

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, July 30, 1957.

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

QUESTIONS.**STANDARDIZATION OF RAILWAY GAUGES.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier considered requesting the Commonwealth Government to provide South Australia with financial assistance for standardizing the railway gauge from Broken Hill to Port Pirie? This would, I think, come within the ambit of the 1949 agreement and not only would be advantageous to South Australia but would shorten the journey from Sydney to Perth by about 250 miles.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—These matters were all considered when the Commonwealth Government appointed Mr. Clapp a commissioner to study this matter, and he recommended the standardization of Australian railway gauges. Conferences were held by the States, and the Commonwealth Government offered certain conditions. Unfortunately, some States did not support the project, notably Queensland. New South Wales and Victoria, with South Australia, were at first prepared to do so, but ultimately did not ratify the agreement, and finally an agreement was made between the Commonwealth and South Australia for the standardization of gauges. This agreement was ratified in 1949 and is a firm and binding agreement under which we have been working in the South-East since that time. The attitude of the Government is that it would be advantageous to the development of the Australian economy if standardization were effected.

Every other country has ultimately had to rely on railways for development. In America, for instance, where there were numerous gauges, it was found there was no escaping the obligation to bring those gauges into harmony so that trains could run freely from one part of the continent to another. That is the firm policy of the South Australian Government, but, as the Leader will see by looking at a map showing the railway system, the mere altering of one gauge in South Australia's railway system would not achieve standardization. Indeed, it would give South Australia three gauges instead of the two we have at present; therefore, the construction of a 4ft. 8½in. gauge from Port Pirie to Broken Hill would give the South Australian Railways

Department a much more difficult problem than it has today because it would have to operate over three gauges, which would virtually cut off some of the system from effective use. The Victorian Government has appeared disposed to favourably consider having a standard line from Melbourne to Sydney, and under the circumstances I have suggested that the Commonwealth approach the Victorian Government to see whether it will take similar action regarding the line from Melbourne to Serviceton. If that were done South Australia could go ahead, without completely disrupting her railway services, under the agreement already in operation, and I have assured the Commonwealth Government publicly that my Government would sympathetically consider that. I believe that that would ultimately lead to the standardization of all Australian gauges because its benefits would be seen and we would have something tangible to show for the expenditure involved. As to altering the gauge of the one line the Leader mentioned, Cabinet has not made any decision, but I believe that in itself it would be rather hard to justify.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Will the Minister of Works see whether it is possible, in accordance with the desire of the Government for standardization of gauges, to have the coaches used on the Overland Express taken through to Port Pirie so that passengers to and from Western Australia may be able to avoid changing trains at Adelaide?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I will take up the question with my colleague, the Minister of Railways, and bring down a reply in due course.

SPRINGBANK ROAD BRIDGE.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—My question arises from the tragedy on the Hilton Bridge last Saturday when three persons were killed. Since then my attention has been drawn to the condition of the railway bridge at Springbank Road, Clapham, and it has been suggested that the guard railing and superstructure generally on that bridge may not be sufficient to stop vehicles and other objects from hurtling through it and on to the rail track below. Will the Minister of Works ask his colleague (the Minister of Roads and Railways) to have the superstructure examined by the Railways Department, which I believe is the responsible authority, to see if the bridge is safe, and if it is not, to take appropriate action?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I will take up that question with my colleague and bring down a reply as early as possible.

AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I understand from a recent press statement that the Australian aircraft production programme is to be extended by the building of Sabre jet aircraft here. Can the Treasurer say whether any of this work will be done in South Australia?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—No. Of course the contract would be one between private engineers and the Commonwealth Government. Normally, we never come into these matters and do not see the conditions. The only time my Government ever takes action is when someone in this State desires a share of the work and feels that his application is not receiving attention. In that case we would take the matter up with the Commonwealth Government to see if the work could be spread fairly and equitably between the States. In this case we have had no application from any local industry. I am not sure whether any local industry has the specialized plant to enable them to undertake the work.

SALE OF URANIUM ORES.

Mr. COUMBE—It was reported today that the International Atomic Energy Agency had been set up in a new form in, I think, the United States of America. Can the Premier indicate the object of this organization, and will it involve any alteration in the method of sale of this State's production of uranium ores?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—This matter does not come within the scope of my Government's activities. I understand that the agency set up has been encouraged by President Eisenhower to develop the peacetime use of atomic energy. As President of the United States of America he has offered various countries much assistance if they will set about progressively to develop the advantages of the use of fissionable material. I understand that the agreement has now been ratified by the various countries, for the agency has been established, with Australia as one of its members, and that it has no effect upon any agreement made for the sale of materials from South Australia. In fact, I am sure that would not be the effect of the agreement, but rather it would be for the United States to make available materials to countries which perhaps have not got any.

INTERSTATE SALE OF EGGS.

Mr. TAPPING—The following is an extract from today's *Advertiser* dealing with the interstate sale of eggs:—

Melbourne, July 29.—Poultrymen's organizations were approaching trade unions in an

effort to stop "bogus" interstate trading in eggs, Mr. G. H. Roadley, a member of the Victorian Egg Board, said today. "This bogus interstate trading could wreck organized marketing—and if that happened in one State the whole Australian egg industry would collapse," he said.

Mr. Roadley said firms were taking Victorian eggs across the border to Tocumwal and Moama, then bringing them back for sale at New South Wales prices. By this device, payment of 11½d. a dozen stabilization pool fee was avoided, at the expense of poultrymen who sold through the Egg Board. Because of section 92, the Egg Board had no power to deal with these interstate traders.

If something similar happened in South Australia would our legislation be able to deal with it?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution is a valid section and therefore under that section a genuine movement of eggs interstate cannot be prevented, and any attempt to prevent it would immediately be *ultra vires* of that section. The question involves policy by other people in other States and I have no desire to comment upon it, nor am I capable of doing so.

TRANSPORT OF CHEESE.

Mr. HARDING—As a result of the closing of the Glencoe-Wandilo narrow gauge railway, the Glencoe Co-op. Cheese and Butter Company has applied to the Transport Control Board for permission to transport cheese by refrigerated road vans. The company has written to me as follows:—

The rail service to our nearest siding will be discontinued after July 1, 1957, necessitating the haulage of cheese 15½ miles by road to Mount Gambier. This road cartage to the railhead will need to be carried out during the heat of the day during the summer months on open road trucks and much deterioration of our cheese will result from sweating, melting and blowing.

Does the Minister of Agriculture concur in the decision of the Transport Control Board?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The honourable member indicated earlier today that he proposed to ask this question and I have some information for him, but it is not by any means conclusive and I will refer the question to my colleague, the Minister of Railways, for further information. I understand that the Transport Control Board has asked the manufacturers, or the people interested in the transport of this cheese, to at least give the railways a trial. I believe the Railways Commissioner will make special provision to accommodate this traffic and I will confirm whether that is so and let the honourable member have the information.

COUNTRY SEWERAGE SCHEMES.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—An article appearing in last Sunday's *Mail* referred to a letter that the Speaker received as member for Angas from the Minister of Works about country sewerage schemes. The article stated:—

The Government has had requests for sewerage from 40 towns, but lack of money has so far prevented substantial progress other than investigations, designs and estimates. With some reduction in requirements in other directions, it now seems likely that country sewerage construction can begin in the near future. Is the Minister of Works in a position to enlarge on that statement for the benefit of members interested in this subject, how soon does he consider the "near future" likely to be, and will Gawler be considered as one of the first towns that should be sewered?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—The object of appointing the medical committee to go into this matter was to put the schemes in order of priority. So many schemes have already been reported on by the Public Works Committee, running in the aggregate into millions of pounds, that it would be impossible to start them all together. The Government has never started a scheme unless it was in a position to see it through, for starting and stopping is very unsatisfactory. The medical committee will report on order of priority, and the Government will proceed with the schemes in that order. The Government is not taking the responsibility of saying what should be started first because, if the extract from the *Mail* were read in full, it would be seen that the first emphasis must be on health considerations, which will be the guiding factor in fixing the order of priority. I hope the committee will get to work soon. With the lessening of demand for water supplies, which must be provided before sewerage can be undertaken, we shall be in a position to put money on the Estimates to start some country sewerage works.

HILTON BRIDGE.

Mr. LAWN—For some years Mr. J. F. Walsh, who was then member for Thebarton, and myself since the alteration of electoral boundaries in 1956, have made representations to the Government for the rebuilding and widening of the Hilton Bridge, at which a fatal accident occurred on Saturday last. Can the Minister representing the Minister of Roads inform the House whether the Government intends to rebuild, widen or otherwise improve this bridge?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I cannot anticipate what money will be on this year's Loan Estimates for such works. Following on the recent accident at the bridge, my colleague the Minister of Roads, with one of the senior engineers, inspected the bridge, and I expect a full report from him tomorrow which I will let the honourable member have, together with any further observations which the Minister might make with regard to the bridge. At present I am not in a position to say what works will be included in the Loan Estimates.

PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS BOARD.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I draw the attention of the Premier to the Public Service Commissioner's report of 1953, in which he mentioned that the greater proportion of appointees to the Public Service each year were junior clerks and junior draftsmen. The Commissioner pointed out that the Public Service Act and regulations provide for the conduct of examinations for these recruits by the Commissioner and allow the Commissioner to accept other qualifications which he considers equivalent. The Commissioner said that the Public Examinations Board of the University of Adelaide conducts these examinations, thus saving his office a considerable amount of work, but he believes that certain changes which have been made are not in the best interests of recruiting for the Public Service. He said that during the past 10 or 15 years it appeared that pressure had been brought on the Public Examinations Board to vary the requirements for the particular certificates, and that the board was not concerned whether the changes affected recruiting for the public service. The Commissioner said, in conclusion:—

In view of this fact, I do not think it would be inappropriate for the Commissioner to be represented on the board in the same way as he was represented on the Board of Commercial Studies. I have no desire to suggest that the requirements of the Service should be a major determining factor in the content of the certificates issued by the board, but I think the Service requirements are sufficiently important at least to justify a voice in the determination of that content. It is obvious that I cannot allow qualifications for admission to the Service to be varied by the action of an independent tribunal, no matter how well qualified or how conscientious they are in discharging their obligation as they see it.

Can the Premier say whether the Government has considered this suggestion and, if so, what decision it has made? If not, will it do so and will he bring down a report?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Government has not considered the suggestion and it is unlikely to do so. The Public Examinations Board was established by Parliament as an authority on education. It aims at moulding the characters of our children and providing them with qualifications suitable for employers. There is no more ground for including the Public Service Commissioner on that board than there is for including the Railways Commissioner, Commonwealth Public Service Commissioner, a representative of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company, Elder Smith's or any other employer. If he desires, there is nothing to prevent the Public Service Commissioner from conducting special examinations, but the Government could not possibly support any request that the whole examinations system be moulded to meet his requirements.

WOOMERA WATER CHARGES.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Has the Minister of Works anything to report concerning Woomera water charges?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—Yes. As promised I examined this question. The township of Woomera is supplied from the Morgan-Whyalla pipe line through a Commonwealth owned pipe connecting with the Morgan-Whyalla pipe line at Port Augusta. The Commonwealth Government pays the State Government the actual cost per 1,000 gallons of the water recorded by meterage at the point of offtake, ranging from approximately 4s. to 5s. per 1,000 gallons.

MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS TRUST.

Mr. STOTT—About two years ago the administration of the Municipal Tramways Trust was discussed at length in this House and I suggested that the Government institute an inquiry into the position. The Premier has no doubt noticed in the press recently that the Adelaide City Council is so concerned with the trust's administration that it believes an inquiry is warranted. Has the Premier seen this statement and, if so, can he say whether the city council has taken over the Government's functions in respect of the trust or does the Government intend to carry out its proper functions and institute an inquiry and not leave it to the council?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have seen the statement referred to that the council is busy discussing this topic at the moment. It remains to be seen whether any useful suggestions will emerge from the council's examination of the problem. If they do

I am sure they will receive the trust's consideration in due course. I do not think there is any objection to anyone examining the public problem and if the council can throw any light upon this matter it will be all to the good. Members know that this State still requires a fairly substantial grant from the Grants Commission in order to remain financially solvent. Yesterday, I was submitting evidence to the commission in Melbourne in this connection. The commission examines the charges made by the claimant as well as non-claimant States to see whether, in point of fact, we are taxing ourselves to the same extent as the non-claimant States or trying to avoid paying charges the non-claimant States pay. If fares were raised in Adelaide to the same level as those in Sydney, the trust would not require any grant from the Government.

Mr. O'Halloran—Provided that people used the trams.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will deal with that in a few moments. Statements have been made in the press that an increase in charges inevitably leads to a decrease in the number of passengers. As a matter of interest, when I saw these statements I made an inquiry from one of the representatives of the Tramways Trust to see whether there had been any falling off in the number of tram and bus passengers since the change was made, and I was informed that there had been no reduction in paying passengers.

Mr. Stott—You mean since the recent rise?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes; in the week it has been in operation, there has been no falling off in the number of people paying fares. That does not necessarily mean there was no falling off in the number of people carried because, before the system doing away with pennies was introduced, some fares may have been missed, and possibly today a bigger percentage of fares is collected. The fact still remains, however, that there has been no falling off in the number of persons paying fares in trams and buses in the first week of the new charges, which is usually the week when the public resists increased charges most. Secondly, we hear as a criticism of the Tramways Trust—and again it comes from the body the honourable member mentioned—in changing from trams to buses. From time to time when this policy has been criticized it has been mentioned that Melbourne has not changed over. Incidentally, it is the only capital city that has not. I brought home yesterday a copy of a Melbourne paper in

which the General Manager of the Melbourne Tramways is reported as saying that trams must inevitably go, because they cannot afford to run them any longer. They do not envisage changing over straight away, but the future policy of that body will be to change over gradually from trams to buses. When city council members go into these two matters they will find that the statements they have been making are completely ill-founded.

BOAT HAVENS.

Mr. CORCORAN—In last year's Estimates £75,000 was provided for fishing havens and other fishing facilities in South Australia. As the Minister of Agriculture is responsible for the disbursement of this money, can the Minister of Agriculture say how much of the money allocated was spent during the year, how much was spent in the South-East and at Port Lincoln and along the West Coast, and how much money has been lost to the fishing industry by the lapse of the allocation due to the effluxion of time? I understand that something of that kind happened in connection with Southend. Can the Minister say, if all the money has not been spent, why it was not spent in view of the urgent need for the facilities, and what is being done to ensure that the money that may be voted this year will not be lost to the industry?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The honourable member raises a number of points in his question, but in its entirety the question is a general one. It is correct that in the Estimates last year £75,000 was provided for the provision of fishing havens and that subsequently, because we were not able to take full advantage of the amount, it was reduced. The honourable member will appreciate that this was the first occasion, at least for a number of years, that the line had been on the Estimates and a vast amount of preliminary work had to be done before decisions could be made and priorities determined for the establishment of facilities. In spite of the very heavy pressure on the Harbors Board and its engineers in connection with bulk handling commitments and other urgent priorities, a great deal of preliminary work and estimating has been done. Actually, very little of the money has been spent. Up to the present the total is under £2,000, but all of it has been spent in the South-East and none at Port Lincoln or at any point along the West Coast. It may be argued that there has been some loss to the fishing industry, but eventually there will be no loss because the programme to be worked

out will be completed in due course. As the honourable member knows, during my recent visit to the South-East specifically for the purpose of ascertaining requirements there, and upon which visit the honourable member accompanied me and attended meetings and discussions held with fishermen in his district and around the coast, I said consistently to fishermen at all ports that the visit was for the purpose of ascertaining for my own personal information what they desired and to establish in my mind some degree of urgency in each case. In no case did I promise that facilities would be granted immediately or at any time. I undertook to draw up a schedule of priorities of work and so on, which I have done. I am having repeated discussions with the Minister of Works in respect to the furtherance of these projects. There will be a further amount of loan money available from the Estimates this year for the provision of fishing havens and it is Government policy, as fast as labour and money can be made available, to provide the facilities which are urgently required.

TEPKO WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. BYWATERS—Some time ago I led a deputation of the residents of Tepko asking for an extension of the Hundred of Finnis water scheme. The Minister was good enough to receive the deputation very well and promised to send an officer to examine the position. This was done about two months ago. Has the Minister any further information on the matter?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—Following an inspection estimates have to be made, which always involves some time, and I have not yet received any recommendation. As the question has been raised again I will bring down a reply as early as possible.

WILD DOG INFESTATION.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Minister of Lands any further information concerning the question I asked last week regarding the number of wild dogs at large in the northern and north-eastern pastoral areas?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The chairman of the Dog Fence Board advises as follows:—

The dog fence runs from the New South Wales border to the sea on the Nullarbor Plain and is 1,360 miles in length. Reports on the condition of the fence some time ago showed that some sections on the north and north-east were not in good condition due to neglect of regular patrol and maintenance by

the owners, who are responsible for maintaining their sections in dog-proof condition. The Dog Fence Board has brought pressure to bear on those owners who were not carrying out their obligations. Payment of maintenance subsidy has been withheld and will not be paid until there is assurance, based on the Inspector of Fences' reports, of satisfactory maintenance being continued. This pressure has resulted in the below standard sections being made dog-proof and patrols and laying of poison baits and setting of dog traps being intensified. Should owners continue to be neglectful of their responsibilities, the Dog Fence Board will, as a last resort, exercise the powers given it under the Dog Fence Board and carry out repairs and maintenance itself.

Early in May of this year telegrams were sent by the Dog Fence Board to all fence owners from the New South Wales border to Lake Torrens and beyond, warning them that there was a heavy concentration of dogs either on or moving in on to the fence, and they were asked to ensure frequent patrols, lay poison baits, and set all available traps. The pressure on the fence has been very great due to the abovementioned influx of wild dogs from outback areas on to the line of fence, which has been aggravated by constant damage to the fence by kangaroos which have also appeared in great numbers. It is inevitable that when dogs are present in large numbers some must penetrate a fence 1,360 miles long. The situation is now considered to be under control.

RECONSTRUCTION OF CHURCHILL ROAD.

Mr. CUMBE—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked last week regarding the reconstruction of Churchill Road?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—The Commissioner of Highways advises that plans for the reconstruction of Churchill Road, with necessary drainage, have been prepared. The roadwork cannot be undertaken until the drainage has been done. The Highways Department has allocated £10,000 (£5,000 of which is to be loaned to the city of Prospect) for 1957-1958 towards this drainage, and anticipates that an increased allocation will be possible for 1958-1959.

CONCESSION FARES FOR PENSIONERS.

Mr. LAWN—I understand that in New South Wales pensioners are permitted to travel on trams, buses and railways at half fare. In view of the recent increase in tram fares in Adelaide and the proposed increase in railway fares, will the Treasurer consider granting reduced fares to pensioners in this State?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will have the matter examined and advise the honourable member in due course.

ZEBRA CROSSINGS.

Mr. DUNNAGE—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked last week concerning zebra crossings?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—The Commissioner of Highways advises that approval of three of the four pedestrian crossings requested by the city of Unley has been forwarded to the council.

STRAYING STOCK.

Mr. HARDING—Several collisions have occurred on South-Eastern railway lines owing to straying stock. The recent accident and delay to the Bluebird between Penola and Naracoorte, when 17 sheep were killed, leads me to believe that some action should be taken in this matter, although I am more concerned with the welfare of the travelling public than with the loss of stock. Could the Act be amended to impose heavier fines for such offences?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I will refer the question to my colleague and bring down his reply.

JERVOIS BRIDGE.

Mr. TAPPING—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my question of last Tuesday concerning the publication of plans for the new Jervois Bridge?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—This question was discussed in Cabinet, which decided that a sum would be placed on the Estimates for the next financial year to enable the work to commence. When the plans were before the Public Works Committee, it probably indicated the alignment referred to by the honourable member and the work will be carried out in accordance with the committee's recommendations. If the honourable member requires any further information I suggest he get it direct from the Commissioner of Highways.

INTERSTATE TRADE.

Mr. STOTT—Some time ago the press reported a forceful statement by the Premier that the Government did not favor altering section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution, but since then the High Court has given a decision in a New South Wales transport case that upholds section 92 and the South Australian Attorney-General has said that the matter is being examined. Does the Premier realize that any refusal to give the Commonwealth Parliament greater powers under section 92 means in effect that neither the Commonwealth nor the State Parliament has power to control the

movement of goods across State borders? Does he realize that, because of section 92, the sovereign powers of a State stop at its borders and only the Commonwealth Parliament, following an amendment of section 92, could control the movement of goods across State borders? If that is correct, can he comment on the statement of the Attorney-General that the Government intends to examine the position under section 92 and can he state the Government's attitude towards altering section 92 so that States can control hauliers and make them contribute to the upkeep of roads within the State?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I do not agree that the case cited by the honourable member took the position regarding the interpretation of section 92 any further than did previous cases. Indeed, that case was not decided on the interpretation of section 92, but rather on the administrative practices of the New South Wales Government, and the High Court in giving its judgment, which was unanimous, was careful to state that this did not mean that a proper tax could not be levied for the maintenance of roads. The important case concerning this matter is one heard recently concerning the Victorian law, which is not designed to impede interstate transport, but to secure some return to enable the roads to be maintained. Further, there is the case, as yet unheard, in which the validity of the South Australian law will be tested. The problem arising from the transport laws is that there has been a continuous desire on the part of Australian Governments to impose on interstate transport some special obligation which has not been imposed on the people of the State as a whole. That, of course, is a political matter and does not mean that the Constitution is dead: it merely means that it will not allow the States to impose a restriction against interstate trade or to place on interstate trade an embargo that is not placed on all users of transport. My Government considers that the whole idea of Federation falls down if we allow to be passed a law that prohibits free trade between the States, and any law governing the transport of goods must be looked at critically, for it could easily be made a law that would infringe the principle of free trade, a principle which I believe every member would support and without which the whole concept of Federation falls to the ground. My Government does not favour piecemeal amendments of the Constitution of the type mentioned by the honourable member. I am sure the second result would be very

much worse than the first, particularly to a State such as South Australia that depends to such a vital degree on its ability to sell its commodities in the heavily populated eastern States.

PILDAPPA WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Has the Minister of Works a further report on the Pildappa water supply?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM MCINTOSH—I have conferred with the Engineer for Water Supply (Mr. Campbell) and, although I said earlier that I was anxious to help these people if they were willing to undertake financial responsibility, I am afraid that the position as outlined by Mr. Campbell will make it difficult to evolve a scheme both satisfactory to them and reasonable to the taxpayer. The essence of Mr. Campbell's report is that the request for an additional tank at the Pildappa supply has been given careful consideration. It is not new, having been put forward previously. The estimated cost of a new 500,000 gallon tank, including pipe work, is £18,000 and on the information available this would represent approximately £3,000 for each settler drawing on the supply, for I believe only six petitioners signed the request for the tank. The Pildappa supply is free and no charges have been made for water obtained from it. It is noted that the settlers are prepared to pay a reasonable rate if an additional tank is built. To give a return of 2½ per cent on this outlay would require a total annual payment by the settlers of £450. It is considered that the settlers should also make some payment to meet at least portion of the interest and maintenance of the supply as it stands, which was constructed in 1928 at a cost of nearly £10,000.

The settlers have had the use of this scheme since that year without charge. It has frequently been pointed out that the Pildappa supply is very reliable and that it has only emptied on a few occasions in the last 20-odd years. Usually, it is only completely empty for comparatively short periods. The records of the flow from the rock catchment, which is not large, show that there is a doubt whether there is sufficient water for an additional tank and that if it were built there would still be the possibility of both tanks emptying when the dry periods occurred. The Pildappa supply is, in fact, more reliable than many other supplies. In a supply that is rated the use of water has to be restricted in periods of low rainfall and the settlers obtaining their supplies from Pildappa could give some consideration to a voluntary rationing scheme among

themselves when they knew the supply was becoming low. In the case of rationed supplies we do not usually allow the water to run out. Indeed, before that occurs at Kimba and other places rationing takes place and restrictions are imposed. I suggest that before the settlers agree to undertake considerable commitments they go into the question thoroughly to see whether the latter alternative is not preferable.

COMPLETION OF NORTH-SOUTH RAILWAY.

Mr. RICHES—Those of us who were at Marree on Saturday to witness the opening of the new railway line were interested to hear a statement from the Federal Minister for Shipping and Transport to the effect that other employment would now be provided for the men who had been working on the construction of the line. We saw the most modern equipment devised for the construction of railways, and some of us wondered whether the Commonwealth had in mind to continue the standard gauge from Marree to Alice Springs. There would be no need for consultation with the States to do that very desirable work. Complicated transshipment now takes place at Alice Springs from rail to road to meet the increasing demand for transporting heavy equipment to the Northern Territory. In view of those facts, can the Premier say whether any discussion has taken place recently between South Australia and the Commonwealth regarding the completion of the North-South railway to Darwin, in accordance with the agreement under which the Northern Territory was taken over from South Australia?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Commonwealth Government has a long-standing obligation to complete the line to Darwin. That was the ground upon which this Parliament ceded to the Commonwealth the control of the Northern Territory, and that obligation was re-stated in 1949 when a Bill was ratified for the completion of the line to Darwin. I inquired as to the immediate programme of the Commonwealth Railways Department, and was advised that the Commonwealth now proposes to ballast the line from Leigh Creek to Marree and take up the old line from Marree to Brachina. I understand that when that is completed it is proposed to start constructing earthworks further north. Some consolidation work is also to be undertaken. In that connection, might I suggest to the Leader of the Opposition, whose district would be concerned, that some of the railway bridges which

will not now be required could be used as road bridges. I asked the Commonwealth Railways Commissioner what would be the attitude of his department to leaving the present narrow gauge bridges for use as road bridges over the creeks running north from Brachina. These bridges are only of relatively low value as scrap materials. I think it would be possible to secure their retention as road bridges if people in the district considered they would be of any advantage to them.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Unfortunately, some of the bridges on the railway line to be abandoned between Hawker and Marree were washed away in a big flood three or four years ago, but I believe some of those still standing could be used for road traffic. One of the Minister of Works' departments controls the road north of the Hawker district council area, and I ask him whether he will have inquiries made to see whether any of those railway bridges could be used for road purposes and whether the Commonwealth will make them available.

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I will ask the engineer for the district, through the Engineer-in-Chief, for a report and make it available as early as possible.

NEW URANIUM DISCOVERY.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier any information as to the importance of the new uranium discovery at Radium Hill?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—At present operations are being conducted on a lode of ore which runs for a considerable distance east and west. Recently, about half a mile south, another parallel lode of ore has been found, and already surface indications have established by bulldozing that it extends for a considerable length. In the main trial readings of the value of the ore have been satisfactory. Three bores have penetrated the lode at some depth, and they give extremely good indications that we have found what might be a duplication of the first mine in a lode running east and west. The new find has precise characteristics of the first mine, but it is of course too early to say whether it will be as long and as deep and have the reserves of the first mine; but it looks like a duplication of the system, and I believe it will be extremely important in that it will provide a very long life for the field.

SNOWY RIVER WATERS AGREEMENT.

Mr. STOTT—Has the Government yet received a copy of the agreement in relation to the use of waters from the Snowy River, and

has it been perused by the Crown Law authorities? When the agreement was prepared did the South Australian representative on the River Murray Waters Commission have an opportunity to put South Australia's viewpoint regarding the diversion of the Snowy River waters, and is the Premier in a position now to state whether he intends to go ahead with a case in the High Court, because the agreement may be against the interests of this State?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The information I have from our representative on the commission does not lead me to assume that it has been consulted upon the matter. As far as I know the agreement has not been sighted by any South Australian authority. The agreement was drawn up by the Commonwealth Government and undoubtedly has been discussed with the Victorian and New South Wales Governments. Although the South Australian Government has repeatedly asked for a copy of the proposed agreement, up to the present it has been unable to sight it, and consequently we think that probably there is something in it that may not be in accordance with the River Murray Waters Agreement. The agreement is obviously a public matter, and we can see no reason why there is so much secrecy about it. Frankly, it is something we cannot understand, because ultimately it must come before the Parliaments of the Commonwealth and the respective States before it can be ratified. We do not know what is contained in the agreement except that we have heard that it proposes to allot all the Snowy waters to New South Wales and Victoria. If that is correct, then my Government will take action to ensure the rights of the State in accordance with the River Murray Waters Agreement.

GREAT WESTERN BRIDGE.

Mr. RICHES—Many people are perturbed at the rapid deterioration that seems to be taking place in the Great Western Bridge at Port Augusta and the long delay in effecting repairs. Will the Minister of Works ask for a report from his colleague on the condition of this bridge and ascertain the department's intentions about repairs and when the work will be carried out?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I will take up the question with my colleague and bring down a reply.

HOUSING OF ABORIGINES.

Mr. RICHES—Towards the end of last year's session and again this year I asked the Minister of Works a question about the rehousing of some aborigines at Port Augusta and

Port Germein. Will any provision be made on the Loan Estimates for a start on rehousing aborigines, particularly those at Port Germein?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—The Aborigines Department and I are anxious to house these aborigines, and we have housed a number of selected aborigines. I hope this programme will be continued, and I ask the honourable member to await the introduction of the Revenue Estimates to see what can be done in this direction.

AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE STUDENTS.

Mr. STOTT—Will the Minister of Agriculture bring down a report on losses of agricultural students who have commenced courses in agricultural science, particularly in South Australia? I know this question is causing much concern in other States, and I hope he can bring down a report showing the losses over a number of years. If the report shows that the losses are serious will he see what can be done to encourage students to take up these courses?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I presume that the honourable member desires a comparison between the number of students this year as compared with previous years, and I will try to get that information for him.

LOXTON SOLDIER SETTLEMENT VALUATIONS.

Mr. STOTT—Can the Minister of Repatriation say when the valuations will be made under the Loxton soldier settlement scheme? Will they be published in a report to Parliament?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The valuations as regards the Loxton scheme are now being made. Valuations of other areas have been completed, and as soon as those of Loxton have been completed they will be published so that everyone concerned may know them. I do not know when the valuations will be finished, but I think it will be before the end of this year.

SOOT AND SMOKE NUISANCE.

Mr. TAPPING (on notice)—Has any report been received from the officer of the Electricity Trust who sought information overseas to assist in the elimination or alleviation of soot and smoke emission from the Trust's power house at Osborne?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Chief Engineer, Mr. Milne, is still abroad investigating this matter. A report is not expected before the end of October, 1957.

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, VICTORIA SQUARE.

Mr. LAWN (on notice)—For what purpose will the Victoria Square Government buildings be used when departments are transferred from there to the Foy and Gibson building?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—All space vacated and to be vacated in Government buildings is required urgently by other Government departments which are at present working under cramped conditions and many of which are expanding. The main departments which will receive additional accommodation in premises being vacated by departments transferring to the Rundle Street building are:—Agriculture, Public Stores, Engineer-in-Chief, Architect-in-Chief, Country and Suburban Courts, Licensing Court, Coroner's Court, Lands Department, Town Planning Department, Motor Vehicles Department, and the Education Department.

The Rundle Street building will provide accommodation for approximately 800 public servants, apart from officers of the Electricity Trust. It will provide accommodation for the following departments:—Children's Welfare and Public Relief: Previously housed in various small buildings adjacent to Victoria Square, owned by the Government. Highways Department: To be transferred from Richards Building and from the Currie Street school. Richards Building is a rented building and will not be re-used by the Government, and the Education Department will take over Currie Street school. Prices Branch: Previously located in this building. Hospitals Department: To be transferred from Martin Building in Rundle Street, which is a rented building, and would not again be used by the Government. Public Health Department: To be transferred from Flinders House, which is a Government building. Woods and Forests Department: To be transferred from Agriculture Building in Gawler Place. Mines Department: To be transferred from the Exhibition Buildings and from the Education Building.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from July 25. Page 152.)

Mr. GOLDNEY (Gouger)—I am very pleased that the term of office of His Excellency the Governor has been extended for another two years. His Excellency, and Lady George, have visited most parts of South Australia and mixed freely with the people. I

am sure that the news of the extension of His Excellency's term has been well received, for he and Lady George have made themselves very popular. I also express pleasure at the high honour that has been conferred upon the Premier, Sir Thomas Playford. He has received a distinction that was probably as well merited as any honour ever conferred on an Australian. I was grieved to hear of the tragic death of the late member for Wallaroo, Mr. L. R. Heath. He was not a member of this House for long, but he was a man of sterling qualities who endeared himself to all sections of the House. I pay a tribute to the late Sir George Jenkins who was a member and Minister of very long standing in this House. I am sure he will be remembered as a member of the South Australian Parliament who has done very great work in his sphere of activity in this State. I congratulate the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply, both of whom made very fine speeches.

In his speech His Excellency referred to the prosperity which has been enjoyed in this State for a number of years. We realize that there has been this prosperity, but sometimes I think we forget that although a good deal of this is because of the advancement of science and its application to primary industries as well as secondary industries, this is not altogether the reason for that prosperity. We are gaining in scientific knowledge almost daily, but another factor which has an important bearing on all aspects of primary production is seasonal conditions. We have even been trying to improve these conditions by rainmaking experiments in parts of South Australia and other parts of the Commonwealth. It was brought home to us very forcibly that although reserves of fodder were accumulated in the country during the good seasons, they quickly disappeared in the long, dry autumn of this year. We may be faced with the problem that there will not be so much to conserve this season because of the late opening and the short growing season. That is one of the difficulties we are up against. Our herds and flocks have increased very greatly, and we may therefore be up against this problem of reserves if these dry conditions continue again next autumn. I emphasize the very great necessity to conserve supplies of fodder as far as possible against such an emergency.

The construction and maintenance of roads in South Australia is a difficult problem because of the great distances and sparse population in many areas, and perhaps very expensive roads are not warranted. Nevertheless, I think there

should be some real road policy, and one thing particularly that we should have is a system whereby main roads are linked. We have linked the capitals with good roads, and there are two such roads between Adelaide and Melbourne, but the roads leading to the west and east are not good. Many years ago a plan was evolved with regard to certain roads, but the work envisaged was never completed. At that time it was considered that a good through road was necessary from our peninsula towns, such as Wallaroo, Kadina and Moonta, to link up with the Barossa Valley. Much of this work was done, but there is a break in the link-up of about 16 miles between Port Wakefield and Balaklava. This road is very important and essential to the link-up between the western district and the Barossa Valley and River Murray districts. It should have been constructed years ago; it is still not too late for that to be done, and I urge the Minister of Roads and the Highways Commissioner to look carefully into this matter. The road has taken a lot of hammering during the last few years through the carting of grain to the Ardrossan silos from Balaklava and other towns further north, and the bulk of the grain will continue to go by road to Ardrossan until the silo system at Wallaroo is completed. The sealing of this road would bring it into line with other main roads, and would also make that link between the western and eastern portions of our State.

About 18 months ago portion of the road linking Port Wakefield with Snowtown—that is branching off from the main Kadina Road—was completed. That road is now taking much of the heavy traffic which formerly went through our northern road to Clare. The volume of traffic on this road is an indication of its popularity and heavy transport is using it in preference to the other northern road which has so many steep grades. Huge sums are spent annually on the maintenance of gravel roads but it would be better to devote more money to sealing more of our main roads.

I am pleased to note that the Education Department proposes increasing the away-from-home allowance for country students who are obliged to board in the city. This has been a problem for parents who, by force of circumstances, have been compelled to have their children educated in the city. The previous allowance was totally inadequate and I am sure they are grateful for the intimation that the allowance will be increased by £20.

Since the formation of the Electricity Trust much has been done in providing power in

country centres and the trust has been inundated with requests for supplies from sparsely populated country areas, some of which are naturally concerned when other centres receive priority. However, the trust must first supply those centres from which the greatest revenue can be obtained. I hope it will continue its present policy and that eventually all centres will be connected so that country people may enjoy the same benefits as those in densely settled areas. I support the motion.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla)—I, too, congratulate the mover and seconder of the motion, and also express pleasure at the extension of the term of office of His Excellency, the Governor. Sir Robert and Lady George have, by their friendly approach to people in all parts of the State, made themselves deservedly popular and I am sure all members are gratified at the extension of office. In dealing with His Excellency's Speech the Leader of the Opposition showed conclusively that the prosperity of the State referred to therein is, in the main, due to fortuitous circumstances—particularly increased production, increased prices and good seasons associated with the wool industry—and not to any particular action by this Government. In order to give the impression that this prosperity is evenly spread, paragraph 4 of the Speech contains what I consider to be a most misleading and blatant piece of propaganda. It states that this State's basic wage in terms of real purchasing power is still the highest in Australia. The purchasing power of the basic wage in any State is determined by the cost of the articles in the index in each State. As a result of the suspension of the quarterly adjustments in 1953 and the failure of this Government to make adjustments to the State basic wage as in other States, our wage-earners have lost at least £14,000,000. If the financial prosperity were more evenly spread we would see it reflected in the contributions that have been made to the various security and other loans that have been subscribed to during the last few years. However, when we examine the list of contributions to those loans, we discover that only small amounts have been contributed from towns primarily of an industrial character as compared with contributions from other places.

Although the Speech states that price rises in this State have been the lowest in the Commonwealth we find the Prices Commissioner reported as saying that he was very concerned at the recent living cost index rise for South Australia, particularly on clothing, and

that, not satisfied with the generous retailers' margin of 45 per cent on utility frocks, some traders had been getting 60 to 75 per cent. He is also reported as saying that the clothing increase represents a most unsatisfactory position. Although these articles were decontrolled following strong assurances and representations from the trade, when these assurances proved worthless the retailers were publicly warned that inspectors would be sent around within a few days. That was done presumably to give them time to change price tags with the possibility of their being again altered when the inspectors had gone on their way. How different that is from the treatment accorded the wage-earner, who is always accused of being responsible for rises in the cost of living for to achieve price stability the wage-earner has been deprived of £14,000,000. It is obvious that what is sauce for the wage-earner is not sauce for the profiteer.

The claim in the Speech that an improvement in the housing position is now evident can only be described as another piece of propaganda which does not reveal the actual position. No doubt the position has improved for those who have secured houses, but the unsatisfied demand is not merely still strong as stated, but stronger than ever and the proportion of unsatisfied applicants to satisfied applicants is increasing. In 1952-53, 7,904 applicants sought trust homes and 4,126 units were built, whereas in 1955-56, 11,751 applied but only 3,238 units were constructed. This reveals that we are slipping backwards rather than progressing. I notice from the Speech that the Housing Trust will complete 3,100 houses for the current year and will continue to build at that rate for the next year. Not only is this total number quite insufficient, but the proportion being built for rental purposes is also far too low. A very big percentage of migrants and other people simply do not have deposits to put down on purchase houses. Recently the general manager of the Housing Trust was reported to have said, "The main reason for cancelled applications on the sales side is that people cannot raise the deposits." It is interesting to see what the *Whyalla News* thinks on this aspect. In a leader in that publication of May 25, 1956, the following appeared:—

If the expenditure by the Government of many millions of pounds on the satellite dormitory city Elizabeth can be justified, then we believe there are even more cogent reasons for the spending of a tenth of that sum on the expanding industrial town Whyalla for additional housing of the type so manifestly and critically required. If Mr. Playford took his

courage in both hands and requisitioned the building of several hundred houses for rental in Whyalla, the significant consequences to the town would be quite overshadowed by the imponderable economic advantages that would accrue as well to the Commonwealth as to the State.

In the issue of July 26, 1957, the editor said:—

Women and some men have been deeply moved to tears because of their straitened circumstances due to the acute shortage of houses available in the town for rental. Many are living in wholly inadequate premises, as the Town Commission's Health Inspector could testify. And there is no relief in sight—at least, not for many long months ahead. An increase in the company's labour force of more than 180 in the past 14 months is only one aspect of the constant growth of the town's population. Housing has not kept pace with that growth, and the position seems unlikely to improve as population expansion continues. What is required is a realistic investigation by the Housing Trust into the needs of those outside the scope of the B.H.P. housebuilding plan. Purchase homes in an industrial town are not, in the final analysis, the best investment for housing a working population. More homes for rental will provide the only answer. The need for such is urgent.

I direct attention particularly to the last three sentences. With regard to this aspect I shall point out just what has been happening over a number of years to show that it is becoming increasingly difficult for a wage earner to purchase his own home. Despite improved methods in building and manufacturing processes, it is now more difficult for a wage earner to secure a home than it was some years ago. I shall compare the position in 1938 with that of 1957; I have selected this period because I am well acquainted with it. In 1938 the basic wage was £3 15s., and the rate for a fitter, whom I have selected as a typical tradesman, was £5 5s. In 1938 the cost of a house of the type now being built for wage earners was between £650 and £800, and the interest rate was between 3½ and 4 per cent. The basic wage is now £12 11s., the fitter's rate £16 6s., a home costs between £3,500 and £4,000, and the rate is 5 per cent. The basic wage has increased by 330 per cent, and the fitter's rate by 310 per cent, whereas the cost of houses has increased by 500 per cent, and the interest rate by 25 per cent.

For the purposes of my comparison I will take the case of the fitter and the type of house he would be likely to buy in 1938 compared with the type he would buy now. If he bought an £800 home in 1938 and did not pay any deposit, he would pay 24s. a week on a 20 years term at 3½ per cent—23 per cent of his weekly wage. If he were now able to enter into

an agreement to purchase a home for £3,500 at 5 per cent interest, and if he paid a deposit as low as £200, which he could do only in quite rare circumstances, his repayments would be £4 6s. 8d. a week for the long period of 32 years—27 per cent of his weekly wage. If he borrowed on a 20-year term, he would have to pay £5 9s. 3d. a week, or 33 per cent of his wage. This would be difficult for a tradesman, but it would be much more difficult for an unskilled workman.

Members of the Government are always very proud of the support they give to the purchase of homes, but it is interesting to see that during all the years in which they have held the reins of government the ability of a wage earner to purchase a home has steadily decreased, and there is not the slightest doubt that the pressure to secure a rental home now is largely a consequence of that. The Leader has touched on the social problems arising from lack of good homes, and it is difficult to assess the far-reaching ill effects on children who lack suitable accommodation. I recently had to deal with the case of a family with six children which, partly through bad management, and partly through sheer bad luck, had no house whatever. These people were housed in a tent, but finally had to move out owing to the inclement weather, when people took pity on them and put them temporarily in an iron garage, contrary to local government regulations. The condition of that family was absolutely pitiable, but an application rested with the trust for three weeks without reply, and if they had not been able to go out 700 miles from Port Augusta to a house on the East-West line, they could not have secured a house. Every effort made to secure accommodation in other directions was fruitless. The problems of this family caused me great distress and presented a problem that seemed completely insoluble under existing circumstances. I venture to say that there are many similar problems in other parts of the State. Unless prompt steps are taken to deal with housing problems the migration policy must suffer because of adverse publicity, and despite the protests made recently by private banking institutions there is no doubt that they have not been making available for building all the money they could. Much of their money has gone into hire purchase organizations simply because it can earn much more there than in home-building loans.

In the paragraph in the Governor's Speech relating to road construction there is no reference to the many difficulties in which councils find themselves in financing new road work.

Despite increasing responsibilities councils are receiving less today than ever before from the national income. In 1950, the Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies, said he would urge the holding of a financial convention in which the Commonwealth, States and local government would participate to examine the financial relationships of the three arms of government. Apparently all States refuse to co-operate. Since I have been here I have heard nothing to lead me to believe that anything is being done in this direction, notwithstanding the crying need to face up to the need to help councils in the construction of new roads. Not only are local government bodies finding it impossible to finance new road work but in districts outside their areas, where the Engineering and Water Supply Department is responsible for road work over vast distances, the department has less money this year for the work of grading roads than ever before, despite the great increase in motor traffic on them. In these areas there are virtually no sealed or metal roads, but simply bush tracks which are improved by grading in some instances.

In the Governor's Speech there is a reference to Government action making councils now better equipped with modern road-making equipment, and to the fact that during the present year work valued at £2,340,000 has been carried out, the money coming from funds provided by the Government for road maintenance. It is also mentioned that the policy of the Ministers is to continue to extend bituminizing throughout the State and to provide assistance for developmental roads. Regarding the assistance provided to councils for procuring road-making equipment, I point out the experience of the council with which I am associated. Recently the Whyalla Town Commission endeavoured to get a loan to purchase a secondhand grader in first class condition for the sum of £2,500, with a view to selling the old grader so that better work can be done. We have plenty of road work to do; many new roads need to be constructed. The reply was that the funds available for interest-free loans were very limited and that it was necessary to allot them to local government bodies for use primarily for maintenance and to construct roads by means of Government grants. Our application in this matter was refused. Let us see why we were ruled out.

Last year we received a Highways grant of £3,500, which was less than the amount in the previous year. This year we will get no highways grant but will receive a grant-in-aid of £700. We are completely ruled out of

obtaining a loan to purchase machinery in order to press on with road work. The position is getting more acute each year because of the increase in the cost of new road work. However, there is nothing in the Governor's Speech to enable me to think that the problem is being tackled.

Regarding the needs of education, housing and roads, I feel that these are fast outstripping our means. More finance is urgently needed to deal with these three important aspects of Government work but there is no suggestion as to how the needs are to be adequately met. Instead we have a solemn complacency about these matters. There is no reference in the Governor's Speech to the much needed steel works at Whyalla, but I notice that the search for high grade ore outside the B.H.P. Company's leases has revealed the prospect of other valuable deposits in the Middleback Ranges, besides the 20,000,000 tons which has been mentioned on two or three previous occasions. Despite all the recent statements about steel production in this country there is an outstanding need for the establishment of works in South Australia close to the source of the main supply of high grade iron ore, and the proving of the new deposits, which I have had the privilege of seeing, will be watched with very close interest by members on this side of the House.

There is no reference in the Governor's Speech to the welfare of aborigines, although we have just celebrated National Aborigines Day and despite the fact that there is a growing and general belief that all is not well in this department. From what I have seen in the short time I have represented Whyalla, I am satisfied many things are far from well in this direction. At present I content myself by saying that I feel it is desirable that much better supervision should be exercised over the relief given to natives. It should be issued only to those unemployed, unemployable or unable to work or sick. There is much room for an improvement in educating aboriginal children, not only in primary but in secondary schools. I find that very little is being done in the latter direction and I am satisfied that real progress towards assimilation can be more easily accomplished by concentrating on the education of these children and giving them the best advantages and opportunities that we can offer.

There is also a need for a further extension of Housing Trust activities in building homes for aborigines in certain circumstances.

Recently the Minister responsible for their welfare indicated his satisfaction that the trouble at Andamooka had been satisfactorily settled. I again draw his attention to the fact that many flagons of cheap wine were taken by taxi to Andamooka from Port Augusta and sold to the natives at £4 a flagon. I hope the police will take steps to ensure that this does not occur again.

The seconder of the motion went to some lengths to stress the importance of Eyre Peninsula and its potentialities in relation to primary production. The successful development of the peninsula is very much wrapped up with an efficient railway system, but there is no reference to it in the Governor's Speech. I have received a statement from one who is very well informed about that system and I want to read it to show its importance and how it needs better attention than it is getting at present, because of its relationship to the development of the peninsula. My informant says:—

The railway system based on Port Lincoln has been badly neglected for many years and the position now is that there are large stretches of line which are not safe for normal speeds. On the Buckleboo track alone there was one 48 mile stretch on which the speeds of freight trains were restricted to ten miles per hour. The main causes of the disgraceful conditions are lack of maintenance and the use of ancient rails that are worn out and crippled. By constant battling, the rate of relaying has been boosted to 8 miles per year, when it is pointed out that practically all of the tracks on the system, totalling over 500 miles, require relaying, it is realized that the only progress being made is towards complete failure. Major derailments through track failures are weekly occurrences. These are very costly, involving the cost of repairs to rollingstock, overtime for many men and a frantic search for spare equipment.

The resources of Eyre Peninsula are only just beginning to be exploited. Cereal production is rapidly expanding while the mineral potential is, on current information, likely to constitute a large part of future development. The railways are only just capable of coping with existing traffic without any further track deterioration which will inevitably result if nothing is done to rebuild it. With development of the area, the extra demand for transport will hasten the end of the system as an essential service. The charge can fairly be laid against the government that it is more interested in spending many thousands of pounds on a pleasure boat harbour at Glenelg to retain one of their members in Parliament, than in facing up to its responsibilities on the West Coast.

Recently, the Chief Engineer of the S.A.R. made a visit to Port Lincoln to investigate allegations in *Truth* about criminal neglect of the railways, and couldn't have gone over at a

better time, as there was a major derailment through the web on ancient rails having rusted through and collapsed. It used to be referred to as the "hoop iron railway," now railways men say that a ship load or two of hoop iron would come in very handy to do some repairs and make the railway safer to train crews. Permanent way gangs no longer stand beside the line while trains go past, they move twenty or thirty yards away to be safe. Members of train crews have all made their wills where the majority of people don't worry about it until late in life. Miners' wives only worry for the eight hours the men are down the mines, but railway men's wives have to worry for three or four days at a stretch. Two crews work relay trains with one crew working and the other trying to rest in the relay van. They want the glass removed from the windows of the relay vans to reduce the risks of injury when (they don't say "if") the van rolls over when they are in it, but there is apparently no money available. Meanwhile, thousands of pounds are being poured into the Patawalonga.

The member for Torrens dealt with civilian defence and I notice with interest that he does not agree with the Premier's attitude. Recently I asked the Premier whether he would make inquiries on the possible danger arising from the use of Woomera and Maralinga ranges for nuclear experiments, and he replied that the matter was outside the scope of the State Government. The member for Torrens says that although he realizes that defence matters are, in the main, within the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth Government, in peacetime at any rate such matters concerned the welfare and defence of the civilian population in this State and thus come within the scope of this Parliament. With that I agree. He went on to refer to public apathy in this matter and said that it may well be that press reports are so confusing and contradictory that apathy results. May I suggest that possibly much of the public apathy, if any, is due to the realization of how ineffectual civil defence could be in the face of an atomic attack, and what little democratic control the public has over the Menzies Government's foreign policy. The honourable member, however, rather destroyed his case by telling us some of the things that may happen if there were an atomic attack, for he went on to say:—

A modern bomb would cause complete devastation through the combined effect of blast heat and rays over an area $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles in diameter. Moreover, irreparable damage would be caused over an area of a radius of $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles and severe to slight damage over a radius of 12 miles. Indeed, on a clear day the latter area could be increased to a diameter of 20 miles, depending upon the distance above ground at which the bomb exploded.

I am reliably informed that if a bomb were dropped on Sydney at midday it is estimated that 1,000,000 people could lose their lives and 400,000 more would be seriously injured. Does not that picture indicate that civil defence is completely ineffectual in the face of an attack of this sort?

I would like members to consider the attitude of people who have been submitted to something of this sort. I remind them that not so long ago the corporation of the city of Coventry was asked by the British Government to take up the question of civil defence. Coventry had a very thorough experience of being blitzed with conventional type bombing, and their reply was that in view of their experience they considered that civilian defence against atomic bombing was entirely useless and they would not be bothered considering it.

I have some correspondence from Japan, and we all know of the attitude of the Japanese Government lately with reference to bombing tests in the Pacific. These people have experienced atomic bombing and it is interesting to see whether they think much of civil defence. I have not heard anything about civilian defence in Japan, but they are very concerned with the question of banning bombing and getting disarmament. The letter I have comes from the Japan Council against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, and says *inter alia*:—

Because of our bitter experiences we no doubt have a special concern to prohibit nuclear weapons. However, we believe that the whole world should be alerted against atomic hazards, and that all responsible citizens of goodwill should be prepared to stand against possible human annihilation. We believe a powerful world public opinion to be the only "deterrent power" against atomic war. And we are deeply convinced that no political, ideological, religious or social barriers are insurmountable in our common efforts to prevent atomic war, which could mean the virtual extinction of the human race. Such has been the experience of our own people.

That statement is signed by several people whose names I will give because so often when a statement such as this is made we hear the gibe, "This is another Communist declaration." The signatories are the Professor of Hosei University; President of Japan Y.W.C.A. and Vice-President of World-Wide Y.W.C.A.; Chairman of the National Federation of University Professors and member of Japan Academy; Chairman of Housewives' Federation and member of House of Councillors; Chairman of the International Peace Association and Elder in Christian Circles in Japan; the President of the Shinwa Bank and member of the House of

Representatives; President of the Federation of Japanese Women's Organizations; Vice-President of the All Japan Buddhist Association; the ex-Mayor of Hiroshima and President of the Hiroshima Council against A and H bombs; the Chairman of the General Council of Trade Unions of Japan; President of Japan Academy and President of the International Law Association. The document is also signed by several other members of the House of Representatives and several university professors. I suggest that the member for Torrens (Mr. Coumbe) would have been better employed had he urged members to work together to build up public opinion so that weapons of this sort would be completely banned and some progress would be made on the road to disarmament.

Mr. Jenkins—Would your public opinion influence Russia?

Mr. LOVEDAY—In reply to that interjection I should like the honourable member to listen to a few statements which have been made but, so far as I know, not published in the press. These show that aggressive instincts do not all lie on the one side. Firstly, I refer to some reports that deal with the prospects of war, because after all, Mr. Coumbe made quite a point about this being an urgent matter and a present danger. In the *Forrestal Diaries* (1951), it is recorded that Mr. Forrestal (Truman's Secretary of the Navy) said in June, 1946, that:—

... he believed that in spite of certain disturbing indications the Russians would not move this summer—in fact at any time.

Two years later (in August, 1948) General Bedell Smith (U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union and previously Eisenhower's Chief of Staff), reported to the War Council on his meeting with Stalin and Molotov, and the council, according to Forrestal, gained the impression that the Russians did not want war. The *New York Times* of November 23, 1951, contained the following extract from a military report to the NATO Council:—

Nor are there any serious indications that the Soviet Union is preparing for hostilities. The *Chicago Tribune* of March 13, 1952, reported the following statement by General Gruenther (Eisenhower's Chief of Staff):—

I don't think war is imminent now and I don't think it is ever going to come. In my mind there isn't going to be any war.

Only last week Walter Lippmann (leading New York columnist) made a similar statement. Let us look for some other "aggressors for peace." The authoritative *Wall Street Journal*

of November 12, 1948, contained the following statement:—

While a peace scare is not probable in the near future its impact, if we had one and it implied a lowering of arms outlays, might easily be worse than a moderate tax increase, from the standpoint of corporate profits.

Further, the *United States News and World Report* dated December 31, 1948, contained this statement:—

Peace, if it really arrived, would upset things. At present arms expenditure and aid to other countries are bolstering business.

The same journal, on February 17, 1951, said, "War scares are easy to create." I suggest that Mr. Coumbe amend his remarks on the question of aggression. One thing is reasonably certain: if there were a full scale nuclear war it would result in such chaos, destruction and social upheaval that the sort of capitalist society Mr. Coumbe is usually associated with defending would not survive; so from all points of view he would be much better employed advocating stronger and more sincere efforts towards disarmament.

Mr. JENKINS (Stirling)—I have much pleasure in supporting the mover and seconder of the motion, and join them in expressing pleasure at the announcement that His Excellency the Governor and Lady George will continue to serve this State for another two years. His Excellency's Speech was a comprehensive and reasonable survey of this State's activities during the past year and a detailed outline of the Government's programme for the coming year.

The greatest setback to South Australia during the past year was the disastrous floods on the Murray River, which brought much hardship to many people and caused a great loss of production and heavy expenditure on rehabilitation programmes. Great credit must be given to Sir Kingsley Paine for his conduct of the affairs of the relief committee; in all cases he has met the applicants with understanding and sympathy. He still has much to do, but I believe he will continue in the same excellent way he has started. I pay a tribute to the Minister of Irrigation and the Minister of Works and their departments for the way they have administered both the preventive measures and the rehabilitation programme such as the dewatering of the swamps and the rebuilding of the banks. I wish to refer to one particular aspect: much good came from the employment of the settlers and the hiring of their implements for the rebuilding of banks and dewatering of swamps. This enabled them to keep the pot boiling until they could get into production again.

The present dry winter has helped in cultivating and seeding the swamp land. As soon as the dewatering of the higher swamps was completed the settlers put in quick-return crops such as barley and oats, and already the cattle are grazing on those crops. A fortnight ago when I was in the area the lower swamp-lands were cultivated and the pastures showing green. Indeed, the land may be better in the long run because of its submergence for a time. One disadvantage that may result from the floods, however, is the increased growth of the *paspalum* and couch. It was hoped to eradicate these weeds, but I understand they are still alive and that the cultivation that is taking place will probably spread the couch to places where it did not exist before.

Paragraph 10 of His Excellency's Speech referred to the completion of the Victor Harbour causeway, and I thank the Minister of Marine both for that work and for the work on the jetties his department has undertaken in my district. The causeway at Victor Harbour is a great tourist attraction, and I believe that not only the Premier, but also other Government members, support the tourist trade. I suggest to the Government and the Tourist Bureau that a great tourist attraction could be made of a road from the Goolwa barrage to the Murray mouth. This would necessitate the construction of a road to a point five miles below the barrage, where the river enters the sea, and a bitumen turn-round at the terminal point so that people could return by that road. The road could follow the river and go through the sandhills. There is deep water for the last three miles of the river and fish such as bream, mullet, and salmon trout abound. This sport would attract fishermen. Further, it would open up a splendid round trip from Adelaide, through Strathalbyn (one of the most beautiful inland towns in the State), Victor Harbour, Goolwa and back to Adelaide. I am sure it would encourage thousands of visitors, especially from other States. Many week-end visitors to Goolwa inquire how to get to the Murray Mouth. At present they can only see it from a point a mile or two away. Although such a scheme would be costly, I am sure people would be prepared to pay to see where the greatest river in South Australia enters the sea. There is much to be seen along the road, including a beautiful bird sanctuary, one of the best in South Australia, which would be an inducement.

The Governor also mentioned that there would be a thorough investigation into beach

sand to prove whether they contained rutile, thorium and zircon. I advocate that one of the first areas to be searched should be between the Bluff, Victor Harbour, and the Murray mouth. I do this for several reasons, one being that these minerals are usually found where granite rock prevails. To be worked economically, there must be road or rail transport and an abundance of fresh water. We have the roads and the railway and we have the Murray running between Goolwa and the barrages, and a pipeline could be laid to serve the whole of the area between the two points mentioned. I hope the Government will have an early inspection made of this area.

His Excellency also mentioned the fishing industry, which is an up and coming industry in South Australia. It has been in the background for a long time. I notice that the Commonwealth Government contemplates purchasing a 160ft. trawler for research work in the Great Australian Bight. I am convinced that this is well worthwhile, as we have hardly touched our offshore fishing resources. If the water temperatures prove to be the same as between the Dogger Bank and Iceland, probably the same types of fish will be found which keep the English, Norwegian and Dutch markets going. Prawn grounds have been found at Tin Can Bay near Brisbane and in Western Australia, and I know that we have prawns in South Australian waters as I have caught them, but whether they are in commercial quantities I do not know. Our fishing research vessel, the *Weerutta* could well be employed on this research. Prawns would be a veritable money spinner if found in large quantities. Those purchased from the other States are very dear, costing 8s. to 10s. a lb. At Tin Can Bay hauls worth £3,000 a night are being made.

I pay a tribute to the South Australian Fishermen's Co-operative Limited. Since it has undertaken the marketing of fish it has purchased depots on the West Coast and in the South-East and attended to the marketing and distribution of fish, and as a result the position has improved out of sight. As it also purchases large quantities of fishing gear for its members, the time has come when it should be able to get import licences for certain fishing gear which cannot be procured in South Australia. I understand its policy is to purchase in Australia all the requirements it can. However, the Australian article costs much more than the imported. For instance, tuna hooks of local manufacture can be purchased in South Australia for 10s. 6d. each, whereas exactly the same article purchased from Japan costs

3s. 3d. I hope that our Minister will give his support if the company seeks import licences for fishermen's requirements.

I remind members of the recent activities of the Police rescue squad at Waitpinga when recovering the bodies of the Sheridan brothers who were killed in an aeroplane mishap when searching for a man who allegedly had been washed off the rocks. I pay a tribute to these men. The equipment they used had been completed only that week and they had no opportunity to practise with it. They worked 300ft. above sea level under wintry, rough and cold conditions. They took every precaution for the safety of those who helped them and did a marvellous job. Constable McNamee went down the cliff face after dark on a 1½ in. rope trying to free the body of one of the victims, and worked for more than half an hour, and when he was hauled to the top was exhausted. I am pleased to see that he has received an honourable mention from the Police Commissioner. I also pay a tribute to the volunteers who assisted in the operation. Every step they took after dark when working on the slippery cliff could have meant their falling over the side, and there could easily have been two or three more tragedies. I hope the Chief Secretary, who controls the Police Force, will see that the rescue squad is supplied with walkie-talkie sets. I do not know whether the squad have yet applied for them, but if they do I hope they will be granted. It was almost impossible for operations to be directed on the cliff after dark because of the terrific roar of the sea. The men working on the cliff top could not communicate with those working below, whereas if there had been two walkie-talkie sets there would have been complete control of operations and much bruising of those engaged in the rescue work would have been avoided.

Water restrictions have been imposed at Victor Harbour during the last two years. The population is increasing to such an extent that it is impossible to meet their water requirements. I understand that in 1951 the weekly consumption during the summer was about 1,500,000 gallons, the year before last it was 5,500,000 gallons and last year it was up to 8,500,000. These figures were supplied by the local water engineer. There had been two very wet winters, but despite this our reservoir was down to about one or two days' supply and was only a muddy puddle. The Minister had given instructions that the pumps

should be employed at Goolwa to inject water into the 6 in. main and into the tank and reservoir to supplement supplies. For several weeks the balance was just held, and but for cool weather and small rains the people would have been in extreme difficulties. It only needed one of the old mains to burst because of the increased pressure from the injection of water for the whole district to be famished for water. A new scheme is before the Public Works Committee at present, but I suggest to the Minister that if the reservoir falls to half level next year pumping be commenced to provide a reserve supply.

The reservoir and main supplying water to Strathalbyn was enlarged last year, but there is an increasing demand for water for stock carried by farmers on the outskirts of the town. The Minister promised me he would consider extending the main to the farming areas, and I hope that this will be done and that the supply will be sufficient. If it is not, I hope he will consider a bigger scheme to meet the needs of the town and district, which is growing rapidly. I understand that he is continuing a survey of an area which is partly in the district of Murray and partly in mine. The area concerned includes Hartley, Woodchester, Karmantoo and Callington, and I hope he will have a report soon because farmers there are developing much land that has been under scrub. They are clearing about 8,000 acres a year and need a supply of water for stock, for the water they have now is too salty.

The question of decentralization is a vexed one, but I refute the allegations that this Government does not support decentralization. In fact, it submits applications for assistance to establish industries to the Industries Development Committee, which consists of members of both Parties and both Houses. The committee examines each case and reports on the economic potential of the industry concerned and often recommends assistance by way of advances or guarantees by the Government. When he was speaking on decentralization the Leader of the Opposition said:—

This scheme was implemented to prevent the workers from spreading out from the industrial districts of the metropolitan area. If they went out to places like Murray Bridge, Tailem Bend and Port Lincoln they would build up a solid core of labour in those places and the fate of the Government would be in jeopardy, therefore the Government does not believe in decentralization.

A little later Mr. Brookman interjected, "Would you compel industries to go to the

country?" and the Leader of the Opposition replied:—

No, but I would not spend taxpayers' money, which can never be recovered, in establishing them on the Adelaide Plains between here and Gawler.

About two years ago a company wished to start an industry in a country district. It was an English firm which had started a branch in Sydney. Two representatives from England and two from Sydney visited my district in company with the Premier. They had already been to several other country towns, and I think Murray Bridge was one, but they were not satisfied. They intended to install a manufacturing plant costing £1,250,000 to produce goods to the value of £2,250,000 a year. In the first year they would require 1,200 employees, in the second year 1,500, and probably more later. They wanted a site having road and rail transport and they took an option over 10 acres between Goolwa and Middleton, which offered the transport they required. They also needed an abundance of fresh water, which was available from the Murray at Goolwa, and an open seaboard to dispose of effluent. They needed a large supply of electricity, but the supply in my district is under the control of the Harbor Electricity Company, which has the franchise until August 1, 1958, and it could not supply the power required for it was working to capacity. The Premier told me the only thing to do was to legislate to enable the Electricity Trust to supply the district. He also said that the Housing Trust could provide the houses for the employees. It seemed that all arrangements were satisfactory to the company, but the Sydney plant has been showing a loss ever since and the firm said it would not go on with its plans in South Australia. I emphasize that the Premier did everything possible to induce that company to commence operations in a country district.

Some time ago the Vice President of the South Australian Branch of the Australian Pig Society approached me about the introduction of legislation for the compulsory tattoo branding of pigs. If it followed the New South Wales Act pigs' ears would have to be branded at least seven days before they went to market. A Bill was passed in the New South Wales Parliament in 1940, but it was not proclaimed until 1954, to take effect from February 1, 1955. The New South Wales Auditor-General's report of 1955-56 states:—

In July, 1953, the balance in the Swine Compensation Fund was £2,170, and in 1954

it was £6,910. Sales of duty stamps, July, 1954, was £47,572, and next year £59,432. Payments to owners in compensation in the first year amounted to £42,832 and the following year £36,114. Repayment to the Treasury was in 1954-55 £7,000 on advances. In 1955-56 sales and fines amounted to £57,256 and compensation to owners £36,993, and repayment to the Treasury against advances £9,000. Balance in the fund at June 30, 1956, was £34,491.

I asked the New South Wales Branch of the Australian Pig Society to inform me of the effect of the legislation on the industry and received the following reply:—

In regard to the Swine Branding Act, we advise that this was introduced at the expressed request of this branch of the Australian Pig Society, in conjunction with the Primary Producers' Union and Pig Processors. From general observation the Act has played a major part in reducing disease and subsequently assisted the industry economically by reducing the number of carcasses condemned. As the amount of labour involved in branding is negligible, there is little difference between the advantages gained by either a small or large producer. Branding assists in maintaining the identity of the producer at all times.

The figures I have quoted about New South Wales show that the industry was in an unsatisfactory position before the Act was passed. Now, instead of being in debt, it has a credit balance in the fund and repayments to the Treasury have totalled £16,000. Recently I received a report from the Minister of Agriculture on the position in South Australia, which indicates that we have quite a different picture to present here. Compensation has been paid on a total of 4,750 pigs from 1950-51 up to and including 1956-57. The Swine Compensation Fund has a credit balance of £87,488 as at June 30, 1957. The only contribution made by the Government or the Department of Agriculture to the fund is interest on the credit balance. A total of £75,338 has been paid in compensation from 1950-51 to 1956-57 inclusive. It will be seen that the fund has a very healthy credit balance.

The point I wish to make is that, notwithstanding this quite substantial balance, there only needs to be one epidemic in the pig industry to put the fund in debt, and considering the small amount of inconvenience and cost to the pig producers I can see no reason why the same legislation should not be introduced in South Australia in order that the disease, if any, can be traced to the owner and stamped out. I support the motion.

Mr. JENNINGS (Enfield)—I join with other members in expressing deep regret at the tragic death of our former colleague, Mr. Heath. When death comes suddenly and unexpectedly, as it did in this case, it seems all the harder, and all members of this House received a severe shock at his untimely end. How much sadder and harder it must have been for the members of his immediate family. The most, and certainly the least, we can do, is to express to them our sincere sympathy. I also pay a tribute to the late Sir George Jenkins. In this case death came naturally after a long and full life, a goodly portion of which was devoted to the service of this State. I think I speak for all members when I say that we will remember him with affection and gratitude. I also agree with the pleasure expressed by other members at the extension of the term of office of His Excellency Sir Robert George and Lady George. The Vice-Regal pair have given splendid service to South Australia, and have carried out their duties in a way which reflects great credit on them and gives gratification to the citizens of the State. We can be thankful that they are permitted a further term in which to continue their service to the State.

I congratulate the member for Barossa and the member for Eyre on having had the honour to move and second respectively the Address in Reply, and I commend them for the manner in which they did it. However, I am afraid that I must speak in rather different terms from theirs about the Governor's Speech. Firstly, I register my very grave perturbation at the growing tendency of the Government to use the Governor's Speech as an opportunity to engage in political propaganda. Let us face the ugly fact that this means that Her Majesty's representative is being used by this Government as a political propagandist. It means nothing more nor less than that. Surely there is nothing more calculated to bring this exalted office into disrepute. It is indeed strange that this should pass without comment or demur from Government members who are always loudest in their lip service to vice-regal status. I believe that most members would feel that at least it is in bad taste to have the Governor state in his Speech, as if it were a fact, something which is very debatable. It is surely intolerable to have the Governor read out, as if it were a fact, something which is definitely and patently untrue, as he had to on this occasion.

In paragraph 4 of his Speech we see this rather astonishing claim:—

The basic wage in South Australia in terms of real purchasing power is still the greatest in Australia, whilst the C series index reveals that since June, 1953, price rises in this State have been the lowest.

This flight of fantasy may have had its genesis in what happened at the quarterly adjustment last March, when there was a general overall drop in the cost of living figures as evidenced by the C series index throughout Australia, the largest fall of all being 7s. in South Australia. In those States where quarterly adjustments were being continued, the wages were lowered by the appropriate amount in each State; but in South Australia, where workers have not enjoyed any of the upward adjustments since the suspension of quarterly adjustments by the Federal Court, the 7s. drop was, naturally, not taken off the basic wage. It could easily be that according to the C series index the purchasing power of the South Australian basic wage was the highest in the Commonwealth for a few days, after lagging badly behind all the other States for years. It would only be for a few days, because very shortly after this fall was announced there were increases in a good many basic commodities in South Australia which operated immediately, and for which the workers received no compensation. Even if the adjustments were to be made the workers would not get any compensation for three months afterwards.

The rises in these basic commodities meant that the South Australian worker lost the temporary benefit he gained through the 7s. fall in the cost of living in the previous quarter. They were reflected in the statistician's figures for the last quarter which have just been released and which show that the rise in the cost of living in South Australia for the last quarter was the highest in the Commonwealth. Our workers now will not be recompensed for this increase over the last quarter, as will the workers in the other States. The fact is that instead of the statement in the Governor's Speech being true, just the opposite is true. Our workers will revert to the Cinderella position they have occupied since the suspension of the quarterly cost of living adjustments.

If we carefully examine the figures we will appreciate that not even the latter part of paragraph 4—“... while the C series index reveals that since June, 1953, price rises in this State have been the lowest”—is correct.

The Statistician's figures disclose that South Australia and Queensland have had price rises equally lowest since 1953 and that New South Wales is only .5 per cent ahead. Indeed, with the exception of Western Australia there is not more than 2.07 per cent difference between any of the States for the whole period. That does not mean that there have not been considerable price rises in every State. However, in the other States, for the most part the workers have received benefit in recompense for the increase in cost of living through the maintenance of some form of adjustment to their wages according to the C series index, whereas in South Australia our workers under State awards have not had any automatic increases. The result is that the workers in this State have lost almost £15,000,000 directly in wages. Of course, there is a further wage comparison that might be made which reveals an illuminating picture. If we take into consideration for the same period awards, determinations and agreements in South Australia and compare them with the increases in the C series index, the average real wage has fallen in South Australia while it has risen in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. Perhaps it is rather understandable that this wage picture was not given in the Governor's speech. Paragraph 20 states—

Although an improvement in the housing position is now evident, the unsatisfied demand for houses is still strong, and is likely to remain so for some time.

I agree with the latter part of that statement although I think it would have been better phrased thus:—

The unsatisfied demand for houses is stronger and is likely to increase for some time.

The statement that an improvement in the housing position is now evident raises the question of to whom is it now evident.

Mr. Lawn—To Government supporters.

Mr. JENNINGS—I think there are some Government supporters who would not agree with that statement. The improvement could only be evident to the person who drafted His Excellency's speech. To everyone with a practical knowledge of the housing position it is obvious that the problem is rapidly worsening and the figures supplied by the Government from time to time corroborate this. Official figures reveal that our house building rate annually is progressively worsening whilst our population is rapidly increasing. During this debate we have heard reference to the number of migrants being attracted to South Australia and this has been claimed as an indication of

good government. I do not know how or why migrants are being attracted here unless perhaps the Government hopes they can be used, because of their unfamiliarity with industrial conditions, as labour that won't rebel at conditions that militant Australian workers would rebel at. Whilst it cannot be gainsaid that we are getting more than our proportion of migrants, we are not doing them a good turn by bringing them here with the housing condition and the employment position that obtain here. Most metropolitan members would agree that every week they are approached by more and more people in desperate housing conditions and there is very little they can hope to do for them. Paragraph 20 also states:—

The Government therefore proposes to continue a vigorous policy of using all available agencies to assist home seekers.

It is obvious that that policy has not been nearly vigorous enough and it is true that no matter how we compare our housing accomplishment in this State it does not reflect any great credit on South Australia. Even so, I am prepared to concede that the housing lag in this State—or any State—cannot be properly overcome until the Federal Treasurer makes available a much greater amount for house building. I believe the money available should be used to provide housing for the greatest possible number of people and I am not satisfied that that is being done at present. I advocate—and I know that this is controversial—the building of more emergency homes to meet urgent cases.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Rather than having people living in crowded conditions?

Mr. JENNINGS—Yes, and to assist those living in caravans, garages, tents and shacks, or crowded into one room. Such a proposal would also assist where families are divided and the father lives in one place, the mother in another and the children elsewhere. Metropolitan and country members encounter cases of this type every week. If emergency homes could be built—and let it be understood that I realize they must be temporary—they would at least accommodate the urgent cases of people who at the moment have nothing to look forward to except a wait of six or seven years to obtain a trust home. A few days ago the member for Semaphore (Mr. Tapping) asked the Premier a question on this matter, and the reply was that emergency homes built formerly were constructed when it was not possible to spend all the money available for housing on permanent homes because materials

were not available, but now all the available money can be spent on permanent homes because suitable material is available. I do not doubt this for a moment, but the Premier overlooked the real point; that, using the same amount of money, many more emergency homes could be built, thereby providing accommodation for urgent cases while keeping up as far as possible the number of permanent homes, some for rental and some for sale.

I now come to the fire hazard in emergency homes built previously. Only three weeks ago there was a bad fire in an emergency home in my district, and it was only through very good luck that a young child was not burnt to death. In the Semaphore district several emergency homes have been burnt, and fatalities have occurred in some instances.

Mr. Brookman—Was the child alone?

Mr. JENNINGS—I believe it was alone in the case I mentioned, but I do not know about others. However, I do not think that has much to do with my point, which is that this type of home is more vulnerable to fire than the average home. In the living room-kitchen there is a lining of Caneite, which is highly inflammable, above the open stove. Asbestos is now easily obtainable, and its use as a lining over the stove would remove the fire hazard. As so many of these homes have been burnt down in the last few years it would be a very good idea if the Government agreed to conduct an inquiry into the fire hazard they present. The member for Semaphore (Mr. Tapping) raised this matter last year, and I think also the year before, and each time he was told that the circumstances did not warrant investigation, but as proportionately many more of these homes are affected than other types, it is time that the Government had a good look into the matter.

On June 25th, when speaking to the motion to go into Committee of Supply on the Supply Bill (No. 1) I referred to the serious deterioration of Housing Trust homes in my electorate. I shall not go over all the points I made then, but I shall go through *Hansard* and refer to some points made by the Premier in reply to what I and others on this side of the House said. The Premier stated—

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member is out of order in referring to another debate of the same session.

Mr. JENNINGS—I realize that, Mr. Speaker; unfortunately I realized it too late. However, I have a fairly good memory, and

I think I can remember the points the Premier mentioned. He said:—

The member for Enfield is quite correct when he quoted a letter sent to him enclosing a report from the Housing Trust. I left that report deliberately open so that the honourable member could write to me if he thought the questions he put to me were not properly answered, and to get a further reply.

I think members who were present on that occasion will recall that the letter, which took 10 weeks to come from the Housing Trust, was in almost exactly similar terms to the letter I received from the General Manager of the Housing Trust two years previously. After then raising it in the House and getting the Premier to refer the matter to the Housing Trust, I waited 10 weeks for a reply, and the reply I received was not a reply at all. To say that I should have written back to the Premier asking him to look further into the matter is quite ludicrous. When the Premier said that he deliberately left the letter open so that I could ask him for further information, even those who sit behind him could scarce forbear to snigger, because surely it was the most stupid statement ever made in this House. We all know that Ministers, and indeed members, when dealing with anyone they correspond with, do not leave letters deliberately open so that someone will write back and involve them in writing another letter. The Premier must be an extremely "unbusy" man—and that is not the impression he usually seeks to give—if he can afford to give a reply which is designed only to elicit another letter to which he will reply again, which reply will presumably be only a three-quarter reply and will involve itself in never ending correspondence. That is not the position at all. I waited 10 weeks for a reply. If I had written back and had to wait another 10 weeks for the Premier's next letter it would not have reached me yet. I know there must be some sort of face saving in these things, and there was a half-hearted sort of reply that the trust would go further into the matter and make good anything due to its negligence, and that must be accepted for the time being. If something of a more definite nature is not forthcoming soon the House will be given an opportunity to state its views on the matter. I do not believe that the House was misled by the Premier's statements, but it is not right for me to allow them to go unanswered.

The SPEAKER—I cannot allow the honourable member to quote from a previous debate

in this House this session if it deals with the same subject matter.

Mr. JENNINGS—I do not intend to quote anything but I want to refer to some of the points the Premier mentioned previously when this matter was raised.

The SPEAKER—I point out to the honourable member that Standing Order No. 143 states:—

No member shall allude to any debate of the same session, upon a question or Bill not then being under discussion except by the indulgence of the House for personal explanation.

Mr. JENNINGS—I am supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply and I understand that any subject matter can be raised in the debate. I want to refer to the condition of Housing Trust houses in my area. Negotiations have been proceeding for a long time. I am referring to the question in general but want to mention some of the things the Premier told me previously about the matter.

The SPEAKER—The honourable member is permitted to discuss the question in general but he cannot refer to a debate or quote from the *Hansard* report of that debate, when it is of the same session.

Mr. JENNINGS—Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That clears up the position for me. I assure members that the alarming deterioration in the houses occurred long before we had the earthquake, yet it is suggested that the earthquake was responsible for the damage. I can produce letters that were written to Mr. Whittle, when a member of this House, from people in the area complaining about the condition of their homes, and also letters from Mr. Whittle to his then constituents saying that the trust was not prepared to do anything about the deterioration. Most members know that Mr. Whittle left this place before the earthquake. He would not have written letters in 1952 to the purchasers of trust homes at Enfield Heights so that I could use them in 1957. Few members will agree that Mr. Whittle thought I was likely to succeed him in this place. It is obvious that what the Premier said recently about the damage to the homes occurring since the earthquake was not true. I have no doubt that it was contained in information prepared for him by the trust but if it is not more accurate than the information in the letter which I read, and which the Premier received from the trust, then it is not reliable. We have reached the stage where the trust, being a law unto itself, is prepared to supply any sort of information, irrespective of its

accuracy, to the Premier in the fond belief that he, regarding the trust as his own baby, will not query it. It is nearly time we started to query some of the information prepared for Ministers and given in this House.

Recently I had another case in my area of Housing Trust negligence. It concerned rental homes that had been built for five years. When they were built tank stands were built with them. Those stands had to wait 4½ years before tanks were put on them, and the tanks had to wait another four months before there was sufficient rain to fill them. When the rain did come the tanks filled and within a few days three of the stands collapsed, throwing 1,000 gallons of water into each of the three back yards. In one case the tank narrowly missed children who were playing in the yard. Now we have the tanks on the ground and no stands and no water. As I said, three tanks collapsed within a few days of being filled and a hurried inspection was made by the trust's inspectors. I am informed that about 60 tankstands were considered suspect and the water was drained out of the tanks three days after they had been filled so that they would not collapse and endanger the lives of the people in the vicinity. In some cases the tanks were not drained by what would appear to be the reasonable and sensible way of turning on the tap, but by punching holes near the bottom of the tank, allowing the water to drain away in several directions, in some cases flooding garages and rooms.

Mr. Quirke—That would make the tankstands permanent, I should say.

Mr. JENNINGS—I know it is hard to believe and it is something that I would not have readily believed had I not seen it. In one case I saw several holes punched around the bottom ring of the tank to let the water out, presumably because it would not drain away fast enough through the tap. These tankstands were built in this fashion: three single cement blocks about 9in. x 14in. x 4in. on edge, held together, as far as I could see, with something that resembled cornflour and talcum powder, with no support through the middle—just two sides and a back. In some cases where the tanks had been taken off the stands were being reinforced by a brick wall down the centre, while the outside walls were crumbling and falling out. Apparently the tank would then do a balancing act on top of the centre wall until a breeze blew up when it would fall one way or the other. There are 300 homes in that locality; three stands collapsed within a couple of days of being filled

and 60 were regarded as suspect and were emptied. The stands are, in some rough and ready fashion, being reinforced, but I think that the other 240 occupiers also run grave risk of their tankstands collapsing and the tanks keeling over on children playing in the yards. A proper job of reinforcing the stands should be done throughout the whole area.

This indicates further negligence on the part of the Housing Trust and I am certain that there are in this State, since the end of the war, contractors building for the Housing Trust who are getting rich at the expense of the taxpayers. Since some publicity has been given to the conditions of Housing Trust homes in my electorate I have had reports from various places in the metropolitan area—some from electorates represented by members opposite—complaining about the rapid deterioration of homes purchased from the trust. I have had a look at some of them. In another part of my district, where the homes have been built for slightly more than 12 months, namely, Greenacres, of 100 houses 40 serious complaints have been made. In this case I am glad to say that, as it has happened after the publicity given about Enfield Heights an approach to the trust has resulted in an effort to repair the damage, but it all inclines me to believe that since the end of the war there has been neglect on the part of the trust to supervise properly building done in its name, and I sincerely think we have reached the stage where we should have a proper investigation into the trust's building since the end of the war. I have seen enough evidence in the last few months to convince me that if a proper inquiry were held it would expose the greatest public scandal South Australia has ever seen. If the Government thinks the trust has nothing to lose let us have the inquiry. If, on the other hand, the Government hesitates to allow any sort of inquiry it is simply an indication that it fears there is something which might be disclosed.

I had intended to refer to other speeches by members on both sides. I find, on reading them, however, that it is beyond my poor powers to improve on what has been said by members on this side, and it is virtually useless to attempt to comment to any advantage on what has been said by members opposite, because nothing worth while has been said. The member for Stirling (Mr. Jenkins), who has just resumed his seat, had a few brief words to say about decentralization. He said that in South Australia lack of decentralization is somehow due to the activity, or lack of

activity, of the Industries Development Committee. However, the committee does not start to investigate anything until a subject is referred to it by the Treasurer and that occurs only when an industry needs some assistance. The crux of this argument is that to help decentralization properly the Government must promote those conditions that encourage decentralization. The honourable member gave the game away in the last few minutes of his speech when he instanced the case of the couple from London and a couple from Sydney who had been driven backwards and forwards by the Premier to Victor Harbour for three weeks or so, and who wanted this and that and the other and electricity which, of course, was not available. After all this one couple went back to London and the other couple to Sydney, and as far as they are concerned South Australia has not been in the picture since.

In the case mentioned by the honourable member he gave conclusive proof that the conditions that would encourage decentralization did not exist in South Australia. If they did, then industry would be decentralized in those and in innumerable other cases, whereas it is centralized today. Let the facts speak for themselves. In this State we have a larger proportion of our population in the metropolitan area than has any other State. In other States the population beyond the capital city area is more decentralized than it is in South Australia where practically all the country population is centred around a few large towns. Vast areas await the decentralization the Government is always talking about but never implementing.

Mr. Brookman—What do you propose?

Mr. JENNINGS—I refer the honourable member to Mr. O'Halloran's speech. The speech by His Excellency the Governor is more memorable for the legislative programme it should have outlined but did not rather than for the legislative programme it outlined. Most of the more important topics concerning the future of the State were not mentioned, for instance, the establishment of a steel works and our great lag in industrial legislation. The deep sea port was not mentioned, but of course that would have no influence in the Wallaroo by-election. However, prior to the next general election we will no doubt see more references to that topic. Many things of vital concern to South Australia were not mentioned in His Excellency's speech, but if we look at what was mentioned we can only see those things that have

allegedly happened through the good offices of the Playford Government over the last few years. Some of those things are real, but most are imagined.

Mr. JOHN CLARK (Gawler)—In rising to support the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply I wish to offer some congratulations that have been well and truly earned. Firstly, in company with other members I offer my sincere congratulations to His Excellency and Lady George on the extension of their term of office. They have both endeared themselves to the people in every way; they are easy to speak to and easy to know. We have been happy to have them with us and I believe they have been happy with us. Secondly, I most sincerely congratulate the six stalwart Government members who have been willing to hurl themselves into the breach and speak in this debate. I find myself in the position that I am forced to follow the member for Enfield (Mr. Jennings) who represents the same Party that I do. Apparently, no other Government member has the temerity or courage to speak.

Mr. O'Halloran—They are ashamed of their Government.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—I am sure the Leader has something there. I am now informed, however, that I must amend the number to seven Government members because another has nobly hurled himself into the breach and will follow me in this debate. The reluctance of Government members to speak is surprising because after all they represent the Government by virtue of their majority, which they have attained because of their democratic idea that all men are equal but that some are more equal than others. Where are the rest of the Government members? They may have nothing to talk about, but that would be nothing out of the ordinary in this place. Possibly everything is perfect in their district and in the State generally. I believe that soon in an untimely by-election, the necessity for which we all deplore, public opinion will be given the chance to give its answer, and I believe that answer will be most satisfactory to Opposition members. Apparently members opposite are not even capable of attempting to reply to criticism levelled by Opposition members, and there has been plenty of that in this debate.

Mr. O'Halloran—Their silence admits the truth of the criticism.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—The Leader is obviously referring to the old saying that silence shows

consent, but I think in this case that it shows rather that many Government members have been worried by the weak replies given by their colleagues in their efforts to refute statements by members on this side. Some may have become afflicted with anxiety, and if so I do not wonder at it. There may, however, be another reason for this silence: possibly they think that the Government programme as outlined in His Excellency's speech is so weak as to be unworthy of debate. If that is so I am strongly inclined to agree with them. It appears to me, to many other members and to many people outside the House that the Government's policy is barely worth considering. Possibly some Government members have the same idea.

I offer most hearty congratulations to the member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke) who moved the motion. His speech was thoughtful and excellently delivered. As I listened, however, I wondered how a man of his manifest sincerity and integrity could believe everything he said about the Government. I also congratulate the seconder of the motion, the member for Eyre (Mr. Bockelberg), who gave a straightforward statement of the facts as he saw them, particularly stressing the needs of his district, which has seldom been treated generously by the Government. I do not know that I am inclined to congratulate the honourable member for Light (Mr. Hambour), but I thank him for drawing further attention to the excellent speeches of Mr. O'Halloran and Mr. Hutchens. I regret that other Opposition members had not spoken before he did so that he could have drawn attention to those speeches as well and people would have been encouraged to read them. I am sure that by comparison it would have done a lot of good to the State.

I ask whether the Governor's Speech is really worthy of serious consideration. I looked at *Hansard* for 1952, the year I came into the House, and concluded that 1957 was not the only year in which the Governor's Speech was not worthy of consideration. I shall quote one or two of the things mentioned in the 1952 speech for which many people are still devoutly hoping, although undoubtedly others have given hope away. In 1952 there were 41 paragraphs in the Speech, this year only 32, which gave Sir Thomas less opportunity to spread himself. In the 1952 speech appeared the following:—

My Ministers will seek legislative authority for the electrification of suburban railways.

This project is now almost forgotten, and I am not certain that it was not best forgotten:

the diesels are doing a first class job. I quote that, as being one of the anomalies normally to be found in this Speech. It is another instance of the Government's speaking of possibilities as if they were accomplished facts. Let me turn to another fairy tale from the 1952 Speech, to which there was some reference this afternoon. Both Mr. O'Halloran and Mr. Hutchens referred to it previously, and Mr. Jenkins this afternoon stumbled around trying to deal with the arguments they had put forward. The following words from the 1952 Speech should be framed and hung in the Premier's office for all time:—

My Ministers consider that measures should be taken to make country life more attractive and to encourage young men to take up life on the land.

I have some knowledge of young men who desire to take up life on the land—not so much in recent years since my district has been changed, but formerly when the Roseworthy Agriculture College was in it. I came to know many of the young men at Roseworthy, a number of whom came to see me seeking to go on the land, but their opportunities were limited unless they had a good deal of money. We are told that the Government is anxious to make country life more attractive to young people. Let us see whether it has been successful or not. For 24 years the Liberal and Country League has been in office in South Australia and in that time the metropolitan population has increased by about 42 per cent. The country population in the same period has increased by only 17 per cent, although the State's population has increased considerably in those 24 years. It makes one wonder whether the Government has its tongue in its cheek.

Those figures emphasize the relative retrogression of the country in the last 24 years. Let us consider the size of some of the country towns. In 1933 there were 112 with population of 500 or more, and because of the general growth of population one would expect by this time a much larger number; but actually there are now only 115 with a population of 500 or more—an increase of three. That does not give the complete picture. Seventeen of those towns which previously had 500 people are well below that now. They include Melbourne, Hawker, McLaren Flat, Caltowie, Booborowie and a dozen others which were once thriving centres. Even that does not give the whole picture, because of the 112 listed in 1933 many, although still having more than 500, are well below their previous numbers. For

instance, Balaklava has shrunk from 1,720 to 1,520, Burra from 1,950 to 1,600 and there have been falls also at Wirrabara, Wilmington, Port Broughton, Edithburgh and 47 other country towns. Yet we are not told these things in the Governor's opening Speech; indeed, we are led to believe that the opposite is the case. Paragraph 3 of the Governor's speech states:—

My advisers are gratified to observe a continuance of the prosperity which South Australia has enjoyed in recent years.

Is it a fact that the decrease in the population of country towns represents prosperity? I suppose it depends on the way one looks at it. Other speakers have shown that we are not enjoying the prosperity that the Governor's Speech indicates. I think most members will agree that if the population in rural areas declines the real growth of the State is hindered. Paragraph 3 of the Governor's Speech also states:—

During the last five years, while the natural increase in the population of this State has been a little above the Australian average, the rate of increase from migration has been almost twice the Australian figure.

One would expect from that statement that the population of country towns would be increasing by leaps and bounds. The Speech also states:—

The strong attraction of South Australia for migrants is a reflection of our favourable living conditions and sound economic position. I am not denying that our migration intake has been high. Many migrants are living in the country, but many others are leaving the country for the city. This proves that many statements in the Opening Speech are misleading. Most towns represented by Liberal and Country League members have suffered decreases in population, but have we ever heard them rising in this place to express concern at this situation? Those of us who try to be fair and just must resign ourselves to the idea that they are not concerned because most of those who have left the country for the city are potential Labor voters, and their leaving the country places Liberal and Country League members, who are supposed to be representing them, in an even stronger position politically. If a country town decays the normal reaction of an L.C.L. member is "We cannot stand in the way of progress," but one wonders what they mean by progress. Is their idea of progress perverted? I believe they think that the fewer people deriving their living from the land and the fewer engaged in industries in country

districts the greater the likelihood that the Liberal and Country League will retain its stranglehold on this State under an electoral gerrymander. Members on this side of the House have been for many years, and are still, concerned because the metropolitan area is growing like an octopus, while our country districts are on the decline. Again, that makes us wonder what is the Government's idea of progress.

The member for Hindmarsh (Mr. Hutchens) gave some extraordinary but true examples of projects that were mentioned in previous Opening Speeches. Those examples made us wonder whether it is right that His Excellency should be placed in the position of having to say such things. Many of them are nothing but window dressing. There may have been some excuse for that at election times, particularly under a dictatorship, but surely in a Governor's Opening Speech, which is supposedly a record of the Government's past achievements and a blue print of future legislation, that is out of place. However, Opening Speeches of the last 24 years show many astonishing variations from the truth. Many projects mentioned have never seen the light of day, while many others are still to come, so we are told, but I doubt it. Many have been forgotten altogether. This year I waited with much interest for the Governor's Speech, for I expected to hear of one or two big projects. Some proposals that have been mentioned in the Governor's Speech during the last four or five years have disappeared with the effluxion of time; and some schemes should have been mentioned but were not.

A few months ago there was a mighty fanfaronade of trumpets and an over-vigorous bashing of drums when we were led to believe that before long there would be an atomic power station in full blast near Mount Gambier. However, there was nothing in the Governor's Speech about this proposal, which would be of great benefit to the State, and the South-East in particular, but apparently my expectation of its mention was premature, like the project itself. It was not in the Governor's Speech, but from newspaper reports of the Premier's remarks some months ago one would have thought that the project was just around the nearest and most convenient corner. We were told that the Premier, when in Canberra, discussed with the United States Embassy officials the prospects of receiving American assistance for this scheme. We were led to believe that only a few minor details

had to be attended to before the erection of this atomic power plant.

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

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Before the adjournment I referred to the fact that the so widely acclaimed proposal for the establishment of an atomic power station in the South-East had not found its way into the Governor's Speech. That was somewhat surprising, in view of the fact that those reading the press would have thought that this project was imminent, but it must be remembered that there were a number of things that we were not told about. We were not told of the "ifs" that would have to be complied with before the proposals could become an actual fact. President Eisenhower's foreign atomic aid programme had to be approved; if the conditions attached thereto were satisfactory to the Premier, who is the Government, and if South Australia were eligible to participate in the plan, application would then have to be made for whatever assistance might be available under the atomic aid programme. We were not told these things, and obviously that is a very far cry indeed from the establishment of an atomic power station in the very near future. Some of us might be pardoned for saying that if such a project were possible and were close to fruition, why should we have American assistance instead of British? I think I can safely say, without in any way reflecting on the United States, that it would be generally conceded that in the field of atomic development for industrial purposes Britain is now ahead of America. By some miracle, for which we should be thankful—although, of course, in view of the hopes possibly raised in the South-East it is a disappointment to the people in that district—that was left out of the Speech we are debating and it was correspondingly shorter. This is not an unusual occurrence. I remind the House of a kindred subject which was brought before our notice some years ago. Possibly some of the newer members may never have heard of Lake Leake, which was first mentioned during the course of the State election campaign in 1953. Many people outside the South-East were hunting for maps and trying to find out the exact location of Lake Leake after we were told, in a spectacular announcement, of the likely establishment of an atomic power station there. We are accustomed to hearing such spectacular announcements in pre-election speeches by this Government. For the benefit of newer members who have never heard of Lake Leake since, I can tell them it is on the borders of the old

electoral districts of Mount Gambier and Victoria. I may be pardoned for presuming that this spectacular announcement was made with the idea of influencing the electors in those districts, particularly in Victoria. If that were the intention it was singularly unsuccessful, because our respected friend, now the member for Millicent, successfully contested the district of Victoria. In the opinion of many members in this House, and certainly in the opinion of the people of the district, he will continue to hold the seat as long as he wishes.

What concerns me is that the change of electoral boundaries relegated the Lake Leake proposal to the same limbo of forgotten things as country sewerage and various other items, because it has not been mentioned since. I do not know whether we will have a procession of sites for atomic power stations such as we had for deep sea ports, according to the political exigencies of the moment. Possibly that is one pleasure that is in store for us. When Lake Leake was first mentioned we were told that the site was ideal for the purposes of that particular plant. Possibly there is some excuse for such kite flying announcements and statements during an election campaign by a minority government such as we have, but surely there can be no excuse for similar statements in the Governor's Speech. However, such statements are there, and other members have drawn attention to them. I believe the member for Hindmarsh did the House a service by demonstrating these fallacies to the House, and that some Government speakers have accidentally done what the member for Hindmarsh did deliberately. Even the Premier's almost pathological weakness for grandiose and spectacular statements does not excuse the reference in the Governor's Speech to things that are not likely to be fulfilled and will be dropped altogether ere long. A typical example of a statement which was completely exploded by the Leader of the Opposition appears in paragraph 4, as follows:—

The basic wage in South Australia in terms of real purchasing power is still the greatest in Australia.

The Leader of the Opposition successfully debunked that myth.

Mr. O'Halloran—I think it was a furphy.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Yes, but it is a furphy no longer. In the same paragraph we find this:—

Sufficient loan money has been obtained to enable the Government to carry on a controlled programme of public works throughout the year without serious disruption.

I very much doubt if sufficient loan money could ever be obtained from this Federal Government, but I draw the attention of the House to the key words in that paragraph which are "controlled" and "serious disruption." In other words, some disruption is obviously anticipated by the Government. I do not see how it could be otherwise.

There are some notable omissions in the Governor's Speech. For instance, we find no reference to something that has been in Governors' Speeches with monotonous regularity for many years, certainly for a long time before I came into this House. I refer to country sewerage, about which there is not one word in the Speech. Not long ago I was one of those in this House who supported amending legislation to increase sewerage rates for the country, and I was a member, along with my colleague the member for Stuart and certain Government members, of a committee that inquired into this matter. Very reluctantly, but in the hope that this increased rate could possibly lead to country sewerage—which I was most desirous of obtaining, particularly for the town of Gawler—I supported the amendment. I have wondered ever since whether it was passed merely to enable increased charges to be applied to country towns that have been sewered because, as far as I can ascertain, there has been no other result. A recent press statement related to country sewerage and I directed a question at the Minister of Works this afternoon on it, but his reply indicated that country sewerage is in the indefinite future. Frankly, I am doubtful whether many country towns will be able to afford sewerage when it is provided.

Gawler recently celebrated the centenary of local government and we were favoured with visits by the Premier, Minister of Railways, Leader of the Opposition and other important personalities in South Australian public life. There was much jubilation about what Gawler had attained and obtained, but there was also much sadness about what was lacking. Gawler has maintained its prosperity, firstly, because it is in the centre of an excellent agricultural area and, secondly, because of the pride of its inhabitants. When I was a boy most of the residents worked in Gawler: now many work elsewhere, but travel to and from work, preferring to remain inhabitants of Gawler. Sewerage is an absolute essential for Gawler. Its established industries are hampered because of lack of sewerage and as a result other industries are disinclined to establish there. I

pray that when Gawler celebrates its second centenary of local government its Parliamentary representative will not still be pleading for sewerage.

Gawler also recently celebrated the centenary of its railway and there was much jubilation among those who had sought an improved service because such became operative from July 1. It is possibly one of the best services in the State, although I have one or two minor criticisms to make. The Minister of Railways, speaking at that celebration, was good enough to give some credit for the new service to the member for the district, and I publicly thanked him. Womma is a name with which few members will be familiar, but it is the station at which people now living in Elizabeth North board the train for Adelaide. I have received numerous complaints from those people that because they are unable to purchase tickets at that station they are obliged on the train to purchase tickets as from Smithfield, which cost them a few pence more. The same position applies when they return at night: they have to purchase tickets to Smithfield. Over a period this additional charge would cost these people a considerable sum. Possibly the railways benefit, but this matter should be reviewed and those using the service given the opportunity to purchase tickets from their own station. I have also been advised that many accidents have narrowly been averted at the Womma crossing and I have asked the Minister of Railways to have flashing lights and warning signals installed, but his reply, as usual, was that there were other crossings where such installations were more necessary. That does not alter the fact that the number of people in that area is increasing daily and that the crossing is dangerous. I hope it will not be necessary for a fatal accident to happen before the powers that be take action.

A number of diesel cars—commonly called “Red Hens”—are used on this railway service and already they have made a difference to the patronage of the service. However, I am concerned at what may happen if fares are increased—as I have no doubt they will be before long. A rise in fares has been forecast, and I am afraid that if this happens the patronage of the railways will follow the same pattern as the patronage of the tramways.

Mr. O’Halloran—And God forbid that should happen.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—If it does the Gawler Road will become more crowded than it is now. I think it is sometimes conveniently

forgotten that the two previous increases in tram fares, despite what we have been told, have in each instance brought about a decrease in passengers, although at the same time there was an increase in metropolitan population. In 1944-45 the total number of passengers carried on the tramways was 95 million.

Mr. Jenkins—That was war time, when there was petrol rationing.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—I am quite prepared to concede that there are several reasons for this. However, the total number of passengers then carried was 95 million, when the metropolitan population was 365,000. In 1955-56 only 63,500,000 passengers were carried when the metropolitan population had risen to 515,000. I do not need to be told that the decrease in passengers was not solely due to increased fares. I know that there was a shortage of petrol in 1944-45, but there was also a shortage of passengers at that time because of the war. I am not saying that the increase in fares is the only reason for a decrease in passengers; I believe there are other reasons too, but, in the main, they are the fault of the Tramways Trust. Each time there has been an increase in tram fares there has been a decrease in passengers. I am sorry for this because we as a Parliament vote for a subsidy to the trust. Now that so many have motor cars I am certain that there will be a decrease in railway passengers. Unfortunately, in general it is those less able to pay who use the tramways—pensioners, and those without cars. Of course, when the service was bad many people living in Gawler clubbed together and travelled by car to work, and I am afraid that the increased railway fares on the Gawler line will offset the benefit of a now excellent train service.

I support the member for Torrens (Mr. Coumbe) in the plea he has made before, which I believe is meeting with success, for an improvement in the outlet roads to the north; but how far north? If there is easier access to the city I am afraid that the congestion on the Adelaide-Gawler road will be worse than it is now. I was pleased to read in a country newspaper that a branch of the Liberal and Country League, in a town I cannot remember in the mid or near north, was discussing what should be done to widen or improve the road between Adelaide and Gawler. For once I found myself wholeheartedly in agreement with a decision of that body, because this road is becoming increasingly dangerous, crowded and congested with the growth of population in the plains area. I

know that a diversion road is planned, and this will assist in some small way, but it will not assist enough, in view of the crowd of people that will be coming to Gawler and Elizabeth, unless something is done to the Adelaide-Gawler Road. I think members know, or at least should know, that land was acquired to widen or duplicate this road. That had been done before I came into this House and on many occasions I have made pleas for something to be done to this road. I believe that lives saved are worth money. Other members have had the pleasure or pain of travelling along that road at peak periods, or perhaps have had the sense to avoid it. The widening should not be shelved any longer.

Mr. O'Halloran—They are starting to widen the road from the other end.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—That seems to be the plan, but nothing will be done unless the Government is found guilty of homicide. I commend the Housing Trust for the work it has done in my area. It is doing a grand job at Elizabeth, and it has commenced another small project outside Gawler. At all times I have received every courtesy from the trust. I have been in the company of trust officials at various functions held at Elizabeth, and I could not but notice the pride these officers take in the growth of that town, nor the obvious pride of the people living there. This morning I tried to explain to a member opposite that in Elizabeth there is something of the pioneering spirit that was to be found in country towns many years ago. The people there seem to have a community outlook that is lacking in other country towns, and I have been struck by the spirit of co-operation. I have been very happy about the assistance I have received from the trust; my only regret is that I have received two or three complaints from purchasers of homes about faulty construction. I have placed these complaints before the trust, and I am hopeful of some success in the matter. These faults were not due to the earthquake. It has often struck me that in such a large and closely settled area the large hotel that is being built is not a community hotel. A wonderful opportunity has been lost, particularly as the community spirit seems to be so strong. About a fortnight ago I had the opportunity to go to the opening of a new hall at Elizabeth South, quite different from the usual type. It was the result of a scheme put forward by the local football club. They needed a hall and set to work to build one. They did not

employ builders or contractors, but did the work themselves in their spare time, assisted by donations from business firms in the area. Some firms gave cement and others timber. They have done an excellent job, of which any town can be proud. The building is not used only as a football club hall, as it can be used as a community hall. It was indeed a commendable spirit.

I was delighted to hear, in response to a question last week, that the new school at Elizabeth North will be ready, at least in part, soon. This is most necessary because there is only one school there now, at Elizabeth South. The number of pupils has grown too great to be catered for effectively by the headmaster and staff. I do not suggest they have not done a good job. I pay a tribute to their work, which is done under difficulties. The Minister gave me details of the plans for future schools in the area. This will be a colossal task but future planning seems to be well under way. I hope the necessary money will be made available. Now there is so much to do and so little with which to do it. The growth of Elizabeth and Salisbury makes the high school at Salisbury North a "must." We have read in the press about the building of other high schools, but the one at Salisbury North should be opened as soon as possible. At present some of the children come to the city, and many to the Gawler high school, which will become hard to work and very cumbersome if the number increases any more. I hope the opening of the Salisbury North high school can be hastened.

Much has been done for Gawler in the way of schools over the last few years. The primary school is now almost a colony of buildings. When I taught at the school I could say that I had taught in every room, but I could not say that now because there are too many rooms. There should be another school on the south side of the town and this is a matter which should be investigated, although something may have been done already. There are several matters I want to mention about the Gawler high school. I have taken them up already with the Minister and I am hoping that something will be done. I only raise them now because they are extremely urgent. Much work has been done at the high school and we are grateful for it. We badly need an oval on which the boys and girls can train for their sports and play games. The Gawler oval is $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the school and when we have

the triangular sports we find it difficult to compete with the Nuriootpa high school, which has a ground close to the school. We are well off in Gawler for land, following on the purchase of the estate of the late Hon. R. J. Rudall. The high school council has a considerable fund in hand. It is over the £1,000 mark and it was specifically raised for improving amenities, and the council wants to spend the money with the help of the department. We want the department to do the grading, leveling and surfacing of the area, and then the council can attend to the amenities.

I am concerned about the lavatory accommodation at the school. The lavatory and ablution facilities are as they were in the early days. They were provided for 150 children and there has been no increase since then. Mr. Speaker, the conditions are the same now as they were when you and I attended the school. Now about 450 children go to the school and after Christmas there is the possibility that the number will be increased. Unless something is done we will have the unsavoury spectacle of the effluent and solid matter flowing over the playing area of the school, and that is not pleasant to contemplate. I realize that this is not the only high school with such a difficulty. At many schools the lavatory accommodation is not as it should be. Under the Industrial Code, there must be in factories one lavatory for every 20 employees.

Mr. Fred Walsh—That is not enforced, owing to a lack of inspectors in the department.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—It should be enforced. A standard is set by saying there should be one to every 20 employees in a factory, and the position in the State schools should be at least as good as it is supposed to be in factories. Something should be done about it at the earliest possible moment.

I am also concerned with likely damage to Government property at this school. Only recently a new assembly and quadruple units have been built and they are proving a boon; but there is no drainage system to dispose of the water coming from the roofs. As these are large buildings, the amount of water is considerable and, if it accumulates under the buildings, there will be a real danger of the subsidence of large sections. Further, a bog is not the best entrance to the classrooms for boys and girls and teachers to plough through. I have already written to the Minister on these matters and refer to them again only because I regard them as urgent.

I wish to conclude with some remarks on the important issue of education in general. I

commend the decision to hold an Education Week in South Australia from August 11 to 16. I believe that, if the adjournment of Parliament for that week does nothing else but advertise Education Week and allow members to attend various functions they are anxious to attend in the interests of education not only in their districts but also in a general way, it will do a great deal of good.

Mr. Jennings—Does anyone know about that?

Mr. JOHN CLARK—It was announced in the press and most people can read. Usually too much is taken for granted concerning our educational system, and Education Week should focus the attention of the public on the grand work our schools are attempting, often under the greatest difficulties. I hope it will make people interested in what we have and what we should have. After all we have so much, but there is still so much to be done in our schools and, comparatively speaking, there is so little to do it with even though the Governor's Speech indicates that the building programme alone in respect of education will cost about £1,000,000 this year, and that is only a small part of education expenditure.

The only way to solve the real difficulties in respect of education is to obtain more money, and the only way to do that in this and other States is to get it from Federal sources. Further, I believe the difficulties confronting this State are the same as those confronting most other States where the Premiers are interested in education. I draw members' attention to the decision made by the recent conference in Sydney of the Teachers' Federation, a non-political gathering, attended by representatives of teacher organizations in each State. At the opening of the conference the New South Wales Minister of Education said:—

Education-minded people all over Australia are clamouring for a much better financial deal for education, in the certain knowledge that the nation's progress and safety are best assured in the hands of educated and trained people.

I am sure all members will agree with that statement. That conference could be regarded as a select body of teachers gathered together to discuss things that they believed would assist education generally throughout Australia. After much discussion they agreed that the following were the main deficiencies in Australian schools:—Inadequate school accommodation, disrepair in many schools, occupation of uncompleted schools, shortage of staff,

large classes, and the impact on State finances of the Commonwealth Migration Scheme. All those deficiencies exist in South Australia to some degree, some to a great degree, and members are probably thinking of schools in their districts that suffer from at least some of those disabilities.

Mr. O'Halloran—That statement applies to 80 per cent of the schools in my electorate.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Yes, and it would apply in most electorates. After much discussion and endeavour to find some way to relieve the hardships confronting education authorities, delegates to the conference made two decisions. The first was to invite the Prime Minister to meet the presidents of all States' teacher organizations and discuss these questions, but the Prime Minister refused to meet them. Indeed, since assuming office in 1949 he has repeatedly said he believes that constitutional difficulties stand in the way of doing what is asked.

Mr. Hutchens—Did he always think so?

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Apparently not, for when he was Leader of the Opposition he expressed a completely contrary view at least twice and said it was desirable that such aid be given to education. Be that as it may, he refused the request and his attitude makes one wonder. Indeed, I have heard the opinion expressed that his refusal may mean that he is not seriously interested in the welfare of our children, our future citizens. Many right-thinking people believe that the national welfare will be seriously affected by the inadequacy of the funds for education. In fact, that situation is already with us, and I will return to that aspect later. The second decision of the conference was to prepare a petition to be presented to the Commonwealth Parliament. I suppose the delegates are still hopeful, even though the Prime Minister has seen fit not to meet them to discuss these matters. The petition contained the following:—

1. That the public educational needs throughout Australia are critically urgent.
2. That each State of the Commonwealth is not able to cope with the provision of adequate educational facilities for rapidly increasing school enrolments.
3. That one factor in the education crisis is the impact of the Commonwealth migration policy.
4. That this desperate situation calls for generous assistance and co-operation by the Commonwealth Government.
5. That the Commonwealth Government should make grants to the States of sufficient magnitude to enable the States to meet in full their educational requirements.

I believe that the petition does not exaggerate one iota. I have always advocated Federal grants to the States specifically for education. I emphasize the urgency for this petition to be signed. Many thousands throughout Australia have already signed it, including more than 20,000 from South Australia; that is not enough. I urge members to sign it and to inspire others to do so. This is not a political matter, but one of vital interest to all those concerned with the future of our nation, and an all-out drive to get signatures would be our most signal contribution to Education Week. This is a national emergency and should be treated as such. Our national welfare has already been seriously affected by things which are not right in our education system—not right because the money is not available to spend on them. Under the heading, "Reason for Illiteracy" appearing in the *Sunday Mail* of July 19, appeared the following:—

Tests of trainees now in camp have shown that 5 per cent of them are illiterate or near-illiterate. The standard in these groups ranges from youths who cannot write their own names to those who can read and write occasional words, and sometimes very elementary sentences.

The Central Command Education Officer, Lt. P. R. Shekleton, said today that most of the 13 illiterates at Woodside would improve considerably before leaving camp in September. An intensive education course would bring most of them up to, at least, third grade primary standard.

"Many of these youths have had little chance," Lt. Shekleton said. "Most of them were in primary school between 1945 and 1952. In those years, the Education Department had a great shortage, due to the war, ever-increasing classes, and a great shortage of accommodation. These conditions are reflected in the present illiteracy rate among young adult males."

In reply to a question, the Minister of Education agreed with me that at least in part these conditions still exist. The article continued:—

Lt. Shekleton said many parents showed little or no interest in whether their children received even a basic primary education. Some actually encouraged their children to miss schooling despite State laws and truancy inspectors. Lt. Shekleton said that apart from those classed as illiterates, 30 per cent of trainees were educationally retarded. He considered this to be a more significant figure than the illiteracy rate.

It may be wise to do not more than generalize on this article. I am not prepared to place all the blame for this illiteracy on those things that are lacking in our Education Department. It is obvious that a large share of the blame must rest there, but I am not condemning the schools or the department,

or even the Minister. We cannot spend on education more than we can afford, and I believe we must find other means of finance. I taught for many years in schools and the idea that such a large number of illiterates should exist in this State, is to me incredible. I found very few who could not reach a grade three standard at least; a teacher would be unlucky if he struck two in five years. Generally, the children who find it impossible to learn do not get to our schools, but are in homes or elsewhere.

I do not believe that those young men in the Army who are classed as illiterates cannot be educated. Undoubtedly, they were the slow ones at school. They are considered satisfactory material for training with Federal finance—and they are compelled to train—yet because the necessary finance is denied to the States, they have been denied the chance to be educated properly. A few of them may be beyond teaching, but only a very few and not as high a percentage as was indicated. Possibly, most of them would be the slower ones—those who would suffer most if school conditions were unsatisfactory. I am prepared to say, to the point of boredom, that these conditions are made possible because of the lack of finance. Let me pose this question—"Can we afford to allow our young people to suffer because of Federal apathy? Can we afford as a nation to train our young men to kill and yet not be prepared to train them to live?"—and I am by no means a pacifist.

Mr. O'Halloran—Particularly with the Federal Government having access to all the easy finance.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—That is so, and when I say Federal finance I mean the finance provided by the citizens of the States. For the reasons enumerated, I ask members to get signatures to the petition and give the future citizens the opportunity fully to enjoy and justify their birthright; I am afraid that some of them are not getting it now.

I very much regret that we have been saddened in recent weeks by the untimely death of Mr. Heath, member for Wallaroo. He was very well known to me long before he came into this House, and I regarded him as a friend. He had many good friends in trotting circles in my town who are also friends of mine. I sincerely sympathize with his wife and relatives in their sad loss. I also express my deepest sympathy to Lady Jenkins. Sir George Jenkins was a distinguished member

of this House for many years. He was sadly missed when he left this Chamber and his passing will be a great loss to the State. When my district included more country areas than it does now I was more closely associated with agricultural bureaus. I found that Sir George was highly regarded by farmers and pastoralists, and that high regard was amply justified. I support the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

Mr. KING (Chaffey)—I rise to support the motion so ably moved by the member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke) and seconded by the member for Eyre (Mr. Bockelberg). I am sure that all South Australians are very pleased that the term of office of His Excellency the Governor has been extended. Sir Robert George and Lady George have both rendered fine service to the State. I congratulate the Premier, Sir Thomas Playford on the high honour bestowed on him. It was indeed richly deserved. Some members opposite have said that there were many shortcomings in the Governor's Speech, but the Government's record needs no embellishment. Indeed, it is the envy of some Governments in other States.

The member for Gawler (Mr. John Clark) said that members on this side were, as it were, hurling themselves into the breach in this debate, but until he spoke as many members on this side had spoken as on his side. I draw attention to the way the Government hurled itself into the breach during the recent flood disaster. No other Government has ever acted as swiftly in an emergency as this Government did last year. During the flood it advanced the enormous sum of £1,775,000. This time last year the people up and down the river were fighting for their lives, and since then the Government has moved with great alacrity to assist them. Many houses have been repaired and the Government has found money for deposits on new houses for those who could not go back to their old houses. The Housing Trust provided considerable emergency accommodation, schools that were flooded out have been re-opened, and emergency schools have been closed. The Government also provided emergency transport for many school children. Roads were kept open as long as humanly possible. When some of them had to be abandoned emergency services were provided.

However, we still have troubles on the river. In Renmark alone six major bridges will have to be replaced as a result of the flood. Fruit

growers have been well looked after by the Government. Money was found to pay the wages of those engaged on flood protection work and also to pay pruners that had to be engaged because the fruit growers themselves had been delayed in pruning as a result of the flood. Growers' homes and buildings have been repaired, dead trees have been bulldozed and sawn up for firewood, and the Government has allowed credit for water rates chargeable on land that has been flooded and not watered. The Government has promised to refrain from charging interest on arrears of water rates in cases of hardship resulting from the flood. In addition, the Government has found money for the removal of flood banks crossing properties and for clearing channels. It has also provided drainage works to offset seepage that could result from the flood. Money was provided, through the Lord Mayor's Relief Fund, for sustenance in cases where the flood had caused cessation of income. All costs of flood protection work were unreservedly underwritten by the Government and no other State can boast of such a good record as the South Australian Government has in its assistance during that flood.

It is only six months since the floodwaters subsided. If the Labor Party were in office it would still be thinking what to do. I pay my tribute to the Government and departmental officers who did such a tremendous job during the flood. Relief was soon forthcoming and cases of distress were promptly given assistance. As the river did not fall until January it was not possible to gauge the immediate or prospective results of the flood on the settlers and other people in the flooded areas. It was not even possible to gauge the extent of damage to roads and bridges or the effect on the State in general. However, before the flood was six months' old, councils were being reimbursed for flood protection costs. They have been paid in full a little over six months from the peak of the flood, except for some disputed accounts. Large grants have already been approved to councils for resiting flood banks and preparing them as a basis for future flood protection works. Provision has been made for finance to be made available to certain settlers who have lost capital as well as income, and advances will be made on the recommendation of those administering the Lord Mayor's Relief Fund. These advances will be made by the State Bank and guaranteed by the Government. I have given the House this information because it is only right

that we should have a record of what the Government has done. Historians will then be able to see what a mighty job the Government did in a fight against great odds.

I was rather surprised to hear the Leader of the Opposition, when speaking on the Supplementary Estimates, express concern at the amount that had been spent in the effort to eradicate the fruit fly. Apparently he does not realize the value of the fruit industry to this State. It is true that £1,000,000 has been spent over a number of years in combating the fruit fly, but I remind the Leader of the Opposition that there are 40,000 acres of fruit trees under irrigation east of Morgan. They would be worth about £12,000,000 and they produce annually fruit and vegetables worth at least £8,000,000. The population of that river area has risen to 25,000. I believe that the future of this industry is fairly bright. The production of canning fruits is increasing at a great rate, and many young trees are not yet in full production. By 1964 I think there will be 30,000 tons of fruit produced for which there are no processing facilities, but the growers themselves are aware of the position and have enough initiative to establish a cannery of their own to help meet it. The production of dried stone fruits has been falling off for various reasons, and South Australia is now practically the only State producing this fruit to any extent. Five or six years ago the other States produced quite a quantity, but last year I think they produced only about seven tons of dried stone fruits.

Mr. Quirke—What about prunes.

Mr. KING—Perhaps I should exclude prunes. Apart from that, South Australia is the only State producing very much. I admit that the market is there, but whether we can expand it or not depends on the labour available at the time and the facilities for handling the fruit. There are some live wires in my district who might be able to find a way of mechanically handling apricots, which is one of our main troubles, thus expanding the market.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Is it true to say that in a few years time we shall not have any fruit in South Australia for export?

Mr. KING—Is the honourable member referring to dried fruit or canning fruit?

Mr. Fred Walsh—Canning fruit.

Mr. KING—We can sell most of the dried fruit, and there is an export demand. The canning position depends largely on the action of the American authorities. There is a big production of canned peaches.

Mr. Fred Walsh—A man from Berri who claimed to be an authority on the subject told me recently that in a few years time we shall not have any fruit for export.

Mr. KING—It depends on America. If America makes dollars available to England, I am afraid the English market may be partly lost to us. That situation has been facing the industry for a long time. Present indications are that there is an unsatisfied demand for fruit, particularly as the Eastern States have lost trees through water-logging caused by the same rains that brought our floods. They have lost up to 5,000 acres of peaches, and this has seriously affected the export markets. Fortunately, we have over 1,000 acres of young trees in South Australia of the same type of peaches coming into production, and as our production is at the rate of 10 tons to the acre compared with five tons in the higher rainfall districts and the dry areas, we have an opportunity to catch up some of the losses of the eastern States.

In addition to what we have planted there is a tremendous area of land still available for development. This Government has improved the communications by constructing roads and sending electric power along the river, and has therefore made it possible, by modern methods of spray irrigation which ignore contours, to bring a lot more land into production than would have been the case 30 or 40 years ago. From my own researches I am of the opinion that there is a very good future for citrus fruits and possibly also for canning fruits in my district. In addition to citrus, there is also a potential for sheep. It is an interesting fact that where water is reticulated to farms by pipes in the counties of Albert and Alfred on the south side of the river, there is a population of 315,000 sheep. In the counties of Hamley and Young on the opposite side, the rainfall is approximately the same but the sheep population is only 76,000. If we could afford it and if there were no more pressing needs, a reticulation system on the northern side of the river would develop the land, and we would then have an income from an additional 250,000 sheep. The power is there and a good road, and I think we should now do all we can to develop it.

For decentralization the important things are power, water and communications, and it is the function of a Government to provide such things. We cannot force an industry to establish itself just where people want it, any more than we can force people to live in a

house in an area they do not like. It is a difficult job to ally the two so that there will be the ideal town of 30,000 inhabitants and markets there to encourage industry to settle itself. It is rather a pity in a way that Adelaide has developed as it has, but if the Government, through the Housing Trust, had not gone to a lot of trouble to find housing for people in the industries which the Government has persuaded to come here, there would have been a far greater outcry from the Opposition because of the difficulties of housing. We found the industries and then we found the houses, but now we are berated because we are not finding industries from somewhere else. It would be a good idea if the people who are complaining looked around and got their people together to see what they could do themselves towards inducing industries to come to their districts. They would soon find that the rest of the things would follow. People will not go to live in country areas unless the facilities are the same as they are in the city, and I do not think industries would go to a city of less than 30,000 people.

I was interested to hear the member for Whyalla refer to the high cost of housing and the high rate of interest payable to hire-purchase companies. I think it is only the economic law taking effect, similar to a workman who leaves a job at £15 a week to take one at £20 a week. I read in the newspaper recently that one of the trade union groups is starting a co-operative hire-purchase company. I do not know if the idea is to reduce the cost to the hirers or whether the groups are attracted by the high rate of interest the people are paying. I suggest that they could form a co-operative housing company; they could charge lower interest rates and thereby assist people to obtain homes. I realize the extreme value hire purchase has been to the State. Without the hire-purchase facilities which are available, not only in this State but in other States as well, it is doubtful whether industry in South Australia would have been sustained at the volume that it has. The most recent statistics available show that the balances outstanding in this State alone on hire-purchase business are about £25,000,000, compared with the Australian total of balances outstanding of £232,000,000. When you take the effect of the hire purchase charges added to the cash price of goods there is an undisclosed effect on the cost of living which as far as I know is not recorded. On the other hand,

it has the effect of reducing the value of money if people live mainly on hire purchase. Most banks today have a large holding in these hire-purchase companies. I can remember when banks were aloof institutions and when they erected temples of mammon for their operations, but they have descended from their pedestals now and do not object to hire-purchase schemes. Hire-purchase is becoming a vital part of our national life and should be closely watched. I do not believe our legislation affords sufficient protection for hirers. Some hire-purchase companies do not study the position of the hirer and I have known instances where property has been repossessed because a hirer has missed on one or two payments. That is completely wrong. The intention of a person entering into an agreement is to acquire property for himself and it is not right that the company should be able to repossess it and make a second profit whilst the original hirer loses everything.

I join with the member for Gawler in commending the Government and, in particular, the Minister of Education, for introducing Education Week. Australia's biggest asset is bound up in the education of young people and any attention that can be drawn to this valuable subject through the various operations of Education Week has my hearty approval and my complete support. I hope that week will produce the results the Minister desires. I support the motion.

Mr. TAPPING (Semaphore)—I support the motion and congratulate the mover, the member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke). I have heard many speeches here in the last 10 years, but I have never heard one given so precisely and clearly. Whilst I do not agree with all or most of what he said, his delivery was excellent and there was no doubting his sincerity. Likewise, the member for Eyre (Mr. Bockelberg) made a fine contribution in seconding the motion. I believe it is the best speech he has made in this Chamber since he entered it in 1956.

I offer my condolences to the widow of Mr. Heath. I did not know him for very long, but he endeared himself to all members of this Parliament irrespective of their politics. He was an excellent sport and a popular man, and it is regrettable that we have lost a member of his calibre. The same can be said of the late Sir George Jenkins. I went to his funeral and attended the service in the Cathedral beforehand. The Rev. Weston paid a fine tribute

to Sir George in explaining his background and his relationship to the soil. It was one of the finest tributes I have ever heard paid to any member of Parliament or, for that matter, any citizen.

I propose to deal with only two items in debating this motion. One of the most contentious—and it affects the whole of Australia—is the decision by overseas shipowners to increase freight rates on exports and imports as from March 1. The impost is burdensome and represents an increase of 14 per cent. Australia depends largely upon the export of its primary produce and the shipowners' decision represents a danger to our future. Whilst at present we have not assessed the repercussions of this decision, I believe that as time passes we will appreciate its dangerous implications. When the decision was announced we were told that the Suez Canal dispute was one reason for the increase, but that dispute has terminated and shipping is back on the normal route to and from England. A second reason given for the increased freights was the increase in wages to seamen and handling charges at various ports. I concede that increased wages must have some effect upon the economic conduct of a shipping line and would cause some slight increase in freight rates, but a 14 per cent impost cannot be justified. From March 1 freight rates will be adjusted on a cost plus basis. In other words, shipping companies will demand 12 per cent on their capital outlay.

That is far too much and the system is entirely wrong. During the war years the cost plus system obtained throughout Australia, but at that time it was imperative as it was difficult to assess the cost of urgently required goods. The Federal authorities were bound to stand up to the cost plus system, but that system was highly abused. The more employment we had in industry the better return the employer gained and this system resulted in exploitation. That system can only be tolerated in wartime. The method of arriving at freight rates on the cost plus basis destroys ambition and competition and creates a monopoly. The shipping companies throughout the world have combined to determine freight rates and conditions. Whilst this might be deemed a Federal matter South Australia is involved economically and we have the right to express our disgust and make it known to the Federal Government, which should do something to overcome the problem. The problem could be met by using the Commonwealth lines of steamers built some years ago

and procured by the Federal authorities to serve the people of Australia. Some time ago Mr. Sanger, the President of the Grazier's Council, in a joint statement with the Wool-growers' Council chairman, said:—

Freights can tip the balance between profit and loss for our exports. Our councils will explore every means of securing a more satisfactory basis, even appealing to the Federal Government to intervene.

Whereas in the past we have made a profit from the export of our primary products, I suggest that with the impost of 14 per cent on our freight rates that profit may be turned into a loss. In 1955 the Menzies Federal Government appointed a committee of inquiry to investigate prevailing freight rates and charges imposed by the stevedoring companies of Australia. That report was tabled in the House of Representatives in October, 1956. In an inquiry of this magnitude it was essential to call witnesses from all bodies associated with shipping-stevedoring companies, shipping companies and the waterside industry generally. We found, regrettably, that some of the shipping companies refused to give evidence on this occasion. Those who did were prepared to give evidence only in regard to the United Kingdom, and not relating to shipping that went to foreign countries.

Mr. Hutchens—They thought they might be found out.

Mr. TAPPING—Yes, I think it was because they were not prepared to help. In summing up, the committee of inquiry held under the Stevedoring Act of 1954 said certain things that I think should convince members that shipping companies are exploiting the people of Australia. This report is the actual wording of the committee of inquiry, consisting of men divorced from any political party. The report states:—

Net profits plus rebates per ton increased by 433 per cent between 1947-48 and 1953-54, while over the same period the weighted average hourly rate of wages paid to waterside workers increased by 114 per cent and the costs of stevedoring operations moved in a similar manner.

There is the disparity. While the profits accrued increased to 433 per cent, wages increased by only 114 per cent. That proves beyond any doubt that the exploitation I have referred to previously is going on today. This is a desperate situation, and there is only one way to solve it; that is, to use the Commonwealth Line of Steamships to compete with these shipping companies. We realize that the

P. & O. and Cunard companies are all-powerful, but the Commonwealth line could be used for the purpose for which it was procured, and could compete with these companies to some extent. That is not only my suggestion. Men like Mr. T. Shanahan, of the Wheat-growers' Federation, and Mr. Vowles have said, "Use these steamers for the purpose for which they were intended, and then bring these companies back to what was intended."

In the matter of profits, the P. & O. line last year showed a profit of £6,266,000, and paid a dividend of 8 per cent. This net profit represents 136.2 per cent on capital before watering, at August, 1951. Instead of being only 8 per cent, the actual dividend was 43 per cent on the 1951 invested capital. The Cunard Shipping Company, owners of the Port line and other ships employed in the Australian trade, showed an operating surplus of over £8,000,000, which is over £10,500,000 (Australian), for the year ended June, 1956. These figures must prove beyond doubt that shipping companies are taking advantage of the position that small Australian companies cannot combat. It is interesting to note that the first Commonwealth line of ships operated in 1916, when it comprised 16 cargo ships purchased at a cost of £2,250,000. Later, other ships were bought during the war period. In 1919 these ships were giving wonderful service to Australia, and were competing with private shipping companies. In the first year of their operations receipts exceeded expenditure by £2,000,000. Not only were they competing with the companies, but they showed a profit of £2,000,000 by taking cargo overseas and bringing cargo back to Australia. During that period, over 1,000,000 tons of cargo, such as wheat, was taken overseas, and general cargo was brought back to Australia.

Mr. Hutchens—It would have been a threat to private shipping.

Mr. TAPPING—Yes. During that troublesome period, when there was overseas shipping manipulation, Lord Inchcape, who controlled such companies as the P. & O. and the Cunard lines, did all he could to sabotage that line, because he learned that it was really a contender for cargo. However, his efforts were futile. Credit must be given to some extent to the late William Morris Hughes, who took a great part in bringing about the inauguration of the Commonwealth line. As you all know, he was defeated in 1923, and was succeeded by the Bruce-Page Government, which at once commenced to dispose of the line, which then

consisted of 54 vessels. By 1927 only five "Bay" steamers and two "Dale" boats remained. I believe figures were juggled to prove that the line was not worthwhile to the Government, and the ships were disposed of. As years went on, with the help of the Labor Government in the Federal sphere, the Commonwealth line was brought into operation, and although this had a lot of ups and downs for certain reasons, it is not too late for it to carry on the purpose for which the people of Australia intended it to be conducted.

To give some idea of the power that a monopoly can bring about in opposition, I can go back some 20 years ago to the time when I was a shipping clerk at Port Adelaide. It was then contended that some of the interstate and intrastate charges were burdensome. As a result, the company known as the Patrick Line came into operation. When that line commenced business in Port Adelaide, it adjusted its rate to about 15 per cent less than the rates operating. However, it did not last long; it was run out of business because the combines adjusted their rates. Although this company cut freights, it still paid its seamen and others employed on its boats the award rates fixed by the Federal Arbitration Court. The Commonwealth Line of Steamships now consists of 45 ships and they could be used to take some of our produce overseas. If this 14 per cent continues, and I feel it may go up to 19 or 20 per cent, it will prove a further burden on Australia. We should raise our voice in protest. The Premier should approach the responsible Commonwealth Minister to have the ships used in the interests of Australia in a time of need. The report of the Commonwealth Auditor-General for 1956 showed that the operations of the board during the year ended March 31, 1956, resulted in a loss of £317,000 compared with a profit of £370,000 for 1954-55, and almost £500,000 for 1954-54. The Commonwealth Line of Steamers has not received a fair deal from some of the Australian shipping companies. Not long ago it was usual to see eight or nine steamers at the Semaphore anchorage awaiting berths at either Outer Harbour or Port Adelaide. In almost every instance the steamers that left the anchorage first were other than Commonwealth Line steamers, which had to remain there for days longer than was really necessary. This meant that costs mounted up, because each day a steamer remains at the anchorage there is an additional cost of £900. This shows how the private companies tried to undermine the activities of the Commonwealth Line.

Even if the line did show a loss, would that not be offset by the service rendered to the primary producers? Each year over the last 10 years or so our railways have lost £3,000,000 or £4,000,000. That sounds bad economically, but there was an indirect benefit to the State as a whole. No-one would suggest that the railways should be handed over to private enterprise. If necessary we could subsidize the Commonwealth Line. It is done on the railways where concession freight rates are granted. In connection with the steamers this State has a strong case to present to the Commonwealth. They were purchased in 1916 for the purpose of serving the people; but under the present Menzies-Fadden Administration they are not being used as was first intended. We should see that the steamers are placed under the proper authority and used for the proper purpose.

In tonight's *News* under the heading "Fire Float May Go" we read that the S.A. Fire Brigade Board is considering disposing of the 31-year old fire float *Fire Queen*. The report also says that the shipowners are concerned at the prospect of Port Adelaide being left without a fire float. History tells us that over the last 30 or 40 years there have been outbreaks of fires in steamers. There was a large blaze on the *City of Singapore*. The fire burned for 24 hours and three people lost their lives. On another occasion a steamer at Osborne with a cargo of explosives caught fire and it was thought that the whole of Port Adelaide would soon be blown up, but through the use of the river fire service no explosion occurred. It would be a retrograde step for the *Fire Queen* to go out of existence. It would not be logical to take away such a service. The Premier should take up the matter immediately and ascertain why the *Fire Queen* is to be sold, and if it was a Fire Brigade Board decision, to ascertain why it was made.

Mr. HARDING (Victoria)—I am proud to be associated with the members of this House who have so ably paid a tribute to His Excellency the Governor, the late Sir George Jenkins and the late Mr. Larry Heath. I am conscious of the sad loss the State has sustained through the death of Mr. Heath. I am proud to be associated with the Playford Government. From listening to Opposition speakers I am amazed that any people at all come to this State and that those who are here remain here, but the figures prove the outstanding development of South Australia. As much as 95 per

cent of our population is served by a reticulated water supply, which is a wonderful record. In the past 10 years South Australia has surpassed the eastern States with a 42 per cent increase in population, and I presume that those people are still here. During the past 10 years the value of new buildings completed in South Australia has increased by 700 per cent. The outstanding figure is the increase in personal income per capita over the past 10 years by 369 per cent; therefore, it does not amaze me that people prefer South Australia.

The world population increases at a rate of about 43,000,000 a year, but it is almost unbelievable to me that the British Isles produces more meat, milk and cereals than the whole of Australia. Further, 37 per cent of the Australian wool production is produced by the small farmer in the 1-15 bales group. One-eighth of Australia's 4,000,000 workers produce the wool and other primary products that earn 90 per cent of our national income. By contrast, 33 per cent of our work force is engaged in producing secondary products that could not be sold but for tariff protection. Are there any long term prospects that Australian factories will be able to compete on world markets? I do not think so. So much Government money has been spent in promoting secondary industries, mining, afforestation, education, electricity, hospitals, housing, and other essential goods and services that the allocation of money for closer settlement has been sadly neglected.

I pay a tribute to the Minister of Repatriation and his officers for the way they have implemented the war service land settlement scheme. I have been closely allied to this scheme in a semi-official position and have moved among the settlers. Consequently, I know that the scheme is working successfully. It is good to see two farms a week carved out of virgin country. Those settlers are as happy and as proud and their children as healthy as we could wish. I also pay a tribute to the settlers themselves for this is no hand-out on a silver plate, but rather something that belongs to the State and the Federal Governments on a two-fifths and three-fifths basis. The soldier settlers are only custodians of the blocks under perpetual lease for at least 10 years, but at the end of that term they may acquire the freehold. There are only a few isolated cases that need attention and they are receiving it. For instance, some settlers are sick and others have had trouble with poor drainage, but in the latter cases expert

assistance has been rendered and I am sure the settlers will come out on the right side.

I now turn to the subject of the allotment of certain land in the South-East and in the western districts of Victoria adjacent to the South Australian border. In the hundred of Jeffries 16 blocks were recently thrown open and 172 applications received for them. In Victoria 26 blocks near the South Australian border were applied for by 465 men. Although I am not unmindful of the fact that there were 600 or more applicants for 39 blocks, I estimate that only 25 per cent of that number had sufficient capital, say £10,000, to go on to this virgin land. That means that about 120 suitable applicants who were interested in developing virgin country were disappointed. Those men should be encouraged and further land surveyed and thrown open in order that they might be settled. South-east of the Murray River there is an area of 700,000 acres of unoccupied leasehold land, and although I do not claim that all of it is suitable for settlement, especially in its present state, I believe that 100,000 acres should be surveyed and thrown open for application. We would surely be amazed at the number of applicants and the amount of capital both from Australia and overseas that would be interested in such a project.

Recently the South-East was visited by the representative of an English company that was anxious to invest £125,000 in suitable country. People are land hungry today, and in view of the fact that 80 per cent of 4,000,000 workers produce 90 per cent of the national income the Government should have more land surveyed and thrown open for settlement. I do not advocate the entry by the Government into a land settlement scheme similar to the soldier settlement scheme or the A.M.P. scheme. I believe that this State will continue to develop so rapidly that finance will not be available for a scheme of such a size because it will be needed to develop amenities such as schools, hospitals and railways. Surely that is the primary job of the Government and any long-term land settlement scheme should be left to private enterprise. If the land to which I referred were cut up into 1,500 acre blocks there would be sufficient for 400 settlers, and I think that we would get 4,000 applicants, many of whom would have from £10,000 to £20,000 available. I saw a statement in the press recently by the Premier under the heading "Preference to South Australian land settlement," and it read as follows:—

The Premier stated that a large area of surplus land in South Australia will be thrown open for settlement in the not far distant future.

More recently the Attorney-General was reported to have said:—

The South Australian Government was going to push ahead with a vigorous policy of opening up larger areas for development, the Attorney-General, Mr. Rowe, said today. Allotment of land would be made as quickly as possible, he said. He was opening a conference of the Australian Primary Producers

Union. He said that in the past 10 years 13,401,512 acres of land had been allotted.

Although that appears to be good reading, on analysis it is not as good as it looks because 8,000,000 acres of that area is pastoral lease. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. BYWATERS secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.33 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, July 31, at 2 p.m.