that public moneys should not be spent with the object of benefiting certain persons. With regard to the purchase of property, the Government has a Land Board and certain other authorities that advise in connection with the matter. There is also an acquisition committee that is called upon frequently to express views as to whether the Government should buy land for future requirements whilst the price is right. In areas where the Housing Trust is to operate it is desirable for the Government to make early provision for schools and other buildings, although they may not be immediately required. A committee has been appointed by the Government to study this type of thing. I do not want to dampen the honourable member's ardour, but the free supply of water to the City of Adelaide arises from the fact that in the early days of this State, before the Government took on the supply of water, the Adelaide council had a small private supply from the Thorndon Park Reservoir which served the Adelaide district. When the Government took over the supply of water for the State it agreed to take over this small supply and to supply the City of Adelaide with water free of cost. That has

been done notwithstanding the enormous increase in the demand for water, and I think the Government has added for good luck the sewerage of the city area as well. It is a residue of a matter of long standing and it is being honoured to an extent which was not dreamed of when the agreement was made.

Mr. LAWN—Can the Chairman of the Public Works Committee give me details of any project before his committee for the provision of additional Government office accommodation, and also can he give me the cost of such building and also the area of floor space?

Mr. SHANNON (Chairman, Public Works Standing Committee)—I got my secretary to give me the relative costs of varying proposals for this project which have been supplied by the Architect-in-Chief. The space for each floor is 90ft. x 100ft. For the Wakefield Street project, three floors of offices with parking space on the ground floor would cost £239,080; three floors of offices and no parking space, £210,450; five floors of offices and parking space on the ground floor, £311,750; and five floors of offices without any parking facilities, £284,680. The committee is preparing its report, and I hope it will be ready in the near future.

Mr. LAWN—I noticed in a press statement that at a meeting of the Adelaide City Council it was alleged that there would be a loss of rates to the council as a result of the Government's taking over Foy and Gibson's building, with a consequent heavier burden on other ratepayers. The Premier indicated this afternoon that the ground floor of this building will still be let as a shopping centre, and that rates will still be payable. Can the Premier say what the position will be with regard to rates when the Government takes complete control of this building?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government each year makes large grants of money to the city council and other corporations and councils throughout the State. In making those grants it takes into account the amount of Government owned non-ratable property in each district. Port Adelaide, for example, receives a substantial grant because the Government owns the wharves there and those wharves are not rate producing. Some years ago the Adelaide City Council asked me to examine its financial position, and as a result a special grant was made. I think the amount was £19,000 a year. I believe that it is most generously treated, and I do not

believe it has any case for additional assistance. However, in the same way that we have always considered the matter in the past it will be examined in the future, and if there are any disabilities which are not experienced in other districts we will do something about it. As far as I know the Adelaide City Council receives more generous treatment than any other corporation or council in the whole of South Australia, and I believe that if the position were examined very closely it could result in lesser grants in the future.

MOUNT BARKER ROAD.

Mr. SHANNON—The section of the Mount Barker Road to Crafers Summit is undergoing alterations, and in some parts new tracks are being laid, but there are still a number of places where bottlenecks are encountered. I am pleased that the local council at Stirling has taken up this matter with the Minister, but I should like the Government to consider prohibiting the use of that section of the Prince's Highway by heavy interstate hauliers on Sundays and public holidays. This has been done for some time in Victoria and I noticed in the newspapers recently that New South Wales is following suit. It is mostly on the section to Crafers Summit that there is serious trouble, though the prohibition I have mentioned might be made to apply a little farther along the road right through the built-up area. There is also another factor that I think the Government should consider. This matter has been considered by the Police Traffic Committee and, I think, by the State Traffic Committee, namely, one of the major problems during peak periods on that section of the road is the difficulty of overtaking heavy hauliers, particularly when two of them gang up and run head to tail. I believe the Police Traffic Committee recommended that there should be a specified distance which such vehicles shall observe.

The SPEAKER—I think the honourable member should ask his question.

Mr. SHANNON—I am asking the Premier to consider the prohibition of heavy vehicles on the Mount Barker Road on Sundays and public holidays and that such vehicles should observe some suitable distance between each other.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government has looked at the problem on this road, which probably constitutes a greater traffic problem than any other road leading eastward from Adelaide. There have been a number of

recommendations and one has been partly carried out, which is the duplication of certain sections of the road. Another recommendation was that the road from Uraidla through Carey Gully to Balhannah should be modernised and bituminised to divert much of the Onkaparinga Valley traffic to the Greenhill Road instead of coming down the Mount Barker Road, and that work has been approved. I do not know whether the State Traffic Committee has made any special study of the problem mentioned by the honourable member, but if it has not I will have his question referred to it.

WATER AND SEWERAGE RATES.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—During the last few weeks I have had dozens of complaints from constituents in the Salisbury area regarding the amounts charged for sewerage and water rates, particularly in comparison with what they paid last year. For instance, one man who paid just over £3 last year has had a bill of £21 for this year. Other people living close to him in similar houses have had accounts such as £22, £28 and £18. Can the Minister of Works say whether I am correct in assuming that these increases are the result of a new assessment—not an increased rate—and if so, can he tell me the reason for these much higher assessments and also the reason for the variations in charges for similar houses that are adjacent?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—A similar request has been received from the local council and I have had a lengthy reply prepared which I intend to be directed to the honourable member. I think that that reply will explain the position to him. Some of the areas are within the metropolitan area and some outside and that requires some line of demarcation, and the honourable member was one of a committee that recommended differential charges in respect of sewerage in particular.

Mr. John Clark—But that would not account for a difference of £7 between houses next to each other.

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—There has been a re-assessment in every case right throughout the metropolitan area over a period, and of course some people have had their assessments increased very considerably but there has not been a higher rate. There are two factors involved—assessment and rate. One member of the council in the honourable member's district alleged that the rate was an average of £25, which, of course, is extraordinarily high for water and sewerage, but I think the highest is £21 or £22, and many go

much lower. I will let the honourable member have the reply that I have prepared tomorrow, and if he wants to address any further questions I shall be happy to try and satisfy him as regards the justice of the charges.

ABATTOIRS FOR WALLAROO.

Mr. HEATH—Can the Premier inform the House of the position regarding the Kadina Meatworks project at Wallaroo?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The company negotiated with the Government and asked for certain meat quotas in the metropolitan area. Those quotas were granted and the company stated its intention of constructing an abattoirs at Wallaroo. It negotiated with the firm that has the lease of the old distillery works, but subsequently advised the Government that because of the collapse of the export market it was no longer prepared to go ahead with a killing centre in the country, notwithstanding that it had a generous quota of metropolitan sales. The Government would be anxious to sponsor this project and has asked Mr. Rice, chairman of the Government Produce Department, to investigate to see whether it is possible for a sound project to be evolved, but his report has not yet been received.

INDUSTRIES FOR MURRAY BRIDGE.

Mr. BYWATERS—About 12 months ago a local industries committee was formed to investigate the advantages of establishing secondary industries at Murray Bridge. That committee has worked hard and collated much evidence to support claims for industries there. Murray Bridge is an excellent place for the purpose, as is borne out in a brochure that was prepared by that committee and which would be of great interest to persons interested in establishing industries in this State. Would the Premier be prepared to place this information before such persons?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It has always been the Government's practice, if industries are making investigations relating to the establishment or expansion of their works in South Australia, to place before their notice all the advantages that may exist in country areas. The Government has no power to compel an industry to establish in any place, or at the present time to prevent an industry from being established. In the past consideration has been given to Murray Bridge and two industries have been established there as a result, one of them involving Government financial support. Murray Bridge has had the type of assistance the honourable member has suggested and it will be continued.

PORT PIRIE HARBOUR IMPROVEMENTS.

Mr. DAVIS—About 12 months ago I was informed by the Government that it intended spending about £1,500,000 on deepening the harbour and renovating the wharves at Port Pirie and the matter was referred to the Public Works Committee. Can the chairman of that committee inform the House whether it has completed taking evidence and, if not, when it will?

Mr. SHANNON—This matter has been the subject of close examination by my committee and a decision has been reached and conveyed to the Minister concerned relating to the deepening of the channel and the deepening and broadening of the swinging basin in the harbour to accommodate larger ships in the harbour proper. From the information I have had it is obvious that any improvements to the wharves to accommodate larger ships would be premature at this stage. We were informed that it would be wiser for the deepening to be proceeded with before undertaking the question of accommodation in the inner harbour. I can assure the member that my committee has not lost sight of the urgency of this work. We appreciate the need of Port Pirie being improved as a deep sea port and the inner harbour will receive our early attention.

MOORAK AND O.B. FLAT WATER SUPPLIES.

Mr. CORCORAN—Moorak and O.B. Flats are served from the Mount Gambier water supply, but although the supply in the Blue Lake is unlimited the means of conveying water to the various holdings around Mount Gambier are not up to date. I have been informed that the main is not sufficiently large. Can the Minister of Works indicate whether anything can be done to remedy that position before next summer?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—The Public Works Department receives annually from the Treasury about £7,000,000 which is expended to the best advantage, giving to those who deserve it most. We are trying to supply those who have not a water supply before we make improvements to those who have, even though they may only have low pressures. The member for Mount Gambier will no doubt agree that his district has received a fair share of the expenditure, and we must examine other areas before we extend further benefits to that district. If the honourable member will let me know exactly what parts he refers to I will investigate whether they should take precedence over some

other areas. Every job undertaken today is at the expense of some other job—either on the question of men, materials or money.

QUESTIONS ON OPENING DAY.

Mr. JENNINGS—I desire to ask you, Sir, whether there is anything in the Standing Orders of this House which prevents members on the Government side asking questions at question time on Opening Day?

The SPEAKER—There is nothing in the Standing Orders to prevent that.

NEW BRIDGE AT BLANCHETOWN.

Mr. KING—I desire to ask a question with regard to river crossings on the road to Renmark. There is still a great deal of traffic congestion, and we are anxiously awaiting the report of the Public Works Committee with regard to a bridge either at Blanchetown or some other suitable place. Can the Premier tell the House when some further action is contemplated?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The construction of a bridge at Blanchetown is a major project which would cost about £500,000 or £600,000. The Government has another urgent major project with the Jervois Bridge, which is in an unsafe condition. These two projects were referred to the Public Works Committee for investigation. I believe that in the course of the inquiry the Highways Commissioner was questioned as to the urgency of the two projects, and he considered the Jervois Bridge the more urgent. As a result the Public Works Committee has, I believe, given first priority to the Jervois Bridge project. I assure the honourable member that it is the desire of the Government to improve the transportation facilities for the Upper Murray areas, and a substantial amount of work has been done on the road north of the river. A great deal of work has been done in enlarging punts, and approval has also been given for other punts where there could be no bridge in any case. That work will be proceeded with pending the receipt of a report on the desirability of a bridge.

EXPANSION OF FISHING INDUSTRY.

Mr. TAPPING—Normally my question would have been directed to the Minister of Agriculture, but as the Premier was acting in that capacity some months ago I will direct my question to him. It concerns the Jangaard brothers who came to South Australia and returned to America some time ago. In the

April, 1956, edition of *Fisheries Newsletter* the Jangaard brothers are reported as saying:—

If your fisherman can regularly find schools of tuna like the best ones we have worked on the past three weeks, the prospects of establishing a worthwhile industry here are very good. To make it a stable proposition, however, you would probably need a fleet of at least a dozen boats with a crew of six or seven, and each capable of holding up to 40 tons of tuna. These boats would have to average about two tons of fish a day in your December-July season. They could go to other States when the local season ends.

This matter is so important to the State that I ask the Premier if he will consider the appointment of an expert Committee to inquire into the report of the Jangaard brothers, as it appears that production of fish in South Australia could be trebled.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—We were fortunate indeed in having the two gentlemen invited to South Australia in connection with the tuna fishing industry. They proved to be extremely capable. They had had a life-time experience of fishing conditions in various parts of the world and they were anxious to give us the advantage of that experience by making the information available on the widest possible basis. Although their contract was to go out with only one boat from Port Lincoln, to enable as many fishermen as possible to get experience they agreed to vary the contract. In the last weeks of their stay here they went out on two ships, thus allowing fishermen from all parts of the State to have the opportunity to go out with them to see for themselves the methods used. Regarding their report, when they first came here they were doubtful whether it would be possible for fish to be caught in Australia and compete with Japanese fishermen on a world price. In America there is severe competition from Japanese fishermen who work on very much lower standards than either American or British fishermen. When Jangaard Brothers first came here they were doubtful whether it would be possible to establish a profitable tuna industry in South Australia, but as time went on, and they had experience of the occurrence of fish here, they altered their view. On the last day before leaving they had lunch with me at Parliament House and we discussed the whole question. They had come to the firm view that it would be possible for a fishing industry to be established in South Australia and they had also altered their view as to the method of establishing that industry. In America they have to go long distances for the fish and when they find a school they arrange for some of

the boats to stay with the school so that the fish are not lost. Sometimes they have to go 800 to 1,000 miles before finding a school and then they arrange for it to be shadowed by boats with wireless. When they first came here they thought it would not be possible to establish an industry unless there was a fleet of boats because that had been their experience in Pacific waters. They were amazed to find here that the fishing was so close to the port and that it would be possible to find a school of fish, and make a catch and return to port sometimes within 36 hours of first putting to sea. That, of course, was a completely new experience from what they had experienced overseas and it made them alter their views as to the financial possibilities of a tuna industry being established here and the best methods of establishing that industry. They said they believed that with the type of ship at present in South Australian waters a fishing industry could be established and they also believed that as a consequence of the catches taking place relatively small ships would become available and the industry might be built up by natural means rather than by the artificial injection of large capital into it. I have a written report from the Jangaard Bros. and I will see that it is made available to honourable members.

FISHERIES RESEARCH.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—My question relates to the purchase of the Sheridan cutter last year by the Fisheries and Game Department for fisheries research purposes. Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether a two-way wireless has been installed on the cutter and in which type of research will the boat be engaged? Will it be for shoal or surface fish, or will it be deep sea trawling? If the latter, have deep sea bottom echo-sounding instruments been installed and when will the research work commence?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I am not completely conversant with the details the honourable member seeks. However, I know that a ship is in the course of being fitted out and it is intended to be used for research in the broadest sense. I believe that echo-sounding devices are being fitted and also wireless will be provided on any vessel doing this kind of work. If the honourable member will question me again in a day or so I will ascertain the stage reached as to the equipment of this vessel.

SUBSIDIES FOR SCHOOL REFRIGERATORS.

Mr. JENNINGS—I understand that the Education Department does not subsidize school refrigerators. Many schools have them and use them for storing lunches for the children. They serve the dual purpose of providing funds for the schools and decent food for the children. Will the Minister of Education refer to Cabinet the question of subsidizing refrigerators at departmental schools?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I am willing to do so. During 1955 I approved subsidies amounting to about £75,000 to schools for various purposes, but they did not include subsidies for refrigeration, except for a few water cooling systems at certain isolated country areas where the temperatures are often very high. It would be quite easy for me either to approve or recommend to Cabinet subsidies on a wide range of items; but during the calendar year 1955 the Government paid out more than £8,500,000 from revenue and loan moneys on education, and it is just a question of what are the basic needs of education and whether a subsidy on refrigerators is one of them. Personally I do not think it is. I shall be pleased to consider the matter raised and discuss it with the Treasurer and Cabinet.

HOUSING SHORTAGE.

Mr. LAWN—In recent months I have had more inquiries for houses than since I became a member of the House in 1950. Numerous cases of hardship have been brought to my notice of where the Housing Trust seems to be in a hopeless position to meet the present housing problem. Many are being threatened with eviction. One case was brought under my notice of a mother employed as a cleaner in the Education Department who has a mentally retarded child, and it is necessary that she should be near the child so that she can look after her. She is threatened with eviction. An application has been made to the Housing Trust for a flat. Over the week-end social workers have called my attention to three cases of pensioners requiring homes. One is an aged pensioner and the other two are invalid pensioners, in each case married. In one instance the wife was bedridden and I have a certificate from a doctor showing that neither of them is in a fit condition to look for a house, and certainly not to shift their furniture. Has the Government any plans for the immediate future

to deal with the housing problem other than what has been done by the Housing Trust in recent years?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government, through its various agencies, has been building homes at a rate approximately double that of any other Australian Government. We have reached the position where all the available moneys for housing have been utilized to the very best advantage. We hope that we shall get money to continue to build. I assure the honourable member that every penny we can get for housing will be applied to the best possible advantage.

Mr. Lawn—Isn't it a fact that we are building fewer houses than we were a year ago?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The number of houses built by the trust this year has fallen slightly from last year's figure because the sum available has dropped considerably. Quite apart from the money made available through Parliamentary votes and through the Housing Agreement to the Housing Trust, we have, in order to maintain the volume of building at its present level, made available £500,000 to the trust in recent months to enable it to continue giving contracts so that its programme will not be disrupted. The trust has over-spent the moneys appropriated by Parliament this year, and by the end of the year it will have over-spent by about £500,000. The Government is doing everything possible to maintain the greatest volume of home building and in that regard the advances for purchase homes are being limited to new houses. One State has completely given up letting new contracts because of its financial position, whereas we have maintained our contracts and are continuing to maintain them. I hope that, if we can get a renewal of the Housing Agreement, we shall be able to continue our programme.

Mr. Lawn—But will you be able to build more houses?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That will depend on the volume of money available; it is purely a matter of pounds, shillings and pence. It will also depend on the number of houses we can sell. Building houses for rental involves the Government in an outlay of the total cost, whereas a house for purchase results in the Housing Trust receiving a deposit, sometimes a substantial one. That means that if we are able to sell more houses we will be able to build more. The volume of housing depends firstly on the initial amount available to us, and secondly, on how many houses are for purchase and how many for rental.

Mr. JENNINGS—Can the Treasurer say by what authority he made the £500,000 available to the Housing Trust to carry on its work in recent months?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Under the Public Finance Act—I think under section 21.

COURT OF DISPUTED RETURNS.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD moved—

That the House proceed to elect by ballot four persons to be members of the Court of Disputed Returns pursuant to sections 168 and 169 of the Electoral Act, 1929-50.

Motion carried.

A ballot having been held, the Hon. B. Pattinson and Messrs. Dunstan, Millhouse and Loveday were duly elected.

SESSIONAL COMMITTEES.

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

That a Standing Orders Committee be appointed consisting of the Speaker, Messrs. Geoffrey Clarke, O'Halloran and Quirke.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I ask that a ballot be taken because I understand from the discussion that was held that we had nominated Mr. John Clark for this Committee.

The SPEAKER—As the honourable member has asked for a ballot, it will be necessary to take one. I inform the House that the Speaker is *ex officio* a member of the Standing Orders Committee, and therefore members will vote for three other members. I ask the Treasurer to come to the table and act as scrutineer.

A ballot having been taken:

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD— I have to report, Sir, that three members have included your name on the ballot paper. I have included those ballot papers in the count, but they do not alter the result.

The SPEAKER—I indicated that members should vote for three members other than the Speaker. I rule that those ballot-papers that included my own name are out of order. As a result of the ballot the members of the Standing Orders Committee will be, in addition to the Speaker, Messrs. Geoffrey Clarke, O'Halloran and Quirke.

The following Sessional Committees were also appointed:—

Library—The Speaker, Messrs. John Clark, Millhouse and Stephens.

Printing—Messrs. Bywaters, Coumbe, Hambour, Heath and Jennings.

JOINT HOUSE COMMITTEE.

The HON. T. PLAYFORD moved—

That it be an order of this House that, in view of the creation of the Joint House Committee under the Joint House Committee Act, 1941, a Sessional House Committee be not appointed under Standing Order 404.

Motion carried.

The HON. T. PLAYFORD moved—

That, pursuant to section 4 of the Joint House Committee Act, 1941, the Speaker and Messrs. Geoffrey Clarke, Hutchens and Frank Walsh be elected members of the Joint House Committee.

Motion carried.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON SUBORDINATE
LEGISLATION.

The HON. T. PLAYFORD moved—

That the House request the concurrence of the Legislative Council in the appointment for

the present Parliament of a Joint Committee on Subordinate Legislation, intimating that Messrs. John Clark, King and Millhouse will be the representatives of the House of Assembly on the said Committee.

Motion carried.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

The HON. T. PLAYFORD moved—

That a committee consisting of Messrs. Bockelberg, Coumbe, Harding, King and the mover be appointed to prepare a draft address to His Excellency the Governor in reply to his Speech on opening Parliament, and to report on May 9.

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.15 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, May 9, at 2 p.m.