

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, August 20, 1959.

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

QUESTIONS.**CARE FOR AGED AT HOME.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—This morning's *Advertiser* contains a report of an address delivered by Dr. R. M. Gibson, Staff Physician of the Royal Newcastle Hospital (New South Wales). In the course of the address Dr. Gibson dealt with a scheme that had been evolved in Newcastle to provide care for elderly people in their own homes rather than keep them in hospital. He said:—

Such domiciliary care in Newcastle, he said, was estimated to have saved the hospital 4,500 hospital-bed days, or a total of £22,500 in 1956-57. In January this year 189 patients were being cared for in their own homes, and it was calculated that 11,000 hospital-bed days would be saved this year, representing about £55,000.

Has the report been brought to the notice of the Premier and will he make inquiries from New South Wales to ascertain the basis of the scheme and consider the possibility of its being adopted for our hospital system?

The Hon. Sir **THOMAS PLAYFORD**—Every State has some proposal or other to assist aged persons. This State has initiated a scheme, which received almost complete Commonwealth acceptance, to give financial assistance to non-profit homes looking after aged people. I have seen the article the honourable member refers to and I will get a report on it.

LANDHOLDERS' AGREEMENTS WITH ELECTRICITY TRUST.

Mr. HEASLIP—A 275 k.v. transmission line from Port Augusta to Magill is being constructed and almost 12 months ago the Electricity Trust signed agreements with landholders in this area whereby they were to be paid £10 a pole for the right-of-way through their property. Normally when an agreement is signed payment is made. In addition to the right-of-way the Electricity Trust has been given the right under the agreement to erect gates to enable them to follow along the line. I had complaints about this matter months after the agreement was signed. Gates have been left open enabling stock to move from one property to another. I visited the Electricity Trust and spoke to officers there and was promised that the matter would be

rectified. That was three months ago yet today these gates have not been hung in several instances and where they have been hung the fences have not been joined up to the posts and stock can still go through. Crops have been sown and stock is still going through from one paddock to another. Can the Premier say why, after having promised and signed this agreement, the trust has not paid, and why it has not made good the openings in the fences of these property owners?

The Hon. Sir **THOMAS PLAYFORD**—I had a report from the chairman of the Electricity Trust on this matter and he stated that the payment for the easement had been held up pending surveys and the submission of documents, and it was difficult to get enough surveyors for this work; but I will ask the chairman whether it is possible to expedite the matter. The chairman said that to the best of his knowledge all gates which were contracted for to be hung have been hung. I suggest that the honourable member give me the names of the properties about which he has had complaints and I will have an immediate investigation made.

ACACIA STREET TRAM CROSSING.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked about the tram crossing at Acacia Street on the Glenelg tramline?

The Hon. G. G. **PEARSON**—Following the member's question I recently inspected a number of streets where unauthorized crossings were occurring. I had a discussion with the general manager of the Tramways Trust and I believe he also made an inspection. I have now received the following report from him:—

The reason for placing notices opposite Acacia Street is that vandals have repeatedly broken down the fences, presumably to facilitate the passage of push and motor cycles across the reserved area. The same thing has happened opposite Ferry Street and at the moment the fencing wires are cut and the notice boards removed. The trust has notified the police of what is happening but so far the culprits have not been apprehended. It is the trust's intention to again restore the fences opposite Ferry Street and replace the notices at this particular point, drawing attention to the fact that it is an unauthorized crossing place, and that the line may be crossed some short distance to the west, at stop 15. At this particular location, we will ensure that the openings in the fence are of sufficient dimensions to cater for push and motor cycles, perambulators, etc. It will be appreciated that the Glenelg trams operate mainly in a reserved area and it is the desire of the trust to retain this feature to provide patrons using

the tramway with as rapid a journey as conditions permit, and to maintain as high a degree of safety as possible. The distance in which a tramcar can be halted is not as short as a bus, for instance, and in the interests of public safety it is felt that it is better for children and others to walk to recognized cross-overs rather than run the risk of the hazards of crossing at unauthorized places. The trust feels the Glenelg tramline is reasonably well catered for, both in respect to vehicular and pedestrian crossings.

MYPOLONGA WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. BYWATERS—Some time ago the Minister of Irrigation visited Mypolonga in my district with a view to establishing a domestic water supply there. I have asked him on various occasions for a reply on the matter and he has gone to some trouble to do something about it. I understand that the expenses are fairly high for this scheme, which seems a little difficult at this stage. If this is a little outside the realms of the present system, would it be possible for an officer of his department to go to Mypolonga to talk with the settlers there to see if some arrangement can be made?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Some time ago the Department of Lands investigated the proposition and found it would be too costly and not attractive. However, Cabinet did refer it to the E. & W.S. Department for an alternative scheme, but that is actually more costly than the other. The docket now is back with Cabinet to deal with and, on the decision of Cabinet will rest whether it will be advisable or not to send an officer to investigate the position further. Personally, I am prepared to do that, but it depends again on Cabinet's decision regarding cost.

KOONIBBA WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. BOCKELBERG—Can the Minister of Works give me any information about the proposed water supply for Koonibba mission station?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Further to an earlier reply I gave to the honourable member on this matter, I sought the latest information and have a report from the Engineer-in-Chief, which states:—

The material (including timber, railway rails and tank) with the exception of the 24-gauge galvanized iron for the Koonibba supply, has been delivered to Ceduna. Some time ago the Chief Storekeeper, when attempting to obtain the galvanized iron, intimated that it was not possible to get early delivery of this material except at a considerable additional cost. It was decided that this additional cost was excessive and an order was placed on Lysaght (Aust.) Ltd. for the iron for delivery towards

the end of August, 1959. The district engineer has planned a programme for his tank construction gang and, provided the galvanized iron is delivered as expected, his gang will probably commence the erection of the sheds and tanks towards the end of September, 1959.

BOOK SALESMEN.

Mr. SHANNON—Before I ask my question, I wish to make an explanatory statement sufficient for the Minister of Education to have the facts clearly before him so that he can take what I consider would be fairly drastic action in this matter, which relates to the Australian Education Foundation (Southern) Proprietary Limited, of Melbourne. A representative (Mr. Boas) by appointment called upon me in my office in Parliament House and at the interview agreed that he would see Mrs. Sillett at Heathfield about payments and put the matter straight. Mr. Boas admitted to me that he had sacked a Mr. Collins for malpractice in securing contracts and also a Mr. Sharpe who was responsible for securing Mrs. Sillett's contract and that he had sent to interview Mrs. Sillett a Mr. Alan Shedden and a Mr. Williams, a salesman who had worked with Mr. Sharpe in the Heathfield area. These men produced a document for Mrs. Sillett to sign, which would, in effect, have said that the agreement or the contract was signed under a misunderstanding. Obviously this would have absolved the organization from any blame in securing the contract. Mrs. Sillett refused to sign and Mr. Shedden then said, "You're a hard woman. I think I'll have to advise my company to take legal action to enforce the contract and it will cost you a lot of money," hoping Mrs. Sillett would relent and sign the document absolving them from misrepresentation.

There is no doubt that this company is seeking now to avoid the responsibility for its own malpractice—and I do not understate the case when I call it that. I am disappointed because Mr. Boas was obviously well dressed and he appeared to be a very presentable young man, but I have grave doubts about his business integrity and I say that publicly. If he calls upon me again I will say it to him. Will the Minister of Education seek some steps by which he can prohibit this company's most undesirable practices or this company from operating in South Australia at all?

Mr. Jennings—Don't confine it to that company.

Mr. SHANNON—Unfortunately I have no evidence about any other company. Will the Minister seek advice as to whether or not steps can be taken to prohibit this type of canvassing for business in South Australia in this particular field, especially as women mostly are the sufferers?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to comply with the honourable member's request and further consider the matter, but the problem is not one that is capable of easy solution, because ordinarily it is a matter for civil claims and civil defences. The Director of Education, the Deputy Director and I have given the matter much thought and discussion and we are extremely worried about the position. We are not too clear as to what we should do in the best interests of the community. As will be readily agreed, any person who acts as his own solicitor has a fool for a client, and in the circumstances, and because of the seriousness of the case and its wide ramifications, I propose, as I have stated on two previous occasions, to consult the Crown Solicitor as soon as he is available to see me.

MATRICULATION STANDARDS.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—Yesterday, the Minister of Education answered two questions by the member for Light concerning university external students and, in the course of his reply, as it is reported by *Hansard*—and I think reported correctly—he said:—

I think the University might consider whether they are not providing far too much for some of the young full-time students of the University (including a small minority of morons of both sexes whose disappearance from the University might be a very great blessing to the University and the State).

The general rule is that all students at the University must have matriculated for the course of study they are pursuing, otherwise they are not qualified to be at the University at all. If the Minister is firmly of the opinion that there are students at the University who should not be there, I ask him whether he believes the standard of matriculation should be raised to that of the Leaving Honors examination, as that would seem to be the most satisfactory way of eliminating the less well-qualified students. If he is of that opinion, will he also take up that matter with the Vice-Chancellor when he takes up the other matter on behalf of Mr. Hambour?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I am not necessarily of the opinion to which the honour-

able member has referred, but I am only too pleased to comply with his suggestion and discuss these matters with the Vice-Chancellor when he is available. I think that one polite definition of "moron" is "a person whose mental development has been arrested." It may well be that young persons have been able to pass the matriculation or the Leaving Honors examination, but from then their mental capacity has been stultified. I think there has been ample proof, both within the University and beyond, that their words and actions demonstrate that the description of "moron" is really a masterpiece of understatement on my part.

Mr. CLARK—If the Minister intends to take up the possibility of raising the matriculation standard to Leaving Honors, will he keep in mind the fact that such a move could involve a real hardship to country students in areas where, unfortunately, it has not yet been possible to establish Leaving Honors classes?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes, I shall be only too pleased to raise the very valid point mentioned by the honourable member. I make it clear that I am not raising the question of lifting the standard of matriculation. These questions have been raised by the University authorities and others; I am not by any means convinced that they are steps in the right direction, and I want to be amply convinced from every point of view before I will be willing to lend my support to the suggestions.

APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY HEADMASTERS.

Mr. HAMBOUR—Can the Minister of Education give me any information regarding the delay in the appointment of deputy headmasters so that the anxiety in the minds of teachers awaiting the result may be dispelled? I believe that these appointments are subject to appeal, and quite a number of appeals have been delayed.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The new positions of deputy headmasters and deputy headmistresses, which were created in 1957, provided a major expansion of promotion opportunities for men and women in primary schools. Teachers eligible for these positions could come from one of several categories, namely:—Class V head teachers, chief assistants, assistants, women chief assistants and senior demonstration assistants (men and women). As there was no common promotion list from which

recommendations could be made, the positions of deputy headmasters or deputy head mistresses were made special appointments. The long delays in making final appointments, resulting from the large number of appeals lodged against provisional appointments, caused concern to me, to the Education Department and to the Appeals Board. It was suggested by the chairman of the board, Sir Edgar Bean, that the positions be removed from the special appointment list. Consideration was given to this proposal at a meeting which senior officers of the department and I had with representatives of the South Australian Institute of Teachers. At the institute's request it was decided to retain the policy of having these deputy headmasters and deputy head mistresses as special appointments. The delays I have just referred to were due to an exceptional set of circumstances which may never arise again. In fact, there is only one deputy headmaster appointment outstanding, and this is because the address of the appellant is not available at the moment.

POLLUTION OF RIVER TORRENS.

Mr. CUMBE—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my question of yesterday regarding the dumping of rubbish on the banks of the River Torrens?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Yes, this morning I received a report from the Engineer-in-Chief which deals with at least one specific matter, namely the granting earlier this year of a permit to Mr. L. R. Gilbert of St. Peters. Mr. Gilbert had requested permission under the River Torrens Protection Act, 1949, to dump certain solid materials into a sand pit adjacent to the river bank. That permission was given, subject to certain conditions being observed. Apparently the work progressed quite satisfactorily for some months, but on June 8 and July 22 the Town Clerk drew attention to complaints received by the council regarding the dumping of rubbish on the lot owned by Mr. Gilbert. On inspection it was discovered that he had been abusing the permission granted him by using the pit as a rubbish dump for old iron, tanks, etc. Although he covered the top of the pit with suitable material, the edges of the pit are in a very untidy state. The Engineer-in-Chief now recommends that his permission to dump should be withdrawn and that he be given a period of seven days to tidy up the dump, and I propose to accept that recommendation.

SCHOOL CHILDREN AND ROAD ACCIDENTS.

Mrs. STEELE—I recently asked a question of the Premier on the stationing of motor traffic police near schools in the metropolitan area at times when children were going into or out of school. I understand the Premier has a reply to that question.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have received a report from the Commissioner of Police as follows:—

The large number of schools in the city itself and the metropolitan area makes it impracticable to station traffic police at all points where children are coming out of or going into schools. Motor traffic police have been instructed to pay special attention to schools situated on main roads during the times the children are expected to be entering or leaving the school. Other school areas are patrolled as and when present commitments permit. A "courtesy car" is being equipped with amplification and will be available for use at "schools" and "school crossings" in the near future. The use of this car should ensure the co-operation of motorists and assist in making the roads safer for school children. This matter is also receiving the consideration of the State Traffic Committee at the present time.

SOUTH-EASTERN ELECTRICITY SERVICES.

Mr. HARDING—In August, 1957, I asked a question regarding an electricity supply for towns along the South Australian-Victorian border, such as Frances, Binnun, Kybybolite and Hynam, where tremendous development has taken place during the last two years. In his reply the Premier said he could see no legal problems and that in his opinion the Electricity Trust would be able to service the towns before the State Electricity Commission of Victoria. A recent issue of the *Border Chronicle* contained the following:—

An electricity supply to Bordertown would be given by a 33,000 volt transmission line from Tailem Bend. The consulting engineer said that a line from Tailem Bend to Keith would cost £250,000. This line would not have sufficient capacity to supply any substantial loads in the lower South-East and would not be extended to Mount Gambier. It is possible that a 132,000 volt transmission line may later be required from Murray Bridge to connect with the lower South-Eastern system.

Has the Premier any information on the matter, and, if not, will he get a report?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—In my opinion there is not the slightest doubt that the South-Eastern system will have to be ultimately connected with the metropolitan and Port Augusta stations. The planning of the

trust is directed towards that end, and the timing is to a certain extent wrapped up with a matter raised by Mr. Nankivell—a water supply for the Upper South-East. If a water supply is provided it will require large pumping stations and they would need a considerable quantity of electric power. I assure the honourable member that the matter is being actively planned and I will advise him as soon as more mature consideration has been given to it.

SALISBURY WATER BASIN.

Mr. HALL—Some of my constituents, who are vegetable growers in the Waterloo Corner area of the Salisbury water basin, are worried whether the basin can withstand the draw being made upon it. Because of intensive development in this area and as many growers are involved in supplying a significant quantity of vegetables for the metropolitan area, the long-term implications are vital for this area. Can the Premier say:—

1. Whether pumping from bores to supply the metropolitan area will reduce the level of the water table in the Salisbury basin, and, if so, will the position be carefully watched?

2. What are the estimated resources of this supply so that purchasers of land in the vicinity will know what to expect from it?

3. Will the Government consider introducing legislation to enable the appropriate authorities to police drilling operations so that they will be carried out efficiently with no risk of one water layer being contaminated by another?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The honourable member mentioned the matter to me two or three weeks ago and I have obtained the following report from the Director of Mines:—

Because of their distance apart, pumping from bores serving the metropolitan area would be expected to have a negligible effect on bores in the Waterloo Corner portion of the North Adelaide plains basin. The fluctuation of water levels in the bores in the North Adelaide plains has been the subject of monthly measurement since 1953. The programme of measurement has recently been intensified. The total underground water resources including the more saline deeper waters in the Waterloo Corner area cannot at this time be accurately estimated. It is, however, considered that the aquifer supplying the better quality water is, or is close to being, overpumped. It is doubtful whether the underground water resources of the area can supply all potential users without a real danger of saline ingression from more saline less heavily pumped areas. The Government is preparing legislation to be introduced this session.

CAMPBELL PARK SOLDIER SETTLEMENT.

Mr. NANKIVELL—On June 10, in reply to my question regarding the Campbell Park soldier settlement scheme, the Minister of Repatriation said that settlers at Campbell Park had had a torrid time because of the flood in 1956 and a low river in 1957. However, I understand that now the Government intends to relieve the position by providing additional land. I believe the Minister has been liberal in this matter with one exception. One settler has been penalized because he made the same mistake as the department and overestimated the productive potential of the land. Can the Minister say:—

1. Has the land returned to the commission been re-allocated?

2. If so, when will the settlers be notified of the area and position of any additional lands to be added to their present holdings?

3. Has he any information with reference to the settler, Mr. C. B. Humphris?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The honourable member told me yesterday that he would ask these questions, and I have obtained replies. Regarding the one settler mentioned, the farm was his own selection as a single unit. The answers to the other questions are as follows:—

1. A plan for re-allocation of surplus Campbell Park holdings has been prepared and is now reaching finality.

2. The Superintendent, War Service Settlement Branch, a member of the Land Board and the District Inspector will visit Campbell Park during September and explain to each settler individually details of the additional areas to be added to his particular holding and the conditions which will apply to his future occupation of his holding. To provide sufficient land for this purpose, two settlers have surrendered their holdings and are being removed to properties in the South-East. It will not be possible to move these men until towards the end of the year, and this may result in the scheme not being fully implemented for a few months.

3. The requirements of Mr. C. B. Humphris have been carefully considered with due regard to the needs of the other settlers and he will be informed of the decision applying in his case when the departmental officers interview him next month.

FINANCE FOR HOMES.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I have been informed that the State Bank, which administers finance for homes, has had to suspend the receipt of applications because of the finance involved in meeting recent applications under the Act. I ask the Premier whether this information is

correct and, if so, can he say how long the receipt of applications will be suspended?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I asked the chairman of the State Bank Board to prepare a statement on this matter, and I appreciate the Leader's question because it gives me an opportunity of publicising this statement. It reads:—

Since the liberalizing of the amount of the loan that can be granted and the extension of the period of repayment, the State Bank has been inundated with applications. If the present rate of applications continues, it would not be possible to handle them from the point of view of staff or finance available. Up to date the bank is already committed to advances of £1,888,000. There are 934 applications in hand for a further £2,595,000 making a possible commitment this financial year of £4,483,000. This does not take into account any future applications that may be lodged. The funds in sight amount to £3,829,000 made up of £2,899,000 advances for homes and £930,000 home building fund.

I mentioned some time ago that I had taken up with the trustees of the Savings Bank the question of their raising the amount of their advance to £3,000, the figure adopted by the State Bank. This has now been approved by the Savings Bank Board and it is hoped that any applicants for advances for new homes will apply to the Savings Bank, which has just inaugurated its changed policy and has this year provided £5,800,000 for home building. That would give some relief to the State Bank from the point of view of both staff and finance. In addition I am taking up with the Commonwealth Bank the question of its raising its maximum advance to £3,000. That matter has not yet been concluded: I am having a conference with the Commonwealth Bank this afternoon. However, the Savings Bank is open to take applications for finance on new homes on precisely the same terms as those of the State Bank.

Mr. RICHES—Under advances from the State Bank owner-contractors can operate; that is, home purchasers can do work on their own homes and this has been very popular, but I understand that the Savings Bank has not up to the present permitted any work of that kind to be done. It has insisted that in all cases the work be done completely by an independent contractor. It would be helpful in my part of the State, and probably in other parts, if the Savings Bank could be persuaded to accept applications from owner-builders, as is done by the State Bank, and I ask the Premier if he would consider approaching the Savings Bank with that request.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will refer the question to the chairman of the Savings Bank Board.

RAIL STANDARDIZATION.

Mr. HEASLIP—The following is an extract from a report which appeared in the *Advertiser* of August 20, and it relates to a question asked yesterday about the standardization of the Peterborough railway division:—

The Minister for Transport (Senator Paltridge) today made a statement of policy on rail standardization. The Federal Government's policy on further rail gauge standardization was that it would assist the State concerned to carry out the work where it was shown conversion would bring tangible results.

If that is the policy of the Federal Government does it indicate that the rail standardization agreement between South Australia and the Federal Government has now been broken or is being departed from and that any line not paying will be ignored and that the State will get no financial help from the Commonwealth on lines such as the Wilmington and Gladstone lines?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The answer to the question in my opinion, is undoubtedly in the affirmative. If the statement attributed to Senator Paltridge today is true it is a complete departure from the spirit of the standardization agreement. That was an agreement to standardize all railway lines in South Australia and to provide a standard system under which the mainland lines would operate. If the Commonwealth Government is to pick out one or two lines for conversion that obviously does not improve the position from the point of view of standardization but makes it hopeless, because the Railways Commissioner, instead of having two gauges to operate, would find himself in the intolerable position of having to try to operate a railway system with three. I say clearly and strongly that my Government utterly opposes any suggestion of that departure from the spirit or the letter of the agreement.

TRANSPORT FOR PENSIONERS.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Will the Premier bring down a report on the avenues, if any, for free and assisted transport available to pensioners in country areas when attending the Adelaide Hospital, and if such transport conditions are not as favourable as those available to pensioners in the metropolitan area will the Government favourably consider making them so?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will obtain a report but subsequent action will of course depend on what the report discloses.

FROST WARNING.

Mr. BYWATERS—Tomato growing under glass has become a large industry in and around Murray Bridge. Unfortunately frost plays quite a big part in reducing the crop output. The growers at times are subjected to heavy frosts; there have been three this week in addition to some earlier this year. I have noticed that 5CL at about 6.45 p.m. gives a weather report including whether or not there is a likelihood of frost in the metropolitan area during that particular night. Because of its importance to glasshouse growers in my area, could this service be extended to cover the Murray Bridge area?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—The weather forecasts in relation to frosts are fairly generous at the present time. I listen to them frequently. I realize that Murray Bridge is not singled out for special warning, any more than many other places are. I will consider the matter fully and give the honourable member a reply when I have had a discussion about it.

SHEEP STEALING.

Mr. HAMBOUR—Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to a question I asked on August 4 about sheep stealing and requesting stock agents to keep a record of brands and earmarks of stock?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I have a report which states:—

It is considered that the suggestion made by Mr. Hambour in the attached cutting from *Hansard* is impracticable for the following reasons:—

1. Many brands and earmarks are illegible due to either the brand scouring out or becoming distorted with the growth of wool or due to distortion of the earmark. For these reasons, agents would be dependent on the statement of the owner as to the actual identity of the brand or mark.
2. Sheep may change hands even several times between shearings and as it is illegal to place any brand or mark on the sheep which can confuse an earlier mark, the brand on the sheep need not necessarily be that of the seller.
3. The checking of such records would be virtually impossible. The stolen sheep are unlikely to be disposed of in the vicinity of the property from which they were stolen, and a travelling stock waybill showing brands must be in the possession of a drover moving sheep

by any means a distance greater than 20 miles. The waybill must be handed to the person taking possession of the sheep at the end of the journey. All agents retain the waybills in such cases for their own protection. As the waybill if correctly filled in must give brands and earmarks, Mr. Hambour's request is already covered. Checking and policing of the waybills is, however, still the major problem.

I shall ask the Chief Secretary to inform me whether sheep stealing is becoming more prevalent or whether it is occurring more in some areas than in others, and will let the honourable member have that information also.

COCKBURN TO PORT PIRIE RAILWAY LINE.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—About two months ago, I drew the Premier's attention to a rumour then circulating in the northern areas, and particularly Peterborough, that the Commonwealth desired to take over the line from Cockburn to Port Pirie and run it as a Commonwealth railway. The Premier replied at that stage, I think by letter, that the Government had heard nothing of the proposal, and in any event it was not in favour of it. However, this rumour still persists and it is alleged that it comes from fairly high Commonwealth sources. In view of the "buck-passing" going on at the moment between the Federal Minister and the South Australian Government, I am impelled to believe that there may be some holding out taking place in an effort to get South Australia to capitulate. Has the Premier heard anything to confirm this rumour since I last brought up the matter, or has he any further information on it?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I personally have no direct information that the Commonwealth has taken any action to secure this line. I believe it is a profitable line and in those circumstances the Commonwealth would not be averse to taking it over, but certainly the State Government has not been approached in that respect. I assure the Leader that it is not the policy of the Government to dispose of it, so that, if an approach were made, I could not imagine it being successful.

The line is a very important part of our railway system and, as such, could not be alienated from the rest of the system without grave repercussions on our traffic arrangements. I assure the Leader that there is nothing like that in the Government's suggestions, even if there is some wishful thinking in some quarters.

KINGOONYA PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked recently about the Kingoonya primary school?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes. I have been informed by the Architect-in-Chief that the drums of Colas referred to by the honourable member were forwarded to the Kingoonya school for the paving of the grounds in 1957. A contract for the work was let, but later was cancelled because the contractor was not able to do the work. The Architect-in-Chief's representative at Port Augusta attempted to get someone else to do the work but was unsuccessful. However, I have been informed that he will make further endeavours to get a contractor and, if this fails, the job will be done by the Architect-in-Chief's own workmen. I have also been informed by the Architect-in-Chief that plans and specifications for the installation of a septic system at Kingoonya are to be prepared. Tenders for the work will be called as soon as possible.

SUPPLY BILL (No. 2).

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended the House of Assembly to make provision by Bill for defraying the salaries and other expenses of the several departments and public services of the Government of South Australia during the year ending June 30, 1960.

In Committee of Supply.

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

That towards defraying the expenses of the establishments and public services of the State for the year ending June 30, 1960, a further sum of £9,000,000 be granted: provided that no payments for any establishment or service shall be made out of the said sum in excess of the rates voted for similar establishments or services on the Estimates for the financial year ended June 30, 1959, except increases of salaries or wages fixed or prescribed by any return made under any Act relating to the Public Service or by any regulation or by any award, order or determination of any court or other body empowered to fix or prescribe wages or salaries.

Motion carried.

Resolution agreed to in Committee of Ways and Means and adopted by the House.

Bill introduced and read a first time.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It follows the usual form of Supply Bill and provides for the amount of £9,000,000 to enable

the public services to be carried on until the latter part of October. Clause 2 provides for the issue and application of £9,000,000 and clause 3 provides that no payments shall be made in excess of last year's Estimates except that the Treasurer may authorize the payment of salary increases. I point out that this supply will take the public services to the end of October by which time it is hoped that the Auditor-General's report and Treasury papers will have been presented and the Estimates passed. We are now reaching the stage when there is more legislation to consider and I hope the House will be available to sit until 10 o'clock on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings next.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

LAND SETTLEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS (Minister of Lands) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Land Settlement Act, 1944-1958. Read a first time.

LOAN ESTIMATES.

In Committee.

(Continued from August 19. Page 516.)

Grand total—£29,000,000.

Mr. HUGHES (Wallaroo)—I support the first line. I know it is the Government's responsibility to try to exploit all the productive resources of the State and I realize that is not an easy task. I think the Government is actuated by a strong desire to do what is right, even though it fails in its efforts. However, the Labor Party is ready to co-operate and assist it in furthering the interests of the State. During the short time I have been a member of this House I have noticed that the constructive criticism of my Leader and other members of the Opposition have helped the Government to advantage. I know that my Leader and other members on this side are happy to bring forward what they consider helpful suggestions, knowing that they will not be accepted by the Government as presented. After a period, these same suggestions are presented to the House dressed in a different suit and bearing a different name, but underneath the camouflage can be seen the suggestions as submitted by members of the Opposition. The Government is happy because it claims to have introduced the legislation

and because certain people will benefit from its adoption the Opposition concedes to the Government credit for its introduction. We on this side are in the unfortunate position that it is not government of the people by the people, but government of the people by those elected on a minority vote.

I now turn to the line on housing. Last session a Bill was introduced by the Treasurer to make a grant of £368,019 to the Housing Trust to build about 150 good and comfortable homes in country areas. It was passed by this House and represented the disposal of South Australia's share of £5,000,000 from the Commonwealth Government to the States. In explaining the Bill the Treasurer said:—

In addition to providing certain people who cannot pay a full economic rent, this building programme, which will be in addition to the ordinary country programme of the trust, will stimulate the country building industry and the many associated industries and thus have considerable effect upon employment in country towns.

Country people were happy about the proposal because in most country districts there are people with limited incomes such as pensioners and widows with young families. The Bill received the support of every honourable member, and naturally the towns coming under the scheme were pleased with it. Wallaroo was one town named to participate in this worthy undertaking. On receipt of information that homes were to be built at Wallaroo, the local council took steps to assist the trust by making available what it considered one of the best building sites in Wallaroo known as Warming-ton Square, situated in the centre of the town. A few days ago I received the following letter from the town clerk of Wallaroo:—

In June 1958 this council took steps to relinquish control over a large portion of Warming-ton Square as it was understood the South Australian Housing Trust were interested in building pensioners' houses there. Following this the land in question was transferred to the Housing Trust by the Lands Department in April 1959. During the interval an officer came in to ask the council whether there would be any objection to the trust commencing building even prior to transfer actually taking place and he was given a reply in the affirmative.

Following this there was a long silence until last week when a telephone call was received from Mr. James of the Housing Trust to the effect that the question of building pensioners' houses there had been postponed for a considerable period. I enclose a copy of a letter I have written to the Housing Trust in this connection and as directed by the council request you to follow up the matter in person

seeking the necessary assurance from them. The council feel that they have been badly let down by the trust in this matter.

On inquiring of the town clerk concerning this telephone conversation from an officer of the trust to the town clerk, I found that the position was that because all the finances had been exhausted under the relevant heads it would be a considerable time before pensioners' homes could be erected in Wallaroo. The Wallaroo Council greatly deplores the failure by the trust to honour its obligation and to take advantage of the council's offer of assistance to make available a large part of Warming-ton Square. In effect, it transferred its ownership. The council feels that it would have been to its greater advantage to have taken steps to have had the square subdivided and split into building blocks, which could have been readily sold by it, as it was in a central part of Wallaroo.

I am at a loss to understand why, after Wallaroo was promised these homes by the trust, it was found necessary to notify the council by telephone that funds had become exhausted. When the Treasurer presented the Estimates to this House last week he told members that £60,000 remained from the £368,000. However, that directly contradicts the information, given over the telephone by an officer of the trust. On the one hand those handling the fund said that it was exhausted, whereas on the other hand the Treasurer told us that £60,000 was still remaining in the hands of the trust. I consider that the Treasurer should investigate the matter and assure the Wallaroo Council that, if it is not possible to allocate moneys from the £60,000 mentioned, Wallaroo should have homes built there, as promised, when other funds become available.

Included in the sum allotted to the Railways Department are funds to cover the cost of buildings, platforms and stockyards. The railway station and trucking yards at Kadina are not in keeping with the rest of the town. Kadina is a business and professional centre and is recognized as one of the most modern and up-to-date shopping centres outside the metropolitan area. Over the last few years a huge sum has been invested in remodelling old business premises and erecting new ones, and many new homes have been built privately, apart from those built by the trust. I will read an article which appeared in the *Kadina and Wallaroo Times* on August 6, to show that Kadina is prepared to play its part so far as the State is concerned. Under the heading

“Kadina subscribes £1,250,000” appeared the following:—

Kadina and district have always been regarded as wealthy, and even bank managers who have served in Kadina and have compared other districts have expressed their astonishment at the amount of money handled at Kadina. The senior representative for Commonwealth Loans (Mr. H. H. Wells) is once again visiting upper and lower Yorke Peninsula seeking support for the next Commonwealth Loan. Once again it was expected both Kadina and Moonta would exceed their quotas.

Kadina has now subscribed £1,124,690, almost double the quota set. This shows not only that Kadina is a progressive town but that its people are prepared to assist in financing the State's programme.

Mr. Hambour—It is a very prosperous community.

Mr. HUGHES—Yes, and its people are prepared to help the State with its work. Since the present railway station, the barley sheds, and trucking yards were established at Kadina, the town has grown, and the council felt that it was justified in asking the Railways Commissioner to consider the removal of the barley sheds and trucking yards from the centre of the town to sections 1762 and 1763 hundred of Wallaroo, partly occupied by the Wheat Board. The first approach by the council to the Commissioner was by letter on November 15, 1957, as follows:—

I have by direction of my council to ask if you would give consideration to the removal of the barley sheds and trucking yards at Kadina to sections 1762 and 1763 hundred of Wallaroo. My council desires the removal of the barley sheds and trucking yards to another site as they are situated at present approximately in the centre of the town. Sections 1762 and 1763 are at present let to you by my council *vide* agreement dated July 20, 1955 (your reference S.A.R. 1529/40). If you are able to move the barley sheds and trucking yards to this site my council is prepared to pass the land back to the Crown.

At the request of the Town Council, I wrote to the Commissioner in similar terms, saying:—

I am requested by the Kadina Council to ask if you would give consideration to the removal of the barley sheds and trucking yards at Kadina to sections 1762 and 1763 hundred of Wallaroo. I understand that these sections will shortly be no longer required as a wheat storage area. The barley sheds and trucking yards are situated at present approximately in the centre of the town. The time is opportune for any changeover before the spur railway line and other facilities that may be required are removed. Should this request meet with your approval the council are prepared to pass sections 1762 and 1763 back to the Crown. Any further information I will be happy to supply or discuss the matter with you.

The council received a reply to its letter early in February, 1958, and a copy of the letter was also forwarded to me. That letter, addressed to the Town Clerk, Kadina, was as follows:—

Kadina request for removal of barley sheds and trucking yards. In reply to your letter of November 15, 1957, I desire to inform you that your request has been fully examined. As the department would be put to very substantial increased costs, both in construction and operation, without any compensating advantage, if the barley sheds and trucking yards were removed to another site, I regret that I cannot agree to your request.

That letter was signed by the Railways Commissioner. The Kadina Council was at a loss to understand where the substantially increased costs were involved in construction. The sections referred to are served by a spur line, and at the time the approach was made more storage sheds were available than would ever be required for the storage of barley. The council was not satisfied with the reply, as it considered the Commissioner had failed to prove that the request was an unjust one. I was asked to arrange a deputation from the council to meet the Commissioner so that the request could be fully explained. I called on the Secretary of the Railways Department and placed the position before him, and he in his wisdom asked me if I would call back in a week's time when he would arrange for the engineer to meet me and discuss the proposal before a deputation met the Commissioner.

I made a special trip to Adelaide on the appointed day only to be told on my arrival that the engineer was conversant with the position at Kadina and did not consider any good purpose could be served by a deputation meeting the Commissioner. I reminded the Secretary that it was the Kadina Council's request that the Commissioner receive a deputation, and I was then told that the Commissioner was not prepared to receive a deputation. In my opinion, this is a very serious matter, for I consider that attitude lacks the common touch that is the first requirement in good government. No attempt at conciliation was made by the Commissioner or his officers, who seemed determined to ignore the viewpoint of the council and public opinion.

Mr. Ryan—They have been doing that for years.

Mr. HUGHES—Since the approach was made, a row of sheds no longer required for the storage of wheat has been removed.

Mr. Corcoran—And your deputation was refused.

Mr. HUGHES—Yes. The spur line still remains, and the Wheat Board is still using

some of the remaining storage sheds. The sections I referred to earlier are away from the main roads leading into the town. It is sincerely hoped that the Railways Department will see the wisdom of the local council's request. Recently the member for Murray, Mr. Bywaters, advocated the appointment of a public relations officer in the Railways Department to create goodwill between the department and the travelling public. I feel quite confident that that would be a good move, for it would improve relations not only between the department and the travelling public but in other directions as well.

I was pleased last week to hear the Treasurer say that £150,000 was provided for the final payment on the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. That is a magnificent hospital which is rendering great service to the community and to the State, and I am not opposed to it in any way; but, as the Leader of the Opposition said only a few days ago, can we afford many more like it? Members have often drawn the attention of the Government to increases over and above the estimates for various projects. We are not the only people who have protested against huge sums of money being spent in this way. I shall quote from the Sydney *Bulletin*, which, as most honourable members know, is not a supporter of the Labor Party.

Mr. Clark—Not any more.

Mr. HUGHES—It may have been at one stage, but not now. The article is headed "Playford's Problems" and is as follows:—

South Australian Premier, Sir Thomas Playford, is in a spot of bother—several spots in fact. It would appear that while he has been busy seeking overseas industrialists as paying guests his domestic housekeepers have been neglecting their responsibilities. His Auditor-General has tabled his annual report in Parliament and is not pleased with much of the Government's activity. He is particularly concerned about Sir Tom's own pet hobby—the elaborate Queen Elizabeth Hospital at Woodville. Estimated to cost £2,250,000 . . .

I think the first estimate was £1,750,000. The article continues:—

Estimated to cost £2,250,000, the project was built on a fixed fee for the contractors, with the Government supplying all materials. The expenditure is now close to £5,000,000 . . . Only a few days ago our Leader said that the cost was now somewhere between £7,250,000 and £10,000,000. The report continues:—

The expenditure is now close to £5,000,000 and in regard to one section now in operation the Auditor-General says "The full cost is not ascertainable from the departmental records." This is a big bill for a 372-bed general hospital

and a 114-bed maternity wing. The maternity section has been open for 18 months. It took 3.2 staff and £82 per week to care for each patient—£63 for actual patient maintenance and £19 interest charges on "as much of the cost as can be determined."

The general public, especially country people, will be pleased to know that final payments for the hospital are provided in these Loan Estimates. Some years ago the people in my district were fortunate in having a good district hospital built at Wallaroo, but apparently insufficient attention was given by those responsible to a suitable foundation being prepared to carry the building. Perhaps soil tests were not carried out in those days, as they are today. For some years the building has been cracking badly; in fact, the western wing has completely let go of the main building. Conduit carrying the electric wiring has been pulled apart. In the main hall upstairs the floor shows plainly that immediate attention should be given this lovely building. A considerable time has elapsed since the trouble was first brought under the notice of the authorities. Various men have been to look at the position. On one occasion, when an engineer and an inspector were there for an inspection, a hole was put down alongside the foundation on the end of the western wing and when the man digging the hole got down to 10ft. water started to come in. I think certain recommendations have been made for pylons, or some such things, to be used to prevent the building from going any further, but the time it is taking to have the job brought under way is simply amazing.

The hospital committee is concerned about what it terms delayed action on the part of the authorities. It wants to prevent further damage to the building. On the surface it points to only two things. The first is that the engineers are at a loss to know how to tackle the problem, and the other that the head of the department concerned is not fully aware of the damage caused to certain parts of the building. Now that the matter has been brought before the House, and this has been done only as a last resort, I trust the Minister concerned will take steps to prevent further damage being done at the hospital.

Mr. Hambour—Would the Wallaroo people take the hospital if it were given to them?

Mr. HUGHES—I am not able to answer that question. I represent the district and cannot know whether they would be able to accept the offer of the honourable member for Light. I support the first line.

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens)—The Loan Estimates before us disclose a record total of £30,385,000, which is a considerable increase on last year's total. This sum includes £5,000,000 that has been allocated directly to housing. The allocation from the Loan Council for 1958-59 was £210,000,000, but this year it has been increased to £220,000,000, to be divided amongst all the States. Semi-Government and local government authorities have had their Loan allocations increased to £4,750,000 this year. This is a phase of borrowing that I think could be extended, for many semi-Government and local government bodies are struggling for the want of finance. Many of them have introduced borrowing programmes. More money could be made available under this heading. Not only would more projects come into being in various municipalities, but more efficient use would be made of existing plant and more employment would be provided in the districts concerned. The Loan Estimates are the first we have had since South Australia became a non-claimant State. This is an historic occasion, and one to remember. South Australia has taken its place with the more prosperous States and has become politically independent.

There are one or two items that I will refer to particularly. We all know that the railways play an important part in the development of the State and we do not expect all lines to be run at a profit. He would be a rash man who would say that they all can be run at a profit, but at the same time improvements can be made to make them run more efficiently. We need the railways to transport people and goods and to assist in opening up sparsely populated areas. I am particularly interested in the programme evolved over recent years for the dieselization of the railways system. Six or seven years ago diesel-operated locomotives were introduced in South Australia on country and suburban lines. Gradually steam locomotives have been disappearing. I favour that, not only as a man in public life but as an engineer.

I have closely studied the position and am convinced that effective savings in operating costs can be made by the railways through the introduction of diesel locomotives. I feel that the programme could be extended. Now there are in commission 30 main line locomotives, each of 1,750 h.p. In addition, provision is made in these Estimates for the expenditure of £862,000 on the purchase of 10 new locomotives, of 900 h.p., to be used on branch lines, probably in the Murray lands, and on

the Pinnaroo line and some of our northern branch lines that feed the main line. They have the virtue that they can be coupled with the 1,750 h.p. main line locomotives. This trend will give greater flexibility in the locomotives available to the superintendents of the various railway divisions. Not only is this to be done, but the suburban and country passenger fleet is to be extended by the provision of more diesel railcars. I suggest that within a few years in the metropolitan area we will have, except for an unusual occurrence, the whole of the fleet run by diesel locomotives. It will probably extend to Gawler, Port Adelaide, Grange, Marino, and the hills line as far as Bridgewater.

There has been a considerable saving through the switch from steam to diesel. Even on the run from Adelaide to Tailem Bend, where main line locomotives are used, sometimes singly and sometimes in pairs, a saving of £1,000 a month on fuel and labour is common on the return trip. Not only is there a saving in running costs but the saving in servicing and down time is amazing, compared with steam. When a steam train takes a long trip, refuelling takes place, there is blowing out of tubes, cleaning and refilling with water. Often a spare locomotive has to stand by whilst this is done. A diesel locomotive can make the return trip without being held up for servicing. In many cases four trips are made before servicing is necessary, and in the servicing, instead of going out of action for 24 hours, the locomotive goes out for only two or three hours. The daily mileage available to the railways from one diesel main line locomotive is about 300 per cent greater than from a steam locomotive of equal size and capacity.

The New South Wales Government held an inquiry in 1957 into the operations of its railway system and a company presented a report to the Minister of Railways on the operations of diesel versus steam locomotion. It was estimated that at the ruling rate for fuel and wages the introduction of diesel meant an annual saving of £8,000,000, which represented a 22.6 per cent saving on that section of the fleet. That bears out my contention that greater use can be made of diesel locomotives in this State. Figures I have taken out on the fuel bill reveal that in 1954-55 the total fuel cost of the railways was about £2,000,000, whereas in 1957-58, for substantially the same mileage, but with more diesel locomotives and fewer steam locomotives, it had dropped to £1,562,000 notwithstanding a rise in the unit cost of the fuel in that

period. In these days of increased road and air transport, the railways, to make effective use of their resources and to look after the capital invested on behalf of the State, have to meet the competition from other forms of transport.

The express service between Adelaide and Melbourne has been improved considerably in recent years and no doubt all members have enjoyed the improved service designed to meet the competition from the airways. The daylight service to Melbourne, to be introduced shortly, should prove extremely popular and attract more tourists. If the savings and efficiencies introduced into the Railways Department by the use of diesel locomotives and the country diesel rail cars can keep pace with rising costs, their use should prove beneficial to the State because they have been found to be far more comfortable, speedy and certainly much cleaner.

I was interested in the Harbors Board line, which showed that provision was being made, at Port Adelaide, Port Lincoln and Kingscote, for the introduction of the roll-on, roll-off ship, which will start running late next year. The future of shipping to West Coast ports and to Kangaroo Island has been in the melting pot for some time. The economics of it to the shipowner, to the Harbors Board, and to the primary producer, who has to send his goods here and receive goods back, has been causing concern for some time, and I believe that the roll-on, roll-off ship will probably solve some of the problems. It certainly will provide a much faster service and it could, by improved stock handling conditions, reduce costs both in freight rates and in time. The fact that goods will not have so many handlings may reduce costs. I commend the Harbors Board for the work it is doing and for the co-operation it is showing with the private shipowners—in this case the Adelaide Steamship Company.

Several interesting lines on the Estimates relate to education. Many members have had the pleasure of reading the Estimates and seeing that provision has been made for the erection of new schools—both primary and secondary—in their areas. I have not had that pleasure, because the schools in my area were established many years ago and there is, unfortunately, no room on which to build more schools, but I am pleased to see the number of schools proposed for other parts of the State. I was particularly interested to see that the Government has included provision for the commencement of the new 13-storey Teachers Training College in Kintore Avenue. If this

Government is to continue its education programme—and we all agree that programme must be undertaken—it must train more teachers. The teacher population must grow to give our increasing pupil population more effective education. We must increase the number of teachers in training and provide better facilities for them. If we do not, we are betraying our trust to future generations of children. It is our duty to provide this facility which is now on the Estimates, and I believe that a start is being made at the right time because it is estimated that in two or three years' time our teacher population will have to double. The site on which the new college is to be built is handy to the city and adjacent to the University, the School of Mines and the School of Art, where so many of these students attend lectures.

I am also interested in technical education and was pleased to see provision had been made for the start of the new automotive and building trades technical school to be erected in Frome Road. We have to look at this question of university training mentioned during question time. I hope that as many children as possible will be able to undertake university courses, but some children, through no fault of their own, are not suited to such courses. I would recommend that such children remain at school a little longer than they do now and then take advantage of the opportunities presented in many centres by the Education Department through technical trades schools. When they have gone through those courses they can, upon leaving school, go to the departmental trades schools which teach various trades, or to the School of Mines where courses are being extended and the school is now bestowing its own degree of technology. I believe that if children were encouraged to undertake these courses instead of leaving school as soon as they could, thus causing a glut of unskilled labour, that would be a good thing, and I commend the department for expanding its new trades school to this comparatively new and necessary trade.

Each of us who has at various times had to get his car serviced likes to know that it is being done by a competent tradesman, and while the trades school is doing a wonderful job at the moment I believe that, if expanded, it could take more and more students. An important part of the work will be the facility offered for training, in this work, adults who were not privileged to undertake an apprenticeship in this sort of work and who want to improve themselves by study

and application so that they will be able to undertake it. Provision will also be made for the training and testing of foreman mechanics, which I believe is a step in the right direction. I was pleased to note on the Estimates that provision has been made for the extension of this work at Frome Road at the original old Exhibition Building completed many years ago.

Provision is made for a further grant of £50,000 towards the completion of the Playford Building at the School of Mines. That is a very fine six-storey building in which technical subjects are being taught as well as agricultural subjects, such as wool classing, and assaying. The work of that school could be expanded even more and it is contemplated that before long the huge Playford Building will be full. Even now the school is planning for the work that will have to go on and it is expected that another multi-storey building, on somewhat similar lines and capacity to the present Playford Building, will soon have to be erected. The school is now teaching University degree work, therefore it is hoped that it will qualify for a grant from the Australian University Commission on a capital basis. It already receives a grant for working expenses. I commend the Government for introducing a sum in this Estimate for the continuance of the work at the School of Mines.

I commend the Treasurer for introducing the Estimates so courageously and for his lengthy oration, and I appreciate the detailed work put into the Estimates. The details given are much more helpful to members than a bald statement—which they could easily have received. The money has been allocated as widely and fairly as possible and I have pleasure in supporting the adoption of the first line.

Mr. RALSTON (Mount Gambier)—In speaking to the first line of the Estimates there are several amounts I wish to discuss. Last year in the Loan Estimates £20,000 was provided for a survey of the Mount Gambier city area for sewerage purposes. Of this amount only £2,000 was spent, the other £18,000 no doubt going to some other unknown activity of Government expenditure. This year there has been a substantial reduction and the sum of £5,000 is provided for initial work involved in the Mount Gambier treatment works. I do not know how much of this will be spent on the proposed sewerage scheme, but the amount provided this year certainly limits the Government expenditure on this

work as compared with what happened last year when £18,000 disappeared somewhere. In this year's Loan Estimates £244,000 is provided for construction work on the new Mount Gambier hospital, which is expected to be completed in the latter half of 1960. I draw the attention of the Government and honourable members to the huge discrepancy that has developed between the original estimated cost and the ever-increasing cost mentioned each year by the Treasurer when he submits the Loan Estimates. The report of the Public Works Committee, dated June 25, 1952, on the Mount Gambier hospital estimated the cost to be £831,042. Last year the Treasurer said the total estimated cost was then £1,207,000 and this year the total estimated cost given by the Treasurer is £1,344,000. This type of seemingly ever-expanding finance occurs in most major projects undertaken by the present Government. I fully agree with and support the Leader of the Opposition in his contention that a Public Accounts Committee must be appointed to ascertain the reasons why projects cost such fantastic amounts in excess of those estimated and submitted when the Public Works Standing Committee investigated the projects.

To further illustrate this point, let me mention two projects in my electorate that are included in this year's Loan Estimates and were also included in last year's Loan Estimates but were not proceeded with in that financial year. I refer to the Gambier East infant school included last year at an estimated cost of £52,000. This year the same school is included, although nothing happened last year, at an estimated cost of £74,000. Last year the Mount Gambier North primary school was included in the Loan Estimates at a total estimated cost of £116,000. Nothing happened there either, apart from a tender being called for.

The Hon. C. S. Hincks—Is the honourable member objecting to the school being built?

Mr. RALSTON—I am objecting to the taxpayer being jumped around like this, but not to the building of the school at its original estimated cost of £116,000. This year the same school with no alterations is again included in the Loan Estimates at an estimated cost of £155,000. I have no doubt that this sort of thing is occurring all over the State. In the interests of the taxpayers of South Australia, who pay the bill eventually, it must stop. It is no wonder that this State has the highest public debt a head of population of any State on the mainland of Australia.

Again, referring to the new hospital at Mount Gambier, which it is now hoped will be completed next year and thus be available to the public, let us examine the position regarding resident medical staff. This hospital is an approved institution under the Medical Practitioners' Act, 1919-1955, and as such is entitled to have resident medical officers as well as a resident medical superintendent. In fact, provision was made in the original plans submitted to the Public Works Committee for a resident medical superintendent and six resident medical officers, but was deleted by the committee provisionally on the recommendation of the Director-General of Medical Services. I quote from the minutes of evidence given in 1952 by the Director-General of Medical Services to the committee. The then chairman (Mr. A. W. Christian) asked him the following question:—

It would be all right for him to continue his private work and carry on as superintendent at the hospital?

At that time the medical officer, as at present, had a private practice and received a salary for his part-time work as superintendent. Dr. Rollison replied:—

Yes, until the number of patients increases to over a daily average of 120. The daily average for 1948-49 was 80.26. At present (which was 10 years ago at that time) the hospital is overcrowded and patients are refused admission. In many cases maternity patients are not kept in the hospital as long as the doctor would like. There are no private maternity institutions at Mount Gambier. All maternity patients go to the hospital.

Further on, the chairman asked:—

You cannot foresee that position eventuating in the near future?

The Director-General replied:—

No. That is why I am going to suggest the erection of the medical superintendent's house and the house for the resident medical officers be deferred until such time as they are required.

Then Mr. Fred Walsh asked:—

You suggest that the construction of a residence for the medical superintendent and one for the resident medical officer should be delayed for a time, but in a hospital of the size of the proposed Mount Gambier Hospital is it not necessary to have a resident medical officer?

The Director-General replied:—

If you have 100 beds in a hospital you must have a resident medical officer, . . . and let me mention here that there will be 217 beds—

. . . and he must not be a junior. My idea is to have a medical superintendent and then increase the staff gradually as the number

of patients grows. There could then be resident medical officers to work with the medical superintendent in collaboration with the honorary medical men. That would be the same principle as we have at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

Then the Hon. J. L. S. Bice asked:—

What about the six medical officers?, and the Director-General replied:—

I think we will probably require six medical officers in future. If it becomes a 200-bed hospital and is used to capacity, which I think it will be in years to come, at least four resident medical officers, as well as a superintendent and the private practitioners, will be required. In a large hospital you must have a man on the spot all the time. A resident medical officer is fully occupied in the morning and he is kept busy in the afternoon. Some resident medical officers are rostered off duty during the afternoon and night, and to provide for this at Mount Gambier at least four of such officers are essential. One may be assigned to the casualty ward and the out-patients' department. Another may have to attend to all anaesthetics. One may have to look after the medical section, where there will be 62 patients, and he will be responsible to see that the treatment ordered by the honoraries is carried out, as well as to cope with any emergencies which might arise during the absence of the honoraries.

Then, in answer to a further question by the Hon. J. L. S. Bice:—

It will be an institution where young qualified men can get their first experience?

He said:—

Yes. If we had suitable accommodation at Mount Gambier and Port Pirie now we could send them resident medical officers. We have the officers available, but not the accommodation.

Honourable members will remember it was on the express recommendation of this same man that the accommodation was deleted, and a little later on he said he wished he had it. Then he continued:—

We have asked Mount Gambier and Port Pirie whether they have suitable accommodation available, (that is, in the old hospital) but they have not got it. It would be a big help to a local hospital if it could have a resident medical officer, as well as being of great assistance to the officer himself.

I think that clearly outlines the evidence given on that occasion.

Now, what will be the position when the hospital is completed next year? The daily average of beds occupied will be very close to, if it has not already exceeded, the required number of 100 to 120 patients mentioned by the Director-General. There will be a casualty ward and all the facilities necessary for the emergency treatment of accident victims and others who may require immediate attention

or admission to the hospital, but no resident medical officer is available to sign an admission order. I suppose they will be sitting and waiting to get in while an honorary is looked for.

Mr. Ryan—Are they going to consider it?

Mr. RALSTON—I do not know whether they will consider it. I will leave it to the honourable member to visualize what must inevitably occur under these conditions. For the information of honourable members, I point out that there are 23 resident medical officers and superintendents at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and 71 at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. Surely three or four could be made available to the Mount Gambier Hospital.

Mr. Quirke—Are you referring to the hospital as it now exists?

Mr. RALSTON—No, the new one.

Mr. Quirke—It is not functioning.

Mr. RALSTON—It will be, very shortly.

Mr. Quirke—How many beds have you at present?

Mr. RALSTON—I could not tell the honourable member offhand; they are trying to accommodate patients in the passageways and anywhere they can find.

Mr. Quirke—Have you a resident medical officer there?

Mr. RALSTON—No.

Mr. Quirke—If a casualty case comes in, what do you do?

Mr. RALSTON—Hunt for an honorary surgeon to sign an admission for him. What is the use of a base hospital to serve the South-East unless there are resident medical officers? I submit that the accommodation for resident doctors that was provisionally deleted should now be included while construction is still in progress on the site.

Mr. Corcoran—You have spoken about the need for that before.

Mr. RALSTON—Yes, and I hope I shall get an answer a little later in question time. I note an amount of £5,000 is available this year for additions to the Mount Gambier gaol, the total cost being estimated at £15,000. Of recent years there has been considerable opposition to the presence of this building in the centre of the city, especially as it adjoins the Reidy Park primary school, which caters for hundreds of children. The city council and many prominent citizens, including ministers of religion have raised strong objections to the site of this gaol and there is no valid reason why it should not be removed to a more suitable site. I strongly recommend, before any major building programme is instituted there, that the Government at least receive representations

from the city council on this matter or, if it cannot or is unwilling to do that, at least send a competent officer there to discuss the matter with the council. I support the first line.

Mrs. STEELE (Burnside)—Mr. Chairman, I find myself in happy agreement with the Leader of the Opposition and other honourable members in congratulating the Treasurer on the amazing way in which he carried out his task of presenting the Loan Estimates. I want particularly to speak about schools and say that the problem of meeting the demand for increasing school accommodation due to our rapidly growing population is not peculiar to South Australia, but confronts all other States of the Commonwealth. One cannot help feeling that the Education Department has most equitably allocated the funds available to it so that the parts of the State in most acute need are given first priority. This year £3,750,000 is provided. It is interesting to note that last year £800,000 was spent in purchasing land for schools and school residences, which is four times as great as that spent two years prior to 1958. Mistakes made in the past have been heeded, and now areas of 20 and more acres have been bought so that adequate provision may be made for the expansion of schools and for sports grounds. There are 10 schools in my electorate—eight primary and two secondary. The member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn), when referring to my entry into this Chamber, said that in a press statement following my endorsement I had stated:—

Burnside has benefited from the stability which results from our well-planned economy. Its population has grown with the result of increases in home building activity. New schools have been established and existing ones expanded and roads and transport have been improved to meet modern demand.

I reaffirm that statement. Members will naturally realize that I could not have claimed that I had been responsible for that, and I give all credit to the previous members for the district. It has been gratifying to me, since my election, to have been of small use to the schools in my district with regard to the completion of playgrounds and similar facilities. I pay my tribute to the Minister of Education, the Minister of Works, and the members of their departments who have been most helpful to me in respect of my requests. The member for Adelaide continued:—

From that and the rest of the statement it is apparent that Burnside has everything it wants.

Judging from the requests that have been made of me and the problems presented to me since

my election it is quite evident that that is not the case. Burnside has not everything it needs. However, it has received its proper share of new schools and additions to old ones, and not without reason, because parts of my district have revealed an amazing increase in population and, as in other parts of the State, the Education Department has met that need and has provided or intends to provide adequate school accommodation.

According to the Estimates a number of major additions are planned and £506,000 is to be spent in the Burnside electorate on various schools. The Linden Park school is now complete and additions to the Burnside practising school, estimated to cost £59,000, are due to be completed. At Hectorville, four new rooms are to be added, and at the Norwood boys' technical high school 14 additional rooms, costing £110,000, are proposed. Later it is proposed to establish a new infant school at Marryatville. This is badly needed because there is little room left for playing areas in the old school. I heard today that it is likely to be about two years before the work is commenced and when it is built it will be within the adjoining electorate of Norwood. That work will cost £69,000. As the Minister of Education stated recently, it is contemplated that the Norwood high school will be built in time for the commencement of the next school year at a cost of £140,000. At Magill the addition of 12 rooms is estimated to cost £111,000.

I have visited all these schools and have made myself conversant with their problems. I am sure the Minister will be pleased to know that some of the schools have no problems, particularly schools like Rose Park in old settled areas. The new schools at Campbelltown and Hectorville are drawing pupils away from the older schools. I have been most interested to study the various types of designs of the new schools. The only fault—and it is not really a fault since we are all anxious to provide accommodation expeditiously—is that it has been suggested that the new schools follow a type of architecture used overseas, which is not entirely suited to Australian conditions. For instance, at one school glass walls face the wrong way and the rooms are very hot during the summer. In another school provision was made for a fine assembly hall, but within a few months of the school opening that hall was partitioned to provide more classrooms. That is a pity because all schools need an assembly hall. Of course, our population is growing so rapidly

that frequently before schools have been completed they are inadequate to cope with the number of children seeking admission. In another school, in order to make adequate provision, even cloakrooms were being converted into classrooms for small children. That is eminently undesirable because the cloakrooms were not constructed for that purpose and are in draughty corridors. The children's health must deteriorate unless steps are taken to alleviate the situation. One factor common to several schools is that the drainage provided to clear excess water from playgrounds is not satisfactory because the gutters are far too shallow and lead nowhere in particular and usually into a corner of the grounds. Water is not carried away and often lies at the foot of steps, making it extremely difficult for children to enter and leave the schools without walking through it.

Mr. Hutchens—Perhaps they failed to take proper levels.

Mrs. STEELE—Either that or the drains are not deep enough to carry away the water. In many instances the ground has a natural fall to a lower level where the water accumulates. I have been greatly impressed in the newer schools with the provision made for libraries. That is a desirable feature, but the tragedy, of course, is that there are few books to put on the shelves. I suppose posterity must take care of that, and one can only hope that the school committees may find the necessary finance to stock the libraries with books. Of course, it is inevitable that in the meantime the libraries may become additional classrooms.

I pay a tribute to the school welfare clubs, mothers' clubs and organizations connected with schools throughout the State. I obtained some figures which I feel are most interesting. In 1958 these organizations raised a total of £220,552—a most magnificent contribution when one realizes that it comes from the efforts of parents and people interested in schools in their areas. In my electorate, in the past three years an average of £8,000 has been raised annually by the 10 schools. I have served as a member of many school committees and quite often have heard visiting members of Parliament express the Government's appreciation of the services rendered by these bodies. It is rather refreshing for me now to be on the giving end rather than the receiving end and to be able to express the Government's gratitude, which I do feelingly, because I know how hard the school committees work and how much they appreciate the tributes paid to them by the

Education Department. I feel that a great deal is expected of parents and of organizations associated with schools and I wonder how some schools would function—and I am not criticizing the Education Department in this respect—without the amenities provided by them. I support the first line.

Mr. TAPPING (Semaphore)—Last week the Treasurer made a marathon speech and there is no doubt that he has wonderful endurance and stamina. When listening to him I thought of the history of past champion race horses—Phar Lap and Carbine—who were noted for their stamina. The Leader of the Opposition made his usual excellent contribution to the debate, but it was a pity the press did not give him greater publicity. I suppose we must excuse the press on this occasion because at present a famous legal battle is proceeding in our city on which the eyes of the world are focused and naturally it received first priority whereas the Leader's speech was relegated to a humble position.

Although I could say a great deal about the proposed harbours plan at Port Adelaide I shall comment only on one aspect of harbours administration—tug pens at Birkenhead. This matter was referred to the Public Works Committee about two years ago and, as a member of the committee, I remember that it was informed it was an urgent matter requiring close and immediate attention, so much so that on July 23, 1957, the committee recommended that tug pens be built at Birkenhead at a cost of £167,100. When I asked a question in this House recently about this matter the Minister said that no money was provided on this year's Loan Estimates and that one reason was that the interested people, who would undoubtedly be the tug owners, would not offer any substantial sum of money towards the cost of the project. I cannot understand that reply. Ships using wharves at Port Adelaide, and in any port of the world, pay the usual tolls imposed by the harbour authority. I cannot understand that tug companies would not be willing to contribute towards the cost of building tug pens, because they would be there for their needs and would mean faster traffic on the Port River.

There have been many complaints from the people of Port Adelaide and Semaphore over the hold-up caused by frequent openings of the Birkenhead bridge. The Jervois bridge is regulated on a time basis and opens at about 7.15, later in the day, and after 5 at night, but the Birkenhead bridge, being in

the main stream of river traffic, opens sometimes 40 or 50 times a day. This bridge has to be opened every time a yacht with a mast over 16ft. high wants to pass, and many of these yachts are berthed on the western side of Jervois bridge. I have often heard the Birkenhead bridge described as a toy; this is an accurate description because it rises so many times daily. These frequent openings cost the State and the people a great deal of money and that is why I maintain that the construction of tug pens downstream from the bridge is essential.

Tramways Trust buses are frequently held up for many minutes, causing breaks in their schedules and a loss of time and thereby a loss of money. At Osborne and Taperoo there are many big industries, including the I.C.I., Electricity Trust and the Gas Company, and other smaller industries. The lorries used by these concerns are frequently held up, with consequent loss of money. Many pedestrians use the bridge, as Birkenhead and Port Adelaide are thickly populated areas. Men going to and from work are delayed and often get back late for work after lunch, which causes them embarrassment. When preparing the Loan Estimates for next year, I ask the Government to consider providing money for this all-important project. Between 12 and 14 tugs are now tied up on the western side of Birkenhead bridge, and each time they answer the frequent calls to the harbour or downstream to help berthing, the bridge must be opened. Also, there are a number of yachts with masts over 16ft. high for which the bridge must be opened. Although this was regarded as an urgent matter when referred to the Public Works Committee two years ago, nothing has yet been done, and these pens are more necessary now than they were then.

I now wish to refer to emergency homes at Osborne and Taperoo, but desire to make it abundantly clear that in doing so I have no desire to make any statement that may conflict with a pending coronial inquiry into the loss of life in a fire at Mansfield Park recently. For a number of years I, with the Osborne-Taperoo Progress Association, have been advocating greater fire precautions in the area. On one occasion an officer of the Fire Brigades Board attended a meeting of the Progress Association and, to the perturbation of members of the association and myself, said that the Fire Brigade under its existing powers had no right to consider precautionary measures. This was an alarming statement, but I believe it is the position. If a home has grass

surrounding it which creates a fire hazard the Fire Brigade has no right to order it to be cleared. That is the duty of the local council, and councils, because of the many jobs they have, cannot police this matter. The Act should be amended to give the Fire Brigades Board power to police this type of thing as it is associated with the job the board is doing.

In the Osborne-Taperoo area there are 400 emergency homes that were built in 1949, but there is only one public telephone to cater for all these homes. When there was a fire in 1957 the telephone was out of order and, when someone reached a private phone some distance away, the house had been razed to the ground and three children had lost their lives. I do not say this would have been avoided if the phone had not been out of order, but the public would have had more confidence if it had been in order.

Mr. Clark—There could be similar cases.

Mr. TAPPING—I agree. As the Port Adelaide City Council is contributing £13,000 this year to the Fire Brigades Board, the board could give more consideration to improving matters in the area. The nearest fire alarm to these homes is at Magarey Terrace, Largs North, a mile away, and the next is at Outer Harbour, about 3½ miles from the first. Here again there is a lack of protection. If these homes were of solid construction the hazard would be much less but, as they are not, a real danger exists. I have raised the matter in this House and am now awaiting a reply on whether something can be done to give some relief to these people so as to ease their minds. Apart from the hazard in this type of home there are large industries and many small industries in the area. The Fire Brigades Board should contact the Post Master General's department requesting the installation of more public telephones. I appreciate that the provision of telephones is not a matter for the State Government but if the board made overtures to the department more phones might be provided.

I have inspected the area from time to time and have noticed a great lack of hydrants. If there were more hydrants the danger in the event of a fire would be lessened. Some time ago I was advised that the Fire Brigades Board planned to build a sub-station in the Osborne area, which no doubt would be an advantage, but it seems to me that it is a plan for the distant future. I appeal to the Government to make some representations to the Fire Brigades Board to expedite the building of this sub-station because of the many

homes there now and the extra homes contemplated. The Treasurer recently stated that it is planned to build a garden suburb in the Largs North area, that the land had been acquired by the Harbours Board for £500,000, and that it would be possible to build about 2,000 homes there. As most of the land in the metropolitan area has been acquired either by individuals or the Housing Trust it is necessary to go north to this area to provide homes and carry out the policy laid down by the Housing Trust. In view of all these things it is essential for the Government to provide as much fire protection as possible in the area.

A loan is to be made to the Municipal Tramways Trust. Recently we were told by the Treasurer and by the press that fares on tramway services would increase from a certain date. This will create hardship for those who must use public transport to travel to their employment because they have no alternative transport. Another matter that has concerned me is the indiscretion of the trust in discontinuing periodical tickets. I recently mentioned an employee living in Semaphore and working in Adelaide who paid £2 16s. 9d. a month for a five-day periodical ticket. This person will now pay £4 a month, which is an increase of £1 3s. 3d. People who were prepared to buy periodical tickets must have had some confidence in the trust as they were regular customers, and the trust is throwing away regular custom by this latest move. In reply to my question the Treasurer read a statement made by Mr. Keynes that the revenue from periodical tickets represented less than 2 per cent of the total revenue, but even that 2 per cent was significant and those patrons should be considered.

Mr. Lawn—Two per cent would be a considerable amount, wouldn't it?

Mr. TAPPING—Yes.

Mr. Frank Walsh—And it was an assured income.

Mr. TAPPING—It was.

Mr. Clark—Are there concessions to school children?

Mr. TAPPING—At certain ages. What concerns me is that, although Parliament makes so many grants to the trust, Parliament has no say in its administration. If a member asks a question of the Treasurer or the Minister of Works about the trust he eventually gets a reply that the trust has said so and so.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—Only today I gave an answer to an honourable member in which I said that I personally made an inspection.

Mr. TAPPING—When it comes to the major policy of the trust, members have no say at all, but we should have more say in these matters. Both sides of the House are concerned about the financial position of the trust, because it is deteriorating so fast. On the other hand, we realize that the service must be maintained for those who cannot afford motor cars. What I can never fully understand is that the trust has not been prepared to take over some lucrative bus services conducted by private enterprise. I have heard honourable members on this side refer to the bus service to Ferryden Park. One often sees 50 or 60 people queued up waiting to use this service. When the trust provides a service, one can say that it is regular.

I congratulate the Minister of Education on the way he has provided schools in my district. I have in mind the proposed high school for Taperoo and the LeFevre technical high school, both of which are necessary. I realize that finance and time are the important factors. My only criticism concerns the number of schools being built of timber but, because of the need to build them quickly, this cannot be avoided. Maintenance costs for timber structures are very heavy, and therefore, as soon as practicable, solid structures should be erected. I am concerned with the heavy prices often paid for land for schools. I have not the solution of the problem, but the Government should control the prices paid for land for this purpose. As much as £7,000 an acre has been paid. As the years go by, it becomes necessary for the Government to pay increased prices, but the Government should try to obtain land at the minimum price. When the Government attempts to buy land for a specific purpose it often has to pay dearly for it. I appeal to the Government to consider the matters I have mentioned. I support the first line.

Mr. HALL (Gouger)—It is with a certain trepidation I rise to address the House for the second time. I realize that some members have much experience behind them, and as I look forward I can see that I have much experience in front of me. Mr. Coumbe ably described the proposed expenditure on railways, particularly on rolling stock, on which, it appears, more than £2,000,000 will be spent. My electorate is closely affected, as the people served by the Gladstone line have had a very inadequate service over the years. They have been promised that within the next month or two they will be provided with a daily Bluebird car service to the city. I am sure that when this service starts and the

public use it they will appreciate the good work done by the department in modernizing its rolling stock. I urge these people to make use of the service on every occasion possible so that even if it is not fully an economic proposition it will receive sufficient support to enable it to be maintained.

The operations of the Transport Control Board are closely allied to railway operations. I think that no other Government Department is looked upon in country districts with such disfavour as this board. Some accusations against it are unjust, although others are true. Unfortunately, its job of necessity consists of saying "No" in most instances and anyone who says "No" continually becomes unpopular. The board meets only once a week and many members know what a delay of three or four days can mean to a primary producer. During the present drought year I know of one man who sold his lambs early, as he had no choice. The person who bought them was a processor who made meatmeal or some such thing out of them and they had to be delivered on a certain day; if that were not done the deal would fall through. On the day of delivery he had to have the lambs penned and hang on the telephone trying to obtain a permit from the board. He was able to get it on that day only because the board happened to be sitting. He gained the impression that it was only touch and go in his getting a permit.

In the course of my farming activities I once harvested some clover seed, and as it is a small seed it is usual to place it in one bag and then place the full bag in another bag to make sure that the seed does not leak. I had to send the seed to Woodside to have it cleaned, and as there is only about a fortnightly rail freight service I thought I would be able to obtain a permit from the board easily. Therefore, I placed the seed only in a single bag, as the handling involved in transport by motor truck is only half that required when rail transport is used, and I thought this would enable me to avoid taking the extra precautions. I approached the board, but was denied a permit. I explained the position and asked whether I would have to re-bag the seed or take a risk on the railway or could I get a permit; but I was refused a permit. Rather than re-bag the seed, I took the risk and sent it by rail. On one occasion roofing tiles were required for a building being erected at Balaklava. A local carrier offered to transport them for £40, but a permit was refused by the board. The tiles

were transported by rail, and, because of the special packaging necessary, it cost nearly £100.

Mr. Fred Walsh—What was the reason for the refusal?

Mr. HALL—That the railways could do it. When sent by rail, the tiles have to be handled four times as against twice if forwarded by truck. Farmers consider that the Transport Control Board operates against their interests and, because their requests for special permits are so often refused, they take the only course available to them and provide their own transport; therefore, instead of the Railways Department losing a small proportion of its business because special permits are granted, it loses the lot because a motor truck is expensive and, once purchased, it must be used to the maximum extent to make it payable. Through this short-sighted policy many small farmers have been forced to buy their own trucks, when otherwise they would have been content to have a carrier do their special jobs with a permit, and to allow the railways to do the remainder. There has been unfair criticism of farmers doing their own transport, but they have no alternative.

I am heartened by the fact that the Government intends to spend so much money to improve our water supplies. By the same token I am alarmed that waterworks construction is so costly. From the figures quoted by Mr. Laucke yesterday, it would appear that about £880,000 is to be spent on $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles of the Warren main. Because of the high interest charges and operating costs, including maintenance and the huge pumping costs, a huge annual deficit results. I ask, how far can we go in subsidizing this service? It is easy to see that a small section of the community—say, 10 per cent in some instances—may with justification be subsidized by 90 per cent of the population, but when 90 per cent are receiving the amenity it is impossible for the other 10 per cent to subsidize them. Where are we getting in this matter? We are taking money out of the right pocket and putting it in the left. The charges for services that nearly all the people have should be examined with this thought in mind.

Most speakers have kept to matters concerning their own electorates, but I was amazed and heartened to hear the member for Hindmarsh make what I think could be called "the" statement in this debate. He said, "I believe that competitive enterprise is the best we can get in any State or any age if

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it is competitive enterprise." Until he spoke in such a forthright manner I did not realize that we had so much in common, and I am beginning to wonder if perhaps he has not more in common with this side of the House than his own side. The least that can be thought is that he has been influenced by the very sound policy enunciated on this side of the House. I have much pleasure in supporting the first line.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla)—At the outset I, like other members, shall refer to the marathon effort by the Treasurer in introducing these Loan Estimates. Although a certain degree of admiration has been expressed regarding it, I cannot help wondering whether it is to the best advantage of the House that we have the Treasurer read 100 typewritten pages in order to present the Loan Estimates. It is a marathon effort and a matter of physical endurance, and it is questionable whether members can absorb so much read to them in that fashion. I do not think there is one member who would not gain more from the Loan Estimates by studying them afterwards when they were in print than from hearing the Treasurer's long speech. I cannot help feeling that if the Treasurer were to give us a reasonably brief general survey and have the remainder incorporated in *Hansard* without reading it we would get on just as well and absorb it just as well, if not better. I put forward that suggestion because it seems to me we are imposing upon the Treasurer a tremendous physical effort and something which, to a certain extent, wastes the time of the House.

The member for Semaphore raised the point of profitable bus services not being taken over by the Municipal Tramways Trust. This is just one of the symptoms of so many of the things connected with these Loan Estimates. The taxpayers always have to carry the least profitable and unprofitable services, while private enterprise skims off the cream. I feel sure members opposite will say that it is entirely wrong in principle that the trust should take over the profitable bus services. In fact, the Loan Estimates are really a survey of operations in the State which include what I would term the Cinderella operations, things that either cannot be made to pay directly or show little profit, and things which private enterprise does not want to run, but must have, in order to run its own more profitable enterprises. Even the member for Gouger, who has just spoken, said, regarding water services, that we were building up

a great deficit, and he could not see just how much further that could go without running us into great trouble.

Not only water services, but many other services mentioned in the Loan Estimates suffer from this particular malady. When we examine their background we find that many of them have considerable deficits. The fact is that private enterprise does not want any of these things because it cannot run them profitably. It thrusts them back on the State, and the State must run them for everybody's benefit, and they are at a grave disadvantage as a result. However, the unfortunate thing about it is that private enterprise never fails to point the finger of scorn at those particular State enterprises if they cannot be made to pay, and it says, "We need a few business men to run these shows and make a profit." I think it is an extremely bad position as far as the community is concerned that this position should not be recognized more than it is and faced up to.

When one examines the long list of Government activities for which Loan money is required for the current year one is struck by the fact that nearly, if not all those services, such as railways, water supply, housing, harbours accommodation and electric power supply, are services which private enterprise wants the Government to provide in an ever-increasing amount. Without these services private enterprise could not function. As I said before, private enterprise is always complaining about the cost of these services and expects them to be run either at a loss or with practically no margin of profit.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Not only private enterprise; society could not function without them.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Exactly. Some of these services are of such a type that they can only show indirect profits to the community in any event. If they could be run profitably they would be in the hands of private enterprise. We have repeatedly seen that happen in the history of Australia. As soon as one of these services can show a profit there is a move to take it away from Government control. All these services are affected in their costs by the inflationary policies pursued by private enterprise, including financial institutions. I refer to the policies of keeping interest rates up to the highest possible level and endeavouring to secure ever-increasing profits by monopoly and combination, and by using commercial methods which must force costs up.

The services in these Estimates are not only required by private enterprise in its industrial and commercial activities, but also by their employees and everybody else in the community. As soon as the employees seek higher wages to meet the extra cost of the services, which is almost entirely due to those inflationary movements, private enterprise immediately presents a combined and obstinate front to the employees' receiving those increases. I doubt whether even the member for Barossa will deny that that is a fairly accurate description of what takes place.

Mr. Coumbe—You do not like private enterprise?

Mr. LOVEDAY—I do not like what it is doing.

Mr. Coumbe—It has done pretty well for Whyalla.

Mr. LOVEDAY—At the same time, the inflationary policies referred to have the effect of preventing these Government services from securing Loan money as cheaply or at as low an interest rate as they might otherwise do. It is clear from the very nature of these Government services that they should have Loan money provided at special low rates, and an examination of the financial position of some of the services shows that one of the main reasons why they do not pay is the colossal interest burden they are carrying. If we examine their balance sheets we find that they usually have a large interest burden that has been accumulated over the years and relates, in many instances, to equipment that is either obsolete or worn out. As a consequence, this big interest burden is reflected in the charges. Mr. Laucke mentioned that a private investor, who has limited funds at his disposal, must be sure that his outlay will be remunerative to the extent that the interest on borrowed capital will be returned, together with a margin of profit to enable him to replace a capital asset by the time it has reached the end of its efficient and economic life. Why should not that apply to a Government service? It suffers the grave disadvantage of being a Cinderella activity, and obviously it cannot operate on the same basis as a profitable private enterprise, but must run at a loss or at such a small profit that it is neither here nor there. One reason is that it cannot get Loan money at a sufficiently low rate of interest.

I have raised this subject before and members will recall that I asked the Premier a question some time ago as to how much of the Loan moneys in these Estimates came directly from Commonwealth taxation, and he admitted

that about 50 per cent of it came that way. He said there was no way of insisting that we get the money free of interest. Whilst the present Commonwealth Government is in charge of Federal affairs obviously there is no hope of getting the money free of interest. Members opposite support that Government up to the hilt at crucial election times, so they must take the full share of the responsibility of our not getting Loan money more cheaply than we do. I see no reason why we should pay interest on taxation collected from us. If Government services need cheaper money, as they do, we should use it that way to give them something to offset the disadvantage they naturally incur through being Government services. The whole position is illogical and detrimental to the people. It is equally illogical to have the spectacle of members opposite seeking an extension of services and at the same time supporting the general policy in financial matters that must make it increasingly difficult for the services to be extended. Mr. Laucke wants more in his district, but at the same time he is ecstatic about the profits of General Motors-Holdens. Mr. Ham-bour said:—

We should get business by means of competition, not restriction. The railways should be able to beat road transport in getting business because they have many facilities not held by road transport, although road transport can take goods from door to door. Where business is available to them the railways should quote competitive prices.

Let us see whether the railways have the facilities and whether they can quote competitive prices. I will talk about the Eyre Peninsula system, because I know something about it. Recently there have been several reports in the *News* about the condition of the railway tracks on the Central Australian railway. It is interesting to learn about the tracks on the Eyre Peninsula railway. In my opinion the Railways Commissioner is doing his best within severely restricted limits—the limits to which I referred earlier in my speech. He is trying to keep the lines open for traffic but the bigger portion of the system needs rebuilding completely. The sleepers are worse than on the sections complained about on the Central Australian railway. In places they cannot be seen because they have sunk into the permanent way and have been covered. The rails are old and there have been instances of their having collapsed under trains. Of the 520 miles of track 225½ miles are subject to speed restrictions, as precautions against the condition of the track. The speed limits vary from 10 to 25 miles per hour. In addition,

there are several short distances where the speed is restricted to five miles an hour, because of the definitely unsafe conditions. At the present rate of relaying it is expected that the additional mileage subject to restriction will exceed by an expanding rate the mileage restored.

Recently the Treasurer said the building of a line between Port Augusta and Whyalla was being blocked by the Commonwealth Government. On the face of what is happening on the Eyre Peninsula railway it seems that by the time any connection between that system and Port Augusta is completed there will be nothing to connect. On October 1, 1957, I asked the Minister of Railways a question regarding the number of main line derailments on the Port Lincoln division, which is the Eyre Peninsula railway system. The number was given and it was also pointed out that for the year ended June 30, 1957, £212,000 was spent upon way and works on this division, 33,000 sleepers were renewed, and 2½ miles of railway relaid. Under such conditions what hope has the Eyre Peninsula railway system of competing with road transport. The reply also said:—

A great proportion of the lines on Eyre Peninsula are laid with light rails and it is estimated that it would cost £3,800,000 to relay with 63 lb. rails all tracks at present laid with rails lighter than 60 lb. The department has a relaying programme for the most heavily used parts of the division and this work, as well as sleeper replacements, will be pursued within the limits of our resources.

“Within the limits of our resources” are important words. The Railways Department has no resources because it works at a disadvantage. The railways are one of the Cinderella activities that cannot get sufficient cheap money to do the job which should be done, and which private enterprise complains about its not being able to do. Are not the farmers on Eyre Peninsula always complaining about the railways? Don't they want the Transport Control Board abolished because of the condition of the Eyre Peninsula railway? Mr. Bockelberg knows that what I am saying is correct.

Mr. Coumbe—What would you suggest?

Mr. LOVEDAY—The remedy is to provide sufficient money at a low enough interest rate to enable the job to be done and the railways to compete. The honourable member for Light should also have found out how the railways were treated on freight. I asked a question on October 16, 1958, and pointed out that the railways were suffering from unfair competition on freights sent to Melbourne. Although

the railways can carry from Adelaide to Melbourne the carton mentioned in that question, they are taken all the way by rail and by motor transport belonging to the South Australian Railways. They were taken to the point of delivery for 44s. and for the distance of three-quarters of a mile from the railway terminus in Melbourne to the point of delivery the cost was 38s. by private carrier, whereas the cost of transporting the same goods by road from Adelaide to Melbourne was 1s. 6d. less than the sum of those two amounts. In other words, there was a deliberate arrangement on the part of private transport to defeat the railways by charging an exorbitant price for the delivery of those goods from Melbourne to the point of delivery so that all those goods would in future go by road and not by rail. This information came to me from one of the highest officers in the South Australian Railways and there is no doubt about its accuracy. Let us see what the Treasurer had to say about that. I did not ask that road transport be prohibited but the Treasurer said:—

The Railways Department is fully alive to the problem and is continually investigating all possible means of winning back lost business.

In other words nothing was to be done about it, yet it is obvious from the information I received that there is a tremendous loss of freight from the railways through this particular avenue—from sheer unfair competition from road transport. I suggest that instead of getting up and saying the railways should compete, the Government should give them a chance to compete. When we are considering the Loan Estimates for these services, which are essential to everybody in the State, we should be seeking an effective solution of these problems instead of blaming railway officials and saying that they seem to be able to show only deficits.

The next unsatisfactory factor in the railways position is that train fares are to be put up. In other words, because the question of the loss of freight from the railways to road transport is not being adequately handled, investigated and dealt with, the people in the country are going to pay higher train fares. Because the Eyre Peninsula railways are in the condition they are in today they cannot compete with road transport as they should be able to and country people particularly are going to suffer as a consequence of this attitude towards railway policy.

Mr. Riches—The carriage of mail by air instead of by rail is not going to help either.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Not a bit. The honourable member for Light vaguely recognized this position in relation to Government services when he referred to water supplies in his district. He said:—

Certain parts of my district that have not been reticulated desire reticulation. I have pursued this question since my entry into Parliament, and I have come to the conclusion that under the existing policy these people will not get water. I think the reason is not that the policy was wrong originally, but that because of inflated costs they cannot meet the return required by the Government.

Of course, the honourable member was right. It is because of inflated costs, and who is responsible for the inflated costs? It is private enterprise that wants these things cheaply, but it is not prepared to permit anything to be done for the provision of cheap money to provide cheaper water. I see that the Minister of Agriculture has an amused smile on his face, but what is the alternative if cheap money is not provided for these services to be carried on? I certainly do not know of any alternative and the services are being carried on at a disadvantage all the time. No-one will deny that they cannot perform the same as private enterprise does. They must have favoured treatment and they are not getting it.

We come here each year, look through the Loan Estimates, and read the same story every time. Now fares have to be put up, the assessment has to go up and water charges have to be raised. It is all done to make the services creep over the top and remain solvent and to provide all the requirements members ask for—and it must be remembered that every member is asking for water supplies.

Mr. Hall—Are you suggesting there is some ultimate way of not paying for what is done?

Mr. LOVEDAY—No, but the Commonwealth Government could supply money through the Commonwealth Bank at 1 per cent and we could, without paying interest, get 50 per cent of the Loan money we are getting, if our own taxation came back to us free of interest.

Mr. Hall—Where does the Commonwealth get its money from?

Mr. LOVEDAY—Where do you think it gets it from? I want to show what is happening as to water to back up what I said about water rating at Whyalla. Some members are satisfied with water rating as opposed to paying for water on a consumption basis, but all will agree that water is apparently necessary all over the State and that it is one of our biggest problems. Water rating has been imposed and the case I quote is of a widow living in Whyalla who appealed against her assessment

of £80. At 13½ per cent on £80 her annual rate payment will be £10 16s., for which she will be allowed rebate water of 86,000 gallons. She ordinarily uses 30,000 gallons a year. She recently had a visit from two officials of the Engineering and Water Supply Department regarding this appeal and they blandly advised her that, in order to get over her difficulty, all she had to do was to get her friends to put in a lawn and she could use up the rebate water that way. In other words they were suggesting that she use 56,000 gallons a year more than she really needed in order to use up the rebate water, yet every member gets up and asks for a better water supply.

That instance refers to one person only, yet it involves 56,000 gallons more than she needs and I think that is a pretty important point. Already steps have to be taken to increase the pumping capacity of the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline and, in the light of the proposed expansion programme, that line will obviously have to be duplicated. Surely this aspect of the policy needs looking into. I particularly mentioned this instance to emphasize to the Minister what the effect of this could be on the amount of water that has to be delivered at the terminus of this pipeline.

I proceed now to housing. I have dealt with this matter on several occasions before, but it is very important and I think it will bear repetition because once again in these Estimates we find ourselves up against a similar situation as the number of houses to be built by the Housing Trust will be insufficient, in view of population trends and the number of applicants for the houses, and, once again, because of the failure to get cheaper money so that houses of modern design can be built and purchased by working people within a reasonable period.

This failure to secure cheaper money has, in my opinion, led to a debasement of design, as regards the size and layout of the rooms and the external appearance of Housing Trust homes. I am not criticizing the Housing Trust as such. Within the limits of the money supplied to it, it is doing an excellent job but, here again, it is up against the sort of difficulty experienced by other services. This debasement of design is not so noticeable where an odd house is being built here and there but a mass of houses, particularly of the semi-detached, rental type, presents an appearance of monotony and drabness that is difficult to overcome, no matter what the Housing Trust does to offset it. Although complaints have

been made from time to time to the Housing Trust, it says it is using every possible variation of design that it has in semi-detached, rental homes and is varying the colouring of bricks—in other words, it is doing everything to try to offset the monotony of what I would term the mass-produced home.

But still we get adverse comments from many observers. At a public meeting held at Whyalla only a few days ago this question was put as one of the main topics of discussion—“Why can't we have more varied designs in Housing Trust homes?” Where big expansion is planned, as in Whyalla, the number of houses required will run into thousands, many of which will have to be of this semi-detached rental type.

The effect of building down to a price is that the rooms themselves are smaller than they should be, the outside appearance is not what it should be and the whole general design is affected by the restriction imposed on the trust of endeavouring to keep these houses down to a price within the financial capacity of the people who rent them. The serious thing is that costs are not even stationary; they are still rising. What will be the next retrograde step? Anyone who has inspected these homes will agree that the rooms are now down to what may be termed the absolute minimum in size, and the outside appearance surely could not be made much worse; so that we have now reached the position where, if costs rise still further, the trust will be up against almost insuperable problems.

I suppose the Housing Trust could cut out some fittings or abandon even the small variety of designs that are now being used, but surely that is a particularly absurd and retrograde step to have to consider even for a moment. We are told that this State is most prosperous and we have improvements in technique in almost every industry; yet still we do not seem to be able to build good rental homes which will show progressive design, increased room space inside for the tenants and a general improvement that corresponds with the alleged prosperity and progress of industry. It just does not seem possible that we are unable, apparently, to solve this particular problem.

I find that I am not alone in this viewpoint but have some good supporters amongst people who are regarded as experts in this particular field. I notice that recently a Mr. R. G. Warren, a leading Canberra architect, advocated that a symposium of Australian

University experts should be called to find a solution of the housing cost problem. He said that the matter warranted an inquiry along similar lines to the recent inquiry made into wool problems. He pointed out that £400,000,000 annually was involved in the wool question, and approximately the same amount was being spent on buildings, mostly houses. The matter was just as important, obviously, from a financial point of view, and he advocated that it should be dealt with at University level. He said that economists, sociologists, scientists and anthropologists should take part in the inquiry. In the last 20 years house costs had risen by 350 per cent, and were still rising. The £1,000 house of 1939 had become the £4,500 house of 1959. In reference to that, I draw the attention of honourable members to the fact that, when I have spoken on this matter before, I have pointed out that in 1938 a house could be obtained for approximately £850 and that it would take about 23 per cent of a tradesman's wages to purchase it on a 20-year term; but that in 1958 for a comparable house it would take 33 per cent of that tradesman's wages to purchase it over a 20-year term.

The Premier endeavoured to make the point that the houses I was referring to were not comparable, but I point to the fact that this leading Canberra architect in his statement bears out precisely the position that I have set out before. I do not think it can be denied that that is the exact position. Experts in the field of home building assure us that a reduction of costs will not be brought about by using conventional means. Some economies could be effected by reducing the number and quality of the fittings in a house, but this would be quite contrary to the current trend. Mr. Warren went on to say that the inquiry should not be conducted solely by building experts and it should go deeply into the first principles of ordinary living for this half of the Twentieth Century.

I have another very good supporter in Sir Douglas Copland, who suggested the formation of a national housing mortgage bank to stimulate home building by providing finance at a reasonable rate of interest. Once again, this question of a reasonable rate of interest arises, this time I think from a quite unimpeachable authority—for no honourable member opposite would challenge Sir Douglas Copland's authority on this point. He said that it should be as simple to buy a home on time payment as it was to buy a television set. We all know it is not, and that involved in the

sale of television sets is the lending of money at at least 8 per cent interest by the investors, so naturally more money goes towards the buying of television sets and less to housing.

Addressing the Victorian Institute of Builders, Sir Douglas said that Australia was building about 70,000 houses a year, but there was a need for 85,000, increasing by five per cent each year. He said that both time-payment and unit fixed trusts worked on as much as eight per cent and that "You can't build a nation on eight per cent interest. It just won't work." That last comment puts in a nutshell what I have been saying during most of my remarks. It all comes down to the question of the search for high and exorbitant interest rates and the failure to recognise that cheaper money has to be provided for the Government services mentioned in the Loan Estimates. One of the interesting aspects concerning the debasement of design in housing is that when houses were being built for profit the experts on city building pointed out that that had invariably led to debasement of design. However, we now find that when houses are no longer built for profit in any quantity and the community has to turn to a Government institution to build the great majority of houses to meet the community's demand, even that Government institution has to debase its designs because it cannot get sufficient money at a low enough rate of interest to perform the job properly.

Mr. King—That isn't the sole reason.

Mr. LOVEDAY—It is the main reason.

Mr. Coumbe—What rate would you suggest?

Mr. LOVEDAY—I am enunciating the general principle. If I started arguing about interest rates we would get nowhere.

Mr. Coumbe—What do you regard as a low rate?

Mr. LOVEDAY—I have already indicated that 50 per cent of the Loan money we are debating about today comes straight from the taxation levelled on South Australians and that it could be recovered, if the Commonwealth Government were willing, free of interest. I have also pointed out, as has Dr. Evatt, that the Commonwealth Government could supply money at one per cent interest.

Lewis Mumford, a world authority, in his book *Culture of Cities*, says, in effect, that except for the income groups well on the comfort level, the building of houses for profit has been carried on throughout the western world only by a debasement of design, systematic overcrowding of the land and overpopulation of the interior quarters on the part

of those who must eventually rent them. The only way that description does not fit what is now being done by the Housing Trust is the question of systematic overcrowding of the land, and that is only because we have a lot of land. However, the other factors apply although there is no logical reason why they should. I regard this as one of the most serious problems of our day. Members opposite, including the member for Gouger (Mr. Hall), have spoken of the need for people to save to buy their own homes. They always emphasise the virtues of people buying their own homes, and if they think that so important in the social life of our community—and I agree it is—surely we should get down to the fundamentals of how that can be achieved rather than continue to talk about wanting a house here, another house there, and the Housing Trust doing a good job. We know that the trust is doing its best within its financial limits, but it is being restricted in its efforts, and it needs a totally different approach on policy in order to achieve the results members opposite claim to believe in.

The member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke) mentioned that the Loan Estimates were based on sound Liberal tenets of finance and he drew a comparison between the Liberal tenets of policy

in this State and those enunciated by Sir Winston Churchill. Of course, I thought he made rather a bad choice for comparisons because Sir Winston Churchill was never really happy as a member of the Liberal Party in Great Britain, and I do not think anyone would disagree if they read his history. Furthermore, apart from the fact that the word "Liberal" is the same in both places, I do not think there is much resemblance because, after all, the Liberal Party in Great Britain was opposed to monopoly in every form. It fought the House of Lords and deprived it of its financial powers. I cannot see any tendency in that direction towards the counterpart in South Australia. The Liberal Party in Great Britain fully supported democratic government, so it seems to me that the likeness ends with the name. There is a tremendous disparity in their aims. I support the first line.

The CHAIRMAN—It is my intention to put the lines *seriatim*.

First line—State Bank, £3,462,000—passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.48 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, August 25, at 2 p.m.