

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, July 31, 1958.

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

QUESTIONS.**WOOL RESEARCH.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The *Advertiser* of July 28 contained a statement by the Federal Minister for Primary Industries (Mr. McMahon) that a further £1,600,000 was to be allocated from the wool research fund, which is made up of a contribution of 2s. a bale by growers and a subsidy of 4s. a bale by the Commonwealth, and that this sum was to be shared by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, the State Departments of Agriculture, the universities, and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. Has the Minister of Agriculture been informed of the sum to be made available to the Department of Agriculture in this State and can he say what type of research will be conducted by the department as the result of that grant?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I do not know the sum that will be made available, but as soon as I ascertain it I shall be able to give a full reply.

MEDICAL BENEFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

Mr. HAMBOUR—My question concerns unregistered organizations for hospital and medical benefits operating in South Australia. On May 31, 1955, and on the following day, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Frank Walsh) asked the Premier questions concerning such organizations, and the Premier said that they were within the law and that the Government had no power to proceed against them. I believe, however, that I have the evidence necessary at least to initiate an inquiry into their activities, if not to institute proceedings against them. There are two organizations involved and I shall give the Minister their names, although for the purposes of this question, I shall call the original company A and the second company B. Company A was formed on February 17, 1955, by a gentleman whose character I cannot describe as estimable. The same gentleman formed Company B on October 5, 1956. Company A solicited contributions from prospective members and certain premiums were paid. One patient, 96 years of age, claimed over £70 from company A, but she was told that the claim would be met by company B, which was taking over company A. Subsequently the two members with whom I am concerned paid another year's premium

on receiving an undertaking that the obligation would be met by company B, but yesterday company B called a meeting of creditors, of which only one of these two members was advised. I ask the Minister of Education, representing the Attorney-General, whether that is sufficient information on which to institute an inquiry into the activities of the person who formed these companies. Further, I have been led to believe that he intends to start a third company. It is Parliament's duty to protect members of such organizations, and I ask the Minister to institute an investigation into this person's activities and ascertain whether he has any association with the third company, which has immediately communicated with people who have paid into company A and company B, soliciting their contributions for the third company, the activities of which may not be above board. I ask the Minister to have the records and activities of the persons concerned thoroughly investigated.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to refer the whole matter to my colleague, the Attorney-General, and I am confident he will comply with the request.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—It seems that the Commonwealth Government encourages people to contribute to hospital funds in order to get greater benefits. When I raised this matter previously the State Government seemed favourably disposed to examine legislation that had been passed by the Victorian Parliament, the result of which has been that some Victorian companies with little financial backing have set up in business in this State. Will the Minister of Education ascertain from the Attorney-General the advisability of introducing legislation similar to that in Victoria preventing companies from becoming registered organizations unless they are in a position to meet their commitments?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to refer the whole matter to the Attorney-General. I think the volume of this type of business is now so great that it merits proper investigation and clarification in the interests of all parties concerned.

CONTROL OF FIREARMS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Minister of Works a further reply to my question concerning the control of air guns?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The Chief Secretary's Department has requested the Police Commissioner to supply a report. As soon as it comes to hand it will be made available.

LIFT REGULATIONS.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—Some weeks ago I drew the attention of the Attorney-General to the lift regulations in this State, which are archaic in view of the modern automatic lifts, and I suggested that they be amended. Will the Minister of Education ask his colleague whether they are likely to be amended?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to do so.

TOWN PLANNER'S REPORT.

Mr. HUTCHENS—The press recently reported that the Town Planner was being assisted by a Mr. Speechley, who has had much experience in replanning town areas in other parts of the world. As some councils have forgone their right to make by-laws in respect of certain planning in anticipation of the Town Planner bringing down a final report on the planning of settled areas, will the Minister of Education ask his colleague, the Attorney-General, to have an interim report submitted by the Town Planner in order to assist these councils?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to ask him whether he will try to do so, but I do not know whether an interim report is practicable at this stage. I shall, however, let the honourable member know next week whether it is possible.

BERRI SUBSTATION.

Mr. KING—Has the Minister of Works received a report from the Electricity Trust regarding the consumption of electricity at the Berri substation during the last few years?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The Chairman of the Electricity Trust reports:—

The 132,000-volt line to Berri was placed in service in January, 1955. Since then the total energy sold by the Electricity Trust (including bulk supplies) in the Upper Murray area has been set out below. This includes the town of Morgan and all areas to the east, but excludes Radium Hill.

	Kilowatthrs. sold. Million.
Year ended	
June, 1955	19.8
June, 1956	25.5
June, 1957	33.4
June, 1958	39.9

The honourable member will see that the consumption from this station has more than doubled in the four years from June, 1955, to June, 1958.

WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT.

Mr. HARDING—An extract from the *Government Gazette* reads:—

The Minister will, during the currency of this lease as soon as he may conveniently do so and in any case before the expiration of the tenth year from the date of commencement of this lease, fix the price at which the lessee may purchase the fee simple of the land hereby demised, together with all improvements provided thereto by the Minister (other than improvements sold to the lessee) and will notify the lessee of the price so fixed.

Will the Minister of Lands submit a report to the House on the problems of zoning, reaching agreement with the Federal authorities, and other matters involved in assessing the various costs, in order to fix the price to the lessee for the purchase of a lease?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yes.

PUBLICATION OF SCIENTIFIC BOOKS.

Mr. BYWATERS—I understand that a committee appointed by the Government decides what scientific books shall be printed and that in the main these books are used as textbooks. Previously this Government made money available to assist in their publication, but this has recently been discontinued. The authors give of their time and knowledge free, but their main complaint is that it takes so long to get their books published that the material prepared is behind the times when published. Can the Minister of Education say how many people have been approached during the last 12 months to write scientific books, what are the subjects, when are they likely to be published and in what order, and what compensation is paid for expenses incurred in preparing material for these books?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I am familiar with the subject matter, but it does not concern my department exclusively. I will endeavour to obtain the information by Tuesday.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS.

Mr. DUNNAGE—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked recently about zebra and pedestrian crossings on the South Road?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The question asked by the honourable member was:—

Will the Premier consider amending the Road Traffic Act to make it compulsory for vehicles to stop when people are using pedestrian crossings?

A minute from the State Traffic Committee states:—

To the committee it appears unnecessary to compel an approaching motorist to stop his vehicle should a pedestrian be on a pedestrian

or zebra crossing, that is, if there is no risk of a collision with a pedestrian.

As the honourable member knows, the State Traffic Committee is the advisory committee to the Government on these matters, and so far as I am aware the question has not been considered by Cabinet in the light of the committee's report.

SUBSIDIES FOR HOSPITAL PATIENTS.

Mr. DAVIS—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Health a reply to my recent question regarding the subsidy paid by the Federal Government to hospital patients?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have received the following report:—

Under the Commonwealth Hospital Benefits Scheme persons who contribute to Hospital Insurance (through a hospital fund approved by the Commonwealth Government) receive the following hospital benefits per day.

Then follows a schedule of the various payments which, I think, are fairly well-known to members. They vary from 8s. to a total of 8s. plus 12s., to which the honourable member referred in his question. The report continues:—

It will therefore be seen that the Commonwealth is definitely endeavouring to encourage people to insure against the necessity for hospital treatment, and it is quite clear that only those who have so insured with an approved hospital fund for a minimum of 16s. per day "fund" benefit qualify for the additional Commonwealth hospital benefit of 12s. per day. Those who insure for less than 16s. per day, but for at least 6s. per day receive the additional Commonwealth benefit of 4s. per day. All patients have the Commonwealth benefit of 8s. per day deducted from their hospital insurance regardless of the amount of hospital insurance they have, or whether they have no such increase.

The daily rate in Government hospitals in this State was adjusted from 35s. to 36s. as from the 1st March, 1958, and this is now the same as the charge for public beds in hospitals in New South Wales and Victoria. This rate is very much lower than that charged in private hospitals. It will be noted that if a person contributing for at least 16s. per day hospital benefits through an approved hospital fund is admitted to a Government hospital, the total hospital benefit received is also equal to 36s. per day (16s. plus 8s. plus 12s.), provided that the hospital fee is at least that figure of 36s. per day. If the fee were less than 36s. per day, then the 12s. per day additional Commonwealth benefit would be reduced accordingly. It should be pointed out that although the rate in Government hospitals in this State has been determined at 36s. per day, such rate is often reduced according to the financial position of the patient and, indeed, in some cases, the charge is remitted entirely.

CONSORTING WITH ABORIGINES.

Mr. HEASLIP—Yesterday the member for Whyalla asked the Minister of Works whether the Government intended to introduce legislation dealing with consorting with aborigines. I listened to the Minister's reply and subsequently read a report of it in the press which seemed to conflict with his statement in the House. Can the Minister clarify the position?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—My attention was drawn to the press report of my answer to Mr. Loveday. I reaffirm what I said then, that I had already announced through the press that a Bill to amend the Police Offences Act relating to consorting with aborigines will be presented to the House this session, and is in the course of preparation. That is the correct answer and not the answer as reported in this morning's press.

WELFARE OFFICERS FOR ABORIGINES.

Mr. RICHES—For some time people in the northern districts have believed it desirable for the Government to appoint welfare officers to work among natives, particularly now that some aborigines have been provided with homes. This would ensure that the natives received help in furnishing as well as encouragement in looking after their homes, and would assist the policy of assimilation. We read with interest that a welfare officer had been appointed to Ceduna some time ago and it has been suggested that it would be worth while for the Government to appoint an officer to Port Augusta. Is the Minister of Works able to make a statement on that?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The Aborigines Protection Board has recommended that one additional male and two additional female welfare officers be appointed to the department in pursuance of the Government's policy of giving increased help to aborigines, wherever located, and particularly to carry out the objects to which the honourable member has referred. This year we propose to make available to the board a considerable sum for additional housing for aborigines. A number of houses have already been provided in country towns for aborigines who have reached a stage of development at which they can satisfactorily occupy them and freely intermingle with the white population. That move has been successful and it is proposed to extend it and also to erect less pretentious houses for aborigines who are at an earlier stage of development. To maintain close contact with such natives it is obvious that

additional welfare officers who can move around among them are necessary. The appointment of such officers is under consideration and I hope we shall be able to find suitable persons. If these appointments are made the male officer will be stationed at Port Augusta and will have the oversight of the immediate surroundings of Port Augusta and the aborigine stations and townships to the north and north-west.

MOONTA BAY FISHING HAVEN.

Mr. HUGHES—In the past, due to storms, extensive damage has resulted to fishing craft at Moonta Bay. In March I accompanied the then Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Pearson, on an inspection of the jetty. He was asked whether a new jetty could be provided and at his request a plan of the requirements and suggestions for the protection of fishing craft were forwarded to him. Since then the Premier, in my presence, volunteered to a Moonta councillor, "We are going to do something for the fishing boys at Moonta Bay." Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether it is the Government's intention to provide a new jetty at Moonta Bay and, if so, when?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—There was rather a long delay in securing the proposals from the fishing interests for whom the honourable member is speaking. The project for a haven for fishing craft at Moonta Bay is being thoroughly investigated. I have received a report from the Minister of Marine made by the General Manager of the S.A. Harbours Board which summarises several alternative proposals that can be considered:—

- (a) A proposal by professional fishermen (May 1958), for a jetty 1,125ft. long by 8ft. wide, together with walk-way and wave screen, and providing for demolition of the old jetty. Estimated cost—£74,000 to £78,100.
- (b) Modified proposal for a lighter type of jetty located at an angle to the existing jetty—the new jetty to be 1,080ft. long by 6ft. wide allowing for a ramp and crane at the outer end which will give a depth of 6ft. at low water. Estimated cost—£33,000.
- (c) Replacement of the existing jetty by light structure—jetty approach 1,420ft. long by 8ft. wide—head 100ft. by 25ft. wide—and providing for demolition of the old jetty. Estimated cost—£73,000.

In view of the very heavy expenditure on works for fishing havens to which we are already committed, unless further funds are provided it is extremely doubtful if they could even be considered for this year's loan allocation. However, the Government is very keen to provide improved facilities in this area for the fishing industry and close consideration is being given to the matter.

DANGER FROM URANIUM DUST.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my question of July 23 concerning protection from radiation of workers engaged in uranium mines and uranium processing?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The Minister of Mines has furnished the following report from the Director of Mines:—

The standards adopted in this State in regard to uranium and radio-active materials are the standards fixed by the international Commission on Radiological Protection, 1954, and recommended to Australian authorities by the Australian Committee on Health and Safety Practices in Uranium Mining, Milling and Treatment in November, 1956. Every month at Radium Hill samples of mine air, dust, mine water and drinking water are taken by the management to ensure maintenance of standards. Check samples and radiation measurements are taken in addition by the Department of Mines every three months. At the Port Pirie Chemical Treatment Plant, the Department of Mines carries out a similar survey also at a three-monthly interval. The results of the tests and samples taken to date indicate that the international standards are being maintained. All people employed in the Radium Hill Project are medically examined before employment in order to maintain a high standard of health in entrants to the industry. That general healthy conditions prevail in the mine and treatment works is borne out by the results of the subsequent annual routine medical examinations carried out by the Department of Health.

INTERSTATE MOVEMENT OF EGGS.

Mr. LAUCKE—Whilst there may be some temporary gains in the present movement of eggs interstate, in the long run the high transport costs involved must result in lower returns to producers in all States. Will the Minister of Agriculture indicate whether consideration will be given to endeavouring to ensure a co-ordinated and orderly policy on a mutually agreed basis as between the Egg Boards of various States to minimize these costly and uneconomical movements?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—This question was no doubt brought about by the recent movement of eggs interstate from Victoria. Owing to the balanced marketing conditions in

South Australia, and, I think, good administration by the South Australian Egg Board, the market here was in a fairly stable condition, but over the last few months a good many eggs have come from Victoria, particularly small eggs weighing about 1½ oz.; those produced in this State average about 2 oz. The reason given by the honourable member for a co-ordinated policy was due to the high transport costs from one State to another. Although I will give this matter my consideration, I will approach it with considerable caution because there is much more to it than transport costs, and I want to make sure that in no case would we be urging some abrogation of constitutional rights.

Mr. Laucke—It would be on a mutually agreed basis.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—Even if there were agreement between the boards of the various States that would not necessarily cover everyone else in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Bywaters—Didn't South Australia first send eggs to Victoria?

The SPEAKER—Order! The question cannot be debated.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I would say that is based on an assumption. I am not in a position to give a definite answer, but I will investigate the matter.

MAGILL REFORMATORY.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my question of July 23 relating to plans for the Magill Reformatory?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have obtained from the Chief Secretary a report made by the Chairman of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board:—

The grand plan for the proposed new reformatory is in the course of preparation, under the direction of a subcommittee of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board, in collaboration with Government architects. This plan is not yet complete.

LAKE BONNEY DRAINAGE CHANNEL.

Mr. CORCORAN—I believe that as a result of representations made by the Port Macdonnell, Tantanoola and Millicent district councils the Government has for some time been considering providing a new channel from Lake Bonney into the sea because the old channel has not been functioning satisfactorily for years. Lake Bonney is situated between Tantanoola, Millicent and the sea, and during the winter all water from drainage systems at

Millicent and Tantanoola flow into it. At times during the winter the water reaches such a high level that there is a backwash which will cause damage to soldier settlements at the northern end of the lake. As I believe some decision has been reached by the Government, can the Minister of Works inform me what it is?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Following on a visit by the Premier at which this matter was discussed, conferences were held in the departments concerned, and the Assistant Engineer-in-Chief (Mr. Anderson), who is, I think, chairman of the South-Eastern Drainage Board, made a visit to the area and discussed the matter on site with the district councils concerned. At a result it has been decided that money will be made available for an immediate start on the excavation of a channel from the lake to the sea at a point where no channel existed previously. It will be a completely new site where the lake is nearest to the sea. The proposal involves much excavation, but it is intended that the work shall be commenced forthwith with a view to completing it at a time when the lake is at its expected highest level, in the late spring, when the water released into the channel will scour out a good opening into the sea. The proposal involves some experimentation because, until it is tested, no one can say for certain that it will be a success. It will lower the level of the lake by from 2 ft. 6 in. to 3 ft., but whether the outlet to the sea will remain open under all conditions is not certain until the scheme has been tested. It was considered, however, that the scheme offered good prospects of success and that the expense was well justified in order to test its possibilities. I understand that the Assistant Engineer-in-Chief has conveyed to the people concerned the decision on the matter. At any rate, they are well aware of the negotiations that took place and have been fully consulted.

VICTOR HARBOUR SHIPPING LIGHTS.

Mr. JENKINS—Seven or eight off-shore fishing vessels are based at Victor Harbour and recently the Chief Inspector of Fisheries and game recommended that guiding lights be installed on the end of the screw pile jetty to guide the vessels at night and in dirty weather. Can the Minister of Agriculture say when these lights will be installed?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I shall find out and let the honourable member know.

MOUNT GAMBIER SCHOOL AND CIVIC HALL.

Mr. RALSTON—I have received the following letter from the Adult Education Centre at Mount Gambier:—

At a meeting of the council of the Adult Education Centre on Friday, July 25, members expressed concern at the delay by the Government in putting into effect plans for the alteration of the old Wehl Street school. It was decided to seek your assistance to see if you can ascertain what the position is and to try to ensure that the work will proceed very early in this financial year. Your fellow members of this council would sincerely appreciate any help you can give.

The Mount Gambier City Council intends to rehabilitate the civic hall, and architectural plans have been drawn up and approved, and estimates submitted and approved. The Minister of Local Government has approved the necessary loan, but it is not possible for the plan to be implemented until the room now occupied by the adult education centre becomes vacant. Can the Minister of Education clarify the position and assure me that the work will proceed early this financial year?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—As a valued member of the City Council and the Mount Gambier Adult Education Centre, the honourable member is no doubt aware that two well-equipped craft centres have been erected on the site at Wehl Street and are ready, or almost ready, for occupation. Having seen many similar buildings throughout Australia, I can say that these will compare favourably with any others in the country. I hoped the rest of the work would be well in hand by now, but there has been a delay caused, with the best of intentions, by the Architect-in-Chief, who desired to erect a large building. In his opinion it would have been preferable to demolish the existing structure and erect a completely new one.

A few weeks before the death of Mr. Fletcher (the then member for Mount Gambier) I visited the site with him, Mr. Davis (the then mayor of Mount Gambier), Mr. Walker (Superintendent of Technical Education and Acting Deputy Director), and Mr. Williams (the local registrar of the Adult Education Centre). We unanimously decided that it would be a retrograde step to demolish a large, commodious and solidly constructed building which had a character of its own and was much appreciated by Mount Gambier residents; therefore, as laymen we decided not to act on the well-intentioned recommendation of our expert adviser, the Architect-in-Chief,

but instead to have the existing building converted and rehabilitated. Instructions were immediately given on my return to Adelaide for that to be done. Later this year tenders will be called for the conversion of the old primary school building in Wehl Street to provide an administrative block and a well-equipped hall for the adult education centre. The hall will be provided with a full stage and dressing room facilities and will seat about 250 people. This should stimulate such activities as drama, music and physical education, facilities for which have previously been lacking in Mount Gambier.

I appreciate the desire of the Mount Gambier Council to have a new hall in keeping with the dignity and status of that city and I desire to facilitate their wish in every way possible. I assure the honourable member and his colleagues on both the City Council and the Adult Education Centre Council that we will not stand in their way and that the renovation of the old Wehl Street building will not affect the classes at present being held in the civic centre. These classes can be moved out as soon as two dual unit portable buildings are erected at Wehl Street. Their erection will commence soon and their completion will not take long. It is also intended to erect soon a new infant school at Mount Gambier East and also a new infant school in conjunction with a new primary school at Mount Gambier North. When these two buildings are completed the existing school at Wehl Street will be removed and all that large and valuable site will become available for the purposes of the Adult Education Centre. When those buildings are completed—shortly, I hope—they will be easily the best of their kind in this State and will compare favourably with any similar building in any Australian country district.

METAL FOR ROAD WORK.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Roads a reply to the question I asked on June 18 about metal for road work?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The Minister of Roads has supplied the following report signed by the Commissioner of Highways:—

Up to date only one contract has been let for the supply of stone to the Main North Road between Adelaide and Gawler, namely, for that section between Gepps Cross and Pooraka. To obviate double handling wherever possible, the quarry trucks deliver metal on to the formation. However, in some instances, when insufficient length of prepared

formation is available, some of the crushed metal is stock piled and then loaded into hired trucks for carting on to the formation when required. With respect to the other section, no contract has as yet been let, but the general practice, as outlined above, will be adopted there.

TRAMWAY TRUST FARES.

Mr. LAWN—Has the Minister of Works, representing the Premier, a reply to the question I asked on July 24 on behalf of the Housewives' Association about bus and tram fares?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The General Manager of the Tramways Trust reported:—

The matters raised by Mr. Lawn are variants of the general theme for concession fares, which the trust considers cannot be justified in view of the present level of fares and the cost of operation. The claimants for concession fares usually state that increased riding will result, but our experience, and that of many other transport organizations, shows that while some increase in riding might occur, it falls considerably short of equalling the amount of the concession granted.

The honourable member asked that mid-city terminals be abolished, and on this matter the trust states:—

In the case of "through" running, an "overlap" in the central city area is provided. For instance, on the Enfield-Colonel Light Gardens "through" route, passengers on the journey from Colonel Light Gardens may travel without additional charge as far as the intersection of King William Street-North Terrace, whilst those persons travelling from Enfield may proceed to Victoria Square without additional fare. The trust feels that this overlap sufficiently meets passenger convenience, and is not inclined to extend it.

As regards the introduction of a terrace to terrace 6d. city section, the trust states:—

The "city section" was abolished several years ago for economic reasons. As regards the statement by the Housewives' Association that attendances at its meetings had been affected, the trust states, "We have no information on this assertion."

X-RAY MACHINES IN SHOE STORES.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Minister of Works, representing the Premier, a reply to the question I asked on June 18 about the possibility of radiation danger from the use of X-ray machines in shoe stores?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have received the following report from the Director-General of Public Health (Dr. Southwood):—

X-ray machines in shoe stores in South Australia are checked at intervals by the State Department of Public Health to ensure that they are sufficiently shielded to prevent anyone working in the vicinity receiving more than

the recognized safe dose of ionizing radiation. Owners of machines are given notices to put on the machine.

A copy of a notice is attached to the report. I do not think we are permitted to bring exhibits into the Chamber, but if the honourable member desires he can see it. The report continues:—

These notices warn the public about being X-rayed too frequently. At the last survey in 1957 there were 23 machines known to be in use.

ACOUSTICS OF ASSEMBLY CHAMBER.

Mr. KING—The acoustics of this Chamber are bad, and it is particularly hard for those in the galleries to hear what members are saying. Yesterday Mr. Quirke complained about the lighting of the Chamber, and I hope the Minister of Works will investigate the acoustics as well as the lighting.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—From time to time attempts have been made to improve the acoustics of the Chamber. The honourable member may or may not know that more and more microphones have been installed for the convenience of members, particularly those in the back benches. That in itself indicates that the Chamber presents some acoustic problems. What more can be done for the benefit of those in the galleries and elsewhere I do not know, but I will ask the Architect-in-Chief whether he can make further suggestions.

Mr. King—Could he modernize the amplifiers?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I do not know whether that can be done, but I will make inquiries about possible improvements. Except under the best of conditions I think it would be difficult for members sitting behind the Government to hear answers to questions when Ministers are obliged to direct their voices to the press galleries and to the *Hansard* staff. It is impossible to look both ways at once.

Mr. O'Halloran—Or talk both ways at once.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I appreciate the interjection because we always talk straight on this side. I will ask the Architect-in-Chief if he can suggest improvements.

The SPEAKER—Following on questions last session by the late member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Fletcher) about the acoustics of this Chamber the matter was referred to the Architect-in-Chief and it is under investigation.

RENTS OF SUBDIVIDED PREMISES.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Apparently the opinion of the Crown Solicitor, given to the rent control section of the Housing Trust, is that when premises for which rent has been fixed as a whole are divided into several sets of premises there is no fixed rental in respect of these new subdivided premises, and the landlord may, until a fixation is made on application to the trust, charge a rent for the subdivided premises in excess of the rent fixed for the whole. As an example I would cite a landlord by the name of Dellapia who is particularly well known for this type of thing in my district and has been charging a total of £7 10s. for several subdivided premises when the whole of the premises had previously had a fixed rental of £2 1s. The Crown Solicitor's opinion is that nothing can be done about this except that if the premises are still within the Act an application can be made for rent control. In many cases tenants are not aware that this can be done. In this particular instance a large sum has been paid over to this landlord, contrary to the evident intention of the Act but apparently not contrary to its letter. Can the Minister say whether the Government will examine this situation so that when it brings down an amendment to the Landlord and Tenant Act later this year—as I assume it will—this anomaly can be dealt with?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes. I will ask my colleague the Attorney-General if he will examine this matter because, as the representative of an electorate in which there are literally hundreds of newly subdivided premises, I am most interested in this opinion, of which I had not heard.

NARACOORTE POLICE STATION AND COURTHOUSE.

Mr. HARDING—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked on July 24 concerning the old police station and courthouse at Naracoorte?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Yes. The Chief Secretary has furnished a reply to the effect that it is not intended to offer the police property for sale because it is required for future Government departments.

ABORIGINAL MISSIONS.

Mr. BYWATERS—Last week I asked the Minister of Works questions relating to the amounts paid to aboriginal missions in this State and, following on his reply, asked the individual amounts for each child. Has the Minister a further reply?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—As from July 1, 1958, the Aborigines Protection Board contributes towards the cost of the maintenance of aboriginal children in homes or institutions as follows:—

Up to sixteen years of age.—Church mission homes and other institutions, £2 per week. Foster parents.—A minimum of £2 per week. In some cases, the foster parents consider this insufficient and the amount paid is a matter of negotiation. The maximum amount paid to foster parents is £3 10s. per week.

Over sixteen years of age.—Church mission homes and other institutions—A matter of negotiation, the minimum amount at present being paid is £2 per week, but in almost every case, the amount contributed is £3 per week. Foster parents.—Again a matter of negotiation with the foster parents. A minimum of £2 per week being paid to a maximum of £3 10s. per week. The above contributions are in addition to child endowment payments.

RETIRING AGE FOR CASUAL EMPLOYEES.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to the question I asked on Tuesday concerning the dismissal of casual employees over 65 years of age engaged in fruit fly operations?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—About 40 casual employees over 65 years of age are engaged on fruit fly work. Under the Public Service Act special approval is necessary for the employment of any male person over the age of 65 years. The Government recently considered the case of these 40 casual employees and, on the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner, agreed that their services should be retained until October 31, 1958, by which time the current programme of work can be expected to taper off. The position will be reviewed again before October 31, and, in the meantime, there will be no general retrenchment of over age employees unless the work is discontinued for some reason not now expected.

GRANTS FOR ROADS.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—On June 19 I asked the Premier whether sympathetic consideration would be given to increasing the grant to country municipalities in order that they might meet the increased cost of maintaining streets other than main roads, which are subsidized, arising from the greater volume of vehicular traffic from the greater number of motor cars domiciled in various country areas. Has the Minister of Works a reply to that question?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have received the following reply from the Minister of Roads:—

The Commissioner of Highways reports that during the three years 1955-56, 1956-57 and 1957-58, the sum of £500 has been allocated annually to the Corporation of Peterborough for assistance to construct and maintain the district roads. It is anticipated that during 1958-59 a similar sum will be allocated. As funds generally are limited, grants for district roads are made only where the roads are in newly developed or sparsely settled rural areas, or where the roads carry a large proportion of other than local traffic. Nearly all the roads in Peterborough carry local traffic. In Peterborough, the main roads which carry the major portion of the through traffic have been bituminized. In order to maintain and extend the existing road system, it is not possible to allocate departmental funds for purely local roads which should be within the resources of the country municipalities.

PRIMARY PRODUCERS UNION CONFERENCE.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I understand the Minister of Agriculture has a reply to the question I asked last Thursday concerning the marketing difficulties experienced by the Barley Board and the Egg Board as a result of Victorian competition. Will he present that report to the House?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—This question was forwarded for comment to the Egg Board and the Australian Barley Board and I have received reports from both sources. The Chairman of the Egg Board states:—

I have to advise with regard to the marketing of eggs and the Victorian competition that this competition was limited, principally, to a grade of eggs known as small eggs which are 1½oz. in weight and under. These eggs were forwarded by the Victorian Egg Board to certain wholesalers in this State, and commenced arriving in Adelaide in early April. Fortunately, the South Australian egg producers did not have very many of this grade of egg. The policy of the Department of Agriculture has been, for many years, to advise the South Australian producers to breed from stock which give a reasonably sized egg of an average weight of 24oz. to the dozen. This policy, obviously, according to the quantity of these small eggs, that have come over from Victoria has not been followed in that State. As the season progresses the quantity of these small eggs arriving from Victoria has gradually decreased. There is no doubt that these eggs have, to a certain extent, limited the quantity of eggs being sold by the South Australian Egg Board, but as these are interstate eggs there is no action that the South Australian Egg Board can take to prevent these eggs coming to this State.

The latter part of his statement is partly related to questions asked recently by the

member for Barossa. The Chairman of the Barley Board, in discussing the question of marketing barley, reported:—

The Australian Barley Board, which includes the activities of the barley industry in both Victoria and South Australia, does not experience great difficulty in marketing because of Victorian competition. In droughty years sales for cash are sometimes made by a few growers to traders in other States under Section 92 of the Constitution and such sales were more frequent in 1957-58 than ever before.

RENMARK AREA ROADS.

Mr. KING—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question regarding roads in the Renmark district?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—My colleague, the Minister of Roads, has furnished me with the following report of the Commissioner of Highways hereon:—

1. Approach road from Renmark to Paringa Bridge.—Following the 1956 flood, extensive investigations have been carried out to decide the length of bridge openings necessary between Paringa and Renmark. A decision on this matter will be reached in a few days. The driving of test piles to determine foundation conditions is at present in hand, and the preparation of plans and specifications will now proceed with the object of calling tenders for bridges and earthworks later in this financial year.

2. Renmark Distillery Bridge.—Plans and specifications for the bridge are almost completed, and it is expected that tenders for its reconstruction will be called in the near future.

3. Cooltong Road.—A contract has been let for the crushing of stone for the reconstruction and sealing of Cooltong Road. It is planned to commence this work towards the end of the calendar year.

BROKEN HILL ROAD SEALING.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I understand the Highways Department is now sealing the main Broken Hill road where it passes through the towns of Mingarie and Cockburn. This morning I heard that a report is current in Broken Hill that it is also intended to seal the road from Cockburn to Cutana—a very difficult section of this road. I hope the report is correct. Will the Minister find out from his colleague?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Yes.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from July 30. Page 224.)

Mr. KING (Chaffey)—In supporting the motion so ably moved by the member for Light (Mr. Hambour) and seconded by the member

for Victoria (Mr. Harding), I also offer my congratulations to the Hon. G. G. Pearson and the Hon. D. N. Brookman for the status recently conferred on them in the Ministry. At the same time we must regret the circumstances that caused the Hon. M. McIntosh to relinquish his position after so many years of service, and trust that he, with the Minister of Lands, will enjoy many years of good health. The passing of the late John Fletcher has robbed this House of a genial personality and one who contributed much to the working of democracy in this Parliament. His mantle has fallen to the new member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Ralston) who would do well to follow in the footsteps of his predecessor. I feel, too, that the Public Works Committee will have gained by the appointment to its ranks of the member for Burra (Mr. Quirke) and the member for Torrens (Mr. Coumbe).

The speech of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor was a model of restraint and understatement. Here was modestly compressed the results of years of patient industry and careful planning. These have produced standards of living without compare in Australia and a diversity of employment and industry to withstand the buffet of a fall in agricultural prices. In other years and in less experienced hands this would have spelt disaster for the people of this State. Instead, we find all the signs of a stable economy which no-one of sincerity can deny, but which we now seem to take for granted.

From the point of view of my own district, several outstanding items are referred to in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech. They not only affect my electorate, but as the prosperity of a part affects the whole, so the success of the river areas will benefit South Australia, and the growth of the other parts of the State will help us, too. The most important, of course, is the settlement of the Snowy disagreement. The outcome has justified the Premier's stand and confirmed the judgment of the Federal Government in commencing this mighty scheme for the development of Australia. Not only is the water for our many purposes guaranteed, but also much-needed flexibility of supply will be provided for in the proposals soon to be placed before the Parliaments concerned. The time may be much nearer than we suppose when every drop of water available will be needed to serve the interests of this rapidly-growing State.

At some later stage, with our expected population growth, reservoir sites in the hills may be insufficient to provide adequate water

supplies for the State as a whole. I may be looking a long way ahead, but the time may come when the greater part of the Murray Valley may be dammed at a point above Mannum to provide a huge reservoir of water some 50 miles or so long, perhaps half a mile wide and as deep as the dam is high. When it is realized that for the whole of its length in South Australia the Murray Valley is 100ft. deep and that the fall to the sea from Berri is only 65ft., it can be seen that there are great possibilities of using this natural storage for the benefit of the State. I might mention that it would be possible then to encourage low-lift irrigation schemes for adjacent land that is not now being fully used. The salt content of the water would be considerably reduced, power generation may be possible, and it may even be possible to generate power to lift water over the hills to the Adelaide water districts.

Reference was made to the need to vote £300,000 to help finance the new co-operative cannery which will help to serve the needs of the expanding cannery fruit production along the Murray. The approval of this proposal meant many months of hard work by the growers, and critical examination by a highly-qualified panel of Government officers before assent to it was gained, but already other industries have indicated that they are going to follow the establishment of this cannery. It might be of interest to the House to know that in my home town of Berri it has been claimed that over £1,000,000 has been spent on recent additions and improvements to buildings, both homes and factories. I think that is a great tribute to the development of a small area. Evidence given to the Cannery Inquiry Committee showed that in a few years fruit production would need three times the existing cannery facilities to handle the crop, mainly of peaches and apricots. The new cannery, which will accept fruit from all Upper Murray districts, will make its contribution towards absorbing some of this surplus, but there will be plenty of fruit to keep all existing efficient canneries in operation.

By insisting on a high standard of production in the field and factory, the canning industry can do much to establish itself as a profitable producer. Senseless competition for poor quality fruit at high prices has done the industry a disservice which in the long run will profit nobody. Growers of suitable tree fruits should be prepared to dry a portion of their crops in the event of there being more fruit than the factories can handle in the

coming harvest. Graphs that I prepared during the cannery investigation indicated that we must soon expect a bumper crop of apricots. Fortunately, the dried apricot market can absorb up to an additional 1,000 tons of fruit on previous performances. Drying would absorb from 6,000 to 7,000 tons of fresh fruit provided that growers are equipped with trays and the necessary gear and have sufficient labour. The dried peach market is not so resilient, and experience has shown that it cannot absorb much more than is being produced now. The need for quality in canning fruits cannot be too strongly emphasized if we are to hold our markets against competition, particularly from South Africa, which has come into prominence as a producer of high quality canned fruits, and is rapidly taking a large part of the United Kingdom market.

There have been some exciting recent developments in the wine industry. Australian sales have shown a commendable increase while exports have also improved. The pattern of consumer preference has already changed with a greater appreciation of the low strength table wines. The proposed plantings sponsored by the established winemakers show their confidence in the industry, and it is to be hoped that production from the proposed new areas along the Murray will not be a threat to the established plantings, a considerable number of which are in soldier settlement areas.

A pleasing feature associated with the wine industry is the spontaneous growth of food and wine societies, whose members are dedicated to the proper use of wines in conjunction with the appropriate foods—the way in which wine should always be served. If, in proportion to population, other States had as many food and wine clubs as South Australia, the wise use of wine would make a notable contribution to the industry in this State, which is responsible for 80 per cent of the Australian production, largely from river grapes. I have suggested this to the wine industry, but so far without a great deal of response. Some hotels in this State are discouraging sales of wines in dining rooms by extravagant overcharging. As hotels are in a privileged position, they should be reminded of their responsibilities to the public and the industry. Fortunately, some hotels are most reasonable, particularly those in my district, and have been highly commended for their sensible approach to this matter.

I commend the Government for its support to the Wine Research Institute, and I have been privileged to learn of the direction of its work. I sincerely hope the Government will support the introduction of new wine grape varieties, having due regard to the dangers of introducing phylloxera to this State. I was recently privileged to hear a lecture illustrated by coloured slides, by one of the officers of the Wine Institute, and I hope this will be the forerunner of what we might do in this State. He said that California has 1,200 different varieties of vines under test, and is also testing new methods of handling wine production.

It is to be expected that fruit culture will be extended along both banks of the Murray where, due to the hours of sunshine, aridity, a benign water supply and other favourable factors, grapes and other fruits grow in profusion with a production per acre three times greater than in most other areas. I will illustrate this by quoting from a report of the Phylloxera Board, in which it is stated that for Grenache, the production in irrigated areas was 6.25 tons an acre as against 2.17 tons in dry areas; Doradillas 5.74 as against 2.24; Shiraz, 4.85 against 1.72; and Pedro, 6.22 compared with 1.95. From this it can be seen that production in river areas is considerably greater than in dry areas. This area of high production is in a comparatively narrow strip of land running east from Morgan to Mildura, and most of the country with a high potential is in the South Australian section.

It is to the credit of this Government that electric power is available on the spot in sufficient supply to develop the tremendous potential of the Murray Valley. The Government and private irrigators are bringing more land up and down the river into production for fruit, vegetables and pastures. Just over the border, Mr. Humphrey Kempe, author of "Astonished Earth," has wrought a miracle in converting barren windswept clay flats into lush pastures. At Taylorville, opposite Waikerie, Mr. M. S. Lunn has shown what can be done on limestone with a few inches of soil, lifting water 120ft. to raise prolific crops of lucerne. Near Renmark, Messrs. Watson and Martin are building a pipeline to take water 20 miles inland to treble the sheep carrying capacity of their land and to dispel the fear of drought. These are only a few instances of what is being done to convert the desert into a land of plenty. The necessary constituents for this progress are the faith, self-help and industry of man backed up by a now

assured water supply, road and rail transport, unlimited electric power and reliable communications—all provided by this far-seeing Government which has given us a close home market of people attracted to the rapidly expanding industries of this State.

The security of the fruit industry rests on the continued success of the fruit fly control programme. Our New Zealand citrus export programme would be impossible without it. The maintenance of this market has kept many thousands of cases of oranges off the local market and has so helped to hold up prices. I believe there is a big future for the citrus industry in this State. The advantages of location referred to earlier in my speech apply equally to citrus. It has been said that oranges grown in this strip of country are the world's best, and we modestly agree. Due to diminishing production in other States from various causes, coupled with competition from our quality fruit, South Australian citrus has taken command of the principal markets in Australia and New Zealand. It is confidently believed that we could safely plant another 2,500 acres of citrus to keep pace with consumption needs in the next few years.

The provision of electric power in generous supply has made possible the expansion of plantings in existing areas as well as allowing for considerable industrial development along the river. If it has not already reached the equivalent of 10,000 horsepower, it will not be long before the daily use of the trust's power along the Upper Murray will reach and pass that total—truly a magnificent achievement. In reply to my question today the Minister of Works supplied figures that showed that the consumption of electricity had risen from 20,000,000 to nearly 40,000,000 units per annum in only four years. That is a remarkable achievement and has justified the faith of the Government in the future. So rapid has been the response by the use of power that the increased load has been the means of checking price rises for power despite rising costs. Here is proof that the foresight in providing the needs of industry will bring its expected reward.

Along the River Murray we have a happy, enterprising community, proud of its achievements and seeking fresh fields to conquer, a combination of self-help and sound Government policy. These people do not want a Royal Commission: they know the answer to establishing industries in their midst; they have the initiative to find out for themselves

and they do not want others to do their finding out for them. In this attitude lies the fundamental difference between the Liberal and the Labor points of view.

I now turn to the subject of housing. Such growth as the river districts have experienced has brought its housing problems too. In addition to private buildings, a notable contribution has been made by the Housing Trust to solve the problems facing the growing country population. Further, it has provided homes for people, including pensioners and others in distressed circumstances, who have been flooded out. Despite uninformed and misleading statements to the contrary that have appeared, pensioners' homes along the river are adequate for the present demand and the trust has shown a reasonable attitude on rentals in cases of hardship, provided the tenants have taken the trouble to meet the simple requirements of the trust in these matters. The trust has also been quick to respond to the need for houses for our growing industries. All river towns are overflowing into adjacent horticultural lands and it has been found difficult to keep up with the demand for factory sites and home allotments. Does this sound like a diminishing country economy? On the contrary, our problems are those of development sponsored by the Government policy of providing the basic necessities for industry and the amenities that go with it.

With the most generous aid of Governments, both State and Federal, and the people of South Australia, the ravages of the 1956-57 flood have largely been effaced. Vulnerable areas are now protected by mighty walls that can safely be raised to meet another 1956 flood or worse. Roads have been repaired and settlers rehabilitated. Hardly pausing to bind their wounds, these valiant people, now secure, are going forward to a bigger destiny.

They look forward with interest to the Government proposals to assist factories in country areas. They have their own research committees that will be ready for any opportunity that may present itself. They realize that the proposed Blanchetown Bridge will be a boon to the whole State and, with them, I look forward to the spanning of the river at Blanchetown. Further, I urge that finance be made available as soon as possible so that the bridge may be erected shortly. We look forward to the day when the development of the Murray Valley will necessitate other bridges as well.

One industry—if that is the appropriate term—for which the River Murray district has

most attractions is that of the tourist traffic. The high-class accommodation offered by river towns is a byword and only matched by the hospitality of the river folk. This is one direction in which the Government, through its Tourist Bureau, could continue to help by making the undoubted attractions of the river more widely known and by helping to build up necessary facilities such as motels, caravan parks, camping reserves, swimming pools, etc. The policy of attracting people to this State should be strongly encouraged. Here again, one finds that the River people have helped themselves, assisted by the blessing and material assistance of a paternal Government.

The same remarks could well apply to social services such as hospitalization and the provision of schools for which funds have been found to meet our expanding needs. As in other country centres, the people on the river have realized that the problems of adolescence will not be met by parading macabre and revolting misdeeds of a small, unfortunate section of the younger set. With the help of the Marriage Guidance Council, a "Home and Family Week" is being held in each river town during September. The emphasis will be placed on the home and the safety of youth in a good home and family atmosphere. These towns have combined to give a greater impact for this effort, which will produce long-lasting and beneficial results. I commend the Government for its recently announced increase in subsidy to the Marriage Guidance Council in acknowledgment of the good, but often unspectacular work it is doing. I remind members that service cannot always be measured in terms of money values.

Returning for a moment to the problems besetting the primary producer, I recall an unexpected consequence of the use of insecticides some years ago which, by destroying predator insects as well as the pest they naturally controlled, allowed the remnants of the pest to build up to plague proportions, and the only effective answer was to encourage the predator to grow again in sufficient numbers to keep the pest in order. I refer particularly to mealy bugs in vines; these got out of hand when growers sprayed to control vine moth grubs. It would be interesting to know whether the recent growth of pasture grubs to plague proportions and the destructiveness of lerps to the south-eastern eucalypts follow the wide use of insecticide pasture sprays, which may have upset the natural control by destroying the insects that once preyed upon the grubs and lerps. Many wasps and lace wings

that prey on larvae and scale insects breed in or near the ground. This matter could be followed up, for it stresses the need for entomological research, a subject that could be given greater attention in this State.

Soldier settlement has played a large part in opening up River Murray lands. A few classified men have still not been allocated properties, although they are young enough to take up their entitlement. I sincerely hope that the Government will provide for these men without delay when considering opening up new land. Single units are an admirable way of settling these men, but usually the difficulty has been to find a suitable property at a mutually agreed price. Failing a solution by this means, perhaps the Government could help by making special loans where applicants have funds of their own to finance a suitable proposition and where the banks do not help under their present policy.

In common with other members I am anxious to help as much as possible in the development of aborigines. This is a matter that has been exercising the minds of Governments for over 100 years. Every effort should be made to encourage those aborigines wishing to do so to take their place in our community with privileges and rights equal to those of the white man. Conversely, we should watch very carefully to prevent the deterioration of the morale of aborigines in the period of transition from the old tribal way of life to that of a fully-fledged member of our society.

There have been some outstanding examples of aborigines who have overcome their disabilities. Others have tried and failed, and yet others have not tried at all. The latter remain "flour and sugar" people and stay in idleness near the source of the hand-outs. These people are no credit to us or to their own people. Their children have little hope of raising their standards above the abased level of their parents. Just as there are wide variations in the stages of assimilation of aborigines to our way of life, so there are also great differences in the approaches of various charitably-minded bodies to this problem.

I refer to the work of various missions. Some of these are doing a fine job in teaching our ways and faiths and in helping these people to adjust their lives to the new environment. Others, in my opinion, have failed to achieve the high ideals and objectives with which they so enthusiastically started off. In my electorate we have one that has degenerated from the high purpose of its founder. Started as a self-supporting orchard

and a pastoral property, today it offers no prospective employment to those natives who live there. It is a graveyard of impulsive ideas that have been started off and later dropped. As many as 90 natives live on the property, which is private land and outside any district council area. The mission, which last year received over £5,000 in Government help, still has not used the materials made available to it by the Government to improve the housing of the natives. Only one poorly-paid enthusiast with no training in native welfare, teaching, horticulture or animal husbandry, has to cater for the needs of 90 people, cultivate a derelict orchard, issue rations, and drive the school bus—an impossible situation. Negotiations with the mission involved are now proceeding.

The position needs clarifying, however. It seems wrong that one or two well-intentioned people can incorporate themselves in the name of a mission, acquire a property and invite aborigines to shelter there. I believe that people who hold themselves out to be a "mission to aborigines" should be obliged to provide and service all the requirements necessary to lift these people up. This could be done by a system of regulation and licensing, which genuine operating missions would welcome.

Those who have a vested interest in indulging their charitable instincts without due regard to the effect of their charity on the recipients should be controlled in the interests of the natives. I believe that the process of assimilation could be achieved by adult education proceeding with the education of the children and by giving these people self-respect based on personal achievement and due recognition by our people. I assure the House that there is much goodwill for the native cause in my district, but it is not appreciated by those who should be the first to use it; therefore, our local "mission" remains a disgrace. I sincerely hope the Government will find a solution to this difficult problem.

I was surprised to read the following statement by the member for Murray (Mr. Bywaters) in his Address in Reply speech:—

If the Government built factories it could offer them to industries when they come to this State.

Surely that is not a serious suggestion. How could you place a factory and design it to meet the needs of a hypothetical industry?

Mr. O'Halloran—It is satisfactory in England.

Mr. KING—I don't think so.

Mr. O'Halloran—I have seen it there.

Mr. KING—Members opposite may not know that each factory must be specially designed to meet the needs of the industry that is to use it. I hope that the other ideas, if any, of the Opposition on assistance to industry are of a higher standard than this one. I can visualize a number of white elephants dotted around the country awaiting industries that must try to fit themselves in like a man with a size 8 head trying to wear a size 6½ hat. Members on this side have far more practical ideas on the subject of industries and these have been emphasized today; others will be revealed in due course. I support the motion.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla)—I join with other members in expressing sympathy to the wife and other relatives of the late John Fletcher and express my great regret at his passing. I congratulate Mr. Ron Ralston, the new member for Mount Gambier. I am sure he will be an acquisition to this House, particularly to this side. I congratulate the member for Alexandra (Hon. D. N. Brookman) on his elevation to the position of Minister of Agriculture and Forests. I am sure his knowledge of primary production will be of great assistance to him in that office. I also congratulate the member for Burra (Mr. Quirke) and the member for Torrens (Mr. Coumbe) on their appointment to the Public Works Committee. I regret that ill-health has compelled the Hon. M. McIntosh to relinquish the portfolio of Minister of Works and Marine, and I trust he will enjoy much better health in the future.

In perusing the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech I was struck once again by the fact that it was mainly a recital of physical accomplishments, which are important and interesting, but there was nothing in it relating to the effect of certain important matters upon the people. We hear from time to time that it is Liberal policy that the State exists for the individual, but many things affecting individuals gravely apparently did not merit any mention in the Speech. I refer particularly to housing and education. The Lieutenant-Governor's Speech said that this year the Housing Trust will again build about 3,000 houses, and it has even been suggested in press reports that the number will be stabilized at that figure. Such an output will certainly not satisfy more than one-third of outstanding applications, and I fail to see how that can be viewed with equanimity. The domestic

happiness and welfare of our people depend on the provision of good homes. During this debate suggestions have been made that young people should save much more than they do to get homes, but those who say that do not point out that if these people saved more there would be much less spent in other directions. This would affect the employment position seriously, for we cannot have it both ways. If people are spending in the way they are today, and if this is necessary to maintain employment, we must recognize that the money spent cannot be saved for housing.

Mr. O'Halloran—Many are urging the people to mortgage their future by using hire purchase to keep industry going.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Yes, and the more we become industrialized the more difficult it is for the wage-earner to save enough in his early years for a deposit on a house and get one when he most needs it—in early married life. I could not see any suggestion in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech to show where the extra money will come from for the provision of houses that are so desperately needed by thousands of people.

The member for Gawler (Mr. John Clark) made an excellent speech about educational needs, and I endorse everything he said. The Lieutenant-Governor's Speech stated that many improvements had been made in relation to education during the past year, but classes are still too big and more schools and amenities are still needed. Leading educational authorities are stressing the need not only to maintain standards of education but to improve them. Changing world situations present a challenge, particularly in scientific work. Therefore, we must improve educational standards and methods, for the future of democracy depends almost entirely on a well-educated people. Our people can still be led quite off the track by sensational headlines in the press regarding measures which should be taken by democracy to meet situations from day to day, so it is essential to have an educated democracy.

Vast sums will be required to carry out the suggestions put forward by leading educational authorities. The problem is mainly one of lack of money, and that applies to housing too. Unless more money is made available for social services and public works Australia will have little chance of meeting the challenge referred to recently in Professor Copland's address, which was read so ably by Mr. Ramsay (General Manager of the Housing Trust) about a week ago. Leading authorities have stressed

that many children are not getting the opportunity to develop their abilities to the greatest extent possible. We must see that they get this opportunity because of the greatly increased demands of industry and the public service for people with high qualifications. Many able students do not get scholarships because there is not enough money available for more scholarships, and that must be regarded with the utmost concern. There was no reference in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech to hire purchase, despite its great impact on the people. Other State Governments have recently expressed concern about this problem, and according to the *Advertiser* of July 30 the Premier of Queensland (Mr. Nicklin) said:—

We appreciate that no single State can do anything by itself. There must be a combined States and Commonwealth approach to the problem. Cabinet felt that the present high rate of interest, and the large amount of money being drawn off by hire purchase companies was detrimentally affecting the economy of the State and the nation.

Hire purchase businesses draw off funds which should be made available for other purposes, but one of the most serious aspects is the rapid increase in private debt. An informative article that appeared recently in the *Sunday Mail* showed that in the last five years the total of personal debt on housing and durable consumer goods had more than doubled and that the mortgaging of future private incomes was increasing fast. It said that Australians now owed about £1,200,000,000 on homes and £330,000,000 on hire purchase contracts. I do not know how that can be viewed without concern, yet there was no mention of hire purchase in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech. The housing debt in 1939 represented 20 per cent of all personal incomes after taxation, but by 1957 it had grown to 30 per cent. When I was dealing with housing last year I pointed out that there had been a marked change in the proportion of the wage-earner's income now required to purchase a house. I stressed the increasing difficulty of the wage-earner in getting a home and said that in 1938 it was possible to purchase a home at £800 at 3½ per cent interest. If the term of the mortgage was 20 years the wage-earner would have to pay 24s. a week, which represented 23 per cent of his weekly wage. The basic wage was then £3 15s., and a fitter's wage was £5 5s. I said that in 1957 a comparable house would cost £3,500. The average interest rate then was about 5 per cent, and under a 20-year term

the wage-earner would have to pay £5 9s. 3d. a week, or 33 per cent of his weekly wage.

Mr. Hambour—A bigger percentage of the people own their homes today than in 1938.

Mr. LOVEDAY—That may be so.

Mr. O'Halloran—No, their homes are subject to mortgages.

Mr. LOVEDAY—More people are endeavouring to purchase homes, but that has nothing to do with the fact that it is becoming more difficult to do so. There is an interesting analogy between the fact that weekly payments on a home now amount to 33 per cent of the wage earner's income and the increase in the housing debt. It is alarming that, despite improved techniques and building methods, it is becoming more difficult for the wage-earner to get a home, and any State that does not view this with concern is putting its head in the sand. The article in the *Mail* went on to state that the hire purchase debt on private cars and other consumer goods had grown from 2 per cent of income in 1939 to 6 per cent in 1957. It is interesting to note that at this particular juncture we had about 70,000 unemployed in this country. I am not suggesting it is due to the effects of hire purchase saturation, but I believe it is something we can expect in the future. Let us make a comparison with the United States. In 1939 Americans owed 23 per cent of their income on housing and 6 per cent on cars and other goods. In 1957 housing represented 36 per cent and cars and other goods 11 per cent. It is interesting to note that the United States have five million unemployed.

There are undoubtedly other factors effecting the employment situation, but it is possible that the amount of hire purchase debt on private income is approaching the point of saturation. In other words, industry is beginning to feel that there is no longer the market for the extra goods it could produce for the simple reason that the incomes of private persons are getting overloaded with what amounts to mortgages on their future incomes. Obviously there is a limit to the extent to which private incomes can be mortgaged and still leave sufficient income each week to meet daily requirements which are not purchased through time payment systems. Obviously, too, this trend must be to the advantage of the more powerful and monopolistic business and to the detriment of the smaller retailer and shopkeeper for whom members opposite claim to have a soft spot. When the limit for hire

purchase is reached we can expect an increase in unemployment. I think it must happen. On every hand we are reading in hire purchase company statements of profit that without their activities full employment could not be maintained. That is possibly the strongest point they are making in their annual reports and no doubt it is in order to excuse their rates of interest and the high profits they are making and to try to justify themselves in the eyes of the community. Mr. Jacoby, chairman of the Custom Credit Corporation said:—

Instalment financing was necessary to full employment, because manufacturers and producers of many materials benefited from the money provided for consumer purchases. Any diminution in funds for instalment financing would seriously affect employment and the welfare of Australia, he said. The company's pioneering move in associating itself with the National Bank had been responsible for its rise, in so short a time, to rank with the leaders in the finance industry, he said.

Mr. Hambour—Do you agree with that?

Mr. LOVEDAY—I have not the slightest doubt it is true today, but I certainly do not subscribe to the view that we have to rely on hire-purchase companies in order to maintain full employment. It can easily be shown that this is the most illogical and ridiculous argument that has ever been produced by these controllers of money who from time to time put up the most amazing arguments in order to justify their actions. What are these hire-purchase companies going to do when we reach saturation point? In a recent issue of the *Mail* a financial writer referred to the almost "insatiable demands of hire-purchase companies for additional finance." The whole process, aided and abetted by the no-deposit attraction, is highly inflationary and is forcing up costs. It places wage earners in a vulnerable position and many are already hopelessly over-committed. By the terrific temptation it places in front of people to purchase many luxury goods they really do not require, hire-purchase is diverting spending away from many things essential to basic good living. More power is passing into the hands of these finance companies and it is interesting to note that they are being assisted and supported in many instances by banking institutions which some years ago always talked about sound finance. I remember how in the depression years they frowned on the slightest suggestion that the position should be relieved by anything unorthodox. They were prepared to see people in the utmost poverty and degradation

rather than have their system touched in any way, but today they are quite prepared to endorse and help these people to carry out a method of financing which is most dangerous and which puts the wage earner in an insecure position. It is a system that cannot carry on indefinitely.

Mr. Quirke—It is a two-edged sword.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Of course it is. Should anything adverse happen to our economy there is no reason to believe that these hire-purchase financiers will be any more considerate in their dealing with the ordinary wage earner who is more hopelessly in debt than he was in the 1930's. We are being told that full employment is dependant upon the continuation and expansion of this method of financing, but there is obviously a limit to which private incomes can be mortgaged, quite apart from the dangerous instability of the whole situation. Of course it is easy to understand why it is expanding. People who have money are prepared to put it into what is called an absolutely safe investment at anything from 8 to 10 per cent.

Mr. O'Halloran—Some are paying as high as 12 per cent.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Yes. It is only natural that people with money to spare are going to seize the chance to get such a high rate of interest. What will happen when we reach the saturation stage? Will the hire purchase companies offer still higher rates of interest to attract the investor who may be getting frightened? What will be the next step to lure the customer into further debt?

Mr. Quirke—Bigger and brighter refrigerators.

Mr. LOVEDAY—When we reach the stage when income cannot stand more debt there will be a drying up of the stream of finance in this direction. There must be. There is not a word in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech regarding this situation. All we hear from Government members is praise of the Government's achievements. There is a steady rise in the production per capita in Australia and there are countless instances of improved techniques which should be reducing costs, yet members opposite say of hire-purchase, "We must not touch it or it will affect full employment."

Mr. Hambour—Your own Party won't throw it out.

Mr. LOVEDAY—I am not suggesting we can under existing conditions, but I am drawing attention to the fact that hire-purchase cannot go on indefinitely and we should face that situation. We should be meeting with the other States and the Commonwealth to examine the situation. We should be studying the position simply because the people who have money to invest are too interested in the high profits they are obtaining from this method of finance.

Mr. Hambour—Are you suggesting that affects our judgment?

Mr. LOVEDAY—Traditionally and historically it has done so in the past so why should we assume differently today? I point out that if the wage earners in this State had received quarterly adjustments they would have secured £16,500,000 more since 1953. That would obviously have stimulated employment. No member will deny that that would have kept industry moving just as well as an equivalent amount of hire-purchase finance, but the moneylenders would not have got their pound of flesh. We are asked to believe that the first course is inflationary, but we hear nothing about hire-purchase being inflationary. As a matter of fact it is far more so because of the exceedingly high rates of interest attached to all the purchases involved. Immediately we speak of quarterly adjustments members opposite rise and tell us how their application would immediately increase the cost of articles and make it more difficult for the State to compete. I suggest it is time they became more consistent and faced up to what is really the most important feature in our economy today—finance for public and social services.

I desire to pass on now to another matter which was raised by the member for Light (Mr. Hambour). He said:—

I know the member for Whyalla will be honest enough to get up and say what the Government has done for Whyalla. The homes have been put there by the Housing Trust. The Premier has told us repeatedly, and has carried the statement into effect, that he will put homes wherever an industry is located.

Mr. Hambour—That is true, isn't it?

Mr. LOVEDAY—Quite. We have nothing to complain about in Whyalla in respect of housing except that we have not yet enough houses. Over 600 Housing Trust homes have been erected there simply because private enterprise won't build homes of that character because there is not sufficient profit in them. Wage earners, particularly in their younger

years, had not sufficient capital to build. The Broken Hill Proprietary Company has built a number of houses for purchase, but if the company wants workers the Government has to build homes, particularly of the rental type. I commend the Government for doing that, but I fancy they have done so to enable the company to continue. I commend the Government for its drilling operations in the Middleback Ranges. I have supported that to the hilt and I am sure that if those operations had not been carried out the Premier would not have been able to say that he had an agreement with the company for the erection of a steelworks. If the honourable member cares to look back through *Hansards* of past years he will find that in the main this position has been brought about by pressure from this side of the House. The other most important action of the Government in relation to Whyalla was the construction of the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline, without which the expansion of the town from 1938 onwards would have been impossible. However, this has all come about because of the presence in the Middleback Ranges of some of the richest iron ore deposits in the world, and their exploitation by the B.H.P.

Mr. Hambour—Nobody denies that.

Mr. LOVEDAY—The honourable member was very anxious to get me on my feet to try to gloat over this matter, as it is a provoking situation. He seems to think he knows all about the situation at Whyalla, but perhaps he does not know the history. All the progress of Whyalla has come about because of the presence of the Middleback Ranges, with very rich iron ore deposits, and their exploitation by the B.H.P.; it has nothing to do with Government action on decentralization. Government action followed the presence of these natural resources and their exploitation by private enterprise. The question is rather what Whyalla and Iron Knob have done for the rest of the State, and what the B.H.P. has done for Whyalla. From 1914 to 1939 over 20,000,000 tons of iron ore were produced in that area, and from 1940 to 1952 inclusive over 27,000,000 tons have been produced. Since then production has risen to over 3,000,000 tons a year. The State has benefited to the extent of £1,700,000 from royalties, even though the B.H.P. has paid these royalties at a concessional rate, and this is a considerable amount. On present production at 1s. 6d. a ton the State is receiving over £225,000 a year, so I think it can be said that Whyalla and Iron

Knob are doing a lot for the Playford Government.

Before 1945 the State had practically no expense on local government at Whyalla, as the B.H.P. did whatever had to be done in that direction. Since then the company has contributed many thousands of pounds towards road-making, the building of the hospital, the technical high school, and providing other amenities, thereby relieving the Government to that extent. At Iron Knob the State Government has spent virtually nothing despite the enormous wealth that has come from the quarry there, and some years ago the people there even lost the advantage of half registration fees because a sealed road came within 35 miles of the town, although the pastoralists nearby still have the privilege of half fees. These are the things that the Government has done to assist decentralization in that area! As the land at Whyalla is crown land, worth at the most a few shillings an acre as pastoral land, it has been sold for building and industrial purposes at greatly increased prices, practically all of which has been clear profit to the State. This has amounted to many thousands of pounds, and although I do not know just how much, the sale last week of eight business allotments for £12,850 might give some idea. These are all community created values, but the town has received no direct benefit. I remind the member for Light that when water first came to Whyalla it cost 3s. 6d. a thousand gallons, and it took a long campaign by the Town Commission to get it reduced to 2s. 6d. When he considers these matters he might revise his ideas about the benefits the Government has conferred on this area.

Mr. Hambour—You don't think the Government has served Whyalla well?

Mr. LOVEDAY—I am not talking about that, but pointing out that the contribution to the State has been tremendous in terms of actual cash apart from indirect benefits, so the honourable member, who tries to make out that the Government has followed a policy of decentralization that has benefited this area tremendously, should revise his ideas.

Mr. Hambour—I did not make out anything about Whyalla.

Mr. LOVEDAY—If the honourable member examines his speech he will see that he was talking about decentralization and that my remarks are quite relevant.

Mr. Hambour—But you cannot accuse me of saying anything about it. I asked you to give the story on Whyalla, which you have done.

Mr. LOVEDAY—I hope that when the terms of the agreement with relation to the steel works are being further considered the Government will take the opportunity to show its good faith in the matter of decentralization by doing something for Iron Knob. There is a wonderful opportunity for this because, as members who know the town realize, it needs a lot to make it a little more attractive for the people who have lived there for many years and have put up with so many disabilities.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—Iron Baron, too?

Mr. LOVEDAY—Yes, Iron Baron, too. Whyalla is a fine town but it will need considerable assistance from State finances in future, because no community consisting mainly of industrial workers on award rates can provide through rates the sums needed to meet legitimate requirements. If the honourable member examines what has happened in other industrial areas he will realize that this is true.

The Andamooka opal field is an isolated spot; it has a population of only 400, half white and half natives, and it has an urgent need for a modern transeiver. I hope that when we are discussing finances this year money will be available, and favourable consideration will be given to providing this necessity. At present Andamooka has wireless telephone communication with Broken Hill, but this is ineffective, and it is almost impossible to conduct a clear conversation with the opal field because of the poor nature of this method of communication. Owing to its isolation and the nature of the work carried out by people there, it is essential that this town should have a better means of communication. The Aborigines Protection Board will undoubtedly be approached to assist in financing the transeiver, and I hope favourable consideration will be given to the matter.

I was interested this afternoon to hear the Minister say that an officer has been appointed at Port Augusta to deal with matters relating to aborigines in the north and north-western area, and I agree that that is a very good step towards assisting aborigines. Last year I suggested that an officer should be stationed at Andamooka to have charge of native affairs there and at Coober Pedy because of the number of natives there, and because I felt that

the situation in those two places lent itself to the valuable work that could be done by a competent and fully trained officer.

At Andamooka a number of aborigines are doing serious mining in a proper fashion instead of merely what is called "noodling" on the top seeking pieces of opal that miners may have missed, and I think they should be encouraged. I regard the appointment of an officer to that field as very desirable because the number of aborigines there and the nature of their work presents an opportunity to assist them towards independent livelihood. As they are in a community that is half white and half native there are many opportunities to develop better understanding between the two sets of people. The children attend school together happily, and I think it is a promising field for an experiment of this sort. I hope that further officers will soon be appointed, and that one will be detailed to this area.

My electorate, which covers an enormous area, has hundreds of miles of road that can only be described as rough dirt tracks; none are sealed, and none are made roads. They receive only the attention of a grader at infrequent intervals. These roads are under the control of the Engineering and Water Supply Department, but although there is greatly increased traffic on them and they are of the greatest importance to people living on isolated stations along the north-east line at fettlers' camps and on pastoral properties, the amount available for them last year was less than previously. I hope that not only will the amount be restored to its previous level, but that it will be increased to meet increasing demands. Surely here again is an opportunity for the Government to show that it wants to do something towards decentralization.

One or two members have spoken about the importance of power and roads to the country, and here is an opportunity to do something. The people have very few amenities, and an improvement to the roads would be appreciated. The only sealed roads in the area are at Maralinga and at Woomera, and it is an interesting commentary on our approach to things that when it is a matter of defence we can put sealed roads in the desert and behave as if money is no object. However, when it comes to providing reasonable means of communication of a most signal nature for people who live in these places all their lives, the Government pares the expense down to the barest minimum.

At Pildappa, a few miles north-east of Kimba in my electorate, there are a number of farmer settlers who have a water supply consisting of underground tanks filled from a rock catchment, and in dry years they have the very irritating and costly problem of carting water from the Tod main. Up to the present time their applications to be connected with the Tod have been unsuccessful because the Tod works to capacity during dry periods. Their applications or suggestions for another underground tank are regarded as uneconomical. I hope this question will be reviewed again, and this time not entirely from a purely economic aspect, because I would like to see these settlers encouraged to remain and develop their farms to the best possible advantage. Here again is another opportunity for something to be done which will aid decentralization.

I could not help feeling that if the same standards of judgment had been applied to the question of sending a committee of inquiry around the country towns to assess priorities in regard to sewerage schemes, that committee would never have been sent, because I am quite sure that all the information the committee obtained at many of the towns which it visited was already present in the files of the appropriate department in Adelaide. Many local government bodies have had correspondence extending over 13 years in relation to sewerage schemes. All the points connected with these schemes have already been debated, and letters have been written about them over that long period. I am quite sure that any further necessary information could have been obtained by a letter and a 4d. stamp, but instead of that this committee was sent around from town to town. In fact, I have heard this described by many people, without any prompting, as merely a pre-election stunt to give people the idea that at last something was going to be done in relation to the sewerage problem.

In one area the advent of this committee even caused a considerable amount of bother to the local council because as soon as the news was received that the committee was coming along those who had been obliged under a local government decree to put their septic tanks in by 1959 adopted the attitude that they were going to get sewerage and immediately stopped work or stopped thinking about their septic tank installation. The local council now has to overcome that attitude.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—If they don't want sewerage at Whyalla or any other place we won't force it on them.

Mr. LOVEDAY—I appreciate that, but the fact remains that the information which was obtained at the place I have in mind could have been obtained by means of a letter and a stamp; the visit of the committee was quite unnecessary, and from my reading of the visit of that committee to some other towns I am certain that the same situation prevailed there.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—The committee was asked to do the job as a genuine attempt to determine which places needed it first and most.

Mr. LOVEDAY—I quite appreciate the reasons that were set forth.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—That is not only the reason that was set forth; it is the proper reason.

Mr. LOVEDAY—All the same, I have my own opinions about it, and if the Minister feels that was the real reason, all I can say is that the situation was not fully investigated before that committee was sent out.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—The committee was sent out to recommend priorities.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Correspondence has taken place in connection with this matter for 13 years at least; every aspect has been thoroughly discussed in the letters that have passed to and from local councils, and I am at a loss to know why it was necessary to send a committee around to ascertain a point in relation to the health situation or the priority of sewerage systems.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—I know what you would have said if Whyalla had not been on the list to be visited.

Mr. LOVEDAY—I do not think it was necessary to send the committee at all.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—You would have thought differently if Whyalla had not been included.

Mr. LOVEDAY—I am saying that I do not think it was necessary to send the committee of inquiry at all. I hope that my remarks regarding what I consider to be very vital things in connection with the people of this State, namely, housing, education and hire purchase, will receive the closest attention by the Government. I think they are the most important matters in this State today. The obtaining of new industries is very important to this State, but it goes further than that.

We should be concerned about the effect of these movements on the lives of people, and the obtaining of the necessary finance to bring housing and education to a successful conclusion and to provide that people are not lured into the number of hire purchase agreements that they are today. These are the problems we should be paying far more attention to, but I can find nothing in the

Lieutenant-Governor's speech which indicates that they are receiving proper attention. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. COUMBE secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.38 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, August 5, at 2 p.m.