

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, August 1, 1957.

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

### QUESTIONS.

#### TRAILER SYSTEM OF LOADING CARGO.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—My question arises from a statement in this morning's press to the effect that the coastal shipping companies are considering introducing a new type of ship which will enable cargo to be loaded in containers, as is now done on the railways. Early this year I was present with the Federal Secretary of the Australian Railways Union and local officers at a deputation to the Minister of Railways, and one suggestion made to the Minister was that consideration should be given to the advisability of using the trailer system whereby the prime mover could take a trailer to the railway yards and the trailer could continue to its destination, to be picked up by another prime mover. Will the Minister of Works ascertain from the Minister of Railways whether this system has been considered by his department and whether it is practicable or expedient?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I will do that and bring down a reply as early as possible.

#### NORTHERN DISTRICTS WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. HEASLIP—In reply to a question by me yesterday the Minister of Works said that if there were no further intakes into the northern reservoirs it might be necessary to take restrictive measures. Can he say whether he is expecting a report concerning a deviation of the Morgan-Whyalla main, and if so how long it will be before the matter goes before the Public Works Committee and what action the Government is taking to prevent rationing or restrictive measures in an area which is highly productive and cannot do without water?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—The honourable member will recollect that last drought the north was about the only part of South Australia that did not suffer restrictions in the use of water, and that was because it could be served by the Morgan-Whyalla main. I have not seen any report with regard to the deviation he referred to. At present we are pumping water into the Bundaleer Reservoir, and it is hoped that with reasonable intakes no restrictive measures will be neces-

sary. Of course, that is in the lap of the gods and we have to look for some intake shortly. The pumping will continue and I will keep the honourable member advised as to what steps we have to take in regard thereto. It is too early at this stage to give any indication of what restrictive measures may be necessary. I only gave a note of warning yesterday in reply to his specific question.

#### REMOVAL OF STOP SIGNS.

Mr. TAPPING—On July 23 I asked the Minister of Works a question regarding the removal of stop signs in the metropolitan area. Has he a reply?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I undertook to take up the question with the Minister of Roads, and he has informed me that the Commissioner of Highways advises that under section 130 (a) of the Road Traffic Act the Commissioner of Police is the authority who controls the erection or removal of stop signs. It is not, therefore, under the control of the Minister of Roads.

#### GAWLER-DAVEYSTON ROAD.

Mr. HAMBOUR—Has the Minister of Works obtained a reply to my recent question about the Gawler-Daveyston Road?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—The Minister of Roads has forwarded to me the following report:—

The Commissioner of Highways advises that reconstruction of the formation and sub-base of the road between Gawler and Daveyston has been completed, and the pavement material will be added shortly so that sealing can be done early in the summer. The road is at present closed to through traffic whilst a bridge near Sheaoak Log is being constructed by contract. It is anticipated that this bridge will be completed in September.

#### HILLS DISTRICT: CHILDREN'S HEALTH.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Recently I read a report that was submitted in 1944 by the National Health and Medical Research Council in regard to a survey that was made of the general health of children in the hills district between 1939 and 1944. It stated that the health of these children would be similar to that of children in other densely populated rural areas. I ask the Premier, as Acting Minister of Health, whether another survey of this nature has been made for the purpose of comparisons?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—No.

### IRON ORE DEPOSITS.

Mr. JENKINS—In view of favourable reports given to the House by the Premier in relation to testing for iron ore deposits outside the Broken Hill Proprietary Company's leases, can he inform the House whether further testing has proved as favourable?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The testing that is taking place continues to be favourable and in one drill there has been between 600 and 700 feet of iron ore continuously in the drill hole, so a large deposit appears to have been encountered at that place. A number of investigations are taking place, and the Government believes that they have been favourable and that we shall find significant amounts of ore.

### HUNGRY HILL WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. BYWATERS—Some time ago I drew attention to the water problem in the Hungry Hill area. The Minister of Works promised to provide a water scheme commencing from about the end of June last, but it has not been commenced. Can the Minister say why?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—Yes, there is a very good reason. Unfortunately, supplies of six inch pipes required for that purpose have not come forward as readily as anticipated. I have spoken to the Engineer for Water Supply (Mr. Campbell), who assures me that he has not overlooked the supply to Hungry Hill, and that as soon as sufficient pipes come along they will be earmarked for that purpose. Mr. Campbell's report continues:—

At present the existing mains are supplying all the needs of the Hungry Hill area and the big demand will come next summer, and every effort will be made to try and obtain sufficient six inch pipes so that the main can be laid in time for this greatly increased consumption.

The honourable member will realize that a good deal of the increased consumption is the result of the growing of gherkins, etc., in that area. Every effort will be made to have the pipes laid in time for the coming summer.

### RUN-OFFS ON ROADS.

Mr. LAUCKE—A hazard is presented to other traffic by stationary commercial vehicles on highways, particularly at night time. I ask the Minister if consideration can be given, wherever practicable, to constructing run-off strips at the sides of highways to enable truck drivers to park off the highway proper?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I will take up the question with my colleague, the Minister of Roads. Up to the present it

has been necessary to spend all the available money on the roads themselves, with none over for such things as run-off strips, however desirable, the provision of which, over all the roads of the State, would cost a substantial amount of money.

### PATAWALONGA SCHEME.

Mr. STOTT—Last week the Minister of Education, as the member for Glenelg, gave a glowing report of the proposed Patawalonga scheme. Judging by that report, this area will be a thing of beauty for South Australia and no doubt a source of pride to the residents of Glenelg. Can the Premier indicate what the ultimate cost of that scheme will be to the Government?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—This matter was the subject of legislation under which the Government originally established this reserve and provided money towards its maintenance on condition that the councils concerned did the same. Some additional finance will be required, probably this year, but thereafter I think the revenue from the trust itself will probably cover its continual operation. This reserve will be used not only by the people in Glenelg and the West Torrens areas but by persons from all over the metropolitan area and the country. For that reason the Government believes there is a case for financial assistance towards its establishment, but always keeping certain responsibilities on the local authorities.

### PETERBOROUGH WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. QUIRKE—In paragraph 8 of His Excellency's Speech, the following appears:—

The Government also expects during the coming year to begin work for the betterment of the supplies in the Encounter Bay district and the Blackwood areas, and to make further progress in the operations for supplying River Murray water to Peterborough.

Can the Minister of Works say whether it is contemplated that the Peterborough supply will come from the existing Morgan-Whyalla main?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—The Treasurer will be presenting his Loan programme on Tuesday next and these items can then be considered.

### HENLEY BEACH HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Can the Minister of Education advise when a start will be made on the construction of the Henley Beach High School and when that school will be ready for students?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The work will be put in hand by the Building Division of the Architect-in-Chief's Department. The preliminary work is already being done and it is hoped that part of the school will be ready by the beginning of the next school year.

#### PORT AUGUSTA HOSPITAL.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Premier received a report from the Hospitals Department regarding the accommodation to be provided at the maternity wing of the Port Augusta Hospital? It would appear from plans submitted to the local board that the improvements to be effected will not add to the accommodation.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have a report as follows:—

With respect to extract from *Hansard* dated 27th June, 1957, herein, it is desired to advise that the statement "despite overcrowding no provision has been made for even one extra bed" is incorrect. The original request for additions to the maternity section at Port Augusta Hospital was received from the medical officer in letter dated 24th March, 1954. As a result thereof, the Architect-in-Chief was requested to:—

- (a) Suitably enclose the existing verandah on the western side of the building with both fixed glass panels and louver windows; the verandah was also to be lined and ceiled. It was anticipated that such enclosure would provide for an additional six beds.
- (b) Provide a new nursery, portion of which should be glassed in for premature babies and housing of humid crib.
- (c) Convert the existing nursery into a three-bed ward.
- (d) Convert the existing urine testing room into a babies' kitchen, for preparation and storage of infants' food.

It was stated that completion of the above work would result in the bed capacity being increased from a then existing 10 to 19 beds. The Architect-in-Chief reports that the verandah was enclosed in 1955, but that it has since been found, in actual practice, that this only provides accommodation comfortably for three or four beds. Plans are in hand at the present time to convert the existing nursery to a three-bed ward. In addition, the Architect-in-Chief is being asked to review a suggestion for the extension of the existing nursery in order to make it a six-bed ward in lieu of a three-bed ward as originally planned. Furthermore, the long-range development plan for the Port Augusta Hospital, which is at present in course of preparation by the Architect-in-Chief, provides for a completely new maternity section. The existing building is to be utilized for other purposes. The Port Augusta Hospital Board is aware of the work that has taken place in the existing maternity section and of the further work proposed in connection therewith. The board is also aware of the preparation of a long-range development plan for the hospital.

#### OPENING OF SAW MILL.

Mr. FLETCHER—I have been asked repeatedly if it is intended to have an official opening of Saw Mill No. 1 at Mount Gambier. Can the Premier inform me whether it is the intention of the Government to have an official opening?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Two or three large projects are now nearing completion, and the Government takes the general view that it is desirable that members have an opportunity of seeing what the works encompass and the amount of development taking place. The new reservoir on the Para is one of these works, and the large saw mills in the South-East is another. There is still another under contemplation for this year. I do not think the honourable member would desire an elaborate function; the Government will arrange suitable functions so that members will be able to take part in some brief ceremony to mark the official openings of these two schemes.

#### CROCKER WELL URANIUM FIELD.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier any further information relating to development on the Crocker Well uranium field and the possibility of production being commenced on that field in the near future?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Some additional work has been carried out on that field, and generally speaking, I think it can be regarded as satisfactory. It is not yet complete or conclusive, but it has already disclosed that there is a very large body of ore in the area, some of which is high grade and some low grade. The problem is whether to proceed at once with a high grade proposition of limited size or to attempt to develop a large proposition based on open cut methods and low cost mining. We believe the ore is of a grade that would be economically possible to work, particularly as the treatment plant at Port Pirie can handle it without any modifications and in conjunction with the ore from Radium Hill. The big cost at the development end could be well held by the existing plant. Regarding the latter part of the question, the Government has submitted a proposition to the Combined Development Agency and it is now under consideration. Some officers discussed certain parts of the proposition, but it is not yet known whether the agency will accept it or not. There has been a substantial fall in the overseas price of uranium. I do not know the market price today, so I cannot forecast whether the agency will accept the proposition or not. We expect a reply from it fairly soon.

**KERSBROOK-WILLIAMSTOWN ROAD.**

Mr. LAUCKE—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Roads a reply to the question I asked last week regarding the Kersbrook-Williamstown road?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM MCINTOSH—I received the following report:—

The Commissioner of Highways advises that the Kersbrook-Williamstown section of the Lyndoch-Chain of Ponds Main Road has been re-sheeted with local material by a departmental gang during a period when winter prevented spraying operations. Many such natural materials, when saturated by rain before they can be consolidated, form a surface slurry which inconveniences traffic for the time being. The section from Kersbrook to the South Para Bridge is now dried out and consolidated and has formed a satisfactory surface. A few patches near Williamstown, which have not yet dried out, are still receiving attention, and it is anticipated that the whole road will be in a satisfactory condition shortly. The use of local material has caused inconvenience to traffic for a short period. However its use was warranted because of the greatly increased cost which would have been involved in obtaining crushed rock, which was the only alternative.

**INTER-ROUTE TRAMWAY PASSES.**

Mr. LAWN—I understand that as a result of its policy of increasing fares the Tramways Trust is dispensing with inter-route passes. For instance, a workman living at Parkside or Unley who has to go to Port Adelaide to work will now be required to buy two passes or pay two fares, whereas in the past he has been able to obtain one pass and change in the city to another bus. Will the Premier take up with the trust the question of the continuance of inter-route passes because of their value to workmen?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will get a report from the trust and bring it down in due course.

**INTERSTATE HAULIERS FEES.**

Mr. STOTT—Speaking on the history of the self-governing States on February 26 the Premier was reported as saying that he would do all in his power to oppose any proposal that might come from the Commonwealth Government to break down the effect of section 92 of the Federal Constitution protecting the freedom of trade.

I also quote from a report from Sydney under the heading "Constitution Changed Urged" as follows:—

The State Governments will be asked to confer to consider a joint approach to the Federal Government for a referendum to alter section 92 of the Federal Constitution. The Australian Transport Advisory Council decided this in

Sydney today. The resolution adopted was:—

That the States should confer, notwithstanding current Victorian litigation, to consider an approach to the Commonwealth for a referendum to provide power for the States to impose charges on interstate and intrastate hauliers as a contribution towards the maintenance and construction of State roads.

The resolution was moved by the South Australian Minister of Roads, Mr. Jude—

Mr. Shannon—Question! We do not want another speech on the Address in Reply.

Mr. SPEAKER—The honourable member must now ask his question.

Mr. STOTT—Was the Minister of Roads speaking with the full authority of the South Australian Government when he moved that resolution, or was the Premier when he said that he would oppose freedom of trade? People are wondering what the position is and I desire a clear statement of Government policy on this question.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Advisory Council recommended to the Governments that they should consider a referendum. It is, of course, open to a Government to accept that suggestion and support the referendum or not as it sees fit, but no member of the advisory council was in a position to involve his Government in any decision, which would obviously be Government policy and require a formal declaration after consideration by Cabinet. Personally—and I now speak without Cabinet having formally made a decision on this matter—I would view with considerable alarm any alteration of the Constitution that enabled any authority to impose charges willy-nilly on interstate trade, because although it would no doubt start with a high motive for charging some fee appropriate for the maintenance of roads, it would not be long before those charges would be used for totally different purposes, for instance, to prop up economic circumstances, to restrict trade, or for any of a hundred other purposes that would be adverse to this State's interests, particularly as South Australia depends on the eastern States for a large part of its markets for its manufactures and primary produce. If we were to give the eastern States the opportunity of restricting the entry of those commodities by imposing charges on road or rail transport, we would prejudice our right to those markets; therefore I would oppose it because I believe it would be wrong. It would certainly seriously affect the economics of this State and would soon have a grave repercussion on the employment position here.

## RAILWAY LOCOMOTIVES.

Mr. STOTT—Can the Minister of Works representing the Minister of Railways, indicate how many diesel electric locomotives are being used by the Railways Department and the number of conversions of fuel burning locomotives?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I will get a report on that matter for the honourable member.

## LONG SERVICE LEAVE BILL.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended the appropriation of such amounts of money as were required for the purposes mentioned in the Long Service Leave Bill, 1957.

## PUBLIC PURPOSES LOAN BILL.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended the House of Assembly to make provision by Bill for the appropriation of such amounts of the revenue and other money of the State as were required for the following purposes:—

- (a) The repayment with interest of the sum of £23,530,000 to be borrowed for the purposes mentioned in the Loan Estimates for the financial year 1957-58 and of any other sums to be borrowed pursuant to the Public Purposes Loan Bill, 1957.
- (b) To make payments from the Loan Fund of repaid loan money and surplus revenue for purposes mentioned in the Loan Estimates for the financial year 1957-58.
- (c) Any other purposes mentioned in the Public Purposes Loan Bill, 1957.

## ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from July 31. Page 226.)

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—The debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply was for a long time in this place regarded as one of the most important debates of the session because it was generally accepted as an opportunity for members to bring forward any matters of importance to their districts and to which they felt the attention of Parliament, the Government and the public should be drawn. It was generally held that matters brought forward in the debate would be considered in due course by the Government and taken into account in the preparation of the Estimates to be introduced later in the session. It is well known that once the Estimates have been prepared and intro-

duced they are as unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. Any alteration would be regarded by the Government as a vote of no confidence. So, unless a member is able to make representations generally in the course of this debate and those representations are considered and provided for in the Estimates, there is little opportunity of having anything constructive done for the remainder of the current financial year. The Treasurer has often given an assurance that the various matters referred to by members will be considered by the departmental heads concerned. This obviates the necessity for the Treasurer to reply to representations during the debate. In the past members have accepted this and have not been discouraged when it would seem that representations made for district requirements, or opinions expressed regarding the operation of the State's services, fell on deaf ears. Therefore, it is not to be wondered at that members have viewed with considerable concern the pattern which the debate has taken, because it appears to indicate a complete departure from what we have come to regard as the accepted practice.

We have noticed during the last couple of years a growing disinclination by the Government to regard seriously some of the representations made, and I attribute this to one of the inevitable results of its having been in office far too long, and its having fallen into the mistaken belief that it is not incumbent upon it to seriously consider representations from this side of the House, except at their own convenience or on their own terms. I consider that is not an unfair criticism; but it is not a healthy thing either for the people or the State. As the debate has proceeded it has occasioned much food for thought, and the feature responsible for that is the reluctance of Government members to participate. If the grapevine is correct and the information given to me by the Party Whip is right, then this debate will collapse this afternoon and I understand that mine will probably be the last contribution. I am at a loss to understand why, unless what I have said is the truth. If it is no longer Government policy to have regard for the matters introduced in the course of the debate, then I can understand the collapse, and if this opportunity to present the claims of their district is not taken are we to assume from the silence from the Government benches that all is well in those members' electorates? If that is so, the treatment meted out to those districts is vastly different from that meted out to districts represented by

members on this side. In making that statement I am not unmindful of the vast amount of work carried out in recent years in the north, but if the silence of Government members is to be interpreted that they are completely satisfied—that they have nothing to say concerning the welfare of their districts—then we can only assume that there is some reason for their silence, and that the treatment they are receiving is different from the treatment of other districts. I do not believe that is the answer, but that we have to look considerably deeper.

It is true that some members opposite have addressed themselves to the debate, but by and large they have contented themselves with patting the Government on the back and singing its praises. I doubt whether any one of those speeches could by any stretch of the imagination be interpreted as championing the cause of any part of their district. One can only assume that in those districts all is well. Another possible reason for this silence is that they are not convinced that there is any longer any value attached to this debate from the point of view of their representations, that they are experiencing a feeling of frustration and that such representations no longer have any influence on the Estimates or the administration. It is reasonable to assume that if the administration paid any attention to what is said in the debate, then Government members would make full use of the opportunity presented, but they do not. I know that they are as keen to watch the interests of their districts as I am to present the case for Stuart. The fact that they are not placing anything before the House on this occasion can be attributed only to their conviction that there is no longer any value attached to the debate; and that they are tired of having their representations falling on deaf ears. Or is it that they have found some other avenue of approach? Whatever the answer it represents a major departure from accepted practice.

I am not convinced that that is good, but consider that representations should be discussed openly so that all members may have an opportunity to express themselves. Too many major decisions are being made outside this House, and too often members are the last to hear of them. I know it is convenient to the Government to have its members going to Ministers privately to present such schemes as that provided for the improvement of the Patawalonga, and to have decisions reached outside this Chamber—decisions

which members representing other districts should be able to examine in the light of the needs of other parts of the State.

Mr. Fletcher—Was there not a Public Works Committee inquiry on that?

Mr. RICHES—Not all the scheme which hit the headlines on the front page of the *Advertiser* this week was referred to the Public Works Committee. I am not singling out that proposition, but that is the kind of thing that can happen, and when we are told there is not sufficient money to go round on the works which are regarded as urgent to maintain services, then these works should be measured alongside others which are desperately needed. That cannot be done if those decisions are not reached inside this Chamber. Do members opposite find it is no longer necessary to make their representations in the House because they have some private channel through which they can forward their representations to the Government?

There is another possible explanation. It could be that the collapse of this debate is merely a reflection of the attitude of people outside this House, a feeling that we are being governed by a benevolent dictatorship, a reflection of the political apathy which abounds, a feeling of couldn't care less, that if the Premier is agreeable to anything he does not have to consult Parliament, but can give an assurance that it will be done, or that it may or may not eventuate, depending on just how he is personally interested in the proposal. If the Premier is not interested and says "No," it is of no use complaining, there is nothing that can be done. We had an instance of that this afternoon. Although one member of the Cabinet was responsible for a resolution asking the State Governments to agree to a referendum on section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution, the Premier gave his personal opinion and said, without consulting the Cabinet, that it would be undesirable. Every member knows just what that means: that the Liberal Party in South Australia will oppose any alteration of section 92.

Mr. Heaslip—Because that is wise.

Mr. RICHES—I am not saying that the Premier is on wrong grounds, but this is the kind of benevolent dictatorship that is breeding a political vacuum in the minds of the people. I think the Government might be glad to have a review of the Constitution, but I am not purposing to argue that now. I am drawing attention to the power that the Premier rightly or wrongly exercises. It is the power to say "No," and it is generally

accepted by the people that if he says "No," that is the end of the matter. How often have other members had this said to them, as I have had it said to me repeatedly:—

When a project is put forward and it is known that the Premier is not favourably disposed towards it, what can you do about it? It is of no use approaching anybody else, because if the Premier says "No," that is the end of the matter.

The people are unable to do anything about it by an expression of opinion in a poll. They can give their views by their votes, but that does not have any effect. The Premier stays put, and as that has been the position over two decades, it is breeding a political apathy which is not good. That apathy is possibly reflected in this Chamber and that is why members, particularly those supporting the Government, find no virtue in addressing themselves to this debate. There are many things that I believe are of first importance to this State, and I am fortified in my opinion by what people say to me, but we regard those things as remote and outside the possibilities of achievement. They do not come within the range of our vision as being practical politics, but they could be achieved if the people were held together and went after them together. If there were a common faith shared between leaders and led there are problems that we could solve, but they will never be solved as long as this couldn't care less attitude prevails and if we think everything is running smoothly under the benevolent guidance of Uncle Tom.

I think the press has to accept some responsibility for this political vacuum, a term I use for the want of something better. A study of the newspapers during the past fortnight demonstrates how little importance they attach to this debate. It is not considered necessary to inform the people any longer of what is being said here on behalf of the people. Unless someone in the press gallery thinks it is good for the people to know what their elected representatives are saying or doing there is no means for the people to know. The whole of a day's deliberations are reported in less space than is given to a story about the fairies at the bottom of the garden.

Mr. O'Halloran—There are many fairy tales told here.

Mr. RICHES—Yes. I appreciated the article about the fairies, but all I am questioning is the attitude of the press that people in a member's district are not interested in more than 2½ lines of his address to this debate. I think the people might be interested, and it

is important in an enlightened democracy, if ever we are to achieve such a thing, that the people should know what we are doing here and should be encouraged to take an interest.

Mr. Heaslip—Do you think they would read the reports?

Mr. RICHES—It would depend on how they were presented.

Mr. Millhouse—And what was said.

Mr. RICHES—It would not take long to read the contribution of the honourable member to this debate. I have a high regard for the power of the press and a great respect for the brain washing of which it is capable. The press can determine our thinking and our reading and the importance placed on the things we read, if done judiciously, to a far greater degree than the average man is conscious of. I hand it to the Adelaide newspapers that they understand the psychology of their readers. They do not overplay their hands, and I believe they are the most responsible press in Australia and that they exercise a far greater influence over the people's thinking than the press of other States. They have led the thinking of the people as no other power has been able to do in a democracy. This power over the minds of men is a terrific power, far mightier than the sword. To those who wield that power, consciously or unconsciously, I say that, in their own interests and the interests of the State, the exercise of that power must not be overdone. I shall give an illustration of what I am saying. A few years ago South Australians had not taken up square dancing. They knew nothing of it and had no desire to go square dancing, but the press sponsored this type of dancing and within a few weeks people from one end of the State to the other were square dancing.

Mr. Quirke—They have squared that off now.

Mr. RICHES—The member for Burra was actively engaged in it and so was I, and I enjoyed it. He could not have been persuaded to go square dancing at the business end of a saw, but he was actively interested in square dancing in his district, as a result of the campaign that was conducted by the press. South Australia took it up and paid the dance callers, while it was in its heyday, a greater sum of money weekly than we pay our Director of Education. When the public lost interest in it it died out as suddenly as it had arrived.

Mr. Quirke—It died out when we found that the callers were the only ones getting anything out of it.

Mr. RICHES—We know now how people can be whipped up by publicity, and 10,000 of them were so whipped up to go out and welcome a croaker like Johnny Ray. That is what can be done. I say to the press in South Australia that by and large it has not abused its position, but by heavens it has used this propaganda for its own advantage and has the people of South Australia thinking along the lines that it would have them think. I have been searching the papers for 20 years in order to find if the Labor Party in South Australia has ever done a good or a right thing. If it has ever made a pronouncement which is right or done anything which is good it has escaped our friends of the press. There has been this constant hammering away at Labor and this constant subtle propaganda that the people are being governed benevolently, that the Labor Party represents disruptionists who are bed-mates or friends of the Communists, and that they are everything that is bad and the Liberals are everything that is good. That has gone on consistently for 20 years or more. People are not challenging it and hundreds are believing it. The result of it is that a political vacuum is being created. This brain washing has been going on, and it takes the form that it is not the right thing to talk politics any more. How often do we hear a person who should be giving a lead in our thinking say, "I have no interest in politics; I have no politics." Surely politics is the science of living together, working together and building and doing things together.

Mr. O'Halloran—It certainly is in a democracy.

Mr. RICHES—Those occupying positions of trust ought to be leading our people. They are men who can invent and fashion and plan a Bill, but they say, "I have no interest in politics" or "I have no politics." It has built up a political vacuum which I believe is dangerous to the people of this State. In social circles the propaganda is that it is not the right thing to be associated with the Labor Party, but it is the right thing to appear in dress suit like the young members of the Liberal and Country League. This is snobocracy and so-called high society at its worst. Nobody knows that better than those who control the press and those who can use that very appeal to the snob instinct among our people for commercial ends. The tobacco people, for instance, use that appeal to the snob instinct when they advertise DeReszke

cigarettes. That advertisement features a man in evening dress, and never any other type of clothing. They also make an appeal to the mob instinct when advertising Capstan cigarettes; they claim that 40,000 people smoke Capstans so they must be all right. So it goes on.

The point I make is that this propaganda is creating an attitude of mind of not caring and a vacuum in minds which ought to be guided and caught up in a vision of what this country is capable of doing and what we as a people are capable of achieving. This is one of the few places on all the earth where the potential is beyond the dreams of man and where we as a people, if we rally together, can achieve the very things that we regard today as impossible. We are being carried along more or less satisfactorily because of high wool prices and a succession of good seasons, and because a large proportion of our people are experiencing a comparatively prosperous time. To those who are not experiencing these good times the attitude adopted in many instances is "The devil take care of them." There could conceivably be a recession in wool prices, and, as the Federal Minister, Mr. Casey, has pointed out, there will certainly be a drought within the next five years. In a time of crisis, what is going to hold our people together if we cannot implant in them a faith over and above the every-day things which will lift them to realize some purpose in living?

Mr. O'Halloran—The Labor Party will hold them together as it did in the last great crisis.

Mr. RICHES—That is the only hope I can see, and I am pleading with the people to do something because I believe they will see that the Labor Party is composed of the people themselves, that the Labor policy is a product of the thinking of the people which they should embrace and hold. The difference between that faith and the absence of it is the difference between the losing of the city of Paris during the second world war and the saving of the city of London.

Mr. Fletcher—A good Independent faith.

Mr. RICHES—If anyone can show me any faith in Independent politics I shall be glad to listen. Independents have no vision and no ideal to aim for, but go anywhere in any direction, whichever way the wind blows.

Mr. Fletcher—They are free agents and are not tied up.

Mr. RICHES—His Excellency the Governor in his speech said that the rapid growth of



our population was being matched by Government undertakings in housing. That may be the experience of the members who are not addressing themselves to this debate but it is certainly not mine. That claim is certainly not substantiated by the figures in the *Pocket Year Book*. We all believe that homes should be provided for our people and that every person should own his own home. However, not much is being done and the housing situation is deteriorating. Surely if we all recognize that it is of the utmost importance to solve this problem and get together then it is within our capacity to house the people of this State. It is all a matter of finance. I believe the general public is satisfied with what the Housing Trust is doing, but it is not doing enough. Why, in the face of such a demand, is there a recession in house building? Just after the last war the Premier told me that if the war taught us anything it taught us that while materials and manpower were available and a reproductive work was necessary nothing in the world should prevent it from being done. I believe that. We should never say that a thing can't be done because we have not the money. We are rapidly reaching the stage of regarding housing as being outside the realms of practical politics.

All members are agreed that positive action should be taken to arrest the drift of population to the city. It is wrong that our country townships should be disappearing and our metropolitan area increasing. From a study of the *Pocket Year Book* it is apparent that the percentage of population in the metropolitan area is increasing. Incidentally, this publication regards Elizabeth and Salisbury as country towns. Many members consider them as belonging to the metropolitan area. If their populations were added to the metropolitan area the picture would be much worse. Last weekend it was our privilege to visit Marree and to witness the function celebrating the completion of the standard gauge railway from Stirling North to Marree. We noted that history was being made and also that history was being repeated because a line was built 75 years ago connecting these two towns. A Bill authorizing the construction of the first line was introduced into this Parliament in 1870 but was defeated. After further inquiry it was reintroduced in 1876 and carried. During the debate at that time it was stated that the railway would link up the townships of Saltia, Pichi Richi, Wonoka, Kanyaka, Gordon, Wilson, and others. Some of these centres had populations of over

200, but not one building is left today in any of those townships, which have disappeared over the years.

Each year members draw attention to the drift of population to the city and refer to the adverse effect on the State's economy, but we seem powerless to do anything about it. We tend to regard the situation as insoluble, but I believe we can achieve something. If we gave sufficient thought to it we could decentralize industry and grasp the vision of an extending development held by our forebears of over 80 years ago. It may be argued that it is easy to voice such sentiments, but they were voiced at Marree. Reference was made to the development that could take place in the Northern Territory by building the railway line through to Darwin. Our pastoral and mineral resources could be opened up. These sentiments were expressed 80 years ago but we are still as far from achieving them as then. The vision is still there and some day these lines of communication will be built. I hope that the line will not stop at Marree, but will be continued through to Alice Springs and Darwin. The Commonwealth Railways have done a wonderful job in building up the track along that route, and ingenious devices have been brought into operation by the mechanical branch in order to cater for road and rail movement of heavy equipment into the Centre, which proves that we have the ability to do these things if we have the need. I believe men in this branch are now working on equipment to transport huge turbines by road to Port Augusta, then by rail to Alice Springs, from where they will be taken on road bogeys to the mining centre. The vision of possible development of the hinterland was held by our forebears 80 years ago, but we have not been able to rally the people around to grasp sufficiently the full importance of what they believed it was possible to attain. Just after the opening ceremony there were agitations for standardizing rail gauges throughout Australia, and I hope something practical will arise from this. Something could arise if we all went after it.

I believe several industries could be established in the north. As a member of the Industries Development Committee I realize that industries cannot be established artificially. I know that the Government has tried consistently over the years to bring some industry to Wallaroo to compensate for the closing of the mines. It was intended that some industry should be established in the buildings erected for the grain alcohol plant,

but the attempts have not been successful, although not for the want of trying. I realize the proximity of raw materials or markets is the first essential together, of course, with the provision of essential services such as communications, electricity and water, so it is necessary for us to look around at our natural resources. That is why it is a source of disappointment to me that although South Australia has some of the richest iron ore resources in the world, it is not getting any substantial benefit from their exploitation, not even to the point of an honourable agreement entered into between the States and the company that was given the right over the leases in perpetuity.

Another raw material that is available to us is salt, and I believe there is a possibility of developing one of the largest salt undertakings in the Southern Hemisphere at the head of Spencer's Gulf. There is a wonderful natural potential there which could operate on a world scale with Government assistance on transport, and that is all that is asked for. Salt is in short supply, and we import £1,500,000 worth in its manufactured form each year. The demand for it is increasing. It can be regarded as the measure of the industrialization of a people; as people become more highly industrialized the demand for salt increases accordingly. Looking into the future, we must expect that Japan, China, Indonesia and all the countries around the Pacific will be searching for salt because the *per capita* demand will increase every year. The most highly developed countries are big users of salt. America heads the list with a *per capita* consumption of 226 lb. a year; Japan uses 55 lb.; Canada, 157 lb.; Australia, 92 lb.; and New Zealand, 40 lb. The Japanese are very much alive to the demand, and although there is a shortage in that country, they are buying from other parts of the world and supplying areas as close to Japan as Australia.

Salt can be the basis of quite a number of important chemical industries. We all hope that one day there will be an oil refinery in South Australia, and as refineries are being dotted around Australia there will be increasing demands for ethyl lead, which has salt in its make-up. Ethyl lead is added to petrol to give it a high octane content, and without it Australia could never be completely independent of other parts of the world for its oil supplies. We all know that salt is used in uranium production. The demand is increasing, and the capacity to produce at the top of Spencer's Gulf is almost unlimited.

In the past few weeks I visited an area that we had been told could not produce salt, but I walked over acres and acres of salt 8 in. thick, and this area could be extended to 1,000 acres. This salt is now being harvested and washed, and the experts say that it is 98 per cent pure, purer than that from the Dead Sea. There is a world market for this product; the only thing necessary to make this undertaking work is some good form of transport. Capital is needed to provide shipping and other transport with a minimum of handling. I hope that the Government will come to the aid of this industry, not only because of its value to South Australia—it could produce up to 1,000,000 tons a year—but also because of the possibility of further expansion of industries that use salt as a basis. We are told by men who have worked in the salt mines in the Dead Sea, and who have been engaged in the industry of producing the bromides that are added to petrol, that here is an industry that should be established in the near future. If it is established, it would make the present power station pale into insignificance by comparison. The company has spent over £200,000 already and a tremendous amount of development has taken place. It would be a sad loss to the State if the plans were not brought to a successful completion. Here is a vision of industries which could come to South Australia if only we had the will to go after them. I hope the vision will not be lost. Paragraph 4 of the Governor's Speech said:—

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

What excuse does the Government now offer for not proceeding with the Port Pirie harbour improvements? The matter was investigated by the Public Works Committee and recommended. It is an urgent work, but it is said that the project has not been proceeded with because insufficient loan money was available. Last week the Premier said that loan money available permitted work to proceed only on two bulk handling projects at the one time. How does that statement measure up with the one in the Governor's Speech? The Port Pirie harbour is falling into disrepair and it is poor comfort to the people in the area to be told that they must wait until the bulk handling projects are completed before any work can be done at their port. We cannot afford to allow our ports to deteriorate further. The urgency that prompted the matter being sent to the Public Works Committee several

years ago still exists. A time factor is involved and the Government should give more consideration to the Port Pirie wharves and harbour.

For too long we have been faced with the situation in which these urgent matters have been placed before the Government and members have been told that the Government was planning for them, or that they had been referred to the Public Works Committee. We have accepted that, but it has only been said to put members off. Then when the Governor's Speech is read we find less definite statements about the matters than were made about them in the previous Speech. The people at Port Pirie will not accept the excuse given for the unwarranted delay in doing the work. It was planned and recommended and would have gone on if it had not been decided to have bulk handling facilities at other ports. Whichever way we look at bulk handling, there is no excuse for not proceeding with the Port Pirie work. I wholeheartedly support the pleas made by Mr. Davis and I give him credit for the consistent way in which he has kept the matter under the notice of the Government. The remarks on this matter should not fall on deaf ears.

I have a serious complaint to make in connection with roads. People in the north have been looking for the day when Port Augusta would be linked with Quorn by a bitumen road. Had promises to this end been carried out Quorn would have been saved. Many of the men who had to work at Stirling North had reached the age when they did not want to break up their homes at Quorn and start others somewhere else. They had worked all their lives in Quorn and they would not have gone to live at Stirling North if there had been a satisfactory means of communication between that town and Quorn. We thought that the Government was seized with the need to have a road between those two towns. We were told that money was voted last year for the commencement of the work and that the first few miles of bitumen would be put down from Stirling North. Members on this side can be excused for feeling that the Government was doing all it could, but not one penny has been made available for the work. The money has been diverted elsewhere and the road today is worse than it was previously. It is sometimes dangerous to travel on the Pichi Richi Pass Road and the Quorn men have had to transfer to Stirling North. I read in a local paper last week that the Stockowners' Association has been told that

there will be no provision for the work this year. If that is the position I enter a protest. I hope the Highways Department will examine the matter in the light of the promises made and the needs of that part of the State. The work should commence soon.

It could be that there are heavy drains on the Highways Fund, but the provision of this bitumen road is more essential than the widening of roads further south, the titivating of bitumen roads and the duplication of roads. People up north do not know what it is to have a bitumen road. They are put off year after year. When will their turn come? No wonder people are coming from the country to the city, and townships in the area are disappearing. I object strongly to the practice of making money available for a project and then, without telling anyone, spending it elsewhere. I believe that a special case can be made for the orange growers of Beetaloo Valley who have had a very difficult season because of the increased water charges levied on them, the long dry spell and the late start of the winter. In the first place these blocks were opened up after World War I for returned men. The trees were planted and came into production and the settlers were receiving local water, of which there was any amount for them, from the creek that ran through their orchards and was dammed back to make the Beetaloo Dam. But as the industrial centres of that district grew they had to draw on this water and the supply has had to be supplemented from the River Murray—not to meet the demands of the Beetaloo people, but of the growing industrial centres. There would always have been permanent water at Beetaloo, and plenty of it for the maintenance of the gardens—not very important to the economy of the State, but terribly important, because it means their livelihood and all they have to the handful of people settled on these blocks—but for this extra demand on it. They sell their oranges in Port Pirie in competition with oranges produced on the River Murray and they have to sell them at the same price. On the river—and here I could be wrong—I understand that the blockers pay about £10 an acre a year for water. At Beetaloo the water which normally could come from their own local supply, but which is held in reserve in connection with the major scheme, is sold for nearer £100 a year per acre and this is placing them in an impossible position. Notice of the introduction of a Bill to remit water charges in some parts of the State was

given today, and I understand that this is to be done in the areas where they have been obtaining water for £10 an acre. In the name and on behalf of the orange growers of Beetaloo Valley I ask the Government to give them some consideration at the same time. I know that water cannot be pumped from the Murray and sold in country areas at any less charge than at present levied; we know that the Government is doing is at a loss, but these men are not in an analogous position with the men on the Murray because their supply is local. The Beetaloo Valley creek, left to the local district, is adequate for orange production, as is the Murray for orange production along the river, so I consider that they have a case and I hope that these men will be considered when this Bill is presented. The Premier has promised to visit the district and to meet the men and we appreciate that offer and are looking forward to his visit.

One final word, and this is in connection with aborigines. I urged last year, and I do so again, that the greatest possible amount of planning work should be done in order to rehouse the aborigines at Port Augusta and Port Germein. I understand that about three years ago a man who worked and lived with the aborigines at Port Germein drew up a scheme for a settlement for them in the foothills adjacent and that this scheme, after due consideration, was approved by the Aborigines Protection Board. Apparently, however, it has become bogged down somewhere since then. Without labouring the situation further I ask the Minister if he will call for that docket, which must be in the department somewhere, and have these recommendations examined to see just how much effect South Australia can give to them when the Budget is presented within the next few weeks. Here again I believe that if we have the will and the vision a solution of our aboriginal problems is not impossible, although it may be difficult. I know that it is not one problem but dozens of problems intertwined; it is different wherever they are situated. At Port Augusta the problem is different from that at Port Germein. Out along the East-West line it is completely different again, requiring different methods. I hope that my remarks will not be construed as criticism of what is being done, for I know that the Minister is sympathetic and if I have not before I express now the appreciation of all those who are working in the interests of the aborigines for the step taken recently in increasing the grant payable for the maintenance and education of children in the homes.

Had my voice held I intended to tell the House the story of Umcewarra. It is a story that ought to be told because it is something that can be put on the other side of the scale. As a people we are not proud of our treatment of the aborigines, but here there is a wonderful story to balance the scale somewhat, and in the interests of those who work and live there I will take the opportunity at some future time to tell it. I support the motion.

Mr. FLETCHER (Mount Gambier)—Like other members I offer my congratulations to our Premier on the high honour he has received and I am sure that all members agree that it was well deserved. I am also pleased that His Excellency the Governor and Lady George are to stay with us for another two years. They would now pass as good Australians for they have been baptized with both fire and water: they have seen one of our worst bush fires and also the worst Murray River flood ever known to white men. To those settlers who lost all or a considerable part of their property in the flood all members extend their deepest sympathy. South Australians generally responded magnificently to the appeal for financial assistance. Any member who has read a book entitled *Old Man Murray*, which is in our Parliamentary Library, will know from the history of the river that it is unreliable and that a deluge cannot be forecast. I hope, however, that the ingenuity of man will be able to overcome any flood that may come down the river and that it may be suitably dammed before it reaches the more closely settled areas.

His Excellency's Speech contained very little fighting material. As a country member, I was disappointed that it contained no reference to the sewerage of country towns. This question has been before the House for a number of years and is still a live one. The appropriate legislation was introduced years ago and the people of many country towns have responded favourably to the suggestion that their towns be sewered. As a member of the Public Works Committee who is familiar with conditions in the larger country towns, I know the methods adopted by many in disposing of their waste; the position is critical. How long are we to put up with these conditions? It is up to the Government to make up its mind when and where it will begin to provide these amenities.

I understand that at present there is an agitation for the sewerage of a number of towns in the catchment area of the Adelaide hills. If more reservoirs are constructed in the hills those towns must be sewered in order to keep

the water supply of the city pure and fit for human consumption. Although I do not oppose the establishment in the Adelaide hills of additional reservoirs to provide cheaper water than that supplied by the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline, I point out that if those reservoirs are constructed under present conditions they will take the water from dairies, piggeries, and all kinds of sources. This question needs deep consideration and I hope it will be given that consideration. Paragraph 30 of His Excellency's Speech states:—

The Government has conducted investigations into the problem of preventing pollution of underground waters and is preparing a Bill on this subject for submission to you.

My constituents are deeply interested in this subject because the water supply of Mount Gambier is from underground sources. The effluent and waste waters from the humble homes and the largest hotels flow underground, and one can imagine what the position must be. The biggest timber mills in the State, if not in the Southern Hemisphere, have now been established at Mount Gambier and at the Umpherston Caves in the area several bores have been put down in an endeavour to get rid of waste waters from the sawmill and nearby buildings. In the sinking of foundations for these buildings it was found that the area is practically riddled with caves and underground waters. What will be the effect of running waste waters and effluent underground? Will they eventually reach the Blue Lake and contaminate the local water supply? I doubt whether the best geologists could say where these waters finish.

At one city in England waste waters have been disposed underground for more than 200 years, resulting in the domestic water supply being polluted. That is a phase which the Public Works Committee seriously considered in the sewerage of Mount Gambier. It applies not only to that town, but also to towns in the districts represented by the members for Millicent and Victoria. All these places get their domestic water supplies underground, and most of their waste waters also go underground. Therefore, I hope the Government will have a thorough investigation of the position, but as to what will happen is in higher hands than ours. It is surprising what a little earth movement will do, as was indicated in the earthquake in the Adelaide hills, and we had a similar experience in the South-East. At a place now known as Earthquake Springs, there was no water before the earthquake, but the ground in the vicinity lifted three feet, and water has been run-

ning there ever since. The late Father Tennyson Woods in his book said he was told by the old hands that 10 years before his arrival there was no Leg of Mutton Lake at Mount Gambier, but there must have been an earth movement. However, the lake has practically dried up again. In dealing with underground waters we are dealing with something over which nature has control and not us.

I join the member for Millicent (Mr. Coreoran) in his efforts to have something done for the town of Port MacDonnell. It is a beautiful little seaside resort, but nature saw fit in a recent storm to wreck the sea wall and seriously damage the foreshore road. The people in the South-East as far as Bordertown are sympathetic to Port MacDonnell in its loss, because it is recognized as the leading watering place in the area, and I hope the Government in its wisdom will be generous in supporting appeals for help from this seaside town in its present time of need. It should be remembered that for years in the early days of the State there was a bigger trade both inwards and outwards at Port MacDonnell than through Port Adelaide. I am going back to the early days of the State, and I do not think that Port MacDonnell will be used as a port again, but as a fine holiday resort. However, the development of the South-East today is on a much larger scale than its development when the bullock waggons, horse teams, lighters and sailing boats all helped to make this a busy port. I hope the Government will sympathetically consider the request to assist this place financially, and I assure the member for Millicent (Mr. Coreoran) that he has my wholehearted support in this matter. Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition asked a question about the destruction of rabbit burrows. He has had a lot of experience with rabbits in the past.

Mr. O'Halloran—I should say I have!

Mr. FLETCHER—He knows that rabbits can cause a lot of trouble, and that once the rabbit is controlled he must be kept under control. I am afraid that some landholders are becoming careless. Myxomatosis has done a wonderful job, but we must not let the rabbit get a start again. Landholders should get out their ploughs and rippers and tear the burrows apart. The Vermin Act should be amended to make it compulsory on landholders to destroy the burrows. To many men rabbits have been a source of income. In my district hundreds of men got a start on their blocks by trapping rabbits, but once they had their blocks they wanted to see the last of them.

I support most of what has been said about decentralization. Some time ago I was approached by quarrying interests in the Mount Gambier district about freight charges on stone because the railways had seen fit to raise the rate to Adelaide by 6s. a ton. That seemed an imposition to me because the stone was in great demand in Adelaide. The railway gauge between Mount Gambier and Millicent was broadened. It runs through the quarry area and an excellent siding was constructed. A bitumen road was constructed from Compton to the quarries and a new road to the siding so that the stone could be put on railway trucks. At times about 1,000 tons of stone was being railed every week to Adelaide, but I have received the following letter from the Minister of Railways about Mount Gambier stone freights:—

In 1952 there was a rebate of 6s. per ton allowed for stone in blocks carried from Mount Gambier to Adelaide for cutting into ashlar. This rate was not intended to apply to stone cut into ashlar at Mount Gambier and then forwarded to Adelaide. The justification lies in the fact that if the rates for block stone and ashlar were the same, the freight content in the total cost of the ashlar cut in the metropolitan area would be greater than that for the ashlar cut in the Mount Gambier area in the proportion that the overall weight of stone transported bears to the weight of the final product sold. It is naturally the desire of the Railways Department in determining the rates to keep the stonecutting industries, both at Mount Gambier and in the metropolitan area, in a healthy condition. The Commissioner believes that the rate differential of 6s. per ton in effect achieves this in so far as it puts the industries in each location on a comparable basis in respect of freight charges. The Commissioner adds that one of the proprietors of a stonecutting business in Adelaide informed the Railways Department that if ashlar were to be carried at the same rate as block stone he would be forced out of business.

Several members have urged greater decentralization of industry, but I do not think there is another industry in the State that has put so much ingenuity and thought into the improvement of machinery for quarrying stone as the proprietors in the Mount Gambier district. Instead of stone being quarried in big blocks they have now invented machinery which cuts the ashlar from the face of the quarry and loads it directly on to motor lorries, and from them on to the railway trucks. That has been the salvation of many of our quarries. The saw being used today will cut through almost anything; this has resulted in an extended life of those quarries and the supply of a far better material than when we had to rely on the old equipment. If one puts a

square anywhere on those ashlar one will find them perfect. The men operating these quarries are being penalized by 6s. a ton for this practical invention. Their stone is loaded on to railway trucks and then delivered in Adelaide ready for the wall. Some waste occurs in the stone sent to Adelaide in blocks if the blocks are not perfect. The contractor in Adelaide who cuts the stone may say that he will be forced to close down rather than submit to the 6s. a ton extra on the cut stone, but I suggest to him that he is paying more than that amount in waste on the blocks he is cutting.

Mr. Corcoran—How is the demand for stone in Adelaide at present?

Mr. FLETCHER—It has fallen off. We are accused of being sympathetic to Victoria, but Victoria is taking our stone and the railways in South Australia will not be getting it; it will be delivered over the border by motor lorry to places as far away as Geelong. There is a new siding and a new line in this State, yet this industry is being penalized at the rate of 6s. a ton. These are a few of my minor complaints. As I said when speaking on this motion last session, I have not that much to complain about. As the member who has represented the district for 20 years I say we have been well treated. We have had railway lines and other things, and I think Mount Gambier should be grateful. If it is not grateful to its member, at least it should be grateful to the Government. I support the motion.

Mr. FRED WALSH (West Torrens)—I join with my colleagues and others who have expressed their congratulatory remarks to the mover and seconder of the motion. I congratulate the mover for the volume of work he must have put into the preparation of his speech and also for the manner in which he delivered it. Perhaps the same remarks could be made concerning the seconder of the motion. Both these gentlemen are held in high esteem, apart from their Party viewpoint, by members on this side of the House. I also associate myself with the expressions of sympathy at the death of the member for Wallaroo, Mr. Heath, and also of Sir George Jenkins, a colleague for such a long time.

One gets a little tired of hearing the monotonous repetition by Government supporters of the Government's achievements. This has become quite common and we have become accustomed to it. In the main they are too timid to express themselves, otherwise there

must surely be some grounds for complaint in regard to their own districts. Surely roads and other amenities for which the Government is responsible are not provided to the full in their districts, but never do we hear any complaint other than by way of a question, the answer to which they accept with an obvious feeling of thanksgiving. The member who has just resumed his seat expressed himself in this way, and he is not a supporter of the Government in the real sense of the term, at any rate, but an Independent. I feel that in a democratic State such as ours it would be enlightening to members on this side to hear some criticism of the Government from its own supporters.

The member for Torrens (Mr. Coumbe) referred at length to the achievements of the Government and went out of his way to refer to the fact that the cost of living was higher in New South Wales than in South Australia. On actual figures that is correct, but it does not necessarily mean that the standard of living in New South Wales is lower than it is in South Australia. It can be that a certain set of circumstances makes the cost of living higher there than here. I remind the honourable member that no matter how high the cost of living is in New South Wales it is well catered for and the workers are well protected because of the cost of living adjustments that exist in that State. It is true that during the last quarter South Australia was 1s. above the C series index cost of living figures, but let me remind the member for Torrens that was the first and only time since 1953 that that was so. On a comparison with the other States, South Australia has been down considerably in regard to the real standard of living if we express that in terms of the pay envelope at the end of the week.

Like most members on both sides of the House and even the Minister himself I was very perturbed at the report from Woodside a few weeks ago concerning illiteracy among military trainees. I draw the attention of the House to the comments of Captain Williams, the Central Command psychologist. He said:—

Of the 289 trainees who took the test only 182 were classified as satisfactory; 94 were educationally retarded; eight were partly illiterate; and five were completely illiterate. I believe that three of the five completely illiterate trainees were New Australians. That excuses them somewhat. An educational officer was reported as saying that many of

the youths have little chance and were in primary schools between 1945 and 1952, during which time there was a shortage of teachers, with lack of accommodation. It is incredible that in these days of compulsory education such a state of affairs can exist. I appreciate that you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make it drink and that the same reasoning may apply to some of these children—you can force them to school but you cannot force them to learn.

Recently I read of a case involving two truck drivers. One, who was receiving about £20 a week, did not know how to read or write and he regretted that he had not taken the opportunity of, learning while at school. He did not blame his parents, a shortage of teachers or lack of accommodation; he obviously did not apply himself when at school. I do not reflect on our educational system or attach any blame to the Minister. That department has never been more efficiently administered and I commend him accordingly. I believe that much of the work teachers are required to do could be done by less skilled persons. I refer to the cleaning of blackboards, monitoring and supervising children during play periods. If those chores were done by other people teachers could devote more time to study, which would benefit their students. I understand that in some parts of the United States of America such experiments are being undertaken, and I believe we could do the same.

The time is not far distant when the Highways Department will have to consider reconstructing Tapleys Hill Road. Since the construction of Adelaide Airport there has been a greater congestion of traffic on this road. In reply to a question recently, the Minister of Works said he thought that lighting that road was the responsibility of the local council and not the Highways Department. If that is so, I do not know how the Woodville Council was able to finance the installation of the fine illumination that exists between Hendon and Grange Road on Tapleys Hill Road. However, from Grange Road to Henley Beach Road there are only five or six low-powered lights, at least a fifth of a mile apart. At the moment the Engineering and Water Supply is working on that stretch and as a result the drive-way is narrower than normally and exceedingly hazardous for traffic at night. Between Henley Beach Road and the air port road there are five bright helium lights, but from there to West Beach Road—and that is a busy road carrying traffic to the

drive-in theatre—there are only four or five low-powered lights, and from West Beach Road to North Glenelg there is not a single light for about 1½ miles. Many accidents have occurred on this road and everything should be done to eliminate the possibility of further accidents there.

The member for Ridley (Mr. Stott) asked a question concerning the development of the West Beach Reserve and he assumed that the member for Glenelg was member for the district. That is not the case, but I do not blame the Minister of Education for taking advantage of the situation and airing his knowledge of the Government's plan for developing this area. However, I think he was looking into far distant future regarding plans for the reserve. I am not criticizing that, because I believe in having proper plans, but recently the West Beach Trust gave a 25-year lease over a portion of the reserve to people who want to establish a drive-in theatre. I have no objection to such a theatre, but I question whether the proposed site is the right place.

When this land was originally purchased, it was not intended that it should be a reserve. The Housing Trust purchased it to construct a number of homes, which is quite a laudable object. That was the intention until the Civil Aviation Department advised the trust that it might require a certain part of the land in the future, which upset the trust's plans. At about that time the Henley and Grange Council was concerned about developing a portion of West Beach in its area as a caravan park, and I took a deputation to the Premier on the matter. Arising from that deputation, this large area of land was handed over to the West Beach Trust, a body established by Act of Parliament. I am sorry that the Henley and Grange Council did not come into the scheme because, although its area comes only to the boundary, it was interested in the matter. It was finally left to the Glenelg and West Torrens Councils to nominate members of the trust, with Mr. Baker, as chairman.

If a man represents a council or other organization or party, he owes a responsibility to that body and should consult it whenever something happens that affects any representation he may make on its behalf. However, that was not done in this instance; at any rate, it was not done in relation to the drive-in theatre, for at least one councillor from an adjoining ward was opposed to the scheme. The West Torrens Council has not declared whether it is for or against, but it has made

inquiries as to the rights of the West Beach Trust to grant this lease, and I believe is approaching the Crown Law Department for an opinion. I make this point to show that the whole of the business of the trust relating to this theatre was of a secretive character; no publicity was given to it until the decision was made.

I believe that, no matter who the authority is, it should at least consult interested parties before coming to a final decision. The Land Settlement Committee and the Public Works Committee obtain the views of interested people and consider them, together with the economics of any scheme and other matters, and in the same way I think this body should not have come to a decision without consulting the people they represent. Now that a decision has been given I do not suppose anything can be done to alter it. Perhaps the Civil Aviation Department could take exception, although I do not know that it will, or perhaps the theatre could be constructed on another site, even in the reserve, that would remove the objections raised by residents and would not create the congestion on the road that I am objecting to. The Glenelg North Progress Association expressed the view that the proposed site creates the greatest traffic hazard of all locations in the reserve where a drive-in theatre could be constructed. It also stated:—

The site selected is better suited for development as a youth sports centre, being the only section of the reserve well served by adequate public transport and being the nearest point to residential areas of Glenelg.

Questions of transport, public or otherwise, do not affect the drive-in theatre because, as its name implies, it is a theatre the patrons of which travel in their own cars. This association also expressed the view that:—

The construction of the drive-in theatre adjacent to dwellings will result in general inconvenience and is objected to by nearby residents. It is then pointed out that the site is in line with a proposed new runway at the aerodrome. Then a complaint is made that the ratepayers were not consulted, after which the association made this good point:—

As a matter of business practice the trust should not have contemplated a lease for the long period of 25 years without provision for adjustment depending on the changing economy: it is to be remembered that costs have more than trebled in the last 25 years. This lease will cost the people who will build the theatre only £30 a week. I ask in all sincerity to just what extent the reserve can be developed at the rate of £30 a week. Don't members think that the people who have been



granted this lease are on a good wicket? Money values may change considerably in the next 25 years, and if they change as much as in the last 25 years the lease should be costing £90 a week at the end of that term. I believe there is a provision for review after a certain period, but goodness knows what the position will be then. The people who made the decision have no right, although they have the authority, to determine these matters without considering the people most concerned.

I now come to a matter that has concerned me ever since I have been in Parliament. Last year I asked a question relating to the bridge across the River Torrens at Holbrooks Road. I raise the question because there is a positive danger to the travelling public and the children attending the Flinders Park school. There is a very narrow road and room only for two motor cars to pass. Two lorries could not pass. There is a footpath 3ft. wide on the western side only and a stone parapet. When I suggested that, in order to safeguard the children and other pedestrians, a footbridge should be provided on the other side of the parapet about 3ft. wide, which could be done at little cost, it was said that was unnecessary. I went across the bridge last Saturday afternoon and a motor-car came towards me. It was in the middle of the road and it took me all my time to miss it. If it had been travelling rapidly there must have been a collision. I shudder to think what would happen if two lorries met on the bridge at the same time as pedestrians and school children were passing over it.

I have brought up the matter of the Hilton bridge on many occasions. I did so first in 1945, then in 1946, 1948, 1949, 1950 twice, 1951 twice, 1952, 1954 and 1955. I did not always deal with the fence, but sometimes I did. I will not quote all that I said on previous occasions, but I will quote my remarks on several of them. Serious results may have been averted if what I suggested several years ago had been adopted. On July 13, 1948, I said, in a question to the Minister:—

On more than one occasion I have asked about the state of disrepair of the Hilton Bridge. The position today is no better than on previous occasions so far as the fence on the bridge is concerned. It is frequently damaged by vehicles causing traffic to be held up, whilst it is months before repairs are effected.

On November 10, 1948, in a question I said:—

The approaches on both sides of Hilton Bridge are in a shocking state of disrepair and have been a positive disgrace to the department for a long time. Some time ago I suggested

to the department through the Minister of Local Government that the type of fence on the south-western side of the bridge should be continued on both sides, as well as on the approaches. I was informed that it was impracticable to have that type of fence because of the need to prevent smoke from the shunting engines passing under the bridge from frightening horses driven across. At the moment a portion of the bridge is covered with wire mesh. Last week-end two sections of galvanized iron on the approaches were blown down and the only protection now is a rope stretched across, with a couple of lights provided at night. It would be advantageous if on both sides of the bridge and approaches the department constructed a similar type of fence to that on the south-western portion.

The reply I received was:—

I have to advise that it is the intention of the department to replace as much of the galvanized iron fencing as is possible with cyclone mesh netting on the Hilton Road bridge as soon as practicable. However, the department is faced with difficulties in obtaining cyclone mesh netting, which is needed urgently to erect at various places on the system where galvanized iron has been removed from fences to be used for dwellings and other buildings. As soon as enough cyclone mesh netting is available we will proceed with the removal of the iron.

In the Address in Reply debate on August 10, 1950, I said:—

Some time ago I suggested to the Minister an extension of the boundary fence which is made of rails bolted together. Prior to the erection of this formidable structure traffic continually ran into and destroyed the old fence. However, I have not noticed any damage to the new fence. I suggested to the Minister it should be extended for the whole length of the bridge and covered with a wire mesh, but he replied that that was not practicable as the wire mesh would cause horses to be frightened when engines were shunting and trains running beneath the bridge. Yet on the northern side of the bridge wire mesh covers nearly half the fence. Surely it would be possible to erect the suggested fence of rails with a covering of wire mesh. It would prevent accidents and look much tidier.

In a question to the Minister on November 6, 1951, I said:—

I have suggested to the department more than once that it erect fences along both sides of the Hilton Bridge similar to that in existence on the southern side of the western approach to the bridge—a fence made of old railway lines, bolted together, which gives a substantial post and rail fence. I suggest that the same type of fence be erected for the full length on both sides of the bridge with a covering of cyclone wire mesh for the protection of children looking at trains.

Frequently I have seen children kneeling down looking at the trains through broken pieces of the galvanized iron. The fence erected on the western approach on the southern

side for about 50 to 60 yards to the first rail crossing underneath was of substantial character. That is the type of fence that could be put there until a new bridge is built. In view of present conditions an entirely different type of bridge is necessary. The engineers stand condemned for having constructed such a bridge. It is the worst I have seen. If what has been suggested by me on more than one occasion had been adopted I feel that the result of the accident on the Hilton Bridge the other day would have been different because the car would not have gone over the side. I am not casting any reflections on the Minister. The bridge is not now in my district. It is in that held by Mr. Lawn, but I travel over it almost every day and know of its condition.

In view of the late hour I shall not say much more, but I want to make brief comment on the remarks of the member for Torrens (Mr. Coumbe) regarding nuclear bombs and civil defence. It is apparent that the honourable member has given considerable thought to this subject and has apparently become something of an authority on it. I appreciate what he said and would like to add that it is useless our discussing the matter in an off-hand sort of way here, or at public meetings or elsewhere, because I cannot agree that any form of civil defence can be effective against atomic or nuclear bombs. The only suggestion that I can put forward therefore is the banning of atomic and hydrogen bombs, not only in actual warfare, but the banning of tests. I hasten to add that I am not suggesting that it should be done bi-laterally; there will have to be some international arrangement, and I do not suggest for one moment that Britain should forfeit her rights to test the bomb unless other nations in possession of the knowledge are prepared to do likewise. It is difficult for me to believe that there will be any such agreement in the near future, hence the unfortunate need for those who are on our side of the Iron Curtain to look to their own defences.

At the time of the announcement of the United Nations Charter that we hear so much about there was no thought of any such thing as an atomic bomb, although the leaders of the Allied powers may have had some knowledge of it, for when the conference closed at San Francisco in June 1945 it was only a matter of a few weeks until the first bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. Although it is true that we all condemn it now how many of us did not feel like throwing our hats in the

air when it occurred because we knew that it must lead to the cessation of hostilities? Why, therefore, go on condemning people when at the time we were quite pleased it happened because we realized that although it had caused the death of thousands and the maiming of hundreds of thousands it would save the lives of untold thousands of soldiers on both sides. Had the bomb been dropped during discussion of the Charter there might have been a different approach to the whole thing, but unfortunately the facts were not known to the public. My point is that I can see no hope of an international agreement under the present set-up, and some further stand must be taken by the United Nations organization; the veto must be eliminated, because so long as it exists so long will we be prevented from reaching agreement on world peace. It is only by public opinion expressed through the United Nations Assembly, where there is no power of veto, that any influence is brought to bear on the people of all nations. Although I know there were serious attempts, especially on the part of the smaller nations at San Francisco conference, to eliminate the veto from the Charter, I assert that it was mainly through the efforts of Dr. Evatt that the veto was eliminated as it affected the United Nations Assembly, but neither he nor anyone else was able to get it deleted from the Security Council. I compliment Mr. Coumbe upon his interest in this question and if the people of all nations could be of the same mind we might get somewhere. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I realize that the hour is somewhat late and I will not take long in replying to the various speeches on this motion. In the first place I would like to say that I also very deeply regret the recent passing of a colleague who had served with me in Cabinet for many years and who had given such efficient service to the State. Long prior to my acquaintance with him he was one of the most able of the administrators that the South Australian Parliament had and did much for the pastoral and agricultural industries. I refer, of course, to the late Sir George Jenkins. Although one could be quite opposed to his political views one could not but admire his convictions and the way in which he carried out his duties and responsibilities. In Parliamentary life we get to know each other very closely and I always felt that in Sir George we had a member whom we could

regard in the very highest way whether he held similar political views to our own or not. I join with others in expressing regret that this gifted man has passed on. I have previously referred to the tragic loss of the honourable member for Wallaroo and I have expressed my sympathy to his widow.

At the outset may I say that I cannot this afternoon deal with all the matters that members have raised, nor would it be possible to set out to do so, because some of the matters require examination by the departments concerned. However, I assure members that their suggestions will be sifted to see to what extent it is practicable to give effect to those that would benefit the State. I wish to refer to one topic in His Excellency's Speech because many members who referred to it had obviously not grasped what was intended. Paragraph 4 states:—

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.

That statement does not mean that the Government has available money for every desirable project in this State: it means that we have enough money to carry out a controlled programme, with the emphasis on the fact that it is not a programme *ad lib*. Further, the words "serious disruption" refer to works already in hand. In other words, the money available this year, details of which will be placed before Parliament next week, is only sufficient for a very controlled programme of public works. I can think of about 10,000 desirable works on which money, if we had it, would be well spent; but obviously, every work that can be imagined cannot be financed on the limited sum available from the Loan Council. That body has allowed us only enough money for a controlled programme, but on the other hand, we will not be doing what some States will be doing before the end of this year—engaging in retrenchments. That is what is meant by the words "without serious disruption."

Unless my calculations are entirely wrong, before the year is out there will be serious financial repercussions in some other States because the sum provided is being overspent. Indeed, it was overspent last year and the cash position in those States is not such as to enable them to carry on at that rate of spending for the whole of this year. That is what is meant when it is said that sufficient money is available for a controlled programme and that the programme of works will

be able to continue without serious disruption. As members will see when the Loan Estimates are introduced next week, a balanced programme has been provided. Even if the Government had the authority to proceed with other desirable works, for instance works that the Public Works Committee had reported on, we would not be able to proceed with them because of the sum obtained from the Loan Council, although I hasten to add that we get our share the same as other States.

A number of statements have been made in this debate regarding decentralization and the establishment of industries in the country, but some of those statements were obviously extravagant and made either with no knowledge of the facts or with little regard for the truth. I will not deal with this question this afternoon because the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. O'Halloran) has given notice of a motion that will enable me to deal with it adequately later. I realize that it is one of the most important topics dealt with by members and one of the greatest problems confronting either this Parliament or the Parliament of any other State or country. The problem is simply that of the bright city lights *versus* the necessity to distribute population as widely as possible in the interests of the economy.

Several speakers opposite emphasized the increase in the population of the city and the decrease in the population of country areas, but here again the statements were made carelessly and without much research; indeed, they were completely untrue. Admittedly, the population of Adelaide has increased more rapidly than the country population, but that is only to be expected at a time when large numbers of people are being brought from the heavily populated countries of Europe. The majority of these immigrants, unfortunately for us, are people who have been used to living in large cities; in the main, they are not agricultural workers and have not lived in country districts. Coming from great industrial and heavily populated centres, they are deposited by the Commonwealth authorities in the middle of our capital cities, and it stands to reason that under those circumstances they are faced with the problem of readjustment. The only reliable figures concerning where people live are the Commonwealth census figures.

Mr. Riches—What about those in the Government Statist's Year Book?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have figures from both sources and, as they

happen to agree, I will quote them without fear of my argument losing force. According to the census of June 30, 1947, the population of South Australia was 646,000, of which 382,000 (59 per cent) were in the metropolitan area and 263,000 (41 per cent) in country districts. By the date of the last census (June 30, 1954) the population of Adelaide had increased by a little over 100,000 to 483,000 (61 per cent of the State's population) and the population of country districts had increased by 50,000 to 313,000 (39 per cent of the State's population).

In the light of those figures some members' statements that the country districts are losing their populations are completely false. The truth is that the country's population has not been increasing nearly as rapidly as that of the city; but it is not that the country has lost population. Actually, it has gained. In support of their argument honourable members opposite gave the names of a number of towns where the population had decreased. That is correct. There are 56 towns which had a population of more than 500 in 1933 which have since lost numbers. I shall give figures over a 21-year period. In that time the population of Angaston has increased from 1,400 to 2,300; Barmera, 800 to 1,000; Bordertown, 1,200 to 1,800; Clare, 1,900 to 2,200; Cummins, 500 to 1,000; Gawler, 4,900 to 6,000; Kadina, 2,500 to 3,200; Kingston, 600 to 980; Loxton, 1,500 to 3,300; Mannum, 1,500 to 2,100; Millicent, 2,200 to 2,800; Minlaton, 900 to 1,200; Mount Gambier, 6,500 to 10,800; Murray Bridge, 4,300 to 5,000; Naracoorte, 2,200 to 4,000; Nuriootpa, 1,200 to 1,900; Penola, 1,000 to 1,600; Port Augusta, 3,400 to 6,900; Port Lincoln, 3,100 to 6,100; Port Pirie, 12,400 to 14,800; Salisbury, 1,100 to 5,800; Stirling West, 500 to 1,600; Tumby Bay, 600 to 1,000; Lobethal, 1,200 to 1,500; Victor Harbour, 1,400 to 2,400; Waikerie, 1,500 to 2,200; Whyalla, 900 to 8,600; and Yorketown, 900 to 1,100.

When one starts to quote a small town like Hawker and say that it has lost population and that that gives an indication of what has happened in the city, the whole position is distorted. Some of the most rapid growth has been in country towns. For instance, in the period I have mentioned Whyalla has increased by no less than 900 per cent. The member for Stuart is one who continually says that the population is drifting to the city. In the time under discussion the population at Port Augusta has increased by 100 per cent, which is much more rapid than

anything which has taken place in the metropolitan area, and it is very largely as a result of Government action. Then we have the class of town which was not in existence 21 years ago, but there we now have towns which come into the category I have just mentioned. And there were towns 21 years ago which had well under 500, but are now prosperous and thriving. Some notable examples are Bridgewater, which now has 1,400, Iron Knob 700, Keith 1,100, Kingston 700, and Leigh Creek 900. Twelve years ago there were no people there. Then we have Nangwarry 1,100. When I first went there, there was only one house. Again this is the result of Government activity. Port Noarlunga has 767 and Pooraka 750. I doubt whether Radium Hill even appears on the map, but it has 800. Salisbury has 5,800 and Woomera, which does not appear on the map, was largely established as a result of the co-operation of the South Australian Government, and it has 3,000. When members say that the country population is decreasing, they are not speaking in accordance with fact. The true position is that the country population is advancing fairly rapidly, although on the average not the same as the phenomenal growth in the metropolitan area.

I sometimes wonder what is the policy of my friends opposite. I have always understood that they claimed to be Socialists. I admit there are various brands, such as Democratic Socialists and the plain common Socialist. My friends have always claimed that they were Socialists. I have no objection to that. When I look opposite I am quite happy to see the honourable members over there, and may they stay there. In a debate like this members can deal with any conceivable subject they like. Why is it that the weight of the attack is always directed to Socialistic activities?

Mr. Davis—You are wrong there.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The main topic discussed by the Leader of the Opposition was the Tramways Trust, which took the whole brunt of his criticism, but I do not believe that criticism can be sustained. The position was that the present Tramways Trust took over a system that was completely run down, which had been losing money for many years, and had not been properly maintained or provided with modern plant and equipment, and in those circumstances it was obliged to write off many assets that showed in the books as real assets, but physically were not assets at all. In some instances they were liabilities, and until that was straightened out the trust obviously had a sticky job. The Leader of the

Opposition criticized the trust's policy of substituting buses for trams. One might have been led to believe that the tramcars and tramlines were quite serviceable. However, I have been watching some gangs taking up the tramlines, and recently I noticed that where half a mile of tracks had been taken up there was not one sound sleeper.

The general manager of the Melbourne Tramways Board said this week that it would cost £112,000 to replace one mile of tramline, so members can see that it would cost an astronomical sum to retain tramcars. The same authority pointed out that the cost of running tramcars is much higher than the cost of running buses and that it can only be justified where there was heavy, concentrated loading. If that applies to a city of over 1,000,000 people, obviously Adelaide, with 500,000, would have a much greater problem. The Leader of the Opposition, in attacking the tramways, attacked a service that I would have thought he would uphold. They provide a more economical and better service than private operators are able to provide. That is no criticism of private operators, for the Tramways Trust has many advantages over them. It has advantages in taxation, it controls the routes, and to a certain extent it controls competing traffic. Why is it that members opposite single out governmental activities, not particularly Government activities, for such a concentrated attack?

Mr. Dunstan—Because they are not controlled by the people directly; they are not socialistic enough.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The member for Enfield (Mr. Jennings) made a strong and scathing attack on the Housing Trust, but it is interesting that members opposite often get up and ask whether the trust can be induced to build a few houses here and a few there, and they are critical if that cannot be done. The member for Enfield recently made this statement:—

For the last three years I have been in constant touch with the Housing Trust asking that the deterioration of some houses be remedied and the purchasers recompensed, but I have received nothing from the trust but procrastination and evasion.

I thought that was a serious allegation, so I called for the relevant docket and expected that, after hearing the honourable member's statement, it would be very bulky. Sometimes dockets get so fat that a supplementary docket has to be started, but what did I find? In the docket there were only two references to any action that had been taken by the

honourable member. The following is the report of the officer who interviewed him:—

Mr. Jennings, M.P., called and presented me with the attached list of defects in houses at Greenacres. He admitted that the list had been compiled by a member or members of the Progress Association who had canvassed for defects and that there were probably more to come. I pointed out that most of the list was trivial and a matter of ordinary maintenance as some of the houses could have been occupied for up to two months or more.

Some of the defects were quite inconsequential, but the interesting thing is that the progress association had been around the district canvassing for defects. One would have thought a good socialist would have been out not to canvass for defects in a Government enterprise, but to support the Government enterprise. See how illogical Mr. Jennings' attack was! If it had come from some of my supporters I might have been able to understand it, for they do not always support socialistic enterprises. The only other reference in the docket to any approach by the honourable member was a letter dealing with a case that has been the subject of some comment from me, so I shall say no more about that. My point is that the honourable member did not support the trust; indeed, he attacked it. He overstated his case because I do not think any member would say that one letter and one interview constituted being continuously in touch with the trust. This request had been canvassed for against a socialistic undertaking, and this is the opposite of what one would have expected of the honourable member. I have tried to ascertain the facts with regard to the serious complaints that the honourable member has made, and this docket from which I have quoted deals with the particular area. Two areas were involved, and the first one the honourable member mentioned was not the one at Enfield but at Greenacres. Here are the facts on this matter. There are 269 completed houses in the group at Enfield. Some early repairs were necessary, but from then until approximately 12 months ago, although these houses had been completed for such a long time, no serious deterioration in any of them had been brought to the notice of the trust.

The following figures give the overall position. There were 269 houses altogether. Six have received major repairs costing more than £50, and 30 have received minor repairs. These were mainly early in the lives of the houses and consisted of adjustments to windows, cisterns, small redecoration jobs, and minor roof leaks.

Since the publicity was given to this matter in the winter time they will know there is early this session two persons have applied to the trust for assistance, and in those cases repair work is not, of course, complete. At the time I said that if there was any negligence on the part of the trust in regard to the houses the trust would take action to remedy the position. There have been two applications for assistance since that statement was made.

At Greenacres 313 timber houses have been built or are in the final stages of construction; 33 complaints have been received involving work costing more than £15 per house, and 45 complaints have been received involving work costing less than £15, while 23 jobs await attention. These timber-frame houses were built last year during a record wet year, and during the last dry summer timber and soil movements comprised the major complaints. If honourable members have had any knowledge at all of constructing timber houses always a certain amount of shrinkage that requires some subsequent alteration.

Mr. Jennings—Why not ask the Housing Trust to give you the true facts?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Before the honourable member came in I gave the House the true position as to how these complaints have been canvassed for. They were not voluntary complaints but have been canvassed for and sponsored by the honourable member, who claims to be a Socialist and, one would have thought, would have supported socialistic undertakings.

Mr. Jennings—I do.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The honourable member has a peculiar way of showing it. This is the sort of thing I cannot understand. Honourable members opposite try to show that the Housing Trust is inefficient, and that it is a political embarrassment to the Government. In many instances that is the motive, in my opinion, behind their criticism. It also proves that Socialism is not the ideal that they themselves are always advocating. We have a housing authority which has been designed on a non-profit basis, and whose only purpose is to provide houses for the people. Without exception the gentlemen comprising the trust are not members of the Government, and only one member, as far as I know, has ever had any political associations with the Government. One member of the trust has had a political association with my friends opposite. The representative on the trust who was selected from the Party which honourable members opposite represent is a very valuable mem-

ber, and I hear nothing but commendation of his work. All these gentlemen have been selected because of their administrative capacity.

Mr. Jennings—What about giving us the facts.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The honourable member always talks about the facts, but the facts are that, although he said he had made repeated representations to the trust over the last three years, he had only been to the trust's premises once and had only written one letter. Those are the facts. I have called for the docket, and I have it here. It is the official docket and the honourable member can have a look at it.

Mr. Jennings—That is as reliable as the rest of it. Did you get Mr. Whittle's docket?

The SPEAKER—Order! There are too many interjections by the member for Enfield.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I do not wish to take up any more time on this matter. The honourable member for Stuart made a comment that the Government was not responding to this debate. That was quite ill-chosen, because in point of fact the Government was responding and has always made a point of doing so. It has always gone into the matters that have been raised, and honourable members know that subsequent action, if it is taken, is communicated to them. It was suggested that honourable members on this side are not speaking because they have been told not to speak or, as the member for West Torrens claimed, were too timid to speak.

Mr. Fred Walsh—I said they were too timid to speak against the Government.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Honourable members are perfectly free at all times to speak and vote as they like, and members opposite can think that one over.

Mr. Lawn—Tell us another story.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Next week we will have an opportunity to see democracy working in its true form and at its best in this House, when the elected representatives of the people will get up and support the things they believe to be right in accordance with the best democratic principles. I thank honourable members for their attention, and I have no doubt that in due course we shall see democracy justified in its entirety.

Motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply carried.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.52 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, August 6, at 2 p.m.