

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.**

Tuesday, October 2, 1956.

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

**QUESTIONS.****RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.**

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Saturday's press contained an article under the heading "Railway Smashes Amazingly Similar." It indicated that both the Minister of Railways and the Railways Commissioner are very concerned over recent accidents, that the enginemen working the diesel train passed the signal at the stop position at Croydon, and that certain matters were being examined. I understand that when the signalling system was introduced it provided for a maximum speed of 40 miles an hour but that the new type diesel train from a standing start can attain that speed in 40 seconds, and that it has a maximum speed of 55 miles an hour. I would like an inquiry into whether the present signalling system is in keeping with the increased speeds now attained. The article also mentioned man hours worked. Would it be possible to ascertain whether the working conditions provide for up to 9½ hours a shift and whether the train travels are six to seven a shift as against three to four under steam? Would the Minister representing the Minister of Railways ask for an investigation along these lines?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—Amongst the first things I had the opportunity to do on returning to duty was to confer with the Minister of Railways regarding the accidents. As the report indicated, there has been a very puzzling series of accidents and the Commissioner, the Railways Union and the men themselves are worried about them. It seems on the face that it is rather the result of coincidence than of something over which human intelligence has control. In every case the men concerned were of the highest calibre. There was no suggestion that any of them lacked application to the job, because each had done the work over a long period of years, or that they had been working under undue strain; yet three accidents occurred within a short period. As to the suggestion that speeding up has helped to cause the accidents, I will ask the Minister of Railways to confer with the Railways Commissioner, but I assume that these points were fully investigated at the time of the inquiry. Having regard to the long period of accident-free control of the railways, and

the wonderful absence of fatal accidents, I suggest that we have run into an unfortunate routine sequence, and we hope there will be no recurrence of it. The Railways Union and the men, as well as the Minister and Commissioner, are taking up the matter to see if they can find the cause of the accidents. The points raised by the honourable member will be directed to the Minister and I will bring down his reply.

**BELAIR COMMUNITY CENTRE.**

Mr. MILLHOUSE—Last Friday night I attended the annual general meeting of the Belair Community Centre, the main project of which is the erection of a community hall at Belair. Over the last two years or so the Centre has collected between £1,500 and £2,000 for the purpose. Whilst at the meeting my attention was directed to an article in the *Advertiser* of February 22 in which the Treasurer is reported to have said:—

In cases where local residents have raised a suitable deposit the Government will support the allocation of funds from the State Bank for the construction of community halls in new housing areas.

Belair is one area in the metropolitan area that has expanded at a tremendous rate, and in view of that will the Premier consider making a grant to the Belair Community Centre for erecting a community hall?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government has no money at its disposal to make grants for this purpose. Amenities of this description are outside the normal purposes for which grants are made. If the honourable member will submit the project to me, and set out the amount raised as against the total amount required, I will see if it is a suitable project to be referred to the State Bank for the purpose of an advance.

**SEMAPHORE-OUTER HARBOUR RAILWAY SERVICE.**

Mr. TAPPING—A few months ago the Railways Department inaugurated a frequent and fast diesel service between Adelaide, Semaphore and Outer Harbour and I believe it has proved successful. Can the Minister representing the Minister of Railways indicate the increase in the number of passengers brought about by that service?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I have had a memorandum from the Minister of Railways but I think it is rather early to give anything in the way of a statistical record of the increase.

On the face of it, however, it seems that the increase has been worthwhile. I will bring down later a more definite report for the honourable member.

#### AGISTMENT OF DAIRY HERDS.

Mr. HARDING—Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to my previous question concerning the agistment of dairy cattle and the accommodation available at the Kybybolite Experimental Farm and the Struan Welfare Farm for dairymen and their families from the flooded River Murray areas? In view of the generous response by landowners to appeals for assistance for flood victims, I believe that present and future agistment requirements should be clarified.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I am now able to reply to the first part of the question, for I have received the following report from the Acting Director of Agriculture:—

The proposal has been considered, but it is apparent that the experimental programme at the Kybybolite Research Centre would be disorganized if an attempt were made to agist stock there. Kybybolite is at present carrying 1,900 sheep and 82 cattle (which is equivalent to 2,630 sheep) on its area of 700 acres; this makes a stocking rate of nearly four sheep per acre. Important trials are being carried out there; for example, in endeavouring to determine the factors which cause Dystokia in Hereford heifers and also calves feeding trials. Struan out-station could be made available for the agistment of about 40 head of dry cattle. Consideration was given to the practicability of the Children's Welfare Department farm school at Struan agisting and milking a producing herd on the basis that dry stock displaced at this farm would be cared for at the Department of Agriculture's Struan out-station. The Chairman of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board advised that it was not possible to provide any accommodation for personnel and that, as agistment was likely to be required for upwards of one year, the feed question would become quite a problem in the summer. Other difficulties foreseen included the dislocation of the training of the boys in various rural occupations and the undesirability of giving outsiders access to the property and facilities of the school where a number of boys are under training and discipline.

As to the latter part of the question, the country public have responded magnificently to the appeals for fodder and agistment made by the Government through the committee set up for the purpose. I have a fairly recent report from Mr. Itzerott, in which he indicates that 5,700 tons of fodder of various sorts has been offered for sale at reasonable terms to those requiring it and 870 tons donated free for the relief of distress among dairymen.

That is a remarkable response, and the thanks of all concerned are due, particularly to those who made gifts of fodder. At present sufficient agistment is in hand for all the stock that has been moved from the Murray River swamp area. A number of dairymen who are still remaining on the swamps and feeding their stock on the adjoining highlands and the nearby areas have expressed their intention of staying there. Should seasonal conditions or some other circumstance make it necessary for them to move their stock, further offers of agistment from South-Eastern districts may be required.

#### SCHOOL BUS SERVICES.

Mr. HAMBOUR—Has the Minister of Education the report of the committee inquiring into school bus services?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—No, but I can inform the honourable member and other country members that about 400 school bus services now serve 230 country schools and transport about 12,000 children 18,000 miles at a cost of £1,600 a day. I am constantly receiving applications for further services, but I do not see how I can comply with many of these requests, for neither sufficient money nor buses are available. As soon as possible, however, I would like to receive the report and recommendations of the committee that I set up last October.

#### APPROACH TO MURRAY ROAD BRIDGE.

Mr. BYWATERS—Recently a young man was killed on the eastern approach to the road bridge across the River Murray at Murray Bridge. At the inquest the Coroner recorded an open finding, but added in his report that the approach was dangerous. The 'S' bend approaching the road bridge creates a hazard; many people have spoken about this dangerous approach and much concern is felt at present because of the increased road traffic, as this is the only open highway left over the Murray River in South Australia. Will the Minister representing the Minister of Roads take up this matter with his colleague to see whether the eastern approach to this bridge can be improved and sufficient warning notices erected so as to assist in preventing accidents?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—Yes.

#### ROAD CONSTRUCTION FOR BUS ROUTES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—At one time a bus service ran from the Hyde Park tram terminus, Cross Road, to Colonel Light Gardens, and I

ask whether the Minister representing the Minister of Roads can say whether the Tramways Trust will be responsible for reconstructing the road for the use of their buses on the route known as Adelaide-Westbourne Park, or will the Garden Suburb Commissioner be responsible for the reconstruction of the road, and if so will a special grant be made to meet the full cost of the work? This problem is similar to that of the Goodwood Road, which concerns the Unley and Mitcham councils and the Garden Suburb Commissioner.

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I have not had an opportunity to discuss this matter with my colleague, but I have noticed in the press that there have been discussions with the councils concerned, and also a discussion on whether the Mitcham council and the Garden Suburb should be merged. There is a good deal of point and counter-point in each case, and I would not like to express any preconceived opinion at this stage on what is possible, but I will confer with my colleague and bring down his reply.

#### TRAMWAYS TRUST.

Mr. LAWN (on notice)—

1. What was the total number of salaried and daily paid employees in the engineering section of the Municipal Tramways Trust before the present board was appointed?

2. What is the present number in this section?

3. What are the plans of the Trust for the building used at present for parking buses at Port Adelaide Depot, when the new buildings are completed?

4. Does the Trust intend to introduce school term tram and bus tickets at a reduced rate?

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

1. January, 1953—912.

2. September, 1956—678.

3. It will be demolished.

4. Monthly tickets at a reduced rate have been in operation since 1909 and this policy will be continued.

#### PETROL SERVICE STATIONS.

Mr. TAPPING (on notice)—How many service stations were registered in the metropolitan area for each of the years 1955 and 1956?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—At December 31, 1955, 381; at September 28, 1956, 423. In addition to the above service stations, there are 60 firms who sell petrol but only incidentally to their principal businesses.

#### TRAMWAYS BUS STOP.

Mr. TAPPING (on notice)—Is it the intention of the Municipal Tramways Trust to change the bus stop near the corner of Hart and Carlisle Streets, Ethelton, to a position beyond the intersection instead of before the intersection, as at present?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—The general manager of the Municipal Tramways Trust reports:—

It is considered that the present stopping place is safer and more conveniently situated where it is, than on the western side of Carlisle Street, and it is therefore not proposed to alter it.

#### ADELAIDE PARKLANDS.

Mr. LAWN (on notice)—Of the original 2,300 acres of parklands surrounding the city of Adelaide how many acres are available to the public today?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—A total of 1,708 acres.

#### PUBLIC PURPOSES LOAN BILL.

Returned from Legislative Council without amendment.

#### LOAN MONEY APPROPRIATION (WORKING ACCOUNTS) BILL.

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

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

That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to authorize the Treasurer to issue and apply money from the Loan Fund for temporarily defraying certain working expenditure, and for purposes incidental thereto.

Motion carried.

Resolution agreed to in Committee and adopted by the House. Bill introduced and read a first time.

#### LOTTERY AND GAMING (FLOOD RELIEF) BILL.

His Excellency the Governor recommended to the House the appropriation of such amounts of the general revenue and other money as might be required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD moved:—

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

That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to provide for the issue of a special totalizator licence and for the payment of certain

totalizator duties and betting taxes to the the Lord Mayor's Murray River Flood Relief Fund, and for other purposes.

Motion carried.

Resolution agreed to in Committee and adopted by the House. Bill introduced and read a first time.

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

*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

I thank members for enabling me to bring this matter before the House today. I propose to give the second reading and then adjourn the debate for a short time to enable members opposite to examine the details of the Bill. Later today we can pass it. The Bill enables a special race meeting to be held for the purpose of raising money for the Lord Mayor's Murray River Relief Fund. When this fund was inaugurated, the principal associations connected with racing held a meeting without delay to decide in what way they could best assist the fund. The meeting was attended by representatives of racing clubs throughout the State, and of bookmakers, owners and trainers. An initial gift of about £3,500 from the associations was immediately guaranteed, and the meeting decided to ask for permission to hold a special race meeting in the metropolitan area on Melbourne Cup day, November 6, to raise additional money.

A committee, called the Combined Racing Flood Appeal Fund Committee, was formed to co-ordinate the efforts of the various bodies concerned.

The Government agreed to introduce a Bill to permit the extra day's racing. Subsequently it was suggested that in addition to the net proceeds from the race meeting the betting taxes and the totalizator duty collected in respect of races held at the meeting should also be made available for the Lord Mayor's Relief Fund. The Government readily agreed to this proposal. This Bill contains the legislation necessary to carry out the scheme. It enables the totalizator to be used at one special race meeting this year, and also provides that the totalizator duty, winning bets tax, and betting commission collected in respect of the meeting will be paid to the Combined Racing Flood Appeal Committee for contribution to the Lord Mayor's Flood Relief Fund. The amount to be so paid will include the taxes on all bets made at the special race meeting, whether on local races or others, and also the taxes on bets made in registered premises on races run at the special meeting.

The Government has agreed to remit the main taxes so that the only cost will be that directly associated with conducting the meeting. The amount of the betting tickets tax is insignificant and there is to be no remission of it.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Acting Leader of the Opposition)—I support the second reading, as the purpose of the special legislation is well known. The Bill permits the holding of a race meeting and remits certain taxes in order that the amount to be contributed to the Lord Mayor's Flood Relief Fund may be as great as possible. I suggest to the Premier that the House adjourn over the day of the meeting so that members can attend, and that they pay an admission fee and not use their gold passes. The Government has agreed to remit the main taxes. The bookmakers will have to stand the tax on the betting tickets, but on this occasion I do not think they will mind. What will be the position if a country meeting is to be held on that same day? I understand that if a country trotting meeting is held on the same day as a city race meeting a Melbourne betting service is provided. I hope a similar service will be given at the special meeting. If there should be a country trotting meeting arranged for that day perhaps the club could forgo it or allow its profits to be added to the proceeds from the special race meeting and so swell the Lord Mayor's Flood Relief Fund.

Mr. JENKINS (Stirling)—I support the Bill. One of its main recommendations is contained in clause 3, which states:—

A licence to use the totalizator at one race meeting to be held before the 31st day of December, 1956. . . .

The Premier said the meeting will be held on Melbourne Cup Day, and the fixing of December 31, 1956, in the Bill ensures that if the meeting is not held on Melbourne Cup Day it can be held on another day before the end of the year. The remarks by Mr. Frank Walsh regarding a country meeting apply to my district because on Melbourne Cup Day it has been the habit of the Strathalbyn and Victor Harbour clubs to alternately conduct meetings. I have not discussed the matter with them, but I have no doubt that they would forgo the meeting on that day and amicably agree amongst themselves regarding the meetings to be held in the future. The Bill is a good one and it should result in about £12,000 being added to the fund.

Mr. HEASLIP (Rocky River)—I cannot support the Bill, although all my sympathy goes out to the residents along the River Murray who have suffered through the flood. South

Australians are subscribing voluntarily to the Flood Relief Fund and their contributions have been magnificent. I cannot see why it is necessary to hold a race meeting and encourage gambling in order to get more money for the fund. Why is it right to provide for gambling to assist this fund, but wrong, apparently, to provide for gambling to assist other funds? How can this extra race day for gambling be justified? If it is right then it is right for us to have a lottery. Why should we not hold a lottery this year to augment the Flood Relief Fund? If it is right to permit gambling in this case then it is right to permit any other form of gambling provided the money goes to this fund.

I do not appreciate this Bill. We have had disasters such as droughts before and we will have them again. In some droughts millions of sheep suffered in agony and their owners lost everything, yet those men received no Government relief, nor was any asked for. Our vineyards have been ravaged by frosts, yet no relief has been given to their owners. The River Murray floods, however, have been spectacular, and merely because of that we are asked to legalize something which for any other purpose would be wrong. That does not make this Bill right and I do not support it because I believe it is wrong in principle. Mr. Frank Walsh said this legislation will give members a chance to go to the races and contribute to the fund.

Mr. Frank Walsh—By paying their entrance fee.

Mr. HEASLIP—Members should be here to do their job and conduct the affairs of the State rather than adjourn merely because a race meeting is being held on Melbourne Cup day. A special race meeting should not be set aside to swell the Flood Appeal Fund through the medium of gambling. If members wish to contribute to the fund let them contribute to it through some other avenue.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra)—I support the measure, and I think that on reflection the member for Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip) will support it. Indeed, I cannot see from his remarks how he can do otherwise. He says that if the principle behind this Bill is right we should raise money by lotteries and all sorts of means, but then he says that the principle is wrong. What does he stand for? I agree with him, however, that in a state of emergency we are prepared to amend legislation to allow certain things that are taboo at other times to be done to relieve a section of our citizens. If those citizens

can be helped by legislation of this sort, then the original Act that prohibits the very thing we are to allow in this case is wrong. If it is right to do a certain thing in this case then it is right to do it under ordinary circumstances. That, however, does not prevent my supporting the measure because I view it with considerable pleasure. It looks as though the opposition of the Playford Government to even a sixpenny raffle for a football club is not as ironclad as we were led to believe.

Mr. Stott—It is willing to do this for flood relief but not for other types of relief.

Mr. QUIRKE—That is so. This type of legislation is not really necessary, for plenty of money is available to relieve the settlers and to assist other types of relief. Even the member for Burnside (Mr. Geoffrey Clarke) almost admitted that the other day. Such availability of money, however, does not alter the principle behind the original legislation, which provides that money shall not be raised by gambling. This Bill, however, provides that money will be made available through the generosity of the sporting public; we are to legalize something that is at other times illegal. I do not understand the reasoning of the Government in this matter, but this legislation simply means that the Government is not as dead as I thought it was, and to that extent I am pleased. Mr. Heaslip mentioned the trials and tribulations of farmers and others in time of drought and his argument is valid, for they did not ask for assistance. Indeed the only time they were assisted was during the depression by means of the Debt Adjustment Act. They deserved that relief just as much as settlers on the river deserve the relief to be given by means of this Bill, but assistance for River Murray settlers will not go as far as that given to farmers under the Debt Adjustment Act.

Mr. Heaslip—I did not refer to the farmers; they got nothing.

Mr. QUIRKE—Some farmers had a few sheep.

Mr. John Clark—But why take exception to this Bill because of that argument?

Mr. QUIRKE—Exactly. The fact that certain people got nothing then is no argument why these settlers should not get this relief today. I support the Bill and appreciate the Government's gesture to sporting people. The Government realizes that if a race meeting can be held for this purpose thousands of pounds will be contributed. Incidentally, the money raised will help the Government because every

pound raised for the settlers in this way will mean a pound less that will have to be raised from some other source.

Mr. HEATH (Wallaroo)—I support the Bill. Apparently the two members that have spoken after the Acting Leader of the Opposition are not conversant with the procedure on totalizator licences. Licences are issued for country racing and trotting clubs, but as it is desired to hold a race meeting in the metropolitan area to assist the Flood Appeal Fund country racing associations have been asked to forgo their country meeting. This will obviate the necessity of many people having to travel to the country to attend a licensed meeting. I point out that this measure does not mean there will be an extra racing day: it is just a matter of the country clubs deciding to forgo one day. For the benefit of the people in the flooded areas the Government is prepared to forfeit its claim to any fees to which it is entitled. The trotting club at Strathalbyn realizes the urgency of assisting the flood relief fund and has decided not to hold its trotting meeting so that people may attend the special race meeting to be held in the metropolitan area.

The Trotting League does not want to see the Strathalbyn Club lose its rotation of meetings on Melbourne Cup day, and adjustments will be made to the trotting meetings held at Strathalbyn and Victor Harbour for this purpose. The member for Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip) said that this Bill will enable special grants to be made for settlers in the flooded areas, but I point out that drought relief was afforded many farmers. However, those farmers could get some return from their land, but many people on the Murray will get no return for some years. I commend the Government for bringing down this measure to help people on the river.

Mr. DAVIS (Port Pirie)—I support the Bill, and I thought there would be no opposition to it. I was surprised to hear the excuse given by the member for Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip) for opposing it. I realize that some squatters have suffered from droughts, but I think he is jealous of the people on the river. I sympathize with any person who loses his means of livelihood, but I think the honourable member does not realize that many people on the river have been rendered homeless. I agree with the member for Wallaroo (Mr. Heath) that it will be many years before some of the land on the river is brought into production again, and I congratulate the metropolitan racing clubs who want to assist the flood relief appeal by holding

a special race meeting. The member for Rocky River said there would be another day of gambling, but Melbourne Cup day is one day in the year when many people, who do not bet as a rule, want to invest on a horse. If they do not have the legal means of doing so they look for an illegal bookmaker. The Acting Leader of the Opposition said it would be a good thing if the House adjourned on the special racing day so as to allow members to attend and assist the flood relief fund by paying their entrance fees. I was not surprised to hear the member for Rocky River oppose that suggestion because that would be one occasion on which he would have to pay to attend a race meeting. The honourable member says he has donated freely to the relief fund, and I hope he will make further donations.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—I think the member for Wallaroo (Mr. Heath) was very modest in his remarks about country racing. I pay a tribute to metropolitan and country racing clubs who desire to have a special race meeting to assist the flood relief appeal. I understand that Melbourne Cup day is the best money spinner for country clubs. The member for Wallaroo takes an active interest in the control of trotting, and he told me that the revenue derived by country clubs on Melbourne Cup day is sufficient to carry them over the lean period of the year. I understand that some clubs take as much money on a Melbourne Cup day as they do during the rest of the year. Therefore, country racing and trotting clubs have made a generous gesture in allowing a special meeting to be held in the metropolitan area.

I understood from the Treasurer's remarks that he was approached by racing clubs for a totalizator licence to be issued for a meeting to be held on Melbourne Cup day. There is no provision in the Licensing Act for that, but the Treasurer agreed readily to the request and I believe the Government has done the right thing in sponsoring this Bill, thereby permitting that portion of the tax that would normally go into the Treasury to be passed over to the Lord Mayor's Relief Fund. I do not want to embarrass the member for Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip), but I am surprised that he argued, in opposing the Bill, that many primary producers had suffered from droughts, but we all know what they cost the general taxpayer. Sometimes we had to call upon wool growers to carry the baby.

Mr. Heaslip—They are the people I was talking about.

Mr. SHANNON—Whether a man is growing wool or wheat his occupation is on the land, and if he is fortunate enough to be in an area that does not have droughts he must help those less fortunate. People on the river are suffering not from a drought but from a calamity.

Mr. Heaslip—Isn't a drought a calamity?

Mr. SHANNON—No, it is a passing phase. The honourable member has been through droughts, but he is still prosperous. Some of the people on the river will be out of business. Their land will be useless for up to a decade before the salt can be leached from it, if that can be done. They will have to be re-established somewhere else, and I do not know how much money will be required for that purpose. What has already been voted is not more than one tithe of what will be required. I pay a tribute to the generosity of city and country racing clubs who are prepared to allow a special racing meeting to be held to help the Flood Relief Fund.

Mr. STOTT (Ridley)—I think some members have taken the remarks of the member for Rocky River from their context. No-one would be more willing to subscribe to the flood relief fund than he, and I do not agree that he opposed the Bill because he would have to pay to attend the special racing meeting. I am sure he opposed the measure on a question of principle, namely, that if it is right to hold a race meeting to assist the Flood Relief Appeal it would be right to amend the Act for other relief purposes. The Bill is a good one because it will enable trotting and racing clubs to demonstrate that they are anxious to help the unfortunate victims of the Murray flood. As has been pointed out, on Melbourne Cup day there is a tremendous turnover tax and this, together with the winning bets tax, will be paid into the relief fund. If a racing club is fortunate enough to hold a meeting on Melbourne Cup day its proportion of the turnover tax and winning bets tax is considerable. The racing clubs are making a generous gesture in offering to conduct a special meeting on that day. The people who are suffering as a result of this disaster will appreciate what is proposed and the amount raised will considerably augment the fund.

Mr. Heaslip referred to persons who have suffered through droughts and pointed out that no special appeals have been made for their benefit, but there is a great difference between a drought and this calamitous flood. In a drought a person may lose his crops and some

of his stock, but is soon able to rehabilitate himself, whereas from this flood some people will lose the results of their life's work. The effects of seepage are now becoming apparent and I know of one orange orchard that is dying out. If a citrus orchard is lost it takes almost eight years before a new orchard can be brought into production. Many orchardists are not in a position to carry on for eight years and they will have to get out. A drought does not wipe out a home—a flood does. I commend the racing clubs, the Government and Parliament for providing this opportunity of augmenting the Lord Mayor's Fund. I agree with Mr. Shannon that the amount already raised by public subscription represents only a drop in the bucket compared with what will be required. Greater efforts are necessary to provide sufficient relief to those who surely deserve it. I support the Bill.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham)—It seems to me that the principle behind this Bill is precisely the same as the principle behind a State lottery for South Australia. It is that the magnitude of the disaster we are trying to alleviate justifies the encouragement of gambling. I do not support the introduction of a lottery in this State because I believe that gambling is an evil that should not be encouraged. I do not believe I could continue my opposition to a State lottery if I supported this Bill. We should be consistent on these matters and for that reason, above all others, I oppose the second reading, even though I realize the tremendous need of those who have suffered from the flood.

Mr. Shannon—Do you realize that a totalizator licence could be issued to a country club on this day, and would be but for this proposal?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—I will answer that in a moment. I fully realize the magnitude of the disaster this measure is aimed at relieving and it goes without saying that I have the greatest of sympathy for those who have suffered. I do not want to deprive anyone of his enjoyment and, while I have little interest in racing, I realize that many people in this State derive much pleasure from it, but—and this answers the interjection—holding a mid-week meeting in the metropolitan area is quite different from having a mid-week country meeting. Obviously greater numbers will be drawn to a metropolitan meeting. Nothing has been said directly about the question of absenteeism. I may be wrong, but I believe that whenever there is a mid-week race meeting—especially in the metropolitan area—industry, commerce

and other occupations suffer considerably from absenteeism because people attend the races. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Walsh) started the ball rolling by suggesting that this House adjourn for the proposed race meeting. If that suggestion is adopted, how many times will that be multiplied throughout the community and how much will the State's production suffer because of this race meeting? For those two reasons—because I believe the principle is wrong, and because I believe it will encourage absenteeism at a time when this country cannot afford it—I oppose the second reading.

Mr. STEPHENS (Port Adelaide)—I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill. I do not often support the Government, but on this occasion I am wholeheartedly behind it. Mr. Millhouse said it is wrong to have a midweek race meeting because it interferes with the State's production. He is only trying to blame the workers for absenteeism, but if he visits any golf course during the week he will see business managers, company executives and business people playing golf. Most members of this House have a gamble at one time or another. I am not regarded as a gambler, but at trotting meetings I have a couple of shillings each way. People gamble on the Stock Exchange, but some, unfortunately, use other people's money. The Government's object in introducing this measure is to enable people to assist those who have suffered from the disastrous flood. One member was apparently jealous because money was to be made available to assist flood sufferers, when others had not been helped during droughts. I believe we should try to help all who suffer from national calamities.

Mr. Heaslip—In that case there will be race meetings every day of the week.

Mr. STEPHENS—The honourable member knows that is not true. The Bill will help those who will require assistance for many years. I hope there is a large attendance at the meeting and that a considerable sum results to the Lord Mayor's Fund. I belong to a club that was able to make a small donation when the appeal was first opened. It was not much because the club had a disastrous year. I hope the Bill will be passed, despite the two dissentient voices.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa)—I am happy to support the Bill. It seems to me that its opponents are endeavouring to make a mountain out of a molehill and have taken the offer of the racing clubs as a new encourage-

ment to gambling. I deplore that distortion, and commend the clubs for their desire to assist in the way suggested. The offer has been made in good spirit and it would be most ungenerous of us to reject it. We must keep the public interested in flood rehabilitation and the proposed meeting will work in that direction.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—I support the Bill and feel that I should explain my attitude on this matter. I do not believe in State lotteries and my support for the Bill is in no way to be taken as such. I cannot follow the logic of Mr. Millhouse in claiming that support for it indicates support for lotteries. I support the Bill because I feel with Mr. Laucke that those opposing it are attempting to make a mountain out of a molehill. This is not a matter to get excited about and it is a pity the time of Parliament must be wasted in discussing it. I regret that it is necessary to use gambling devices to assist people and institutions in need, but in many instances we have to face up to the fact that the required assistance is not forthcoming in any other way. With the very best of motives people are desirous of helping the appeal. I cannot understand why the Commonwealth Government should take months to decide whether or not it can assist in this matter and whilst it is dilly-dallying the racing clubs have come forward with an offer. I felt that it would not be right to cast a silent vote. I have every regard for members who see a principle and have the courage to support it. I respect their opinions and I hope they will respect my view. I can see no principle in this matter, which in no way commits a member to support State lotteries.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE (Burnside)—My opposition to the Bill is not to be taken to indicate that I am not completely sympathetic with the distress of so many people in the Murray areas. Indeed, there should be no need to make protestations of sympathy when we debate a matter like this which involves certain principles. The practical sympathy of every man, woman and child goes out to the people along the Murray River. That is shown by the magnificent response to the appeal. The Government introduced the Bill with the best possible intentions and I believe the offer was made by the racing clubs, and those who will forgo certain rights on that day, also with the best possible intentions, but I feel certain points arise where the end does not justify the means. I regret my attitude on this Bill because I am literally looking a gift horse in the mouth, but I feel that if the Bill is passed it will establish



a precedent and provide opportunities for other worthy causes to claim special dispensation in order to make use of the machinery of horse racing to support them. The needs of the unfortunate victims of the flood will not go unmet if the spontaneous gifts of thousands of citizens are insufficient to supply the full needs. I feel that it is most proper that after spontaneous and generous charity has been exhausted Commonwealth and State Governments should make good whatever is necessary. There should always be room for private charity in supporting public institutions and public needs. When that is exhausted it is proper that the Government should meet the needs from revenue, because it is derived on the basis of ability to pay.

Mr. Shannon—Do you suggest that we rebuff this offer of the racing clubs in order to encourage racing people to give to the appeal.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—Many racing people have already given and the appeal to date has been made very strong by the advocacy of it by leading citizens. Most citizens who want to give to the fund have already done so because their hearts have been touched by the publicity given to the dire need. I object strenuously to the suggestion by the Acting Leader of the Opposition that Parliament adjourn on the day of the meeting. That is completely out of proportion and should not be adopted. I would feel happier about the offer to hold a charity meeting if it were to be held on a day on which races are ordinarily held. I agree with Mr. Millhouse that the meeting could cause absenteeism when the need for production is great. Overall, the loss to the State could be infinitely greater than the sum by which the fund will be increased by holding the meeting. On May 1, this year the Melbourne *Argus* contained the following:—

The pursuit of easy money has a firm grip on the community. With some £300,000,000 being spent annually on gambling in one form or another the time has come to take stock of the position. The preoccupation of so many people with their prospects of quick riches and the drawing-off of so much money from more productive avenues is not in our best interests. Because I believe gambling in Australia is far beyond the capacity of our economy to support, I oppose the Bill.

Mr. KING (Chaffey)—I support the Bill and express appreciation of the people in my district and in other areas along the Murray River who have suffered such grievous losses. Not only have they in many instances lost their income but many have lost their life's

capital that has been put into businesses. Some of the people on wages have lost their homes. This is something no previous disaster has caused. I said earlier that between 500 and 600 homes have been completely submerged and that many of them will be a total loss. We appreciate the offer of the racing clubs to hold a race meeting. There was no other way of having it held than by amending legislation. It has been pointed out that there will not be any greater number of meetings this year than before. There is to be a concentration in one big effort and the only people who will benefit will be those who get assistance from the fund.

The matter of gambling has been much laboured this afternoon. The opportunities for gambling will not be greater on this occasion because it is also Melbourne Cup day. Although we may disapprove of gambling in this way Melbourne Cup day is a fiesta day and much money changes hands without going through the regular channels. I do not think this meeting will make a great deal of difference because greater opportunities are not provided for gambling. I do not think it is necessary to adjourn the House because State business must transcend the holding of a race meeting, but if members want to support the meeting they can send along the admission fee as a contribution to the fund. Regarding absenteeism, I doubt very much whether many industrial places and offices get a full day's work out of their employees on Melbourne Cup day for not much work is done between 2 and 3 o'clock in the afternoon. I deplore it, but the running of the Melbourne Cup on that day will cause more absenteeism than the holding of the special meeting. In 1930 it was my unfortunate duty to administer drought relief and farmers' assistance to a number of people on the West Coast and in other places where there was mixed farming. They received a full measure of Government assistance, amounting to millions of pounds.

Mr. Riches—On the West Coast?

Mr. KING—Yes. I could quote many instances for the honourable member.

Mr. Riches—I could quote many where assistance was not given.

Mr. KING—Possibly so, but I do not want anyone to think that assistance has not been given in the past to unfortunate people. I support the Bill and pay a tribute to the racing people for wanting to help a worthy cause.

Mr. HAMBOUR (Light)—I am disappointed at the argument advanced by some members and

the importance they attach to the gambling that might take place on the day of the special meeting. Possibly they are not gamblers; I hope I am not considered a gambler. On Melbourne Cup day people who want to gamble will gamble, whether or not there is this special meeting. The matter has been considered out of all proportion. We have musical people putting on concerts in order to raise money for the fund. Racing people are usually generous.

Mr. Shannon—They are real sports.

Mr. HAMBOUR—If we can call them that. The word "sport" has often been misinterpreted. I have been told that I must choose my words carefully. The racing people have been most generous in their response to this appeal. The relief of those affected by this calamity is beyond the resources of this Government. Having given individually, these racing people consider that a concerted effort should be made by the racing fraternity in the metropolitan area as this would give the smaller racing interests a chance to contribute. These people have been referred to as "gamblers," but I resent the use of that term and believe it is wrong in this debate to place too much emphasis on gambling. These people have their hearts in the right place; they wish to help and we should give them full credit for that. Small country clubs are unable to stage a big meeting, but I understand that the northern racing clubs will get together and make a composite donation. They would like to conduct a meeting and thus contribute a substantial sum, but that is not possible and they realize that as much as £12,000 may be raised at a city meeting. Appreciation of that gesture should be shown.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 passed.

Clause 4—"Application of stamp duty, commission and winnings bets."

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Acting Leader of the Opposition)—Will country clubs and betting shops be permitted to use the usual betting facilities on this day? If so, will the proceeds from the winnings bets tax on such betting go to this fund?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—Country clubs having the right to race on this day have forgone that right and will merge their activity with the meeting to be held in the city. The Government has forgone the right to collect revenue from the

race meetings normally held in the country on that day. The service will be provided at the metropolitan course.

Clause passed.

Clause 5 and title passed. Bill read a third time and passed.

## THE BUDGET.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from September 27. Page 786.)

Legislative Council, £10,094.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—Last Thursday I was dealing with the catastrophe on the River Murray. The *Hansard* report of that debate seems to indicate that I suggested that pure water from the river be pumped over some areas affected by seepage, but I wish to correct any erroneous impression that may give and state that, because of the river level, there is no need to pump the water over the land. A few years ago a disaster similar to the recent flood occurred in the Hunter Valley of New South Wales and the important town of Maitland suffered disastrous loss. On that occasion we were all sorry for the people affected and I believe efforts were made in this State to assist the homeless and others who suffered. On that occasion the Federal Government assisted the New South Wales Government to a considerably greater extent than it proposes to assist the River Murray settlers on this occasion.

Mr. Bywaters—I believe the amount was £3,000,000.

Mr. SHANNON—I do not know the exact total, but speaking from memory, I believe that New South Wales received considerably more than a pound for every pound raised. Indeed, I believe the figure was more like £3 from the Commonwealth Government for every £1 raised by the State Government. Although those floods were dreadful I do not believe the recent flood is any less dreadful and this State will certainly be at no less disadvantage in rehabilitating the settlers than was New South Wales after the Hunter River flood. I therefore believe that this State should receive a subsidy from the Commonwealth in excess of pound of pound.

Certain members have criticized the assistance given by this Government to the Tramways Trust. This year £500,000 more is to be made available and some members have said that the trust, in pursuing its policy of converting tram to bus routes, is taking an action

that will result in a permanent deficit. I remind them, however, that this problem is not confined to Adelaide, but is prevalent in other States, and, indeed, in other parts of the world. Certainly the same effects are being felt in all other States. Some members, particularly of the Opposition, have criticized the Government for making grants to assist the Tramways Trust to balance its budget.

Mr. Tapping—We did not oppose those grants.

Mr. SHANNON—Some members said the grants were getting heavier and heavier and there seemed to be no end of them. They said this was not good policy, but let us examine what is done in other States. In New South Wales railway freights and fares and tramway fares were raised to help the finances of rail and street transport. I understand it costs the ratepayer in Greater Brisbane about £200 a year to balance the budget of the tramways system. When we first made a grant to the Tramways Trust it was suggested that metropolitan councils should be levied to meet the deficit, but that did not meet with much support. Therefore, the Government had to subsidize the tramways from general revenue. Members should realize that the Government cannot be accused of legislating unfairly in the interests of people in the city. Parliament has viewed the problem of city street transport as an overall problem, and the same applies to the railways. I believe that is sound policy based on just grounds.

I now want to make another stab at the authorities in the medical world in an effort to get them to see reason in the registration of New Australian doctors. I think that some people believe I favour a system that will lower the standard of the South Australian medical profession, but that is the last thing I would be a party to. I have previously brought to the notice of the House the need for improving our standards of health, and my suggestions represent a step forward in providing better health services. I have had discussions with leaders of the Good Neighbour Council, and Mr. R. J. Coombe, S.M., has given me much information about New Australian doctors. I hope members appreciate the difficulties confronting any New Australian who comes from behind the Iron Curtain. He may be qualified to practise medicine in his own country, but before being registered in South Australia he must pass the last three years of the course at the Adelaide University. If he is married and has a family that presents a great difficulty.

Any man is lucky to escape from behind the Iron Curtain, and luckier still if he can get his wife and family out too. At any rate, he has to leave his worldly possessions behind. Therefore, he has little with which to sustain his family while he is studying for three years. Even if he is single he finds it hard to meet his commitments with the little money he can earn at week ends or in doing odd jobs, but to return to the University at 30 or 40 years of age and get back to the study habit is most difficult. The medical people in South Australia responsible for our system of registration would have a hard row to hoe if they attempted to study medicine again and pass their examinations. Very few would make the grade. It is not easy to pick up the study habit again after practising for 20 or 30 years.

The policy being pursued today is resulting in few New Australian doctors being registered. One man who came from Vienna put some of our leading chest specialists through post-graduate courses in that city, but he had to take a position as orderly under Dr. Nichterlein at Kalyra. Obviously, this man's qualifications suggest that the order should be reversed, and that, with greater justice, Dr. Nichterlein should be his orderly. We lost the services of that doctor, for he went to Western Australia. This policy is not the result of Government action. There has been much buck passing in this matter. From the records of the Good Neighbour Council it is obvious that the University has passed the buck to the Medical Board, which is responsible for registering medical practitioners, and the board passed it back again to the University. No final decision has been reached, and it has been suggested to me that no decision will be reached, but they reach decisions in every other State. I wrote to the authorities in other States to see what is done there. The New South Wales Medical Board replied as follows:—

Apart from attending the University to do the examinations of the fourth, fifth and final year in Faculty of Medicine, persons with foreign medical qualifications may become eligible for registration as follows:—

Regional posts—Section 21A:—Five foreign doctors are at present working in defined areas in the State which were previously not adequately provided for in respect of medical and/or surgical services. They hold licences to practise and at the end of five years' satisfactory service will be entitled to registration. These are the only regions so far proclaimed.

Foreign Doctors Examination—Sec. 21B:—Persons holding foreign medical qualifications are, subject to the board's approval, permitted

to take an examination in General Medicine, General Surgery and Obstetrics. The primary requirement is that they resided in New South Wales on January 1, 1954 and are continuously resident up till application is made. Twelve doctors passed the first of such examinations held in October of last year and more will be sitting this month. They become eligible for appointment to State, Mental and Public Hospitals and to registration after five years.

Post Graduate Teaching or Research—sec. 21 (1):—Provision exists for the granting of a Certificate of Registration for post graduate teaching or for research in medicine or surgery. Registration is granted after three years continuous employment. This section is seldom used.

Special Experience and Special Qualifications—Sec. 17 (2):—The board has power to report to the Minister that the ordinary requirements for registration be waived where it is satisfied that a particular person "has such special qualifications and has had such special experience" as would justify taking this action. Only a small percentage of applications made under this section succeed.

That is signed by Mr. P. E. Cosgrave, the secretary of the New South Wales Medical Board. The reply I received from Victoria was accompanied by a copy of the Victorian Act together with schedules, but I will not weary the House by reading them. The letter is self-explanatory and reveals that Victoria is meeting the position properly. It states:—

I refer to your letter of September 12, 1956, requesting advice of the provisions which apply for the registration of New Australian medical practitioners other than by taking a portion of their medical course through the University, and enclose for your information a copy of Act No. 5965 which amended Medical Registration Act, 1928, and as you will see, put the responsibility on the Medical Board of Victoria to assess the medical and surgical qualifications, the experience, and general suitability of a candidate for registration to practice in Victoria. I enclose also an explanatory memorandum which has been issued by the Medical Board. I hope this information will fulfil your requirements.

It is signed by Dr. Kevin Brennan, Chairman of the Commission of Public Health. The Victorian Board provides that persons may be registered as legally qualified medical practitioners:—

By satisfying the Medical Board of Victoria that they possess medical and surgical knowledge, experience and skill which, in the opinion of the board, are of international standing or are such as to have special value to the people of Victoria.

The board also provides that:—

In the case of any other applicant for registration procedure requires that in addition to the above requirements he shall personally present to the secretary of the Medical Board of Victoria a summary of his medical

school training, of his degrees or diplomas and of his experience after obtaining his degree or diplomas. The Medical Board of Victoria will consider summaries of *curricula vitae* and applicants who are considered to have a case for registration must be available for personal interview as required by the board. A good knowledge of the English language is essential and applicants may be required to undertake a test in that subject with particular emphasis on English medical terms.

Doctor Linley Henzell, the Commissioner of Public Health in Western Australia, replied to my letter as follows:—

Referring to your letter dated September 12, unless New Australian medical practitioners hold degrees or diplomas registrable in this State, they would not be permitted to practise medicine in Western Australia until they completed the prescribed course of medicine at an Australian or other approved university, or received an appointment to a regional position.

Under the provisions of the Medical Act, regional positions are sometimes proclaimed in districts where it is not possible to secure the services of a registered medical practitioner. Any doctor appointed to a regional position is permitted to practise medicine only in the prescribed area until he has served for a period of five years when he may be granted full registration. On the other hand, he may elect, after serving three years, to sit for an examination prescribed by the Medical Board, and if successful, could receive full registration. These regional vacancies do not occur very frequently and as more and more doctors complete their course of medical training and secure their diplomas, the number of regional positions will diminish accordingly.

Doctor A. Fryberg, the Director-General of Health and Medical Services in Brisbane, replied as follows:—

With reference to your letter of September 12 concerning registration of New Australian medical practitioners, I would advise that in Queensland a New Australian medical practitioner makes application to the Medical Board, setting out the particulars of his course.

If the Medical Board is satisfied that his degree or diploma was obtained after a five year course of study and it is of standing not less than that of the University of Queensland, then the applicant is given the opportunity of being examined by a board of examiners directed by the Professors of Medicine, Surgery, and Obstetrics and Gynaecology. The examination is in English, and is clinical and oral—not written. If the examiners see fit, they may make a condition of registration that the examinee does 12 months in a hospital, similar to our own graduates. If passed by the examiners, the applicant can practise anywhere. He does not have to attend the University.

Tasmania was one of the first States to recognize the value of New Australians and

to make practical use of them. Dr. John Edis, the Director-General of Medical Services in Tasmania wrote:—

**New Australian Medical Practitioners.**—As requested in your letter of the 12th instant, I have pleasure in enclosing herewith two copies of the synopsis of the conditions for further training in Tasmania, together with the form of questionnaire required to be completed by applicants.

In an accompanying document headed, "Information for persons wishing to undergo further training to entitle them to practise as medical practitioners in Tasmania," the following points are detailed:—

1. In Tasmania the Medical Council is the authority to approve of the registration of medical practitioners and issues to each practitioner a certificate of qualification for registration.

2. Any person who has passed through a regular graded course of medical study lasting at least five years and who has received, after examination, a degree or qualification entitling him to practise as a medical practitioner in the country of graduation, may make application to the Minister for Health to undergo further training. Such further training shall be for a period of not less than 12 months and is to be undergone at either the Royal Hobart Hospital or the Launceston General Hospital.

3. A salary will be paid during the period of training.

4. At the end of the period of further training the Medical Council will conduct an examination of a standard equivalent to the final examinations for the bachelor's degrees in medicine and surgery.

5. If the person is successful at the examination the Medical Council may issue to him a special licence to practise as a Tasmanian Licentiate in Medicine or in Surgery or in Medicine and Surgery as the case may be.

6. For a period of three years the licentiate will be posted to a district as required by the Minister for Health and, during this period the licence must be renewed from year to year.

7. At the end of the three years the licentiate, if he is a naturalized or natural born British subject, may be granted registration by the Medical Council to practise generally in the State.

8. The Medical Council shall grant not more than two original special licences in each of the next five years ending on the 31st day of December, 1959.

9. Every selected applicant will be required to undergo a medical examination as to fitness before commencing training.

I have the questionnaire and a copy of the Tasmanian Act if any member desires to see them. My first approach to this problem was that some practical way should be found by our Medical Board for it to assess the skill of any New Australians seeking to practise medi-

cine or surgery in this State by permitting them to work under supervision in any of our public hospitals. That approach was not accepted by our board, but is virtually what is being done in other States. They give applicants an oral examination—not a written one—and it must be appreciated that that is the simplest way for a person learning a language to express himself. If he were asked to write a paper on some topic it would probably be beyond him. I believe that in South Australia we could do with a few more country doctors. Hawker, with a small hospital, lost its doctor when he moved to New South Wales. He had one of the nicest homes in Hawker and offered it, together with his practice, for £1,500.

Mr. Riches—Do you think doctors should have to pay premiums for practices?

Mr. SHANNON—No, I am not in favour of doctors having to pay for goodwill, but in this case the amount asked did not equal the value of the home. I do not know whether Hawker now has a doctor, but there are many areas where it is difficult to persuade young men who have recently secured degrees to practise. New Australians could fill those positions. Unfortunately, I believe there are not many left in South Australia now because they have drifted to other States where the approach to registration has been more realistic. I do not believe that these men were promised before they came here that they would be permitted to practise their professions when they arrived. We are very willing to have them come to our country, and in other professions, especially in engineering, to make full use of their skill. It might be said of me, "You do not mind treating the human being as a machine," but if anyone should thus criticize me I remind him that no industrial concern worth its name would take real risks with its valuable plant, but make sure by observation whether or not a man was qualified before allotting him any responsible post. I want the same to be done in the medical profession. I do not want the Medical Board to register a man simply because he comes here with certain documentary evidence. If his credentials are in order, as far as can be ascertained, then he should be put through a course where his skill can be properly assessed by those in the medical world. I like the Tasmanian idea of finding some outlet for the services of these people.

Mr. Riches—Why is it that the country must always have the poorer services? Human life is just as valuable in the country as in the city.

Mr. SHANNON—In these New Australian doctors we would not be getting second-rate

men, but men probably of better than average standard who had been practising in their own country for years before coming here. They are not recently passed graduates, but are ahead of graduates who have done only one year at the Royal Adelaide Hospital before going into practice. In Tasmania they are allotted an area where they can get a living and it is difficult for the State to procure medical services.

Mr. Hambour—Why not let them practise in the city? They should not be sent to the country unless they are qualified.

Mr. SHANNON—I do not object to a New Australian doctor being put in the Royal Adelaide Hospital for observation of his skill. When we see what has happened, particularly in New South Wales and Queensland, I do not think much harm would come of that. We could well follow what is done in Tasmania. Their experience has not given them any headaches. I can find no complaint from any State regarding New Australians now practising medicine as a result of some other form of passing the standards required than going through a three-year course. Unfortunately, there is reluctance by our Medical Board to take any step which will make it easier for a man who is prepared to disclose his practical skill. Any New Australian wishing to become a medical practitioner should first be naturalized. I feel that South Australia has done a great disservice in offending many New Australians, and this applies not only to doctors. If this question had earlier been looked at fairly, we would have got many more of these highly skilled medical personnel who have drifted to other States where they could practise their profession. I support the first line.

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray)—In supporting the first line, I congratulate Mr. Shannon on his very fine effort in the interests of New Australian doctors. He has undertaken much research to make the information available, and I hope that as a result the powers that be will be more sympathetic towards these people, because I feel that we are wasting a wealth of knowledge in not allowing them to practise.

I appreciate the sympathetic remarks of members concerning the position of sufferers as a result of the Murray flood, and also am grateful to those who availed themselves of the opportunity to visit the flood areas to see the extent of the damage. There is no other way of assessing it. I remember speaking to

Mr. O'Halloran after his tour of the Murray areas, when he said, "I believed it was a terrific flood and everything that I had read indicated that it was a disastrous flood, but on seeing it I realized that it was ten times worse than I imagined." I believe that would be the view of others who have similarly visited the areas.

I appreciate Mr. Hambour's suggestion that a delegation should wait on the Prime Minister with a view to the Commonwealth Government granting aid. He had the graciousness to include me on that delegation. I appreciate his thoughts but I believe it would be preferable for the Prime Minister, with the Federal Treasurer, to see the damage themselves, as then they would realize its extent. If they then failed to open their purses, they would be hard-hearted indeed. To a great extent we must rely on Federal aid to rehabilitate the sufferers. These people, and I, appreciate the splendid response of South Australians to the Lord Mayor's appeal, and also the South Australian Government's action. I believe it has cost our Government much more than has been indicated, but it is the Federal Government which should help rehabilitate these people.

Mr. Shannon said he thought that a much larger amount than has been allocated to South Australia was made available to New South Wales after the Hunter Valley flood. Figures I have show that Victoria contributed £25,000, South Australia £10,000, Tasmania £5,000, Queensland £15,000, New South Wales £100,000, the Commonwealth Government (on a pound for pound basis with the New South Wales Government) £100,000, Lord Mayor's Appeal £10,000, Melbourne City Council £10,000, British Red Cross Society £1,000, New Zealand Red Cross Society £250 and the Melbourne Red Cross Society £5,000. According to the Federal *Hansard* New South Wales received £2,000,000 from a special Commonwealth grant in recognition of the special needs of the State arising from the extensive flood damage. I do not wish to detract in any way from the seriousness of the New South Wales flood, but believe that our flood was even more disastrous than any which has ever hit any Australian State. Therefore, the Commonwealth Government should come forward with much more than it has so far contributed, and I believe it will. Many adjectives have been used to describe this flood. It has been called the most disastrous in the history of the white man and the flood of a thousand years, but my memory does

not go back far enough to enable me to comment. We have had high rivers in the last four years. The river in 1952 threatened the lower Murray Valley. I hope that we will profit by the experience of the last few months, and that adequate steps will be taken to prevent a recurrence.

I would like to pass on the appreciation of the people of the river districts, particularly the lower part in my electoral district, of the assistance they have received. The members of the Waterside Workers' Federation were the first to come along to fight the floods in an organized way, and others were quick to follow, but unfortunately one or two press statements have tended to detract from their fine work. In the *Truth* on September 8, the following article appeared:—

Last Sunday a party of nearly 150 men, eager to help in the battle against the Murray, wasted half a day before they were able to find anything to do. Travelling in motor lorries and private cars, the party, most of them South Australian Gas Company employees, arrived at Murray Bridge shortly before 9 o'clock. An irate member of the party told *Truth*, "We were told at Murray Bridge town hall that we were not wanted at Jervois. Despite this, one section of the party continued to Jervois and we found out later were usefully employed all day. It was suggested at Murray Bridge that we go to Wall Flat but we were told by workers there that they did not want us. Whether these men were influenced by the fact that they were earning up to £100 a fortnight, as they told us, and wanted the job to last, is anybody's guess. But some of them said quite bluntly that we were doing them out of a job."

This could create a wrong impression. The people in that settlement were not being paid for their work; they were saving their own properties and doing a wonderful job. Of course, there may have been some Government employees there receiving high overtime rates, but they were not residents. The people were trying to save one particular home, and as they had ample labour they told the volunteers that perhaps they could be more usefully employed elsewhere. Mistakes occur in all voluntary effort because organization is difficult. The workers who came up to assist were keen to do so, so it was unfortunate that they were delayed, but the residents received no payment for their work.

I pay a tribute to those who are agisting stock from Murray areas, particularly the people of the South-East who are also providing free hay. I have no desire to make political capital out of the flood, but I will criticize certain aspects. My first criticism is in relation to river levels. I have travelled over

practically the whole length of the river and nearly everyone to whom I have spoken has said that they would have been able to do much more if they had known just how high the river would rise. I believe we could have got nearer the ultimate level than the original estimates. On May 22 last, in reply to a question by Mr. King on river levels, the Minister of Works gave the following reply:—

I have conferred with the Engineer-in-Chief and am able to say that it is impossible at present to predict with any degree of certainty what effect the water coming down the river will have on levels in South Australia as the water is still rising at Albury on the River Murray, at Hay on the Murrumbidgee, and at Menindie on the Darling. On present indications there is insufficient water in the river to cause a level approaching that attained last year. This being the case, the punts at Lyrup, Blanchetown, Cadell, Mannum, Wellington and Narrung are not likely to be affected. However, those at Berri, Kingston, Swan Reach, Walker's Flat and Purnong will probably be progressively out of action from early July onwards as the peak of the flow passes down the river.

I appreciate how difficult it is for engineers to assess levels, particularly as there was no precedent.

The Hon. Sir Malcolm McIntosh—Plus the fact that there were continuous rains in the catchment areas.

Mr. BYWATERS—That is so. However, we were told that the level at Mannum might reach 120ft., but it finally reached 125ft. The settlers put in some bags that they thought would be sufficient for a level of 120ft., but as things turned out they would have needed a height of 16 bags. If a better estimate had been given there would have been better opportunities to protect the houses in some towns. A mark was placed around the walls of Mannum houses at the 120ft. level and sandbags were laid, but because of the much higher level a good deal of effort was wasted. The bottom of the main street is now under water. It is too late to do anything about that, but I hope that records will be kept to ensure that this will not happen on future occasions.

I wish now to point out the value of some of the reclaimed swamp areas, which contain some of the most productive land in Australia, if not in the world. This area contains some of the best pasture land it is possible to get. People travelling between Adelaide and Melbourne notice the beautiful green flats even in the driest summers, and coming from Melbourne the first thing they see is the beautiful pasture land at Jervois, comprising about 12 miles of flats, unfortunately inundated today.

There were 11,432 acres of reclaimed swamps, and before the flood 16,000 head of cattle on those areas. These flats are very productive and the cattle are very big producers. Some of the land is also used for sheep. Over the past few years some of these holdings have been sold at very high figures. The average holding of swamp land is between 50 and 60 acres, and some of these properties have changed hands at between £14,000 and £20,000, according to the value of improvements. Even without improvements this land was valued at £100 an acre, which is a very high price for vacant land. The value of milk alone is £1,250,000 a year. There is also the amount earned from the sale of stock and calves, and the return from sheep grazing in those areas, proving that these reclaimed swamp lands are very valuable, not only to the dairy farmers, but to the State and the Commonwealth because of the value of the exports.

It is interesting to note how these reclaimed areas first came into being. They were first mooted by Sturt when he came down the River Murray and pointed out the possibilities of these swamps being reclaimed and the asset they would be to future generations. Reclamation was first attempted in the year 1881, when Sir W. F. Jervois, then Governor of South Australia, made the first move by reclaiming about 3,000 acres near Wellington. A little later an area of 700 acres was reclaimed on the opposite bank by Mr. McFarlane. These areas were used mainly for sheep and were occasionally flooded as the levees were not very high. About 1900, Messrs. Morphett & Company successfully reclaimed an area of 650 acres at Woods Point by building a strong watertight levee, and they soon proved that the soil was amazingly fertile for lucerne and food crops. Other owners followed suit, notably the late Sir John Cowan of Glen Lossie, who reclaimed about 800 acres. All told, private enterprise reclaimed about 3,500 acres. In 1904 the Government was induced to reclaim and subdivide some of the remaining swamps. Work was first started on the Burdett and Mobilong swamps, adjacent to Murray Bridge, and then extended to other areas. In reclaiming a total of about 9,500 acres, the Government built about 45 miles of levee banks and dug about 125 miles of main channels and drains. These swamps through the years have proved a valuable asset to the State, and because of their value I feel that a greater degree of permanency should be provided for the people on those swamp areas.

Even in 1952 dangerous slips occurred along these reclaimed swamp banks because in many instances they were made of porous material. I have known of four occasions in the last six years where efforts have been made to save portions of some of these banks. Last year the Leader of the Opposition mentioned this very fact. At page 1328 of *Hansard*, in the debate on the Estimates, Mr. O'Halloran said:—

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

In answer, the Hon. C. S. Hincks, Minister of Irrigation said:—

For the reclaimed area, provision has been made to enable banks to be built up. I feel that the Leader's suggestion relates to other localities and I will examine the matter and advise him in due course.

The Leader's suggestion did not relate to other localities, but to the reclaimed swamp areas. I feel that he was quite justified in making that statement, because we have seen that these banks have not been the quality they should have been. We must provide something of greater permanency in the future for the people in these particular areas, such as a bank to cope with floods like the disastrous one we have had.

I know that some people would say we were bottling up the Murray, but if it looked as though the river was being bottled up it would be better to open the sluice gates beforehand and let the waters flood in normally when the water on both sides would serve as some form of protection. That would ensure these banks standing in a fair condition until the water was pumped out. It is obvious that they needed a lot of improvements before the floods came. Usually there is a channel immediately behind the banks and this hampers repair work, as well as weakening the bank. Immediately behind that channel is a road approximately 20ft. wide, and I believe that this road should be against the bank and the channel beyond that. This would give a greater toe to the levee. There must be something substantial at the base, and the banks must be built strong enough to withstand at least a normal flooding.

I cannot stress enough the value of these swamp areas to the State, and I hope that they will all be reclaimed at the earliest possible moment. This is going to be a colossal job,



and we will have to await the engineers' advice as to when and how this can be done. There will be problems in the priority of pumping out, because every person feels that he is entitled to get back on the land at the earliest possible moment, which is perfectly natural. Some ill-feeling will arise if one particular swamp area is put back in preference to the other. I suggest to the Government that swamps should be re-established in the order in which they were inundated, and if that principle is carried out I feel that it will at least be just and leave no cause for argument. I leave that suggestion with the Government and trust that it will be considered.

I asked a question in this House recently with regard to water rates on swamp lands. Before reading from *Hansard* I will briefly state the method of charging rates on these reclaimed areas. The water gravitates by a process of channels, and irrigates the particular area that is required to be watered. It is pumped off by means of these channels into a salt drain and back into the river. The rates are charged for the services rendered in pumping the water and for the maintenance of the channels, but these pastures are now inundated and consequently the services are not being rendered. In 1931 the Government decided to waive all rates on the reclaimed swamp areas, and I believe it will do that again. The people there, however, are concerned about these things, and I would appreciate it if the Government would state its policy in this regard. The question I asked on August 22, page 354 of *Hansard* was as follows:—

Will the rent and water rates payable by settlers in reclaimed areas on the Murray be waived during the period of inundation and until they get back into production?

The reply by the Hon. C. S. Hincks was as follows:—

All matters of hardship will be considered by Sir Kingsley Paine, and if there are any settlers who are embarrassed financially by their rates falling due they should apply to him.

I cannot see the merit of that because I believe all people are entitled to the same concession when it comes to the waiving of rates. I do not wish to labour this particular issue, but I trust the Government will at least tell the people what it intends to do in regard to water rates on the River Murray. I asked another question on September 5, at page 531 of *Hansard*, with regard to electricity surcharges during the River Murray floods. That question was as follows:—

Over the last year or two dairymen in the reclaimed swamp areas have had electricity installed and the Electricity Trust has adopted the policy of having an estimate made of the quantity of electricity to be used, basing the surcharges on that estimate. Failing their using that quantity their surcharges are increased, but if they use more they are reduced. Many people have left the areas and most of their milking plants and so on are not in operation, and for the next few months the use of electrical appliances, motors, etc., will be greatly reduced. Will the Treasurer take up this matter with the trust with a view to having the policy temporarily suspended?

The Premier's reply was as follows:—

The Minister of Lands has already discussed this question with the chairman of the Electricity Trust and the reply is that each case will be dealt with on its merits.

Today I received a letter from the Electricity Trust of South Australia which answers that particular point, and I appreciate the trust's attitude in this matter. The letter was as follows:—

The rehabilitation of the flooded areas along the Murray will involve many aspects of electricity supply. New supplies will be required and the consumption of electricity may be greatly different from normal. The trust has considered the question of how cases of hardship caused by the floods might be dealt with and has decided that it would be impracticable to vary our conditions of supply for particular cases. Accordingly a donation of £5,000 was made to the Flood Relief Fund with the idea that individual cases of hardship would be dealt with by the organization set up for this purpose. In the case of consumers who pay a surcharge on their tariff the trust has decided that increases will not be made on the surcharge where reduced consumption has been brought about by the flood. We shall always be prepared to examine any submissions made to us on other aspects, but it will generally be our policy to apply the normal conditions of supply.

I was pleased to get the letter because this is another matter that concerned the people, for they thought they would be penalized by increased surcharges. The rehabilitation of the settlers will be a great problem and a substantial Commonwealth Government grant is necessary. We believe the matter of granting relief is in the hands of the right man. Sir Kingsley Paine impressed me as being just and impartial and I believe he will do justice in granting relief according to the money available to him. For the people who have been flooded out of their homes the matter of personal effects should be considered first. In my area there are 200 flooded homes. Mr. King mentioned 500, but I do not know whether he was referring to all districts or only to his own.

It will take a colossal effort to get these people re-established. At Mypolonga 40 homes out of 120 are inundated. Many are on the point of collapse and a terrific rebuilding programme will be necessary. A number of pensioners lived in the area and many of their homes will be uninhabitable when the floodwaters disappear. I have asked the Housing Trust to consider erecting cottage homes for them and I hope assistance will be forthcoming for these people who have no hope of rehabilitating themselves. Some people say they should not have gone there to live, but the 1931 flood was 5ft. lower than the present one and consequently the pensioners would not have expected such a high flood now. If they are to be blamed for building houses there the Government must be blamed for putting houses in swamp areas. This flood is out of all proportion. I have seen letters in the press saying that people who put houses there deserve all they got. It was criminal to say such a thing. Who was to know that the floodwaters would reach such height?

Many dairies, sheds and other buildings will become a total loss. The dairies were built close to the pick-up places and many have been destroyed because of the water pressure. The owners face a tremendous rebuilding programme and should be assisted. It is expected that some people in private swamp areas will not get financial assistance. They would be happy to get a long-term loan in order to re-establish themselves. Many have mortgages on their properties and the going will be hard for them when they recommence production, and they should be in production again as quickly as possible. They are industrious and it would be a great help if they could get long-term loans, say from the Commonwealth Bank. Mr. Laucke and others spoke about the need for these loans.

Much has been said about future flood mitigation. In the past we have bitten off a little more land than we should have done, which has created abnormal conditions. I refer to the watershed of the Murray River, where people have tried to graze land that should have been left in its original state of afforestation. I went to Victoria recently to attend a meeting of the River Murray Development League and to listen to experts talk about flood mitigation. I saw two films showing what is done in America in this respect. They proved that removing trees and pastures

created a greater hazard in relation to water run-off. They showed how the soil was affected by the running of water across it and the increased water channels resulting. They also showed how the land was rehabilitated by plantings, with the result that the run-off became less. I have read about the watershed of the Ohio river and figures prove a different run-off in various circumstances. On a rainfall of 10.84 inches in an afforestation area the run-off was 33 per cent. On the pasture land it was 75 per cent, but on fallow land 95 per cent. If people try to develop watersheds excessively greater hazards are created and this causes greater floods. The League suggested the appointment of a committee of representatives of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia to go into the matter with the Commonwealth and formulate a policy to protect the watershed of the River Murray. We are getting water that normally should go to Queensland. Every State should co-operate towards achieving future flood mitigation.

The possibility of there being a foreclosure on mortgages is causing concern to some of the settlers. I have been assured by many people who hold mortgages that they will assist in every possible way, but if, once the settlers get back into production, the mortgagees foreclose the mortgagors will be knocked right out of business. I should hate to see anyone sorely pressed by the flood get back into production and then have his mortgage foreclosed. Through no fault of their own mortgagors could lose their properties and other people could get them cheaply. I feel confident the Government will protect the settlers. It may be necessary to have another Mortgagor's Relief Act. I would like to portray the position along the River Murray a little better, but because of my limitations I cannot do so. South Australians have been sympathetic and have responded magnificently to the appeal for funds. I hope the Federal Government will be most generous in finding money to assist unfortunate settlers.

When the Mobilong Swamp bank broke the water crossed the Mannum Road and cut out the Mannum Road railway crossing at Murray Bridge, which had a wig-wag warning device. The only alternative to using that crossing was to go to the second crossing, or the Cypress Street crossing, but it has become more dangerous than the other was because of the added traffic. The hazard is increased because of the high bank on one side of the

line. The Railways Department has put up a stop sign and instructed its engine and railcar drivers to accentuate the blast of the siren for a distance farther back than normal. I have approached the Railways Department for a warning device to be placed at the crossing, because conditions there could easily cause a tragedy. The powers that be should heed the cry and do something in this matter because we have had enough tragedy along the river already. Only recently a man engaged on flood prevention work at Wall Flat was killed, leaving a widow and three children.

Many previous speakers in this debate have referred to roads, but I believe that one of the worst of our main highways is that between Adelaide and Bordertown. Although known as our No. 1 highway it is becoming worse each day; instead of a bitumen road motorists are now forced to use a pothole road. The main street of Nairne is one pothole after another and the Highways Department will have to pay special attention to it soon or there will be serious trouble. Today the weight of the traffic on the road is increased by the use of many semi-trailers, which are making it progressively worse. At Moorlands there is a bad patch where only a week ago a police car crashed. Accidents have frequently occurred there and one man dislocated his neck while driving over a bump.

We need roads that will stand up to heavy wear and tear. Many drivers of semi-trailers are contravening the legislation on weights of loads without being detected; they wait at a roadhouse outside Murray Bridge and do not pass through the town until they know that the weighbridge there is not being policed. I suspect they are warned by people directly interested that an inspector may be waiting for them. I realize that these regulations are difficult to police, but this matter should be considered more fully. Many financial difficulties will arise during the coming year, but I trust that the Commonwealth Government will find the money to assist those settlers along the River Murray who have been affected by the floods. I support the first line.

Mr. HEATH (Wallaroo)—I do not intend to refer to all the matters dealt with by previous speakers, but I consider it my duty as a citizen of the State and the representative of the electors in Wallaroo to express appreciation to the Treasurer for the efficient manner in which this State's finances have been conducted during the past 10 years. South

Australians have shown their confidence in the Playford Government. The Treasurer's Financial Statement shows that the total income of this State over the past 10 years has been £376,316,505 and expenditure £378,672,648, giving an annual average deficit of only £235,714. Those figures reflect great credit on the Government and speak volumes for the control and management of this State.

The finances of a State depend upon two factors: the production of the soil and the ability of labour to utilize the production and gifts from the soil. All members must appreciate the fact that the Playford Government has been able over the past 10 years to develop primary and secondary production in this State. Further, the production per man hour in South Australia is greater than that in any other State, which proves that the management and administration have been acceptable to all sections. Some members have complained about the housing shortage, but the numbers of homes built in the various States over the past 10 years prove that South Australia has done a good job: New South Wales 40,320; Victoria 31,654; South Australia 25,059; Queensland 16,068; Western Australia 15,842; Tasmania 7,900. In other words, South Australia has produced 3,050 homes for every 100,000 inhabitants, whereas New South Wales, which has been quoted as the greatest home builder, has produced only 1,152 for every 100,000 inhabitants. That proves that the materials and labour available here have been used to their fullest capacity in home building.

I do not intend to criticize the Government on its actions; rather would I offer constructive suggestions. It is easy for a member to criticize, but it takes a wise man to offer constructive criticism. If all members, irrespective of their political colour, were to use their efforts towards constructive criticism, South Australia would progress even more rapidly than it has done over recent years when its Government has been recognized as the most progressive in the southern hemisphere.

One of the main problems facing this Government is that of deterioration in our main roads, but I believe this should come within the province of the Federal Government for that Government has agreed to accept the position under section 92 of the Federal Constitution and refused State Governments permission to raise fees from the owners of heavy semi-trailers which, operating interstate, extensively damage main roads. This being the case, the Federal Government should

undertake to repair our main highways, and all other arterial roads should come within the province of the State Government. It is impossible for a State Government to provide all highway requirements. I believe that much money is at present being wasted because of the construction of too many brattennized or graded roads, whereas more metal roads should be constructed. Today we have modern machinery capable of constructing roads more cheaply than in the past. Practically all the old foundation roads of solid metal are still in use, whereas the brattennized or graded roads have deteriorated because the natural metals have been transferred to the water tables by the grader instead of being left in the road. This has the effect of leaving only the inferior metals in the road and causes potholes.

The continuance of our trade in the outback must depend on motor transport working from the railheads. Had it not been for motor transport the Australian Wheat Board would have been unable to ship through the Ardrossan bulk bins 7,000,000 bushels of wheat, and it must be remembered that no bulk bins were available at any other South Australian ports. The Highways Department should decide on a programme to be carried out over an extended period during which it could grant to councils money to be spent on bituminizing roads designed to carry heavy traffic instead of those which today are designed to carry only light traffic. The future of this State depends largely on the efficient cartage of goods by road. The Australian Government allows firms to import motor vehicles capable of carrying up to 25 tons, yet load limits of eight tons to the axle are imposed, which means that two-thirds of the carrying capacity of vehicles is wasted. If roads were built to carry heavy vehicles production costs would be reduced because they could carry twice the loads they do now. Australia is a continent of great distances, and production costs cannot be lowered much until our highways are constructed to carry heavy loads.

We have heard many complaints about the slow turn-around of shipping, and some people blame waterside workers for this. I know members opposite will agree with me that all the blame cannot be placed on these men. It is necessary to have goods on the wharves on the arrival of ships from other States. It is not possible to utilize trucks until 24 hours before loading commences, but if the Government extended that to 48 hours it would be possible to have sufficient loading on the wharves to

enable a ship to be two days up on actual turn-round. This would greatly expedite the loading of ships on arrival. Because of the demurrage rates the labour force is divided into two sections—half being used on the shore front and the other half on the jetty, but that division of labour would be eliminated if the Government extended the demurrage time from 24 to 48 hours.

I appreciate the efforts of members representing the Murray flood areas, for they have placed before the House a clear account of the difficulties of their constituents, and although I agree that the people there have suffered a calamity the State must assist the progress of all districts. Therefore, I hope the Government will bring down measures to benefit all parts of the State. The State Government, with the assistance of the Commonwealth Government, will do its utmost to rehabilitate the flooded areas, and the fact that many citizens have contributed to the Lord Mayor's Relief Fund, which now totals over £300,000, shows that the people realize the seriousness of the disaster. I am sure the victims of the flood appreciate the generosity of those contributing to the fund, and I support the first line of the Budget.

Mr. DAVIS (Port Pirie)—I congratulate the member for Murray (Mr. Bywaters) on the able way in which he presented the case for people who have suffered from the Murray flood, and I hope the Government will take notice of his remarks. I sympathize with the flood victims. The Budget that has been brought down by the Treasurer is an inflationary one. It has been called various names by various speakers, but because many charges have been increased the cost of living will rise further, notwithstanding that the Treasurer said they would not affect the family budget. He has done everything possible to place further burdens on the people. He has decided that patients in public hospitals shall be charged 35s. a day, which is £12 5s. a week, but who will judge whether a person is able to pay? It will be impossible for a working man to meet hospital bills, for £12 5s. a week is more than the basic wage.

The member for Light (Mr. Hambour) spoke on hospital charges and supported the Government on this matter. He even went further and said that hospitals should be run by councils. If it is right for the Government to charge for hospital treatment

it should take over all hospitals, for many people are heavily rated for the upkeep of hospitals in their areas. When they go into hospital they must pay fees, but they are also taxed, through their councils, to maintain hospitals. Many schemes have been inaugurated to finance hospitals, particularly in the country, but it is not right that any community should be burdened with financing hospitals. When charges were levied previously for public hospital treatment, I believe under regulations, the department had the right to make the children of the patient pay if the patient was not in a position to pay. I hope the Government will not resort to that practice again, for usually the children have commitments of their own. That practice was most unfair. Many members have referred to the bad state of repair of most of our roads. I agree with most of their statements, and I am sure that the Government will have to adopt a positive policy on road construction. Heavy traffic has greatly damaged many of our country roads.

Mr. Frank Walsh—Even King William Street is in a bad state.

Mr. DAVIS—I do not know much about that road, but I know that many of our northern roads have been damaged. Last Friday week the member for Stuart and I were driving home along a road between Port Wakefield and Merriton. That road was constructed only recently, but we found the stretch from Lochiel to Snowtown crumbling badly. I am sure this has been caused by the heavy vehicles that use that road.

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

Mr. DAVIS—A bridge at Merriton carries a notice indicating that it has a five-ton load limit, but it is not policed. I saw about 12 extremely heavy vehicles crossing the bridge. If the bridge were to collapse and a driver were killed whose responsibility would it be? The northern roads should be policed for load limits, otherwise they will soon be battered to pieces. I listened with interest to the member for Light (Mr. Hambour) who suggested that our aged people should be sent to the country.

Mr. Hambour—I said “invited,” not “sent.”

Mr. DAVIS—I can only liken his attitude to that of a man who turns his old horse out into a paddock for its last few days of life. Our aged people should be accommodated and looked after and homes provided close to their friends. It would be wrong to take them from

the metropolitan area and send them to the country. Possibly Mr. Hambour believes there is no fresh air in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Hambour—There is none at Port Pirie.

Mr. DAVIS—At Port Pirie we do our best to look after our aged people. Apparently Mr. Hambour believes in sending old people away for someone else to look after. Many members opposite are prepared to shirk their responsibilities at all times. It is the Government's responsibility to look after aged people who at present are receiving a raw deal from this and the Federal Government. They are expected to live on one-third of the basic wage. Can any member opposite indicate how that is possible? I agree with Mr. Corcoran that it is almost impossible for young people to purchase homes. He instanced a block of land selling for £1,500. What young man could afford to pay that for land and then build a house and furnish it? A young couple who desire to marry today require at least £4,000 to build a home. If their land cost £1,500 they would need £6,000. After building they must furnish, and members are all aware of the exorbitant prices charged for furniture. Some firms who deal in new furniture also sell secondhand furniture and if they are unable to exploit a young couple by selling them new furniture they attempt to sell them any old rubbish. No matter how thrifty they may be, a young couple is confronted with difficulties in establishing a home. Unfortunately, many of them utilize the hire-purchase system and, as a result, are in debt until their old age. I suppose there is some justification for hire-purchase because many people would not be able to enjoy amenities without it.

The Premier has said that Government hospitals were unable to carry on unless charges were imposed. Legislation has been passed to provide for the payment of a betting tax of 6d. in the pound and we were told by the Premier that if we did not agree expenditure on education and hospitals would have to be reduced. Some of the money from the winning bets tax is returned to the wealthy racing clubs, and therefore it would appear that the Premier is more concerned about them than the sick. If he does not desire to finance hospitals from the winning bets tax, why does he not favour the introduction of a lottery? He is prepared to accept money from those who gamble, but not come out in the open and permit a State lottery.

I agree with Mr. Heath that more financial aid should be given by the Government to councils. In Port Pirie during the wet

weather the roads break up rapidly, due largely to the nature of the soil, the town being built on a swamp. It is impossible for the council to build good roads without a heavy foundation. To build a decent road at Port Pirie would cost twice as much as in an area where the soil is suitable. The State Government receives all the money collected from motor vehicle owners, and although grants are paid for certain roads, they are not sufficient. Only last year registration fees and drivers' licence fees were increased, but councils received none of that extra money. It is wrong that they do not receive more from the Government. Councils in the metropolitan area are treated more generously than those in the country. Mr. Hambour, by interjection, said that Port Pirie residents are heavily hit by council rates. We are trying to get sufficient money to put our town in a decent condition, and it is hoped that after this year the council will be able to build several new roads.

Mr. Jenkins—You are about 10 years late.

Mr. DAVIS—The honourable member is probably right. Certain ratepayers in Port Pirie are partly responsible for the council's financial position. Some time ago business people appealed against their assessments, and unfortunately for the council they were upheld. As a result the council lost £10,000 a year and finances drifted to their present unsatisfactory position. Some people at Port Pirie are screaming about being too severely rated, but the town has been assessed too low for many years. When the council desires to raise money, it does as the Government would do, taxes the people more heavily, but it has not taxed them as heavily as the Government has done over the years. I hope next year the council will be in a position to give ratepayers some relief. The changed transport system in the metropolitan area is making it difficult for councils to keep their roads in good condition. Every metropolitan council is complaining about the condition of its loans and is looking for more relief, which I sincerely hope will be forthcoming.

I will now refer to the condemnation by the honourable member for Light (Mr. Hambour) of other members of this House. He said we are here to carry out the business of the State and not to play, or words to that effect. If he comes here to play, the members of my Party come here to carry out the business of the State in a serious way. Members opposite may come here to play, which they can do because they have the numbers,

but we are only a struggling few, and we have struggled for years to put the Government on the right track. I do not think we shall ever succeed because members opposite are intoxicated by their power.

Mr. Jenkins—That is why you put up the rates at Port Pirie.

Mr. DAVIS—I have learned a lesson from members opposite. If it is right for the Government to get money to carry out the State's affairs, it is right that I and my council should have the power to carry out the affairs of my city. Members of the Labor Party do not attempt to ridicule, but give advice to the best of their ability at all times. However, when we ask questions the Premier tries to ridicule us. We expect courtesy but do not receive it. Recently I asked the Premier if he would investigate drainage in the Housing Trust area of Port Pirie, and the reply I received was what one would expect from an overgrown boy.

It was that the drainage was the concern of the local council, and the Premier had the audacity to tell me that he would interview the Lord Mayor of Port Pirie. I think I have a fair sense of humour but I do not accept insults, and this answer was an insult.

Some time ago I was advised that £1,500,000 would be spent in Port Pirie on harbour deepening and wharf renovation work, but the matter was then awaiting investigation by the Public Works Committee. Nothing has been done, the wharves are falling to pieces, and the entrances to the harbour are being blocked. I think it is time the Government realized its responsibilities to the outer ports. Port Pirie should be the main port outside Port Adelaide because it is the logical distributing centre of the north. I cannot see why everything should be unloaded at Port Adelaide and railed to the north, because Port Pirie has all the necessary facilities—a harbour and railways that lead east and west. I maintain that Port Pirie is a logical place for a deep sea port. I hope it will not take the Government as long to do the work it has promised at Port Pirie as it has taken with the deep sea port in the South-East, because if it does we will lose a lot of trade in this State. I think the people in the South-East will be very old before they get a deep sea port there.

The Government should give further consideration to outports such as Wallaroo, Port Augusta and Port Pirie, which are not being used as they should be. Some little time ago so many ships were lying at Port Adelaide that they could not be unloaded. These ships could

have gone to the other ports for discharge, but they were allowed to lie at anchor or at the wharves at considerable expense to the ship-owners. This has a bad effect on the cost of living because the consumer has to meet this expense, and if the outports were used the consumer would be saved a good deal of money. I expected that the work I spoke of would have been put in hand at Port Pirie by this time because the jobs will be lengthy ones and £1,500,000 is scheduled to be spent there. That money will be well spent in the end. More consideration should be given to Port Pirie because it is one of the money spinners in this State. The Broken Hill-Port Pirie line is the only paying one in the State, and for that reason more money should be spent on the towns through which the line runs.

The Government is not prepared to do anything for country towns. Port Pirie has been promised sewerage for a number of years, but the people there have given up hope of ever getting it and have decided to put in septic tanks. It is not fair that the people of Port Pirie should be forced into that position. I have been advised that the cost to the rate-payers for sewerage would be about £17 10s. a year, but with the increase in the assessments I believe that the cost would be much greater. The metropolitan area has been seweraged for a long time but the country seems to have been forgotten. I hope the Government will alter its policy and give the country what it deserves because of the very important part it plays in this State.

I would like to say a few words about the increases in Housing Trust rents. I am pleased to say that there are quite a number of Trust homes in Port Pirie, and that the Trust has done a fairly good job there. I do not condemn the Trust for what it has done, but I do not appreciate the fact that it has increased rents. I do not know how many of the people living in Trust homes in Port Pirie and other parts of the State are going to live, because £3 out of a weekly wage is a lot of money to a working man. Some of the Port Pirie people are perhaps a little more fortunate than those in other towns because they earn more money, but there are many workers who are on the basic wage or only a little above it. After paying £3 a week for rent they have only £9 a week to live on, and no one with a family can do that and live decently.

I have condemned the Government for its Budget, but I will now refer to one thing that pleased me very much. Last Thursday the member for Stuart (Mr. Riches), the member

for Semaphore (Mr. Tapping), the member for Stirling (Mr. Jenkins) and I visited the Somerton Crippled Children's Home, and we were impressed with the wonderful job being done by the people who run that home. I was delighted to see how happy the children were. We also visited the Spastic Children's Home and witnessed a very sorry sight. I am pleased that the grant to the Crippled Children's Association is to be increased from £2,000 to £4,000. The association is doing a wonderful job and is getting grand support from the general public. It behoves each member of this place to do all he can for the benefit of mankind.

Mr. STOTT (Ridley)—Several members of this place have visited the flooded Murray areas and have given much information about the devastation that has been caused. However, not one member can estimate the final cost of the damage. There is now evidence of seepage trouble and many of the citrus trees will die. We cannot assess the position until all the floodwaters have gone. All we have is the evidence of trouble following a drop of only a few inches in the water level. Within a short time more water will come down the river as the snow melts, which will mean that some orchards will be under water for many more months, and more trees will drown. Members who have visited the area know that even gum trees drown through standing in water. Some of the orchards now flooded have never been under water before, not even during the 1931 flood. Some people whose orchards are now under water have been there for 35 years and when the additional water comes down the river they are likely to lose their holdings.

The Premier made a disappointing statement when he said that because the State was in a bad financial position relief would be available only to 20 per cent of the damage done. I cannot accept his statement for I think additional money could be found for rehabilitation purposes. Local government may be embarrassed to some extent but not in the same way as individual settlers. The Treasurer said we cannot raise money except through the Loan Council, but it cannot guarantee a sufficiently large loan to meet the full cost of rehabilitation. Money has been found in times of national emergency and we have such an emergency now. The Commonwealth Government should come to the rescue to a greater extent than is proposed. It must be done if Government investments in the areas are to be secured.

People will ask where the money can be found but in the past State deficiencies have been met by the issue of Treasury bills. The present emergency warrants the issue of bills, but some people say it should not be done because it increases the inflationary spiral. It is said to be a dangerous practice, to be frowned on at all times. The last report of the Commonwealth Bank shows that Treasury Bills outstanding in recent years as at June 30 have amounted to:—1949, £123,000,000; 1950, £108,000,000; 1951, £108,000,000; 1952, £153,000,000; 1953, £225,000,000; 1954, £190,000,000; 1955, £160,000,000; 1956, £165,000,000. The Commonwealth Government only has Treasury Bills outstanding to that extent at present, but if the crisis in Suez were to blow up tomorrow plenty more money could be found for a war. I believe that the River Murray flood is a national disaster and the Treasurer should tell the Loan Council that it warrants a further issue of Treasury notes so that settlers may be assisted. It is wrong to ask settlers to face a bill for damages and only assist them up to about 20 per cent of the total.

Some district councils will be embarrassed by the after-effects of the flood. Already in such areas as Moorook, Kingston, and Swan Reach residents are considering shifting their shops to higher ground and abandoning the old main streets, but such action cannot be taken without financial assistance. Some shops, which are freehold properties, will have to be shifted to higher ground, but in order to see that justice is done the council should close the main road and the Government should assist in establishing its shopping area on higher ground. Government money should be found in this emergency.

In my district the devastation to the roads caused by the flood is terrific. Although the Sturt Highway and the punts at Kingston, Purnong and Swan Reach have regularly been used by people in my electorate, today their only means of access to the city is by way of Murray Bridge, but the road to Murray Bridge was never built to carry the heavy interstate traffic using it today. Heavy semi-trailers coming from Mildura must now cross the Murray Mallee and go through Murray Bridge, with the result that the road has many pot-holes and is rapidly deteriorating. Further, the traffic that formerly crossed the river at Cadell, Purnong or Walker's Flat is using other district council roads, which are being

damaged, for they were not built to take these loads. District councils in these areas need financial assistance from the Highways Department, and unless emergency grants are made this year councils will be faced with a terrific problem. True, they can get a general maintenance grant from the Highways Department, but such a grant is only a drop in the bucket in the light of today's requirements and usually only enables a grader to be run over the road and the corrugations removed. After a week or two and a shower of rain the road needs more attention and the money spent is wasted.

Mr. O'Halloran—You're lucky if they last a week.

Mr. STOTT—Exactly. The Highways Department should look at this problem with a long-range view and construct proper roads as soon as possible. The money would then be spent on giving service instead of being poured down the drain on temporary roads. The improvement of the quality of Australian wheat is being encouraged at present. The Australian Wheatgrowers' Federation has been in consultation with the Commonwealth Department of Trade and arrangements have been finalized for a levy of up to one farthing a bushel on wheat for research and expansion of services throughout the Commonwealth.

Mr. O'Halloran—Is that on all wheat or only on export wheat?

Mr. STOTT—On all wheat delivered to the Australian Wheat Board. The Commonwealth Government is to set up a central committee, and in addition to the levy raised the Commonwealth Government will grant a subsidy. The central committee will allocate the money from the Government subsidy, and in each State an advisory committee, comprising a majority of growers, with the power of allocation of the total amount levied within the State, will be set up. That committee will confer frequently with the central committee in order to avoid duplication in the allocation of finance. For instance, the South Australian committee may allocate a certain sum to the Waite Research Institute to investigate breeding a higher protein wheat with an improved yield, and it would advise the central committee that that allocation had been made. Other States would also be advised, and the New South Wales committee might say, "We don't want to allocate money to the Wagga College to investigate improved yield. We will allocate money for the investigation of rust-resistant varieties." In this way the work of the



various State boards can be co-ordinated by the Federal committee. If a drought occurred in one State the Commonwealth committee could assist that State. The State would not have sufficient money to carry out its research work itself and the Commonwealth committee could allocate a portion of its Commonwealth subsidy for the benefit of research organizations. It takes years to breed good strains of grain.

The Department of Agriculture should be commended for its efforts to improve the quality of South Australian wheat. Officers of the department are often the judges at crop competitions, and they should allocate points to wheat of high protein content. That would encourage growers to produce better wheat. The farmers' view is "We do not get sufficient encouragement to produce high protein wheat because we do not get any more for it than for wheat of low quality." Invariably wheat known as weak variety yields more to the acre. For instance, Insignia yields three to four bushels an acre more than Gabo, which has as much as 14 per cent protein content. The weaker varieties have a protein content as low as 6 per cent or 7 per cent. The Department of Agriculture should educate farmers to grow better quality wheats, and its officers, when addressing meetings, should advocate the growing of higher standard wheats.

A Japanese delegation visited this State last week. It came to Australia to make inquiries into Australian f.a.q. wheat. It told the Wheat Board that in its future purchases, which will be at the end of this month and in November and December, it wants wheat only from Queensland because a shipment from that State showed an average of 11 per cent protein content. Shipments from Victoria averaged only 5 per cent to 6 per cent. New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and parts of South Australia have had a severe winter, so wheat production will fall considerably this year. It has fallen so much in Queensland that the Wheat Board will not sell any more wheat from that State, so Japan will not be able to get the wheat it wants. Buyers are now becoming much more selective. The Agricultural Bureau officials should point out these facts to farmers and stress the disadvantage of growing wheat of low protein content. I hope the Department of Agriculture will consider improving the quality of wheat and lifting the present f.a.q. standard. My association has investigated the possibility of segregating high protein wheat,

which is known as premium wheat, from ordinary f.a.q. wheat. That would give buyers a selection, but the ordinary f.a.q. wheat would be reduced so much in standard that it would be hard to sell unless it was reduced in price. I think it would be much better to educate farmers to gradually eliminate the lower quality wheats. Then overseas buyers would know they would get wheat from Australia yielding a protein content of, say, 9 per cent or 10 per cent.

During the past few years the United Kingdom has refrained from buying large quantities of Australian wheat. The Commonwealth Minister for Trade (the Rt. Hon. J. McEwen) is negotiating a new trade agreement. He wants some of the clauses of the Ottawa Agreement amended, but that is not an easy matter. That agreement has been in force since 1932 and it needs revision, but the difficulty facing Australian growers is to put their wheat on the United Kingdom market, and on the markets of other countries, at an attractive price to buyers. Recently the United Kingdom has been purchasing wheat from Argentina, where growers are subsidized by the Government by as much as 10s. a bushel. Australia, with its small population, cannot compete with that. A survey of wage conditions in the United Kingdom reveals that in 1954 a fitter's labourer received about £9 1s. a week, whereas a similar Australian worker received £14 15s. Because of the lower wages in industry in the United Kingdom goods are cheaper and a man can exist on a lower wage level than in Australia. The general economy of the United Kingdom is such that it is forced to obtain its requirements through the subsidized markets. The Australian producer suffers from the nightmare of continual rises in the cost of production and a tendency towards lessening prices for the article he sells. It is interesting to note the percentage our rural exports represent of our total exports. In 1951-52 our total exports were 665.2 million pounds, of which rural exports represented 541 million—a percentage of 81.3. In 1952-53 the respective figures were 848.5 million pounds and 721 million—a percentage of 85. In 1953-54 the percentage of rural exports was 85.1; in 1954-55, 84.8, and it is estimated that in 1955-56 it will be 83.6.

It can be seen that the general economy of Australia depends on our being able to build up our overseas sterling balances. The Federal Government is now committed to an immigration intake of 100,000 annually for

the next four years and this, with the natural increase in the present population, will necessitate our having an exportable balance of £1,000,000,000 in 1960. From the figures I have detailed it can be seen that we have not reached nearly that amount. During the next four years Australian producers will have to increase their exports by 22.5 per cent to meet the position in 1960. However, we are now confronted with a Budget providing for a deficit of £2,500,000. If we continue our present attitude of *laissez faire* the position will be more serious in 1960. Immediate steps must be taken to improve the position.

Because we cannot meet the balance of our overseas payments we have restricted imports, with the result that France, for example, has been antagonized and has said, in effect, "If you will not import our goods we will not buy wheat from you." France is not normally an importer of wheat, but because of the serious frost damage last winter in Europe, France requires 500,000 tons of wheat to meet her own requirements. In addition she requires a further 500,000 tons to meet her commitments under a bilateral agreement she has with Western Germany and Poland. During the last eight or nine weeks she has purchased 25,000,000 bushels of wheat from Argentina, the United States and Canada, but not one bushel of Australian wheat.

Mr. O'Halloran—How would the prices she paid for that wheat compare with our prices?

Mr. STOTT—In Australian currency it would work out between 13s. 6d. and 14s. 6d. a bushel. Many of our silos are crammed with wheat at the moment and are holding about 83,000,000 bushels. I do not suggest that if we did not have these import restrictions France would have purchased 25,000,000 bushels from us, but I believe we could have sold her a considerable proportion of her requirements. I cannot understand the psychology of the back-room boys in Canberra in adopting their attitude on imports. They are maintaining their present policy despite strong representations to remove some of the import restrictions. If we had said to France, "We will buy £10,000,000 worth of goods from you provided you take £10,000,000 worth of wheat" that wheat would have been sold. In the final analysis what alteration would it have made to the balance of payments position? I suggest it would not have affected the position because France normally is not required to import wheat.

Mr. O'Halloran—That is all the more reason we should stick to our good customers.

Mr. STOTT—The United Kingdom has been one of our greatest customers for many years, but she is not buying our wheat now.

Mr. O'Halloran—I seem to remember that we drove the United Kingdom out of the International Wheat Agreement merely because of 5d. a bushel.

Mr. STOTT—Nearly all the wheat sold on world markets since the United Kingdom left the agreement was sold at considerably below 18s. 3d. It was not a question of 5d. a bushel at all. The United Kingdom could have bought all the wheat it wanted at less than 18s. 3d.

Mr. O'Halloran—What was the sense of insisting on the high figure?

Mr. STOTT—The United States of America and France would not not agree to a lower figure. Australia had it recorded at the meeting of the International Wheat Council that it would agree to a lowering of the price by 5d. a bushel, provided an agreement was made. The United Kingdom made no overtures to come into the agreement if the price were lowered by 5d. The United States of America, Canada and France would not play ball, and had Australia not agreed, there would have been no agreement. The United Kingdom made it quite clear at the first day of the conference at Geneva this year that it would not have a bar of the agreement. During the war years Britain had a buying commission for all the goods it required, and it argued that because flour millers were now on their own and there was no British Ministry of Food, they could not be forced to buy certain quantities of wheat.

Mr. Hambour—Would you throw out the Ottawa Agreement?

Mr. STOTT—No, but I would favour its being revised. It was made in 1932 and there has been no alteration since. I pay a tribute to the Federal Minister for Trade (Mr. McEwen) for his negotiations with the United Kingdom to get another deal on wheat.

Mr. Hambour—You referred to a bi-lateral agreement with France to sell our surplus wheat. How could you get away with free goods from France and still keep within the Ottawa Agreement?

Mr. STOTT—Under the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs provision is made for such bi-lateral agreements. The Federal Government is negotiating with the United Kingdom hoping to arrive at an agreement to buy a quantity of wheat which will offset the

loss of sales to France. This is not easy. No-one will give greater credit to Mr. McEwen than I if he brings off the deal. It is all very well to say "Why didn't we accept 5d. a bushel less and get the United Kingdom into the agreement?" It is not as easy as that. They had their own ideas on the question and also their problems. I regret the allegation that we could have got the United Kingdom in had we accepted 5d. a bushel less. Nothing is further from the truth.

We must increase our production by 22½ per cent. I want to illustrate the problem the farmer is up against owing to rising costs. In vol. XII of the *Current Affairs Bulletin* of July, 1953, appears the following:—

If the court raised wages to a level which imposed on farmers a burden greater than they could bear, the Government itself would probably suspend or abolish the arbitration system before economic disaster supervened. Maintenance of the export industries is of vital importance to the Australian economy.

We must export to pay for the imported machinery and raw materials we need for our industries as well as for consumption goods that we cannot produce efficiently for ourselves. Any increase in industrial productivity would, of course, reduce the effect on prices of any improvement in wages and conditions and so lighten the burden on farmers.

The stability of the system of compulsory arbitration therefore, probably depends ultimately on an achievement of a steadily rising industrial productivity. Yet, the following comment was made by the Full Bench of the Federal Arbitration Court in the basic wage and standard hours case, 1952-1953:—

"If by productivity is meant volume of production per man hour the general view seems to be held that a gradual improvement takes place in a community such as Australia if the whole field of production is looked at. No information has been presented to the court upon which we feel able to measure that improvement however roughly."

The Bureau of Agricultural Economics, which I think is accepted as a reliable authority, presented the general position of costs in a table that shows that there has been an average increase of approximately 80 per cent in primary production costs. The table shows that labour has increased in cost by 80 per cent, farm costs by 90 per cent, depreciation by 60 per cent and interest by 40 per cent. It must be conceded that labour costs are governed by awards and standards set up by arbitration courts over which the farmer has no control, but depreciation is a mathematical computation and the 60 per cent increase shows a greater degree of mechanization than the 20 per cent allowance by the Federal Government would

indicate. Farm costs have increased by 90 per cent, and this term covers a multitude of items—rates, land tax, farm requisites, bales, petrol, oil, veterinary supplies, and many other things. The farmer has no control over fixing any of these costs, so how can he reduce them? When opening the Royal Show this year the Premier made a powerful speech in which he said:—

The big problem confronting Australia today was cost of production, particularly in the primary industries which have no sheltered market. They have to sell their commodities on the world market against world competition—and frequently against subsidised competition from the North American continent.

In these circumstances, it is necessary that we take a very firm stand and see that the materials the primary producer needs and the goods he produces are kept down to a price which will enable him to produce efficiently and compete overseas. If we can do that, our overseas balance of trade problem automatically ceases to give us very much concern.

That is a great statement, and I am all for it, but on examination we find that the Government has increased rail fares, land tax assessments and rents, so how can these words of the Premier be put into practice by the farmer to reduce his costs? That can only be done through avenues such as this Budget, and I would like to see the Premier put some of what he said into practice. The Commonwealth Government met in conference with the State Premiers with an idea of arresting the inflationary spiral, and of doing something to rectify the general economic position of the nation, but the conference was abortive. I think another conference should be held in an attempt to reach agreement on this problem. In the statement issued by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the following appeared:—

Prices paid by Australian farmers have increased more rapidly in the last four or five years than prices paid to farmers in a number of other important countries. The following table shows comparative movements in prices paid by farmers for their requirements in the several countries which compete with Australia in markets for primary products. The year 1951 has been used as a basis for comparison as this represents the commencement of a period of relative price stability following the Korean war boom.

Base year: 1951—100.

	1951.	1952.	1953.	1954.	1955.
					(est.)
Australia . . .	100	119	122	123	126
Canada . . .	100	105	103	103	103
U.S.A. . . .	100	102	99	100	100
France . . .	100	113	108	103	102
Netherlands . .	100	103	101	108	109

From those figures it can be seen that the tendency is for prices to rise in Australia.

which is making competition with other countries difficult. Something should be done to reduce costs, and I think the Commonwealth Government and the Premier should meet to handle the problem. Unfortunately, we must go back a little to find out what is causing the present inflationary spiral. Prices increased, and wages chased prices to such an extent that when the matter came before the Arbitration Court that court froze all awards. The Premier rightly pointed out at the Premiers' Conference that merely to deal with the wage problem is not answering the problem.

Mr. O'Halloran—This State had the greatest increase of the lot.

Mr. STOTT—It did, and it is quite obvious from what has happened since then that if wages are pegged the problem is not solved—further steps must be taken. I believe that the way to tackle this problem is for the Commonwealth Government to reverse its present policy. It must pay more subsidies, particularly on items in the C series index. If that were done the natural corollary would be a halting of the wage structure for the next three months because of the natural cheapening of the various goods. A plea has been made to reduce costs of production on export goods, and one way to do that is to provide subsidies and thus halt rising wage costs. However, to build up our export balances we must not only reduce costs but increase production so that we will have a greater sterling balance. When a farmer wishes to increase his production he goes to his bank to get an overdraft, but he is unable to do that today.

The general economic policy of Australia is out of hand and reaching a position of absurdity. We are shutting out favourable customers and making a plea that we have to increase our production and exports to restore our balance of trade overseas, but when a farmer wants to do the right thing he is apparently told that he cannot get an overdraft. That is a very foolish position for this country to be in. There must be millions of pounds available in the community, but where has it gone today that the banking structure is unable to advance money to primary producers? The following appeared in yesterday's *Advertiser*:—

First accounts of Esanda Ltd., the hire purchase company of the E.S. & A. Bank Ltd., shows profit at £101,343 for the seven months of initial trading to June. At June 30 the company had £6,583,000 out on hire purchase contracts. Paid capital is £2,000,000, all of which was subscribed by the E.S. & A. Bank.

I emphasize that all of that capital was subscribed by the E.S. & A. Bank.

Mr. Quirke—It is interesting to note that the capital is £2,000,000 and they have over £6,000,000 out on hire purchase contracts. That is another stupidity.

Mr. STOTT—The article continues:—

Latest profit was struck after providing £68,100 for income tax. Expenses amounted to £96,362 and £81,000 was paid to the E.S. & A. Bank as management fee. Esanda Ltd. started business on December 1 last. It took over all hire-purchase business previously conducted by the E.S. & A. Bank. The latest result is equivalent to a profit of about £174,000 for a full year. Considering credit restrictions and the increases in sales tax announced in March, the company has apparently made a good start.

I'll say it has! The article continues:—

Since there has been no previous statement on outstandings, comparisons cannot be made, but evidently the growth was somewhat less than expected. The bank, in the £1,500,000 debenture issue in November, said earnings before the management fee would be sufficient to pay the interest charge (about £90,000) four or five times. This means an annual (before management fee) figure of about £360,000-£400,000, whereas the first result indicates an approximate annual rate of about £312,000.

No wonder the primary producer cannot get accommodation at ordinary overdraft rates, because the fluid money of the banks is being invested in hire purchase companies at the higher rates. Our important export industries are being denied the very necessary credit to keep them in production. The position is out of hand, and it is a ridiculous state of affairs that the banks, which are in a highly privileged position, are doing this sort of thing to the community.

This Government has the power to call a halt to this extravagance of hire purchase investment. Generally speaking, life insurance companies do not indulge in this higher rate of interest because they are prepared to take an average rate over a long period of years and make their investments in Commonwealth loans at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent to 5 per cent. We find today, however, that the insurance companies are doing the same thing as the banks. That being so, what is going to happen to the Commonwealth loans on which this Parliament depends for roads, bridges, schools and other things? I urge this Parliament to give attention to the general economic position of the State which is facing a £2,500,000 deficit this year. The Government has to give serious attention to this because the Premier will be faced with a further deficit next year.

In the preparation of this speech I have been very careful not to mislead the House or make any extravagant statement. The figures I have given have come from reliable sources which I have stated. Steps should be taken at the next Loan Council meeting to see that hire purchase companies are prevented from offering 9 per cent, as they are doing, over a short term. Banks are putting capital into hire purchase companies, with the result that producers cannot get money at overdraft rates. I have proof of this. I know a farmer who, because of high taxation, was in difficulties with his bank and was on the wrong side of the ledger. He wished to expand his production by erecting fences and putting down a bore, and a few weeks ago he went to his bank to get an overdraft but was told that the bank had received instructions from its head office that it could not advance any money at all. A few days later he received a letter asking him to reduce his existing overdraft. He wrote back and told them that he had not the slightest hope of doing that, but the bank insisted that he should reduce it. He made representations to another bank and was told that the bank could make no advances on new accounts. Eventually he was forced to sell his property and take a dairy farm in the hills.

That sort of thing is wrong. I could quote other cases. This case occurred in Victoria. The man wanted a new machine and asked his banker for £1,000 as an advance but he refused it because the bank had decided not to make any more advances. Finally the banker said the man could get his machine through a hire purchase company if he paid an interest rate of 9 or 10 per cent. He got the machine and told me the names of the bank and the hire purchase company. Later it was found that the bank had money invested in the company. The Government should act in connection with this hire purchase business before it gets too bad, and it is bad enough today.

Mr. STEPHENS (Port Adelaide)—Members of both sides have expressed sympathy with the unfortunate River Murray settlers. South Australians are prepared to give all the assistance they can but the Commonwealth Government should realize that South Australia is part of Australia and should do its share. I have no doubt that the money contributed to the Lord Mayor's Flood Relief Fund will be distributed fairly. When the snows melt more water will come down the river but I

doubt whether it will be as high as it is now. What are we doing to prevent future floods? We knew the present flood was coming but nothing was done to prevent damage. Our engineers, who are as good as any in Australia, should tackle the problem. Perhaps the route of the river could be altered. At Loxton the river level is 39ft. above sea level and between Loxton and Lake Alexandrina there is much limestone country. The water from the river could be diverted and made available to places where it is badly wanted. One of Australia's greatest statesmen, Charles Cameron Kingston, said that the oldest and wisest man could learn something from a child, and every suggestion put up to our Government should be considered. The Government should not think that suggestions from this side of the House are useless. For some years I brought forward matters in this place but for a while I got nowhere. Finally, through being persistent I got what I wanted. Members remember the Nelcebee-Gerard case in respect of which I got the Government to amend the Marine Act and to pay compensation to a man who had been wronged. Then there was the matter of free milk for school children. The South Australian Government did nothing in the matter, but the Federal Government implemented the scheme. A channel from Loxton to Lake Alexandrina should be constructed so that the State generally would benefit. If necessary, the Federal Government can find the money. Today the banks control finance and the Federal Government is merely their rubber stamp.

As members we are placed in an unfortunate position in this debate for we cannot increase any grant even by one pound. On the other hand, any move to reduce any item by one pound would be taken as a vote of no-confidence in the Government and defeated; therefore no member can change an item. I am reminded of the man who said, "The time is fast approaching when every man will be able to do as he likes, and he that does not will be forced to." We can do nothing in the matter of the Estimates: we must agree to them.

This year's revenue will exceed last year's by over £1,000,000 and this amount will have to be found by taxation. Unlike business people, who can pass on increased taxation by way of increased prices for their goods, the workers must go to the Arbitration Court for an increase and, even though they get one, they

will probably find their costs, such as rent, increased and the real value of the increase taken away.

The Government intends to carry out a 50-year developmental plan in the Port Adelaide area, but what does it intend to do about a dry dock there? Two ships—m.v. *Morialta* and m.v. *Moonta*—trade regularly in Port Adelaide, and every time they have to be repainted or repaired they must be sent to Melbourne or Sydney, whereas, if we had a dry dock, the work could be done here. I have known damaged ships to come to Port Adelaide, partly unload, and then proceed to Melbourne for repair work in the dry dock. The Government should see that a dry dock is constructed here so that money is not diverted in this way.

I hate to hear some members complain about our railways. They want cheaper rail freight rates and increased motor transport facilities, but they should remember that the railways opened the outback. Indeed, much land would not be worth half its present value were it not for railway facilities. I am not anxious to see the railways make a profit, but I am anxious to see them give a good service to the people. Those members who complain about the railways should be the last to complain, for they have been granted registration concessions for their motor vehicles that they use on their farms, but also use to compete with the railways. Our roads are being damaged by heavy transports. The Port Road is being badly cut up, and one can always see big vehicles parked on North Terrace, where they take up much room. I believe that heavy transports should pay higher petrol taxation and registration fees. A few weeks ago I was in the Adelaide hills and spoke to the member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) about heavy transports on the hills roads. I noticed 27 motor cars held up behind a semi-trailer coming down from Bridgewater. These vehicles are so long that they have to cross the double line to get round corners. They should be prosecuted because a motorist would be prosecuted for doing that.

I have never been able to understand why more cement roads are not built. Many years ago Addison Road, which runs between Torrens Road and Junction Road, and Fletcher Road were built of cement, and they have cost little in maintenance. I hope to speak on some of the lines in the Estimates later. I realize that as representatives of the people we cannot reduce or increase the amounts allocated to the various lines. In dealing with the Budget we

have to take it or leave it, for there are so many members sitting behind the Government that we could not successfully move a vote of no confidence in the Government. I support the first line.

Mr. JENKINS (Stirling)—The Treasurer has had a difficult job in compiling the Budget this year, but I am pleased that in raising additional revenue he is not curtailing public works and not placing greater burdens on people in the lower income brackets and those on fixed incomes. The Leader of the Opposition criticized the Treasurer when he said he was wasting money on ambitious projects, but I do not think he would do anything to adversely affect primary producers, workers, or businesses. Therefore, I do not think he was serious when he criticized the Treasurer.

Many speakers have referred to the Murray flood, which has hit my district at Jervois and Woods Point. Those areas have not been as badly affected as some areas represented by the member for Murray (Mr. Bywaters). The people of Jervois and Woods Point will suffer loss of income through inundation of pastures, whereas many people in the district of Murray have been rendered homeless. The response to the Lord Mayor's Fund has been spontaneous, wholehearted and prolonged, which is most commendable. The departments that have provided the working force and machinery and organization to combat the flood should be praised for their efforts, and it is a great pity that their efforts have gone for nought. Since the breaching of the banks at Jervois there has been some criticism of the manner in which the work was undertaken there, but that criticism was not justified because there were many people ready to assist when the break occurred. I think one member said that the breach occurred when water came over the bank, but that was not quite so.

Where soil had been placed on the banks in other places it consolidated to some extent, by the trucks moving over them, but where the breach occurred the filling had been placed by dobbins and was soft and not consolidated. The high wind raised the water several inches and the high pressure forced water through under the sandbags and the bank collapsed. If the banks had not been breached when they were I think it is probable that they would have gone a day or two later because we had so much rough weather. Most of the excellent bank at Jervois is still intact. I was there on Saturday last and most of the 12 miles of bank was

still showing above the water, and if it remains intact it will be a big asset when rehabilitation work is started. Some people have suggested that the efforts of the Engineering and Water Supply Department and other Government departments have been a waste of time. I do not agree, because their efforts delayed the breaching of those banks for about five weeks and during that time the settlers were able to gain an income from their pastures. They were not forced to transfer their herds to the high ground, with the result that the pasture there was enabled to thicken. The gross income from a dairy is about £10 a day and the value of retaining the flat lands for an additional five weeks was considerable. The milk supply to the Jervois dairy factory has decreased by about one-third and it is expected to decrease further during the summer months.

Some doubt has been expressed whether it is wise to move stock away from the Jervois area. Some milking herds have been transferred to the South-East and others to Echunga, many miles away. Some herds have been split up and the cows sent to different areas. Considerable losses can result from moving cattle from one type of pasture to another. I know of one instance where 18 cows in good milking condition were moved to Echunga. The settler was to receive one-third of the proceeds of the milk and he anticipated a reasonable income, but as a result of the change from one pasture to another the cattle lost so much condition that there was practically no return from them. Instead of receiving a reasonable income he was presented with an account for £3. A similar position will arise when the herds are moved back to Jervois after the pastures have been resown. About two years ago a herd of six cows was brought to the Jervois district and put on to a pasture to which it was not accustomed and in 12 months each cow dropped back to the extent of over 100 lb. of butter fat. There are many problems arising that have not previously been encountered.

Some settlers at Jervois are settling down after the frenzy of fighting the flood, but others are uncertain of what will happen during the next 18 months or two years. Each settler has a different problem. Those who will be hardest hit are the settlers who have been in possession of their properties for two years or less. They have put all they had into those properties and those without any high ground will have no income. Their herds

have been moved to different areas and although they are receiving some income from the milking herds they are obliged to pay about 4s. a head a week for agistment for their dry stock.

When I was in the area last Saturday I discovered that there are many problems relating to agistment. In some instances I believe it is costing them £1 a day for rent. The settlers will be confronted with water rates which are charged for cleaning out channels and pumping out surplus water after irrigation has taken place. The local councils have been obliged to spend a considerable sum in building protective banks and are urging settlers to pay their council rates so that the councils can recoup their finances. That comes hard on people who have little or no income. The man who has been established for some years is not so hard hit as the man who has just started and who has no capital and little or no income. I wonder whether Sir Kingsley Paine's committee would be able to reimburse the councils or whether the councils would be able to rebate the rates to those settlers who have no high ground and whose incomes have been so seriously disturbed.

A few months ago I asked the Minister of Agriculture if he would take steps to ensure that when the swamps were ready for resowing after dewatering a sufficient quantity of first-class New Zealand clover and rye grass seed would be available. The Minister said there was a divergence of opinion as to what type of pasture should be sown down. He said that paspalum was recognized as a good pasture on the flat. I do not think we need worry about sowing paspalum because it will re-establish itself quickly without any sowing down. The main thing is to get good quality clover and rye grass which will provide a quick return crop.

Every person I interviewed at Jervois had a different problem and I thought it would be a wise move for Sir Kingsley Paine and his committee—or representatives of it—to visit the settlers and discuss their problems on the spot. However, I subsequently discovered that a local committee has been established at Murray Bridge. Mr. Sims of the Lands Department is a member of that committee, as is Mr. Manning, the resident engineer for several years in the locality. Both men are familiar with the area and know the settlers and their problems. Their knowledge will be valuable to the committee and will assist in ensuring that the settlers receive relief at the earliest

possible moment. Those people who disposed of their herds except for young heifers which are on agistment and held as the nucleus of a new herd when they get back on their swamp lands, received good proceeds for the stock sales, but unless they reinvest those proceeds within 12 months they will be liable to taxation. It is most important that they should be able to keep the purchase price so that they can be in a position to restart. I hope the committee will be able to help them in that direction.

Another matter brought before my notice was the price of hay. When the flood first broke through some settlers were anxious to ensure that they had sufficient fodder. They were offered hay at Keith and other places in the South-East for the cost of the baling, which is about 1s. 9d. to 2s. a bale. That seemed a very good offer, but by the time the hay was transported from the farm to the railway, then by railway to Murray Bridge and then delivered to the dairies the cost amounted to about £8 a ton, which is only £2 short of the full price. If they could purchase the hay nearer home they would not have the high transport costs and would be able to inspect the hay before purchase. Whether the committee can help in that direction I do not know. I am glad to say that the people on this part of the river are not so unfortunately situated as some of those in Mr. Bywaters' area. When some of the inundated homes are replaced steps should be taken to ensure that they are built on ground sufficiently above the present flood level so that they will not suffer in the event of a future flood. One of the main things worrying settlers in the Jervois and Woods Point area is the uncertainty of what will happen to them in the near future and during the next two years. I believe that Judge Paine's committee will handle the position impartially and fairly in making funds go as far as possible in bringing about alleviation.

Some honourable members have suggested that portion of the defence grant should be used on roads. I would agree that portion of the grant should be allocated to roads. I had the idea that if at the end of the year £20,000,000 of the defence grant had not been used it could be allocated for roads, but I understand now that that could not be done constitutionally. Perhaps an amount of £20,000,000 could be allocated for roads within the defence grant. If that could be done, it would meet with my approval.

The member for Enfield criticized the use of portion of the defence grant in teaching trainees to slope arms, among other things.

The object of arms drill is to teach the recruit to become familiar and proficient in the handling of weapons. A man is a member of a section, which is built up into a platoon and then to a company, and eventually a battalion and then the complete army until we have the required defence force. Drill teaches discipline and is part of the initial training. The honourable member said that if there were war in this country it would be an atomic war and we would be devastated. Supposing that his theory regarding an atomic attack is correct. First, our main line of defence would be to have a complete or as near complete dispersal of industry and the people as possible. There are three major countries in a position to make an atomic bomb and capable of delivering it, and two of them are friendly to us. The other may not be quite so friendly. In the event of an attack on this country we could expect those other two countries to come to our aid. Because we are members of S.E.A.T.O. and A.N.Z.U.S., the United States of America, being a signatory to the A.N.Z.U.S. Treaty, would be bound to come to our aid. However, I cannot imagine any likelihood of atomic warfare in this country. The best defence to this type of attack would be the development of guided missiles and a complete radar location network along the coastal fringe so that we would have timely warnings of the approach of enemy forces, and could then be in a position to deal with them. I am pleased to think that the Commonwealth Government is doing something in this matter. I support the first line.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—Unlike some honourable members who have criticized both Federal and State Liberal Party administration and then concluded their address by saying that they supported the first line, I want to make it clear that I intend to oppose the whole Budget. I condemn both Federal and State Liberal Party administration, and during my speech will justify my condemnation of the Budget. It seems to be the practice for Liberal Party Governments to inflict sorrow or dismal Budgets upon the people. Only when there is a Labor Party in office can the people expect proper administration.

Mr. Jenkins—Which Labor Party?

Mr. LAWN—There is only one Australian Labor Party, of which I am proud to be a member, and members opposite, although they do not realise it, commend the policy of that Party. I have heard them commend our Electricity Trust and our railways, from which



they want a better service—but all these things are in line with the policy of the Australian Labor Party.

I join with members who have expressed their sympathy towards the residents of the Murray area affected by the disastrous flood. I cannot add to what has been said, but I can assure members for these districts and the people they represent that if it is possible for me to help on a Parliamentary level I shall be pleased to oblige in any way I can. My remarks are only an endorsement of the sentiments of all members who have spoken. I desire to extend thanks to all people who went to river centres to work on the banks, and to those who made a financial contribution. If there should be a war there would not be any shortage of money to finance it, so there should be no shortage of money for rehabilitation work along the river.

During the Address in Reply debate I referred to the inadequate water supply in Thebarton, which is in my electorate. I have since received a letter from the Minister of Works stating that the matter would be dealt with in this Budget and that work would soon be commenced to put down a new pipe system. I wish to thank the Minister for this. The amount provided in the Estimates is considerably more than the provision last year, so I hope that the work will be proceeded with and the people will obtain a good water service. I applaud the Minister of Education for the continued grants made to Suneden, a private home to assist physically and mentally handicapped children. The amount provided this year is £1,400. Only in recent years has the Government made any contribution towards this organization. I do not think it should be necessary for individuals to organize such homes, which should be the responsibility of the State rather than having the matter left to the parents of the physically handicapped to organize on their own. When introducing the Budget, the Premier said:—

For the year ending June 30, 1957, the expenditure proposals which I shall place before the House will amount in all to £65,982,000, whereas I anticipate that receipts will amount to £65,129,000. On balance, therefore, the proposals indicate a deficit of £853,000 for the current year. When account is taken of the accumulated deficit to June 30 last of £1,510,000 the prospect is that at June 30 next the Consolidated Revenue Account of the State will be in deficit to the extent of £2,363,000.

I stress this large amount as a measure of the current financial difficulties facing the State. The Treasurer has emphasized the fact that over the past two years there have been

deficits, and there will be another this year. From Appendix 6 of the Budget we can see that the accumulated surpluses over the last 20 years have amounted to £3,951,626, and the accumulated deficits over that period to £5,253,849. From these figures and from the Budget Speech it is obvious that this State is in a difficult financial position. However, last Tuesday the Treasurer said that "the State had a credit balance as at June 30 last of £2,670,127" and allowing for the estimated deficit for the current year of about £850,000, the State would still be in credit by the end of next June by about £1,800,000. I claim that the State's financial position is not as black as the Treasurer's statement implies. I suggest to the Treasurer that in Appendix 6 there should be another column setting out the amount standing to the credit of the State as at June 30 of each of those years, or what the actual deficit is at that particular date. Last Tuesday I asked the Treasurer the following question:—

What was the amount of balances standing to the credit of the State at June 30, 1949, and for each of the years since?

The Treasurer replied—

The balances of the Government funds at June 30 each year were as follows:—

1949, £4,080,206; 1950, £3,908,183; 1951, £4,358,308; 1952, £2,301,949; 1953, £5,234,461; 1954, £7,140,005; 1955, £5,148,909; and 1956, £2,670, 127.

Despite the fact that we had £80,000 in debit on Consolidated Revenue account as at June 1955, and £1,400,000 at June 1956, we have actually had a balance standing to the credit of the State in each of those years. Appendix 6 sets out the position each year during the past 20 years as to whether the State incurred a debit or had a surplus, but I suggest that another column should be added setting out what was actually the financial position of the State as at June 30 in each of those years, because otherwise a false picture can be drawn. The position is not quite as black as the Treasurer painted it in his opening paragraph.

The Treasurer went on to say:—

The Commonwealth and State Governments have latterly all been most concerned with the threat of renewed inflation. The Commonwealth, as the Government having major control of banking, trade, and principal sources of taxation revenues in income tax, customs and excise, has taken extensive financial measures as a counter to that threat.

I agree that it may have taken some measures, but they were certainly not sufficient or appropriate measures to overcome the inflation which

we are experiencing. This statement is made seven years after we were promised by the Commonwealth Government that if returned it would put more value back into the pound.

**Mr. O'Halloran**—We were promised things by the State Government too.

**Mr. LAWN**—Yes, we were promised a lot of things, and I propose to deal with that. The Treasurer in his policy speech painted a wonderful picture of South Australia and of what the Government was going to do. He claimed a lot of credit for the Government then, but now he is saying that the State is not in a good financial position. The Treasurer does not have to worry about any discredit, because his Government is perpetuating the worst possible hoax upon the people of this State. He knows that it is just a joke going to the people at election time, because the Government will come back and do what it likes; in other words, carry on its dictatorship. It is just like pouring water on a duck's back to offer any criticism, constructive or otherwise, of this Government's administration. He goes on in his statement to say:—

Unfortunately the States, and particularly the three smaller States, are being forced to face a peculiarly difficult problem which is not experienced by the Commonwealth Government—that is, a prospective shortage of cash. The Commonwealth revenues not only suffice to cover its normal expenditures, but they cover virtually all capital expenditures of the Commonwealth and provide a further sum of the order of £100,000,000, which is to be lent at full interest rates to the States for their capital purposes. This State, on the other hand, has insufficient revenues for its normal expenditure purposes, and there can be no question of providing any capital funds from current State revenues. At the same time, the borrowed funds available to the State are insufficient to meet the bare needs of the rapidly expanding South Australian economy for homes, schools, hospitals, water, transport, and the like. In point of fact, the Loan Estimates already before this House necessarily contemplate expenditures in excess of borrowings.

What greater condemnation of the Federal Government could we find than is contained in that paragraph? He has criticized the Commonwealth Government for returning approximately only 27 per cent of the money raised by the State of South Australia by way of taxation, and he condemns it for taking from the people £100,000,000 more than it needs for its expenditure so that it can lend it back to the States at the full interest rate of five per cent. He is full of

condemnation of the Commonwealth Government in that respect.

**Mr. John Clark**—Which side do you think he will be supporting in the Barker by-election?

**Mr. LAWN**—I am coming to that. He condemns the Commonwealth Government with regard to the availability of loan funds, but next thing we know he will be speaking with the Prime Minister and asking the people to perpetuate all these things which he has condemned. It is sheer political hypocrisy. On November 28 last year the Premier spoke at Glenelg with the Prime Minister and he told the people: "Return the Liberal and Country League Government, I can get more money out of them than I can the other crowd." All this year he has been crying in this House about not being able to get sufficient money from the Commonwealth Government by way of loan money or Commonwealth grant or by way of taxation, and he has condemned that Government for taking £100,000,000 from the people and lending it back to the States at five per cent. On Friday night he will ask people in the South-East to vote for the candidate that supports the Commonwealth Government. We do not expect that sort of thing from our Treasurer. It is the sort of statement that would come from an ordinary politician. He accuses me of playing politics but I speak on behalf of my constituents as their interests demand. In this debate Mr. Hambour said:—

We in Australia, and in South Australia particularly, are being lulled into a sense of false security.

That is what the Prime Minister and our Treasurer will do on Friday night next, and what will Mr. Hambour do about it? He will do all he can to help the Liberal Party candidate win the by-election. When Mr. Hambour made the statement he had in mind what I have in mind now—the insincerity of the Treasurer and the Liberal Party.

**Mr. Hambour**—No.

**Mr. LAWN**—All Government members want to be returned to power to govern in the interests of the section of the community they represent—financiers, profiteers and the like. The Treasurer then outlined his taxation proposals and I refer particularly to the following:—

(3) Increase in inward wharfage by about 25 per cent on average and outward wharfage by about 20 per cent on average, except that no increase is proposed on the inward wharfage on coal or in the charges applying to livestock or farm produce which passes over two wharves in the course of local shipping. An increase

in pilotage charges of about one-third is also proposed. Regulations to prescribe the new rates will be promulgated shortly. Increased revenue will be about £240,000 in a full year, and about £180,000 during the remainder of this year.

If it were not so tragic it would be funny, but unfortunately our electoral system is so sewn up in South Australia that the Government can get away with anything. The Treasurer also said:—

In making a careful review of what revenues might properly be increased in order to meet the State's prospective cash difficulties and reduce the deficit to manageable proportions, I have endeavoured to avoid those increases which would raise costs and prices. Particularly have I avoided those which would affect the ordinary living costs of persons of modest means. Any steep increases in freights, fares, power, light, and gas charges would be quickly reflected in living costs with consequent demands for an increase in wages. Some increases in charges have been absolutely unavoidable, but I feel sure that if one examines the measures which have already been taken or are now proposed it will be seen that none of the additional charges should be reflected in increased prices of commodities in common use.

Mr. Hambour—I want to have your ideas on the matter.

Mr. LAWN—I can understand Mr. Hambour's interjections. He hopes that the people will have a short memory and he believes that the day after the Treasurer spoke about living costs not being affected it was forgotten. I am reminding the people of what the Treasurer said. He pointed out that any steep increases in freights, etc., would be quickly reflected in living costs. This morning there was a press statement to the effect that shipowners are to increase freights. This will mean, according to the Treasurer, a steep increase in costs. The shipowners did not have to go to the Arbitration Court, yet the Government says to the workers, "Go to the Arbitration Court and obey the industrial laws." It is because the court is stacked that wages have been frozen, but there is one section of the community that Government members represent that does not have to go to the court. It arbitrarily says "Freights will go up tomorrow" and then it raises them as it wishes.

The Treasurer proposes to increase outward and inward wharfage. He also said that Housing Trust rents would be increased by as much as 12s. 6d. a week. At the recent basic wage inquiry the Government had counsel to argue the matter of rents. The Treasurer knows that trust rents are not included in the C series index figures. He

could increase them by £5 a week but they would not be included in the figures. He wants to keep wages down in the interests of the employing section whom he represents. I am speaking about the people who invest their money in business. The Treasurer keeps the basic wage down as much as he can. He made sure there were no increases in the rents of privately-owned homes because they are included in the C series index figures. He admitted some time ago to the owners of these homes that they were being sacrificed in order that the basic wage might be kept down. Nevertheless, despite his assurance that he has carefully reviewed the revenues available to the Government, Mr. Playford has deliberately increased the rents of people in Housing Trust homes, knowing full well that such increase will not be reflected in the C series index. Isn't that cheap politics? Is it the action of a good Labor Premier, as some Government members like to call Mr. Playford?

I now wish to refer to some of the items the Treasurer claims he has so carefully reviewed. Tea, sugar, sago, potatoes and kerosene are all items in the groceries section of the C series index and, being imports, are all subject to the increased wharfage charges. Clothing items such as suits, overcoats, hats, caps, underpants, socks, stockings, braces, pyjamas, pullovers, shoes, and boots, and all items of household drapery and domestic linen included in the C series index: all of these will be affected by the increases in freight rates and wharfage charges inwards. The same can be said about household utensils such as crockery, knives, spoons and forks, and electric irons, cigarettes and tobacco, which are included in the miscellaneous section of the C series index. The Treasurer has not considered the interests of the State when framing his Budget.

Further, increased hospital charges have been imposed on people in Government hospitals, and I expect that the basic wage earner will probably have to pay about 17s. 6d. a day. This burden is to be imposed in addition to the increased prices of the commodities I have mentioned, and patients will also have to pay fees for services rendered in hospitals by honorary doctors. Mr. Playford is certainly not concerned with the welfare of the people and South Australians are to carry the full burden of inflation.

Mr. Hambour—What about the primary producers?

Mr. LAWN—In that respect I will quote from publications by the Institute of Public Affairs and the Commonwealth Trading Bank, both authorities the member for Light will probably accept. An economist writing in the *Melbourne Herald*, which is certainly not a Labor paper, said on July 7 this year that the output per person employed in Australia had risen from £886 in 1939 to £3,331 this year, three and three-quarter times as much. The basic wage in 1939 was £3 18s. a week. Today it is £12 1s., but according to the C series index it should be £12 6s. If the basic wage had been related to the increased productivity of the worker it would be £14 12s. 6d. a week now. The unrest of the workers can be understood when we continually hear some members urging them all the time to produce more. The worker knows that the more he produces the less he receives in return. If he produces more the only people to benefit are the profiteers.

Mr. Hambour—Rubbish! There are plenty of producers other than wage earners.

Mr. LAWN—The economist of the *Melbourne Herald* said that the wage earner has increased production three and three-quarter times, but the basic wage has not gone up that much since 1939. He is being robbed by supporters of a political party that are not concerned with the interests of the working class. Members opposite use the term "greater production" because the people know what "sweated labour" means. At one time they would have used the term "sweated labour" and also whips and leg irons on the worker, but today they use the term "greater production." The statement goes on that in working those figures out they must be qualified by taking into consideration the fall in the value of the pound. It states:—

Making allowance for the depreciated pound, it would appear that production per employee

has increased 43 per cent in real value since 1939 whereas average real wages have increased only about 20 per cent since 1939.

Mr. Coumbe—What is the authority for those figures?

Mr. LAWN—I assume the economist accepted the Commonwealth Statistician's figures. He continued:—

If real wages had increased by the same proportion as output working people would still have received back only the same share of what they have produced that they received in 1939. In fact, they get less share of their output now than in 1939. Exhortations for increased production cannot be expected to produce results, when the employee knows that other interests will be the main beneficiaries of his or her extra work. It is up to the Government to discover what has happened to that extra production, which should have been the employee's share, but which has gone elsewhere.

We on this side of the House say that the worker should receive a greater share of production and also that there should be an excess profits tax. Before the last Federal election the Liberal Party announced excess profits taxes as part of its policy, but the Menzies-Fadden Government is not carrying it out. Our Treasurer has often said that our employees produce more per head than the employees of other States. If the employees of Australia, on an average, now produce three and three-quarter times what they did in 1939 South Australian workers are producing more than that, but they have had their wages frozen, whereas the employees in other States have not. South Australian workers have the worst Workmen's Compensation Act in the Commonwealth and the worst industrial laws. Moreover, they do not get long service leave benefits.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 11 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, October 3, at 2 p.m.