

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, October 3, 1956.

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

QUESTIONS.

ATOMIC TESTS: CIVIL DEFENCE.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Recent press reports stated that some of the atomic bomb experiments carried out at Maralinga last week were intended to devise methods for the protection of civilian population in wartime. Can the Premier say whether those reports were correct? Were representatives of the South Australian civil defence organization present at the tests, and has any information been conveyed to the Premier as a result of the tests which would assist in providing the most adequate civil defence possible in South Australia against the explosion in this State of an atomic weapon by an enemy in wartime?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The experiments were carried out by the Commonwealth Government in consultation with the United Kingdom authorities who are in charge of the programme, and all safety measures and arrangements were supervised by those authorities. Concerning civil defence, I received a communication from the Prime Minister, inviting the South Australian Government to nominate an officer to observe the tests in the interests of civil defence, and the Government nominated a senior officer of the civil defence organization in South Australia (Mr. Johnson). Owing to weather conditions, however, the experiments were delayed and Mr. Johnson, who is a senior and important officer of the State, was unfortunately unable to be on the spot at Maralinga when the explosion took place as he had other commitments at that time. I understand, however, that other tests will be held, and a representative from the civil defence organization in this State will then be able to see some of them and judge what action, if any, should be taken.

CENTENARY OF STATE'S CONSTITUTION.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—During 1956 South Australia has been celebrating a number of centenaries; for example, April 19 last was the 100th anniversary of the first steam locomotive in this State, which ran between Adelaide and Port Adelaide. I have a copy of a *Government Gazette Extraordinary* dated October 25, 1856, which contains a proclamation of the

Constitution of South Australia. This marked the first attempt at responsible government in this State, although Parliament did not assemble until April, 1857. I believe that plans are in hand to mark, in April next year, the centenary of the first assembly of Parliament, but I ask the Premier whether the Government intends to do anything to mark the centenary of the proclamation of the Constitution in about three weeks' time?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I point out that the Constitution of South Australia is not a written Constitution in the sense that it cannot be altered; it can be and has, on numerous occasions, been altered by Parliament. It is intended next year to have a fairly extensive programme to mark the centenary of self-government in this State, but at present there are no plans to mark the centenary of the incident mentioned by the honourable member.

ADVANCES FOR HOMES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Treasurer a reply to my recent question concerning advances for homes by the Bank of New South Wales?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I contacted the Bank of New South Wales and the reply was that the scheme of advances would operate only in those States where branches of the Savings Bank of New South Wales had been established.

NARACOORTE RAILWAY BUILDINGS.

Mr. HARDING—As the volume of traffic in the South Eastern division of the Railways Department has trebled since the opening of the broad gauge line to Naracoorte in 1950 and as the original passenger buildings there are beyond economic repair, will the Minister representing the Minister of Railways obtain a report regarding the outcome of the deputation from the Mayor of Naracoorte to the Railways Commissioner which drew attention to the antiquated and unsatisfactory conditions of those buildings, particularly the ladies' rest room?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes.

PORT AUGUSTA PRE-SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Minister of Education a reply to my recent question concerning the restoration of the subsidy to the Port Augusta pre-school kindergarten and the employment of a teacher from Germany?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Not as of right, but as an act of courtesy to the honourable

member, I referred his question to the Kindergarten Union and have received the following reply from the secretary:—

We are glad to be in a position to re-open affiliations and will be pleased to have information from the Port Augusta pre-school centre committee regarding the qualifications of the teacher mentioned by Mr. Riches. If her training is suitable for pre-school work there will be no hesitation in reinstating the committee's affiliation and subsidy. We have kept in touch with the Port Augusta pre-school centre since its affiliation lapsed, and our supervisor visited the centre recently to advise on building plans and other matters in preparation for their eventual re-affiliation.

HIRE-PURCHASE BUSINESS.

Mr. QUIRKE—Yesterday's *Advertiser* contains a report of the activities of the hire-purchase company established by the E. S. & A. Bank. It is known as Esanda Ltd., and the report states that it made a profit of £101,343 from the first seven months of trading; it has a paid-up capital of £2,000,000, all subscribed by the bank, and it had £6,583,000 out on hire-purchase contracts. This is a startling reminder of what is possible when in command of finance. The profit figures are extraordinary, and I see no reason why State instrumentalities should not be used—

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member may not debate the question.

Mr. QUIRKE—Can the Treasurer say whether the State Bank or the Savings Bank of South Australia may compete with such an organization in the hire-purchase field, which would be to the undoubted advantage of the State and South Australia's economy?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The moneys available to the State Bank are those moneys provided by Parliament for specific purposes, the deposits lodged with the bank and the capital provided by Parliament for carrying out its functions. Those moneys are at present fully occupied on legitimate business. Advances to primary producers, advances to settlers, and advances for homes are taking all those moneys, and it would be highly undesirable to withdraw them from those purposes to enter into hire-purchase contracts. Those purposes are probably more enduring and better than that suggested by the honourable member.

I would be opposed to the Savings Bank of South Australia entering into hire-purchase agreements, for that bank is the custodian of the savings of the people. No doubt hire-purchase can be very profitable in good times, but it is a speculative busi-

ness and can quickly lose money in bad times. I do not think the savings of the people should be applied to hire-purchase.

MURRAY RIVER FLOOD.

Mr. BYWATERS—Has the Minister of Irrigation a reply to the question I asked last week about the dewatering of reclaimed swamp areas?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have received the following report from the Assistant Director of Lands:—

The first stage in the rehabilitation of the flooded reclaimed lands will be to repair the breaches in the banks and de-water the areas by pumping. This will be commenced when the river has been drained to the lowest possible level. Although it is not expected that any dewatering by pumping will commence until the new year, the Engineer-in-Chief reports that action is being taken to secure additional pumping units. Priorities for de-watering have not yet been decided. It is the intention to commence on as many areas as possible at the one time.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

Mr. QUIRKE—Some disturbing information on present economic trends has been published recently. Firstly, it has been found necessary to provide relief for unemployed people converging on Port Augusta. I understand they are mostly single men. According to the *Advertiser* of September 20, Mr. Whittington, the retiring president of the Adelaide Chamber of Commerce, stated:—

Import restrictions and price controls have failed to achieve the objectives envisaged by the sponsors of those two negative expedients.

On the other hand, Mr. Monk, the president of the A.C.T.U., and Dr. Evatt have urged the continuance of existing controls and also the imposition of more rigid controls. A growing number of people are gravely concerned with present trends and the conflicting opinions. Is the Premier prepared to make a statement on those opinions, and can he say whether unemployment is increasing to a disturbing extent?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Commonwealth Government regularly issues figures about unemployment, and gives the number of persons on relief. Those figures relate to persons who have proved a case and are receiving benefits from the Commonwealth. They undoubtedly show an increase in the number of unemployed persons receiving relief in all States. It is claimed that those figures do not tell the complete story because a person has to be unemployed for a certain period, I think a fortnight, before he can claim relief. It has been asserted, probably with justification, that

the number of unemployed is much in excess of the number of persons receiving relief. A fairly substantial number of people in Australia are unemployed, and we have records of a considerable number migrating to South Australia because the employment position here has been better than in some of the other States, particularly Western Australia, where there has been a fairly sharp recession in employment.

The second part of the honourable member's question is much more difficult to answer. I once heard it said that if there were 21 economists in a room there would be 21 different opinions on the reason for any economic trend. I believe our difficulty mainly arises from the fact that prices and costs have risen too high. Our costs of production are so high that we have to export many of our primary commodities and sell them at a price below cost of production; for instance, eggs and butter. This means that we have to charge the local consumer a higher price to make up for our export losses. Of course, the honourable member will say that is only making the problem more difficult because the more we load the local price the more difficult it subsequently becomes to export. My opinion is that not one section of the community alone is involved in inflation. From personal acquaintance with people I have found that everyone is opposed to inflation except where it affects the particular services or goods they are selling. In that respect they do not object to a degree of inflation.

I believe there will have to be a general re-organization of our economy. That will not be achieved on the one hand by pegging wages or on the other by pegging prices or liberalizing or restricting bank finance. It is only by taking a number of factors into account that we will ultimately achieve a reasonably stable economy. I can prove that price control has undoubtedly saved the people of this State hundreds of thousands of pounds. It has been said that price control is not a factor, but I can prove that it definitely is and can show that the States with price control have had the smallest increases in their costs of living. I am not so foolish as to believe that price control in itself will solve the problem, because it cannot. Production and many other factors enter into whether we can stabilize our economy, but I believe that price control has at least had a restraining influence on the upward trend of prices in South Australia.

RENMARK PRIMARY SCHOOL RE-OPENING.

Mr. KING—Can the Minister of Education indicate the prospects of re-opening the Renmark primary school in the near future?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—On several occasions the honourable member has asked me to consider re-opening the Renmark primary school as soon as possible and I recently received a similar request from the Renmark Corporation. This is a large country school with an enrolment of 700 and I am anxious to re-open it as soon as possible, firstly in the interests of the education of the children, but also as a contribution toward the restoration of the community life and the trade and business of Renmark.

After consultation with the Premier, I sought the advice of the Director of Education, Mr. Mander-Jones; the Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Dridan; the Director-General of Public Health, Dr. Southwood; and the Government Liaison Officer, Mr. Gordon. I have received reports from the Director of Education, the Engineer-in-Chief and the Government Liaison Officer. The Director-General of Public Health is at Renmark today with some of his principal officers making investigations and he will report to me on his return to Adelaide tomorrow or Friday. I intend to visit the Upper Murray during the week-end and on Tuesday next—I hope in company with the honourable member and the Director of Education—will meet the mayor and members of the Renmark Corporation, the local Emergency Committee and the local school committees, for discussion. I hope then to be in a position to come to a final decision as to when the school will re-open and will announce my decision there and then.

MURRAY RIVER FLOOD RELIEF.

Mr. BYWATERS—Yesterday, when speaking in the Budget debate, I suggested that it was desirable for the Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies, and the Treasurer, Sir Arthur Fadden, to come and view the flood damage. Has the Premier invited either of these gentlemen to this State, or is it the Government's intention to invite them here to make such an inspection?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Federal Parliament is sitting at present, so it is not easy to get either the Prime Minister or the Treasurer to make a visit of this nature; but the Government has obtained a comprehensive set of photographs of the devastation on all parts of the river and has forwarded it with the

application for financial assistance. There is sufficient documentary evidence to reveal to anyone interested the extent and nature of the damage. Those documents are in the Prime Minister's hands. I have not invited the Prime Minister, but will ascertain whether it is possible for him to visit the areas, although I doubt whether it will be practicable. I assure the honourable member that whether or not the Prime Minister comes here, the case for financial aid will not go by default because the photographs and documentary evidence forwarded to the Commonwealth are most graphic. Some of the photographs actually show levee banks bursting and others indicate the damage to buildings and property. Some represent bird's eye views of the whole of the areas inundated at different places. Whilst such evidence is not the same as a personal visit, it will enable a person to realize the extent of the devastation caused by the flood.

MORGAN-WHYALLA PIPELINE.

Mr. QUIRKE—It is common knowledge that the amount of water passing through the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline from Hanson is insufficient to serve all the new deviations from Hanson down the Peninsula and to other places. It is contemplated that a duplication will have to be made. Can the Premier indicate the stage that investigations have reached and whether it is contemplated to proceed with the duplication in the near future? Further, can he intimate whether there is any defined line that that pipeline will take: will it follow the existing route or will it pass through new country and serve different areas?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—At the time of its construction the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline was designed to exceed the then requirements. The Public Works Committee of the day, after it had completed its investigations and report, recommended the larger scheme proposed by the Government. The Government, by administrative decision, altered the specifications of the pipeline to include much heavier walls in the heavier-pressure sections, so that boosting could give additional supplies to those proposed. The present pipeline has not failed to meet requirements but ultimately the supply will be insufficient to do so. As a long-term proposal, the Government has decided to submit to the Committee a plan to duplicate certain sections of the pipeline. It is not an immediate project because other areas have no supplies at present and they must take precedence. It has also been decided that the duplication should

go through additional areas so as to provide for additional supplies. I believe that the new pipeline, when surveyed, will go on the other side of the range so as to give a supply to country at present not served.

MINING INQUIRY.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla)—I move:—

That an address be presented to His Excellency the Governor praying His Excellency to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and report on—

(1) What action, if any, should be taken by Parliament to ensure that South Australia's high-grade iron ore and taconite resources are used in the best interests of this State.

(2) What steps should be taken to ensure the immediate establishment of a steelworks at Whyalla.

(3) The negotiations which have taken place between the Government and the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited on the questions of (a) the establishment of industries at Whyalla and (b) the payment of royalties.

(4) Whether the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited has failed to honour either the letter or the spirit of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company's Indenture Act, 1937, or any verbal undertaking given by representatives appearing on behalf of that Company before the Select Committee set up to inquire into the Bill for that Act or before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in the course of its inquiry conducted pursuant to that Act.

(5) What action, if any, the Government has taken to give effect to the recommendations of the Director of Mines or to the resolution carried by this House in 1953.

(6) What action, if any, Parliament or the Government should take to encourage overseas interests to establish steel works in South Australia.

There has been a long series of events in connection with this matter which has brought members on this side to the conclusion that an investigation of this character is needed. I propose to show that there is a need for a Royal Commission to investigate the matters mentioned. I will go over the history of the events that have brought us to this conclusion. I refer first to the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech in opening Parliament in 1955. He said that the iron ore deposits in the Middleback Ranges were the State's most valuable mineral assets and that it was one of the Government's paramount interests to secure the establishment of a steel industry on Spencer Gulf in the vicinity of the deposits. At the same time he said the Government was not prepared to acquiesce in the unsatisfactory position that had arisen through the delay by the Broken Hill

Proprietary Company Limited in establishing a steelworks at Whyalla, and that if the investigation to ascertain whether sufficient high-grade iron ore existed outside the company's lease to establish a steel industry in South Australia proved unfavourable an expert committee would be appointed to advise on what measures could be taken to ensure that the State would derive adequate benefit from its iron ore deposits.

Since that time there have been several significant happenings in connection with the matter. This year, in opening Parliament, His Excellency the Governor dismissed the matter in three lines. They referred only to the investigation being carried out by the Mines Department in areas outside the company's leases. Production of high grade iron ore from Iron Knob by the company has been stepped up to over 3,000,000 tons recently. Increasing tonnages are being returned from month to month and are being sent to New South Wales from Whyalla. In addition, the company is to establish increased bin accommodation and will shortly replace its steam locomotives with diesel locomotives with a view to not only improving the efficiency of its transport but giving increased deliveries of the ore at the port. Also, the company has just announced a developmental programme to cost £100,000,000, none of which apparently is connected with the establishment of steelworks at Whyalla.

Mr. Riches—Most of it is based on the use of ore from Iron Knob.

Mr. LOVEDAY—That is true. Following on requests from the Government the Mines Department has from time to time given estimates of the ore deposits outside the leases held by the company. It is noticeable that the departmental estimates in regard to drilling outside the leases held by the company have over the last 18 months remained static at between 10,000,000 and 20,000,000 tons. The department is said to be using the maximum resources available to it in its drilling operations. Added to that, the Victorian Government is making vigorous efforts to interest overseas organizations in establishing steelworks adjacent to iron ore deposits in East Gippsland. Today's *Advertiser* contained the following report under the heading, "Big Steelworks Nibble":—

A French and an American firm are "nibbling" at a proposal to build a £100m. steelworks at Port Stephens, near Newcastle. The Minister of Land and Mines (Mr. Nott) said this tonight. Mr. Nott said that an

officer of the Department of Lands was now searching the Port Stephens area for a site for a steelworks.

The demand for steel and steel products continues unabated in Australia and there is no prospect, despite what has been said, of the demand being met by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company in the foreseeable future. We suggest that these are more than sufficient reasons for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into various aspects of the matter. The motion is moved because we on this side feel that the investigation would be without political bias, most thorough and accurate, and that its findings would carry the maximum weight and respect.

I intend to deal with the various paragraphs in the motion *seriatim* to indicate the necessity for an inquiry. Paragraph (1) states that the Royal Commission shall inquire and report on the action to be taken by Parliament to ensure that South Australia's high grade iron ore and taconite resources are used in the best interests of this State. Since the establishment of the steelworks at Newcastle in 1915 about 50,000,000 tons of ore from South Australia has been used there. Indeed, that steelworks depends entirely for its ore supplies on the Broken Hill Proprietary Company's leases at Iron Knob. The present rate of quarrying exceeds 3,000,000 tons per annum and represents 99.5 per cent of the total Australian production of iron ore. According to the estimate of the South Australian Director of Mines, that rate of production will exhaust those deposits in from 15 to 20 years. The work of the Mines Department outside the company's leases has revealed additional deposits of about 10,000,000 to 20,000,000 tons of high grade iron ore. In his 1955 report the Director of Mines states:—

At the present time South Australian known high grade deposits have a 30-year life if it is assumed that the production of 3,000,000 tons per annum is maintained as at present for the New South Wales steel industry and the production of 2,000,000 tons per annum be allocated to a new South Australian steel industry.

The Iron Monarch deposits that have supplied the 50,000,000 tons for Newcastle are regarded throughout the world as unique both as to the quality of the ore and the high manganese content, yet the benefits this State is obtaining from those deposits are very few compared with those obtained by the company. In referring to the unsatisfactory reply made by the company in 1955 to the South Australian Government on the question of the

erection of steelworks at Whyalla, the Director of Mines states:—

It is obvious from the reply that the company places no future premium on the preservation of the known high grade iron ore resources. As has been explained in earlier reports, their exhaustion for immediate needs, detrimental to the public interest, is threatened. Some more effective principle than trust in private initiative must surely be applied in the interests of the general social prosperity and national welfare.

The tonnages of taconite or lower grade iron ore on B.H.P. Company leases have apparently never been estimated, but the total deposits run into enormous figures. So far these have not been used in any quantity worth speaking of and the Director of Mines is not aware of any experimental work that has been undertaken on their use. The lower grade ore must be treated with a process known as beneficiation in order to render it suitable for treatment in a blast furnace. It is important to remember that the cost of production of steel based on these lower grade deposits would necessarily be higher than that based on the high grade iron ore.

Paragraph (2) of the motion directs the Royal Commission to inquire into what steps should be taken to ensure the immediate establishment of a steelworks at Whyalla. In this connection two main considerations arise: firstly, that sufficient high grade iron ore be available, and secondly, that finance for the undertaking be available. Since an additional steelworks with a productive capacity of 1,000,000 ingot tons per annum is needed to meet current Australian requirements, an additional output of 2,000,000 tons of ore per annum would be required. Compared with overseas steel producers the Australian industry is favourably placed because of the low cost of raw materials. Further, the per capita demand for steel is rapidly rising in Australia and the existing known plans of the B.H.P. Company are such that there seems no possibility of its production meeting Australian requirements. From 1940 to 1950 the total capacity of the B.H.P. Company's steelworks increased by only 1 per cent per annum, although over the same period the capacity of secondary industry generally increased many times over. The current production programme of the company is indicated by the production in 1954-1955 of 2,200,000 ingot tons per annum, and the capacity of its plant will shortly be raised to 2,600,000.

During the past five years Australian imports of steel and steel products have exceeded the equivalent of 1,000,000 ingot

tons per annum. Since our population in 1960 is expected to exceed 10,000,000 we should now be planning for a home consumption requirement of 5,000,000 ingot tons per annum. It is interesting to note that the per capita consumption in the United States of America is 12.5 cwt. per annum and in the United Kingdom less than 8 cwt. The suggestion that 5,000,000 ingot tons per annum will be required in Australia by 1960 is based on a per capita consumption of 10 cwt. per annum—a figure midway between the United Kingdom and United States consumption and a reasonable figure in view of the tremendous development occurring in Australia. Further, experience in the United Kingdom and the U.S.A. has shown that steel production should be planned in excess of anticipated demand. With the combined advantages of low cost production and a great unsatisfied demand on the home market, finance should be readily available.

Paragraph (3) of the motion directs the Royal Commission to report on the negotiations that have taken place between the Government and the company on the establishment of industries at Whyalla and the payment of royalties. It is necessary to see whether those negotiations leave any room for hope that a steelworks will be erected in South Australia soon. The Mining Act provides that a 2½ per cent royalty shall be paid on the gross value of the mineral product at the point of production. For statistical purposes the value of the iron ore was fixed in 1924 at 23s. a ton, and until 1940 the company paid only 3d. a ton royalty. From 1914 to 1939 over 20,000,000 tons of ore were quarried. From 1940 to 1952 inclusive over 27,000,000 tons were produced, and since then production has reached 3,000,000 tons per annum. From January 1, 1940, the royalty became 6d. a ton, when iron ore was valued at not less than 23s. a ton, and more recently the company voluntarily increased the royalty to 1s. 6d. a ton, as from December 1, 1954. However, in 1953 the market value of the ore on world standards was said by Mr. Dickinson in his report to be at least £5 a ton f.o.b. Whyalla, without regard to its manganese content, which increases its value considerably.

Therefore, in 1953, on the basis of 2½ per cent of the gross value of the ore, the royalties should have been at least 2s. 6d. a ton. On those figures I have calculated what this State has lost by way of royalties, compared with what they would have been if calculated under the Mining Act. If we assume the average value of the ore from 1914 to 1939 was not

more than 23s. a ton (the price fixed in 1924) that the average value from 1949 to 1952 was £3 a ton, and that from 1953 to 1955 it was £5 a ton, we find the company has paid to the Government at least £2,000,000 less in royalties than it would have paid had the Mining Act been applicable. The Director of Mines pointed out that if the Government, which owns the ore (the company only has the right to mine it), were the supplier of the ore it would be making an annual profit, on 1953 output figures, of £10,000,000 to £12,000,000. Paragraph (4) of the motion states:—

Whether the Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd. has failed to honour either the letter or the spirit of the B.H.P. Co's. Indenture Act, 1937, or any verbal undertaking given by representatives appearing on behalf of that company before the Select Committee set up to inquire into the Bill for that Act or before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in the course of its inquiry conducted pursuant to that Act.

There has been considerable debate in the House over this matter and I do not wish to traverse it, but since Government action on the establishment of steel works must to some extent hinge on whether the company has failed to honour the Indenture Act the matter should be investigated. The conditions of that Act and the decision of the Public Works Committee on the Morgan-Whyalla main were so extraordinarily favourable to the company, and the conditions of the Act so radically departed from accepted practice, that it is impossible to believe that those responsible were not fully convinced by assurances that a steelworks would be established at Whyalla. When giving evidence to the Select Committee that inquired into the question of giving the company special rights to iron ore deposits in the Middleback Range, Mr. Essington Lewis, Chairman of Directors at that time, said:—

We the directors of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company feel if a steelworks is established subsequently and a water supply is put down to Whyalla, part of which we would pay for, an enormous benefit will be derived by the primary producers around the coast to Whyalla, and the position of such places as Wallaroo and Port Pirie would be strengthened in so far as their becoming manufacturing centres in the future is concerned. There is no reason that I can visualize why a certain number of industries should not develop from the establishment of steelworks in this State. There is no reason why they should stop at Whyalla. There is every reason why, perhaps, some of the finishing industries should be carried out at Port Pirie or Wallaroo, or even at Adelaide. The feeling of our directors is that they are

endeavouring to put a pivot in the industries in South Australia to which can be hung various other allied industries.

That was a definite statement made in 1937, and to show that these suggestions were not just fleeting ideas of the company Mr. Essington Lewis, when giving the Joseph Fisher Memorial lecture at the Adelaide University in June, 1948, on "The Importance of the Iron and Steel Industry to Australia," referred to the company's plans for expansion at Whyalla in these terms:—

The Broken Hill Proprietary Company is now planning a development of peculiar significance to South Australia, namely the establishment of a steelworks at Whyalla, thus further aiding the scheme of decentralization. When the Newcastle steelworks were established it took approximately 1½ tons of ore and three tons of coal to make a ton of finished steel. Obviously, the economics were in the direction of taking the ore to the coal. In the intervening 30 years tremendous strides have been made in the art of fuel conservation and nowadays an Australian steelworks takes about 1½ tons of ore and 1½ tons of coal to make a ton of finished steel. The economic situation has therefore changed and it becomes a practical proposition to carry the coal to the ore under some circumstances.

This Whyalla development will involve the erection of coke ovens, open hearth facilities and rolling mills—in fact, a completely integrated steelworks. The nucleus already exists in the wharf facilities, blast furnace and machine shops and with a large clear area of land available there is the opportunity to lay out a fine modern plant. Before the works can be built it will be necessary to conduct negotiations with the South Australian Government for further supplies of fresh water. When the Indenture Bill came before Parliament the then Premier (the Hon. R. L., now Sir Richard, Butler) led the House to believe that as a result of the negotiations over iron ore a steelworks would ultimately be established, and the members of Parliament at that time undoubtedly accepted those assurances and acted accordingly. Commenting upon the Indenture Act the Director of Mines, in his 1953 report, was constrained to use these strong words:—

The facts clearly show that a company has never received so much for so little for so long from such a valuable natural resource essential to social existence and well-being. The essential criticism is that the Act gives special privileges to a favoured party. No other mining company in Australia has sought or received special privileges of the type set out in the Broken Hill Proprietary Company's Indenture Act. For example, the Act makes no provision for the exploitation of the iron ore being subject to control and to continue its adjustment to social convenience. It is the function of a Government, however, to effect regulations and procedures in accordance with

the requirements of the time. The ordinary Mining Acts of the States are the instruments which permit of adjustment from time to time.

The Indenture Act provided under section 3 that the Public Works Committee should inquire into the question of a water supply for the northern areas and Whyalla. One of the provisions was:—

In framing its recommendations the said committee shall have regard to the possibility that a supply of water may be required at or near Whyalla for the purpose of enabling the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited to establish and operate coke oven plant and other works for the production of steel as mentioned in clause 13 of the Indenture.

It is impossible to imagine that the people concerned in those negotiations were not all confident that a steelworks would be established. After taking evidence the Public Works Committee stated that although the company cautiously refrained from giving the committee a definite undertaking that steelworks would be established in the near future at Whyalla, the committee felt that the company's programme of expansion there and its guarantee to take and pay for sufficient water for a steelworks justified it in recommending the adoption of the major scheme. A number of minor schemes were considered, but the committee was satisfied to recommend the major scheme in the best interests of the State. What is more, in doing so, it fitted in with the Commonwealth's requirements in that direction. This brief outline clearly indicates the necessity for inquiry as provided in paragraph (4) of the motion.

Paragraph (5) draws attention to the recommendations of the Director of Mines and the resolution carried by this House in 1953 expressing the opinion that steelworks should be established at Whyalla. The commission is to inquire what action, if any, the Government has taken to give effect to these recommendations. Since 1950 the Director of Mines, Mr. Dickinson, has added special appendices to his reports drawing particular attention to the danger of exhausting our higher grade iron ore resources in the Middleback Ranges and the necessity for setting up a steelworks at Whyalla as soon as possible. He has made comprehensive surveys of the whole position in Australia relating to the need for steel, the supplies of iron ore available and every other aspect of the question. Those surveys have never been challenged and as the years have passed his reports have revealed conclusively that the matter is becoming progressively more urgent. If these reports are being

ignored we should know why, and, if not, what action the Government is taking to put these recommendations into effect.

Finally, it is necessary—as set out in paragraph (6)—for the commission to recommend what action, if any, Parliament or the Government should take to encourage overseas interests to establish steelworks in South Australia. It has been claimed that there is insufficient money in Australia to finance a steelworks of this kind, but it should be stressed that during the last five years we have paid sufficient premiums in respect of imported steel to have met the cost of establishing a steelworks of sufficient capacity to meet current demands.

Mr. Brookman—How much would a steelworks cost?

Mr. LOVEDAY—We have paid, over and above what we would have paid for home-produced steel, £100,000,000 in the last five years. It is estimated that it would cost about that sum to establish a steelworks capable of producing 1,000,000 ingot tons per annum.

Mr. Brookman—Do you think a private steelworks could be persuaded to establish there?

Mr. LOVEDAY—There seems to be no reason why a private steelworks should not be established on that basis in view of the particularly low cost of raw materials in Australia in relation to overseas costs, and, as I previously mentioned, apparently French and American firms are already nibbling at the idea of establishing in New South Wales.

Mr. Brookman—Even if we break our agreement with the B.H.P. Company?

Mr. LOVEDAY—That is a matter for inquiry by the commission. The commission would examine all aspects to see what action is justified.

Mr. Brookman—What security would you offer an overseas firm?

Mr. LOVEDAY—The commission would be quite capable of answering that question after investigating the matter thoroughly. The last report of the Director of Mines deals comprehensively with the question of finance in relation to a new steelworks and the present price of Australian-produced steel in relation to costs. It also throws a light on the way the Broken Hill Pty. Coy. is now financing its operations. It is an important report because it removes a number of misconceptions in regard to those

matters, and I will quote extensively from it. The Director said:—

Whilst resources and labour are available, the shortage of local capital funds is currently the stumbling block to the rapid development of basic manufacturing industries and essential public services. The expansion of the steel industry and in particular, the establishment of a new steel centre, is held up essentially through lack of capital. Before dealing specifically with this problem of capital funds for steel, it is appropriate to express a principle which must necessarily be the basis of any solution to this problem.

For Australia's evolution to an advanced manufacturing and commercial life, heavy investments are needed for the establishment of an efficient and permanent industrial mechanism. The fact is often overlooked that, no matter how rich natural resources available for specific projects may be, substantial development generally requires an excess of expenditure over earnings for a considerable period. The remuneration must therefore largely await the maturity and possible success of development projects. In this way the industrial development of Australia requires the investment of labour and capital at a rate in excess of that required for the maintenance of present industrial and living standards. The source of finance and labour for this development is obvious. It cannot be found completely within Australia and must come from abroad, preferably from British Commonwealth countries, so that the control of new major developments can remain essentially within the Commonwealth. Both investment capital and long term loans from abroad should be sought in the firm belief that the potential exchange earnings will be substantial.

Metals will always find world markets and particularly favourable markets can be expected for steel and steel products in many countries of the world. The repayment of loans can be confidently anticipated by virtue of the outstanding advantages that the steel industry enjoys and will continue to enjoy in Australia.

To date Australian capital resources have been largely used to finance the expansion programmes of the Broken Hill Pty. Coy. Ltd. In contrast to overseas major steel producing companies, which have received funds from Governments to maintain a rate of expansion commensurate with their countries' needs, the Broken Hill Pty. Coy.'s funds have come almost entirely from the Australian public without any governmental loans. This achievement reflects great credit on the company, but since the war, there has been an ever-increasing shortage of steel. As time goes on, it is becoming more and more obvious that further funds are not forthcoming in anything like the amounts needed for the country's essential steel needs. It should not be assumed that there is a lack of capital in Australia for steel production, but rather that the fiscal policy of the Broken Hill Pty. Coy. is still geared to the resources and dictates of its few major shareholders. Because of this, its capital raisings have been relatively small and for the most part determined by the ability of these major shareholders to subscribe and

retain their equity. A change of policy could allow much larger public subscriptions and also Government financial assistance for the greater development of steel production.

The paid-up capital of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company is now £28.3 millions, an increase of approximately £16 millions over the last 10 years. This increase is exceedingly small compared with the cost of the expansion programme that has been in progress over these years. The continuous strip-mill alone has cost £50,000,000 to date and current construction activity is costing over £5,000,000 per annum. The published reports of the company show the following trend of capital growth, and declared profits (Table V). They do not, however, reveal the earnings of the company, operating costs and other costs and profits which are vital to any understanding of the fiscal policy of the company. The capitalization cost of the company per ingot ton cannot be appraised. For example, the source of the funds and the method of capitalization of the £50-£60 million hot continuous strip-mill at Port Kembla cannot be deduced from the schedule (Table V) or the issued reports of the company.

Reference, however, to the price index for steel and actual production cost (see Fig. 2) clearly reveals that the price of steel has advanced in the last five years out of all proportion to costs. It is obvious, therefore, that the source of the bulk of the funds now being used by the company to build new productive capacity are coming from undistributed profits and short-term loans. Only minor amounts are being provided from new capital raisings. Returns to shareholders are thus limited to a much smaller proportion of the total earnings and profits.

Up till five years ago, the incredibly low selling price of Australian steel was a feature of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company's operations. Although maintaining a complete monopolistic control over all the known high grade ore deposits in Australia, the company wisely maintained a policy of not advancing prices for many years, believing that they were sufficient to yield a fair return on capital and maintain the company's properties in satisfactory physical condition. During the war years, price control did ensure the continuation of this policy, and was not in conflict with the pre-war declared policy of the company. The abnormal price increases have come in post-war years as the solution to the problem of capital finance for its vast development schemes.

The relatively small amount of money obtained by public subscription compared with that being provided from undistributed profits and private loans for the company's developmental schemes, clearly shows that the fiscal policy of the company is still essentially the retention of the present major shareholders equity. Having previously established an arbitrary control of steel production in Australia, it was simple to obtain these funds largely from uncontrolled monopoly profits.

The graphs of cost versus price clearly show the result. Whatever merit the B.H.P. Company deserves in pursuing a vigorous

expansion programme for increased steel production it is obvious that its fiscal policy is detrimental to the country's economic strength. The major capital for its development programmes should come largely from public subscriptions and Government loans, not from profits concealed, undistributed or otherwise. There is little doubt that a detailed record of the total sales and operating costs of the industry would reveal the ability of the company to obtain the bulk of its vast capital requirements from the public, and permit low prices for steel to be one of the basic advantages of our industrial life. In this regard United States Steel Company sets an outstanding example. No individual in United States Steel owns as much as three-tenths of 1 per cent of either the outstanding or preferred stock . . . Whilst considerable additional capital would undoubtedly be forthcoming from the Australian public for the expansion programmes of the B.H.P. Co. Ltd. if the Australian public was given a much greater opportunity to subscribe, the expansion now required would appear to need additional funds.

Further on in his report, in relation to increasing steel prices, he said the position in Australia was particularly important having in mind that steel is used for almost everything in the modern economy. He continued:—

In most overseas countries steel prices have increased only moderately in spite of higher operating costs. In Australia the reverse has been experienced. The price of steel has risen substantially in relation to a relatively small increase in production costs. To those unfamiliar with the steel industry this statement would appear to be incorrect. However, when it is known that the actual cost of steel making is chiefly determined by the raw material assembly costs which make up 80 to 90 per cent of the cost of ingot steel, and that these costs have shown only relatively small increases over the years, it can be accepted as a truism. Additionally, the growth of the Australian steel industry has benefited cost-wise from enlarged capacities and improved efficiency in the steel-making processes. Other costs, notably distribution costs of products are higher, but not sufficiently great to justify the substantial price increases on operating cost factors alone . . . Now that the prices of Australian steel are being fixed more on the basis of overseas prices without regard to cost it would seem desirable to institute some form of price control to ensure that steel prices are always reasonable and in keeping with the actual costs, not capital costs, of production. Australia's manufacturing future, especially in the export field, depends very much on the preservation of a low price steel industry. I do not think anyone will quarrel with Mr. Dickinson's statements about Australia's future steel requirements. In Great Britain in 1953 the Conservative Government found it necessary to establish an iron and steel board, the purpose of which was to exercise general

supervision over the iron and steel industry with a view to promoting efficiency, acting in the best economic interests of the country, and supplying adequate steel under competitive conditions. The board had the responsibility of ensuring that the industry's programme was in line with national requirements and the board was empowered, though not compelled, to fix maximum prices at which iron and steel products could be sold within the United Kingdom. On this matter Mr. Dickinson said:—

This experience in the United Kingdom with a highly competitive industry clearly emphasizes the need now for a similar board in Australia to deal with Australia's requirements and developments in steel, at least while a complete steel monopoly exists.

Summing up my reasons for the need for the appointment of a Royal Commission, I recapitulate the following as making the step imperative. First, there is the rapid exhaustion of the State's most valuable high grade iron ore resources and their export to New South Wales. Secondly, steps are being taken by the company to speed up still further the deliveries of ore to Whyalla and their export to New South Wales. Thirdly, there is the failure of the company to include provision for steelworks at Whyalla in its recent £100,000,000 programme. Fourthly, there is the inadequacy of steel-making capacity in Australia, coupled with the fact that there is no prospect of the demand being met by any known plans of the company for future development. It is not necessary to deal with the evidence that shows conclusively that we need steel urgently in Australia, nor with the question of the site of steelworks. These matters are adequately covered in the report of the Director of Mines and they have been dealt with exhaustively in this place in past debates.

Mr. Shannon—Does he mention Whyalla? I think he mentioned Port Adelaide.

Mr. LOVEDAY—He mentioned Whyalla, and even Adelaide. I suggest that the honourable member read the report. The House is undoubtedly convinced of the desirability of steelworks being established at Whyalla because it has already expressed itself in that direction. The immediate need is to get action whilst there is still sufficient high grade iron ore in the Middleback Ranges upon which to base new steelworks. In other words, we need steelworks that can be based on lower production costs associated with high grade iron ore. There is no question associated with the present and future development of the

State that is more important at present. It affects every activity in the State. Almost everything we buy is connected with steel directly or indirectly. Every aspect of our life is intimately associated with it. Further delay and procrastination in this matter could be fatal to our hopes of getting steelworks in South Australia. The failure to get works established must retard development because of the insufficiency of home-made steel and the unnecessary diversion of funds in the purchase of imported steel. The motion has the full support of members on this side and I move it because the matter concerns my electorate. I trust it will receive close consideration and the full support that it deserves.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD secured the adjournment of the debate.

COURSING RESTRICTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 26. Page 736.)

Mr. TAPPING (Semaphore)—I wholeheartedly support the Bill because it will give to people and organizations the right to conduct coursing with the aid of a "tin hare." The Bill is not contentious because it contains no gambling provisions. In fact, new section 3b makes it clear that totalizer facilities and bookmakers are precluded from operating. The matter of cruelty was raised by the secretary of the R.S.P.C.A. in a letter to the *Advertiser* published on October 1. An extract from Mr. Colley's letter is as follows:—

... It (the Association) believes that the legalizing of "tin hare" racing will bring about an increased use of live bait in the form of small animals to "blood" grey hounds in training.

All members know that for some time both hares and rabbits have been in short supply. Consequently, dogs now being trained are only enjoying a small percentage of the live bait referred to by Mr. Colley. The shortage of rabbits in this State is so great that only last week in some shops rabbits were being sold for 5s. and 6s. each. A few weeks ago I had the pleasure of spending a few hours at a Waterloo Cup coursing meeting. I saw 30 courses and at the end of the day only two hares had been killed. They did not suffer at all because they died quickly. I remind members that there are many avenues of cruelty never dealt with by the R.S.P.C.A. For instance, fishermen know that fish are often thrown on to the deck of a boat, a jetty or a wharf to remain there for two or three hours before dying. That is undoubtedly

cruelty if cruelty is to be considered in its extreme sense. In a three-mile steeplechase an unfit horse may be forced by whip and spur to negotiate an obstacle, but apparently the society has overlooked that in considering cruelty.

Mr. Jenkins—It is inconsistent.

Mr. TAPPING—Yes. Last Monday evening when listening to a radio broadcast I heard that pigeons were to be released at Alice Springs to fly to Adelaide—a distance of 1,000 miles. That may be deemed a cruel practice because a bird released to fly that distance must fly beyond the limits of its natural endurance, and it is a well known fact that many homing birds are lost in flight. The cruelty mentioned by the society does not exist in the sport covered by this legislation.

Coursing could be considered a poor man's sport. It is indulged in by the man on meagre wages as well as the rich man, and I consider that it is wrong to allow racing and trotting clubs to conduct meetings with betting facilities and at the same time to take away from a certain organization the right to conduct tin hare racing without betting facilities. The sponsor of the Bill does not intend that betting facilities shall be provided at tin hare meetings. Members should support the Bill because it is a step in the right direction. With the mechanical hare the organization will have greater patronage and income. This sport should be considered an industry because we are often told in this place that racing and trotting are industries, and that is true. If tin hare racing can be popularized by Parliament's passing this Bill, breeders will enjoy a better price for their dogs and buyers from other States will buy South Australian dogs whereas they will not do so at present simply because our dogs are not raised under conditions comparable with those in other States.

The Bill is not contentious for gambling will have no part in this sport. Further, cruelty does not exist in tin hare racing. If any member thinks that it does, let him remember what I said about fishing.

Mr. Quirke—What about the steel trapping of rabbits?

Mr. TAPPING—Yes, that method often results in a lingering death for the rabbit, yet I have heard no complaints from the R.S.P.C.A. about it. Further, the society has not complained about myxomatosis, yet a rabbit may take days and perhaps weeks to die from the virus, and surely it suffers during that time. For the reasons I have given I support the Bill.

Mr. HEATH (Wallaroo)—I, too, support the Bill because I feel that those people interested in coursing should be granted the same facilities as are extended to other sections of the community. Mr. Colley (Secretary of the R.S.P.C.A.) is reported in yesterday's *Advertiser* as having said that New South Wales is the only State that permits the use of a mechanical hare, but that is not true, for at Sandown Park in Victoria £80,000 was recently spent on a tin hare coursing ground. The sport is also in vogue at Ballarat, and there are practice courses at Cheltenham Park and Geelong in Victoria.

Coursing is one of the oldest sports in the British Empire. Years ago plumbton races were permitted in South Australia, but as a result of a hullabaloo over alleged cruelty to dumb animals the sport was unfortunately curtailed. In those days six coursing clubs each conducted five meetings a year, and the average killing was less than 2 per cent at each meeting. I have been connected with sport in this State for the past 35 years and can speak from experience. The plumbton hare was boxed, treated and fed with oats, lettuce leaves and lucerne so that the promoters were assured that it was fit to race in competition with the dogs. It was given a 75 yards start before the slipper released the pair of dogs, and it was provided with an escape at the end of the 600 yard run. In open coursing, however, the dogs are released on to a hare that is found at the squat in a paddock and the hare has to find a place to escape or it is killed. Under usual conditions on fallow land the damp earth clings to the feet of the hare and it cannot turn. It is in turning that the art of gaming lies. The greyhound dog is one of the most likeable animals one could wish for. Thousands of these dogs are kept as domestic pets and provide excellent guards as well as fine house dogs.

I appreciate the statements of the member for Semaphore (Mr. Tapping) concerning the alleged cruelty of the sport. The R.S.P.C.A. has complained about the bleeding of the dogs, but nobody who knows anything about conditioning a greyhound would blood a dog on a rabbit, because immediately the rabbit is taken into captivity it will not run but merely lies on the ground and the dog picks it up and kills it instantly. After this has occurred a few times the dog will become cunning and refuse to chase the rabbit. At Harold Park in New South Wales tin hare racing is a fine sight and equals night trotting and galloping as a spectacle. Dogs are

brought from Victoria and other parts of New South Wales to race there, and the spectacle of a brace of dogs going over a hurdle is something for the eye to see.

Queensland and Western Australia have never had coursing, but at Dunedin in New Zealand plumbtons and coursing are carried on. Tasmania, New South Wales and South Australia have coursing meetings. The R.S.P.C.A. has never objected to the shooting of rabbits, but any man can shoot at a rabbit and trust to luck how severely he wounds it. How cruel is the spotlight shooting of hares where the ray from the headlight blinds the animal and prevents its moving! A bird shooter may hit the wing of a bird and it is crippled for ever; surely that may be considered as cruel.

Only one case of cruelty in connection with tin hare racing has been brought before the courts and that was in Victoria eight years ago when a person was prosecuted for using a possum as a lure, but there is no suggestion that that would happen here because such a practice might damage the dog and make it cunning. This sport has resulted in increased incomes for working men who have been able to train dogs at little cost. Hundreds of dogs have been trained in Moonta; indeed, some of the best-formed dogs in Australia have come from that district and have been sold at prices ranging from £50 to £150 to purchasers from New South Wales. Because of the inability of local breeders to educate the dogs properly, however, those sales have fallen off. In an effort to prevent this falling off the services of a lad have been used to draw a hare on a tape. Coursing has been conducted at Waterloo Corner and Port Pirie. For years one of the finest greyhound studs in this State exported thousands of pounds worth of dogs, but today that trade has ceased because the stud master cannot guarantee that his dogs will chase the mechanical lure. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill, for Parliament is justified in granting this request of persons interested in coursing. The Bill is in accordance with the rights of man in this State, and therefore we should pass it.

Mr. JENNINGS secured the adjournment of the debate.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT.

The SPEAKER laid on the table the Auditor-General's report for the financial year ended June 30, 1956.

Ordered to be printed.

INDUSTRIAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 26. Page 745.)

Mr. STEPHENS (Port Adelaide)—It is only just that the Bill be passed. I was one of the first persons interested in settling disputes by conciliation and arbitration, and I regret that there has not been more conciliation and less arbitration because I often feel, after reading reports of cases that have been brought before the court, that arbitration is on its way out. I believe it has outlived its usefulness, and the penalty clauses are spiteful. They do no good, but simply drive men away from arbitration. If representatives of employers and employees meet in conference and come to an agreement the terms of the agreement are generally observed. We do not find either side looking for technicalities to escape its provisions, which is often the case with Industrial Court awards.

Industrial boards have been established under the Code. They issue determinations, and either side may appeal to the court. I sometimes appeared before the court on appeals, or to get an interpretation of determinations. I was the first layman to conduct a case in the State Industrial Court, and the late Mr. Angas Parsons opposed me at that hearing, but we got on very well together. The case arose from the action of some employers, who caused no end of trouble. In the Commonwealth Arbitration Court the procedure is different from that in the State Court, for in the former court, until it makes a common rule applicable to the whole industry, the award covers only the members of the union applying for an award. Therefore, we often had to get awards from both Federal and State Courts.

If a number of employees, in opposition to their union officials or the decision of a meeting, decided to go on strike they could be prosecuted under the penalty provisions, and so could the secretary or president of the union even though they had done more than anyone else to prevent the strike. That reduces the value of arbitration. If an employee refuses to work under a Court award he may be prosecuted, and although the penalty provisions also apply to employers it is much more difficult to prove a case against them. I do not think any member can remember an employer being prosecuted successfully for causing a lock-out. Recently members have expressed their concern about the high price of potatoes. A few years ago growers at Mount Gambier said they would not dig potatoes and supply

them to the market because it did not pay them. On the other hand, if an employee said he would not work at award rates and refused to work he would be prosecuted.

If an employer did not want to pay the award wages he might say, "I will close my business or transfer it to another firm that has not been cited before the court and is therefore not covered by the award." The penalty clauses are too one-sided; they penalize the employee, but not the employer. Therefore, members on this side of the House want them deleted from the Code, for they are doing more harm than good. We cannot have harmony in industry until these obnoxious provisions have been repealed. I was associated with the Drivers' Union for many years, and one firm that was covered by the award said it would not pay the award rates and that it did not care what the Arbitration Court said about it. It decided to hand over its horses and vehicles to an employee and make a contract with him at so much per ton or day. The employee agreed to the conditions, and because he had not been cited before the court he did not have to pay the wages prescribed. Actually, the action of the firm amounted to a lockout.

When I was secretary of the Drivers' Union I was called in to settle many disputes on matters not covered in the award, or perhaps the interpretation of the award was in question. I had to wait on some of the biggest carrying firms in Port Adelaide, such as Graves, Gibbs, Rofe and Company, and Willsmore's. Often I was able to get the men to go back to work when they were on strike and have the dispute settled satisfactorily, but I would not try to do that today because of the penalty provisions in the Code. If I went near the premises my action could be construed as trying to get the men to continue the strike. Many years ago all the employees of John Gibb & Sons, at Port Adelaide, came out on strike on a Monday morning. I was home recuperating from an accident, and my doctor said I was not to leave home. The employer and the chairman of the union came to see me and asked that I visit the premises and get the men to return to work. I asked them to tell the employees to go back to work and that I would get the dispute settled in a few days. However, I had to see the men, and they went back to work within an hour, but I would not blame any union secretary for not trying to settle such a dispute today, for he could be prosecuted under the Code.

Sometimes men go on strike against the wishes of the union. Some of them may not be union members, but if a union official was seen near them he could be prosecuted. On the other hand, the employer has no such fears. Notwithstanding the provisions of an award, an employer may say to his men on pay day, "I am giving you a week's notice. I will not have enough work for you next week." Employers can do all manner of things and the employees are powerless. That is one reason why Australian workers are losing interest in arbitration. About the time I entered Parliament I was the oldest—in terms of years of service—union secretary in Australia. I have only once advocated a strike and on that occasion persuaded the employees of a carrying firm, which had branches in Port Adelaide and Adelaide, to strike for improved conditions. Other carriers did not assist the employer concerned because they recognized the justification for the strike. After four days the men returned to work. The employer met all their demands and paid their full wages for the period of the strike.

There should be no pinpricking as is happening all the time between shipping companies and waterside workers. The companies are wilfully goading the men into striking. I agree with arbitration, but employees should not have the whip held over them. They should not be told that if they do not do certain things they will be gaoled. At present a man can be fined and gaoled and if, while in gaol, he cannot pay the fine his goods and chattels can be taken from his home. This is most vicious legislation and in the interests of justice the penal clauses should be removed. While they remain there will always be trouble.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra)—I cannot support the Bill. Striking out the penal clauses would be tantamount to striking out the Industrial Code. That is a sweeping statement, but is perfectly correct. All law is backed by force. If law cannot be backed by force based on Constitutional authority, it is senseless our enacting legislation. If the law requires a bicycle to be equipped with lights at night and there is no penalty for not having lights there is no sense in making such a law. Everyone will admit that the member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) has an extremely wide and valuable knowledge of the operations of the Industrial Code and if what he said about the Plasterers' Case is correct—and there is no reason to doubt him—there is room for

improving the legislation to remove undue harshness or foolishness. However, there is no necessity to remove the penal clauses. I would be prepared to consider amendments to those clauses, but I do not agree with excising the power to enforce law. If the provisions can be made less drastic and more in keeping with modern practice that should be done.

Mr. FRED WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

FEDERAL CONSTITUTION.

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr. O'Halloran—

That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that the Premier should approach the Premiers of the other States with a view to arranging for the submission to the Commonwealth Government of a joint request by the Premiers of all the States for the representation of each State, on the basis of one representative of the Government and one representative of the Opposition, on the Constitution Committee now considering proposed amendments to the Federal Constitution.

(Continued from September 26. Page 751.)

Mr. TAPPING (Semaphore)—I support the motion which is aimed at enabling the States to make submissions to the committee which is now meeting in Canberra to consider amendments to the Federal Constitution. That committee has already sought legal information and opinions from leading South Australian lawyers who have special knowledge of Constitutional law. Because of that move into South Australia by the committee, this motion has gained significance and importance. I believe the committee would welcome submissions from Governments and Oppositions in the various States. After all, the Commonwealth belongs to all Australian people and each State should have an opportunity of making submissions to the committee. I think we are all agreed that the Constitution should be altered in some respects.

The Premier and the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) opposed the motion but admitted that there were apparent weaknesses in the Constitution. They referred to the Senate elections. I agree that any system that assures the return of five members to the Senate is unsound. The Party gaining the most votes in a Senate election automatically returns three members and two members—the first and second on the ballot paper—are returned from the opposing Party. It is only human nature that if a person knows

he is sitting pretty on the ballot paper his ambition and incentive are lessened. The present method of conducting Senate elections is most unsatisfactory and should be altered.

The Premier and Mr. Millhouse also referred to the payments the States received from the Federal Government from uniform taxation. Whilst I agree with uniform taxation, I am prepared to concede that the payments, particularly to the minor States, are not in keeping with their requirements. That matter could also be discussed before the Constitution Committee. It has frequently been suggested that everything the Labor Party in this Chamber introduces is Party political and unsound. I ask the Government to accept this motion as an earnest desire to achieve something in the State's interests. It is sound and is based on a spirit of co-operation. The Liberal Party has governed in South Australia for the last 23 years and, as a result of the system under which our Parliamentary elections are conducted, the Labor Party has been on the outer. Unless the system is altered Labor may still be on the outer for years to come. Because of that the Government could heed some of our attempts to alter legislation or accept motions that we move. Every proposal of ours is opposed by the Government because it is regarded as party-political. There would be two representatives, one Government and one Opposition, on the committee and they could discuss possible changes in the Constitution. The recommendations would be worthwhile and could be further considered.

Federation was inaugurated in 1901 when the population of Australia was 3,770,000; today it is 9,400,000. It is apparent that in the last 55 years many changes have occurred in Australia. Circumstances are different today but the Constitution has not been amended to any extent. It must be completely overhauled at the earliest opportunity. Mr. O'Halloran said that since 1901 Australia has had 26 referendums and that only four had been successful. On each occasion it was apparent that the two Parties agreed on the approach to the nation. Two of the referendums dealt with State debts and the people agreed with the views held by the two Parties. The third and fourth referendums dealt with social services and the Senate. Where the referendums were defeated the views of the two Parties were different, which caused confusion amongst the voters. The committee, after deliberation, could bring forward a united effort and tell the people of Australia in which way the Constitution should be

amended. If there were agreement in this way there would be every chance of a referendum being successful.

In 1942 a conference of representatives of the various States was held in Canberra. South Australian's representatives were the Hon. S. W. Jeffries for the Government and the Hon. R. S. Richards for the Opposition. The conference agreed that certain powers held by the States should be transferred to the Commonwealth so that the war could be conducted without a hitch. If there can be a united front in war-time it should be possible in peace. War is important, but peace is just as important for after the war there are always many problems to solve. The greatest we have today is inflation. Because of the war-time powers possessed by the Commonwealth Government we were not troubled with inflation. The Commonwealth was able to control profits and wages and there was more economic stability than there is now. Because of the lack of the power today the value of the pound has deteriorated to about one-third of what it was in those days. Control in several directions is necessary. I will refer to banking, price control and divorce laws. It is said generally, and I agree, that finance is the life blood of a nation. If finance is wrong the nation does not function as it should. The finances of the country were controlled during the war and they should be controlled now.

In 1945 the Commonwealth Parliament passed banking legislation. The then Labor Government brought it down to control banks, restrict the credit issued by private banks and control payments into the Commonwealth Bank. These matters were covered by sections 18 to 22. There was also a section that controlled bank withdrawals and deposits, which could be made only with the consent of the Commonwealth Bank. It was also provided that councils throughout Australia were bound to deposit money with the Commonwealth Bank. Members will recall that the Bill was questioned in the High Court by the Melbourne City Council and the appeal was successful, which invalidated the legislation. The Prime Minister of the day, Mr. Chifley, was convinced that the only way to control the nation successfully was to control banking by means of legislation or regulation. A book entitled *Things Worth Fighting For* contains speeches by Mr. Chifley, and, dealing with bank nationalization in one speech, he said:—

... the Government is convinced that, because the problems of the post-war period of

unemployment, of development, of trade, are of such magnitude and involve such serious consequences, the Government must accept responsibility for the economic condition of the nation and must have complete powers over banking policy to assist it in maintaining the national economic health and prosperity. The Commonwealth Government is committed to a policy of full employment and the maintenance of economic and financial stability. During the war and since its completion the Australian economy has been kept more stable than that of any other country in the world.

He was convinced that his views were sound and he proceeded to nationalize the banks, making the Commonwealth Bank the central Bank. He said also:—

Because we had a powerful central bank in 1942 the Labor Government of the day was able to take steps under the National Security Regulations to employ it as an instrument of government in the interests of national welfare instead of being forced to obey the dictates of private financial interests.

Before the Commonwealth Government of the day proceeded to bring down this legislation to nationalize banks the opinions of the best Constitutional men in the Commonwealth, including Dr. Evatt, were sought. These people were convinced that Parliament was wise in bringing down legislation to control the banking methods of Australia. An appeal was made to the High Court but disallowed. Then an appeal was made to the Privy Council and that was disallowed. Since that time, however, the economic position has deteriorated and it is imperative for all Australian Parliaments to do something to arrest inflation. Mr. Chifley also said that the Government in which Sir Earle Page was Treasurer had to pay 5½ per cent on Treasury Bills. In the war-time set-up the Labor Government made similar transactions at 1 per cent, which proved the worth of the Commonwealth Bank. This is a matter that could be discussed by the committee so that the States would have a voice on the subject. Under the present set-up they have none.

History tells us that in 1948 the people of Australia made a tragic mistake when they turned down the referendum dealing with price control. Then the two Parties had different ideas on the subject. The Labor Party advocated that the people should vote for it whereas the Liberal Party had other views. Some of the Premiers said that the States could not handle the matter properly. Our Premier will now agree that whilst we have some form of price control in this State it is not working as it should do. Since that referendum there

has been chaos in price control. Last week the New South Wales Government decided to discontinue State control of prices, but supported Commonwealth control. As soon as the decision was made haircuts in Sydney increased from 3s. 9d. to 5s. Immediately there is no control prices skyrocket. If we are sincere in our desire to curb inflation, the committee could no doubt be convinced that price control by the Federal Government is essential. When that Government had the power to exercise price control, its legislation was a great success. It was essential during the war period, and it is just as essential now because of our financial trouble.

Over the years members have spoken about the need for uniform Federal divorce laws. Each State has a different approach to this matter. If people involved in litigation move into other States, complications occur. If the people had their way I know they would vote for uniform legislation, and the legal profession favours it. These matters could all be dealt with by the committee. The Constitution was framed 55 years ago, and since then the population has increased 2½ times. There has also been a change of economic conditions. All such matters should be considered by this committee. It is the sincere desire of members of my party to have the Constitution amended for the sake of Australia and Australians, not to make political capital out of this matter. I support the motion.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I thank members for the interest they have shown in this debate, even though in some cases it was only a passing interest, as was very evident from the fact that some statements by those who intend to oppose the motion were not related to the arguments advanced in favour. It seems that if they had thought of this first it would have been an excellent proposal, but as the Opposition thought of it first they feel it should be defeated, and perhaps at some later stage, if the Opposition has been sufficiently discouraged, they might be able to bring in some similar move. I have not had time to consider some of the remarks made by those who opposed the motion, and so that I might do so I ask leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted and debate adjourned.

LAW OF PROPERTY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

THE BUDGET.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from October 2. Page 832.)

Legislative Council, £10,094.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—I said at the outset that I intended to refer to statements made by the *Melbourne Herald's* economist on July 7, and to articles appearing in the *I.P.A. Review* and *Commonwealth Bank Report*. Mr. Kemp, the director of the Institute of Public Affairs, stated recently:—

Australia is suffering more than any English speaking country from inflation.

The ordinary citizen, particularly the housewife, knows this only too well. This week the price of eggs dropped by 4d. a dozen, but that is only one fleeting bright spot, and it is only seasonal in any case. The *I.P.A. Review* stated that the inflation spiral, based on the percentage increase on retail prices since 1939, puts Australia right on top with 178 per cent. The figures for other countries are:—The United Kingdom, 154 per cent; Eire, 134 per cent; New Zealand, 104 per cent; South Africa, 103 per cent; the United States 90 per cent; and Canada 80 per cent.

When the war ended, the Labor Government then in office had ensured that the increase in prices was the lowest of the English-speaking countries. I can remember articles in the press comparing the prices of beef in Australia and America, but now Australian inflation is the highest in the world. This inflation, according to the Institute of Public Affairs, has caused near tragedy for many on fixed incomes and has lowered standards of living for thousands more. The following table shows how prices have increased since 1939:—

	1939.		1949.		1956.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Bread (2 lb. loaf delivered)	0	5½	0	7½	1	2
Tea (lb.)	2	3½	2	9	6	6
Sugar (lb.)	0	4½	0	5	0	10
Jam (plum, 24oz. tin)	0	8	1	4½	2	4
Peaches (30oz. tin)	0	9½	1	6½	3	4
Potatoes (lb.)	0	2½	0	3½	1	0
Soap (lb. bar)	0	6½	0	10	1	4½
Butter (lb.)	1	7	2	2	4	6½
Bacon (middle rashers, lb.)	1	5½	3	2½	6	2
Milk (pint)	0	3	0	5	0	8½
Beef, sirloin (controlled)	0	9	1	5	2	11
Sausages	0	5½	0	10	1	6
Corned beef, silverside	0	9	1	5	3	0
Mutton, leg (controlled)	0	7½	1	1	1	11
Chops, leg	0	8½	1	1½	2	0
Pork, leg	0	11½	2	3	5	6

The increase in the price of tea was greatly affected by the removal of subsidies. I know that overseas prices have a big effect, but they can be dealt with by subsidies. During the war price control was administered by a sympathetic Labor Government, but the Government that followed it wanted only to look after the interests of the profiteers. That has been proved by the greater increase in prices since 1949. Members will appreciate from the figures in the table the great increase that has taken place in the prices of items in the C series index since 1939, particularly since 1949 when the Menzies-Fadden Government assumed office in Canberra. Indeed, much of the increase has taken place in the last three years, during most of which time the basic wage has been frozen in South Australia. It is a well-known axiom that wages chase prices. The Statistician reports on prices of C series items and, even under automatic adjustments, it is three months before wages catch up. The effective pegging of prices would stop the inflationary spiral because prices alone determine the basic wage, but on the other hand the pegging of the basic wage will not stop inflation because wages are not the only factor determining prices. In that respect profits, interest rates and overseas prices also play a part; but the Liberal Party does not want effective price control although it advocates it in order to win the support of electors. We cannot have effective price control under six State administrations. Frank Shaw, the journalist who wrote the article to which I have referred, thoroughly investigated the price structure and deals with other factors that have contributed to the inflationary spiral. He says:—

Take the doctor's bills. Back in 1939, you could see him in his surgery for 7s. 6d. or have him call at your bedside for 10s. 6d. Today the fees are 15s. and £1 respectively. There's your council rates. In the palmy pre-war days, an average suburban rating, on land values, for a 50ft. frontage block was about £3 7s. 6d. This year it was away up to £13 10s. Water and sewerage rates for the same block in 1939 were about £5 10s., but today they are more than double at £11 10s. The sad tale continues with higher chemists' charges, dearer clothing, and a similar movement in haircuts, footwear, tram and train fares, and rents.

In this respect it must be remembered that since this article was written Housing Trust rents have been increased still further. The article continues:—

These are all part and parcel of the cost of living leap which has carried the basic wage from £3 18s. in June, 1939, to £12 1s. today, and which has slumped the value of the £A from 20s. at that time to a relative 7s. today.

On the face of it the basic wage earner is better off with the rate 209 per cent. higher while the inflation rate is only 178, but, let's be realistic. The C series index is no longer a table reflecting current living standards. Electrical appliances like a radiator, washing machine, refrigerator, even the commonplace radio, find no place in the regimen—but who will claim these are luxuries nowadays? There are dozens of other items, accepted as part of our high living standard, which are not recognized as contributing to the rise and fall of the basic wage, but which lift the real cost of living far beyond the fictitious current figure. The prices of many items to which I have referred will be affected by the increased wharfage charges. Frank Shaw refers to a recent public opinion poll that put the real cost of living at £15 rather than the £12 1s. awarded by the court. In answer to the question "Where is it all going to end?", the writer says:—

Not even six State Premiers, the acting Prime Minister, Sir Arthur Fadden, and the cohort of economic advisers can tell us that—as witness the abortive conference in Canberra. They could not reach agreement on uniform price control, wage freezing, profit limiting or, indeed any firm idea put forward as a way of stabilizing the cost spiral.

Frank Shaw then refers to another conference to be held when Mr. Menzies returned to Australia. Mr. Playford probably knows what will be done at the next Premiers' Conference, and I have a shrewd idea that we can expect from it only another Premiers' Plan similar to that produced in the early 1930's. If the Treasurer knows what is ahead as a result of the next Premiers' Conference he will have the opportunity in the Barker by-election campaign to tell the people what to expect, but I suspect that action on the economic position will be delayed until after that by-election. Referring to the economic position in Australia, the 1955-56 report of the Commonwealth Bank states:—

Expanding output, the result of good seasonal conditions, improved farming methods, farm investment in the recent past and continued low rabbit population, was again a feature of rural industries during 1955-56. Livestock numbers were at record levels and new production records were set for many commodities, the most important of which were wool, milk and wheat. The wheat harvest, from a slightly smaller acreage, was substantially greater than the previous year and the yield per acre was the highest ever achieved. Some crops, however, notably sugar cane and dried vine fruits, were adversely affected by unseasonal weather. . . . Shortages of shipping space and high freight costs added to the difficulty of disposing of surplus wheat and unsold stocks at June 30, 1956, were a little higher than 12 months earlier.

Under the heading "Domestic Supplies" the report states:—

Industrial production in Australia during the year was higher than in 1954-55. The volume of imports was slightly lower as a result of the tightening of import restrictions, but this fall was more than offset by the increase in domestic production. . . . Significant increases were recorded in the production of iron and steel, chemicals, paint, food, drink, and newsprint. Production of building fittings and domestic refrigerators was lower than in the preceding year Aggregate demand for goods and services remained high in 1955-56 and was sufficient to absorb the supplies available at higher prices than those ruling in 1954-55.

The report points out that the demand for goods and services remained sufficiently high in 1955-56 to absorb all available supplies at higher prices than obtained during the previous year, but I point out that the living wage was still the same as that received by the worker in 1954-55, so he had to pay higher prices from the same income, which meant that his real income was lower. The report continues:—

Compared with the previous year, retail sales increased in value and volume during 1955-56. The value of sales of all the major commodity groups, excluding motor vehicles, etc., was greater than in 1954-55, but the most marked increases were recorded for sales of food and groceries and hardware. Investment expenditure rose again in 1955-56, both the private and Government sectors sharing the increase. Non-residential building which rose in 1954-55 increased further over the year. Although there was some decline in commencements and completions of dwellings and the work on hand declined during 1955-56, the value of total investment in residential building was about the same as in 1954-55.

The total value was the same merely because costs had increased: the actual number of buildings commenced and completed was less than during the previous year. Referring to employment and prices the report states:—

The greatest increase was recorded in the manufacturing sector, with smaller increases in most other main industrial groups. The increase in building and construction was less than in the previous year, while employment in mining and quarrying fell slightly. Total vacancies declined during the year by over 25,000 and, at the end of June, 1956, amounted to 32,500. There were 31,500 persons registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service at the end of June, 1956, as unemployed and awaiting placement, compared with 19,000 a year earlier. About 7,000 were drawing unemployment benefit compared with 3,000 in June, 1955. With the tightening of the labour market turnover of labour has been reduced. Prices rose slightly during 1955-56. Retail prices

measured by both the Commonwealth Statistician's C series index and his interim retail price index rose by about 6 per cent during the year. In the C series the food and groceries section rose by 10 per cent, rent by 8 per cent, and miscellaneous items by 7 per cent, while clothing prices were fairly stable.

The cost of food in an average worker's home rose by 10 per cent, rent by 8 per cent and miscellaneous items by 7 per cent, but the average overall increase amounted to 6 per cent. Had that been reflected in wages there would have been an increase of 14s. a week in the basic wage, but this was pegged and the worker received nothing until the last week or two of the financial year when he received 10s. a week increase. This matter cannot be mentioned too often to let those in authority know that there is a section of our community which is not receiving a fair deal.

This Government has claimed credit for the present financial position. The Treasurer has slated the Federal Government over the availability of loan money, but this is what he said in his election speech on February 15, and I quote from the *Advertiser* of February 16:—

South Australia was now in a strong position to secure from the limited loan money available within the Commonwealth an adequate share appropriate to its needs. This was the result of prudent policies followed by the Government in the past.

There was a statement by the Treasurer that the policy of his Government was responsible for the present availability of loan money. On other occasions, however, he has severely castigated the Federal Government on the very same subject. With regard to other matters mentioned in the Treasurer's Financial Statement, let me make reference to what he said on February 15:—

The policies already in operation and which we desire to continue have shown themselves to be eminently successful. During the term of my Government, production per head of the population in this State has risen from the lowest in Australia to the highest. By every tangible measure of prosperity South Australians now appear to be more prosperous than the people of any other State.

All I can say is that the people in the other States must be in a very bad position.

The Hon. T. Playford—They are.

Mr. LAWN—We are in a bad position, so the position in the other States must be very bad. The Treasurer in his policy speech went on to say:—

Further, the result of the Government's policy was that under the formula contained in the Constitution South Australia was now

entitled to 14 per cent of the total loan funds available, although on a population basis our share would have been much less. This careful policy enables me to say confidently that the programme I place before you can be successfully financed, and all services the State gives properly maintained.

The Treasurer has been complaining ever since that he is getting only 27 per cent of the taxation which the Federal Government receives from this State, about the availability of loan money, and about the £100,000,000 which the Commonwealth has taken from the people by way of taxation and is lending to the States at full interest rates. Immediately prior to the elections, however, he claimed that the policy of his Government would ensure that all services would be properly maintained. He will tell the people at Mount Gambier on Friday night that they should return the Liberal Country Party candidate whose Government perpetuates all the things that he has been complaining about in this House. He said to the people at Glenelg on November 28 last:—"Return the Liberal Country Party Government, I can get more money out of them than I can the other crowd." Since then he has admitted that we have more unemployed than we have had for many years, and they are coming here from other States as a result of the horror budget. The Treasurer has told us that this trend has become most noticeable since March of this year, which was when the horror budget was delivered by the Federal Government. He will not say that to the people at Mount Gambier on Friday night. but he will say "They are a grand lot; return them because I can get a better deal from them than I can from the Labor Party." Next week he will be back in this House complaining about the raw deal we are getting from the Federal Government. I quote further from the Treasurer's policy speech:—

We have now reached the stage when great benefit is apparent from the developments my Government has inaugurated, but even greater benefits can be achieved if we now seize the opportunities made available to us by our work in the past. Let us not be afraid of prosperity.

I do not know what he means by that, but if what the people are enjoying now can be called "prosperity" I am not happy with it. The Treasurer went on:—

We must not rest on our past achievements. We must go forward. My Government therefore desires a mandate from the people to enable us to continue the work so fruitfully commenced, and to embark upon new enterprises for which our past efforts have laid the foundation.

The Treasurer is thus claiming credit for having laid the foundation of the economic position of this State. It is not for me at this juncture to condemn the present economy, and I will leave it to honourable members to say whether they think it is a good economy or not. Do the members representing primary producers think that primary producers are enjoying prosperity at the present time? I will content myself with saying that the Treasurer has admitted that his Government laid the foundation in past years for our present position.

I now refer to a letter, dated July 30, 1956, which I received from the Australian Journalists' Association. The essential part of that letter reads as follows:—

On May 24 in the House of Assembly, the Premier, Mr. Playford, read a report obtained from Dr. T. A. R. Dinning regarding child migrant Ruta Tomanis, who recently was flown to Germany for medical treatment. The report read, in part " . . . I repeatedly informed the Press that in my opinion the child was not suffering from a brain tumor. In spite of this repeated opinion of mine the press persisted in publishing reports that the child did in fact have a brain tumour." This implies that Dr. Dinning was deliberately misrepresented. The District Committee has made a thorough investigation of this case. It has found that A.J.A. members submitted factual and accurate reports throughout, and that there was no misrepresentation—deliberate or unintentional. The District Committee, while not wishing to become involved in an argument over what was said and what was not said, wishes to emphasize that A.J.A. members do not deliberately report people as having said things they did not say; neither do they deliberately suppress statements—particularly when the statement is of such importance and comes from such an expert source.

I have complied with the request contained in that letter, and will say no more about it.

Metropolitan councils have for some time past been complaining at the amount being levied for Government hospitals, and I noticed in the press this morning that the Municipal Association is still considering the matter. I refer to this question because the Government now proposes to charge patients at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. The ratepayers of the metropolitan area are already making a contribution and it is intended that the amount of rates will be doubled. In 1955-56 rates paid by corporations and district councils to hospitals amounted to £42,229, and the estimated receipts this year are £81,450, which is nearly a 100 per cent increase. I think I will be accurately assessing the position when I say that the £81,450 will be

received in something less than a full year, so that next year the amount received will be more than a 100 per cent increase on that paid by metropolitan councils last year. In addition, the Government expects to receive £186,000 from patients at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, compared with £52,091 last year.

I do not feel that it is right for patients to be charged. If the Government were sincere in its desire to avoid overcrowding, it could apply a means test prior to admission. The Treasurer at one stage said that the charge was being made to relieve the long waiting list, but he changed his tune when the Opposition pointed out that charging patients would not affect the waiting list; people who wanted to go to the Royal Adelaide Hospital would do so because it would not cost them as much as a private hospital. The Premier should agree to the application of the means test prior to their admission, and those covered by the full £21 a week from friendly societies or hospital funds should be advised to seek attention in private hospitals, except where the doctor suggested that they should go to the Royal Adelaide Hospital because of the special circumstances of their cases. Where a man requires an operation and it does not matter particularly whether it is this week or next week, instead of waiting to be admitted to the Royal Adelaide Hospital he should go to a private hospital, and be entitled to the full hospital benefits of £21. Members of the community who are compelled to go to the Royal Adelaide Hospital because they cannot afford to go elsewhere will be forced to pay something. For the sake of the £81,000 which the Government hopes to collect from the metropolitan councils this year I cannot see why it could not eliminate the amount entirely. What is £81,000 compared with a Budget of £65,000,000? I have before me a copy of the annual report of the Superintendent of Mental Institutions (Dr. Birch), which I regret receives very little consideration from members. This is what Dr. Birch had to say:—

It is with pleasure I report that at the end of the year there were 22 fewer patients in the two mental hospitals (14 less at Parkside and eight less at Northfield) than there were at the end of the previous year. This, having regard to the fact that the average annual increase in the two mental hospitals has averaged 71 for the previous nine years, reflects a more satisfactory mental health service for the community.

In explanation, I think the decrease was due to the combined factors of more staff, particularly medical; more provision for the

elderly in other than mental hospitals; and finally, to the satisfactory results from the use of recent drugs such as chlorpromazine.

The Government should give every consideration to the provision of the necessary staff. Year after year I have mentioned in the House that better provision should be provided for elderly people in other than mental hospitals. Because we have not sufficient homes for aged persons many have to receive attention in a mental institution. This is a shame and a disgrace to the State. I urge the Government to do everything possible so that the only persons admitted to a mental institution are those who should be treated in such places. The doctor refers in his report to the Mental Defectives Act as follows:—

Prior to 1913 the statute relating to the care and treatment, by the State, of persons suffering from mental illnesses and mental deficiency, was known as "The Lunatics Act." The patients in the mental hospitals, then known as lunatic asylums, were referred to as lunatics, and treatment was in the main custodial. The new Act of 1913 was indeed an improvement, but it is nevertheless clear that the term "Mental Defectives Act," which statutorily refers to the patients as "Mental Defectives," is both scientifically unsound and aesthetically unpleasant and stigmatising.

It is suggested that in keeping with more modern concepts, the Act should be known as "The Mental Health Services Act" or "The Mental Hygiene Act." As a corollary, the person receiving treatment should no longer be known as "a mental defective." Throughout most of the English speaking world, the term mental defective means a person who is deficient in mental capacity from birth or an early age. By far the greater number of our patients do not come within this meaning.

I urge the Government to consider an alteration of the Act as suggested. The question has been discussed over a long period. Dr. Birch's report continues:—

There has been some lessening in the numbers of senile patients with only moderate degrees of mental deterioration admitted to the mental institutions. However, I again express regret that far too many very elderly patients, towards the close of their lives, should be certified "mentally defective" and sent to the mental hospitals. At Parkside during the 12 months there were 126 deaths at 65 years or over; and of these 13 had been in the hospital less than one week, 21 less than one month, and 44 less than one year. The ages of these patients at the time of their admission varied between 65 and 94 years. There is, however, one satisfactory side to this problem, and it is that the care and treatment given to these very sick and very elderly patients are of high standard. Indeed, many relatives and friends express their gratitude to the hospital and staff.

Here we have a statement by Dr. Birch that aged people are being sent to a mental institution to die. He also said:—

Both mental hospitals have babies and children who are suffering from varying degrees of mental deficiency. It would be advantageous to provide a separate hospital and colony for children, with all degrees of mental deficiency.

I believe that every Cabinet Minister should go out and see the shocking state of affairs of children at Parkside being herded with adults. With other members I visited the Parkside institution on one occasion and we saw children in with the women patients. Criminal patients are locked up in one section of the institution, another section is for males, another for females and children, and there is also a section for tuberculosis patients. It is shocking that all these people should be together in the one section. I believe that the females are divided into two groups. The doctor says that the children should be kept in a separate institution, and I therefore urge the Government to give this matter serious consideration. It is not a question of Party politics, but one of the proper care of the sick.

No doubt the Premier will admit that Dr. Birch is admirably fitted for the position he fills. The inmates themselves have the highest regard for him. I have seen similar cases at the Magill Old Folks' Home. I particularly stress that child patients should be segregated in a home of their own, and that there should be more homes for aged people rather than that they should have to be declared mentally deficient so that they can be sent to Parkside to die. When a person applies for insurance one of the questions asked concerns the mental stability of his relatives. If a relative had been sent out to Parkside merely to die, the applicant for insurance or for employment would be required to indicate that on his application form, whereas, as Dr. Birch points out, there is nothing mentally wrong with them. I urge the Government to consider Dr. Birch's report, and hope that it will rise above Party politics and make the necessary alterations which have been advocated by Dr. Birch for many years.

I have pointed out that some of the increased charges proposed in the Budget will affect the cost of living despite the Treasurer's assurance to the contrary. I hope that by some means, such as the defeat of the Federal Government or of this Government, the people will have an opportunity to review the choice they made at the elections held last December and March.

I have asked several questions about the Scaffolding Inspection Act, but it is evident that the officer who prepared the replies for the Premier misunderstood my questions. I understand the Act provides that before scaffolding can be used it has to be examined by an inspector appointed under the Act, and also that there is nothing in the Act making the erection of scaffolding compulsory. I asked the Treasurer whether the Government would consider making it necessary to erect scaffolding for buildings. Several big buildings are being erected in Adelaide, and one at Tonsley Park. Some accidents have occurred at these buildings, one or two being fatal. There was no scaffolding on those buildings, and if it had been provided on the large building being erected in Victoria Square the employee who fell would not have been killed, for he would have fallen on the scaffolding.

The steel framework of the building being erected at the corner of Gawler Place and Grenfell Street has been completed. The brickwork is now going up, and I am pleased that scaffolding has been provided there, but on the building at the corner of King William Street and Pirie Street the brickwork is being done from the inside, and if an employee leans out and falls he will be seriously injured or killed because there is no scaffolding. The Act applies only in certain proclaimed areas, but the provision of scaffolding should be made compulsory everywhere. Some buildings of up to 12 storeys are being erected without scaffolding. The Minister of Works took cognizance of what I said during the debate on the Address in Reply and I hope what I have now said will be considered by the Ministers concerned. I do not support the Budget and will not support the first line. If the Government is defeated on any line I will be pleased, for that will enable us to go to the people again.

THE ESTIMATES.

THE LEGISLATURE.

First Line (Legislative Council, £10,094) passed.

House of Assembly, £13,725; Parliamentary Library, £6,610; Joint House Committee, £10,684—passed.

Electoral Department, £17,254.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I want some explanation of the line "Returning Officers—Legislative Council and House of Assembly districts at £40 per annum and £50 per annum each, respectively—£2,150", and also why £22,200

was voted last year for "Fees for election" and only £10,795 was spent. It seems that returning officers get a flat rate irrespective of the type of their electorate. In the large country electorates their duties are onerous, and I think their fees should be based on the number of polling booths and the areas of their electorates. It is difficult to get clerks for outlying polling places and much time and trouble is involved in getting the ballot boxes out and returned later to the counting centres. It may be said that in some country centres there would be few electors, but the returning officer's work is much the same whether there are few voters or many. I hope the Government will consider remunerating returning officers on a fairer basis.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I will submit the honourable member's remarks to the Chief Secretary and let him have a reply in due course.

Line passed.

Government Reporting Department, £34,011.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—One line is "*Hansard*—cost of printing and publishing." Last year £10,000 was voted and £9,833 was spent. I think the annual subscription for *Hansard* is 4s. I do not want to discourage anybody who pays us the compliment of taking *Hansard*, but it seems that the annual subscription is out of all proportion to the cost of printing and publishing.

Mr. O'Halloran—It has been doubled in the last few years.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—That was before my time. At 4s. we are giving it away, especially as that includes postage. According to the Auditor-General's report, many Government charges are too low and should be revised. What is the total of subscriptions for *Hansard*, and will the Government consider whether the subscription should be raised?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am afraid this is not a question of what it costs to print *Hansard*, but of what it is worth after it has been printed. If we raised the subscription we might lose the small amount of revenue we get from it. The subscription was doubled recently, and I think that is all this item will stand. I will get the total amount of subscriptions for the honourable member.

Line passed.

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, £4,421.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Can the Treasurer explain why the vote for the secretary's salary has been reduced by £46?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Members will notice similar decreases on other salary lines. This has been caused by the number of pay periods being fewer this year than last year. As far as I know, there has been no decrease in the salary of any principal officer, either in this department or any other.

Line passed.

Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement, £3,395; Miscellaneous, £38,462—passed.

CHIEF SECRETARY AND MINISTER OF HEALTH.
State Governor's establishment, £7,387.

Mr. LAWN—In August I had occasion to write to the Treasurer about one of the domestic staff at Government House. The lady concerned—the head cook—entered into an agreement with His Excellency before she left England concerning her duties and conditions of employment. The agreement—which I will not read in detail—provided, among other things, for annual leave and for the payment of wages on the last day of each calendar month. It also stipulated that it was not to be made public. During the last three years, because of circumstances, this lady received only three weeks of the six weeks' annual leave to which she was entitled. Each time she applied for her leave she was told it was impracticable for her to take it at that time.

In June last the Commonwealth Arbitration Court increased the basic wage for men by 10s. a week and for women by 7s. 6d. The head cook did not receive an increase and when she interviewed Lady George, Her Excellency claimed that the 7s. 6d. was not due to the head cook but to herself for increased cost of living. The cook gave one month's notice and subsequently the question of her return fare to England came into dispute. She was told the fare would be available until a certain time, but if she did not avail herself of it within that period she would not receive it. On my advice she went to a solicitor and the matter was settled. There is no doubt the cook was entitled to certain wages and conditions, but she should not have been obliged to have consulted a solicitor before she received what was rightfully hers. I wrote to the Treasurer setting out the facts and including copies of the cook's statement and the agreement she entered into with His Excellency. I concluded my letter by stating:—

It would be appreciated if you would have this matter investigated and corrected. May I ask that the Government makes the necessary arrangements to ensure that the staff

at Government House in future receive nothing less than is provided by the Arbitration awards of this country for comparable work. I visualized the Government appointing a person with knowledge of local conditions to ensure that Government House staff received the wages and condition to which they were entitled under our awards. The reply I received from the Treasurer's Secretary included the statement:—

The Premier desires me to say that this matter is one entirely between His Excellency and Mrs. — and there is no action which he can properly take in the case.

I disagree entirely with that statement. As a member of Parliament I am asked to vote a certain sum for His Excellency's establishment. On previous occasions the Treasurer has said that Parliament has voted money for certain purposes and must accept the responsibilities for that. If I approve expenditure for Government House staff, I will not be satisfied with the suggestion that thereafter it is none of my business. The provision in the agreement that it was not to be made public was tantamount to erecting an iron curtain around the activities of Government House staff.

Irrespective of his employer, an employee should receive fair and just treatment. In this case the cook should not have had to consult a solicitor. As a stranger to this country Lady George is not familiar with our Arbitration Court awards and I contend that the Government should appoint a person with special knowledge to supervise the wages and conditions of the staff at Government House. Obviously His Excellency cannot be expected to be familiar with court awards. His duties are many and varied and in all probability he knows nothing about this matter. Unless my suggestion is carried out the mistake Lady George made may be repeated on future occasions. We should ensure that this does not happen.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I regret that the honourable member did not take the hint I gave him in my reply that this was not a matter in which the Government should interfere. He has raised this question on the assumption that he is voting money for this position. This person is a private employee of the Governor and there is no provision on the Estimates for her wages. Her position is no different from that of any private employee in domestic service. She came from England under contract with His Excellency and her fare was paid. In time her contract lapsed and I satisfied myself that every term of

the contract was carried out. In fact, in some instances she received conditions in excess of those provided in the contract. As far as I know there is no award governing this person. The Government did not pay her salary. She was employed in a private capacity in His Excellency's establishment.

Mr. Shannon—It would be better if all reference to this matter was expunged from the record.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I agree, because it has nothing to do with Parliament. There was no action the Government could properly take. Possibly the honourable member was not aware that there was no provision for this position in the Budget. If, however, he was, it was highly improper for him to introduce the matter.

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

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I regret that a domestic matter relating to a private person employed at Government House should be raised here. The grounds for raising the matter cannot be accepted by the Government. When there is a cost of living adjustment there is always an adjustment in connection with keep. There are one or two features of this case which, if I chose to go into them, would put an entirely different conception on the matter. Mr. Lawn assumes always that the employer is wrong and the employee right.

Mr. LAWN—I do not accept the statement that the employee concerned is not covered by the Estimates. I refer to the line "Wages and Allowances, Government House staff £2,000."

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—On a point of order, I definitely say that this person is not covered by that line. There are some wages that the Government pays to employees at Government House, but this person is not included.

Mr. LAWN—I am still not satisfied on the point. It does not matter whether or not the Government pays the wages, so long as the matter is covered by these Estimates.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—On a point of order, the amount paid to His Excellency to meet certain expenses is covered by an Appropriation Act. It is not covered by these Estimates.

Mr. LAWN—I do not care whether it is paid out of these Estimates or under other legislation. Parliament provides the money for paying this person's wages. The Treasurer said she is not covered by an award and I accept that statement.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—On a point of order, is the honourable member in order in discussing this line? The person concerned is not covered by it.

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member for Adelaide has accepted the Treasurer's statement. He is discussing this matter under the line "Wages and Allowances, Government House staff £2,000."

Mr. LAWN—That is so. Some Government House employees are paid from that amount of £2,000 but some are not covered by an award. The agreement says —

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—On a point of order, the agreement has nothing to do with the line.

The CHAIRMAN—I ask the honourable member for Adelaide whether his query is associated with the line "Wages and Allowances Government House staff £2,000" and whether he is not referring to an agreement relating to the Government House staff?

Mr. LAWN—I accept the Treasurer's statement that some employees are covered by an award but there is an agreement and clause 4 of it says—

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—On a point of order, the agreement has nothing to do with the persons who are paid under this line. They are paid full award rates as determined by the Public Service Commissioner. The agreement deals with persons not paid under this line.

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member must accept the Treasurer's statement on this point.

Mr. LAWN—I accept your ruling, Mr. Chairman, and will not refer to the agreement. There are employees at Government House, some covered by awards and some who are not. In South Australia we accept arbitration and I protest against any person being employed at Government House and being paid less than award rates.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member is discussing persons not covered by the Estimates, yet you, Mr. Chairman, are permitting him to do so. It is not the business of members of Parliament what wages are paid to private employees at Government House. If the employees are covered by an award they must be paid the award rates, but if not covered they are paid a rate reached by mutual agreement. I am determined to see that Government House is not wronged in this matter. This is an attempt to extort money from Government

House by raising a public outcry and if the honourable member wants it that way I am trying to tell him the position.

Mr. LAWN—I deny that. I made it clear that only in the last few days—

The CHAIRMAN—Order, I ask the honourable member to confine his remarks to the line “Wages and Allowances Government House staff £2,000.”

Mr. LAWN—That is what I am doing but every time I speak the Treasurer says I am talking about something else. All employees at Government House should be covered by an award.

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member can discuss only those employees covered by the line.

Mr. LAWN—In view of the Treasurer’s statement I assume some persons at Government House are paid under this line.

Mr. Shannon—And are under an award.

Mr. LAWN—No; I said there are persons employed at Government House who are specifically mentioned. There is no argument about the aide or the chief clerk. The House has to accept the fact that the head cook is not included, but how are we to know who is included and who is not? The people employed there should not receive less than they would if they occupied similar positions outside and were working under awards. Ever since this discussion commenced the Premier’s attitude has been to throw an iron curtain around the subject.

The CHAIRMAN—Order! The honourable member is out of order in discussing that.

Mr. LAWN—We should not have anything to hide in Government House or any other State establishment.

Mr. SHANNON—The honourable member spoke about an iron curtain and then about about people who cannot protect themselves. I deplore the fact that we have got away from the real estimates; this leaves me hot under the collar.

Mr. LAWN—On a point of order, Mr. Chairman—

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member for Onkaparinga is out of order.

Line passed.

Chief Secretary’s Department, £16,101; Statistical Department, £63,232; Audit Department, £57,977; Printing and Stationery Department, £266,270—passed.

Police Department, £1,666,671.

Mr. STOTT—The sum of £1,400 is provided for emergency fire services. I wish to bring

before the notice of the House the splendid work this service is doing. This provision is excellent because it will encourage the organization, particularly in country districts. During Show week the service put on a splendid display, and I was extremely disappointed that no reference was made to it in the daily press. I hope in future it will get the publicity it deserves, and the public will be made conscious of the dangers of bush fires.

Mr. LAWN—Will the £39,765 for purchase of motor vehicles be spent on patrol cars?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This amount is for the purchase of one additional truck, 12 Holden sedans, some of which are additions and some replacements, 85 solo motor cycles, mainly replacements, 10 additional motor cycle outfits, and three Holden sedans for mobile radio patrol work on interstate highways.

Mr. HAMBOUR—I was rather surprised at the low vote for the Licensing Branch. This is an important department, particularly as the Empire Games will be held here soon. I ask that this branch be instructed to ensure that every hotel provides accommodation in accordance with its size and the amount of liquor it serves. If that is done more money will be necessary to pay a larger staff that will become necessary. I am not satisfied with the service we are getting, although I am certain that the branch will perform its functions well if given the necessary personnel. Can the Treasurer say how many inspectors are employed?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Licensing Branch consists of the Chief Inspector and four other inspectors, but I point out that the standard of hotel accommodation does not depend on the number of hotel inspectors. They have the duty of inspecting licensed premises and reporting to the Licensing Court, and they do effective work. I remind the honourable member that during the war and immediate post-war period hotel proprietors were not permitted to improve their accommodation by building. Moreover, building today is costly, and if we insist on high-class hotels the immediate result will be a considerable increase in the tariff. It is difficult to fix a happy medium in this matter. Although I admit that the accommodation in some city hotels is neither adequate nor satisfactory, I believe that licensees generally are trying to improve it. I have seen, even in the outback where patronage is comparatively small, instances of hotel proprietors who, desiring to provide satisfactory service, have done an excellent job. For example, one hotel in Whyalla

compares favourably with any in the metropolitan area.

I do not believe that an increase in the number of personnel in this branch would affect the standard of hotel accommodation because that standard will ultimately be set by the Licensing Court. Incidentally, the court has established a much higher standard for new premises than has been the rule previously. In time the position will be rectified and satisfactory accommodation provided generally. To provide the standard of accommodation required by overseas visitors is not practicable for there is insufficient demand for accommodation at £10 10s. a night. The officers of the branch are diligent and doing their utmost to see that the law is observed. They report breaches to the Court, which must decide the action to be taken on the complaints before it.

Mr. TAPPING—Can the Treasurer explain the decrease from £154,800 to £120,000 in the Government contribution to the Police Pensions Fund?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That fund is assisted by Government contributions. From time to time the Government Actuary examines it and, if there are any arrears, recommends that an additional amount be paid in to bring the fund up to actuarial solvency. The amount paid in last year was in accordance with the recommendation of the Government Actuary.

Mr. HAMBOUR—I did not wish it to be inferred from my remarks that the officers of the Licensing Branch are not doing enough. I believe most hotel proprietors are doing their best to provide satisfactory accommodation, but some are not giving satisfactory service. Will the inspectors investigate such hotels and ascertain how much they are collecting from their house trade? In Tasmania the licensee has to declare how much he receives from his house trade, and our inspectors should have the power to make South Australian licensees provide such information. We have many beer houses, the accommodation at which is unsatisfactory. Is the number of personnel in this branch sufficient to police the legislation?

Line passed.

Sheriff and Gaols and Prisons Department, £309,142.

Mr. DUNSTAN—I refer to the amount of £1,670 to be paid to the Keeper of Gaol (also Officer-in-Charge of Inebriate Institution), and although I do not reflect on Mr.

Barbier, an efficient officer who has the respect of everyone coming in contact with him, I point out that we have no satisfactory inebriate institution. In this community a substantial body of people may be seen morning after morning at the Police Court coming up for conviction for offences of drunkenness in a public place. What happens to them? A man who has had 164 convictions for drunkenness in the last two years may come into court and that case is not uncommon. Such people are not out to deliberately break the law: they are suffering from the disease of alcoholism. We have an Inebriates Act which takes into account the fact that alcoholism must be treated as a disease, but we have no institution to which those people can properly be sent for treatment, unless they voluntarily go to Northfield where, of course there is no provision for compulsory detention. We used to have the Colebrook Home, but that is now used for aborigine children. We have a duty to the people who are suffering from this disease, and I ask the Premier what measures are being taken by the Government to cope with the matter. This question has been raised in the House before, but we still have the sorry picture of these people coming up before magistrates for drunkenness morning after morning. They go to gaol for perhaps 14 days, and after they have been out for a few days they are back in gaol again. Many of them need detention and treatment for their condition, but they cannot get it.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will obtain a report on the proposed alterations being made in the Prisons Department. For a number of years we had an institution which I think was specifically designed for the detention and treatment of alcoholics, but it was closed down some years ago because the authorities considered that it had not served the purpose for which it was designed. The topic raised by the honourable member with regard to inebriates and prison life generally is one to which this Government has given a good deal of consideration. The Public Works Committee has reported on a farm establishment which is designed to get prisoners into a different atmosphere and give them a chance to pick up their self respect and become useful citizens again. Prison institutions in my opinion should not be merely places of punishment but places which will provide for reform if possible. I will get a report for the honourable member which will give more specific information.

Mr. DUNSTAN—I very much appreciate the Premier's undertaking to get a report, but I stress again that at the moment I am not so much concerned with the provision of additional institutions which will form a more open prison than those we now have. I appreciate the Premier's remarks about the proposal to provide a prison farm which will obviously be helpful to certain types of offenders, but it does not meet the particular type of offender I have in mind. Dr. Salter of the Northfield Hospital is a person who has the very latest information upon the treatment of alcoholism. Prisoners are not treated for mental disease or mental deficiencies. General reform is attempted, but there is no provision for proper treatment and there is no satisfactory institution in which these people can be treated. It is to that matter particularly that I ask the Premier to refer in the report when he makes it available.

Mr. QUIRKE—I was glad to hear the Premier say that a prison should be a place of reform as well as punishment. Although some reforms have been made many remain to be made, one of which is the provision of some interest to these prisoners outside of the deadly prison routine. At Gladstone there are some religious organizations which desire to give moving picture entertainment to the prisoners, but they find that it is very costly for them to replace films. This sort of entertainment could possibly do quite a lot in the way of reform. It would be an advantage if that prison had a projector which could be used for standard type films, and I ask the Government if it is prepared to make provision for films to be shown in this institution and make available suitable films that can be shown by these people who have the reform of prisoners at heart. These religious institutions have no income other than what they receive from various parishes, and they cannot afford to provide these things themselves.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will have the request examined and advise the honourable member in due course.

Line passed.

Hospitals Department, £4,047,679.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I understand that nurses at the Royal Adelaide, Port Lincoln, Wallaroo, Port Pirie, Port Augusta, Barmera, and Mount Gambier hospitals are classed as employees under the Public Service Act and after having served 10 years or more become entitled to long service leave. Later, under the Chief Secretary's Department, we have

fairly extensive provision for what are known as Government subsidized hospitals, of which there are about 50, which receive substantial Government subsidies. In recent years these institutions, particularly those in the country, have experienced great difficulty in securing staff, particularly trained staff, and it has been suggested to me that nurses employed in Government hospitals would be prepared to accept positions in the semi-Government hospitals if in doing so they did not lose their entitlement to long service leave. The Government should see whether the same long service leave provision could be applied to nurses employed in subsidized hospitals as applies to those in Government hospitals.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Much difficulty would be associated with the proposition. Although the Government assists the subsidized hospitals, it is not a direct employer. We may be able to advise these hospitals that we would be prepared to accept a certain proportion of the cost for additional leave. Under ordinary circumstances country hospitals cannot provide conditions as attractive as those in the big Adelaide institutions. I will have the matter examined and advise the honourable member whether anything can be done. It could be considered only from the point of view of providing additional subsidies for hospitals to enable them to do as suggested.

Mr. HEASLIP—There is a Government hospital at Port Pirie, and at Crystal Brook, 17 miles away, a subsidized hospital. Sisters and nurses at Port Pirie would be quite happy to go to Crystal Brook provided they did not lose their long service leave. Would the cost of long service leave be included under the line?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Government employees generally, if they give good service, are granted, when they leave the service, the long service leave provided under the legislation governing them. That does not apply to those who are not Government employees. Certain hospitals have their own rules about annual leave, which may be more generous than leave in Government hospitals. We can only assist subsidized hospitals to provide long service leave by granting them additional amounts. Although we subsidize country hospitals generously now, this year we propose to increase their grants.

Mr. HAMBOUR—I assure members that subsidized hospitals would be only too happy to inaugurate superannuation and long service leave schemes if they could get their staffs to

remain for lengthy periods. Long service leave implies some lengthy period of employment, say, 10 years. On an average, sisters remain in their profession for only three to four years after becoming qualified. Many subsidized hospitals pay trained sisters more than the award rate and try to make their lot happy because they appreciate their importance to the community.

Mr. RICHES—Can the Treasurer give the formula adopted by the Hospitals Department in charging patients? I am particularly interested in the problems of people who are not eligible to join any medical scheme because of chronic disabilities.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—If a person believes he cannot afford to pay hospital fees he can apply for a remission. I have not the details of the department's formula, but I will get them for the honourable member.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—There is a line under Royal Adelaide Hospital—"Fees to members of board (also members of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Board)." I understand that the one board administers both hospitals, but I think there should be separate boards now that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is approaching completion.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—At present the Queen Elizabeth Hospital takes only maternity cases. Its organization is only now being worked out, but I should think it would be necessary later to appoint a board for the administration of that hospital.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Is it intended to enlarge the personnel of public hospital boards? I think representatives of the teaching staff, where hospitals are teaching institutions, and of women should be on the boards. For instance, matrons and nurses and those excellent ladies who have worked hard on the Adelaide Hospital Auxiliary have asked for years for a woman on the Royal Adelaide Hospital Board, but this request has fallen on deaf ears.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government does not intend at present to enlarge the Royal Adelaide Hospital Board, which consists of three members. The Minister of Health is responsible for the administration of his department, and he has permanent officers and an advisory board to assist him. I do not think it would be advantageous to have large advisory boards, for the issues to be dealt with are relatively straight-forward. I do not suggest any persons should be debarred from serving on a board because of their sex. There should be a balanced board to efficiently

cope with the requirements of the organization it represents. I believe there will be a complete reorganization when the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is completed. I will place the honourable member's suggestions before the Minister of Health.

Mr. HAMBOUR—Under the general heading "Other hospitals" provision is made for the medical officer at Mount Gambier Hospital, which has a daily average of 78 patients, to receive £847. Port Augusta Hospital, with a daily average of 50, is to receive £748 and Barmera with a daily average of 19, £685. In view of the changed circumstances whereby patients will pay hospital charges and medical officers will be permitted to charge patients—

Mr. RICHES—Who told you that medical officers would charge patients?

Mr. HAMBOUR—The honourable member will soon find out. In view of those circumstances is there any necessity to provide for these fees to medical officers? Does the Treasurer consider the payments—£847 for a daily average of 78 and £685 for a daily average of 19—equitable?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I understand the Minister of Health has received an application in respect of the Adelaide Hospital suggesting that where persons qualify for medical benefits, fees should be paid to medical officers.

Mr. RICHES—Does the application apply to country hospitals?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am not certain. Conditions are different in the country. Honorary medical officers at the Royal Adelaide Hospital have not been paid by the Government, whereas in the country certain fees are paid. It is hard to compare conditions in different places. The number of doctors in a town, the number of people who can pay full fees and the number who cannot pay any fees must be considered. As far as can be assessed the fees paid are equitable for the services rendered.

Mr. RICHES—I read recently that there has been application for payment to honorary practitioners at the Adelaide Hospital. I would view such an application with grave concern if it applies to country Government hospitals. I do not think the doctors seek the right to charge patients in hospitals. If some organization has applied on behalf of country doctors, I suggest that country districts be given an opportunity of stating their opinions before any decision is reached. Recently I attended a meeting of the Port Pirie District Council. It is rated for the upkeep of the Crystal Brook hospital and its members were concerned about reports that that

hospital may have to close. I do not know whether any hospital has closed in this State, but if so, can the Treasurer outline the procedure regarding the compulsory levy on district councils?

During the council discussions the shortage of nurses was mentioned. Is the Treasurer satisfied that the Hospitals Department is doing everything possible to recruit staff? I believe our recruiting campaign is unimaginative and lacks drive and appeal. All I have seen is an occasional advertisement on a theatre screen or an advertisement in the classified columns of the press. An all-out drive should be made to bring before our young people the value of services rendered in such a high and noble calling. Some hospitals are not understaffed and, strange to relate, they are remote from the glitter of the city. They are staffed by people who feel they have a call to render service to the community. Incidentally, those hospitals do not receive much consideration from the Government. The staff, which could find more remunerative employment nearer the city, remain in the outback to their own personal satisfaction and to the relief of the districts they serve.

I have visited many of our high schools and entirely agree with the Minister of Education's expression of great faith in the character and calibre of our high school students. I do not believe they would be any less responsive to a properly conducted recruiting campaign for this, the noblest of all professions. As a community we should show a proper appreciation of the work of our nurses. Unless a more imaginative recruiting drive is embarked upon I do not know what the future of our hospitals will be. Will the Treasurer take up with the Minister of Health the possibility of embarking on a State-wide recruiting campaign so that our hospitals will be adequately staffed with a trained personnel?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not know the position with regard to Crystal Brook Hospital except that these Estimates vote a substantial sum of money to it. Presumably it will have a greater subsidy than it had last year. Mr. Hambour spoke about nursing personnel. I believe our training schools are full and that we have no trouble in getting trainee nurses. Many girls, after training, get married, but any steps taken to prevent that would not be desirable. When the Queen Elizabeth Hospital functions fully we will have a larger training capacity and more girls will be attracted by the conditions. Some girls, after qualifying, travel overseas and to other States.

Mr. Stephens—Don't you think wages are too low?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not think wages have anything to do with the problem. Many girls would undertake the training whatever the wages. When the trainees were paid a pittance of 5s. a week there was a waiting list. I agree that wages paid to the trainees should be adequate. Girls training at some hospitals must go to other hospitals to complete their course but it would be far better for a girl to train at a hospital where the full course could be taken. For instance, at the Royal Adelaide Hospital a girl would get a wider experience in a shorter time. The staff position has improved immeasurably in the last year or so and I do not think the past problems will occur in the future. There will always be a demand for nurses because medical treatment has been completely revolutionized in the last few years. Everything possible is being done to get trainee nurses.

Mr. HAMBOUR—In the overall picture there is no shortage of probationers. There is a shortage at country hospitals but a waiting list at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, where the course covers three years. At country hospitals it is four years. If the Government could extend the period of training at the Royal Adelaide Hospital to four years there would be no trouble in getting trainee nurses anywhere. On two occasions I submitted a proposition to the Nurses Registration Board but it was rejected. I suggested that girls be accepted at 16 years of age as probationers. Now they are not taken until they are 17, which means they are 21 before being fully trained. Under my proposal if qualified before they were 21 they could be classified as junior sisters. The proposal would mean that the potential of trained nurses would be stepped up by 25 per cent on a four-year course, and 33½ per cent on a three-year course. Also, a number of young people who register as trainee teachers would be absorbed in the nursing profession. It is said that a girl of 16 is not mature, yet at that age she is admitted as a nursing aid.

It is also said that a person under 21 is not responsible in law. That is so, but nurses have to complete their training when they are under 21, and in the last year they do the duties of trained nurses. It is fit and proper for a man to join up and be able to kill and maim at 18, yet it is not proper to give a licence to cure to a girl under 21. There is a shortage of nurses, but if we take younger girls we will get more.

Mr. STEPHENS—The sum of £725,548 is provided for wages for medical officers and nursing staff at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. The nursing staff is doing a wonderful job, but they used to be underpaid. I am pleased to see that this year's provision is an increase of £68,283 over last year, and I hope good wages will continue to be paid to these people, who have great loyalty to their profession.

Line passed.

Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department, £577,707.

Mr. DUNSTAN—I wish to raise the matter of where uncontrolled children are to be sent and what discretion the magistrate has in dealing with them under the Maintenance Act. Children are being sent to institutions such as Vaughan House, and the magistrate has no discretion about sending them anywhere else. In some cases, if the magistrate had been in a position to exercise a discretion, a child may not have been sent to an institution but would perhaps have been placed with a suitable relative. If a child is found to be uncontrolled, under section 112 there must be a committal to an institution. A constituent in my district, because of illness, was unable to exercise effective control over his daughter, who got into bad company and became uncontrolled. She was eventually arrested for some minor offence and an unsatisfactory background of behaviour was disclosed, but she was capable of reform in a stable home background, which was available from another member of the family. Despite this the magistrate was forced to send the girl to Vaughan House. When she got there her behaviour was much worse than ever before, because apparently she felt she had not been given a chance to go to a stable home. She absconded and apparently went to another State. Though the father is only an average wage earner, he was informed that if he wanted the girl back he would have to pay her fare if she were found, even though she had escaped from the custody of the Children's Welfare Department after having been ordered into that custody by the court. That does not seem to me a satisfactory way to deal with uncontrollable children under the Maintenance Act and the Government should consider granting to the magistrate the widest possible discretion in dealing with such a child so that he may place it where he considers in the circumstances it should go.

The other matter I wish to raise concerns the boys reformatory at Magill. Section 113 of the Maintenance Act formerly gave to the magistrate in the Juvenile Court, when committing a child to the reformatory, a discretion in stating the period for which he was to be committed, but that discretion is no longer with the magistrate. On several occasions he has expressed his dissatisfaction with the fact that if he considers a child must be committed to the reformatory he must commit him until the child attains 18 years of age. The magistrate should have discretion in such cases because he may consider that a boy of 13 who has been up before the court before should be committed to an institution, but not for as long a period as five years. The magistrate in our Juvenile Court is deeply concerned with his job and has presented reports to Parliament which show his interest in his work. He should be given the power to decide how long a child should be committed to the reform institution and not have to leave it to the authorities at that institution to decide.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—Can the Treasurer say how the allowance of £400 to approved organizations pursuant to agreement with the Commonwealth Government will be spent on child migrants?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will get that information.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Can the Treasurer say when the promised expenditure of £90,000 is to be made on new buildings at the Magill Reformatory?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That would be shown in the Loan Estimates. I will have to refer to those Estimates to answer the question.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—Will the Treasurer suggest to the Chief Secretary that during his visit to the United Kingdom he visit the Borstal Institution which I understand is a model reform institution?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will refer that matter to the Chief Secretary.

Line passed.

Department of Public Health, £200,676—line passed.

Miscellaneous, £1,658,287.

Mr. LOVEDAY—As the cost of maintaining the Ceduna Flying Medical Service, which is part of the Flying Doctor Service of Australia, is about £15,000 per annum, will the Treasurer consider increasing the grant of £500 to that organization?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will refer the honourable member's request to the Minister of Health.

Mr. JENKINS—Can the Treasurer explain the grant of £280 towards X-ray plant at the Victor Harbour (South Coast District) Hospital?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—All the items from 1 to 18 are subsidized on a pound for pound basis on the amount raised by the local people.

Mr. TAPPING—I refer to the item "South Australian Fire Brigades Board—Annual Grant, £38,500" on page 43. I appreciate the increase of over £2,000 by the Government, but it does not relieve the burden thrown on the councils concerned. I refer particularly to the £12,300 which the Port Adelaide Corporation pays as its quota under the agreement. I have from time to time asked questions with regard to a better allocation amongst councils in order that the Port Adelaide Corporation may only be called upon to pay something reasonable. I received a letter today from the Port Adelaide Corporation enclosing a copy of a letter which it had received from the Municipal Association of South Australia. That letter referred to a decision by the Chief Secretary in the following terms:—

I am directed to inform you that it is not proposed to take action to set up a committee to investigate the allocation of the cost of portion of the Fire Brigades Board operating expenses.

Can the Treasurer say whether he would be prepared to reconsider this matter, even though some councils would not be satisfied because they would pay more under some other method of allocation? I ask him to give further consideration to the matter of payments by councils.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government is prepared to alter the basis of contributions by the constituent bodies in the metropolitan area provided that the same amount of money is contributed. The problem is that no proposition can be put forward which will be acceptable to the local government authorities. The honourable member touched on a delicate spot when he said that any council will object if it is called upon to pay more. I do not know of any satisfactory basis upon which it can be altered. It has been suggested that it could be done on a rateable value basis, but I do not regard that as equitable because industrial areas have a very much greater fire risk than cottage residential areas. The cost of these services is naturally higher

where there are large warehouses and docks and petrol installations. If the cost were based purely on population the residential areas would be making contributions completely out of accord with the services they would require for their normal protection. The Municipal Association put forward suggestions to the constituent bodies in the metropolitan area and I think only four supported the suggestion of a change.

Mr. Riches—It would be easier if we had a greater Adelaide.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not think that is covered by this particular line. If the constituent bodies could devise some more equitable way of apportioning the cost the Government would be prepared to accept it because it is not necessarily wedded to the present formula. It is a formula that was considered fair when Parliament put it into operation, but I assure the honourable member that if the councils can agree to something else the Government will be prepared to accept it provided that the overall amount contributed by the councils does not vary.

Mr. BOCKELBERG—I support the honourable member for Whyalla in his appeal regarding the Flying Doctor Service for Ceduna. I assure members that that service is doing a wonderful job in the outback. Recently a civil aviation official was stranded in the bush. Fortunately he had a small transmitting apparatus with him and was able to get in touch with, I think, Leigh Creek, which contacted the Flying Doctor Service at Ceduna which was able to 'phone somebody in Minnipa and they went out and brought him in. Members will see that the Flying Doctor Service, in more ways than one, is doing a very good job on Eyre Peninsula and in the outback.

Mr. BYWATERS—I refer to the grant of £350 to the Tailem Bend Hospital, which appears on page 36. I feel that this amount is grossly inadequate. Tailem Bend has a population of 2,174. It is a railway town and virtually a Government town because most of the houses are owned by the Railways Department. The last census in August showed that there were 12.29 in-patients per day. It is a growing town and the hospital is finding it very difficult to maintain the services. They have had difficulties with staff and other difficulties mainly through lack of finance. They had commitments of £600 and only £190 to meet those commitments. I suggest that the grant of £350 would possibly be the lowest grant made to any country hospital. More money should be made available because this

hospital covers the district from Murray Bridge to Keith, and as it is on the Princes Highway it has quite a big influx of patients due to accidents. I ask the Treasurer if it would be possible for this particular hospital to get greater assistance, and if he can say why it does not qualify for a subsidy.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Tailm Bend hospital is not a public hospital in the country hospitals category. It is classed as a cottage hospital, and I believe the subsidized hospital is at Murray Bridge. This applies not only to this hospital, but to hospitals generally. A committee goes into the financial position of each hospital, considers the services it is rendering and the number of indigent patients it is providing for. If a hospital is doing a good job and maintaining a proper standard, and in so doing gets into financial difficulties, assistance is granted on the basis of its needs. An amount in contingencies is provided in the Estimates for this purpose. I will refer the question to the Minister of Health.

Mr. STOTT—Can the Treasurer give details of the amount of £10,000 provided for the Escourt House building?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government is providing half the cost of a building costing £20,000 on a pound for pound basis.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—An amount of £20,000 is provided for the Royal Institution for the Blind and £6,000 for the Travellers Aid Society, both these amounts being greatly in excess of those granted last year. Both organizations are very worthy. Can the Treasurer give the reasons for the increases?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The amount for the Royal Institution for the Blind is for educational purposes, and that for the Travellers Aid Society for the reconstruction of a building which was badly affected by the earthquake.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—An amount of £100,000 is set aside for the new hospital at Salisbury. I take it that it is the proposed hospital at Elizabeth. How far will this amount go toward the construction of this institution, and when will it be ready to function?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This is the amount which the Housing Trust, the building authority for the hospital, is expected to require up to June 30. Cabinet has approved of the first stage of the hospital, and provided £250,000 for this purpose.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—The sum of £3,000 is provided for expenditure in connection with the celebration of responsible government in

South Australia. Can the Treasurer say what plans have been prepared for this occasion?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will get a complete list of what has been proposed by the executive of the Parliamentary Association.

Mr. STOTT—Will the Government consider making representations to His Excellency the Governor to see if it is possible for Princess Margaret to visit South Australia for the centenary celebrations?

Line passed.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL.

Office of Minister, £17,090; Registrar of Companies Office, £10,968; Crown Solicitor's Department, £33,058; Parliamentary Draftsman's Department, £7,716; Public Trustee's Department, £62,343; Supreme Court Department, £74,659; Adelaide Local Court Department, £29,330; Adelaide Police Court Department, £28,426—passed.

Country and Suburban Courts Department, £59,580.

Mr. RICHES—The court at Port Augusta sits almost every day of the week because more cases are heard there than at any other town. The clerk is having great difficulty in arranging sittings because local justices cannot give sufficient time to hear all the cases. The magistrate's circuit is so big that he cannot hear many cases at Port Augusta, and I ask whether the Government will again consider the appointment of a resident magistrate in the northern district?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes.

Line passed.

Coroner's Department, £4,863.

Mr. BYWATERS—Recently an inquest held at Murray Bridge took almost a day, but the coroner received the magnificent sum of £1 ls. for his services, although a doctor got £2 2s. for giving a few minutes' evidence. The coroner had to employ a young lady to look after his shop for the day, which cost him about £3. Will the Government review coroners' fees?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—For many years country coroners have been paid a fee of £1 ls. for each inquest, and fees are paid to witnesses as allowed by the coroner. Last year I referred a similar question to the Attorney-General, but I will bring the honourable member's remarks before the notice of the present Attorney-General.

Mr. HAMBOUR—I have acted as coroner on many occasions, but have never received a fee. I have always believed, and still believe, that justices acting as coroners do not receive any remuneration.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Whether they receive a fee or not is a matter for them to decide. They are entitled to receive £1 ls.

Line passed.

Registrar-General of Deeds Department, £101,712—passed.

Miscellaneous, £10,289.

Mr. KING—One item states “Grant to the Marriage Guidance Council of South Australia £2,000.” I hope the Government will consider increasing the grant to this non-political and non-sectarian body which is doing wonderful work in patching up broken marriages and in other ways. We had a Home and Family Week in our district about 12 months ago, and from a small population of about 4,500 there was an average attendance of 400 people at meetings held on consecutive nights. The people there were anxious to ascertain how they could help their children in facing up to the more sober aspects of life. I am sure the Marriage Guidance Council helps greatly in dealing with child delinquency. The press and the radio could also help by refraining from publicizing the activities of bodgies and widgies and rock 'n roll fans, for these cults are given social status instead of social degradation. The Government should consider increasing the subsidy to the Marriage Guidance Council to assist it in its efforts to restrict the activities of these cults.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I believe the grant was considerably increased last year from a comparatively small sum to £2,000. I agree largely with what the honourable member has said about the work of the council. Its work received a great impetus from the visit of Dr. and Mrs. Mace and I am pleased to know that the meetings were well attended and received in the Upper Murray districts as in other parts of the country and metropolitan area. I will bring the honourable member's remarks to the notice of the Attorney-General.

Line passed.

Treasury Department, £35,470; Superannuation Department, £43,174; Motor Vehicles Department, £190,953; Agent-General in England Department, £30,804; Land Tax Department, £84,676 and Stamp and Succession Duties Department, £33,155—passed.

Publicity and Tourist Bureau and Immigration Department, £275,039.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Last year £5,000 was voted as subsidies towards sundry recreation areas and swimming pools. Only £3,097 was spent, but it is proposed to increase the vote

to £21,000 this year. Is the proposed increase due to the fact that there have been considerably more applications for assistance, or is it proposed to increase the subsidy on swimming pools? It is proposed to expend £16,750 on advertising the State. The Tourist Bureau should do far more to advertise and popularize the undoubted scenic attractions of the northern Flinders Ranges. Quorn could very easily become a tourist centre. It has excellent hotels and is within easy motoring distance of Warren Gorge, Pichi Richi Pass, Devils Peak and other fine examples of mountain scenery. Beyond Hawker is Wilpena Pound and magnificent scenery that extends for hundreds of miles, especially the Parachilna Gorge. If this area was publicized to a greater extent in the other States and overseas it could be a marvellous attraction, particularly for winter tourists. In the more northerly part of the State it may be necessary to provide chalet accommodation to supplement the accommodation now available. Special consideration should be given to the possibilities of this area as a tourist attraction in order to induce new money to South Australia. Quorn has suffered as a result of the transfer of railway men to Stirling and Port Augusta and if it were established as a tourist resort it would be recompensed to a degree.

I believe it is essential for a photographic record to be made of the indescribably beautiful wildflowers that abound in the Flinders Range country north of Hawker at present. I have not seen them this year, but had the pleasure of travelling extensively through that area last year. It is impossible to describe the beauty of the various types of wildflowers. A Peterborough friend of mine made a coloured moving picture of a considerable part of the area and obtained a magnificent film. The flowers are at their best now and if pictures are to be taken they should be taken in the near future. Provision is made in another line for photographic and other purposes and the Minister should approach the Director of the Tourist Bureau immediately in this respect. I suggest the money could be well spent in getting a pictorial record of the wildflowers when at their best. It could be used for educational purposes, particularly in schools and adult education centres, or even sent overseas. I have been to other parts of the world and have seen the natural scenery. I have seen the edelweiss in Switzerland and the purple heather in Scotland. Few people realize the beauty in South Australia and we should take

the opportunity to immediately make a pictorial record of the beauty in the north, which would be of advantage to our tourist trade.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There was some difficulty in administration because many applications came for projects in what were not normally regarded as tourist areas, yet were visited by tourists. Cabinet decided to broaden the scope of the grant and take in places not generally regarded as tourist areas. The Government will make grants for the establishment of projects approved by the Tourist Bureau on a fifty-fifty basis to the extent of £1,500 in each year. An application could be made for a further subsidy in another year and it would be considered on a fifty-fifty basis. The money could be used for the addition of amenities to an existing project. The increased amount arises from the number of applications for grants that are likely to be received. Whilst it concerned only tourist areas, many applications could not be considered. Now that the scope has been widened more applications will be received.

Mr. Davis—How often could the £1,500 be obtained?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There is no limit to the making of applications but each project must be approved. One town may have had two grants and another none, so the latter would have to receive preference. One of the most effective ways of advertising is to show films, particularly in other States.

Mr. Riches—Where are our films shown in other States?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—South Australia has a film theatriette that has been copied in other States. There is a wide demand for our films. Some beautiful films have been taken of parts of the Flinders Ranges and they have been well received. I will consider the suggestion of the Leader and see if it can be adopted.

Mr. KING—The amounts provided for advertising the State and for running interstate offices is only about £18,000. New Zealand and many other countries have begun to realize the value of the tourist trade as a dollar earner, and have spent much more than we are doing. I think our tourist attractions are as good as any in the world, and I would like the Tourist Bureau to do something to help the river people who have lost a great deal of their tourist traffic. I point out that although adverse reports have been made of bugs and mosquitoes, they are no worse than in other parts of the State. The flood works will be of interest to tourists, and the hotels

in the district are the equal of any in the State. I hope some of the money will be used to offset undesirable publicity and to build up the river towns for the tourist trade.

Mr. BYWATERS—The sum of £8,323 is provided to the Murray Bridge Corporation for purchase of land and development of the river front. Can the Premier tell me the total amount that was promised to the corporation, and the present position in view of the flood?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Corporation of Murray Bridge waited upon me with a proposal to purchase some additional land to make a very much better reserve on the river front, pointing out that many people camp there and use it as a holiday resort. The Corporation pointed out that the area was liable to flooding with a high river, and I discussed the matter of levees with it. The Corporation was promised £22,600, which was voted last year, but it used only £14,277 last year, so that £8,323 is the balance. There is a good deal of doubt whether the Corporation will be able to spend this amount this year because of the flood, so it may be necessary to vote it again next year.

Mr. HAMBOUR—The Premier has stated that subsidies may be granted each year for swimming pools, but without chlorination plants. A swimming pool without a chlorination plant will not be of much use, so I ask that £1,500 be provided for such plants, even if in another year.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The £1,500 is in respect of any one year; there is nothing to stop local people from raising another £1,500 and applying for a further subsidy of £1,500 in the next year. If the money is available in the line without cutting out someone who has not had a grant, favourable consideration would be given to an application. The decision to widen this provision to areas not normally regarded as tourist places has enabled many more councils to make applications for this money.

Mr. TAPPING—This year £21,000 is provided for subsidies towards sundry recreation areas and swimming pools. Can the Treasurer tell me the amount intended under each part of this line? I doubt whether this amount will be sufficient, because I know of 14 of these projects. The Swimming Association, of which I am a life member, very much appreciates the co-operation of the Minister of Education in stepping up swimming lessons to such an extent that 50 per cent more children were taught last year than in the previous year, but because of this more facilities are needed.

In the event of more than £21,000 being necessary this year, is the Treasurer prepared to make more money available if the projects are *bona fide*?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—When these Estimates were prepared a few weeks ago, £21,000 was the amount of applications expected this year. Should further applications be received, however, they will doubtless be approved if they are *bona fide*. A few sundry amounts for recreation areas are included in the total; it does not apply only to swimming pools.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Are the amounts for recreation areas fixed and do the same conditions apply as apply in the case of swimming pools?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The amount is not fixed and applications are considered on their merits. Where a proposition is a good tourist attraction a 50 per cent subsidy is generally given, but where it has a local rather than a tourist flavour in some instances only 33 per cent has been given. The scheme has been working in the district of Whyalla and amenities have been provided on the beach and in the recreation areas.

Line passed.

Prices Control Department, £87,557.

Mr. SHANNON—Can the Treasurer explain the amount of £4,000 provided for payments to dependants and officers retiring or resigning?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—In the main, officers of this department were taken over from the Commonwealth Government when the State took over price control, and although they retained certain Commonwealth privileges, they are now more closely in line with conditions operating in the State Public Service. A number of retirements and resignations have resulted in an increase in the amount of the item referred to by the honourable member, but in some instances the officers have been replaced. I point out that the increase in the total salaries payable does not necessarily indicate a corresponding increase in the number of officers, because a portion of the amount may represent the payment of a retrospective increase in salaries. The staff of

this department has not been excessive and it is about the same as it was last year. Prices officers are difficult to get for they must be capable investigators with a high degree of accountancy. On occasion the department has been understaffed, and at this time last year the number of officers may have been under establishment. I point out that the department has saved its administrative costs by its activities in controlling petrol prices.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—I regret that at a time when the policy of the Government is to decontrol items the expenditure on this department continues to rise.

Mr. QUIRKE—I refer to the item “Committee fees (bread and meat).” Are they permanent committees, and is the £150 for services rendered or for feeding the members on those commodities?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Those are advisory committees for bread and meat set up under the legislation. The meat advisory committee has not functioned very effectively, but the bread committee has functioned very effectively indeed and has been very valuable. The amount of £150 does not include their sustenance, but represents travelling and sitting fees.

Mr. BYWATERS—Would any of that money be expended in the purchase of meat by the inspectors, and if so, what becomes of the meat?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The line refers to the committees and not the commodities which they purchase or eat. The committees consider the price of those commodities. It is true that in order to get a conviction it is sometimes necessary for an inspector to purchase meat in order to prove that it had been sold at an unlawful price. I believe that the meat goes to Government institutions, but I am not certain on that point.

Line passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 10.24 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, October 4, at 2 p.m.