

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, August 8, 1957.

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

QUESTIONS.**ROAD TO NORTHERN TERRITORY.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Periodically in recent months I have heard rumours about a proposed change in the route of the north-south road between Port Augusta and the Northern Territory. One suggestion is that the road will be re-sited approximately along the railway line as far as William Creek and then turn west to join the present route of the road somewhere between there and the Territory. Can the Minister of Works say whether negotiations have taken place between the Commonwealth and State authorities as to changing the route of that road or has he any knowledge of any proposed change?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I have no knowledge whatever of it. Any communication from the Commonwealth to the State would go to the Premier, but I doubt whether he has heard of such a proposal, otherwise he would have referred it on, seeing that most of the area is outside district council areas. I will follow the question up and make inquiries.

INFESTATION FROM NEGLECTED FRUIT BLOCKS.

Mr. HARDING—Annually thousands of pounds are spent in combating and eradicating fruit fly, and commercial fruit growers are continually spraying trees and vines to control other pests and diseases in order to market first grade fruit. Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether there is any law governing abandoned or neglected orchards, vineyards or orange groves?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The honourable member advised me that he would ask this question and I obtained a report thereon. It is lengthy and cites sections of the Act which give power to inspectors under the Fruit, Vine and Vegetable Protection Acts to take action against the owner of a vineyard which it is considered constitutes a danger or is harbouring diseases which could be detrimental to adjoining vineyards. That is a precis of the report I have received from the Director of Agriculture. If the honourable member cares to peruse it in full I will make it available to him.

AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—In this morning's *Advertiser* under the heading "Prime Minister Returns," it is indicated that Mr. Menzies stated that Australia is better informed about the future of her air policy, and can now continue effective aircraft production without becoming involved in colossal expense. I have been informed by a major company engaged in this business in this State that since July, 1955, the number of its employees has dropped from 869 to 162, and there is an indication that it will be further substantially reduced. Can the Premier ascertain from the Prime Minister or the appropriate Federal Minister the possibility of some aircraft production being diverted to South Australia?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The question the honourable member asked me on this topic about 10 days ago and my reply immediately evoked some correspondence from the firm concerned which pointed out that it has a very modern factory capable of undertaking much more work than it is doing, and the number of its operatives is very low compared with what could be achieved. Under those circumstances, I immediately gave instructions for a request to be made to the Commonwealth for an allocation of work out of the new programme proposed. I have no doubt that this will be placed before the highest Commonwealth authority in due course.

HILLCREST PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Mr. JENNINGS—On July 23 the Minister of Education, following on a letter he had received from me about the state of the grounds at the Hillcrest Primary School, wrote to me stating, "Paving will be carried out by the Architect-in-Chief's Department, but at the moment it is not possible to indicate the date when the work will be commenced." Is the Minister now in a position to say when it will be commenced?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I am not in a position to say, but I hope to be when Parliament resumes.

RUN-OFFS ON ROADS.

Mr. LAUCKE—Last week I referred to the hazard presented to road users generally by commercial vehicles parking on highways, particularly at night time, and asked the Minister representing the Minister of Roads if an inquiry might be made into the possibility of constructing run-offs for parking purposes. Has the Minister a reply?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I took up this matter with the Minister of Roads, who reported as follows:—

It is considered that the construction of run-off strips at intervals along our highways would not give benefits commensurate with the cost involved, as in many cases the stopping of vehicles is due to mechanical breakdown or tyre trouble, which would not necessarily occur adjacent to these strips. To provide for parking off the pavement throughout that part of the main road system used by heavy vehicles would involve a huge expenditure of road funds to the detriment of the construction programme.

USE OF RAILWAY LAND.

Mr. FRED WALSH—I believe that the strip of land which constituted part of the route of the North Terrace-St. Leonards railway line is still reserved by the Government pending future plans. I previously raised the question of portion of this land being used as a dumping site by the Highways Department and was promised that as soon as space could be found elsewhere this practice would be discontinued. Since then what was there at the time has been shifted and more of a different kind dumped. The West Torrens Council is concerned about the department's possible intention of constructing an arterial road on this land. Will the Minister of Works call for a report from the department as to its future intentions?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I will take up the matter with my colleague, the Minister of Roads, and bring down a reply as soon as possible.

HOUSING IN RIVER MURRAY AREAS.

Mr. KING—During last weekend I believe the Minister of Lands visited several river towns to examine the housing position. Can he give any information as a result of his inquiries?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—In several places I got in touch with the local councils and promised to make arrangements on my return for the Housing Trust to interview applicants for land in certain areas. At Monash we have secured land for this purpose, and at Barmera we have land available if it is required.

SNOWY RIVER WATERS AGREEMENT.

Mr. KING—Has the Premier anything further to report regarding the agreement between the Commonwealth, Victoria and New South Wales regarding the Snowy River diversion scheme?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have nothing to report regarding the agree-

ment because we have not been able to get a glimpse of that document to see what it contains. Some public statements have been made which appear to indicate that the whole of the water from the scheme is to be apportioned between Victoria and New South Wales and that, with the exception of what is required by the Commonwealth Government at Canberra, the electricity also is to be shared between those States. Some investigation has been made since the matter became public and it appears to the Government that the proposed agreement is a serious infraction of the River Murray Waters Agreement, all the more reprehensible because one of the contributing parties to that agreement has not been consulted in any way. I cannot understand how a Commonwealth authority could begin to negotiate with certain States while there was a remote possibility of another State being involved, without that State being notified of what was taking place and of the implications of the proposed agreement. The Government believes it is its duty to see that the future rights of this State in this matter are protected; consequently, I have sent a telegram to the Prime Minister requesting him as a matter of urgency to make a copy of the draft agreement available to this State for perusal, and pointing out that we are concerned not with the implications of the Snowy River scheme as such, but only with the implications of the agreement as it affects our rights under the River Murray waters agreement. I confess that I was shocked this morning when I learnt that before the agreement had been made public the Commonwealth had briefed eminent constitutional authorities to resist South Australia's claim. That seemed to be taking the matter very far indeed, but now that the Prime Minister is home and will have an opportunity to examine these matters a satisfactory solution will probably be arrived at.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Can the Premier say whether the South Australian Government was consulted during the negotiations between the Commonwealth, Victorian and New South Wales Governments prior to the inauguration of the Snowy River scheme in, I think, 1946, and whether it has been consulted in any way since?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—There were negotiations on the Snowy River scheme long before the project started. As far as I can remember, they were between the Commonwealth, Victorian and New South Wales Governments and, as agreement could not be reached, the Commonwealth ultimately decided to go ahead with the

project as a Commonwealth project. Speaking from memory, I know of no occasion on which the Commonwealth consulted South Australia concerning the allocations, nor can I recall any correspondence on it, but, as this is a matter of from 'six to eight years' standing, I should like to refresh my memory on that. I certainly do not know of any negotiation with South Australia as to the allocation of water or the present agreement. I cannot recall any mention of that until it became what appears to me to be practically an established fact.

TANTANOOLA-COMPTON ROAD.

Mr. CORCORAN—I understand that during the past year considerable work was carried out on the Tantanoola-Compton Road between the point where it connects with Prince's Highway near Tantanoola and the point where it rejoins the highway, and that portion has been re-built and regraded. Can the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Roads, say whether the Government intends to proceed with this work during the current financial year? If so, when is it expected to be completed and what will be the saving in the mileage compared with the distance *via* the Prince's Highway over the range and through Glencoe?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—As soon as I receive the *Hansard* record of the honourable member's question I will forward it to the Minister of Roads and bring down his reply as soon as I receive it.

ACCIDENTS WITH STATIONARY VEHICLES.

Mr. LAUCKE—Will the Premier ascertain the number of fatal accidents in the last five years as the result of collisions with stationary commercial vehicles?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Information as to the number and nature of fatal accidents is tabulated in the annual reports of the Police Commissioner. If there is any additional information the honourable member requires and he lets me know, I will see that it is tabulated for him.

FRUIT FLY ERADICATION.

Mr. KING—According to my information, most of the outbreaks of fruit fly are believed to have originated in home gardens. In view of that, will the Minister of Agriculture consider instituting an examination of home gardens in the River towns and in other fruit producing areas as soon as there is any possibility of a fruit fly strike, in order to protect the main industries surrounding those towns?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The question suggests to me that we should take action to investigate every home garden to see whether there was any fruit fly present in order to safeguard other areas. I should say that was a complete impossibility, and the answer could not possibly be "yes." From year to year we watch the sources where there have previously been outbreaks and take action during the whole of the season subsequent to the outbreak to spray and trap if possible any fruit fly which might have escaped in any earlier eradication measures. Beyond that, I do not think the department could possibly or usefully go.

MARKETING OF EGGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON, having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Marketing of Eggs Act, 1941-54. Read a first time.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH (Minister of Works) moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Local Government Act, 1934-1957.

Motion carried.

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

SCAFFOLDING INSPECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to supplement the measures which have already been taken by the Government for securing a higher degree of safety for workmen employed in building operations. New regulations respecting tubular scaffolding have recently been gazetted and improvements made in the administration. The scaffolding legislation, however, which is contained in the Scaffolding Inspection Act of 1934 is not satisfactory. This Act is a consolidation of several Acts, the principal of which was passed in 1907;

and they are characterised by limitations and deficiencies which considerably reduce their usefulness in present day conditions. The present Bill is designed to remedy the defects of the present law.

Clause 3 makes some amendments of the definitions in the principal Act. The amendments in paragraphs (a) (b) and (c) of the clause are drafting and consequential. The amendment in paragraph (d), however, has an important effect. It relates to the definition of scaffolding. Scaffolding is defined in the principal Act as a structure or frame work for the support of workmen in building operations. Many years ago the Government was advised by its lawyers that the term "workmen" means persons acting as employees, so that if scaffolding is erected for persons who are working as contractors or sub-contractors it is not governed by the Act. It is proposed to remove this restriction in the definition and to make it clear that the term "workmen" includes any persons working for reward whether as employees, contractors or sub-contractors. This extension of the definition will considerably widen the scope of the Act in view of the fact that much work on buildings nowadays is done by sub-contractors.

Clause 4 deals with the appointment of scaffolding inspectors. At present the principal Act provides that the Governor may appoint one inspector and such acting or assistant inspectors as he thinks fit. No person, however, can be appointed either as an inspector or assistant or acting inspector unless he has had at least four years' experience in the erection of scaffolding. These provisions contain unnecessary restrictions on the appointment of inspectors and make it legally impossible to use the services of highly qualified inspectors in the Factories and Steam Boilers Department just because they have not had the appropriate length of experience in the erection of scaffolding. It is proposed to alter the law so that the Chief Inspector of Factories and Steam Boilers will automatically be the Chief Inspector of Scaffolding and the Governor will have a general power to appoint any suitable persons to be inspectors of scaffolding.

Clause 5 contains minor amendments of the provisions of the principal Act by which a person who intends to erect scaffolding is obliged to give twenty-four hours' notice to the inspector. The amendments provide that notice must be given to the Chief Inspector

of Factories and that the maximum penalty for failure to give notice will be raised from £5 to £20.

Clause 6 deals with the duty to report accidents. At present the only accidents which have to be reported are those which cause loss of life or serious bodily injury to any person. The first amendment proposed in clause 6 is to extend the law as to reporting accidents so that it will be necessary to report accidents in which any load-bearing part of scaffolding or of any gear or hoisting appliance is broken, distorted or damaged.

Another amendment is that the duty of reporting accidents is placed upon the person who has the use and control of the scaffolding at the relevant time. Under the present law the duty to report an accident is on the owner. This was satisfactory when scaffolding was owned, as it used to be, by the builder or contractor but nowadays when tubular steel scaffolding is hired out to builders and contractors by scaffolding companies which are not otherwise concerned with building operations, it is not satisfactory to place the duty to report accidents upon the owner of the scaffolding. For this reason the Bill proposes that the onus of reporting accidents shall be on the person using and controlling the scaffolding.

Another amendment made by clause 6 is to raise the penalties for not reporting accidents from £10 to £20. Clause 7 makes consequential amendments.

Clause 8 provides for a substantial extension of the scope of the principal Act. At present the Act and the regulations are restricted to ensuring the safety of men working on or in connection with scaffolding. But if men engaged in building operations are not working on scaffolding or gear or appliances connected therewith, there is nothing in the Act to require that any safety precautions shall be taken. It is proposed in clause 8 to enable inspectors to give directions for safety precautions in any case where men engaged in building operations are working in a place where they are exposed to risk of injury from falling or from being struck by moving material whether or not any scaffolding is erected. Such directions may be given in writing either to the owner of the building or to the person carrying out or in charge of the building operations. As in the case of other directions given by inspectors under the Act, these directions will carry a right of appeal to the Minister who will have the final say in the matter.

Clause 9 gives the inspectors a general right of entry to lands, buildings and structures for the purpose of ensuring the proper observance of the Act. Clause 10 raises the maximum penalty for obstructing inspectors under the Act from £5 to £20. The Government believes that these amendments, when taken together with the new regulations which have recently been made and gazetted, will greatly improve the effectiveness of the scaffolding legislation as a safety measure.

Mr. O'HALLORAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

LOAN ESTIMATES.

In Committee.

(Continued from August 6. Page 273.)

Grand total, £24,905,000.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—Members will recall that in discussing Loan Estimates some years ago I criticized the Treasurer for not providing sufficient information. However, I do not think any valid complaint can be levelled at him on this occasion because he produced a voluminous document packed full of information on things that have happened, are in the process of eventuating and are possible. It is right that that should be so because the Loan Estimates are, in effect, a little Budget. They provide for the expenditure of approximately £30,000,000 and later this session we will have to consider Revenue Estimates which will approximate £60,000,000.

We have to consider the beneficial impact of the Loan Estimates on the State's economy, particularly in those parts of the State where considerable expenditure is to be incurred. We must also consider whether the amount is sufficient or too high. If we examine figures for recent years we see that the amount provided this year is similar to those provided in the Public Purposes Loan Acts of the last few years. This type of expenditure has been relatively constant. The following is a list of the loan expenditure in the last few years:—

Year.	Loan Expenditure Authorized. £
1952-1953	29,019,000
1953-1954	27,618,000
1954-1955	27,295,000
1955-1956	28,300,000
1956-1957	28,135,000
1957-1958 (Proposed)	24,905,000

In addition to this year's proposed expenditure there are other items not included in the

amount. I instance over £5,000,000 which is to be provided from the loan the Electricity Trust proposes to float and from its internal financial resources. It will thus be appreciated that the amount of £30,000,000 I mentioned earlier is substantially correct. Since 1952-53 the total loan expenditure, including what is proposed this year, amounts to £165,272,000. This clearly indicates that the demand for services and amenities such as water, housing, sewerage, education and hospitals is growing rapidly because of the rapid increase in population.

We have two points to consider: firstly, whether the provision of these services is keeping pace with the demand and, secondly, and more important, from what source is the revenue to enable us to meet interest and sinking fund on this expenditure to come? I am not questioning that these services are necessary. The population has increased substantially as a result of the natural increase and the number of migrants who have settled here, but I am concerned why certain items and certain areas are apparently marked out for special consideration. I would prefer more money to be spent on developing our productive potential in the country so that we might be sure of meeting the cost of servicing this loan programme. I shall have more to say on that later in my remarks.

Something that strikes one is the astronomical amount already provided, and the amount it is proposed to provide, for the Electricity Trust to complete the "A" station at Port Augusta, to erect the "B" station and to construct transmission lines. I am not complaining about the total expenditure or criticizing the trust for the manner in which it is being incurred except in one respect, and for this I think the Government more than the trust is responsible. I am well aware of the efficiency with which the trust has expanded the production of power since it was socialized by this Government, and how it set to work to provide the people of this State with the amenities and services they would never have received from private enterprise. However, I wonder whether we could not have established smaller power stations in different parts of the State. I know that the decision to establish the power station at Port Augusta was largely dictated by the proximity of the Leigh Creek coalfield and of the water in the Gulf, but I question whether the necessity to have deep sea water for cooling purposes really exists. When in England a few years ago I saw many power

stations situated right away from seaports on comparatively small rivers and lakes, and the difficulty of providing cooling water was overcome by the use of cooling towers.

Mr. Shannon—Did you inquire into the economics?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—No, I was not in a position to do so, because I was pressed for time as it was. These things could have been inquired into here. Perhaps they were and it was found necessary to keep our power stations near deep water.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—With gas turbines, of course, no water is needed.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The stations to which I have referred were orthodox stations not using gas turbines. We now propose to establish another power station, and it is generally assumed that it will be in the metropolitan area somewhere along the Port River or adjacent thereto. Would it not be possible to use some other site where there is deep water; for instance, on Spencer Gulf? I understand that Port Pirie was considered when the proposal to establish a station at Port Augusta was being determined. There is also a port south of Port Pirie—Wallaroo—that is well situated on deep water. There are other places on the River Murray. I do not know about the availability of fuel there, but I think that instead of building these large costly stations we should perhaps have established smaller stations, because I am looking forward to the time when we will have to convert these stations from the present orthodox method of steam production to atomic production.

I am sure every member gets the booklet prepared by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Organization, in a publication of which it is stated that the problems of using atomic power for peaceful purposes are not so difficult to solve and not so far from solution as many people would have us believe. I believe that, when the time comes to convert from the present method of producing power to the atomic method, it would be easier and cheaper to convert a number of small stations than one large station. I may be completely wrong in my theory, but I don't like to see everything concentrated in one or two places, or the necessity to send power by landlines over tremendous distances. Radium Hill, which is in my electorate, obtains power that has to be generated at Port Augusta, sent from there to Waterloo, then to Morgan and then back to Radium Hill. I

suppose as the crow flies Radium Hill would be less than 200 miles from Leigh Creek, which is the source of the power, but goodness knows how many miles the coal and the electricity has to travel before reaching there.

Another point about which I am not happy is the very expensive modernization of our railways system. At the Loan Council meeting in May last the Commonwealth Government agreed to support a loan programme for 1957-58 for State works and housing up to £200,000,000. If this amount is not raised by loan the Commonwealth Government is to finance the balance out of revenue. Although the Commonwealth Government's support is subject to review in January next, the Premier does not expect any mid-year amendment, but this arrangement, dictated by the Loan position, is not altogether satisfactory, as it creates doubt in the minds of those planning our works programme. They begin the loan financial year with the prospect of spending £200,000,000, but that is dependent on the good graces of the Commonwealth after half a year has passed.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—It is even a little more sketchy than that, because the Commonwealth has stated that if any of the States do not play the game the money will not be available.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—That is very useful information from the Premier. We have gone a long way further along the road to unification under the regime of his Party than we have ever succeeded in doing by actions of my Party which really believes in unification.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—I think your Party could claim to be the great pioneers of it.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The plain fact appears to be that we have financial unification today; that the Commonwealth calls the financial tune to which the States must dance. In view of the artificial nature of the Housing Agreement the terms of which were radically amended recently there appears to be no good reason why the £4,000,000 housing loan should be dealt with separately and left out of the Estimates. In fact, the Commonwealth Government apparently determines the conditions under which the money shall be spent, and not this Parliament. I am aware that it has been the subject of disagreement between the two Governments but that merely lends emphasis to my point that we are becoming more and more a vassal of the Commonwealth Government.

Now I want to say a few words regarding the State Bank and housing. The State Bank was originally the official channel for the financing of home purchases as against the landlord function for which the Housing Trust was established. For a long time the Housing Trust has been building purchase homes and in recent years has further invaded the preserve of the State Bank by building on privately owned land. We had an example yesterday in the question asked by the member for Burra (Mr. Quirke) about the availability of finance from the State Bank for persons who desire to build homes themselves and those who were having purchase homes built for them by the trust. In addition to duplication of agencies for the financing of home building there is a duplication of the sources of revenue. Home finance might be made more effective by co-ordinating these activities. I have referred in previous debates to my belief that the trust should continue to build houses for letting and that the amount of finance available to South Australia for home building should be divided more equitably between the State Bank and the Housing Trust so that the bank would be able to build more houses for sale. I know we have gone a long way towards pushing the State Bank to one side in this field, but I still think we might consider whether or not some better arrangement could be devised, and whether it would not be wise to return to the old *status quo*, namely, the trust to build for renting and the State Bank for sale. The bank assisted 930 applicants during 1956-57, which was a creditable achievement, but it is symptomatic that of the 528 applicants assisted under the Advances for Homes Act only 83 were in the country. It is pleasing to note that additional sums are to be made available to the State Bank this year to assist various industries, particularly co-operatives and bodies involved in the processing of primary products. Last year advances totalling £98,625 were approved by the bank, and it is estimated that this year the sum required will be £175,000 and that, as I remarked before, is a step in the right direction.

As I have said on any number of occasions, we are not making sufficient use of the lands of South Australia. It devolves on the Government as a fundamental duty to see that opportunities for land settlement are placed in the way of those young people not possessed of very much finance who desire to become settled on the land, and this can only

be done by a Government scheme for the repurchase, subdivision and development of land for closer settlement. The sum of £100,000 is provided this year for further substantial development of an estate west of Penola and another north of Lucindale. These estates will provide seven and nine holdings, respectively, so that their development, I should say, will be fairly costly. On those figures each holding will cost between £6,000 and £7,000 for development, to which must be added the cost of purchasing the land, so that they will be pretty expensive holdings by the time they are allotted. The sum of £1,000 is provided under the item "Land Repurchase for Closer Settlement," but how much land could be bought for that? If we are going to do something substantial—and I think we should—let us not make a mockery of the thing by placing such an insignificant sum on the Estimates.

Under "Irrigation Settlements," it is proposed to deal with some of the aftermath of last year's disastrous River Murray floods by providing a sum to help resite levees and improve protective works in order to hold back any future flood. This is wise expenditure and a fitting tribute to the heroic measures taken by local people during the flood to protect their areas so far as was humanly possible with the resources at their disposal. I am therefore happy to endorse this item. Further, we should consider the possibility of future floods and provide for better protective works. We should go back to the highlands of New South Wales and Victoria whence comes the great volume of floodwaters to see whether the damage done by years of misuse of the highlands can be remedied. The Treasurer should take up this aspect when discussing the ultimate disposal of the irrigation water that will become available as the result of the completion of the Snowy River scheme. It seems that we will be in bother in trying to get a share of this water for which we, as taxpayers, are helping to pay the same as taxpayers in the other States, and the Treasurer should see whether, in addition to getting a fair share of this water in accordance with the agreement governing the River Murray waters, the control of the head waters of the river can be brought under the authority responsible for managing the weirs and locks so that uniform action is evolved to protect the highlands and ultimately minimize and possibly eliminate the great floods which, if something is not done, will assuredly occur in the future.

The section relating to afforestation and timber milling shows how another of the socialistic enterprises, which this Government is not supposed to believe in, is developing. The Mount Gambier sawmill is estimated to cost £1,600,000. I am concerned because the zoning of the mills, particularly private mills, has not been effected so as to protect the roads and get the best use from them, and I believe this aspect must be considered soon. Amenities, including a recreation hall, are to be provided at Mount Burr. This indicates the need for such amenities in the establishment and development of permanent country communities, and I am in favour of their provision. Indeed, I believe there should be more amenities in the new housing areas in the metropolitan area so that the young folk, particularly children, may have a place to meet and enjoy entertainment instead of having to meet on the streets under most undesirable conditions.

Another aspect of our afforestation programme is worth considering. We have concentrated entirely on the planting of softwood trees, although some years ago we experimented in planting certain types of hard woods. I do not know whether they were all unsuccessful, but I know a number were, for they were planted in soil and rainfall districts not conducive to their best growth. I believe it is mistaken policy to depend entirely on softwood forests to provide our future timber.

Mr. Brookman—What trees do you suggest?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Parts of South Australia lend themselves to the growth of red gum, blue gum, and probably the much-maligned stringybark or Australian oak. They are three that occur to me at the moment and I suggest that consideration be given to their inclusion in our afforestation programme. Red gum is an excellent timber for railway sleepers, but because our red gum forests have been denuded we now have to establish costly plant to treat softwood timber, namely, *pinus radiata*, for use as railway sleepers.

Mr. Brookman—*Pinus radiata* sleepers are much cheaper than the red gum, taking into account the speedier growth of the trees.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Possibly, but they are not as efficient. I remind the honourable member that we have had little experience of the sleepers produced under the new process, whereas at Melrose many years ago sleepers made of six types of timber and subject to various treatments were placed in the line and all but two were completely

unsatisfactory. One of those had almost to be written off as a failure, but the other, treated with a process similar to that proposed to be used in this State, was reasonably successful. I inspected those sleepers 12 years after they had been placed in the line and only the one that was creosoted had stood up reasonably well, but it had not stood the test of time anywhere near as well as the red gum sleepers on an adjacent section of the track.

I am pleased to learn from the Treasurer's remarks that the duplication of the Goodwood to Brighton railway line has been completed at last. For many years, almost as long as I can remember, we heard about its completion. I should like to know what has happened to the proposals for the electrification of suburban lines. I remember when it was at the forefront of the Government's programme for an election campaign. The matter was referred to the Public Works Committee, which reported in its favour. It was again on the Government's programme for another election campaign, but it has since vanished into the limbo of forgotten things. We now learn that large sums are to be spent on providing diesel traction for our suburban lines. Fourteen diesel mechanical rail cars are to be built at a cost of about £96,400 each. I take it that they will be used mainly for country work. Then there are to be 11 trailer cars to cost £60,360 each. These are substantial figures. In addition we have our quota of cost of additional joint stock cars, the roomettes and twinettes, which are to cost about £60,000 each. I know that these cars are very comfortable and have improved interstate travel enormously, and contend, with great deference to the Commonwealth Railways, that the roomettes used on the Adelaide-Melbourne line are superior to those used on the Trans-Australian railway. We are also to have additional diesel main line locomotives, which implies that the Government is pledged to a huge expenditure in mechanizing our services, but with what proportion of return I do not know.

I have seen what has happened to the tramway system under a modernization programme, and I am wondering whether the same may happen to the railways. I know that the figures show that diesel engines are doing a wonderful job, but they are hauling full loads both ways. It is not fair to compare their working results with the steam locomotives—the Puffing Billies—which have to do the hack work for the whole railway

system. I wonder whether we are pressing forward with this modernization too fast and are to scrap equipment which has not yet been paid for. That has always been one of our troubles and is always shown in the loan accounts. Long before the debt is liquidated by the National Debt Sinking Fund, equipment has had to be renewed again out of borrowings, and often we have two or three debts on the one set of equipment. I know that this modernization is intended by the railway management to recover some of the business lost to the roads, and in that respect it is a worthy purpose, but I am still not satisfied that it would not be possible for the Commonwealth and the States to get together to see that road and rail traffic were put in proper perspective. I am not opposed to road transport, and have no desire to eliminate road hauliers, but believe that those using the roads should make a fair contribution toward their upkeep, because the railways have to build the tracks over which they run. I am not satisfied that the Government is doing sufficient in implementing such a policy.

Portion of the Treasurer's explanation relating to harbours makes very interesting reading. We find that this year £396,000 is to be spent on the harbour at Port Lincoln, but that is only portion of the final figure. The total cost of the works to be carried out is estimated at £1,030,000. I am particularly concerned that out of the £396,000 to be spent this year £25,000 is being provided for a new oil berth. I assume it will cost a great deal more than this. According to the Treasurer, it will increase the safety of the port. Probably it will, but it will also provide better facilities to the oil companies to handle their demands on Eyre Peninsula. Up to a short time ago, and it may still apply, the companies charged more per gallon for their oil on Eyre Peninsula than on the mainland, and they claimed that this additional charge was necessary to cover extra handling costs. I know that the former member for Eyre, the late Mr. Christian, took the matter up vigorously in this House on a number of occasions.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—So did I.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I know that the honourable member has also been active in this respect. Has there been any reduction, or are the people on Eyre Peninsula still subject to the differential charges?

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—There has been a material reduction.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—That is good to hear. In return for the expenditure to provide better facilities for handling oil, we are entitled to ask the oil companies to either abolish the differential, or reduce it substantially. I am sure the Minister of Agriculture will be watching the position closely. About £370,000 is to be spent at Port Lincoln and £253,000 at Wallaroo on the provision of bulk wheat installations. They are large sums, but the point which concerns me—and which concerned me considerably when the legislation to provide for the bulk handling system was being passed—is whether we shall be able to recover a sufficient amount on each bushel of wheat which passes through these installations to meet capital and working costs and interest charges. If we do not we shall be making a direct contribution towards the cost of handling wheat on behalf of South Australian farmers, and I do not know that that is warranted. The farmers wanted bulk handling, and having got it, they should be prepared to pay for the installation which the Government has to provide.

Mr. Heaslip—They offered to install the whole thing at one time.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I know that, but I think the honourable member will agree that it was not a very practicable proposal to allow the company to take over our wharves and railway terminals adjacent to the wharves. It was better for the Government to provide the installations and charge for their use. Moreover, the company would have been hard pressed to provide the necessary finance to pay for the installations. There is a good deal of dissatisfaction already in the country because it seems that farmers will have to wait some time before they get any benefit from the installations for which they are paying tolls.

The total amount to be spent on waterworks and sewers is £5,400,000, of which £2,000,000 is to be spent in the Adelaide water district, but the total to be spent on country sewerage schemes is £6,000! The amount of £5,000 will be spent at Port Lincoln to connect some Government offices with the hospital sewerage scheme, and £1,000 will be spent on plans for Gumeracha. I heard so much about the Gumeracha sewerage scheme last year that I thought it would be an accomplished fact by now, but apparently it is only in the planning stage. I emphasize that we have many country towns large enough to warrant sewerage, such as Mount Gambier, Port Pirie,

Peterborough and Port Augusta, and they should be sewered so that they will not become backwaters and eventually lose the population that merits the establishment of a sewerage scheme. In next year's Loan Estimates we must do much better than £6,000 for country sewerage schemes.

We have been told that the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline may be finished by 1959. The large amount of £9,800,000 has already been spent on it, and the total cost is now estimated at £11,300,000. I was a member of the Public Works Standing Committee when this scheme was investigated and approved, and the estimated cost was about £4,000,000. I am not criticizing the Minister or the department for the huge amount already spent on the scheme, but it shows that costs have increased tremendously in a short period. The annual cost of maintenance, interest and pumping will probably be more than £1,000,000, but the estimate given to the Public Works Committee was about £300,000.

Costs of the South Para and Myponga reservoirs are also big items. Nearly £8,000,000 is to be spent on those two reservoirs, but if some of that money had been spent on providing amenities in country areas it would not have been necessary to spend so much on providing water for the metropolitan area. Recently I learned that the Jamestown-Peterborough pipeline would be completed this year. It is well on the way to completion now, and I here pay a tribute to the Minister and his department for expediting this work. A small gang with a trench digger surprised local people with the expeditious way in which they laid the pipes underground, and no doubt the same will apply as regards the laying of pipes above the ground for the pumping section between Jamestown and Belalie North. For some years Peterborough, Yongala and Terowie have been short of water. The problems of Peterborough and Yongala will be solved when the pipeline to which I have just referred has been completed, but Terowie is still out on a limb.

Recently the Minister of Works informed me that it would cost about £117,000 for a connection from Belalie North to the existing Peterborough-Jamestown pipeline. That seemed to me a high estimate, but of course we have to take these figures, though they make the financial result look rather bad. However, I notice from the Estimates that small schemes are projected to provide water in the Adelaide hills to serve places where there is running water in nearly every gully.

There is no running water at Terowie, which is one of the dry places of the north. It is a sizeable town, and will continue to be a sizeable town and so there will continue to be a considerable demand for water apart from railway purposes. Down the years the railways have been involved in tremendous costs in hauling water from Burra to Terowie. In addition, the local citizens have had to purchase water from the railways at a cost of £2 10s. a thousand gallons. What would the people in these beautiful valleys in the Adelaide hills say if they were asked to pay even £1 a thousand gallons for water? Despite what appears to be a not very good financial result on the scheme, the savings to the Railways Department over a period would provide more than the capital cost of the scheme. One aspect of the haulage of water from Burra that should be considered is that it is Morgan-Whyalla water. It has to be pumped to Hanson by the Engineer-in-Chief as the authority controlling the Morgan-Whyalla scheme, and from Hanson to Burra by the Railway Department's pumping plant. That water has to come from the Morgan-Whyalla main in any event. It has to be pumped to Burra and then hauled by rail to Terowie. That fact should be considered in determining whether the scheme is to proceed. I trust that the Minister will induce Cabinet to have this matter referred to the Public Works Standing Committee for inquiry and report.

I was also associated with the Yorke Peninsula water scheme in its inquiry stage. When the Public Works Standing Committee investigated this scheme it was estimated to cost £1,750,000, but now the estimated cost is £5,800,000. Whatever the cost, the scheme is warranted because it will enormously increase the productive capacity of that area, particularly livestock and fat lambs. With the establishment of a meat works at Kadina, suggested so often by the Premier, this will become an export earner for South Australia. We are told that expenditure on Adelaide sewers this year will be £1,015,000. We are also told that at Elizabeth sewerage is keeping pace with building construction. As I pointed out earlier, old established towns are to have only £6,000 spent on them this year.

The vote for hospital buildings is £3,700,000, but one is struck by the huge expenditure concentrated on a few buildings. The Royal Adelaide Hospital is generally considered to be far too unwieldy. It is a 900 bed hospital,

but 600 should be the absolute maximum, and other suburban hospitals should be provided. After the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to serve the western suburbs is completed, one to serve the southern suburbs and another to serve the northern suburbs should be commenced as quickly as possible, and they should be confined in size to not more than 600 bed hospitals. The southern country towns are very fortunate in having Government hospitals, but the great majority of country towns are not so fortunate and have to make do with subsidized hospitals. At the best, all they can hope for is half the capital cost in the form of a subsidy from the Government and a maintenance subsidy which, of course, is less than half the cost of maintenance. I believe the hospital question will have to be tackled sooner or later on a State-wide basis. One town which was fortunate enough to get a Government or public hospital in the early days should not have an advantage over another town not far distant and in similar circumstances.

Our school buildings are too large. The member for Edwardstown stated that a school in his electorate which originally was to provide for 320 children now has 1,700. That is ridiculous, and something should be done about it. I have a small school problem at Olary in my own district. The old wood and iron school has been there for nearly 70 years. The problem is almost solved because I think the department will have to prop that school up while it is building a new one. No doubt similar conditions exist in other parts of the country, because this problem is not confined entirely to the metropolitan area.

The town of Elizabeth appears to have been specially favoured. This is, of course, the Housing Trust's major project. The 803 houses built at Elizabeth in 1956-57 should really be included in the metropolitan classification, but the Premier included them in the country classification. There is no justification for that because Elizabeth, to all intents and purposes, is merely another suburb of Adelaide. If it were included in the metropolitan classification it would show the distribution of houses at 2,493 in the metropolitan area and 642 in the country. The Premier gave the total of houses built in country towns at 1,373, but of that total 803 were built at Elizabeth and should have been included in the metropolitan area. One hundred and fifty-eight houses were built at Mount Gambier, 64 at Port Augusta, and 61 at Port Pirie.

Mr. Jennings—And the 4,000 at Mount Gambier were not built.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The 4,000 which the Premier so airily said yesterday were to be built at Mount Gambier have not yet been built.

Mr. Brookman—Wasn't that consequential upon an industry going there?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—No, I think it was consequential on a resolution I moved yesterday afternoon. The total in the Premier's figures was 1,086, but if one looks at the real figures only 287 houses were built in all the other towns mentioned in the list.

Work in connection with the Electricity Trust and the Housing Trust is not the subject of inquiry by the Public Works Standing Committee. We should, therefore, have a Public Accounts Committee to investigate the affairs of semi-Government instrumentalities such as these, particularly when they are spending such astronomical sums of money. A further £500,000 is to go down the drain as a subsidy to the Tramways Trust. I had much to say on this subject in an earlier debate and I will have a great deal more to say later. I suggest that in the meantime members opposite examine the set-up of the trust to see whether they will not support the Opposition in attempting to tidy up the mess.

One point has emerged from recent discussions on Government expenditure—that the Commonwealth is all supreme in questions of finance. In an article in the *Advertiser* of July 12 last Mr. L. C. H. Johnstone pointed out how much of the cost of public works in Australia in recent years had been met from taxation. He said:—

It is recognised, of course, that Australians have made major contributions to development through a form of "compulsory" savings. In recent years, a big proportion of public works have been financed out of revenue.

According to Sir Douglas Copland's calculations, out of a total of £2,688 million spent on public works since 1948-49, £1,942 million has been raised through taxation and only £746 million through loans. "Compulsory" savings have thus supplied over 70 per cent of the total sum for public works.

The term "compulsory savings" is a misnomer because "savings," as I understand the term, are moneys which the people entrust to somebody or some organization for safe keeping and which can be recovered by them. Surplus taxation is not compulsory savings. This state of overtaxation in order to provide public works began with the present Menzies-Fadden Government. A substantial proportion of the loan pro-

gramme of the States has been financed by the Commonwealth from taxation. The Commonwealth overtaxes the people of this State in order to create a surplus and then it uses portion of that surplus to support our loan programme, but charges us current rates of interest for our own money. They are the plain facts in a nutshell and the sooner it is realized by the people, the better.

I mentioned 1948-49 because it has significance. That was not the beginning of loan expenditure in Australia. During the war when the Labor Party, led first by Mr. Curtin and then by Mr. Chifley, was in office it did not have to finance public works programmes, but had to finance huge defence expenditure. That was done by borrowing from the public and by supporting loans with national credit. That is why this spate of spending from taxation did not originate until 1949. If we could use national credit for defence purposes, surely we could use it for the purpose of developing the country.

Mr. Brookman—Where is national credit raised?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—It is raised by the Government through the agency of the Commonwealth Bank. It could be raised today in the same way as it was during the war and there would be no need for overtaxing our people. In the dark days of the war when the Labor Government thought it might strain the national credit too much, it suggested a form of compulsory savings whereby people would invest portion of their incomes in war loans and be repaid their investment at a given date after the termination of the war. The Faddens, Menzies and Playfords said that it was an outrageous proposal and they wouldn't have a bar of it. However, nowadays they have tolerated ripping nearly £2,000,000,000 from the people in taxation since 1949. If national credit were used we could finance the huge cost of water and sewer schemes and our other public works and at the same time bring relief to the financial position of the people of this State.

Mr. HAMBOUR (Light)—I intend at this juncture to deal exclusively with one subject. There are many items of interest to my district, but I propose to speak on them when the lines are considered. A matter of vital interest to many people in my district is the excess charges on electricity to group consumers. I am sure the House will appreciate what these people must feel when they read about the colossal losses made by the Tram-

ways Trust, which has to receive financial support from the State. As the trust is assisted, I do not see why those on the end of the power supply should not also receive some support. I do not suggest that the Government should provide the necessary finance, because I know that it is at its wits' end to meet its obligations as it is. However, two years ago the Government offered a 5 per cent subsidy to the trust which, in its wisdom or generosity, or both, refused to accept it and provided the amount out of profits.

As I have said previously, the trust has not been mean; if anything, its attitude towards group consumers has been generous. I am not prepared to accept that the supply to these people should be treated as a purely business proposition, because I think the hardship they have to suffer should be borne by the bulk of consumers as one group, and I have looked for the means by which their difficulties could be alleviated. Quite a number in this group can well afford to pay excess charges, but a few cannot. I have studied the figures relating to several groups, and the average excess seems to be about £25 a year. Any figures I may quote on this subject may be wrong; I am speaking on the assumption that they will be wrong and that the Treasurer, in reply, will tell me where. The general revenue of the trust last financial year was about £10,000,000, a mighty figure. The number of group consumers at the end of the financial year was 2,845. Last year we were told that all the consumers connected prior to January 1, 1952, were relieved of the excess charge. I will assume that that number is 865, which leaves 2,000 still paying excess charges. If each of these pays £25, the total revenue produced would be £50,000. Even if I am wrong and the amount is double that, what I intend to propose would still not present a problem. There are several ways in which these excess payments can be removed: the Government can meet the charge by subsidy, or the trust can meet it from profits. Something has been done by way of subsidy already, but an attempt must be made to eliminate the excess charges completely.

When speaking in the Address in Reply debate last year I suggested that the trust should level out all charges and eliminate the zones, and I was told that it would increase the cost of power so much that electricity would suffer in competition with gas. I now suggest that we deal with the evil—the excess charges. If the revenue derived from

these charges is £50,000 a year, it would need a levy of only 4s. a year on each consumer to eliminate them. Would that be too big a price to pay to remove this charge from country people, some of whom can ill afford to pay? A charge of 1s. on each meter would yield £12,000. If the trust thinks that 4s. a meter is too great, would it be too much to ask that it meet a portion of this? I am confident that the people of this State would not object to making some contribution to equalize the cost of power to people in the country. I realize that 80 per cent of the consumers who would be called upon to pay the extra charge live in the metropolitan area.

Mr. O'Halloran—You are going to force them to live in the area and then charge them for it?

Mr. HAMBOUR—I do not want to force anybody to do anything, but I ask the trust to consider increasing the meter rental of all consumers in the State so that excess charges can be eliminated.

Mr. Davis—Some country organizations do not charge any meter rent now.

Mr. HAMBOUR—Well, they have been very fortunate and they will still only have have to pay 4s. a year to come into the full scheme. Mr. Brookman asks whether my suggestion would apply only to existing group consumers. Any concession made now will have to apply to future users, but the trust has a measuring stick and all I ask is that it uses that in future as it has in the past. Members know that an installation will not be made unless the power consumed yields a revenue equal to eight per cent on the capital cost, and I suggest that the trust continue to use the same measuring stick and give serious consideration to increasing the meter rent, using the revenue thus derived to lift the excess charge off group consumers. We were given to understand, when the trust had a profit of £196,000 for the year 1954-55, that this charge would be taken off those who had been connected longest, namely, those services connected up to January, 1951. The trust's profit for the next year, 1955-56, was £410,000 and it then lifted the excess charge on people who were connected to January 1, 1952. In my opinion they should have gone another year further. In my speech on the Address in Reply I asked the Premier to make a public statement in regard to the trust's intentions in this regard because I feel it would bring much relief to the people

concerned if they felt that this policy was to be pursued on more definite lines and in ratio to the trust's profits.

Mr. TAPPING (Semaphore)—I wish briefly to refer to railways and harbours. I commend the railways administration on doing an excellent job under difficult circumstances. It is true that its adoption of diesel traction for the purpose of competing with other forms of transport has cost a lot of money, but I believe that it will pay dividends in the long run. It has been my experience that if a member of Parliament makes any reasonable suggestion to the Railways Commissioner or his deputies it is at least given a test. Recently I suggested to Mr. Harvey, the General Traffic Manager, that he should run two trains from Hendon on Saturday mornings to serve the Hendon people, and last Saturday this service came into operation. Prior to that there had been no train from Hendon on Saturday mornings and through my representations, which came through the Albert Park branch of the Labor Party and the Progress Association, Mr. Harvey saw that the people were becoming train minded and decided to give it a trial. It has always seemed to me that the Railways Department will listen to overtures from members, which is quite in contrast with the attitude of the Municipal Tramways Trust where, in almost every case what I have regarded as logical suggestions have been turned down.

The railways problem is a very difficult one as railways are now running counter to section 92 of the Federal Constitution, which means that interstate traffic which they previously held is now going to road transport and as a consequence railway revenue has been depleted. I believe that if the railways adopt up-to-date ideas they will win through. On a number of occasions I have referred to the need for a daylight express between Broken Hill and Adelaide. Broken Hill people are actually allied to South Australia and they are very disgruntled over the raw deal they get from the South Australian Railways. Any person who has undertaken the railway journey from Broken Hill, leaving there about 6.30 p.m. and arriving in Adelaide about 8.30 a.m. next morning, will know that it is not a very congenial trip. I claim that the only way to make that service a success is to run a daylight express. At present, because of the effect of section 92, many road buses are running between Broken Hill and Adelaide daily and they are carrying most of the passenger traffic.

I believe that statistics would show that the number of railway passengers has fallen off by about 400 per cent. The railway service is very important for people on the lower ranges of income, and therefore we should introduce the service I suggest. Furthermore, air services are now taking many passengers from Broken Hill, but a lot of people cannot afford to patronize this service, and it therefore behoves the railways to fill the gap with a modern, fast and commodious service.

The same can be said regarding the Melbourne service. On a number of occasions members from both sides have referred to the need for a daylight express to Melbourne which would enable travellers to see the countryside and enjoy the trip more. I believe this would be the means of winning more people back to the railways. I am certain from observations that the new diesel service between Outer Harbour and Adelaide is appreciated. It is more expeditious and more people are using it. For this traffic there is competition between the railways and the tramways, but I am glad to see that more people are going back to the railways, and if the department continues its present policy it will win back thousands more patrons in the next year or so. I have noticed, however, that most suburban diesel trains running out of Adelaide run to the Outer Harbour, and although this may be necessary at certain times of the day, their use at night is not warranted by the amount of traffic offering and it would be more economical to use rail cars after the peak hour.

The Railways Department should canvass for the business of sporting bodies, such as football, swimming and cricket clubs, which make annual trips to country towns and even to towns in other States. On the Labor Day week-end, for instance, as many as 100 sporting clubs may make trips to places such as Broken Hill, Peterborough and Port Pirie. At present most of these clubs are catered for by buses, which earn good revenue thereby, but by canvassing for it, the Railways Department could attract perhaps 50 per cent of this business. Special trains could be run or carriages reserved, and if concessional rates were charged many clubs would prefer to travel by train. The Railways Department should investigate this possibility in order to augment its revenue.

Our harbours are playing an important part in the progress of South Australia and

members who visit Port Adelaide and the Outer Harbour know that the wharves there are among the best in the world. They will last many years and the money spent on them is well spent. The Loan Estimates provide for the installation of cranes which, I understand, will be used to supplement existing loading and unloading facilities at the inner and outer ports. This step will be welcomed by everybody including members of the Waterside Workers' Federation. It has been said that the loading and unloading rate at our ports is unsatisfactory and that some companies have refused to allow their ships to call at Port Adelaide because of this, but many authorities, including the captains of some of the larger ships visiting South Australia, have said that the loading rate at South Australian ports is equal to, if not better than, the rates in other parts of the world, and our rate will be further improved by the use of these cranes. This is a modern trend, similar to that in some other States of Australia and also in the United States of America.

Recently, the press reported that about six shipping companies, including Huddart Parker and the Adelaide Steamship Company, were to form a road transport organization. These shipping companies have been losing money because of competition of road transports operating between capital cities, and recent interpretations of section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution seem to indicate that the position will not improve in this regard. The shipping companies are also suffering because of the imposition of wharfage fees and pilotage fees, and the Government should consider a reduction in these charges. This will have the effect of diverting some of the cargo now carried by road back to interstate ships, and any reduction in the harbour charges would be made up in the long run by an increase in the total revenue of the Harbours Board because of the increased quantities of goods going over the wharf.

The sum of £11,500 has been provided for a drainage scheme in the Draper area adjacent to the acid plant that has been established in association with the production of pyrites at Nairne. The new plant is doing a good job, but during the erection of the plant and the construction of the railway line to service it, some of the Housing Trust homes in the Draper area were flooded because of the lack of drainage facilities there. After the implementation of this drainage scheme, however, the water will be sent through drains to the Port River and those living in the area,

particularly those in temporary homes, will not be affected by flooding.

Although I can find no reference to the reconstruction of Darling's Wharf at Birkenhead, I know that this project has been before the Public Works Standing Committee and will probably be carried out next year. When Darling's wharf has been reconstructed and the tug pens installed downstream from the Birkenhead Bridge, much time and money will be saved because it will then be unnecessary for the bridge to be opened every time a tug has to be used. At present, every time the bridge is opened as many as 30 or 40 trucks are held up and the consumer must pay for this delay. The construction of these tug pens is an urgent matter and I appeal to the Government to proceed with the work as early as possible.

The LeFevre Community Hospital was inaugurated in 1950, and at that time the bed position was very grave. The people of Semaphore banded together and approached the Minister of Health to ask the Government to assist in the purchase of the Wolverton Hospital at Largs Bay for use as a community hospital. We were pleased that the Government decided to donate £10,000 and so the purchase was proceeded with. Later, it donated a further £2,000. There is an excellent board of management comprised of men of sound business knowledge. A nearby home has been acquired to house the nurses, who are provided with modern quarters. Recently I made overtures to the Acting Minister of Health for a Government grant to enable two beds at the hospital to be retained for pensioners. This was really the result of a fine gesture by a former Lady Mayoress of Port Adelaide, Mrs. Moore. I have now received a reply to the effect that the Government cannot see its way clear to help in maintaining beds for pensioners. I feel that on this occasion it might have stretched a point to help.

One of the greatest problems is to care for the aged and infirm. We know that all the churches and the Salvation Army are doing a mighty job in building homes for them, but that is not sufficient. Many pensioners are living under very poor conditions. Whereas many people say that their parents are near and dear to them, they do not undertake their obligations when the true test comes. If relatives are neglecting these obligations the Government and the local council should come forward and play an extra part so that these people can be catered for. I hope the Government will reconsider its decision because of

the need to do more for old folk. I support the first line.

Mr. JENNINGS (Enfield)—It is interesting and most impressive to see our loan programme headlined, with the Government proposing that so many million pounds will be spent for this, so many for that, and so many for something else, until the dizzy millions make our heads swim. What we must remember is that instead of saturating ourselves with satisfaction about the astronomical figures mentioned in the Estimates, we should remember that actually the loan funds are £2,500,000 less than the amount spent last year. I think it will be agreed that the amount we spent last year, which was all we had to spend, was very inadequate. I doubt whether any member would deny that last year many schools which should have been built were not built, many areas which should have been sewered were not sewered, hospitals which could have been built were not built and many other works of public importance which should have been undertaken were not undertaken, because of the scarcity of money. The value of money is now less than it was last year, and this year we shall have even less money to spend on our public works as a result of a reduction in the loan funds available.

The astronomical figures mentioned in the Estimates are not indicative of improved public services for this year, but of steadily decreased public services. It is true that no State can spend more loan money than it receives. Primarily, our criticism of the inadequacy of loan funds must be directed to the Federal Government, but certainly not the whole. I say primarily because the Federal Government controls the nation's purse strings and because this Federal Government has shown a marked disinclination to make money available to the States for public works, but an equally strong tendency to spend extravagantly on projects which it thinks will bolster its prestige. We cannot look for a better example than the expenditure of £200,000,000 a year on the average over the last eight years on what is euphemistically described as defence. It has achieved no object except the establishment of an officer class—an army with more officers than men. The Navy has enough officers to sink a ship if they all got on it together, and we have an Air Force that can always depend on being equipped with the most modern obsolete weapons. We must lay the blame for the inadequacy of our loan funds primarily at the door of the present Federal Governments, but not wholly, for we on this side of the House and the people of the State generally might

be entitled to apportion a considerable share of blame to the Government of this State. Was not the present Federal Government elected with the full support of the Playford Government, and were not the policies of the Menzies-Fadden Parties endorsed by this Government at the 1949 election and at every election since? Indeed, the Federal Government has had the support of the Playford Government right through, except for those periodical pantomimes at the Loan Council when the Premier engages in a little light shadow sparring with Sir Arthur Fadden purely for South Australian consumption.

In deploring, as we all do, the financial restrictions on our progress, which after all are only artificial restrictions, we need not waste any sympathy on this poor, impecunious Government of ours, for we should realize that what it is confronted with now it contributed to itself. Its wounds have been self inflicted. What an absurdity we have reached—indeed what a tragedy—when we have a superabundance of all the materials we need and hundreds of men queued up every morning at the Commonwealth Employment Service in Currie Street looking for a job, yet we cannot carry out the projects so necessary for the State because of a lack of money! Once again we see the only real wealth of the community being sacrificed to this money monster that we have created ourselves and which, like Frankenstein's creation, is no longer our servant but our master. At the conclusion of my speech I shall return to general issues, but I shall now turn to some details of the Loan Estimates.

I am glad that an increased amount is to be made available for schools. Of course, whether it will be adequate for our growing population we do not know now, but an amount has been listed for a new primary school at Klemzig, which is in my district. This school was promised four years ago, so I am not too confident that it will be erected this year. If it was desirable to build the school four years ago it is an urgent matter now. A permanent new building for the Enfield High School is listed, but we have heard much about this school before, and anyone following the fortunes of the Enfield High School might be pardoned for thinking that there are six new Enfield high schools proposed. About two years ago the Minister of Education officially opened the school, and he and I coyly told the assemblage that the Public Works Committee had just passed a

plan for a permanent building at the school costing about £200,000. There was loud applause.

Mr. Riches—You have only had to wait two years for the building!

Mr. JENNINGS—We have not got it yet, but I am pleased that a start has been made, and I sincerely hope that the school will be completed this year. The new Payneham Primary School was completed only recently, and it is a fine building. It was formerly in the area represented by the member for Norwood, but I have been told by the school committee that it is only half big enough. Therefore, many pupils are accommodated in the old school, which is supposed to be used as the infant school. This situation has many disadvantages. Firstly, the headmaster has no control over half his staff and pupils. Secondly, the people who have formed themselves into a parents' association are divided. Half of them say "My Johnny does not go to this school, and anything I contribute to the committee will not go towards his school, so I will not contribute anything." The short-sighted policy of the department in not building a primary school of sufficient size in the first place has led to friction in the school committee and, as a consequence, the department is losing the co-operation on which it depends so much.

The same thing, to a lesser extent, happened when the new Hampstead school was built. It is a splendid school, but the day it was opened it was necessary to erect two temporary rooms behind the school. Subsequently, more were erected, and I think more will be erected this year. Surely it would be cheaper in the long run for the Education Department, with all the facilities at its disposal, to build schools of a sufficient size in the one operation so that all the children in the area can be accommodated instead of having to bring contractors back to erect temporary classrooms.

There is nothing in the Estimates about the provision of police stations or police courts in my area. There is not one new police station in the new northern suburbs of Clearview, Enfield Heights, Northfield, Hillcrest, and Klemzig. There is one at Gepps Cross, but that is not Gepps Cross as we know it; it is out in the desert between Gepps Cross and Pooraka. I believe there should be a police station somewhere in the centre of this populous area. If the Government cannot see its way clear to establish one there, I

request that this Gepps Cross police station, as it is called, be transferred nearer the densely-populated areas of Northfield or Clearview.

I do not think we can afford to commend ourselves on the fact that the number of houses proposed to be built this year by the Housing Trust is only the same as last year. We all know that the number built last year fell far short of what was required. Our population is increasing all the time, and if we are only going to build the same number of houses year after year we will be getting further and further behind, as we have been in the last five or six years.

Mr. Lawn—The Premier said yesterday that he was going to build 4,000 homes himself at Mount Gambier.

Mr. JENNINGS—Those 4,000 homes in the Premier's imagination would not have housed many people. They were only thought up after the motion was moved by the Leader of the Opposition. I would go so far as to say that nobody, not even the Premier himself, had thought of them before that. Anyhow, they have not been built and those homes, existing nowhere but in the pages of *Hansard*, are not likely to relieve the housing position. It is disturbing to realize that the trust no longer builds a certain number of homes for rental and a certain number for sale, but sells as many as it possibly can. I agree that this is probably necessary because the more money it gets back obviously the more homes it can build, but one of the consequences is that the most deserving cases are not likely to be helped under this system under which whether one is housed or not depends more on the bank balance than on the need. Nevertheless, I suppose in the long run the building of more houses must help the housing situation. Surely the trust must know how many houses it is likely to sell out of the total it builds in a year, and the remainder of the money should be allocated, at least for the time being, to building some cheaper form of homes which will mean more homes and more people accommodated. I certainly do not believe in breaking down our housing standards, but I think any sort of a new home reasonably commodious, clean, safely built out of timber, asbestos, or any other reasonable method of construction, is infinitely better than what many people have now. Many are crowded into caravans, rooms, shacks, and garages. Some of us encounter these sort of conditions every week of the year.

I am very pleased to see that over the last few months there has been much better supervision of Housing Trust homes that are built for sale. I would not hazard a guess as to the reason for that, but nevertheless it is clearly discernible. Indeed, some of my friends in the building industry have told me that over the last three months they have seen more Housing Trust inspectors than they had during the previous three years. In a vigorous defence of the trust by the Premier recently we were informed that a list of inconsequential complaints had been made to the Housing Trust by myself, and that I had gone out and canvassed for these complaints. This, of course, is not true.

Mr. Jenkins—That was not said. A progress association was mentioned.

Mr. JENNINGS—Very well; he said those complaints had been canvassed for by a progress association. Let me tell the House the truth of this matter because they have heard nothing like the truth yet and I am sure they would like to hear it. These houses had been built for a year and during that year many dissatisfied purchasers made approaches to the trust and received not the slightest satisfaction. As a result, they formed themselves into a progress association and asked that all the residents of the district send their complaints to the association. They called a general meeting at which these complaints could be discussed, and they asked me to attend. That was the very first I knew about it. These 35 letters were waiting in front of me when I sat down beside the chairman at the meeting. I took them to the trust, and I am very glad to say that as a result of my representations these allegedly inconsequential complaints have been remedied.

Let us see how inconsequential some of them were. In at least three cases the purchasers had signed the contract with the trust for the purchase of the home but were arranging finance through some other lending authority, and that lending authority, because of the conditions of the house, would not pass the loan with the result that over the year the purchasers were paying rent instead of paying money off their homes. In some cases they were up for almost £100 in rent which should have been going off the cost of their homes. I do not regard this as inconsequential. I am pleased that as a result of my representations appropriate action was taken by the trust which had not been taken before.

I have sometimes been accused of being a Socialist, and of all the accusations ever made

against me none is more justified than this. Socialists believe that one of the not inconsiderable merits of Socialism is that any genuine socialist undertaking, through its inevitable links with practical democracy, has always been the subject of public scrutiny public criticism and public debate. In this State we have an anti-socialist Premier resorting to a bastardized form of socialism in order to keep the economy of the State on an even keel; in other words, to keep it and him from the full effects of the free enterprise policy in which he professes to believe and on which he is elected. Nowhere is the distinction between true, sincere Socialism and the mongrelized expedient Socialism of the Premier more clearly shown than in his almost pathological petulance when any of his undertakings are criticized. This, of course, is a vindication of our belief that true Australian democratic Socialism in which members of my Party believe and have always believed is incompatible with dictatorship and incomprehensible to the mind of a dictator.

It is idle to talk at length on these Estimates after they have been so completely analysed by the Leader of the Opposition. Only a certain amount of money is available and it must be spread equitably around the various State services. There is not much scope for debate in that. It would be different and much more realistic if we threw off the shackles of jealousy and pettiness that are inherent in the Federal system under which we live—if we could only do away with impotent State Parliaments and establish one sovereign Parliament without the fetters of an outmoded and antiquated Constitution. When we do that, and not before will the people of Australia be emancipated because of the sovereignty of their own representatives. With these very few remarks I support the first line.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.59 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, August 20, at 2 p.m.