

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, May 23, 1956.

The SPEAKER (Hon. B. H. Teusner) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

### QUESTIONS.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF URANIUM FIELD.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Some time ago the Government asked for offers to develop the mine on the Mount Victoria Hut-Crocker Well uranium field. Can the Premier say whether, following on any offer, arrangements have been made for its development?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The real problems are markets and developing a mine of sufficient size to justify the capital expenditure involved in establishing a town, water supplies and all the other ancillaries necessary for a mining area. During his visit overseas the Director of Mines, on behalf of the Government, did some work on this matter and some negotiations have been carried out by the Government with overseas authorities, both before and since that time. Generally speaking, the Mount Victoria Hut project area, which is a deep mining project, appears too small to justify the capital expenditure. The project has been looked at from a number of angles, including the establishment of a treatment plant at the field or, alternatively, the road haulage of the ore to Radium Hill for treatment. The latter would be the more advantageous, but although the grade of the ore is good the size of the mine does not warrant the necessary capital expenditure on a mine and treatment plant. A fairly large deposit of ore has been found at Crocker Well, which would be an open cut project, and if sufficient additional ore could be found it would appear to be attractive from all points of view. The lode matter is irregular in its habit and appears not to persist at depth, but investigations are proceeding on that aspect. It is too early for me to indicate that a project has been worked out, but the Government is still interested and every avenue of discovering extended lode formation will be explored.

#### RABBIT DESTRUCTION.

Mr. GOLDNEY—A few years ago myxomatosis was introduced, spread amongst rabbits, and for a time proved effective, but from recent press and authoritative statements it appears to be losing its effect. I believe, however, that a poison known as "1080" has proved satisfactory in dealing with rabbits, but that being

very potent it has not been made freely available to landholders. In the circumstances will the Minister of Agriculture arrange for supplies of "1080" to be made freely available to farmers and others to destroy rabbits?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I could give a brief answer to the question, but in view of the current interest in myxomatosis and the alternative proposed, I will reply at somewhat greater length. My departmental officers and others have satisfied me that myxomatosis has become less effective than in the early stages. This morning an officer informed me that although current strains of myxomatosis appear to have lost their potency this does not mean that virulent strains are not still available. There is a strain that will kill rabbits in three days and another which the department has disseminated for use in this State and which will kill in about 12 days, but from that point onwards various strains exist that will scarcely kill within a month and in these cases many rabbits recover and thereafter are immune from further attacks by the myxomatosis virus. Immunity, however, is not passed on to their progeny. The difficulty is that the most virulent strains exist on the infected animal for only about three days; therefore the period of opportunity for dissemination by mosquitoes and other insects is short and it follows that the less virulent strains affect many more rabbits than potent strains. Therefore, as time goes on the immunization campaign will increase in its scope. It has been suggested that when a dry season occurs and the rabbit population is thereby automatically reduced it would be prudent to introduce a more virulent strain and set it to work when a good kill could be obtained.

Regarding "1080" in Tasmania and Western Australia departmental officers are employed to lay the baits, but I do not feel that that utilization of departmental officers is justified: the landholder should be capable of doing the job. The poison is very potent and the Advisory Committee of the Board of Health has therefore been somewhat reluctant to approve its being easily obtainable. However, I am assured by those competent to express an opinion that in the form in which it has been released, that is, sprayed on cereals, mainly oats, it is a no more virulent poison than hundreds of others to which the public has access. Therefore, it seems that there is a case for an approach to the health authorities for it to be made much more readily available to landholders, and I propose to discuss this with the authorities concerned.

### LAW ON FIREARMS.

Mr. JENNINGS—Can the Premier say whether the Government has considered tightening up controls on the purchase and use of firearms and ammunition? Recent events have shown there is a good case for amending the legislation.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The use of firearms falls into two categories. The first is their criminal use, and in such a case it is presumed that the firearm was not registered, or if registered, the owner could not be identified. It is already illegal to carry such weapons without a licence, and licences can only be obtained by accredited persons, so I think the legislation in that respect could not be made more effective. However, I will ask the Commissioner of Police whether he can make any suggestions. The other category is the rather promiscuous use of firearms, to the danger of the public, by people using them for sporting purposes. This question has been examined on a number of occasions and it has even been suggested that it be made unlawful to carry firearms at all, but whether it is possible to tighten control in a sensible way it is difficult to say. The Government has also had requests from landowners for the prohibition of use of firearms. It has a fair amount of information available and may bring down this session some legislation on the use of firearms for sporting purposes, and the types of firearms that may be used, but a decision has not yet been reached.

### CIVIL DEFENCE.

Mr. JENKINS—In a previous session I asked the Premier what steps had been taken regarding civil defence in South Australia. He replied that a committee had been set up by the Commonwealth Government to report to the Minister for Defence, and I saw recently that a report had been furnished. Can the Premier indicate the contents of the report and how it will affect civil defence in South Australia?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—We have not made much progress in civil defence, for it is extremely difficult to assess what type of attack is likely to be made in any part of Australia. The combined services have from time to time considered that problem, but there does not seem to be any clear thinking on what we could expect under certain conditions, so it is hard to say what precise steps in South Australia are justifiable. Civil defence is extremely costly, being wasteful in materials and manpower, and it is undesirable to take steps that may ultimately prove unnecessary. We are seeking

clarification of what is expected from State authorities. The Commonwealth Government has gone ahead with its proposals for training key personnel, and active steps in that regard are now being taken.

### CHELTENHAM TRAM ROUTE.

Mr. COUMBE—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked last week regarding the conversion of the tram route to Cheltenham, which passes through portion of my electorate in North Adelaide?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I do not think this question comes within the immediate intention of the Tramways Trust, but in the next two years it is purposed to run a bus route along the existing tramway route. I will get further details for the honourable member.

### RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN STATE SCHOOLS.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—During the past few months several press statements have been published about the possibility of altering the present procedure in schools in regard to religious instruction. Can the Premier say whether any change in policy is contemplated?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government desires to facilitate religious instruction in State schools provided the various denominations can agree on what further steps should be taken. There has been no difficulty from the point of view of the Government making schools available; the difficulty arises from a difference of opinion on what form any extension of religious instruction should take. The Government could not expand religious instruction if important elements of the community were opposed to it. We have always taken the view that our schools should not be used for propounding denominational tenets. The Government is prepared to accede to a request for extension provided the main religious organizations agree on the form.

### PORT AUGUSTA WEST JETTY.

Mr. RICHES—The Port Augusta West jetty, which has long been promised repair, has now reached such a state of deterioration that it is regarded as dangerous. Port Augusta people have been waiting for several years for the Harbors Board to make the promised renovations. They were rather concerned to notice that such renovations were omitted from a list of harbor works in Spencers Gulf outlined by the department earlier this year. It is not a big job, but it is important. Will the Minister of Works confer with the Harbors Board

with a view to having this work put in hand early, and advise me when it is anticipated that the work will be commenced?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I do not like to be facetious, but if the work is so urgent it is remarkable that I have heard nothing of it either from the honourable member or the people of Port Augusta or Port Augusta West.

Mr. Riches—I don't know if you know what goes on in your own department, but your department has heard about it.

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I know what goes on here, and the honourable member has been in a position to ask questions. He only raises these questions when he intends to follow them up with a speech.

Mr. Riches—The department has promised to do the work.

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—If the jetty has been so neglected, it is remarkable that the honourable member in all these years has not drawn my attention to it. I would like to know who uses the jetty, and for what purpose it is used, and why the honourable member has so neglected the interests of the district that he has not communicated the matter to me earlier. I will take the matter up with the Harbors Board immediately and obtain an answer.

#### NEW BERRI PUMPING STATION.

Mr. KING—Can the Minister of Lands indicate what progress has been made towards the building of the proposed new pumping station at Berri?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Plans and specifications have been prepared and the building will begin in the near future. I will get full details and let the honourable member have them.

#### ISLINGTON RAILWAY FIRE.

Mr. HUTCHENS—It has been rumoured that a fire occurred at Islington and that one of the new diesel electric trains nearing completion was burned. Will the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Railways, ascertain whether that rumour is true and, if so, the cause of the fire and the extent of the damage?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I will obtain the information as early as possible.

#### COMMONWEALTH BANK BUS STOP.

Mr. LAWN—Last year I asked the Premier a question concerning the bus stop in front of the Commonwealth Bank in King William

Street. I queried whether that stop could not be more conveniently situated, and the Premier said he would have investigations made. Has he anything to report?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The question of traffic control in Adelaide is vested in the Corporation of Adelaide. I understand the honourable member is close to that council at the moment on a number of matters and, under those circumstances, he is no doubt better instructed on this matter than I am. When the question was previously raised I did take the matter up and I will ascertain what eventuated, but probably the honourable member could get the information much more rapidly than I.

#### EYRE PENINSULA ROAD TRANSPORT.

Mr. BOCKELBERG—Can the Premier explain why interstate hauliers are permitted to travel from the eastern States to Western Australian and back, while South Australian hauliers are obliged to obtain permission to carry goods from such districts as central and upper Eyre Peninsula, which are not connected directly by rail with the city? Will some consideration be given to carriers in those districts?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The reason interstate carriers are permitted to operate without control is that the State Government has no constitutional control over them. It is true that there is no rail connection between Eyre Peninsula and the remainder of the State, but it is equally true that it would be impossible to maintain steamer services to Eyre Peninsula if the higher-priced traffic was bled off to road transport. It is the Government's opinion that it is necessary to maintain steamer services and as a result it is essential to ensure that there is a sufficient volume of transport to permit their continued operation. If we were in a position to maintain roads without worrying about costs and did not have the heavier and more costly lines to take to Eyre Peninsula I do not think there would be justification for the continuance of control on road movement there; but Eyre Peninsula rapidly becomes disrupted if steamer services are discontinued. It is really a question of whether sufficient protection should be provided to enable the continuance of steamer services or whether Eyre Peninsula is in a position to dispense with them. If the honourable member has any particular views on the matter they will receive the Government's earnest consideration.

# OIL REFINERY FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Mr. TAPPING—On May 10 I asked the Premier a question concerning the proposed establishment of an oil refinery in South Australia and he promised to let the House know more when negotiations had proceeded further. Has he anything further to report?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—All oil companies, for some reason best known to themselves, desire that their communications be regarded as confidential and I am not in a position to discuss publicly or privately their views upon this matter. In my opinion the negotiations are proceeding favourably. No actual decision has been made for any company to establish a refinery in South Australia, but from communications I have received, both from within Australia and abroad, I know that earnest consideration is being given to such a project. Whether it will ultimately eventuate depends upon a number of factors, but I believe that there are hopeful prospects.

# FULHAM PARK GARDENS TRANSPORT.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Representations have been made to me by a number of residents in the Fulham Park Gardens area, which is in my new electoral district, concerning the lack of transport. The area is being extensively developed and that will continue from now on. I understand the Tramways Trust intends to ultimately take the bus service down the Grange Road to Henley Beach, but at present the terminus is at the junction of Tapley's Hill Road and Grange Road. In order that they can be adequately transported to and from their work and other places, including the city, the people desire that the bus service should be extended three quarters of a mile down the Grange Road to what is known as the junction of the Beach Road, running diagonally from the Grange Road. If that could be done it would satisfy their needs for some time. People in Henley Beach and Grange have adequate transport by means of tram and rail services, but these other people are far removed from any form of transport. Will the Minister of Works take up the matter with the Tramways Trust with a view to having sympathetic and serious consideration given to extending the present bus service as requested?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—Immediately I get the approved transcript of the honourable member's question I will send it to the Tramways Trust for a reply. I do not think it will be to hand before the House adjourns, but as soon as possible thereafter I shall write to the honourable member in reply.

# ONKAPARINGA VALLEY WATER SCHEME.

Mr. SHANNON—Mr. Premier, in the coming year's Loan programme what provision does the Government propose for the progress expected to be made with the Onkaparinga Valley water scheme?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Loan programme cannot yet be finalized because the amount of money available to the Loan Council will not be known until the end of June this year. Through the Engineering and Water Supply Department the Government already has a number of commitments that are proceeding. They are fairly heavy major works and involve considerable sums of money. They include the Yorke Peninsula scheme, the completion of the Mannum-Adelaide scheme, and the completion of the dam to serve the new town of Elizabeth. I hope sufficient money will be found this year to enable a start to be made on the Onkaparinga Valley scheme. For some time the Government has been pumping water from underground supplies in the area for the Nairne Pyrites field and the Woodside Camp. As a result they have been seriously depleted. This is having a marked effect on the production of the district, which to a large extent depends on irrigation for potato crops. It is hoped that sufficient progress will be made at least to link up the end of the present Mannum-Adelaide pipeline with the pipeline running through to Nairne, which at the outset would relieve the underground supplies, and to make some extensions in the local areas concerned. I hope substantial progress can be made in next year's Estimates when some of the present heavy commitments will have been attended to.

# PORT PIRIE HOUSING TRUST SHOPS.

Mr. DAVIS—The Housing Trust has built four shops in a shopping centre in the new Housing Trust area in Risdon Park, Port Pirie. They are situated on the corner of Balmoral Road and Robinson Street. The downpipes from the shops run out to the edge of the footpath under the verandah of the shops. There is a space of about 45ft. leading to the water table of Balmoral Road. At present the waterpipes run into earthen drains and in very wet weather the place becomes a quagmire. At the back of the building water is run on to a concrete surface and then into Robinson Street, making it most difficult for the occupiers of the shops to get into their back yards. At the front of the shops it is only with great difficulty

that people can get in. Will the Premier take up the matter with the Housing Trust to see if it is intended to surface the areas I have mentioned?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The question of drainage in any area is normally one under the jurisdiction of the local council. I shall take up the matter with His Worship the Mayor of Port Pirie to see what can be done.

Mr. DAVIS—Mr. Speaker, I object to the answer given to me by the Premier. I am entitled to a decent and civil answer. The property belongs to the Housing Trust and not to the council and it is the trust's responsibility to see that it is properly drained. There is no responsibility on the council.

#### SOUTH-EAST FISHING FACILITIES.

Mr. CORCORAN—Last night, in the Address in Reply debate, I mentioned that the *Tancred* belonging to the Harbors Board had proceeded to Southend for the purpose of taking soundings in connection with a deep sea port in the South-East. Whilst it was there I introduced a deputation representing fishermen and requested the chairman of the Harbors Board to consider recommending the erection of a jetty. Mr. Meyer promised that he would in due course send an officer of the board to Southend to make an inspection and confer with the people interested in the erection of a jetty. Can the Minister of Marine say whether an inspection has been made by an officer, whether a decision was reached with the local people and, if so what has transpired in the matter?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—The question of the extension of fishing facilities has been one of great difficulty because of various contending interests. The Premier has taken an intensive interest in the matter and received a deputation in the South-East, and in consequence of that visit the policy of the Government is that in future the allocation of Loan funds for the Fisheries Department will be under the control of the Department of Agriculture, the Harbors Board being merely the constructing authority. In pursuance of that policy both the Agriculture and the Harbors Board Departments have been collaborating on how the money available from current Loan funds will be spent. I have had conversations with the Premier on policy and with my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, on the allocation of the funds, and until the amount of Loan funds available is known and the allocation decided I can say nothing further.

#### COUNTRY ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.

Mr. QUIRKE—At various times this session members have asked questions about country electricity supplies. Can the Premier say whether a reply to those questions will be available before the House adjourns till later in the year?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—With the assistance of the Electricity Trust I have had prepared considerable information which will be made available when I reply in the current debate on the Address in Reply. It is a fairly lengthy and considered reply and should be of interest to all members as it answers questions about policy and will enable members to appreciate the problems involved and how they can best be met.

#### SEARCH FOR OIL.

Mr. FLETCHER—Can the Premier say whether any company is making a serious search for oil in the South-East and whether the Mines Department is being kept fully informed of the progress of the search?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—As the result of rather favourable indications in several places there is at present an intense interest by oil companies, and as far as I know, the only area not under some form of licence is that which includes Eyre Peninsula and the St. Vincent Gulf areas. I understand that the South-East and other parts of the State, including parts of the Woomera Rocket Range, are under licence. One of the conditions of all licences is that the holder shall keep the Government informed on all aspects of the investigation and I have made it quite clear to oil companies with whom I have discussed this matter that the Government will insist on the fullest information being made available to it at all times and will take a most hostile view of any information made public merely as propaganda to induce people to speculate in oil to an extent that would not be warranted by fact and thereby to waste money on futile projects. It has made it quite clear that the companies must make public only the actual facts on their projects.

#### BUS STOPS.

Mr. TAPPING—Today's *Advertiser* contains the following report:—

S.M. Criticizes M.T.T. on Bus Stops.—The Municipal Tramways Trust had shown little imagination in selecting bus stopping places on the Port road in particular, said Mr. L. D. Hunkin, S.M., in the Woodville Police Court,

sitting at Thebarton, yesterday. He made comments on the M.T.T. while dealing with alleged driving offences at intersections along the Port road. In convicting one motorist for having failed to give way to a vehicle on his right, the magistrate said, "Buses usually stop immediately before an intersection, as at the corner of Woodville and Port roads. They should uniformly stop after crossing an intersection, not just before reaching it."

A similar case in the Port Adelaide district was brought to my notice a couple of years ago when people there objected to the bus stopping before the intersection of Hart and Carlisle Streets, Glanville. I was supported by the Port Adelaide City Council in overtures to the Tramways Trust, but after two approaches the trust refused to rectify the matter. As this is a serious matter, can the Minister of Works suggest what steps could be taken to protect the public against the hazard that may exist because of this practice?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I will send a copy of the honourable member's question to the Tramways Trust and ask for a full investigation. As the House may not be sitting when the reply comes to hand I will probably send it to him by letter.

#### EVICION OF RAILWAY WORKER'S WIDOW.

Mr. JENNINGS—Has the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Railways, a reply to my recent question about the eviction of a railway worker's widow from a departmental house?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I said earlier that I did not think the Railways Department or any other Government department would be guilty of anything approaching inhumane conduct, and the fact is that the husband of this lady having been killed, an officer of the Railways Department on April 27, sent her the following letter:—

The Railways Commissioner has allowed a period of grace in this respect but finds it necessary to give you formal notice that you must vacate the premises not later than May 26, 1956.

The lady wrote immediately afterwards, and her letter was well phrased, but I will not read it. The Railways Commissioner's secretary replied on May 3, and his letter will dispel any suggestion that any hardship was intended. He stated:—

It is regretted that the notice to vacate the departmental cottage was sent to you, as the intention of the Railways Commissioner was that you should have reasonable time to find other accommodation. Please, therefore, disregard the date given you in the Chief Engineer's letter.

That was a fine gesture. The letter proceeds:—

You will, of course, appreciate our need to regain possession of this house, and we trust that you will be able to find other accommodation in the not distant future. The matter will be reviewed in three months. Will you please accept the sympathy of the Commissioner and myself in your bereavement.

Of course, these houses are wanted for essential purposes of the railways. The fact that the secretary to the Railways Commissioner asked that the Chief Engineer's letter be disregarded indicates the very humane treatment that was, and I hope always will be, meted out to widows.

#### SPEED LIMITS IN BUILT UP AREAS.

Mr. HAMBOUR—Has the Government any control over the speed of trains or railway vehicles over crossings in built up areas, in particular through the middle of country towns, and does the Road Traffic Act apply to those vehicles?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Road Traffic Act applies to the whole of the State. The speed limit under the Act is 35 miles an hour in built up areas, and that applies in country towns. Under the Local Government Act councils have power to regulate parking. The Adelaide City Council has exercised that authority, but many councils have not.

#### RAILWAY TIMETABLES.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Railways a reply to the question I asked last week about the impossibility of obtaining railway timetables?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—There seems to be some confusion, for in a report the Deputy Railways Commissioner says that public time table folders are available at ticket offices at a cost of one shilling and that the last issue was in May, 1954. At present there are about 1,700 unsold copies still available for sale. Since the issue of that time table the new country rail cars and suburban cars have come into operation, and there have necessarily been amendments to the timetable, all of which have been advertised in the press. It is expected that a new time table will be issued during August and this, of course, will be up-to-date. In view of that report I can only conclude that some people have been refused time tables because some sagacious officer said that the time table on hand was out of date and suggested that it would not be worth while to buy one. It has been stated that it is not possible to buy a time table, yet there are 1,700 available, so there is a direct contradiction there.

Mr. John Clark—I tried to buy one in Adelaide.

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I have tried to explain the position. Perhaps an officer said that the present time table might be misleading and did not desire it to be sold.

#### POWER OVER PARKLANDS.

Mr. LAWN—Can the Premier say whether the Adelaide City Council has the sole authority over the use of the parklands or has Parliament any say in this matter?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The parklands are vested in the Adelaide City Council for use for recreation. That means that the council has full control, but that power could be taken away or modified by Parliament at any time. Crown Law officers have advised that the authority of the council would not permit it to alienate the parklands from the purposes for which they have been vested in it. They also reported that a long term lease of a large area for another oval that would require to be fenced off would not be within its authority. Such a lease, as with the Adelaide Oval lease, would have to be approved by Parliament.

#### DISMAL SWAMP LAND.

Mr. CORCORAN—The latter portion of paragraph 12 of the Governor's Speech stated:—

The Government is also negotiating with the Victorian Government for the drainage of the Dismal Swamp area into the Glenelg River. These schemes may ultimately add greatly to the agricultural production of the South-East.

Does the Government intend purchasing the Dismal Swamp area for closer settlement? I am sure that considerable benefit would follow closer settlement. What steps would be taken to compensate land owners if land were acquired?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—A considerable time ago this matter was discussed by Victorian and South Australian officers. Many difficulties were involved in the project, but they have since been more or less overcome. I am awaiting further information from Victorian officers concerning arrangements for another conference to ascertain what can be done.

#### INSURANCE OF HOME PURCHASERS.

Mr. TAPPING—It was announced last week that some finance companies propose insuring people who purchase goods under hire-purchase in order to protect them against sickness,

unemployment and death. As such a scheme would be of benefit to home purchasers, will the Premier consider some form of insurance of purchasers of homes from State authorities?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Some figures were taken out in connection with such a scheme, but it would be costly because it would involve insuring many aged people. Another State claims to have such a scheme, but inquiries revealed that it operated only to a limited extent and only when the purchasers were very young. It is a long-term operation to purchase a home, and in those circumstances the Government believes it would be better for purchasers to make their own insurance arrangements.

#### SALISBURY NORTH RAILWAY STOP.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked on May 9, concerning the provision of a built-up area at what is known as the 13-mile railway crossing?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I have received the following reply from the Railways Commissioner:—

Mr. Clark presumably refers to the stopping place known as "Nurlutta." Plans are already in hand for the provision of two short platforms, one on either side of the railway and so located as to reduce the interference with the movement of road vehicles across the level crossing to a minimum.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION: PORT AUGUSTA WEST JETTY.

Mr. RICHES—I ask leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr. RICHES—I realize that the Minister was facetious, but I feel that an unfair inference may be drawn from the Minister's reply to a question I asked about the Port Augusta West jetty unless I make a personal explanation. Negotiations between the Port Augusta Corporation and the Harbors Board regarding the reconstruction of the jetty have been proceeding for some time, and representatives of the corporation have always been met sympathetically by the board, which promised that the work would be put in hand, and the corporation has been expecting it to be carried out. However, an announcement was made a few weeks ago that certain work would be done in Spencer Gulf, and we were amazed to find that the work on the Port Augusta West jetty had been left out. That is why I asked the question.

## ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from May 22. Page 187.)

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood)—I congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, and other members who have been appointed to office and congratulate and welcome new members to this House. It is obvious from their speeches that we have a number of new and bright—if sometimes blushing—adornments to the House. I wish them all well. If I do not wish all of them a long stay, it is not, of course, from personal considerations, but from political ones. I wish to refer to two departments in the course of my remarks: firstly, to matters which fall within the ambit of the Attorney-General's Department.

In these supposedly enlightened days of the twentieth century I find it extraordinary that any community should persist in the most barbarous practice of capital punishment, because it is based on neither reason nor evidence. Since this question was last raised in this House there has been a report of an English Royal Commission upon capital punishment and, although the question of whether or not capital punishment should be inflicted was not in the terms of reference to the commission, nevertheless during its exhaustive inquiries that question inevitably arose. It reported that it could only conclude that there was no evidence to show that capital punishment was any greater deterrent to crimes for which capital punishment is now imposed than other forms of punishment.

Mr. Jenkins—What about the recent barbarous murder of a taxi driver here?

Mr. DUNSTAN—I do not know whether the honourable member would suggest that because a crime is barbarous the punishment should be barbarous. If he does, I find it extraordinary. The suggestion of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is something no reasonable person would advance these days. One might as well suggest that if a man cut off another person's hand in the course of an assault the punishment to be inflicted should not be that he be sent to prison for unlawful wounding, but that his hand be cut off. That idea should have gone out with the Saxons, but apparently it lingers in some people's minds these days. The idea of just retribution cannot be argued on any logical basis. What is there to advance for capital punishment? There can only be the argument that it is a more effective deterrent than any other punishment that could be

inflicted. The Royal Commission found that there was no evidence to show that capital punishment was any greater deterrent than a lengthy term of imprisonment. The statistics of countries where capital punishment has been abolished do not reveal any increase in the crimes for which capital punishment is normally imposed in British countries. In fact, in most cases—although I do not suggest that this is a consequence—there is a decline in the figures of normally capital punishment crimes.

There are crimes for which today we do not impose capital punishment, but for which in the last century we did, and yet there has been a substantial decrease per capita in the proportion of these crimes committed. When you add these facts to the one overwhelming argument against capital punishment, I believe there is an unanswerable case for its abolition. The overwhelming case is that no court is so infallible that a man's life should hang on its verdict. Mistakes are so easily made. Mr. Chuter Ede, a Home Secretary, refused to remit capital punishment in one case in respect of which he now believes was wrong and that the man was wrongly convicted. That happened recently in England and it could happen here. What would have been the position of McDermott, the man a Royal Commission released in New South Wales? He was alive to tell the story and was released on the findings of the Royal Commission because, unlike this State, in New South Wales capital punishment is not imposed, but the sentence is commuted. In South Australia McDermott would have been hanged and it would have been poor consolation to him or to his ghost if a Royal Commission afterwards found that he was wrongly convicted.

I implore the Government to discontinue this practice. It may be that people, inflamed by the barbarous nature of a crime, will suggest that something should be done to the man found guilty, but no-one, even on what appears to be the most cogent evidence, can ever say, even when there is a plea of guilty, that it is so certain that that man ought to be deprived of his life. There have been many cases in the courts where a man has been convicted on evidence that seemed completely conclusive and without the slightest shadow of doubt, let alone any reasonable doubt, of his guilt and where afterwards he has been found to be innocent. The case of Beck is an admirable illustration. If his had been a capital crime he would have been hanged, but years afterwards he was released although he



had been convicted on evidence so strong that nobody ever dreamed at the time that he could not be guilty of the crime with which he had been charged.

Mr. Quirke—Was the evidence circumstantial?

Mr. DUNSTAN—It was not only circumstantial: people had seen the man who had committed the crime; the woman Beck was alleged to have married came into the court and identified him; his handwriting was identified and yet later it was discovered that another individual was responsible. It was a case of completely mistaken identity and yet the evidence of identification was so positive that nobody at that time had the slightest doubt that Beck was guilty. We must have courts, they must come to conclusions, but those conclusions can never be so certain that a man's life should depend on them. When that fact is added to the findings of the Royal Commission and the experience of the Home Secretary in England there can be no argument for continuing capital punishment here or elsewhere and I beg the Government to put an end to it.

I raise again the matter of police questioning of prisoners. It has been debated here previously and it was suggested by some members that judges and magistrates should exercise the discretion, which they had not previously exercised and since the debate have not exercised, and exclude what was held to be an unfair basis of questioning. In other States the practice of South Australia is not followed and there is a much closer check on police questioning of prisoners. If judges will not exercise their discretion to see that police questioning of prisoners is fair—and after all members on both sides of this House said that my statements on the matter were not exaggerated—it is up to Parliament to see that the questioning is fair in the future, and that proper safeguards are written into the law to be enforced by judges and magistrates.

I come now to the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board. The management of South Australian institutions dealing with juvenile offenders, unlike the position in England where the institutions are under the Prison Commissioners, is under the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board. Although some attempt has been made by the board to follow in some faltering manner the Borstal system introduced in England it cannot be said that our system is as full or as satisfactory as the English system. Under the Borstal system when a juvenile offender is sentenced he is sent to an institution, where he is examined by voca-

tional guidance experts and psychologists to decide the best place to send him and the type of training considered best for his reform. The aim of the Borstal system is reform. The Magill institution is called a reformatory but it is really a training home. The aim in taking juvenile offenders into institutions is not merely to keep them from committing crimes, but to reform them and see that they do not commit crimes after their release at 18 years of age. In England an attempt is made to see that the reformation is carried out as far as possible. Expert attention is given to the boys as soon as they are received to decide the best form of training for them. Every boy undergoes aptitude tests and examinations by psychologists to show where he can best be trained, and the institution to which he is sent must be appropriate for his training.

In South Australia we have two institutions. Firstly we have the Magill training home, which accommodates by far the largest number of boys sentenced by the Juvenile Court; and there is the Struan Farm, which accommodates 13 to 14 boys. It approximates the open Borstal institutions they have in England. There they have both open and closed institutions. In the closed the boys do not have nearly the same freedom, but in the open they may go out freely, although under some supervision, and they can get leave to go home. They are really under supervision whilst working in a training establishment. In the closed Borstal institutions a much stricter check is kept on the boys. On the average Magill accommodates about 56 boys. There is a proposal to place at Lochiel Park an institution for subnormal boys, but it is not yet completed and is now being worked by some labour from Magill. From my experience—and it is the view of people with experience in the Juvenile Court—the re-conviction rate amongst boys from Magill is alarmingly high, but the rate has not been published by the board. It is certainly much higher than the rate of re-conviction amongst boys from Borstal institutions. Magill is regarded as a training school for crime.

We are not so large a community as England and we cannot have more segregation than we have, but more could be done if we had expert advice. There has been an outcry recently for advice on reformatories and training schools in South Australia, not only on Magill and other institutions but Vaughan House, where there have been a few unfortunate outbreaks in recent years. At first the reply of the department was that there was really nothing wrong and that the outcry was a lot of

nonsense. When it continued and more people came forward to say they thought things were not satisfactory, there was suddenly a statement that £90,000 would be spent at Magill. It is laudable to spend more money on that training home but I would like to have a clear indication that it will be spent effectively, and that we will have expert advice on what should be done at the home. When the request was made for expert advice we were told that the Chief Secretary would be going overseas and would examine some of these things and come back with ideas. With the greatest respect to Sir Lyell, he is not a trained social worker. He has not been trained in reforming boys, and we should have trained men and expert advice. No amateur—and, with the greatest respect, that is all Sir Lyell can hope to be—can be expected to have an expert knowledge, even of making inquiries, in this matter. No amateur could look at a few of the Borstal institutions and then tell us what to do in South Australia. Money would be well spent if this Government brought one of the Commissioners from England. He has been to Canada to give his advice and if Canada accepts it surely we can, and profit by it. We should have someone here with wide experience of the reforming of juvenile offenders so that we may be able to benefit from the advice, and see if we cannot lower the alarmingly high re-conviction rate that now exists.

I come now to the prosecution activities of the board in connection with maintenance orders. Here a disastrous situation exists for the average deserted wife in South Australia. When she is deserted she may go to the board for an interview. It will take some time to get one, but she will get an interview with one of the prosecuting officers, who are so overloaded with work that they are booked up well ahead. This officer then writes a letter and tries to find the husband in order to get him to come in. If that does not work after a period the Department issues a summons for maintenance. This process is likely to take up to three weeks. In the meantime, the wife has no income, and if she has no savings of her own she gets relief, but relief is not a satisfactory basis of living. The State tries to be as generous as possible but a person cannot do very well on the relief granted by the board. When a case comes up it is set down for two weeks ahead. Then it is called on in the Juvenile Maintenance Court, but because of the congestion there it may be weeks before an order is obtained. Once the order is obtained there is the job of enforcing it.

That is a job in itself because the board has to maintain a fairly large staff to catch up with people falling into arrears. When a person has fallen into arrears over some weeks the department issues another summons and that takes almost as long to be dealt with. Then an order may be made for the arrears to be paid at so much a week. If that fails, another summons has to be issued. Many wives are placed in an extraordinary position simply because the court and the department cannot cope with the flood of work. I have been inside the department and seen what goes on, and I know that the officers despair about ever getting their work up to date. They plod along and do as much as they can in the time, and the waiting lists gets longer.

Mr. Riches—Is there not a remedy?

Mr. DUNSTAN—The first remedy is one that the department has sought for a long time. It needs more money for more prosecuting officers and more staff to deal with the work; otherwise it cannot carry out its work efficiently. We need a Maintenance Court apart from the Juvenile Court because the one court cannot cope with two things. The delays in the maintenance cases and the adjournments from week to week should not obtain, because these are really cases of emergency. There are other cases where there is not the same urgency. We need a special Maintenance Court magistrate. The Juvenile Court magistrate is doing sterling work in trying to cope with the demand on his court but after having seen it work I know that it is badly overloaded. The next thing required is an amendment of our Maintenance Act to provide that once a maintenance order is obtained a garnishee on the wages of the defendant can be secured. I am not fond of garnishees on wages but where a husband has a responsibility to his wife and family, contracted by the marriage ceremony or by bringing children into the world, he must carry it out, and he should not be allowed to shelter behind the delays of the law in order to avoid paying maintenance. The only way to cope with the position is to have a garnishee on the wages after the first order.

Mr. Corcoran—You cannot always locate the man.

Mr. DUNSTAN—No, but if he can be located there should be a garnishee on his wages. In order to prevent his slipping away—and many men against whom orders have been issued have the habit of going to another State—we should see that there is a system of regular reporting. Then if a man misses a report he can be looked for quickly.

Then he can be found whereas with the delay of two months before we start to look for him the chances of catching him are slim.

The Collections for Charitable Purposes Act is administered by the Chief Secretary's department and recently there has developed a racket in Adelaide which I think should be immediately exposed and about which steps should be taken immediately by the Government. I came into contact with it through a charity (Meals on Wheels) with which I am connected and which was unfortunately taken for a ride by these unscrupulous people. A firm by the name of Bradshaw & Hilbury, which has been registered under various names and can rarely be found, wrote a letter to Meals on Wheels Incorporated, a body registered under the Collections for Charitable Purposes Act. They said, "You are putting on a charity show and if you give us the right to collect moneys for advertisements on your tickets and programmes and to reimburse ourselves for this work out of the proceeds, we will provide you with your tickets and programmes free."

That sounded a generous offer and the organization accepted it. Then the firm engaged a number of people to canvass for advertisements. Their method was to go to a firm and ask for an advertisement for the tickets. If the firm asked how many tickets would display its advertisement it was either told the total sum (between 3,000 and 5,000) or that the exact number could not be specified and that the advertiser would be protected by the organizer of Meals on Wheels. This body, however, had no control over the number of tickets on which advertisements were printed, and when it found out what was going on it wrote to Bradshaw & Hilbury telling them to cease their activity immediately because obviously they were trying to enlist an enormous number of advertisers for a small number of tickets (without specifying the number of tickets) while using the name of the charity to get a substantial rake-off for themselves. Although told to desist they nevertheless went on collecting advertisements at £6 10s. each. Finally, a number of tickets were printed and although one of the advertisers in my district was told he would be allotted 3,000, he was given only 200 and a number of people who paid for advertisements got none at all. Of course, there is no actual offence under the Criminal Law in this case and at Civil Law a person is required to protect himself against a cheat such as this firm, and a plaintiff can merely take up the matter in the Local Court where the cost of recovery would be far greater than £6 10s.

This racket has been perpetrated in other States by people trying to cash in on charitable purposes. All charities should be warned about this racket, but further, the Act should be amended to provide that, where charities are registered under it, no advertising agent shall get any return from advertising for such organizations unless the method and terms of his canvassing are approved by the Chief Secretary. Only then could we control the activities of these people who are trying to make money for their own pockets out of people's charitable instincts. In the case I have mentioned business firms who thought they were helping Meals on Wheels were taken down and others have been exploited in the same way.

I turn now to our hospitals. One of the new members on the Government side had a little to say on a press article that appeared under my name, but he shed little light on the matter; in fact, his light shone through a glass darkly, so darkly that it was almost opaque. The member for Light (Mr. Hambour) said that I knew nothing about hospitals, the subject of the article, and that I would do better to collaborate in future with someone who knew something about the subject.

Mr. Jennings—Would that be the member himself?

Mr. DUNSTAN—I do not know, but apparently the honourable member considers himself an authority on hospitals. What he did not realize, however, was that apart from the figures appearing in the article all the subject matter came not from my own brain, but from the advice of two senior medical men who practise in the Royal Adelaide Hospital and who are perhaps a little better acquainted with hospitals generally in South Australia than is the honourable member.

Mr. Jennings—Don't be so foolish!

Mr. DUNSTAN—I admit the member for Light would find it hard to credit that, but it was the case. Having said that, from reading my article, he did not believe I knew very much about hospitals, the honourable member was careful not to refer to it or say what was wrong with it.

Mr. Hambour—I asked you what you would use for money.

Mr. DUNSTAN—I will give the honourable member some details on that aspect. I do not propose, and never have proposed, that a State lottery should be run or a compulsory loan floated to raise money for that purpose. The honourable member went on to say that if only in Adelaide the same local interest was shown in hospitals as was shown in country

areas we would be better off, but obviously he is not very well acquainted with the activities of public hospitals in the metropolitan area. Although it is true that few country hospitals are taxed to capacity at present, that is not the case in the metropolitan area. In the city much interest is displayed in hospitals and much local finance found, and although the honourable member referred to the amount paid by the State Government towards the Royal Adelaide Hospital, he omitted to mention that metropolitan councils were rated.

Mr. Hambour—So are country councils.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Yes, but it is still a fact that local money is going into the Royal Adelaide Hospital. Further, there is in the hands of Commissioners for Charitable Funds about £60,000 for the new women's block at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. That sum was raised by local bodies interested in the hospital. Money has been raised in the same way by the Anti-Cancer Campaign Committee for the orthotron at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, and the honourable member should realize that both these projects will benefit not only the metropolitan area but also country areas for country people come to the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

Mr. Hambour—You don't say that country people did not subscribe to the Anti-Cancer Fund?

Mr. DUNSTAN—No, but it was raised for the purpose of erecting in the metropolitan area something that would serve the whole State, and I do not think the honourable member will deny that most of the fund came from people in the metropolitan area. The same statement also applies to the funds raised by the Royal Adelaide Hospital Women's Auxiliary which organized the canteen there.

Mr. Hambour—But £60,000 is a lot for the metropolitan area to subscribe.

Mr. DUNSTAN—It is a lot for one institution. I happen to be a member of the Queen Victoria Maternity Hospital (another metropolitan institution) to which I subscribe and at whose meetings I vote.

Mr. Hambour—What is its capacity?

Mr. DUNSTAN—I do not know its present bed capacity but it must be considerable for it is the operating maternity hospital for the metropolitan area and the teaching maternity hospital for the State.

Mr. Hambour—You should know a little more if you want to make comparisons.

Mr. DUNSTAN—If the honourable member wants to know the exact figures I will get

them for him, but the capacity is considerable. Another hospital (the Adelaide Children's Hospital), like other subsidized hospitals, receives a Government subsidy but other considerable sums are also raised.

Mr. Hambour—Also by country people.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Possibly, but nevertheless a considerable sum was also raised in the metropolitan area. My aunt, who lives in the city, is a member of the board of that hospital and works long hours to raise money for it. It is untrue to say that people in the metropolitan area do not show local interest in their hospitals whereas it is true that hospitals in the metropolitan area serve the whole State and not only the city and suburbs.

Mr. Jennings—You have never tried to create a city versus country controversy as the honourable member has done.

Mr. DUNSTAN—No; as far as I am concerned South Australians are citizens of the whole State, not merely of the metropolitan area or country districts. We should therefore co-operate to develop hospital facilities in the interests of the people. The fact remains, however, that South Australia is worse off than any other State for public hospital services and by far the worst off for bed capacity.

Mr. Hambour—Only in the city.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Possibly, but that very closely affects metropolitan members, who find that many of their constituents cannot get hospital accommodation. Only yesterday afternoon while the House was sitting one of my constituents interviewed me on this matter and his experience is only typical of hundreds that have been brought to my notice. His sister, also a constituent of mine, was ordered by a doctor in my district into the Royal Adelaide Hospital for treatment of an abscess. There she was operated on, and moved from a ward to St. Margaret's Hospital, which is a walking convalescent home, though she was not able to walk. She was not fit to go there, and she soon went into a serious decline and had to be sent back to the Adelaide Hospital. By the time she got there she was in a coma, and later died.

Mr. Hambour—We would look after cases like that in the country.

Mr. DUNSTAN—We cannot send every patient from the metropolitan area many miles to country hospitals. We must have hospitals close to the people whom they are supposed to serve. It is of little use the honourable member

saying that we should send patients as sick as this lady in an ambulance to his district, say, to a hospital in Freeling. Surely he does not suggest that we will have effective hospital services by sending people from the metropolitan area to the country for treatment when they need surgical treatment in Adelaide.

Mr. Hambour—You should do what the country people do—build their own hospitals.

Mr. DUNSTAN—I have already mentioned that money has been raised by various people, but we must provide adequate hospital accommodation for people in the metropolitan area and also to cater for serious cases from the country.

Mr. Jenkins—Do you advocate a means test for admission to our hospitals?

Mr. DUNSTAN—Perhaps there should be a means test for admission to the Royal Adelaide Hospital as long as there is a bed shortage, but that is not a complete solution of the problem. The member for Light asked me a few minutes ago for some figures about the Queen Victoria Maternity Hospital. In 1955 the daily average of occupied beds was 92, and the number of clinic attendances was the small figure of 19,430!

Mr. John Clark—Send them all to the country!

Mr. DUNSTAN—Apparently that is what the member for Light would do. Let us look at the bed capacities of hospitals in the various States. I dealt with this matter in an article I wrote before the elections. I am sorry the member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) is not here now because he wrote an article on this question before the elections. The following are the numbers of people in each State to each public hospital bed:—New South Wales, 183; Victoria, 207; Queensland, 132; Western Australia, 156; Tasmania, 72; and South Australia, 232. In other words, there are more people to each public hospital bed in South Australia than in any other State.

Mr. Hambour—They don't want to pay.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Those figures include all public hospital and subsidized hospital beds, and include children's hospitals. If a child is admitted to the Adelaide Children's Hospital the parent has to pay, or end up in the unsatisfied judgment summons court.

Mr. Hambour—Rubbish!

Mr. DUNSTAN—If the honourable member will come down with me to the court he will find that is correct. I often have to attend that court, though I have not been in the dock.

Mr. Hambour—You should be.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Mr. Speaker, that is offensive to me.

The SPEAKER—I ask the honourable member to withdraw that remark.

Mr. HAMBOUR—I withdraw, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. DUNSTAN—If the honourable member will go to the court he will find people there who have not paid an account to the Adelaide Children's Hospital.

Mr. Hambour—You said that if they cannot pay they are made to pay. A person who cannot afford to pay is not compelled by the court to pay.

Mr. DUNSTAN—On an unsatisfied judgment summons the court does not make orders if people cannot pay, but it will make orders for the payment of so much a week, even when that is a great strain on people.

Mr. Hambour—I have more confidence in the court than that.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Perhaps the honourable member knows more about the courts than I do. I am only a legal practitioner.

Mr. Hambour—Only a young one, too.

The SPEAKER—Order! Interjections are out of order.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Obviously the honourable member will become a High Court practitioner in time! The member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) referred to my figures about the number of people in each State to each public bed when he wrote an article for the *News*. He was taking me to task for writing half truths and giving incorrect figures, and he said the facts were that South Australia had 6,216 hospital beds, as taken from the records of the Hospitals Department, for its 825,924 people, or an average of 133 of population for each bed. He went on:—

This compares with the figures quoted by Labor for Victoria, 207; New South Wales, 183; and Queensland, 132.

He quoted figures taken from the records of the Hospitals Department, and I paid him the compliment of going to the department and finding out what his figure of 6,216 hospital beds represented. In the words of an officer of the Hospitals Department, he must have scraped the bottom of the barrel to get every figure for every private hospital in South Australia as well as every public hospital. Having taken all those figures, he compared them with total population and then related the resulting figure to figures which I had given of a comparison of population only to public hospitals in

the other States. Then he had the colossal effrontery to say, "You know Labor is dealing with half-truths in this election campaign—beware of Labor!" The honourable member asked how we could have a better bed capacity, and I agree that we should have a better bed capacity for his Government has had a chance to catch up with other States because an L.C.L. Government has been in office since 1933. It could have spent much more from its works programme on hospitals because additional hospital accommodation is urgently needed, but I stress that the Government could have had more money to spend on the running costs of our hospitals.

Let us look at the last published report of the Grants Commission. It shows that South Australia spent 82s. 5d. per head a year on public hospitals, health and charities, which was a lower figure than that of any other State, claimant or non-claimant. Also, on law, order and public safety, South Australia spent less than the other States. It is clear that had we spent on all those services at the same rate as the average of the non-claimant States we could have had considerably more money from the Commonwealth. If, in addition, we had brought our State taxation and charges on State instrumentalities up to the level of the non-claimant States we would have had from the Grants Commission for the relevant year an extra £1,306,000. We did not get it because, firstly, we did not provide adequate social services, and, secondly, because our charges on State instrumentalities and our State taxation were at a lower level than the average of the non-claimant States.

The Treasurer may say that we must keep our electricity charges down in order to attract industries here, but we could have brought our taxation and other charges up to the level of the non-claimant States. Even if the taxes and charges had not been increased we could have had an extra £456,000 from social services if the State had provided the services. That is not a small sum, and it is much more than we could get out of a State lottery. It would have helped to provide more adequate hospital services so that many pitiful cases could be given proper attention. One man in my electorate had to be operated on for peritonitis, but he was turned out of hospital before he could walk properly. He had to walk out of hospital doubled up, for the bed was needed for another patient. Another man, who is a member of one of my local committees, needed an operation for

cancer. There was no bed available for him, so he was given radium treatment, which doctors said afterwards would not be effective for three months, but all that time he was away from his work. The hospital problem in the metropolitan area has assumed fantastic proportions. We are not discharging the State's obligation to see that the poor and sick and needy who require medical treatment are properly catered for. It is a scandal that this is so, especially when we could have more money from the Commonwealth to cope with the situation if the State's finances were properly managed and our social services run effectively.

Furthermore, the Royal Adelaide Hospital Board should be expanded, for it is a common cry from the medical profession, the teaching staff, and the public generally that the board is far too narrow and should be widened so as to be more representative. There is a great need for a comprehensive plan to decentralize hospital services, not only in the country (and I realize that some country hospital accommodation is not taxed to capacity), but also in the metropolitan area in order that we may have at least another suburban hospital for which the Minister of Education was asking almost every week before he became a Minister. We could have decentralized hospital services within the metropolitan area as well, and have enough beds to cope with the patients. Although the other States are facing difficulties in financing their hospitals, at least none of them are as badly off in bed capacity as we are. We need to do something urgently about this situation, and that is the opinion not only of laymen but of almost every medical man who has anything to do with the situation in public hospitals in the metropolitan area. The Government must not fob off this hospital question as it tried to do when it was raised last year in a public outcry in this State, not only by the newspapers, but by senior members of the medical profession and well known architects, who said that our hospital programme could be speeded up effectively if the Government would have a go at it. It is not a time for fobbing this off, and it is not a time for excuses. I do not think it is even time for recrimination, because that is not going to get us anywhere. We have to recognize the lack in this community and get down to doing something about it. Until the time comes when a person can obtain medical treatment when he needs it, I believe this community is falling down and the Government, which is responsible to the community, is falling down also. I support the motion.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra)—In supporting the adoption of the Address in reply I congratulate the mover and seconder on their speeches in support of the Governor's Speech. I do not necessarily support all the new members said, but I do congratulate them on their speeches on this motion, which allows all members to express themselves on whatever subject they consider should be put before the House in the interests of their constituents. I congratulate you, Sir, on your election to your extremely high office. Long before you were elected you held the esteem and regard of the members of this House as a private member. It was because of that esteem and regard that the House elected you to your present position, knowing that the rights and privileges of the members would be safeguarded in the best traditions of your office. I congratulate also the Chairman of Committees on his appointment to a most important office in this House. When a Bill is in Committee members have the right to analyse each clause in succession and to speak as many times as they wish, or at least until they understand or are understood. It can therefore be a most exacting position, and the person appointed to it has to realize the extreme responsibility he has undertaken, because such important results accrue from the deliberations in Committee. The duty of the Chairman of Committees is to see that every member gets a fair hearing, and that no clause is passed until such time as it has been fully discussed and deliberated upon.

The Hon. Mr. Christian, Minister of Agriculture, and Mr. Don Michael have passed to their eternal reward, and we regret their absence from among us, and the loss of good fellowship. Everybody had an extremely high regard for Arthur Christian; he was a man whom it was impossible to dislike. Whether you agreed or disagreed with him, he had all the qualities that made people like him. The same applied to Don Michael, who also had many sterling qualities and with whom it was impossible to be at enmity. I take this opportunity of expressing my sympathy to their bereaved relatives.

We are all pleased to welcome the new faces in this Chamber, and we have listened to these new members with considerable interest. In every case they have given expression to thoughts which indicate that they are well able to compete, and I feel that they will be prepared to act up to the expressions of thought they have given in this House. Irrespective of their political affiliations they appear to me to be men who will be worthy

representatives of the people who supported them to the extent of giving them a seat in this House. That is the important thing to remember. Without presuming to give advice, I say that it must be remembered by all members of Parliament that they take their places in this Chamber as representatives of the people of their districts. That is why the representation of those people is such an extreme responsibility. These new members have given every indication that they are aware of this responsibility, and when every member recognizes this responsibility the collective effect on this Parliament must be a good one in the general interests of the State.

Party politics are a ruthless and remorseless means of seeking representation in the political sphere, and I mention that because we have lost two members in that way. Throughout my Parliamentary career I honoured and respected Sir Robert Nicholls, the former Speaker of this House, and I think every other member did likewise. He is a victim of the ruthlessness of Party politics and nothing else. The same applied to Mr. Leo Travers, who adorned this House with his knowledge and the extreme capacity of his brain. I do not mean that as a reflection on the members who have succeeded them in this Chamber, but I do regret that South Australia has lost the services of a man of such vast experience as Sir Robert Nicholls. There is the added regret that after his long service he will not be here next year when we will celebrate the 100 years of the existence of this Parliament. How nice it would have been for somebody with such long service to have occupied the Chair on that occasion. I take the case of Sir Robert Nicholls as embodying the two positions. These gentlemen were not dismissed from this House by the people; they were members of this Parliament who had been elected by the people in a duly constituted election, and not elected unopposed. In other words, the people had appointed them, but it was not the people who deposed them, because they had no say in the matter. A mere hundred or so people decided that they would put others in their places, even though these men had been appointed by the people in the first place.

Mr. Davis—How were they appointed in the first place?

Mr. QUIRKE—They were elected by the people. I have no objection to a Party putting up a member as its representative, but Sir Robert Nicholls came before the people and the people endorsed the selection of the Party.

He was thrown out without the people having an opportunity of saying anything about it. The other man never got the opportunity and could not go to the people unless he went as an Independent or an unendorsed Liberal. That is exactly the same, and nobody can convince me there is the slightest difference. An Independent Liberal would not get the slightest support from the Liberal Party.

Mr. Heaslip—But if the people had elected him he would have been a Liberal.

Mr. QUIRKE—I say he would have gone before the people as an Independent. That is the position with a man who gave valuable service to this State. There were four candidates for that preselection ballot.

The Hon. Sir Malcolm McIntosh—Tell us how it applied to yourself. That would be more interesting.

Mr. QUIRKE—I am stating how it applied to the Liberal Party which is more important. I can remember when the Minister was returned after he beat an Independent by only one vote.

The Hon. Sir Malcolm McIntosh—But I did defeat him.

Mr. QUIRKE—I give the Minister full marks for that one vote. However he has now become a Minister of the Crown and has had a long and worthy political life by virtue of that one vote. Sir Robert Nicholls, a man with an equally long political life, never had the opportunity of being elected by one vote except by going against the Party that threw him out. Four members contested the pre-selection. I do not know the inside story, but I will relate what happened, and everyone knows what happened. It is quite possible that there were two ambitious men who knew perfectly well that if Sir Robert were endorsed their cake would be dough for the next 10 years; so probably their preferences went to a man who, as was well known, would not be standing for the next 10 years. The result was that a man who had given unstintingly of his services to the State was thrown into the discard. Then there is the case of Mr. Leo Travers. We all know his capacity and the brilliance of his legal brain. His services were invaluable to the House, but he, too, did not get the pre-selection because of the re-alignment of districts which possibly removed from his district an area in which he had influence. That also applies to the ex-Speaker, whose district was completely annihilated. He had no-one to appeal to. He was left like Mahomet's coffin, suspended between earth and heaven. I deprecate that and I think it entirely wrong that men with such service should be treated in that manner.

Mr. Davis—If Sir Robert had been elected the sitting member would have been defeated.

Mr. QUIRKE—Of course, but Sir Robert didn't have an opportunity to go to the electors.

Mr. Davis—Yes, he did; he could have gone as an Independent.

Mr. QUIRKE—Yes, and he would have had as much chance of winning that seat as an Independent as the honourable member would have had of winning Port Pirie as an Independent.

Mr. Davis—I would never stand as an Independent.

Mr. QUIRKE—The honourable member has never been independent in his life, nor is he ever likely to be. The present electoral districts are too large and as single-member districts will place an intolerable burden upon members. Of course, it will be understood that a pocket handkerchief area like Port Pirie is not included in my remarks and its being completely unimportant also excludes it from my considerations. However, districts such as Whyalla, Frome, Eyre, Rocky River, Burra, and those peculiar districts Stuart and Millicent, cannot be adequately served by one member: their areas are too vast and there are too many towns in them. If a member attempts to give complete service to his district he will suffer. The only answer is to enlarge this House numerically. Rocky River is not a huge area, but it contains a number of towns and it will be one of the most difficult country seats for a member to handle without killing himself. My district, Burra, is not so large and will not be quite as difficult, but how can a member do justice to a district the size of Frome or Whyalla? We made a mistake in attempting to create districts of 6,000 or 7,000 people. We overlooked the fact that towns of only 100 citizens require as much attention as larger towns. Time will show that I am correct and we will then be forced to increase the numerical strength of this House in order that the people shall have adequate representation and not have to travel hundreds of miles to communicate with their member as they must do today.

Mr. Davis—I do not think you could avoid that even with two members.

Mr. QUIRKE—It would make the position much easier. I am not necessarily referring to two-member districts, but suggest that there should be more districts. There have not always been 39 members in this Chamber: at one time there were 45. If the membership



were increased and there were a further distribution of districts there would be better and more adequate representation. I do not suggest that the present members are not prepared to give adequate representation, but it would be almost impossible for human endurance to stand up to the demands made upon members representing widely spread districts.

Mr. John Clark—What do you think of bigger districts with proportional representation?

Mr. QUIRKE—I favour proportional representation but there is no chance of ever having it here. The ideal is multiple districts because with them there are never uncontested seats. The uncontested seat is what murders interest in South Australian politics. The Party machine was responsible for the loss to this House of Mr. Macgillivray. I say that as a friend of Mr. Macgillivray and as a friend of every member in this House. No new member who has come here can adequately replace him. There are few men of his calibre possessing his tenacity of purpose, his powers of debate and his insistence on the right of the individual. His is a grievous loss to this House. He was destroyed by the ruthlessness of the Party machine—in this case completely and utterly misguided. Of the 1,970 second preference votes of the Labor candidate about 1,400 went to the Liberal candidate. In other words, 1,400 people were prepared to take the advice on the Party ticket and vote for the opposite Party. That was an extremely dangerous thing to do. It was suggested that it made it easier for the elector, which assumed that the elector was a congenital idiot who did not know how to mark 1, 2 and 3 on a card in order of preference. The Liberals did not assume that at all, but left their card open for the electors to fill in. The Labor Party was responsible for the election of the present member for Chaffey. That is no reflection on Mr. Harry King, whom I have known for many years and for whom I have the highest regard, but I am explaining the position as I saw it and revealing the unwisdom of the Labor Party's actions.

Mr. Davis—Its wisdom or unwisdom is a matter of opinion.

Mr. QUIRKE—I say that the Labor Party was responsible for the election of the present Liberal member for Chaffey. That cannot be denied.

Mr. Davis—No-one is denying it.

Mr. Jennings—It is no crime.

Mr. QUIRKE—I am not suggesting that there was a crime or a criminal. I am not standing before a judge in the Criminal Court.

I will reveal what happened and show how the Labor Party has contributed to its long record in Opposition. It would appear from its action that it is determined to see that its long record of Opposition is not broken.

Mr. Davis—What is the difference between Macgillivray and a Liberal?

Mr. QUIRKE—I will tell the honourable member if he will hold his horses. In the 1955 session there were 29 divisions. There were four Independent members. The member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Fletcher) supported the Government on eight occasions and the Opposition on 19; I voted with the Government on five occasions and with the Opposition on 22; Mr. Macgillivray supported the Government on five occasions and the Opposition on 18 occasions and Mr. Stott voted with the Government on 12 occasions and with the Opposition on nine.

Mr. Hutchens—That proves conclusively that Independents cannot be depended upon.

Mr. QUIRKE—The Labor Party, by excluding Mr. Macgillivray, has refused the opportunity of making it 19 all on the floor of the House after the Government had appointed a Speaker. That is the nearest the Opposition would have been in 25 years to governing, and if it continues its present methods it is the nearest it will be for the next 25 years.

Mr. Davis—What about divisions in the 1944-47 Parliament.

Mr. QUIRKE—I have recounted the last figures and the honourable member does not like them.

Mr. Davis—You have never voted with the Labor Party on any matter of value in your life.

Mr. QUIRKE—The member for Port Pirie has indicted his own Party and suggested that it has called for divisions on matters of no importance. He is condemned out of his own mouth. I will now tell you how this Party system works. The Labor Party printed its cards giving second preferences to the Liberal candidate in Chaffey and to the Independent candidate in Ridley.

Mr. Riches—He called himself an Independent Liberal.

Mr. QUIRKE—I do not care what he called himself. I am not arguing his case at all.

The Hon. Sir Malcolm McIntosh—But he had two bob each way.

Mr. QUIRKE—He did, and I have no excuses for that. In both Chaffey and Ridley the Liberal Party left its card open; that is,

no figures were printed except "1" in front of its candidate. However, that is not the way the cards remained, not by any means. Hundreds of them were completed in ink and distributed, and hundreds of Labor Party cards were also completed in ink in Ridley, giving preference to the Liberal candidate despite the fact that the original printed figure gave the preferences to the Independent. In Chaffey the cards were filled in, and I have plenty of them available if members wish to see them. There were four candidates in that district, and the cards were filled in to give first preference to the Liberal candidate, second to the Labor candidate, third to Mr. Macgillivray, and fourth to Mr. Napier, but they were altered to give third preference to Mr. Napier and the fourth to Mr. Macgillivray. That is an indication to me that an agreement was arrived at in those districts between the two Parties, and I have plenty of evidence that that is so. In Ridley there was keen resentment at the falling down of the Labor Party on its agreement, because it practically collapsed in that district, although it was most effective in Chaffey, so much so that it was suggested that the original cards printed by the Liberal Party for Chaffey had to be discarded and a new lot printed. Colour is given to that suggestion by the fact that the cards are of different sizes.

The Party machine is a destroyer of men in political life. It destroyed Sir Robert Nicholls, Leo Travers and William Macgillivray, and in doing so deprived this House of estimable men of vast experience. In May of last year the President of the Australian Labor Party in South Australia, the present member for Hindmarsh (Mr. Hutchens), visited the River and suggested that the vote be a Party one to eliminate the Independent, and this culminated at election time in what I have told you. I raise no objection to these Party tactics as such. A Party is entitled to adopt those tactics if it sees fit, but what about this hypocrisy of a Liberal Party Government and a Labor Opposition when at election time they can get together? Which is the Government and which is the Opposition, or is it a Liberal-Labor coalition at election time?

Mr. Riches—As in Mount Gambier, for instance?

Mr. QUIRKE—There were only two candidates at Mount Gambier. I always doubt the sincerity of people who will undertake such pacts. In Chaffey there was a Liberal, a Labor and an Independent candidate, and Labor entered into an agreement

to exchange preferences with the Liberal candidate. That resulted in the return of a Liberal member, and that was a chance that no organization that hoped in any sincerity to take office should have entertained for a moment, yet it did so in that case. It is certain that there was an agreement. Mr. J. Y. Simpson, the President of the Loxton L.C.L. complained bitterly to my son, John Quirke, at election time that Labor had not lived up to its agreement there, but had done so on the other side of the River. I have given those names as a challenge. That seems to indicate that the Labor Party executive did not know what the boys up the River were doing, except the President of the Party, of course, who knew full well. I have the evidence here to show anybody who wishes to see what happened, and with that I will leave the matter.

What I have said has been in defence of the man alongside whom I have sat for years and have honoured as a member of this House, one who did so much for his district, but who was so ruthlessly exterminated from the political world by collaboration between the two parties that hated his individuality. I congratulate Labor on its magnificent record in opposition, which must be permanent if its present tactics are maintained! The idea was that Labor would win the Liberal preferences, and we know perfectly that that resulted, not in the election of a Labor candidate but of a Liberal representative. I congratulate Mr. King on his election because I know he will do a worthy job for his district. In Ridley 500 Labor voters would not follow the cards because they would not give their preferences to the Liberal candidate.

Mr. Riches—The member for Ridley called himself Liberal in all his speeches. Why defend him?

Mr. QUIRKE—I am not defending him, and I do not care what he called himself. Collaboration took place on both sides of the River. I am defending the friend who sat alongside me in this House for many years.

Mr. Davis—The people did not want him in the end.

Mr. QUIRKE—Had it been a council election he would have been elected, because he obtained a majority of first preference votes. One day the member for Port Pirie (Mr. Davis) will contest an election and find out what it is like to be defeated.

Mr. Davis—It would not be the first time.

Mr. QUIRKE—No, but it would probably be the last. I am disappointed that with all the references to new members nobody referred

to my having made a maiden speech, although I am the new member for Burra. When I speak again, the effect of what I say will be the same as it has always been. I can go out and do what the collective efforts of the Labor Party could never do, so I am not concerned with what they say about me. As an Independent I won Stanley from Labor, I won it against a Liberal Candidate as an Independent, and I have now taken a "blue ribbon" Liberal seat—Burra. The Labor Party has not the internal machinery to contest a seat that it does not think to be a moral certainty.

I take this opportunity to mention another member who lost his seat and for whom I have always had a very high regard, which is higher now that he has lost his seat. I refer to Mr. Stanley Hawker who, until I won the seat, was the representative for Burra. I do not think it would be possible to contest a seat against a greater gentleman. I compliment him on the way in which he conducted his election campaign, and I humbly trust that he would say the same of me. I am honoured in having won the seat, but I regret that this House has lost its only pastoralist. He had a unique and outstanding knowledge of the pastoral industry in this State, and if there are any regrets about his defeat they should be because this Parliament will be deprived of that knowledge. I would very much like to see that position remedied. Mr. Hawker said he would endeavour to remedy it at the next election, and I of course, will do my best to see that he does not do so. I compliment him on his attitude during the election campaign, and although I am glad to have won the seat I would prefer to have won it from somebody other than my very great personal friend, even long before I came into this House.

The Governor's Speech is certainly an impressively long document and is a record of considerable achievement. Members have complained that it does not give much information about what will be done. Why should it? Parliament has no control over Governments today and they are becoming intolerant of Parliament. But for the direct opposition of back bench Liberals in the Federal House, a Bill to increase the size of the Ministry would have been bludgeoned through without any debate and without any possibility of opposition. It is to the eternal credit of those back benchers that they indicated that they were not going to be subjugated by the Government when it wanted to force something through. When parties are subservient,

that can happen, but on this occasion it did not happen, although it is happening in other Parliaments. One gets no information in the Governor's Speech on the opening of Parliament, but only a record of what has taken place. It is an impressive record, and I am not trying to write it down. No-one can deny the achievements recorded, and it would be foolish to attempt to do so.

Members know that it is as difficult to get information in answer to questions as it is to pull the back teeth out of a horse with one's fingers. There is a rapidly growing disregard for members, and they cannot get definite answers. The only answers received are guarded and one has to try to interpret their meaning by sometimes reading a couple of pages. It is unfair and wrong and against the best interests of the country. That attitude is one of the main reasons for my independence in this House. There are 6,200 constituents in the new district of Burra and I gave them every opportunity to hear me speak during the election campaign, but in the 14 places I addressed only 161 attended. Something has led up to the conditioning of the people to that state of affairs. The future of the State is in the hands of the members of this Parliament and the Government, and yet there is so little regard for Parliament that few take any interest as to who is to be the member for the district. If my name was either Orangoutang or Gorilla, provided I was a member of the right Party, I would get the majority of votes. As Mahomet said, if the mountain will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet must go to the mountain. I had my election speech printed and it was contained in a booklet of six pages, and a copy was sent to all electors in the district.

Things have come to such a pass between the two Parties that there is reason for my being an Independent. I think that the two-Party system of election is probably nearer to the ideal than any other system evolved. It is certainly better than having a dozen parties. The Labor Party has a hide-bound constitution, which is fixed and unchangeable like the laws of the Medes and Persians. One cannot do anything about it. The Labor Party is back in the horse and buggy days, its constitution having no relation to the advances taking place. It is like the Australian Commonwealth Constitution—it is outmoded. The Liberal Party also has its fixed dogma, to which its members must subscribe. There are some people who will not subjugate their principles when they

think that certain things are wrong. In my little booklet I gave reasons why I am an Independent. I left the Labor Party and could not be a member of the Liberal Party. If there are certain incompatibilities in either party to which I cannot conform, I must be an Independent. That is the only opposition I have to the party system. If either party was free and untrammelled and allowed its members freedom of expression in everything and freedom to do everything they considered necessary for the district or the wellbeing of the State, there would be no opposition to it. In the booklet issued to my electors I included the following:—

I was a Party man. I was elected in 1941 as a member of the Labor Party, but I found I could not continue so because I could not agree with what I found to be a very rigid socialist line.

Mr. Fred Walsh—It was the same when you joined.

Mr. QUIRKE—I candidly admit that, but I was like many other members of the Party, who have no idea of what the constitution contains until they join, nor how rigid that line is.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Did you not once write a treatise on Labor's objective—Socialism—for the Party?

Mr. QUIRKE—No. The only thing I wrote, and for which I got no credit, was evidence which was placed before the Rural Reconstruction Committee. I never wrote any treatise on Socialism, and I challenge the honourable member to produce one. The evidence I wrote was presented to the committee by the Hon. R. S. Richards as leader of the Party, and I attended with him. It was afterwards printed with the Party's sanction. I would still adhere to every word that I included in that evidence. Most of it was embodied in one of the reports of the Rural Reconstruction Committee. I also included in my booklet the following:—

That the Labor Party has done much for Australia every fair-minded person will agree, but I cannot accept socialism as the cure for anything because it is fundamentally opposed to the democratic freedom of the individual. Everyone realizes the necessity for State-owned instrumentalities such as roads and bridges, water supply and public transport, but I cannot agree with the ideology expressed in last November's issue of the *Labor News*, the official organ of the central executive of the Queensland A.L.P. It stated:—"The welfare State is not an end in itself. It is a means to an end and that end is Socialism . . . . When the reins of economic power are firmly in the hands of the people, then only can the future be assured. The welfare State will lay the basis for Socialism.

Those who live in its protection will build the Socialist society of tomorrow."

That is in an official organ, but I cannot agree with it. That kind of thing has been said by every dictator, whose job was to take away the very rights of the people and submerge them in the interests of a State dictatorship. The economic power is never in the hands of the people, except in a democratic state.

Mr. Dunstan—That is just what we propose.

Mr. QUIRKE—If you have a completely socialistic state it must be bureaucratically controlled, and the greater the bureaucracy the less the freedom of the people.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Can you tell us of any controlled democratic state now existing?

Mr. QUIRKE—I think that the nearest approach to complete democracy would be the country in which we are living. Democracy is something which grows. Its effects are cumulative. Democracy as we know it has been growing, to give a date, ever since King John signed Magna Carta. There was democracy before that, but the system has culminated in what we have in Australia, and is as effective as any other system, incomplete as it is. I will not throw this over for any state socialistic scheme which puts the people in the hands of bureaucratic power. You cannot have Socialism without bureaucracy. That is completely impossible. It is not easy to be an Independent in Parliament. Politically, both Parties dislike Independents. I think I will get perfect agreement on that point. Particularly do they dislike criticism of themselves which can be so freely made by Independents. I further stated in my booklet:—

If parties were so constituted that they gave the same freedom to their members as they had prior to the first World War, I think there would be few Independents.

"What is democracy?" someone has asked. I would say that the Liberal Party is not democratic. I told those who elected me that it was not, and I will proceed to prove it. Democracy means rule by the people. Under our Constitution the people do not rule and they never will whilst it remains. To the extent that it is undemocratic our whole set-up must fail to be democratic. The franchise for the Legislative Council is practically limited to the people owning property. It is a relic of past days when privilege was the rule, and it should not exist today. The limitation means that most single and married women are denied a vote for the Upper House. No Liberal member of Parliament is permitted to move to abolish this

outrageous discrimination. Not all Liberals are happy about the position, as was evidenced by Mr. Dunstan last year. Today we have a distinguished person in another place who was so unhappy about the criticism inside and outside his Party that he spoke on the matter recently. He said that in these days it should be an easy matter for a person to acquire land to the value of £50 in order to get a vote for the Legislative Council. I cannot adequately describe such a statement. Nowhere within 100 miles of Adelaide would it be possible to buy a piece of land valued at £50. There is also a right in connection with a rental value of £25.

That member of another place is completely unrealistic. It would be impossible for the majority of married women to spend £50 on a piece of land, even if the Surveyor-General cut up blocks and put a value of £50 on each of them. Single and married women do not get a vote for the Council under the property right, but someone else who is close to being, but is not necessarily, a certified lunatic can get one. A high school woman teacher cannot have a vote if she is single and has no property or rental rights. That alone would keep me out of the Liberal Party because no-one can believe in the rudiments of democracy when he supports such a system. I could refer to mothers, and their sons who fought for Australia and made it safe for democracy. These women bore their sons, reared them and sent them out to fight, and when the sons came back they had a right to vote for the Legislative Council, but not the mothers. If that is not a relic of barbarism will someone please tell me what is? Every member of the Government side should rise up in indignation and pledge himself to remove this blot on our democratic set-up. The Independents in this House have the support of the people who elect them. I believe that at every election the Independents have been opposed. Mr. Fletcher can correct me if I am wrong.

Mr. Fletcher—It is right with me.

Mr. QUIRKE—And me, too. I was first elected as a Labor candidate, and then as an Independent, and now I have come back again as an Independent. The Independent members for Mount Gambier and Ridley have been elected and re-elected, which clearly shows that they have the confidence of the people in their districts, despite the opposition of the big Parties. Another fault with the present system is the recognition of certain districts as Liberal and Labor districts. In the 1953 election 95,000 electors were disfranchised because nine districts were uncontested. In the last

elections 16 districts were uncontested and over 150,000 people had no vote. That is one of the root causes of the apathy towards our Parliamentary life.

Mr. Fred Walsh—There is nothing to stop an Independent from nominating.

Mr. QUIRKE—No, but an Independent would need great bravery to oppose the political Parties who do not recognize the rights of the electors. It is said that this is either a Labor or Liberal seat and that it will not be contested by the other Party, without giving any consideration to the electors. It is known that against the machinery of the Party the Independents are likely to get kicked. When there are two Parties, one with the Labor and the other with the Liberal tag, a district is divided into two lines of thought and the Independent has a tremendous task in trying to prove to the people that the labels are phoney expressions of subservience without any real foundation in fact. It is said that if the Liberal or Labor Parties will not tackle a job it is something for the Independent.

Mr. John Clark—The Independent knows he cannot win.

Mr. QUIRKE—He does not. If I had held that opinion I would not have contested the seat of Burra. Give me six weeks in any district and I will rattle the member holding the seat. An Independent must have had the experience I have had—

Mr. Hutchens—And the ability?

Mr. QUIRKE—Yes, which a member of a big Party does not need. All that is necessary is the label. It is like buying sheep according to the ear tag. We have heard a lot recently about inflation and deflation and the effects on the community. The State public debt at June 30, 1955, was £249,000,000, equivalent to £304 for each man, woman and child. For the 12 months ended June 30, 1955, the debt increased by £25,000,000, or £31 a head. The interest paid on this debt almost equals the total revenue the State receives from succession and stamp duties, land tax, motor vehicles tax, winning bets tax and other imposts. In all it is about £7,000,000. From the national debt sinking fund last year we paid off £2,254,000, but the public debt increased in the same year by £25,000,000. Here is a problem for any school teacher to put on the blackboard. If we pay off £2,254,000 in one year and increase the debt by £25,000,000 in the same year, how long will it take us to pay off the £249,000,000? Most of the debt is owed to Australian bond

holders and to that extent the position is satisfactory, but the system is crazy. Our system is unrelated to present day realities and it needs a drastic reformation. The total Australian debt today is £4,000,000,000 and the interest payment last year was £119,000,000, collected by taxation. Such a system is not sensible, or is it just plain silly? Where are we going? Today at Monte Bello we are firing weapons and liberating colossal forces. Inherent in it all is the destruction of the human race. In South Australia we are feverishly mining uranium, and, incidentally, treating it successfully. We have the Woomera Rocket Range testing out guided missiles with heads that carry a product of our uranium mining. These things cost colossal sums of money, and they are all entirely unrelated except from the point of view of survival. Assuming that these vast forces can be harnessed and that automation will come into existence, what will be the relationship between these things and our crazy financial structure? Should we not try to supplant that structure with something of greater realism?

Do members opposite realize the terrific burden the manufacturer of the Holden motor car is placing on the people? What do we people of Australia have to find to keep that organization going? I do not criticize the energy and initiative expended or the perfection of the article produced, but what is the cost? The latest figures I have show that General Motors-Holdens produce 66,720 units per annum, and as the sales tax on a Holden motor car today is £233 the Federal Government takes about £15,000,000 each year in taxation on those cars. Further, General Motors-Holdens last year made a profit of over £9,000,000; therefore for the privilege of having this industry in Australia the rank and file of people must pay £24,000,000. That is fantastic and this amount is protected by tremendous burdens on imported cars and licences restricting their import. How long must this country carry on that practice? Are we so foolish as to allow it to continue?

In 1954-1955 the personal income of all Australians was £3,833,000,000 and the total taxation almost £1,000,000,000. Since the recent increases in taxation almost one-third of the total income earned by Australians is being dragged off them in taxation, yet we still expect these industries to function and people say that anyone wishing to buy a refrigerator or washing machine must find 50 per cent of its purchase price although

it is virtually impossible for most people today to find that 50 per cent. Indeed, if it were not for hire-purchase Australian industry would close down, for more than £200,000,000 is owing to the providers of hire-purchase finance for goods manufactured in the past. What about those being manufactured now and to be manufactured in the future? Most secondary products manufactured in Australia are sold here, so is there to be a greater and greater demand for higher wages in order to meet the cost of the output of industry? If the Government is to continue to exact such tribute the demand for higher wages is justified and cannot be denied. Some honourable members have spoken about the need for an increase of 15s. a week in the basic wage, but that amount will not cover the deficiency. I look forward to the time when, if we are to adequately meet Australian conditions, we will get away from the negative approach we adopt today and instead of £11, the basic wage will be nearer £17. That is inevitable.

Mr. Fred Walsh—But it would only be effective in relation to its purchasing power.

Mr. QUIRKE—True, but if the Commonwealth Government takes £233 of the money paid for the Holden motor car the money must be there.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Then the basic wage doesn't mean a thing.

Mr. QUIRKE—That is so, and I thank the honourable member for his assurance as he has had much experience in these matters.

Mr. Riches—Have you thought of the cost of selling the article after it is produced?

Mr. QUIRKE—Yes. The total costs translated into price can never be met from wages, salaries, dividends and so on. The iron ore is gouged out at Iron Knob, smelted, sent to Port Kembla or some other place and turned into steel. It arrives at the Kelvinator or Coldstream factory as sheet metal. The costs of that product are the total costs accruing to it at the various stages of production. I do not criticize the Broken Hill Proprietary Company in this matter for its steel is the cheapest and among the best in the world. Indeed, in view of the tremendous energy expended the profits of the B.H.P. Company are not astronomical; the company is entitled to them and we should not argue about them. The manufacturer converts the steel into, say, a refrigerator, and passes it on to the wholesaler and in turn the retailer both of whom must make their profit. The consumer stands the whole expense, but he has not the money. Somebody backed

by the Bank of New South Wales or the National Bank lends him the money at a rate of between 10 per cent and 18 per cent, as Mr. Menzies has admitted. These people who have manufactured nothing render a costless service in making money available, but they charge a rate of interest for doing so.

Mr. Jennings—They make credit available.

Mr. QUIRKE—Yes, but I use the term "money" because it is money to the consumer. Although it is a costless service they extract from the poor unfortunate consumer 10 per cent to 18 per cent interest, and it is the fly in the ointment.

Mr. Riches—That still doesn't answer the question of how the costs are made up.

Mr. QUIRKE—My concern is not the cost components but the final charge on the consumer. In order to meet that charge a man has to mortgage his future income and take the money from people at a high cost even though that money was originally subscribed by people at only 6 per cent or 7 per cent. That is wrong in principle. I have heard some members say we should introduce legislation to compel these companies to reduce their rate of interest, but I would do nothing of the sort, for the only way is to collapse their business entirely within a week by competing with them. I would use the resources of South Australia to the utmost through the Commonwealth and the Savings Banks. I asked the Premier last year why it was that the money that went into the South Australian Savings Bank was in the main invested in Commonwealth securities, and he gave a peculiar reply. Indeed, I do not think he had considered it because I am certain he knows better. He said it was necessary to invest the money in Commonwealth securities so that if there were a run on the bank he would have ready access to money to meet the demands of depositors, but the Premier knows that that scheme would not function.

The 1955 report of the South Australian Savings Bank states that £2,007,394 is held as cash at head offices, branches and agencies and at bankers, whereas total liabilities to banks' depositors are more than £100,000,000. The bank has its bank deposits of more than £13,000,000 on call, probably at the Bank of New South Wales, which renders it unnecessary for the Bank of New South Wales to have a branch of its Savings Bank in this State. Commonwealth Treasury bills total £239,402, sundry amounts £708,706, making total current assets £16,465,502. Investments include Commonwealth Government securities (£54,426,423),

stock and debentures of statutory bodies (£16,177,262), loans guaranteed by the Government (£1,000,000), debentures of local government authorities (£1,727,934), and mortgage loans (£17,246,277), making total investments £90,577,896. Total assets available to meet obligations to depositors and other liabilities are £107,673,398.

I advocate the use of South Australian money in direct competition with the people who are using it at present for the very purposes of which I complain. The Bank of New South Wales is probably using it, for that bank is the banker of the South Australian Savings Bank. If an honourable member lends somebody £100 the recipient has the £100 and the lender has not got it: it is owing to him. If a man puts money into a Commonwealth loan his bank account is reduced by that amount, whereas if the Savings Bank puts £54,000,000 into the Commonwealth loan it still owes it to the depositors and every depositor is in a position to withdraw it. In this way they can have their cake and lend it too. I do not criticize that; I merely give that evidence to show the immense possibilities of this State's doing something to compete with this blood-sucking monetary system that is behind the hire-purchase scheme. We cannot deny the principle of hire-purchase, but we should compete with the present hire-purchase people and exercise the undoubted rights we have in our banking organizations. The housing situation today is disturbing, but interesting. In 1931 only 51 houses were built in the metropolitan area. They were bad times, and for years after we felt their impact. There was little money in the community, and 6s. a week was considered enough to keep body and soul together. At that time hundreds of farmers were going bankrupt, not because they failed to produce wheat, but because they produced too much. Wheat was bringing only 1s. 6d. a bushel and the cost of the bag had to come out of the proceeds of 4s. 6d. for three bushels.

In those days few houses were built because of the shortage of money, but now we have so much money that we have to prevent people from building houses and drain money from them. It is a peculiar thing that as soon as restrictions on advances for houses were imposed housing materials that were in short supply immediately became available. Galvanized iron was one item. I am associated with a business that for years sent down many orders for galvanized iron in the hope that some would be supplied, but within one month of restrictions being placed on the building of

houses we were told we could have all the iron we wanted. There is no shortage of galvanized iron today. The restriction on the building of houses is attacking the economy of the country and creating a feeling of frustration and hopelessness in the minds of young people for which we will pay the penalty. Today we can't keep ourselves in potatoes or eggs. We are responsible to our electors, and we must see that the affairs of this country are managed properly.

Let us consider the building industry in this State. Mammoth structures are being erected in Adelaide. Whether they will be architectural masterpieces I do not know, but they will certainly be masterpieces of engineering skill. In the last depression when few people could build houses skyscrapers were being erected, and today, when few people can build houses, other skyscrapers are going up. The City Mutual Insurance Co., Mutual Life and Citizens Co., the Savings Bank, and other organizations are erecting great steel buildings, but where is the farmers' and producers' skyscraper? Of course, people who work in the interests of the farmers, for a fee, erect magnificent buildings. Elder Smith, Goldsbrough Mort, and other stock firms have excellent buildings, and so has the Liberal Club.

Mr. RICHES—You do not suggest that the Liberal Club works in the interests of primary producers?

Mr. QUIRKE—I thought I would get that. These huge buildings cost colossal sums. I do not object to the erection of big buildings, but now is the opportune time to erect them, when there are other building restrictions. What the people really need is more homes. Today most houses are being built by the Housing Trust, and that is a reflection on everyone who represents the financial interests controlling this country. The position is wrong. Let the Housing Trust continue to expand, but we should not restrict the man who wants to express his own individuality in the house he wishes to build. Of course, the Housing Trust will build a house on a man's own block. He may be advanced £1,750 from the Savings Bank and, if necessary, the Housing Trust will allow him another £350, but the cost of the most modest home is £2,700, so the applicant for such a home must raise £600, and much more if he wants a more expensive home. My point is that a man wanting the trust to build him a home must make his selection from the trust's plans.

I know the Premier will later make a statement for the benefit of country members on the supply of electricity, and I hope he can give a good reason why every small extension should be treated as a new matter and the total cost involved imposed on the group wanting the power. I hope he will answer my question regarding the fact that the trust will not supply power in some areas unless a 75 per cent surcharge is paid. I am also concerned about water charges. I think the cost of pumping 1,000 gallons through the Mannum-Adelaide main is 3s. 6d. or 3s. 9d. I realize the city must have an adequate water supply, and I did not object to the laying of the Morgan-Whyalla or the Mannum-Adelaide mains, but I object to the fact that when a small scheme is requested for a country area, costing say £500,000 it is unceremoniously rejected because it will be uneconomic.

Every gallon pumped through the Mannum-Adelaide main is a loss to the State. The people of Adelaide do not pay 3s. 6d. a gallon for that water, but it is just as necessary to take water to country people as it is to supply water to Adelaide. If the costs are not considered when supplying Adelaide, where the majority of votes are, the same policy should be applied in the country. I applaud the laying of the main to the Clare district, to Jamestown, and to Peterborough, but many other smaller districts need a water supply. For instance, for many years I have been hammering for a main from Hanson, through Black Springs, to Waterloo and Manoora. It would cost about £500,000, but we have been told it would be uneconomic, yet £9,000,000 has been spent in providing the Mannum-Adelaide main. It is so costly to transport water through this main that it is not used except in an emergency. I shall be glad to hear the Premier's reply to the points I have raised. I have not brought up these questions antagonistically, but in the interests of the people I represent. I congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the Speaker's Chair and I hope that in the future you will have very little difficulty in dealing with the member for Burra.

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I am somewhat disturbed at the scenes I have witnessed in the House today. I thought we would never see such scenes except at the wailing wall in Jerusalem. The weeping and trembling and the fear of the honourable member who has just taken his seat, coming from a man



of his stature, has amazed me. I will deal with his remarks at some length later.

I join with others in offering you, Sir, my heartiest congratulations on your elevation to the Speakership. I have had the pleasure of working with you in this House, and I well remember an occasion at the conclusion of a session when you clearly demonstrated your belief in the proper functioning of the Parliamentary system and the retention of its dignity. I feel that your election was a very fitting one, and that you will conduct the affairs of this House in a manner in keeping with the principles of a democratic Parliament. I join with other members in expressing my regret at the untimely death of Mr. Christian, the late Minister of Agriculture. I was at a function with him just prior to his death, and on hearing him speak on that occasion I felt that in him we had a man who worked with great honesty of purpose. He was always admired for his devotion to duty and no man in this House made greater sacrifices in the carrying out of those duties. The late Mr. Michael endeared himself to every member of this House, and always put forward his views in a kindly way and in the manner that only a fine Christian gentleman of his calibre could do.

I offer my congratulations to the mover and seconder of the motion. I agree with sentiments that have been expressed, and I believe that all who have spoken have given a great deal of thought to their subjects and advanced their arguments in a manner that did them credit. That remark applies to every honourable gentleman who spoke for the first time in this House. I have been reminded that there are nine new members in this Chamber, possibly the greatest influx for many years, and each one of them, in my opinion, has come before the House having given evidence of much thought to the subjects on which he has spoken. They are the type of men which this Parliament has enjoyed for many years, and I believe that the traditions of this House will probably be enhanced by their presence. I believe that the two new members on this side of the House have given many years of service in all types of civic and political work, and have had to win their way in a very hard battle to come to this House. I believe that their efforts in the past will prove that the training they have had has been valuable, and that they will acquit themselves in a manner that will do credit to this great Labor Party, which in the past has produced many great statesmen.

I take this opportunity of offering my congratulations to Mr. Pearson, the newly appointed Minister of Agriculture. I am confident that he is at the moment employed on very important business or he would be here at the House. Mr. Pearson and I have often disagreed, but I believe that he will apply himself fearlessly to the job within the limitations of the Party in which he serves.

I am pleased and honoured to represent the new district of Hindmarsh, which has been changed somewhat by the redistribution made last session. I imagine that this is one of the oldest established areas in the State. It will be remembered that it was named after the first Governor of this State, and it has grown from a very humble beginning into a mighty industrial area, with the type of people who are prepared to give of their best and to make requests only for their needs, which fortunately are not as great as in other areas. We have been established for a lifetime and have the type of citizen who is prepared to fight on and give of his best in the interests of this great State. We have one or two difficulties, however, and desire some help, though not in any material sense, from the Health Department and the Minister of Health. In the district of Hindmarsh we have large areas which have been used by the brick manufacturing industry in the development of this State. I refer to the pugholes of great depth and width, which are a real problem in the area because of the difficulty of getting them filled, their unsightliness, and the fact that many people desire to use them for the purpose of dumping refuse. This is a real problem, and the dumping in these holes is creating a great deal of inconvenience to many citizens in the district.

Some weeks ago I wrote to the Minister of Health and forwarded a petition from a number of ratepayers who live adjacent to the Jervois Avenue pughole. I am casting no reflection upon the industry which is using this pughole as a tip; indeed, I am appreciative of the great amount of wealth and employment and prestige which that firm has brought to the town of Hindmarsh and to the State. That firm has the right, under certain regulations, to tip in that particular pughole, and officers of the Department of Health went down and gave certain instructions as to how tipping was to be conducted. The tipping had to be done in bays of certain dimensions, and the refuse had to be covered

with ashes in a manner specified by the department, but it seems to me that the department erred in their instructions. The bays are far too wide, the walls have spread, and the sludge from animal matter has spilled across the width and breadth of the pughole. When the atmosphere is warmer, causing evaporation, the odour that rises from this pughole is most offensive. I am not suggesting that it is unhealthy, but it is offensive. It has had the unhappy effect of reducing the values of properties. I feel that an officer of the department should make some careful investigation to see if something can be done in order to prevent the recurrence of this unskilled tipping and the unpleasantness arising from it. I am confident that if the correct instructions are given to the people who are tipping there, they will co-operate in the interests of nearby residents and the district as a whole.

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

Mr. HUTCHENS—The major Parties in this State have been accused of entering into an agreement with regard to the allocation of preference votes in the districts of Chaffey and Ridley. This accusation has emanated from three sources: firstly, from the member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Fletcher), secondly, from a body not directly associated with this House and last, but by no means least, from the member for Burra. Yesterday Mr. Fletcher, who is not much less humble than the member for Burra, expressed gratitude for being returned to this House and thanked the electors of Mount Gambier for their faith in him. He made much of this and revealed a rather inflated ego by relating what he had done for the people of his district. I know full well that the member for Mount Gambier, not having a policy, offered sweets and lolly water to suit the palates of most of the electors in his district and stood at their doors and sang with tears in his voice and sought reward. The people arranged a testimonial for the honourable member and gave him their No. 1 vote. I am sure they will realize their mistake later. During the course of his remarks yesterday Mr. Fletcher said:—

When the two big Parties put their heads together things must happen and it is a pity that on this occasion it resulted in the defeat of Mr. Macgillivray.

Mr. Fletcher should be the last to reveal a lack of appreciation for the attitude the Parties have adopted towards him. I admit that the Labor Party did its utmost to win his seat, but I know that the view is held in Mount Gambier that the honourable member had the

support and backing of the Liberal Party. In the *Border Watch* of February 14 under the heading "Mr. Pyne Withdraws: 'I could have Won'", the following appears:—

Sir, Following a meeting last night of the Liberal and Country League to consider whether or not it was prepared, as a Party, to give me full and unqualified support in the event of my nomination for the Mount Gambier seat, it has been made overwhelmingly clear that the Liberal and Country League as a Party is so fearful of the ultimate result with three candidates in the field that it prefers to play safe—in short, to stick to Mr. Fletcher in the hope that he will be able to hold the seat and so keep Labor out.

I point out that Mr. Pyne is a highly respected citizen of Mount Gambier who has devoted half his lifetime to the Liberal Party. If his remarks are only partly true then Mr. Fletcher is indebted to the Liberal Party and should not make accusations about an agreement between two major Parties based on assumption, hearsay and circumstantial evidence. May I now refer to the body outside this House which commented on his alleged agreement. We find that the allegation was sponsored not by one who left the Labor Party but by one who was once a member of that Party and who was a Mussolini in stature and character and who tried to force his views on the Party and persuade it to change from its straight and narrow course and honest policy. He adopted such despicable tactics that the Labor Party had to consider his worth and considered his character so despicable—

Mr. QUIRKE—On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I do not usually make objections, but although there has only been an oblique reference to somebody in this House, that person has been charged with "despicable tactics." I think that phrase should be withdrawn no matter to whom it applies, even though the individual is not named.

The SPEAKER—Did the honourable member refer the word "despicable" to any member of this House?

Mr. HUTCHENS—I was referring to a group outside this House.

The SPEAKER—If it referred to a member of this House the honourable member must withdraw the phrase.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I was referring to someone outside. No matter how it appeared, I am sorry that any member should think that the cap would fit. When this person was so despicable the Labor Party decided that he was not entitled to free association with people of honour and expelled him. The member for Burra alleged that an agreement was made

between the major Parties in the allocation of preferences in respect of the districts of Chaffey and Ridley. I emphatically deny that any agreement was made. The allegation is based on hearsay, circumstantial evidence and no truth has been advanced of any agreement. I frankly admit that when I was canvassing on behalf of the Party I represent I said that a Party man could provide the best representation in Parliament and urged the electors to vote for the Labor Party candidate accordingly. I made no suggestion about the allocation of preferences. I remind members that the member for Burra was once a member of the Australian Labor Party and also a member of the executive. He is in a position to know the procedure for allocating preferences. He knows full well that no individual member of the Labor Party can enter into an agreement until a determination is made by the Central Executive. Mr. Quirke made it known that I was president of the Party, but anyone who knows anything about the conduct of meetings will appreciate that the president has less influence than any member, because unless there is an even vote he is denied a vote.

The Hon. T. Playford—Is that why the honourable member was made president?

Mr. HUTCHENS—That may be the Premier's deduction and it may be right. Sometimes it is a good policy to appoint a person president to get him out of the way. In respect of the Chaffey election it has been suggested that "How to Vote" cards were altered in ink, but so far as preferences were concerned the central executive decided that where the name of a Labor candidate appeared first on a card the card should be marked straight down and where his name appeared last the card should be marked up. That was done for simplicity. If the immediate past member for Chaffey (Mr. Macgillivray) was so confident of being returned he would not have gone around the district with his canvassers soliciting second preferences from both Parties. He knew he was beaten. I deny that the Labor Party entered into any agreement with another Party and challenge any member to prove otherwise. I have made no secret of my attitude towards Independents. One member from the Legislative Council was present at a meeting in Renmark when I made my attitude quite clear. I said that Independents were the greatest political humbugs in existence. They are a class of individuals elected to Parliament knowing full well that they can never have the responsibility of Government. They are in the fortunate position of being able to criticize

both Government and Opposition ruthlessly. I suggest that the electors of South Australia will soon be awakened to the fact that they can only enjoy responsible Government under the Party system. We of the Labor Party, after we have advocated the return of our candidate, do not care who gets the next preference. It has been said that we showed preference to an Independent in the district of Ridley, but the position there was clear—the people had the choice between two declared Liberals and a member of the Australian Labor Party. If we had wanted to differentiate we could have decided who was the lesser of two evils amongst the Liberals, but I emphatically deny that any agreement was entered into, and I feel that the honourable member who made that allegation was only too conscious that if he were to be opposed by the Labor Party in his district he would certainly be defeated, despite his boast of being able to win any seat in six weeks.

Mr. Quirke—I ask you to come to Loxton with me and repeat the statements you make now.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I would do that because I have never been afraid to speak the truth. The Labor Party did not adopt the tactics used by certain people, who claim to be Independents, of having a shilling each way on their card. In Ridley the card used gave on one side first preference to the Independent, second to the Labor man and third to the Liberal, and on the other side the preferences were reversed. That is typical of these people. At least the Labor Party ran straight down the card.

The Hon. T. Playford—The honourable member cannot complain about that; the Labor candidate got half the preferences.

Mr. HUTCHENS—As a matter of fact, he did not. As the Premier knows, the allocation of preferences is only a guide, because the major parties are in it till the death-knock.

Paragraph 3 of the Governor's Speech contains the following:—

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.

I like the air of confidence in that remark, but it cannot be denied, and I think the people should be warned, that the economic position of this country is not quite as bright as it was—it is, in fact, showing a decline. There has been much evidence of that in this debate and in answers to questions. Recently the Premier said that although we had a credit of £12,000,000 in our total loan, trust and revenue funds

a year ago it has now been reduced to £6,000,000, and from his tone I imagine the decline will be far more rapid than pleasant. A further perturbing report is that under the International Wheat Agreement the price of wheat has been reduced from 14s. 1½d. to 13s. 5½d. It appears that the wheatgrowers are very concerned about this, but it is obviously caused by a change from a sellers' market to a buyers' market. I am not criticizing our primary producers, for whom I have much admiration; I think they are equal to any in Australia. The *South Australian Wheatgrower* of March 22, 1956, contained a report of remarks made at the Central Council Conference by Mr. T. Shanahan, who I would not think would subscribe to my political thoughts. He said:—

The wheat position in Australia shows a slight improvement in recent months. The position this wheat year will be a little more difficult on account of bigger production.

In his opening Speech the Governor said that last season we produced 30,000,000 bushels of wheat, the average yield being 18 bushels to the acre. I am indebted to the honourable member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke) for a very fine speech on the wheat industry. Writers in Australia generally agree with the remarks he made. It appears that we have been growing a poor quality soft wheat for a considerable time, and it is now necessary to turn to a harder type. A bushel of f.a.q. wheat weighs 64½ lb., which I believe compares more than favourably with that in other States. The wheatgrower in this State does not receive a great deal of compensation for growing the better type wheat because the production is considerably less per acre. In order to retain our markets and compensate the farmer for producing a better type we should pay better prices for better types, as suggested by the honourable member for Barossa.

The wool industry has given us cause for concern because, although we have had a wonderful time for many years, the position now, although not alarming, is one for concern. In an article in the *Pastoral Review* of February 16, 1956, the following appeared:—

The Commonwealth Bureau of Agricultural Economics, in a review of the wool market at the end of December, says that world supplies in 1955-1956 are estimated at 2,725,000,000 lb. and the world's consumption is estimated at 2,575,000,000 lb.

Although that represents only a small surplus there is some reason for concern. My experience in the industry is not great, but I know the State has spent a great deal of money

in training wool classers, many of whom lack administrative qualities, and that has led to bad baling and classing in a wool-classing store. With a declining market we must give this matter greater attention.

The honourable member for Alexandra (Mr. Brookman) made a very fine contribution to this debate. As he said, wheatgrowers are anxious to receive assistance from scientific research. There is need for some frank talk about the economic position, and I think there is cause for real concern. As the honourable member for Chaffey said, there is often a slackening in time of prosperity, and that has been so. The restoration of a sound economy is not only the responsibility of the primary producer or those engaged in secondary industry, but of everyone in the community. Primary producers are in such a position that they may have to pay dearly. They have enjoyed much prosperity, but I have seen them suffer much poverty under a collapse. It is a tragedy to see men who have put large sums of money into various parts of this country end up in poverty because they have struck bad seasons or markets.

In South Australia we have about 86,000 factory workers, and because of the pegging of their wages it would be safe to say they are losing about £64,000 a week to try to save the economy of this country. In the State Civil Service there are another 36,000 employees, and for the same reason they are losing about £26,000 or £27,000 a week. In the meantime, the "C" series index figures show that prices have increased by about 15 per cent. Into my hands recently came a copy of the *National Bank Journal*, which contained the following:—

The statement on economic measures by the Prime Minister to Federal Parliament on March 14 is certainly the most significant economic event so far this year. In giving a foretaste of less easy times and announcing additional restraints, Mr. Menzies set the tone of the Government's approach to our difficulties, and disclosed at least portion of its plan for meeting them.

No doubt that is an indication of less easy times to come and, in fact, that the worst is yet to come, but for whom? The *Journal* further stated under the heading, "Objectives and Government's Policy":—

To come to grips with these problems over-all spending must be brought into stable relationship with the real resources available to us, productivity must be rapidly improved, exports must be expanded, and great saving stimulated. Much of the new policy enunciated by the Government is, in its way, designed with these objectives in mind. A tight bank credit policy and higher interest rates are essential.

This really makes one feel that we are in for a tightening up, and that it will be more difficult to carry out our programmes. I join with Mr. Frank Walsh in his claim that members should be supplied with information to enable them to answer questions regarding the spending of Government moneys on certain projects, and with this end in view that a Public Accounts Committee should be established. The Labor Party has for a number of years advocated that such a committee be appointed, but the request has not been conceded. Sometimes it is difficult to understand why there should be such a difference between the estimated and actual costs of public works. Last session I addressed a question to the Minister of Works concerning certain projects recommended by the Public Works Committee. One related to additions to the Light Square depot of the Government Produce Department. The estimated cost was £38,720 and the completed cost £88,356, a difference of about £50,000. I could quote a number of jobs which are in the same category. A branch main from the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline to supply Onkaparinga was estimated to cost £150,000, whereas the actual completed cost was £209,873. Perhaps many reasons could be advanced for such variations. In other cases the estimated cost has been greater than the actual completed cost. There must be some very good reasons for such variations, which we should be apprised of so that we can tell the public. Perhaps the Minister of Works could explain why the estimated cost to provide a water supply to the third group of Housing Trust homes at Salisbury was £51,750 whereas the completed cost was only £46,650.

The Hon. Sir Malcolm McIntosh—It often depends on the basis of the estimates. In some of the bigger jobs the estimates were made three or four years ago.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I submit that members should be in possession of all the facts, because they are responsible for how the money is spent. I have been requested to bring forward the question of the condition of many of the cottages provided for railway employees, and if I refer to one in an honourable member's district I hope he will not assume that I am interfering with matters of his own concern. Some of these cottages have been in a bad state of repair for many years. Often these men are employed in outback places and they are doing a magnificent job for the community. Huge amounts have been spent in providing diesel trains and I understand that the cost of the complete unit is about £1,000,000 or

more. These engines could not operate but for the men who keep the lines in repair. The Railways Commissioner has received numerous complaints about the standard of their housing. The interiors of many of these cottages are in a shocking condition and are unfit for human occupation. Some have been condemned by the health authorities. One at Reynella is occupied by a packer with seven children and is in a bad state of repair. Although the bath heater was taken away for repairs two months ago it has not yet been replaced. This necessitates the wife carrying water for about 20 yards from the washhouse. These men are entitled to better consideration. The cottage occupied by the ganger in the same locality is very damp. There are 26 holes in the roof and the structure is badly in need of repairs and painting. I could give many more such instances. I urge that the department should give these men who are performing such a valuable service to the community the consideration to which they are entitled and see that they are provided with proper accommodation.

The following was included in the Governor's Speech:—

The Government is giving careful consideration to the problem of extending closer settlement on Crown lands and other areas which at present are not fully productive . . . The war service land settlement scheme continues to progress as a highly successful undertaking. It has now provided holdings for about 900 settlers and a substantial number of additional blocks are being developed for allotment.

The member for Chaffey said that because of the good efforts of the Department of Lands and the Department of Agriculture we now have the means to combat the threat of seepage, frost and diseases. In the journal *The Riverlander* appeared the following under the heading "Don't cover the mistakes at Loxton—face them":—

The *Riverlander* regrets to be the first to bring into print miscalculations which, unless admitted, may threaten the future of the Loxton exservicemen's settlement. To these exposures by a reliable correspondent official rejoinder will be welcome. When the new irrigation settlement at Loxton, in region five of South Australia, was planned for exservicemen of the second world war, it was stated that all the old mistakes would be avoided. Lessons learned in the established areas would guide the Loxton programme. But it is becoming obvious that most of the old errors have been repeated, including the most reprehensible one of all—trying to hide mistakes. The Loxton area was cleared before 1914 and grew wheat until acquired for soldier settlement ten years ago. After a soil survey, it was reported that the land was suitable for irrigation. It now appears

that the grid on what that survey was based was too big. A more intensive examination would have revealed areas bound to cause trouble. Salt seepage is not supposed to show up until land has been under irrigation for at least twenty years. That is incorrect; it has appeared in some areas in half that time. Loxton has it after only six years of watering. And it was claimed that under the system of irrigation to be used salt seepage would be eliminated.

I have no doubt that the Minister is desirous of doing the best he can for the settlers. I appreciate that there have been two bad seasons in the production of dried fruits, and that there are marketing difficulties. I have the highest admiration for Mr. Gordon of the department and believe he has great ability, but a frank admission would do much good in this matter. The promptest possible action is needed. It is an important industry and I make a plea on behalf of the exservicemen. This settlement could be as beneficial to the State as other settlements, if all possible attention were given to it. I hope the settlers will soon be confident that everything possible is being done for them. I had other matters dealing with the economic position to mention and I intended to reply to remarks made by the member for Torrens, but in view of the lateness of the hour I shall reserve them for a future occasion. In the meantime I content myself by supporting the motion.

Mr. STOTT (Ridley)—Some members have referred to the International Wheat Agreement and expressed regret that the minimum price had been reduced from 14s. 1d. to 13s. 5d. a bushel. This minimum price of 14s. 1d. was fixed at Washington in 1953 and the agreement signed then expires on July 31 this year. At that time sales of wheat were being made overseas at about 18s. to 19s. a bushel. Since then the price has fallen considerably, and much wheat has been sold at the minimum price, and when we consider the quality differential the price has been even less. An overhaul of the price factor became inevitable. Rather than be disappointed in the reduction of the price to 13s. 5d., members should be pleased that there was not a greater reduction. Since 1953 there has been built up a great surplus and now the United States has a surplus of 1,200,000,000 bushels. When we had 660,000 bushels stored in the depression years the price fell to 1s. 3d. a bushel. If the law of supply and demand had operated without the floor price under the International Wheat Agreement we would have had another depression in world wheat prices. Negotiating an agreement is a difficult matter. It is not a matter of Australia saying she wants

something and everybody else agreeing. The views of 58 nations have to be considered.

Undoubtedly the Australian delegation saved the agreement negotiations from breaking down on three occasions. Without the work of Sir Edward McCarthy and the other members of the delegation there would have been no agreement. In the first week of the negotiations the United Kingdom said she would not be a party to the agreement because it would not do anything to dispose of the large surplus. As that country had gone back to the flour millers she did not want them to be tied up in any way under the agreement. This had a dampening influence on the negotiations because the small exporters looked to the United Kingdom coming back into the agreement. India, which usually follows the United Kingdom, was loth to discuss the matter, but because India bought a lot of wheat from Australia our delegation was able to get her to continue in the talks. I am disappointed that the United Kingdom is not a member of the agreement. During the negotiations at Washington in 1953 the Australian delegation was accused of forcing the United Kingdom out of the agreement because it insisted on too high a minimum price. That was denied because Australia had nothing to do with the United Kingdom refusing to join the agreement. In January, 1953, the United Kingdom announced throughout the world that she did not intend to continue with the British Ministry of Food as the sole importer. In February and March in the talks at Washington she again indicated that she was lukewarm about an international wheat agreement. It was said again at Geneva recently that the United Kingdom would not be a party to the agreement because it would interfere with the trading of her flour millers. That was exactly the same position as in 1953. The suggestion that the Australian delegation forced the United Kingdom out of the agreement in 1953 was mischievous.

Another factor that had a big influence on the negotiations was the law passed by the United States since the building up of the large reserves. It was called Public Law 480 and it gave the Administration the right to dispose of surplus wheat free to any country, but there was a provision that the country concerned could not get any wheat unless its normal requirements had been satisfied, but the Administration has not carried that out to the letter. There are many instances where the United States under that law has given wheat and flour to other countries. The effect of this on the recent talks must be obvious. For instance,

under the old agreement Japan's quota was 35,000,000 bushels. Now it is 10,000,000 bushels. That country was under the impression that if she could keep the quota low under the agreement she would be able to negotiate for the sale of wheat under Public Law 480. A statement in the press last week showed that Indonesia and the flour millers of Australia are becoming alarmed at the distribution of give-away flour under Public Law 480. That was the second phase of the conference where quantities were being so reduced that Canada became uninterested in continuing the agreement. At that stage Australia, always extremely friendly with Canada, was able to play a liaison role between Canada and the importers and thus keep Canada within the conference. It was this sort of negotiation to which I referred when I said that Australia saved the conference from breaking up on three occasions. Canada exports a tremendous quantity of wheat and consequently a big reduction in quantities makes a greater difference to Canadian trade than it would to Australian trade with its smaller export quantities.

Then arose the price factor. Australia had indicated that it was willing to negotiate an agreement on a lower range of prices, but Canada and U.S.A. were unwilling to do so, and after consideration the importers offered a price of one dollar 45 cents. Canada, U.S.A., France, and Argentine had indicated that they wanted no alteration of the old range of prices (14s. 1d. to 18s. 3d.). That announcement was made in conference and the importers would not agree to the old range of prices. As Australia had indicated it was willing to take a lower range it became a liaison between the countries wanting the lower range and the exporters wanting a higher range. In this way Australia was able to arrange a compromise between the two parties and its efforts resulted in the present lower price range of 150 cents (13s. 4d.) to 200 cents (17s. 10d.). This was the phase in which Australia saved the conference.

Australia was willing to accept a lower maximum price than 200 cents, for the Australian official viewpoint was that the maximum figure did not matter so much because it was not considered that within the next three years the price would be anywhere near the maximum. I still believe that reasoning was correct, but Canada and the U.S.A. held a different view, believing that because of the terrific crop damage on the Continent (including such countries as France, Poland, Western Germany, and

Rumania) and the fact that Russia had negotiated to buy wheat from Canada, the price would rise to at least 17s. 10d. Australia believed that it would be safe to negotiate a lower maximum, but as France, Canada, U.S.A., and Argentine insisted on the maximum of 200 cents Australia had no alternative but to fall into line.

In 1942 when an International Wheat Agreement was first mooted, Argentine indicated it would be a party to it, but subsequently repudiated the agreement and it has since been criticized for its attitude on that occasion. Today, however, Argentine has a different and, I believe, a better administration. Its delegation at Geneva created a profound impression with the other delegations, which all expressed the view that Argentine should be given a chance to enhance its prestige diplomatically. Indeed, all other delegations felt that Argentine would honourably carry out its obligations under the agreement. I am one who wants to see Argentine do that and to give it every assistance.

The presence of Argentine in the agreement makes the marketing position overseas much different because now U.S.A., Canada, Australia, France, Argentine, and Sweden are exporting signatories to the agreement, and any country remaining outside the agreement as an importer (such as the United Kingdom) must inevitably go to an exporting signatory if it wants wheat supplies. Such a transaction would not be under the agreement, but would be negotiated as non-agreement wheat. Such countries are free to negotiate for the sale of wheat outside the agreement under any terms and conditions they please, but such a sale by an exporter under the agreement would be extremely foolish if it were negotiated at a price lower than the minimum under the agreement because the other countries tied to the agreement would ask, "What is going on? You are selling to a country outside the agreement so what is the use of our being under it?" Therefore, in order to safeguard the agreement, sales outside it must be related to the measuring stick under the agreement, namely, the floor and ceiling prices. From that angle I believe the agreement will continue successfully for the next three years.

I am extremely disappointed that the United Kingdom is not under the agreement and that the quantities are so low. True, it is not the agreement we would prefer, nor is it a good agreement from certain angles, but with all the other countries free to express

their views it was the best deal we could get and under those circumstances it was better to have that deal than none at all.

Another factor having a big influence on marketing sales today and some effect on the price of wheat is the bilateral agreements between some of the other nations, and in order to get a proper measure of the effect of Public Law 480 and these bilateral agreements. Under a bilateral agreement Argentina will sell Brazil 883,000 metric tons, Germany 435,000, Italy 507,000, and Japan 162,000, making the total exported by Argentine under such agreements 1,987,000 metric tons. Under a bilateral agreement France will sell Western Germany 500,000 metric tons, and Sweden will sell Western Germany 161,000 metric tons. The U.S.A. has negotiated bilateral agreements to sell Israel 16,000 metric tons, Peru 19,000, and Yugoslavia 465,000.

The agreement causing all the trouble in the marketing position today is that negotiated by the U.S.A. under Public Law 480, which relates to both wheat and flour. Under this Austria has received 54,400 metric tons, Brazil 500,800, Ecuador 16,300, Egypt 76,200, Greece 81,600, Israel 174,200, Italy 46,300, Japan 376,400, Peru 147,000, Yugoslavia 824,700, making a total of 2,297,900 metric tons of wheat shipped by the U.S.A. under Public Law 480. That is the damaging factor in the marketing situation today and members will see in the press from time to time reports of the able criticism by the Minister for Commerce (the Hon. J. McEwen) of the United States with its Public Law 480 and the United Kingdom under the Ottawa Agreement. Despite what the member for Hindmarsh (Mr. Hutchens) said tonight when he branded me an "Independent-Liberal" I believe in giving credit where credit is due, and I support the Minister for Commerce in his attacks on those nations for upsetting world trade.

No doubt members will be anxious to know what happened under the agreement in relation to export quotas. The quantities allocated among the exporters under the agreement to be renewed on August 1 are as follows:—U.S.A., 129,500,000 bushels; Canada, 100,900,000; Australia, 30,200,000; France, 16,500,000; Argentine, 14,600,000; Sweden, 6,400,000. That represents a big reduction from the 500,000,000 bushels under the previous agreement. Two reasons were responsible for this reduction. Firstly, the operation of Public Law 480 in the U.S.A. made certain

countries cagey about including in the agreement a higher figure because they were hoping to be able to get more wheat under that law, which would not be sold under the International Wheat Agreement.

Another aspect that affected Australia and Canada more than the United States was the fact that Argentina became a signatory, and that had the effect of lowering Australia's previous export quota from 45,000,000 bushels to 30,200,000. However, it is far better to have an agreement, even with lower quantities, with Argentina than to have no agreement at all. Obviously, with Argentina out of the agreement as an exporter and the United Kingdom out of it as an importer it would have been extremely difficult to extend the agreement for a further three years because the United Kingdom would have been able to negotiate with Argentina and use that as a lever to get prices down below the minimum under the agreement. With Argentina a signatory we have a much better chance of holding the floor price under the agreement.

One matter causing great concern at present is the tendency of banks to be too niggardly with their advances to primary producers. Many primary producers at times find it difficult to meet their commitments because costs are rising all the time. Naturally they approach their bankers for credit. I know of instances where banks hold the title deeds to property but refuse to advance even £200 to farmers to carry through a difficult period. One property I know would be worth at least £35,000 and the bank holds the deeds, but when the farmer went to the bank for £1,500 to erect fencing and sink a bore to carry more stock he was told he could not have even two shillings.

Mr. Heath—Were there any encumbrances on the property?

Mr. STOTT—None. This farmer came to me in great distress and I was able to get him a loan from a stock agent's firm. I have taken up this question in Canberra and the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer told me that the Commonwealth Government had never given instructions to banks to refuse credit to primary producers. Bankers have told me that it was the Commonwealth Government's policy for banks to withhold credit from primary producers, but that is not true. Other bankers have told me, "It is all very well for you to be critical and get hot under the collar, but the banks simply have not got the liquid resources." What has become of their liquid resources? They have been invested in hire-purchase companies. It is not right in a country



struggling for economic stability that banks should put their money into hire-purchase in order to earn higher rates of interest while primary producers cannot get loans. If that goes on it will spell economic disaster.

Mr. Corcoran—Can this Parliament do anything to remedy the position?

Mr. STOTT—The Federal Government says that the matter is in the hands of the States. Hire-purchase has got out of hand. The banks are investing in hire-purchase because it returns them 14 per cent interest, but they will not advance money to primary producers at ordinary overdraft rates. Something must be done to halt the hire-purchase racket. I do not say that banks should lend money willy-nilly, but surely today our primary industries are in a flourishing position and the banks have ample security if they lend money in *bona fide* cases. What is worse, in many instances banks are calling in existing overdrafts. A few days ago a prominent financial authority totally disagreed with the Commonwealth Government's economic advisers' views on credit policy, and so do I. The hire-purchase problem is a difficult one, but the State Governments must tackle it. There should be stringent regulations on the rates of interest under hire-purchase and on the right of repossession if repayments are not maintained. Some time ago a person I know entered into a hire-purchase agreement regarding a machine. He had to pay so much per week. He kept his payments up regularly until he had paid about 50 per cent of the purchase-price, but his wife had a serious accident and he had to pay big hospital bills. Consequently he could not meet his weekly commitments and the hire-purchase firm said it had no alternative but to re-possess the machine. He lost the machine and the money he had paid. That may be legally right, but it is morally wrong. The purchaser should not lose the machine and the money he has paid as well.

Mr. King—The Act provides for such cases as that.

Mr. STOTT—No, I had that tested. Another question causing me concern is the transport of country school children to area schools. Contractors may agree to transport children, but later many approach the department for higher fees because they find the service is not paying them. Sometimes the department asks the parents to transport the children, but they should be adequately compensated. The Minister is now considering some cases I have put before him, and I hope the Government investigates this problem thoroughly.

The member for Hindmarsh (Mr. Hutchens) referred to the Loxton soldier settlement scheme, and I assure him that if he has any soldier settlers in his area I shall be as interested in them as he is. Some time ago a Parliamentary committee visited Loxton to inspect the settlement and the conferences with the Minister and his officers did a great deal of good, but there are still a few problems to be solved. The drainage problem is a most difficult one. The Engineering and Water Supply and Irrigation Departments are doing everything possible to try and solve it by putting down what is known as Waikerie bores to get the water to seep away to the lower ends, but I think the drainage problem there will not be completely solved until we have a comprehensive drainage scheme for the whole area. That is not a matter for this Government, but it will assist the Minister, in his negotiations with the Commonwealth, to put pressure on them to go into the question of a comprehensive scheme as soon as possible.

While we have this seepage problem occurring every day on these blocks it is no use doing nothing while we wait for a comprehensive scheme because it would take too long. The Minister is right in trying bores to rectify the problem, because I think that in some instances it will alleviate the position. It will not, however, solve the overall problem of the area. Spots are showing up now in different places, indicating that further steps will have to be taken with regard to drainage. I do not know who was responsible for it, but some drains laid in the past were put down too deep, and some of them are still too deep. The new drains being put down now are nearer the correct level of about 3ft. 6in. to 4ft. Where older drains are too low feeder drains should be fed into them, and this may solve the problem. I know the department has drainage tiles up there but they are having difficulty in getting contractors to undertake this work, and if contractors cannot be obtained consideration should be given to employing day labour. It is getting pressing, and while the men on these blocks know that the department intends to do something about it they are getting impatient and disappointed. I know that it would be better for contractors to do the work, but if the department cannot get them it will have to employ day workers on this urgent work at Loxton.

The Minister knows that permanent sprays have become the order of the day with newer settlers while the settlers with 1948 plantings, or thereabouts, still have portable sprays. The

trees are getting higher, and the settlers are finding it increasingly difficult to work these portable sprays. I hope the Minister will take this question up with the department in order to see that the supply of permanent sprays to all these settlers is expedited. These portable sprays have to be taken to pieces, whereas the settler with the permanent spray has only to turn it on and watch it do the job. Settlers who have been on these blocks for only a comparatively short time have been supplied with these permanent sprays, and naturally the older settlers feel that the department should hurry up and supply them to everybody. I hope the Minister will give some further thought to this question. I am disappointed that the increase in petrol tax has not all been allocated to roads. This is a great national problem, and we need a greater amount of money for roads in country districts. I hope that the Premier will use more vigour and energy than usual in extracting from the Grants Commission and the forthcoming Loan Council a greater allocation of money for roads in South Australia. With the heavier motor traffic year by year there has been a heavy impact on our roads, particularly in rural areas, and this is causing delays in getting goods to market as quickly as possible.

I have addressed a question to the Premier this session with regard to a new bridge over the River Murray at Blanchetown. This project was referred to the Public Works Committee on December 16, 1954, but to date the committee has not taken one word of evidence. In answer to my question the Premier explained that the Jervois Bridge was one of urgency because it was unsafe, and therefore had to have precedence. I am not disputing that the Jervois Bridge was an urgent project, but am pointing out that money has been allocated to that project whereas the question of the Blanchetown Bridge has been pigeonholed. I do not wish to attack the Public Works Committee on this point, and merely bring this matter forward to try to find out why the Blanchetown Bridge is still being delayed. Nearly 18 months have elapsed and no evidence whatsoever has been taken by the Public Works Committee. The time has arrived when it should take some evidence on this project.

I know that the committee has had a tremendous amount of work to do, and that the bulk-handling project, for instance, has taken up considerable time; but I say that with a major undertaking of that nature a special committee of inquiry should have been set up because of the wide ramifications involved. Only this

week the committee made available a report in which it recommended the truck-jetty system for loading wheat at Wallaroo. I am extremely disappointed in that finding of the committee, and I maintain that it should have recommended the endless belt system. Honourable members, when they read the report, will see that the evidence of senior Harbours Board officials, including Mr. Meyer himself, was strongly in favour of the endless belt system. The reason given by the committee in favour of the truck-jetty system was obviously that that method involved a smaller capital cost. Honourable members in the city, who are probably anxious to get something done at the Jervois Bridge, may agree with the Public Works Committee because of the fact that less capital expenditure is involved, but I do not. We should not sacrifice efficiency for capital. In this particular instance the endless belt is quite obviously the best method. I think references will also be found in the report to the fact that the two Government representatives, Messrs. Dean and Rosevear, preferred the endless belt as being the best ultimate system, but they went into the question of operating costs and other things and then recommended the other method.

Mr. Fred Walsh—The volume of throughput was taken into consideration.

Mr. STOTT—I admit that the committee investigated that thoroughly. In my opinion the question of 7,000,000 bushels does not reject an endless belt at Wallaroo.

Mr. Shannon—Overseas authorities would not consider the installation of an endless belt system at Wallaroo. Their evidence is hard to overlook.

Mr. STOTT—I have the highest regard for Mr. Rosevear and Mr. Dean who are gentlemen of ability, but they were in a most invidious position. Prior to going overseas they had no knowledge of wheat or of bulk handling equipment. They were only away a short time and I consider that the committee placed too much reliance on their evidence. The General Manager of the Australian Wheat Board—a man of vast experience—contends that the endless belt system is the only one for Wallaroo.

Mr. Shannon—Especially if the farmer doesn't have to pay for it.

Mr. STOTT—I do not want to get into an argument on that, but the honourable member knows perfectly well that the company in its original negotiations for a charter from the Government offered to install an endless belt

system at Wallaroo. The Government would not grant that in the charter and said that as jetties were operated by the Harbors Board the board should make the installation. The company is anxious to install the most efficient system, but is denied an opportunity because the charter does not permit it to do so. The Government proposes to install the cheapest, but not the most efficient system.

Mr. Shannon—What would the company have used for money?

Mr. STOTT—What it is using today—good money received from the growers. It would probably take the company a little longer, but the system would have been up-to-date and more efficient. Although the Public Works Committee has recommended the truck system the time will come when it will have to be discarded in favour of the endless belt system. Quite obviously the committee and the Government were concerned with saving capital costs, but that will stand for nothing because that expenditure will be wasted when the endless belt system has to be installed. Endless belts are estimated to last for over 20 years and when a gallery is installed they last much longer. In giving evidence to the committee, railways witnesses stated they could handle 3,000 tons of wheat at Wallaroo and pointed out that they could load 50 per cent straight down the jetty into the ship without going to the silo. If the railways organized the loading themselves that might be possible, but if the Wheat Board wanted to clear a certain siding—Snowtown, Bute or Paskeville—it is quite obvious that the railways could not maintain that rate. It will be some time before the company is able to establish bulk silos at sufficient country sidings to enable the railways to maintain a 3,000 ton through-put. At present the only bulk sidings in the Wallaroo division are at Paskeville and Bute. By harvest time there will be others at Balaklava, Hoyalton, Snowtown and Blyth, but how can the Railways load 3,000 tons of bulk wheat when there are only a half dozen points to load from?

Mr. Shannon—What about the port storage? Won't that supply it?

Mr. STOTT—I am referring to the railways evidence of loading 50 per cent straight down the jetty into the ships without going to the silo. They won't be able to do that until bulk points are established in many centres.

Mr. Shannon—The railways were just as realistic in their approach to the question as was the bulk handling company. You cannot receive wheat at any siding until you put in silos.

Mr. STOTT—If there is a ship at Wallaroo, in order to maintain the quick dispatch money 1,500 tons a day must be loaded. If there are no bulk points for the railways to load from in the country quite obviously we will lose the quick dispatch money and incur demurrage.

Mr. Shannon—There is one point you are overlooking: as soon as the Wallaroo bin has been built by the company you will be able to load the ships at the required rate of 3,000 tons a day.

Mr. STOTT—I agree that will be possible once we have the wheat in the silo at Wallaroo, but that is not what was suggested in the Railways evidence.

Mr. Shannon—Yes it was.

Mr. STOTT—The railways said they could put 50 per cent straight down the jetty without going into the silo.

Mr. Shannon—And they will when the silo is completed.

Mr. STOTT—I say they will not, and let us see who is right. The railways cannot do that at present because they have not the points from which to pick it up.

Mr. Shannon—And you cannot take it in bulk until you have established those bins.

Mr. STOTT—We can if it is in the silo. The honourable member knows very well that when a 1,500,000 bushel silo is installed at Wallaroo it will be filled. I do not deny that once it is in the silo it can be loaded into the ship, but the railways will not be able to load 50 per cent straight down the jetty into the ship for some years.

Mr. Shannon—And I say you should wait until the system is completed.

Mr. STOTT—We will have to wait until it is completed before the railways can put 50 per cent down the jetty, and in the meantime the growers will be logged one halfpenny a bushel because there is a truck jetty system there. The wheat ports will be charging a differential to the growers delivering at Wallaroo because of that system, but there would not be any differential against local growers with an endless belt system. That is the truth.

Mr. Shannon—No, it is far from true.

Mr. STOTT—Then the manager of the Australian Wheat Board, who has been tested on three occasions on this matter, is not speaking the truth.

Mr. Shannon—He has not read the Public Works Committee report. That is the answer to your airy nothings.

Mr. STOTT—They are not airy nothings. We have gone into this matter very thoroughly. Although Messrs. Rosevear and Dean tried very hard and with great sincerity to put up the point that the Wheat Board should bear the differential because of the truck jetty method and make it a charge against general accounts, the board said that could not be done. Even at the last meeting of the board we were told that even if the truck jetty method is installed at Wallaroo there will be a differential that will have to be borne by local growers delivering there. The general manager of the board told us that with a truck jetty method his opinion, based on experience of shipping, is that the shipping companies will probably want between 2s. 6d. and 3s. sterling extra for each ton at Wallaroo.

Mr. Shannon—It amazes me that these people should be seeking a penalty from shipping companies when they are going to load at normal rates with a belt method. I cannot understand wheat people inviting the shipping companies to burden them with an extra 2s. 6d. to 3s.

Mr. STOTT—I am amazed at it too.

Mr. Shannon—I was so surprised I did not take any notice of it.

Mr. STOTT—You have to take notice when such a statement comes from someone who has the responsibility of putting it into effect. He is the man responsible for the charters to those shipping companies.

Mr. SHANNON—Should not the rate of loading decide whether there should be a penalty rate?

Mr. Stott—Yes, but the shipping companies do not always do that.

Mr. Shannon—I believe they do.

Mr. STOTT—The loading rate for the truck jetty method has yet to be determined; whether or not it can be maintained has yet to be seen.

Mr. Shannon—It will be.

Mr. STOTT—The honourable member is optimistic, but I do not think the shipping companies will be as optimistic as he. I believe that the shipping companies want to cover themselves against all emergencies by charging an extra 3s. a ton, and that it will be charged against the authorities at Wallaroo. I am disappointed at the finding in favour of the truck jetty method as against the endless belt system.

A matter that requires some attention from the Minister of Roads is the condition of the Berri road. Members know that a high river is coming down again this year and the road

between Berri and Loxton will be out of action again. For a considerable time it has been suggested that it be elevated on the flats near the Berri punt so that traffic between Loxton and Berri can use it during floods, but the Government has made no real attempt to deal with this problem. When the flood came down last year the Minister promised to do all he could, but nothing has been done yet, and it has been reported that the road is again out of commission because of the high river. I hope the Government will ensure that it will not be out of order during future floods.

The Federal Government has not seen fit to agree to a proper stabilization scheme for the dried fruits industry. I think it has treated the industry in the River Murray areas and in other States very shabbily in not working out a proper stabilization scheme to provide prices for sultanas, lexias and currants. The Federal Government put forward a scheme that the A.D.F.A. rejected, so the Commonwealth is not prepared to go any further. I hope that representatives of the A.D.F.A. will continue negotiations with the Government for a stabilization scheme. This scheme must cover whatever crop is being grown—lexias, sultanas or currants. Members do not need to be reminded of the bad times growers have had in the last two or three years. Only a few weeks ago we had rains that seriously affected crops, and last year growers got into difficulties because they were unable to get advances, even from the fruit sheds, to enable them to carry on. If this Government confers with the Federal Government I hope it will endeavour to get a proper stabilization scheme for the industry.

I congratulate the new members on their election to Parliament. Their contributions have enlivened the debates, and by the time they become more confident the debating in this House will have considerably improved. Although most of them are supporters of the Government they are apparently not afraid to point out where they disagree with it. That is all to the good and I hope they will continue in that spirit, because it makes this Parliament more worthwhile. I have already congratulated you, Mr. Speaker, on your appointment to your high office and I feel certain you will make an excellent job of it. I also congratulate Mr. Dunnage on his appointment as Chairman of Committees, and commend Mr. Loveday and Mr. Bywaters for their contributions to the debate. I consider they will improve the debating strength of the House. I have known Mr. Loveday since 1927

and have a very high respect for his sound commonsense and judgment. I wish him well in the House. We have already had an indication of his debating ability. I welcome all the new members and hope that the decorum of the House will continue as in the past, as a result of which it has been one of the best debating Parliaments in Australia. I do not agree with the criticism levelled by one or two members, but let us forget that and get on with the government of the State.

Mr. FRED WALSH (West Torrens)—As the Premier desires to complete the debate tonight, I will forego referring to a few matters I had in mind and save them for another occasion. I associate myself with other honourable members in the congratulations extended to you, Mr. Speaker, on your appointment. The choice was a very popular one with the Labor Party, and I feel sure all members on this side believe, having regard to our brief experience of you as Speaker, that no other member could fill the office better. I also extend congratulations to Mr. Dunnage on his appointment as Chairman of Committees. I have been associated with him on the Public Works Committee and feel confident he will fulfil his duties with credit and be impartial. I also congratulate Mr. Pearson, feeling that with his knowledge of rural industries he will prove a most competent Minister of Agriculture. I regret the death of his predecessor, the Hon. A. W. Christian, and also Mr. Don Michael. In the death of Mr. Christian South Australia has lost a very valuable citizen. I was associated with him on the Public Works Committee for a number of years. He was chairman of that body, and I feel that it would be impossible to get anyone else in this Parliament who could so completely fill the position. It is to be regretted that he left us so suddenly.

I feel I am called upon to refer to some of the remarks made by the Premier in another debate. I will not say he deliberately misled the House because I am sure I would be called to order, but I feel he unwittingly misled it when he referred to the basic wage and the living wage. During his speech he said that the basic wage and the living wage were not the same thing. He added that the Industrial Code provided for a living wage to be determined and that it was determined on the cost of living. The position is that basically the Federal basic wage is fixed on the cost of living. Down through the years a series of inquiries have been made to establish the State

living wage. Although the general procedure followed was different from that adopted in the Federal sphere, in essence the result was the same. The Federal Court actually relied upon the Commonwealth Statistician's figures. When an inquiry was held in South Australia by the Board of Industry the court used to be cluttered up with vegetables, groceries, and other household goods. Whereas the Federal basic wage was subject to quarterly adjustments, the State living wage was subject only to periodical inquiries. The figures I produced previously, and which I could produce again, showed conclusively that during the whole period when the State living wage was arrived at there was only a difference of about 6d. in any one year compared with the figure arrived at by the Federal Court.

Despite the arguments adduced by counsel before the Board of Industry for or against an increase, in the final analysis the board determined its findings on the Commonwealth Statistician's figures, having regard to the Commonwealth basic wage. Whether it is called a basic wage or a living wage is only a matter of terms, and actually means nothing. In determining the wage the court had regard to the possible trend in the cost of living, and would try to judge what amounts would cover the position over a period of six months, and due allowance was accordingly made to protect the interests of both sides. We have no complaint about that. It is called a living wage in South Australia under our jurisdiction, and a basic wage in the Federal Court, and is also known as the basic wage in most other States, where they arrived at it in somewhat the same way as we did prior to 1949. Then a provision was inserted in our Industrial Code for the acceptance, after the necessary certificate had been given, of the Federal basic wage for Adelaide as the State living wage for South Australia. The Premier has said that the basic wage was not pegged, but it has been pegged by the court and the Government accepted the pegging, despite the fact that in every other State, by legislation or through the Industrial tribunals, the basic wage for those working under State jurisdiction has been increased. New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania did it by legislation, Queensland and Western Australia per medium of the State Industrial Court. The other day the Premier said that although legislation was passed in Tasmania covering those working under State jurisdiction no provision was made for their own employees. There was no need to pass legislation for them

because it could be done by regulation, in the same way as it could be done in South Australia. This Parliament could not pass legislation providing for the automatic application of the quarterly adjustments for those working under State awards or determinations, but it could amend the Industrial Code and make the adjustments. That is all we desire.

No attempt has been made by the Government to increase the wages of its own employees. It sticks rigidly to the awards and determinations covering employees in its service. This shows that their wages have been pegged. Some employers have paid more than the award rates, but we are not asking for that. All we want is provision for the automatic application of the variation in the cost of living as determined by the "C" Series index figures. We hope that on Friday the Federal Court will give a decision on the application for the £1 a week increase in the basic wage and the restoration of quarterly adjustments. Mr. Lawn mentioned the evidence submitted to the court on behalf of the Government. It disclosed that if the application is agreed to by the court every worker in South Australia under State jurisdiction will get an increase of 35s. a week. I am not so optimistic as to believe that the court will agree to the £1 a week requested and to the quarterly adjustment restoration, but there will be an attempt to mete out a measure of justice to the workers because if that is not done there will be trouble in industry. No longer can the workers in South Australia continue to be at a disadvantage when compared with workers in other States. It must be remembered that I am referring to those working under State jurisdiction. Those under Federal jurisdiction have, in the main, been able to increase their margins or to some extent obtain over-award payments. Most of the unions who go to the Federal Court are strong and can bring pressure to bear on the employers, but the mass of the workers under State jurisdiction are not in the same happy position. Only two unions in South Australia are entirely State unions. A number of federated unions who, for purposes of awards, go to the State court, will be forced to go to the Federal Court. I am not keen on doing that. I prefer to remain in the State Court jurisdiction where we have received better conditions, and in some instances better wages, than we would have got from the Federal Court. If on Friday the Federal Court does not agree to the application of the employees the Government must seriously con-

sider making provision to safeguard the interests of the South Australian workers.

I congratulate the new members on their contributions to this debate. With the exception of perhaps one member they performed very well, but the member for Light (Mr. Hambour) started off by saying he was proud of the efforts of successive Playford Governments. He made a number of comparisons with conditions in other States, but if one were to listen to some of the eulogies voiced by members on the Government benches one would be led to believe that all the other States were industrially bankrupt.

Mr. Hambour—So they are.

Mr. FRED WALSH—That interjection proves that the honourable member has little knowledge of the position because every State has experienced a considerable expansion of its secondary industries in recent years.

Mr. Riches—Some other States have industries, such as a steelworks, that should be here.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Yes; the member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday) pointed out that a steel industry might be established in Victoria long before it was established in South Australia, although iron ore was discovered in this State many years ago. Mr. Hambour reminded me of a book I read in America, but which was banned in Australia—*Forever Amber*. When that book was first published an article in the *New York Times* stated, "Never since Manhattan was sold for a few hundred dollars has so much dirt been sold so cheaply," and to a great extent that applies to some of the remarks of the honourable member.

Mr. Hambour—I didn't think you would read that book.

Mr. FRED WALSH—I read any type of book and apparently the honourable member read that one. He went on to say:—

Unfortunately the drift to the city continues. This drift will be accelerated if the present policy is not changed in many respects.

I assume that there he was referring to the Playford Government's policy, and I hope he continues to criticize that policy from time to time not only in Caucus, but in the House. The drift to the city is natural and I do not always agree with the views on decentralization expressed by my colleagues, although I believe in decentralization as advocated by my Party. I consider that policy must be implemented economically. I see no sense in establishing an industry in a country town merely to create employment there unless it can be conducted economically. In this respect raw material, water and power must be available, and it may

be cheaper in some instances to take power or water to the raw material and in others to take the raw material to the power and water. These are matters that can be determined only by an expert.

In this regard we should view South Australia not only as a State, but as an integral part of the Commonwealth. Generally speaking, for a country the size of Australia with a population of almost 10,000,000 our industries are fairly well distributed in cities and inland towns in all States. An industry such as a cannery could be established economically on the banks of the River Murray, but such matters should be carefully considered. Until this is done the drift to the city will continue because of the better conditions and amenities there. Conditions in our primary industries are deteriorating, and a press statement by Alf Hannaford & Company Limited (a firm closely connected with agriculture) states that the area under crop will be reduced this year from 1,600,000 to 1,400,000 acres, which will mean a considerable falling off in the production of wheat. There is a considerable surplus of wheat to dispose of and it is no use producing it under these conditions.

Mr. Hambour—That may be offset by increased production of barley.

Mr. FRED WALSH—The article goes on to refer to the increase in barley production, but this will be insufficient to offset the reduction in wheat. After all, many wheat-growing areas are unsuitable for barley.

Mr. Hambour—Barley can be grown in most parts of the State.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Unlike the honourable member, I do not hold myself out as an expert on barley, but merely on the finished product, and on that subject Mr. Hambour received support from the member for Port Pirie (Mr. Davis) who knew nothing about it. On the other hand, Mr. Hambour certainly understands it, because he is president of the club on whose behalf he voiced the grudge, but, although I do not wish to take the side of the brewers, I must be fair as I have some knowledge of this matter. It is unfair for a club to sell liquor at a price lower than hotels charge, because hotels have certain expenses that clubs do not. Furthermore, profits made by clubs revert to members in the form of more amenities. The rebates were paid to charities in the district of the member for Light. He did not tell us that when you spoke on the motion before the House.

Mr. Hambour—I did. If you read *Hansard* you will find that I did say that rebates are paid to charities in my district.

The SPEAKER—The honourable member has made his personal explanation, but I ask members to refer to each other as "the honourable member," not "you."

Mr. FRED WALSH—The honourable member spoke of rebates; what was the rebate?

Mr. Hambour—It was 13s. 4d.

Mr. FRED WALSH—The price of a kilderkin of beer to a hotelkeeper is £10 9s. 6d., and the excise is £8 17s., leaving £1 12s. 6d. for the producer, out of which he has to pay for labour and materials and other costs. However, no employer in South Australia gives better wages and conditions to unskilled workers than the brewer. The question of the stoppage of the rebate that was ultimately paid to charities is nothing compared to the action that would be taken by the union if any hotel employed a man who was not a union man. Recently, we have heard much about automation, but automation has not developed suddenly, though it has developed rapidly in recent years. I saw some of these machines in operation as long ago as 1945. Of course, automation developed rapidly in Western Germany because so many of its industries were destroyed during the war. The capital cost of installing these machines is enormous, but I believe there is nothing to fear from the introduction of super-electronic machinery if the interests of the workers are safeguarded. Many people will be displaced from employment, but there is little chance of employers and employees getting together and reaching an understanding on the matter. Governments must come into this problem and our State Government should not unduly delay calling conferences to consider it.

In recent months considerable damage has been caused to our metropolitan foreshores, but I am concerned mostly with those at Henley and Grange, which are in my electorate. It is of little use patching up damage done from time to time. A series of groynes should be installed on our foreshores; they have been successful in England, particularly on the Channel coast. They break up the sea and build up a sand reserve that helps to replace the foreshore. The groynes project into the sea and after a period the foreshore is widened. I do not think one could get a better example than the Outer Harbour, where the breakwater acts as a groyne. People who knew that area many years ago realize the vast amount of land that has been reclaimed as a result of the breakwater being constructed there. Although

a breakwater would be a fairly big project, the establishment of the groynes would be a comparatively small one. It would not be very costly and would add considerably to the protection of the beaches, not only in the immediate future but virtually for all time.

I recently raised a question with regard to the Holbrook Road Bridge. I do not think the Minister took the matter seriously enough, and I am disappointed with his reply. I see in the *News* this evening an article headed "Tragedy Waiting at Narrow Bridge." A picture of the bridge also appears. The newspaper article suggests that a mesh-wire fence should be erected, but I think that unless it were very high it would not be of any use. Even if it were high it would be subject to damage from time to time because of the fact that two motor lorries could not pass on the bridge without the tray of one overlapping the footpath. The footpath is very narrow, and any pedestrian or child walking along it would be liable to injury. I suggested the construction of a foot-

bridge on the western side of the bridge parapet, with the Architect-in-Chief's Department making the angle irons and proper wood decking available. A wire-mesh fence could then be erected on one side to prevent people falling into the river. I appeal again to the Minister, and I ask him to see that this bridge is made safe before some tragedy occurs, because if it does occur the responsibility will be on the department, and nobody wants to see that.

I know the Premier wants to wind up the debate, so I will conclude by repeating my congratulations to you, Sir, and the others who have been mentioned by previous speakers. I support the motion.

Motion for adoption of Address in Reply carried.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 10.14 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, May 24, at 2 p.m.