

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.**

Thursday, October 15, 1959.

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

**QUESTIONS.****MORGAN-WHYALLA MAIN  
DUPLICATION.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—It is reported in this morning's press that the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline is to be duplicated over certain distances and eventually over the whole distance in order to supply additional water to the areas concerned. For many years requests have been made for improved water supplies for Terowie and Quorn, both in my electorate. Can the Premier say whether, when the duplication project is referred to the Public Works Committee, it would be possible for the committee in conducting its inquiry to consider the possibility of supplying water to those towns?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I think that the committee does, as a matter of practice, when examining any project, try to determine whether it is likely to meet the essential requirements of additional projects that may later be decided on. Whether the committee, in this inquiry, would consider the two towns mentioned by the honourable member is, in my opinion, doubtful. I will confer with the Minister of Works and the Engineer-in-Chief to see what is involved and will give the Leader a report in due course.

I should like to correct a statement I made last night. It is reported this morning that I said the Government was going to undertake the sifting and cleaning of scree ore at Whyalla at the expense of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company. What I meant to say was that it was most likely that the Government would construct the 24-inch branch pipeline from Lincoln Gap to Iron Knob, which is now requested, at the expense of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company which, I believe, proposes to pay for the capital cost of the line. The Government is not in any way interested in the physical work of cleaning the scree ore.

Mr. HEASLIP—I appreciate that this project is to be started from this end rather than the other end. I understand that the first stage will be from Hanson to Baroota. A large pocket in my electorate has been waiting and hoping to receive Murray water. When the Public Works Committee investigates this scheme, will it be prepared to take evidence

from the landholders of Hornsdale, Appila, Wirrabara, Booleroo Centre, Melrose and possibly Orroroo? Orroroo has been successful in getting a supply from a bore and is comparatively all right, but the other towns are without water, except Booleroo Centre, which has a restricted supply. Will every opportunity be given to these people to submit evidence to the committee?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—It is a Parliamentary committee and not under the direction of the Government in any sense whatever. However, I am certain that it will, as it always has done, take the views of the people concerned. I will see that the question is placed before the committee formally so that it will not be lost sight of. I am certain that the committee will accede to the request.

Mr. QUIRKE—In connection with the proposed duplication of the Morgan-Whyalla main, I have already placed before the department one or two projects that are pending. The interest now, of course, is in the time factor. Can the Premier state whether the duplication will take place within three years, or two years—because it can affect schemes at present projected, particularly one at Burra?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Up to now we have been held up pending some information from the Broken Hill Proprietary Company as to their water requirements and the schedules under which they would expect that water to be delivered. As the honourable member knows the Broken Hill Proprietary Company tendered evidence to the Government on the water requirements of the steel industry at Whyalla; but the position regarding Iron Knob was not nearly so clear. In the first place, two types of ore have to be treated and each type has to have a different system evolved for it. It was not known what the use of water would be in either case. As I said in last night's broadcast, the company now has been able to inform us of its requirements, which are a maximum of 2,000,000 gallons a day. That is the ultimate requirement for the industry at Iron Knob. The first stage in supplying additional water will be fairly soon, but we are at the moment in a very difficult position with regard to the northern water supply, and steps have to be taken now to curtail consumption from the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline.

Honourable members know that this has become a most urgent matter for the State. The duplication of the pipeline is a very big work. I will not pretend to give an estimate of the cost today, but I assume it would be well

over £10,000,000, so a good deal of planning work remains to be done. The Engineer-in-Chief believes that he will be able to have the project sufficiently well planned to go before the Public Works Standing Committee in a few months' time. From then on it will move forward as quickly as the approval, materials, and money can be obtained. The work will be done in stages. It will ultimately cost a very large sum because it will be an undertaking to at least double the capacity of the present line. That in itself was quite a big project.

Mr. Riches—Is the company helping to finance this?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—No. The company is paying for the water. As I told the Leader of the Opposition, the company will probably pay the capital cost of the Lincoln Gap to Iron Knob extension and purchase water from us at Lincoln Gap, as provided under the Indenture Bill. The duplication of the line itself is necessary because of several other factors quite outside the company's activities. The company will require probably 1,000,000,000gall. at Whyalla and ultimately about 700,000,000gall. at Iron Knob. Since the line was established, all the power stations at Port Augusta have been established, the Woomera project has been connected, the whole of Yorke Peninsula has been connected, and water has been reticulated as far as Peterborough, so that the conception of the whole scheme has changed completely from merely the supply originally proposed for Whyalla for the iron ore industry and the ship building yards. It will now become a matter of urgency particularly in dry years.

#### WATER SUPPLY FOR NEW OVAL.

Mr. COUMBE—A sporting body in my electorate desires to establish a rather large playing oval immediately. It intends to plant this with lawn seed but, as the cost of the seed will probably be about £200 to £300, is considerably worried about the prospects of watering that oval during the coming dry summer. Can the Minister in charge of the Engineering and Water Supply Department give the House any information about water supply during the coming season?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—During the last few months by the continuous use of every pumping plant at our command and every possible source of supply, we have been able, with the co-operation of the public, which has been of material assistance, gradually to build up the water supply in the metropolitan reservoirs to a figure now slightly in excess of

6,000,000,000 gallons. That will enable us to meet normal requirements through the coming summer, providing the co-operation of the public continues in reasonable measure. We hope, therefore, to be able to supply sufficient water to maintain existing gardens, lawns, and household gardens up to a point.

New commitments, however, are a matter in which I am sure the Government would appreciate some restraint on the part of the people concerned. I hesitate to say that we could, or would like to, encourage any new plantings of ovals to any great extent. Several inquiries of this nature have reached me and in each case I have told the inquirers, "If you can possibly defer the planting of your new oval for a year, I am sure that would be of material assistance." I suggest, therefore, that, where it is not absolutely essential that new plantings be undertaken this year, it would be of considerable assistance to the department, and to the Government, if they could be deferred for this summer. It would be a serious matter, as the honourable member suggests, if due to perhaps extreme circumstances—hot conditions lasting over long periods when the draw-off of water exceeded the normal by a great amount—the seed having been planted, restrictions were necessary. Possibly, the seed would be lost, with a heavy loss of money involved in securing more seed for replanting. In some new areas proposed to be planted, it would be appreciated if the plantings could be deferred until this crisis has passed, and until after this coming summer.

#### JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. HUTCHENS—In view of the unfortunate passing of Mr. Justice Piper and the contemplated retirement of Mr. Justice Abbott, has the Government taken any steps to fill the vacancies that will be caused in the judiciary and, if so, when can we expect a decision?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The matter is being actively considered. No decision has yet been reached, but I hope it will be shortly.

#### ST. MARGARET'S HOSPITAL.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Premier a reply to my question of September 16 regarding whether the Queen Elizabeth Hospital has entered into reciprocal arrangements for the care of age pensioners who have to go to St. Margaret's Hospital at Semaphore?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have received a report from the Hospitals Department and am pleased to be able to advise the honourable member that as from

October 5, 1959, convalescent patients from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital will be transferred to the St. Margaret's Convalescent Home at Semaphore, and that the cost of such accommodation will be borne by the Hospitals Department.

#### BLACKWOOD SCHOOL TOILETS.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my question of October 6 directed to the Minister of Education regarding the toilets at the Blackwood school?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I am pleased to be able to inform the honourable member that a tender was accepted this morning for the construction of and improvement to toilets and ablution facilities at the school, and the contractor has undertaken to commence the work within the next week or two.

#### SCHOOL DEMONSTRATION ASSISTANTS.

Mr. CLARK—I share the pleasure of the Minister of Education in the increased numbers now being admitted to the Teachers College, but I was rather perturbed yesterday to be told on excellent authority that apparently there is a shortage of demonstration assistants in our schools. In fact, I am informed that at one practising school there has been for some time a shortage of two demonstration assistants. The Minister will realize that, if the number of these teachers is short, teaching students may not get the necessary attention, and an extra burden is placed on the present demonstration assistants. Is there a shortage of applicants for the position of demonstration assistants in practising schools? If not, will it soon be possible to fully staff the schools?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—As I understand the position, there is a shortage of demonstration assistants, but I did not know there was a shortage of applications. However, I know that the problem is being considered by the Director of Education and his principal officers at present and every effort is being made to relieve the shortage as soon as possible. I agree with the honourable member that it is necessary for the shortage to be overcome without delay.

#### MILK ZONING LICENCES.

Mr. LAUCKE—Will the Minister of Agriculture ascertain whether the Metropolitan Milk Board will not grant a zoning licence in the northern metropolitan areas to any vendor who does not subscribe certain fees to the Retail Milk Vendors Association?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—Although I can say immediately that that is not correct, I will refer the honourable member's question to the Metropolitan Milk Board and ask whether it would like to make a statement.

#### PORT PIRIE GAS PRICE.

Mr. McKEE—The price of gas at Port Pirie is at least 50 per cent above the price in the metropolitan area. It is the policy of the Housing Trust to put gas stoves in the homes it builds at Port Pirie, and the high price of gas is causing concern among the tenants of these homes, who want to know if it is a just price. Will the Premier obtain a report from the Prices Department as to why there is such a great difference between the price of gas at Port Pirie and that in Adelaide?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I shall be pleased to do that and to give the honourable member the information.

#### STOCK FEED.

Mr. HAMBOUR—Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to my recent question concerning statements made by Senator Mattner when opening the Kapunda Show?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I have examined the position and am now able to make the following report: The Commonwealth Government last paid a subsidy on wheat in 1951-52. On that occasion a subsidy of 2s. a bushel was paid in all States on wheat used for poultry, pig and dairy cattle feeding, but not for the sheep. The subsidy scheme was dropped when wheat stabilization legislation was introduced at that time. The origin of this subsidy was not related to drought conditions but was simply to support the sideline industries in a period of high wheat prices. In 1957 the New South Wales wheat crop was approximately 10,000,000 bushels. Of this crop only 3,500,000 bushels were delivered to the Australian Wheat Board, the other 6,500,000 bushels being retained on farms for seed or feed purposes. Wheat had to be imported from overseas and from other States. The various costs involved were charged to the New South Wales consumers, and this was done by the New South Wales Government's imposing a loading of 4s. 0½d. a bushel. This represented the average added costs. On this occasion the New South Wales Government approached the Commonwealth Government for a subsidy, but the application was rejected. The honourable member asked if we would ask the Wheat Board to curtail exports of wheat from this State in view of the shortage, so I

should like to add that Senator Mattner's statement was incorrect. I would be glad, however, to know from the honourable member if Senator Mattner's remarks implied some offer from the Commonwealth Government; perhaps he could ascertain this from the Senator. As I said in reply to the honourable member when he asked this question a few days ago, the Premier has written to the Prime Minister pointing out the serious situation facing South Australia. In this letter the Premier requested the Commonwealth Government to give these matters its urgent attention and make suitable arrangements with the Wheat Board to ensure that adequate wheat is retained in this State to meet local requirements but, as far as I know, no reply has yet been received.

#### HOUSING TRUST RENT COLLECTIONS.

Mr. TAPPING—Some tenants of the Housing Trust have asked me to ascertain whether it is possible for the trust to improve its method of rent collection. The trust's rent collector takes up a position in the street and the tenants must take the rent to his motor car. Will the Premier see whether the trust could adopt a system of rent collection similar to that practised by private landlords, or at least improve the present method?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will ask the chairman of the Housing Trust to prepare a report for the honourable member. I understand the present method has been devised in the interests of economy because every additional cost incurred by the trust is passed back to the tenants. The trust builds houses and provides services as cheaply as it can and any additional cost ultimately finds its way back in the form of increased rent.

#### GLENCOE-KALANGADOO ROAD.

Mr. HARDING—In a report in this morning's *Advertiser* headed "South-East Rail Support Urged" the Minister of Railways urged that produce from Glencoe be carted by road to Kalangadoo and forwarded from there to Adelaide by rail. Will the Minister of Works ascertain from the Minister of Roads whether an assurance was ever given to the dairymen, primary producers and other residents of Glencoe East and Glencoe West that an all-weather road would be maintained between the two townships and the rail head at Kalangadoo and whether it was suggested that the road would ultimately be bituminized? If so, will he inquire what steps have been

taken by the district councils to complete this undertaking?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I will refer the question to my colleague and bring down a reply.

#### TAX CONCESSIONS ON GIFTS TO SCHOOL COMMITTEES.

Mr. BYWATERS—On July 30 I asked the Minister of Education whether he would take up, on a Ministerial level, the possibility of having gifts to school committees recognized as taxation deductions. Has he a reply?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes. As I promised the honourable member when he asked his question on July 30, I immediately took up this matter with the Federal Treasurer. I have now received, through the honourable the Premier, a reply from the Prime Minister which reads as follows:—

On August 14, 1959, the Honourable B. Pattinson, your Minister of Education, wrote to the Commonwealth Treasurer, the Right Honourable H. E. Holt, asking him to give consideration to a proposal to allow as deductions for income tax purposes gifts to school committees towards funds for providing facilities and amenities for departmental schools. I should be obliged if you would advise Mr. Pattinson that this proposal was one of the many relating to the taxation legislation which were considered when our Budget for this financial year was being prepared. In the event, my Government decided to confine concessions to those announced by the Treasurer in his Budget speech. However, I shall see that this suggestion is listed for consideration when the income tax legislation is again under review.

Let us hope that both the consideration and the decision of the Commonwealth Government will be favourable. The work of schools, school councils, school committees and other parents' and friends' organizations in South Australia has been simply magnificent, and has been of tremendous assistance to the State Government and a constant source of inspiration to me as Minister of Education. In the short space of less than six years since I have been Minister, they have raised nearly £1,250,000 for school purposes as follows:—1954, £135,000; 1955, £191,000; 1956, £203,000; 1957, £211,000; 1958, £220,000; 1959 (estimated), £250,000—a total of £1,210,000. However, what is immensely more important than the huge sum of money is that this widespread interest displayed by the parents engenders in the minds of the children the feeling that the home and school are working together in perfect unison and harmony for their education, enlightenment and advancement in life.

# LAND VALUATIONS.

Mr. STOTT—My question involves a matter of policy. At present there are four different bases for the valuation of land: the Land Tax Department valuation, the Waterworks valuation, the valuation for succession duties, and district council valuations. In respect of succession duties a considerable delay occurs before agreement is reached between the Federal and State authorities and this affects the probate on estates. In the last two years we have had experience in this Parliament of discrepancies relating to land values in respect of areas close to the city where land used for primary production is valued differently from subdivisional land. This is creating much concern at present. Will the Premier place this matter before Cabinet and ascertain the views of various departments on the possibility of establishing one valuating authority which could settle these anomalies?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—As State Treasurer the idea has many attractions to me, but as a district council ratepayer it has no attractions whatsoever. It is true that we have a number of valuations for a number of different purposes, but I doubt whether any strong support exists anywhere in South Australia for a uniform valuation for all purposes. I have seen some correspondence directed at the question of the high values that are being assessed by some district councils for land with subdivisional potential but still being used for agricultural purposes. Of course, that question has been dealt with by legislation. Under the Town Planning Act, if a person desires to keep his land for rural purposes he can apply to the Governor to have that land proclaimed as agricultural land and it is then assessed for all taxation purposes on its production value, but of course it is not then subject to subdivisional values. Some applications have been made under that provision, but generally there is great reluctance to make such applications, because while some landholders might not like to pay the district council rate, on the other hand they dislike losing the subdivisional value.

## PORT AUGUSTA HOSPITAL POWER.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Premier a reply to questions I have asked recently about the installation of an emergency power unit at the Port Augusta Hospital?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes. The Assistant Manager of the Electricity

Trust, Mr. Huddleston, has supplied the following report:—

The Port Augusta Hospital has two small emergency lighting plants and in the normal course of events it would seem unnecessary to install a comparatively large auxiliary set for emergency use. Unfortunately, the Port Augusta area has had more than an average number of interruptions to power supply and this has no doubt raised the question of emergency plant. The interruptions have in many cases been associated with construction work at the Port Augusta power station. Supply to the town is obtained by a 33,000 volt transmission line from the power station main switchyard and construction work in this switchyard and elsewhere on the station has on several occasions necessitated planned interruptions of the supply to Port Augusta.

Such planned interruptions differ from breakdowns in two ways. Firstly, consumers can be notified in advance and secondly they may be of several hours' duration, depending on the amount of work to be done. Breakdowns in supply can usually be dealt with quickly and power restored. We still have future work to do which will require disconnection of the line to Port Augusta. For example, both the new 132,000 volt lines to Woomera and Leigh Creek must be strung over the top of the Port Augusta feeder which must be deadened while the 132,000 volt wires are being erected. In view of the number and duration of these planned interruptions, we propose that on such occasions in future we will provide a portable auxiliary plant to continue supply to the hospital. This will be done unless the planned interruption to supply is expected to be only of short duration.

The trust cannot guarantee absolute continuity of supply since there is always risk of transmission line or transformer breakdown. However, these should be infrequent and can be dealt with without delay now that the trust is operating the direct supply of power in Port Augusta township and has breakdown gangs available. The question of whether an auxiliary plant should be permanently installed at the hospital is one of policy. We always advise that sufficient plant be available for emergency lighting and this apparently already exists. We believe that supply from the Port Augusta Power Station will in future be more reliable than it has in the past, and we will provide temporary relief for the hospital for prolonged planned disconnections. In these circumstances it would probably be reasonable to defer the installation of any further auxiliary plant to see whether these measures will prove adequate.

## MOUNT BURR COMMUNITY HALL.

Mr. CORCORAN—Has the Minister of Forests a reply to a question I asked last Tuesday relating to the proposed new community hall at Mount Burr?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I have inquired about this and find that the plans of the building are ready, but the specifications have yet to be typed. They are voluminous

and a number of copies must be typed before tenders are called for. It is expected that tenders will be called for in two weeks' time.

#### WHYALLA CENTRAL PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Has a definite decision been reached yet about the replacement of the library building at the Whyalla central primary school and, if so, can the Minister of Education say when the work is likely to be done?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—No; I am afraid I am not in a position to inform the honourable member, but I will have a reply by next Tuesday.

#### TELEVISION CHAIRS.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier any information to give me regarding my recent question concerning the poor quality of television chairs being sold in other States, and is there any occurrence of this in South Australia?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have the docket of the Prices Commissioner on this subject and it is available to any honourable member. He has furnished me with the following reply:—

Following the query raised in the House by the Leader of the Opposition concerning a report that poor quality television chairs were flooding Sydney and Melbourne markets, it is advised that inquiries have been made by the Prices Department, but there is no evidence that anything of a similar nature is occurring in this State.

#### STOCK DISPOSAL.

Mr. HEASLIP—My question relates to the matter I raised yesterday regarding the disposal of surplus stock interstate, which was followed by a question by Mr. O'Halloran about rebate on store stock carried on the railways. I have always understood that the rebate applied only to stock travelling within the State. If the store stock rate still applies, does it apply to stock travelling not only within the State, but also to another State?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Since these two questions were raised I have obtained information and find that the store stock rate was first introduced in South Australia in 1934 and continued off and on until 1952, when it was cancelled. It did not at any time apply to stock moving interstate, but only to stock moving from one part of South Australia to another. This does not take the question much further forward in relation to relief regarding drought stock, and I can only suggest to honourable members that if anyone sees an oppor-

tunity to move stock interstate and a special rail freight is desired, if they advise me of the fact, I will see what arrangements can be made.

#### SIRENS ON AMBULANCES.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Has the Premier a reply to my question of August 11 regarding the use of sirens on ambulances?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The matter was referred to both the St. John Ambulance Brigade and the Commissioner of Police, and has been considered by the State Traffic Committee, which has decided to recommend that no action be taken. The Commissioner of Police has instructed that the police will not use sirens on police vehicles between midnight and 6 a.m. The St. John Ambulance Brigade has also given certain instructions, and perhaps it might be useful if I read the following letter addressed to the State Traffic Committee by the brigade:—

Due consideration has been given over some years to the problem of when and when not to use a siren as an additional road warning, if sirens are in fact to be used at all. As an experiment, at one stage in 1958 all sirens were disconnected, and in a few days the danger of adopting this policy was proved. Cases of poisoning, haemorrhage, serious accident, sudden complications at childbirth, and a dangerous condition in a prematurely born baby proved conclusively that the fitting of sirens to our vehicles was necessary. On the other hand the problem of when and when not to use a siren has to be left to the discretion of the crew, who in turn could diagnose the severity of the injuries or the seriousness of the case in varying degrees of urgency. In general the following cases can be a guide as to when sirens may be used, depending on traffic conditions:—

1. Poisoning.
2. Internal haemorrhage.
3. Proceeding to a road accident, and in some cases proceeding from a road accident.
4. Drowning, asphyxia, electrocution.
5. If urgency is stressed by a doctor, especially in unusual circumstances, e.g., transport of blood plasma, provision of oxygen for serious heart cases, movement of a baby by humid crib.
6. If police request our presence urgently.

We find that motorists co-operate with us in our problems, although the introduction of legislation requiring vehicles to pull as far as practicable to the left of the road when hearing a siren would help. We would also be quite agreeable to legislation prohibiting the use of sirens between midnight and 6 a.m. I am certain that your committee can see our problems, especially when public opinion expects help for accident victims to be available in a few minutes, and when anxiety produced by accident or serious illness can over-exaggerate a time lag in our arrival. We have also proved on occasions that criticism

of our use of sirens has been misdirected, there having been none of our vehicles on the road at the times stated.

I assure the honourable member that the sirens will be used by the brigade as little as possible, and that the police use of sirens will be discontinued between the hours I mentioned.

#### USE OF LAND ALONGSIDE HIGHWAYS.

Mr. LAUCKE—Has the Minister of Works representing the Minister of Roads a reply to my question of October 7 concerning the use of land alongside highways?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—My colleague has furnished me with the following reply:—

Where land has been acquired for road purposes, the Highways Department is considering the possibility of allowing the fences to remain until the wider strip is needed for further construction. Every case will, however, have to be treated on its merits. As the land, when opened as road, is vested in the respective district councils, these bodies will be responsible for the leasing of sections of road.

#### PORT PIRIE HARBOUR BEACONS.

Mr. McKEE—Has the Minister of Marine a reply to my question of last week regarding the replacement of beacons in the Port Pirie harbour?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The General Manager of the Harbors Board has supplied me with the following information:—

The side channel beacons Nos. 1 and 5 at Port Pirie which collapsed during recent heavy weather, were replaced temporarily with buoys fitted with flashing lights. Appropriate Notices to Mariners were issued. The board's workboat will sail from Port Adelaide about the 15th instant to carry out jobs at various outposts and is programmed to reach Port Pirie towards the end of November. There she will be engaged in constructing beacons in connection with the dredging of the entrance channel and in replacing Nos. 1 and 5 beacons with new structures. These two beacons will be replaced sooner, however, if a suitable pontoon can be made available at Port Pirie and weather permits.

#### OSBORNE-TAPEROO AREA FIRE PROTECTION.

Mr. TAPPING—A few weeks ago in reply to my question about the need for greater fire protection in the Osborne-Taperoo area, the Premier said, in effect, that discussions had taken place between the Fire Brigades Board and Port Adelaide City Council. I have learned that the Postmaster-General's Department has decided to install three new public telephones in the area—at Dover Terrace, Largs North; Lantana Street, Draper; and Cool-

gardie Street, Draper. That is an improvement, but will the Premier request the Fire Brigades Board to install fire alarms in this area, as temporary homes present a fire hazard.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes.

#### NORTHERN WATER RESTRICTIONS.

Mr. RICHES—In reply to a question concerning the duplication of the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline the Premier said that it is now quite apparent that there will be water restrictions in the northern districts during the coming summer. The Minister of Works has warned us that, if we do not receive rain, restrictions are possible, but no definite statement has so far been made, and the people in these districts are anxious to know what the situation will be. Is the Minister now able to make any statement?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Yes. The Engineer-in-Chief made a report to me yesterday that indicated that it is necessary almost at once to impose water restrictions in the area served by the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline system. This includes the northern towns which, of course, are well known, and Yorke Peninsula, which draws it supplies mainly from Bundaleer, which is supplied from that line. Cabinet has not yet approved the restrictions, but will consider the matter at its normal meeting next Monday. If restrictions are approved, I expect that the proclamation will be dealt with by His Excellency the Governor in Executive Council on Thursday next.

#### MINING OPERATIONS AT OPAL FIELDS.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Has the Premier any information in reply to a question I asked last week regarding special mining leases granted to companies using bulldozers to mine opal at Andamooka and Coober Pedy?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have not yet received the report, but I will advise the honourable member as soon as it is forwarded to me. Sometimes, when a report is required from another department, it takes longer to obtain than if it were to come from my own department. This report will have to be obtained from the Director of Mines, and I have not yet received it.

#### WATER SUPPLY FOR STOCK ROUTE.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—A statement was made recently that a boring party is operating in the north-eastern corner of this State with a view to overcoming water shortages on the stock route from those areas to the Peterborough-Cockburn railway line. Will the Minister

of Lands say whether there are any unoccupied Crown lands in that area and, if there are, whether they can be allotted, assuming that the operations to procure permanent water for the stock route are successful?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I will obtain a report for the honourable member for Tuesday next.

#### SUPPLY BILL (No. 3).

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.

#### CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 1).

His Excellency the Governor, by message, informed the House that he had reserved the Bill for the signification of Her Majesty the Queen's pleasure thereon.

#### LAND SETTLEMENT ACT AMENDMENT ACT.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the Act.

#### POLICE PENSIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Police Pensions Act, 1954-1957.

Motion carried.

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

#### THE BUDGET.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from October 13. Page 1049.)

Grand total, £80,323,000.

Mr. FRED WALSH—When last discussing the Budget I was about to speak of the Factories Department. I have more than once told the House about the inadequacy of the inspectorate of that department. The Auditor-General's report of this year shows total receipts of the department as £70,669 from

different sources, and the departmental expenditure, including administration, inspectional staff, attendance fees and a refund of £100 to the Harbors Board for inspections, is shown as £61,384, which results in an excess of receipts over payments for the year of £9,285. That is quite uncommon in most departments, yet we find that in this department the staff is totally inadequate. In my view, and in the view of the trade union movement, the result of that understaffing has been generally that the awards and determinations, under which 50 per cent of the employees in South Australia work, are not properly policed.

I raised this matter last week when I asked the Premier, as acting Minister of Industry, a question on a ruling given by the Chief Inspector of Factories concerning community hotels. The Chief Inspector's ruling, after he had studied certain judgments that were published in the South Australian Industrial Reports—he quoted one in particular dealing with community hospitals—was that community hotels were outside the ambit of "industry" as defined in the Industrial Code.

I disagree with the views expressed by the Chief Inspector of Factories, therefore I asked the question of the Premier last week. Unfortunately, sufficient time has not yet elapsed for a reply to be given to my question. I wanted to have the report checked by the Crown Law Office to see if its view coincided with the view of the Chief Inspector of Factories. A serious position will develop if the ruling is correct and the trade union movement will endeavour to have the Industrial Code amended to make it conform to what we believe should be the correct position.

Although we do not disagree with the viewpoints expressed in the reported judgments relating to community hospitals, we believe that the position is different when related to community hotels. Community hotels are becoming more and more numerous in this State and the position could become all the more serious. A judgment on which the Chief Inspector relied when giving his ruling, appears in volume 25 of the South Australian Industrial Reports and deals with the Hospital Employees Case. I quote from page 193 as follows:—

In the parts of the Code dealing with industrial arbitration, industrial boards (whose functions are in substance those of the older wages boards) and the new Board of Industry, the word industry is separately defined, and in each instance defined in identical terms. In the part dealing with factories the old



definition of the earlier Acts is re-enacted. The Industrial Code 1920, by its interpretation clause, varies, and in some respects cuts down the general meaning of the word industry, as used in this legislation. Apart from the specific inclusion of the council of any municipality in the definition of employer, the employees of a municipal corporation would not be included. Municipal corporations do not "carry on a business, trade, manufacture or calling by way of trade or for purposes of gain;" yet their undertaking was an industry under the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912. Looking at these definition clauses and their history, the conclusion is, to my mind, irresistible that the legislature, when framing the definition of industry in the Industrial Code, 1920, purposely used the phrase "by way of trade or for purposes of gain," appearing in the factories legislation, legislation which had received judicial consideration, and inserted it without any variation in the new definition of industry. So careful has it been to preserve the precise words that it has produced the real or apparent tautology "in any trade . . . carried on by way of trade." In my judgment, therefore, these words should receive the same interpretation in the definition of industry as they have received in the definition of factory.

If it could be argued that community hotels did not carry on for profit or gain to any individual or group of individuals and were therefore not subject to award conditions, it could be just as legitimately argued that municipal bodies did not carry on for gain. They carry on for an express purpose but who would suggest—and I am sure the Factories Department would be the last to suggest it—that any municipality should not be bound by an award. They have awards, as every member knows. All their employees are bound by the provisions of the award that covers council employees and it has never been suggested that they do not come under the provisions of the Industrial Code as determined by the definition of the word "industry."

Certain people engaged in community hotels render a service to the public and I am concerned about the people employed. In one case it has been found that, because of the machinations of the management, a laundry worker was employed but the provisions of the award were not being observed. The classification of a laundry worker is clearly defined in the award covering country hotels, and wages and conditions are specified. When the manager's attention was drawn to the fact that he was not paying wages in accordance with the award he conceived the idea of drawing up a contract that, in my view, was illegal and constituted a breach of the award. The contract clearly indicates what some people will

stoop to to evade the provisions of awards and determinations. The contract was a memorandum of agreement for a term of 12 months with the right of renewal subject to any alterations or additions that might be agreed upon by the parties concerned. The community hotel is described in the agreement as "The Company" and the domestic as "The Contractor" and its provisions were:—

1. The contractor shall undertake to carry out all laundry work appertaining to the hotel as required for the sum of £9 per week.
2. The contractor is to complete such operation to the satisfaction of the management.
3. The company shall not be responsible for any insurance cover protecting the contractor against accident or sickness.
4. Should the contractor during the term of this contract be absent from work then it shall be the obligation of such contractor to substitute a suitable person.
5. Should either party determine to cancel the existing agreement, one month's notice in writing must be served by the party making such decision.
6. The company shall be responsible for all equipment or plant required to satisfactorily complete the laundry work of the hotel.
7. The cost of maintenance of all machinery attached to the laundry shall be the responsibility of the company.
8. All domestic amenities as required for completion of laundry work shall be at the cost of the company.

Had it been proposed that the laundry work should be taken away entirely from the hotel I would have had no quibble with the contract, but because the company accepted the responsibility of providing the plant and amenities necessary for the work, and proposed to pay a lower rate than the award rate, and sought to escape its responsibilities concerning sick pay, workmen's compensation and other conditions, the contract constituted a breach of the award. The employee objected and did not sign the contract. If this contract were accepted by the Factories Department and the Crown Law Department it would mean, in my view, that all employees in community hotels in South Australia would be exempt from the provisions of the award. That would then be the legal position and steps, possibly illegal, would have to be taken to make the hotels conform to the provisions of the award. I am sure that most employers associated with this section of industry desire that things be done legally. This is the first time we have had cause to consider this particular aspect, which could have far-reaching effects, and that is

why we want the Government to examine the position. It may be necessary to amend the Industrial Code and the trade union movement hopes that the Government will bring down the necessary amending legislation and will also examine the desirability of employing more inspectors so as to police State awards and determinations adequately.

Recently I was advised that a metropolitan wine cellar, employing about 30 persons, had constructed, in accordance with the provisions of the Industrial Code, a lunch room, but although it was completed over 12 months ago it has not yet been made available to the employees, who are compelled to eat their lunches in and around the plant. If the Code were properly policed that employer would have been compelled to open the lunch room long ago and also to comply with other provisions of the Code relating to amenities for employees.

Recently I asked a question about increasing the fees of members of wages boards, but I was not satisfied with the reply from the Secretary to the Department of Labor and Industry. I admit that he is inexperienced, possibly because he has not occupied his position for long, and that he was probably guided by the views of others, but he obviously has had no practical experience of wages boards, nor has he attempted to ascertain the actual position. I disagree with his view that it is not necessary to increase the present scale of fees. I am a member of two wages boards, and have been a member of one for 35 years, and have had considerable experience in this work. The Secretary suggests that most of the work of wages boards is now done of an afternoon—and by inference he suggests in the employer's time—whereas at one time it was done of an evening. It is true that at one time most of the work was done in the evening, but it was common practice for members to engage in direct negotiations at round table conferences and by the time the board made its decision the matter was virtually resolved and the decision was merely formal. That situation applies in industries other than the one with which I am associated. In one case, after months of these conferences held mainly in the afternoons and mornings, we would not agree to the submissions put forward by the employers. They offered us a concession if we would agree to what they wanted, but we could not reach agreement because their offer was contrary to a principle for which we had fought for a long time. The result was that it was taken back to the board for determination.

The chairman of the board refused the employers' application: in fact, he voted against it with the employees' representatives. The employers then appealed to the State Industrial Court against the decision of the board, and the court rejected the appeal. The employers, not satisfied with that, then thought they would try a new one and approached the Federal arbitration tribunal, applying to bind South Australia to the Eastern States Award because that Award was less favourable, in some instances, regarding working conditions in South Australia while in some instances it was better, but it contained the very thing that they wanted for South Australia—that was, shift work in the industry and the employment of female labour which, as I have said, the board and the court had rejected.

The employers took this matter to the commissioner and it finally came before him. He had heard evidence in Melbourne and Adelaide and he finally rejected their application, contending that the industry was adequately covered by the provisions of the South Australian Award and determination. The employers, not satisfied with that, appealed to the Federal Arbitration Commission, which consisted of Chief Justice Kirby, Mr. Justice Wright and Mr. Conciliation Commissioner Portus, who heard arguments put forward by the employers' representatives in favour of the employers' case in their appeal against the decision of the Conciliation Commissioner. They retired, came back into court, advised us that they did not want to hear any evidence from the other side, and rejected the employers' appeal.

I mentioned that to show the importance of the matters that can be dealt with by industrial boards, and how far-reaching their decisions can be; how, even despite their non-acceptance by one side or the other, they can be finally upheld by the highest tribunal in the Commonwealth—upheld to the extent that an appeal against them was rejected. Many of the men concerned—and for that matter the employers' representatives I suppose—lost time. While the board might meet at 4 p.m., it might go on until 6 o'clock or into the evening and no penalty rate is prescribed. So we believe there should be a more correct summing up of the values of the work that these boards do; and they should be compensated accordingly. Since the last increase in fees to members of wages boards, the living wage has increased by £2 a week. In 1932, when the basic wage was £3 3s. a week, the board members' fees were 7s. 6d. a sitting. Today,

with the basic wage at £13 11s. a week, the fees are £1 a sitting. The secretary to the department has gone to great lengths in trying to prove the position of the chairman of the wages board. I am not arguing his case; he can argue his own case. In the course of a year he deals with many cases. He should be excluded from any consideration when we are dealing with the fees of members of wages boards. Despite this recommendation from the Department of Labor and Industry, I ask that the Government review the position because I first brought the matter before the House from the Trades and Labor Council. I did so in the best way by way of a question: hence, my desire now is to have the matter reviewed. I ask the Minister of Industry to review the matter and give serious consideration to the aspects I have again referred to.

Turning to the Highways Department, I have already raised the question of the urgent need for the construction of a footbridge over the Sturt Creek on the Tapley's Hill Road. On previous occasions I have pointed out the dangers. Anybody who knows the volume of traffic on that road between half-past four and six o'clock in the afternoon will have some idea of the serious danger with which those pedestrians who are compelled to use that bridge are confronted. No footway is provided for; the pedestrian is not protected. The width of the roadway is from boundary fence to boundary fence and in many instances the pedestrians have to walk foot over foot to cross on the concrete about 6in. wide, or maybe a little wider, of which the boundary fence of the bridge is constructed. If they get off that they may be knocked over by a car.

Some serious accidents have occurred at the bridge a few hundred yards further north. Not long ago a New Australian boy living at the migrant hostel was killed. In that hostel are some 300 migrants, and goodness knows how many children. They are compelled to cross that road almost daily to catch either the Graymore to city bus or the Glenelg to Port Adelaide bus, which runs along Tapley's Hill Road. Unfortunately, a further complication is that the Tramways Trust bus, which ceases its run on the southern side of the Sturt Creek bridge, swings around across the traffic with no concern for oncoming traffic, and goes down the street opposite. This further increases the danger to pedestrian traffic.

I have written to the Minister and raised the question in this Chamber. I have here a report from the Minister, which reads as follows:—

My colleague, the Minister of Roads, has now furnished me with the following report of the Commissioner of Highways:—

It is not the responsibility of the Highways Department to provide foot bridges. Generally, if existing conditions at the time of construction require it, a footway is provided on a bridge at no cost to the local authority. As departmental funds for this work are derived wholly from motorists' taxation, this practice is very favourable to local authorities who are responsible for providing for pedestrians.

Until this bridge is rebuilt or widened, the local authority concerned should provide a separate temporary pedestrian crossing, or submit a definite scheme to this department for consideration.

I believe the bridge was constructed just before World War I, and it is my view that an engineer of any standing should have been able to foresee future traffic requirements and provide for pedestrians, but that was not done. Unfortunately, this bridge joins two council areas—Glenelg and West Torrens. No-one, other than the local people and those who run the risk of injury to themselves and their children, seems to be very interested.

The argument of the Minister of Roads is not sound. Three years ago I raised the question of Holbrooks Road Bridge, and then pointed out the serious danger to pedestrians, particularly children who attend the nearby school on the northern side. There is a 3ft. footpath on the western side and I suggested that an outrigger footpath should be provided on one side, preferably the western side. The reply I then received was somewhat similar to the one I have since received, namely, that it was not the responsibility of the Highways Department. The bridge is built on a curve; it is very narrow; and much traffic uses it. It was badly constructed in the first place, very little engineering knowledge being applied; and the position is now becoming more dangerous. Despite what I have said today and what the department has told me that it was the responsibility of the councils, this is the letter the Minister of Roads wrote to the secretary of the Flinders Park School Committee in February:—

The earlier suggestion was to use the footpath to the existing bridge as part of the road, and to construct a foot bridge nearby. This has now been deemed inadvisable, and a survey is being carried out with the object of widening the bridge and providing a footpath for pedestrians on each side.

Members with experience in local government know how difficult it is for councils to meet the cost of roads and bridges, and it is my

view that the Government must seriously consider the ability of these councils to finance these works. We hear much from country members who complain about the state of their roads—I do not say that they are not justified in complaining—but this also applies in the metropolitan area. Many of these roads, if not actually arterial highways, are certainly partly so and they are used by people not residing in the district, whose business takes them through or into the district, and who never contribute one penny toward the rates of the councils concerned. It is unfair to expect the local council to provide all the finance for the provision of proper roads for these people to use.

Mr. King—Country people do not mind city people using their roads.

Mr. FRED WALSH—The chief country roads are the responsibility of the Highways Department, and their upkeep is financed to some extent by the motorists who use them, although all their contributions in the way of registration fees, petrol tax and so on are not used in this direction as was originally intended. It is unfair that the councils should be asked to meet the expense and that the local ratepayers should be taxed accordingly. These matters must be given serious thought if our roads in the metropolitan area and the country are to be developed as they should be.

Mr. Bockelberg—Hundreds of people who live in the city use country highways.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Does the honourable member know what metropolitan roads are the sole responsibility of the Highways Department? I thought I was generous in my reference to the country. I am not in a position to argue the advantages that the country may gain from any finances that may be made available by either the Federal or the State Government. However, the Highways Department accepts full responsibility for only a few roads in the metropolitan area. On the advice of the Metropolitan Transport Advisory Council, the Railways Department saw fit to close the line between Grange and Henley Beach, and as a result the rails along Military Road were pulled up, leaving the road in a shocking condition. I took a deputation from the Henley and Grange Corporation to the Minister with a request that it be put in a proper usable condition appropriate to the area, but the Minister contended that the department

had fulfilled its obligation in accordance with the law, which was to put the roadway into a condition similar to that which existed when the lines were put down. I daresay when the line was put down only a sandhill was there, so it would not require much work to restore it to that condition.

Mr. Hall—But there is a good highway within one block of that road, isn't there?

Mr. FRED WALSH—Who told the honourable member that? That is the responsibility of the Henley and Grange Corporation, and the ratepayers of the district meet the cost. Probably he is one of the people who use it but do not contribute towards its upkeep. Of course, I do that in other districts myself. We as a State must deal with these matters and finance them, and not leave them to any particular section. I know there must be taxation to meet this, which must be on an equitable basis so that there could be no complaints. As this is the last opportunity I will have during this session to refer to these matters, and because of the answers I have received to some questions, I have taken advantage of this debate to mention these things, and I appeal to the departments concerned to consider my suggestions. I support the Estimates.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—Firstly, I pay a tribute to the Treasurer on his 21st Budget, which was a remarkable effort. Those who know what we are up against this season will remember it as one of the best we have ever had. After all, good budgeting comes into the light of day when times are hard and there is not as much money as is needed, and the resources of the State are at a low ebb. Although the Treasurer is budgeting for a deficit I have not heard anyone complain. We hope some of this year's expenses, such as the pumping of water to the metropolitan area, will not be necessary again for a number of years. We know that revenue from Government undertakings will be considerably reduced as a result of the poor season. Because of these things, I think the Treasurer has done a remarkably good job to produce as balanced a Budget as anyone could produce.

I also pay a tribute to the Treasurer's officers, particularly Mr. Drew, whom I know very well: a more capable and conscientious officer could not be found in the Public Service. It is a pity that men have to retire when, to all outward appearances, they are as fit mentally and physically as ever they were.

Mr. Drew has reached 65, but age is not always a good guide on whether a man should retire or not. I know that if he were the manager of a big business and was carrying on successfully, as he has done when dealing with the finances of this State, he would not be required to retire, but would be asked to carry on for as long as his physical condition permitted. The same applies to the Auditor-General, Mr. Bishop. I had the honour to serve with Mr. Bishop on a committee inquiring into public health services in South Australia in the middle 1940's, when I learned his worth as an investigator. He was a tower of strength on that committee. Mr. Bishop is an able man, and I am sure the Government will find posts for him and Mr. Drew so that their qualities will not be lost to the State and the benefits that can be gained from their services will not be entirely lost. No doubt Mr. Drew will continue to be chairman of the Electricity Trust, as he has already proved that he is the man for that job, but I am not sure where the Government will find suitable employment for these men in other walks.

I listened with some interest to the new members who have spoken on this debate, and I compliment them on their contributions. After all, this debate gives a new member fairly wide scope. He is not tied down, and he will discover that I do not propose to be tied down, as I have a record that I want to put straight. A charge made against me, which was not truthful, must be put in its right perspective, which I propose to do. When I last spoke on this matter, it was suggested by one member that I was having a hate session, but that was far from right. I wanted to rouse the Government to action in the field in which I believe we are taking a real risk of having one of our primary industries involved in a state of affairs in which overseas buyers will not be as interested as we would like them to be. A greater surplus of wheat exists in the world than there has ever been before, but I do not think the figures are frightening merely because drought conditions apply in Europe. I have no doubt that the surplus wheat will be required. Australia is not going to have an abundant harvest this year, although South Australia is the only State suffering throughout its whole area. As it will be a lean year for the Commonwealth, it becomes more imperative for us to keep our house as tidy as possible.

It is the practice of the Wheat Board to issue receivers' licences to all the people who

were in the wheat business before the Wheat Board came into being. They had to accept certain responsibilities to justify the grant of the licence. One was to care for the wheat received from the farmer on behalf of the board. They had to make sure that they complied with the Wheat Board standards. Wheat inspectors were appointed whose duty it was, on behalf of the Australian Wheat Board, to make sure that the wheat was properly cared for and that if it were not in a shed it was properly roofed and curtained, that the dunnage was properly laid, and that vermin infestation was promptly dealt with.

They are the usual safeguards which, in the merchandising days, were taken by the firms. The firms had their own inspectors who went around and examined the agents' wheat at the receiving points. They made sure the agent was not taking in inferior wheat or wheat that was so inferior that it could not be dealt with. In other words, they were looking after their own interests and that is the position that exists today. The licensed receivers, other than the Co-operative Bulk Handling Company, operate as a joint body of wheat inspectors. There are about six inspectors working for the licensed receivers and it is the practice of the inspectors to exchange their reports with each other so that the licensed receivers can check and if the report is an unfavourable one receiving agents are dealt with on the spot.

Inspectors are also appointed by the Australian Wheat Board and they and the licensed receivers' inspectors have worked amicably together and have exchanged their reports. That practice has worked in the best interests of grain handling in South Australia. Unfortunately the Co-operative Bulk Handling Company has not been so co-operative, and in fact the contrary has been the case. That company has even denied the inspectors of the Australian Wheat Board the opportunity of getting into their installations at any time the inspectors may wish to do so. If an inspection is to be effective, obviously you do not want to send a post card giving warning of the impending arrival of the inspector. The stack should be in order all the time and there should be nothing amiss at any time. The inspector should be able to walk on to the premises where the wheat is stacked, whether in sheds, on the wharves or in silos, and that is the way the half a dozen men employed by the agents and by the Wheat Board work. They

can go on to the storing places of the licensees at any time without resistance. That is part of the agreement entered into by the Australian Wheat Board and the licensed receivers, of which the Co-operative Bulk Handling Company is one. That company should be subject to exactly the same policing as the other licensed receivers.

The company will deny that it has done some of the things I am going to say it has done and it will allege that my information is incorrect. It will also say that it does permit the inspectors of the Australian Wheat Board to go on to its installations, but I say Mr. Sanders has instructed the people in charge of some of his silos not to let the Wheat Board inspector enter the premises unless he has a responsible officer of the Co-operative Bulk Handling Company with him. That instruction was issued.

I have evidence that I intend to read that will give honourable members an opportunity of assessing whether or not some of the charges I have made are well founded. I complained that the Co-operative Bulk Handling Company was not using its silos as they should be used for the treatment of wheat infested with weevil. That resulted from its taking in wheat containing too much moisture content which caused the weevil to breed. Its agent had not been careful enough in his treatment of the wheat. A fellow member told me that he saw a farmer bring in a bulk load of wheat and the agent, when taking a test for moisture content, found it was 3 to 4 points higher than it should have been. He told the farmer that he could not take it and he suggested that it should stand for an hour or two. Would any sensible person suggest that a bulk load of wheat standing in a vehicle in a yard for an hour or two would lose sufficient moisture to enable it to conform to the required standard? No, but the agent got away with it by again testing the sample which had been standing in his office for that period and had by then dried out sufficiently to reach the required moisture content. It was then accepted. These things happen. Some cases have been brought to my notice since I made that statement.

Mr. Hall—That is not general. They are strict in Balaklava.

Mr. SHANNON—Does the honourable member mean they are strict in getting rid of it as quickly as possible because it is a bad infestation? I want to bring these people to book. If they do the right thing I shall have

no cause for complaint, but they must comply with the conditions of their licence and permit Wheat Board inspectors to go on to their premises the same as they go on to the premises of other licensed receivers. One honourable member said that it was not necessary for Wheat Board inspectors to go and examine the wheat, but I have correspondence that clearly indicates the necessity. Unfortunately I cannot refer to all the correspondence I have received as some of my informants want to remain anonymous because they fear they may be victimized if their identity is known. However, I can quote from a letter from Mr. E. T. LePage of Koolunga because he has advised me that he has no objection to my using the information he has supplied. He is an elderly man who has been a wheat agent for over 45 years, mainly with Louis Dreyfus & Co. Ltd. I do not know him, but he wrote as follows:—

I haven't had the pleasure of meeting you or don't know the source of your information, but I have read with much interest the controversy with regard to the receipt of inferior wheat, etc., by the South Australian Co-op. Bulk Handling in South Australia. Your observations are very similar to what has happened in our area. I did not intend to enter into this topic, but I couldn't stand by and see you assailed in the manner that has been done, for stating a few truths. I have dealt with millions of bushels of wheat over a period of over 50 years, mostly in bags. For 45 years of this period with Louis Dreyfus & Co. Ltd. and can say that in all that time nothing has been done that has been more tragic to the South Australian farmer than what has been done by these people in spoiling our reputation for sample, and mass production of weevil, etc. For the 1956-57 harvest the last year I dealt with bagged wheat at Redhill; samples of approximately 10,000 bags that were intended to be delivered there; were tested and proved to be below the margin set by the Wheat Board that could be received into an f.a.q. bag stack and it all floated away to bulk. I did not blame the farmers. 1957-58 season saw bulk at Redhill, and the better average season for sample; the fact of taking everything did not create a serious problem but within a few months of that harvest Brinkworth had created a bulk weevil problem; which would, to put it in the words of old experienced bulk members, comprise more damage in this respect than the total of previous seasons.

This last season 1958-59 saw much inferior wheat about. There were samples about down to 50-51 lb. to the bushel and you no need to go further than experienced co-operative bulk members; a string of them who know what happened; as these peoples' observations and comments of "doubtful," "rubbish," "terrible," "awful," "shocking," referring to some of the samples that went into bulk. I

think they are all bulk members without exception. I know that although many benefited by this procedure some of these and many other members know it is not in their best interests. They are amazed—perturbed; and expect repercussions. I am sure in their hearts there are very many bulk members will be behind you if something comes out of it to remedy this tragedy at a time when they are specially battling to retain markets and sales.

Is it any wonder you hear of inability to get minimum weights on railway trucks, and it would be surprising if millers are content. Why, if they are all agents of the board, that there is a standard bag agents are penalized for not abiding by—while in practice there is no standard for bulk—the Wheat Board inspector is conspicuous by his absence and appears afraid of reprisals or the sack if he comments on what he knows. You could no doubt find out more about that. You can use this information in any way you like as I can substantiate everything I mention and could give you names of all commentators. Just to put one case in almost the bulk member's words—he had inferior wheat, he knew wasn't fit to go into f.a.q. and he got sacks to put it in; but when he saw his neighbour's rubbish disappearing he thought he would give his a go and away it went about 59 bushels lighter than usual on a small bin full.

Mr. Hall—What would have happened to that had it been bagged?

Mr. SHANNON—It would have been docked.

Mr. Hall—Because of the bushel weight?

Mr. SHANNON—I do not know. Obviously it was not up to standard and the farmer knew it, but he saw his neighbours putting inferior wheat into bulk without dockage and he did likewise. Mr. LePage has since written me another letter advising that if anybody went into the area and spoke to the farmers he would get all the evidence he wanted and more than he needed. Members will note that Mr. LePage said that Wheat Board inspectors were conspicuous by their absence. I have a copy of a circular letter set out above the signature of T. C. Stott, M.P., per V. J. Walsh, who, I think, is his secretary. It states:—

Regarding your query—The position in this State is that for the handling of bulk wheat the S.A. Co-op. Bulk Handling Ltd. have been appointed as the licensed receivers to handle all bulk wheat in their silos and are responsible for the care, storage and attention, and for the turning out of wheat under their contract as licensed receivers. The reason why the S.A.C.B.H. inspectors are in full authority is that under the terms of their appointment as licensed receivers it has been found in the past that the A.W.B. inspectors have been given contrary instructions to those given by the licensed receivers which I think you will understand, tends to create confusion and misunderstanding so that, in effect, the S.A.C.B.H. inspectors are now fully responsible for the

care and handling of wheat, dockages, etc., and inferior grain would be under their close supervision. With the likelihood of inferior grain about it is much better to have it under one authority than having other inspectors giving different directions and disagreeing on the dockages. Kind regards.

Is any honourable member very happy about that? The member for Ridley (Mr. Stott) is now a liaison officer. I understood he had no connection with Co-operative Bulk Handling but now he is the liaison officer between the wheatgrowers and C.B.H. I hope that that connection will be severed as a result of what I am disclosing, for it is a connection that C.B.H. could well do without for it is receiving a disservice rather than a service.

When he spoke in reply to me previously on the Address in Reply, the member for Ridley disclosed that he thought C.B.H. should put every bushel of wheat that it could get into the silos, irrespective of the possible need for treating a cell or two for infestation, such as weevil. He justified that by saying that the farmers wanted their wheat in bulk, that every bushel should be put into bulk handling irrespective of whether it should be treated for weevil infestation should it arise. Irrespective of what the members of the board or the management of C.B.H. say, the sheaves of evidence that have come to me disclose clearly that there was serious trouble with weevil. It is their own responsibility and fault. Access was denied the inspectors. They had the cheek to make this suggestion that no other licensed receiver made. They considered they were above the law. If there was any trouble it has been well and truly hidden. Only one body knows, and that is the Australian Wheat Board itself. It is not in their own interests to hurt their own pockets. I have had private information—I cannot disclose its source for it is confidential—that there have been complaints about the condition of wheat overseas. A letter I have received states:—

Dear Mr. Shannon, this is not a sample of wheat sent overseas but it is a fair average sample of a bag of wheat delivered to me from a bulk purchase by an Adelaide firm of 600 bags from the Wheat Board. It has been screened twice and the resulting rubbish of each screening can be accepted as a dead loss to the purchaser as it is of no feed value and weighs nearly two ounces and represents 7½ lb. per bushel for which payment has to be made to the Wheat Board, while the remainder is below f.a.q. standard. In my opinion the Wheat Board is debarred from accepting any wheat that is substandard, which would compel the farmers to pay proper attention to their jobs and produce a better quality grain. If this was adopted, pig and poultry farmers could

then pay a fair price for poor quality grain if they were prepared to feed such stuff to pigs or poultry. The second parcel I enclose is taken from another bag of wheat from the star thistle country. It was so badly infested with star thistles that it could not be fed by hand to poultry. This also came from the Wheat Board and was charged for at the rate of 17s. 4d. per bushel delivered. I do not wish to incur the spleen of the Wheat Board as I am dependent for supplies of grain from this totalitarian body. Therefore I must remain, Your truly, "Anonymous."

I quote that letter although it is anonymous. I do not know the man and have not sought to find out who he is, but I do not think that anybody looking at these samples and reading that letter will doubt its authenticity. The point at issue is that these inferior samples of wheat containing various foreign matter are getting into our bulk wheat installations and finding their way back to the purchaser who wants to feed pigs or poultry, and he has paid for 7½ lb. of rubbish of no value in each bushel. That is about 12 per cent and, if 12 per cent on 17s. 4d. is calculated, it is apparent that he is paying a good price for his wheat.

The member for Ridley can, if he cares to, have another go at me and call me the same names as he did before. If he wants to attack me again, I shall be happy. I do not think that being called names in such a matter as this hurts anybody very much if he knows, as I happen to know in this instance, that what he is saying is founded on fact.

I have not taken this case up. I was not anxious to have a go at it at all. In fact, I should have preferred not to have anything to do with it if I had had my choice. I was really talked into it because of the seriousness of the charges laid. However, I think it will do some good, although we have to bear the odium of being the naughty boys who bring a matter to light, but if we have achieved some good as a result, that should be sufficient recompense.

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—A number of members who have addressed themselves to the debate have expressed their concern at our increasing expenditure and public debt. In his financial statement the Treasurer submitted figures regarding our increasing public debt and they give us reason for concern. In 1949-50 the State's expenditure amounted to approximately £29,000,000. The public debt had increased by £4,316,000 during the previous 12 months. In 1950-51 the corresponding figures were £33,442,000 and £4,496,000. The estimated expenditure for the present financial

year is £80,000,000. Our public debt on June 30, 1959, was £317,702,000, and this is a matter for concern. Perhaps some members do not realize that our public debt is the highest per head of any State. As we may be running into a decline in world markets, we should have some concern for this increased expenditure. I realize that we have to spend money on development, and acknowledge that there has been some development in South Australia.

I hope it will not appear presumptuous on my part to express appreciation on behalf of my associates during the recent visit of the Commonwealth Parliamentary delegation. With the Hon. Mr. Story, the Hon. Mr. Shard and Mr. Laucke it was my pleasure to act as marshal for the visiting delegates, who came from all parts of the British Commonwealth of Nations. They were greatly interested in what we were producing and our ability to develop the country. They came to the conclusion that our resources were tremendous and were impressed with our workers and management. They considered that the possibilities of South Australia were exceedingly great. However, in spite of this, we have the ever-increasing public debt.

I think that Mr. Laucke will agree with my remarks of appreciation of those who assisted us as marshals. I pay a compliment to them all. I consider that the welcome given by the mayor and people of Port Augusta will never be forgotten by anyone present. The school children lined the streets and gave a rousing welcome to the delegates, who were obviously touched. The assembly hall was fittingly decorated with South Australian wild flowers and this gave the delegates great pleasure. This reception was typical of others wherever the delegates travelled. We had an excellent reception at Whyalla and also by the mayor of Victor Harbour, Mr. Jenkins, M.P., who was assisted by a fine band of lady helpers. The people in the Barossa Valley represented by the Speaker and Mr. Laucke did equally well, and delegates were shown the cultivated products of the area. The success of the visit of the delegates to South Australia was largely the result of the untiring efforts of the secretary of the South Australian branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Mr. Ivor Ball. I have never seen a man expend greater energy and be more exacting and painstaking in the interests of the State. It was fortunate that we had such a man to see that things went smoothly and make what might have been a task a very pleasurable experience.



A number of members opposite have offered their congratulations to the Treasurer on presenting his 21st Budget. Although I do not subscribe to the political views of members opposite, I join with the member for Semaphore (Mr. Tapping) and others in expressing admiration for the Treasurer, who, despite our electoral system, has been in office for 21 years! Some members opposite have opposed price and rent control most vigorously, yet, when it has come to the testing time, it appears that they have developed political stomach cancers and have toed the line, which is putting it moderately. We find that these puny political parasites become Premier Playford's prime praisers in the next breath.

Mr. Hambour—Do you agree with everything your Party puts up, or do you accept the majority decision? Be honest about it.

Mr. HUTCHENS—We accept a policy, we are elected on a policy, and we stand by that policy and, after debate, accept the majority decision. We do not pretend allegiance to a person or persons, then condemn them, and later go out and ask the people to support us. There is a slight difference, but of course the member for Light could not see it. When there is some slight difference in the expressions of members of my Party, members opposite say that there is a division in the camp but, when they say something contrary to the Treasurer's views, they say they are at liberty to do so. That is a strange thing, but it is typical of these political parasites who have not the courage of their convictions and will vote with the Treasurer for self-preservation and the right to return here.

Mr. Laucke—There is no attitude of self-preservation whatever.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I would expect that from the honourable member, but facts have proved the contrary.

Mr. Laucke—Could you name one instance where a member has spoken against legislation and has not voted against it accordingly?

Mr. HUTCHENS—It would be no trouble; if the honourable member desires it, I could give in writing 100 instances.

Mr. Millhouse—Give one.

Mr. Laucke—I have never altered my vote. After having spoken in a certain way I have adhered to my principles.

The CHAIRMAN—Order!

Mr. HUTCHENS—The Treasurer has been most successful in keeping this motley lot together and keeping himself in office. Nobody could imagine that he is a Labor man or a Socialist. If you are going his way, that

is all right, but if you are not, you could be hungry very quickly. It is sad to see a major Party in such a dilemma and its members not having the courage to come along and do the things they believe in.

Mr. Hambour—Don't you admire your Leader? That is a fair question.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I think the answer is so obvious that it is unnecessary for me to give it.

Mr. Hambour—Then aren't we allowed to admire our leader? I think we have just as much cause.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I would think that is so, but the honourable member should be consistent. Much has been said about our being a non-claimant State, and the impression has been given that everything in the garden will be lovely from now on. Members opposite have spoken about the wonderful job the Government has done to bring this about. The comments of the member for Mitcham remind me of an old tune, two lines of which are to this effect:—

Look at the coffin, bloomin' great handles,  
Oh ain't it grand to be bloomin' well dead.  
We hear those statements time and time again, but we want to see the results. Who will pay for the glory spoken of by members opposite? An examination of some figures and prices and a comparison of them with those applicable in a claimant State will show whether we have reason to be quite so happy. Members opposite say this is the greatest State and this is the State that can suffer any adverse conditions today. They have been saying this for so long that they have now been taken at their word. Who is going to pay for it? It will be paid for by the unfortunate worker who cannot afford a motor car and has to use public transport.

Mr. Millhouse—There are few of them.

Mr. HUTCHENS—The honourable member for Mitcham never sees them. He is like the travellers, mentioned in the story of the Good Samaritan, who looked the other way.

Mr. Millhouse—I use public transport every day.

Mr. HUTCHENS—And so do a lot of other people but only for the same reason as the honourable member. I have here tables showing railway fares applying in South Australia, which is now a non-claimant State, and in Western Australia, which is a claimant State, and I ask leave to have them inserted in *Hansard* without reading them.

Leave granted.

Miles.		Cost.		Miles.		Cost.		Miles.		Cost.		Miles.		Cost.	
		s.	d.			s.	d.			s.	d.			s.	d.
1	..	3	6	13	..	11	6	25	..	18	0	38	..	19	3
2	..	4	3	14	..	12	3	26	..	18	0	39	..	19	3
3	..	4	9	15	..	13	3	27	..	18	3	40	..	19	6
4	..	5	0	16	..	13	9	28	..	18	3	41	..	19	6
5	..	5	9	17	..	14	6	29	..	18	3	42	..	19	9
6	..	6	6	18	..	15	0	30	..	18	6	43	..	19	9
7	..	7	6	19	..	15	6	31	..	18	6	44	..	20	0
8	..	8	6	20	..	16	3	32	..	18	6	45	..	20	0
9	..	9	0	21	..	16	9	33	..	18	9	46	..	20	3
10	..	9	6	22	..	17	3	34	..	18	9	47	..	20	3
11	..	10	3	23	..	17	6	35	..	18	9	48	..	20	3
12	..	10	9	24	..	17	9	36	..	19	0	49	..	20	6
								37	..	19	0	50	..	20	9

## WESTERN AUSTRALIAN RAIL FARES.

Miles.	One month.			Three months.			Six months.			Yearly.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1 .. .. .	0	13	9	1	12	6	3	2	3	6	2	0
2 .. .. .	0	17	3	1	18	6	3	13	0	7	2	0
3 .. .. .	0	19	0	2	4	0	4	4	0	8	3	2
4 .. .. .	1	1	3	2	14	6	5	4	0	10	2	9
5 .. .. .	1	4	0	3	5	3	6	4	9	12	3	3
6 .. .. .	1	7	6	3	16	9	7	5	9	14	4	3
7 .. .. .	1	11	0	4	9	0	8	11	8	16	14	0
8 .. .. .	1	14	9	4	18	3	9	7	0	18	5	0
9 .. .. .	1	17	6	5	9	0	10	7	6	20	4	3
10 .. .. .	2	0	0	5	15	0	11	1	6	21	12	0
20 .. .. .	3	1	0	8	3	6	15	10	9	30	0	0

## Railway Fares : Comparison Western Australia and South Australia.

Miles.	Weekly.		Monthly.		Quarterly.		Half-Yearly.		Yearly.	
	W.A.	S.A.	W.A.	S.A.	W.A.	S.A.	W.A.	S.A.	W.A.	S.A.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
10 ..	0 9 6	0 16 0	2 0 0	3 6 0	5 15 0	8 18 0	11 1 6	16 19 0	21 12 6	30 2 0
20 ..	0 16 3	2 4 0	3 1 0	4 16 0	8 3 6	12 19 0	15 10 9	24 12 0	30 0 0	46 15 0

Mr. HUTCHENS—That shows what is happening in this State which has done so much. It is almost unbelievable.

Mr. O'Halloran—It is.

Mr. HUTCHENS—And the story is the same throughout. The lesson to be taken from those figures is obvious.

Mr. Millhouse—Have you the figures for New South Wales?

Mr. HUTCHENS—They would be no value in the case I am stating because, if the honourable member stops to think, he will realize that New South Wales is also a non-claimant State.

Mr. King—Is this the reason why Western Australia is closing down a number of lines?

Mr. O'Halloran—Aren't we doing the same here?

Mr. King—Not to the same extent.

Mr. HUTCHENS—The same sort of thing is happening regarding the Tramways Trust. I draw attention to the risk of injury to limb and danger to life which is being brought about by the efforts of the trust to save money. The introduction of one-man buses here has generally proved detrimental to people and I doubt whether the trust saves much in the long run. It is impossible for one man to

collect fares and watch people getting on and off buses the same as two men could.

Mr. Millhouse—It is done successfully in other places.

Mr. HUTCHENS—It may be done reasonably successfully and it can be done here, but I say it is not in the best interests of the travelling public. I was an employee of the Tramways Trust for 12 months and while working as a conductor I realized just how difficult it was on trams and buses to collect fares and watch passengers, apart altogether from having to drive the bus or tram. At times it was nerve-racking to watch children getting on and off or to try to be absolutely sure that a passenger was not coming around the back of the bus in an effort to board. Members can imagine how a conductor would feel if a bus were about to move off and at the last moment he should notice a woman with a child in her arms about to clasp the handrail in an effort to get on the bus. That is the type of service our people are getting as a result of the effort made to improve the finances of the trust.

I join the Leader of the Opposition in complaining about the height of the steps leading into the buses. It is most difficult, because of the high steps, for aged and infirm persons to get into buses and I hope the position will be rectified. Buses bound for different destinations pass over the same route at certain points and rear destination signs should be put on

all buses so that a person coming from the rear to catch a bus would not be misled into believing it was his bus when in fact it was not. I have seen people who have let a bus go, believing it not to be theirs, catch a taxi to proceed to their destination only to overtake the bus a little further down the route. This has caused extra expense to the passenger and I have seen it repeatedly happen on the Port Road.

The Leader of the Opposition drew attention to the fact that in the last 20 years there has been a decline of almost 3,000 in the number of landholders in South Australia. This is amazing when one realizes that since World War II 973 ex-servicemen have been settled at a cost of £20,978,000. It is regrettable that the Commonwealth scheme is ending, but I have not heard of any plans by the State Government to take over the settlement of ex-servicemen. Something should be done and although the Minister of Lands may suggest that district councils have been asked to notify his department of any land that may be available for soldier settlement, it should be realized that, generally speaking, district councillors are landholders who wish to purchase additional land for their sons and, therefore, they are not anxious to bring competitors into the market thus increasing the price of the land available. The Government would be well advised to send an officer into the country to ascertain whether land can be secured. In my own electorate dozens of young men who want to go on the land would be prepared to sacrifice much for an opportunity to develop our country.

This afternoon the Minister of Education referred to the work done by parents and friends associations, school committees and school councils in assisting his department and said that in 1958 these organizations raised £220,000 to assist the department. It was gratifying to learn from him that the organizations have done even better this year and that they will raise about £250,000. The Minister said that they were doing a great work in creating a feeling among scholars that the home and the school were working together for the advancement of their education. I recently read an article in which an interstate person said that there was no free education in South Australia. Education is so important to our progress that every child, irrespective of the status of his parents, should be afforded the utmost opportunities for education and that

can only be done when his parents are not taxed to an embarrassing extent. The cost to be met by some parents for books is almost prohibitive: it harasses them and retards the progress of the children.

Last year I asked a question about Superannuation Fund insurance, pointing out that the fund, in advancing money for home building, compelled the purchaser to insure with one company—the Mercantile Mutual Insurance Company Limited. The purchaser had no right to insure with a company of his own choosing. In his reply the Minister of Lands, as Minister in charge of the House at that time, said:—

Since the inception of the Superannuation Fund the board has maintained the policy of insurances with one company only—the Mercantile Mutual Insurance Company Ltd., which is a sound tariff company operating entirely in Australia. This policy has well defined advantages from the points of view of both protection and low administration costs.

Since then I have received many letters from insurance companies assuring me that they could do even better if given the opportunity, that they are not only tariff companies but have a good backing, and that it is the policy of most banking institutions to permit people to insure where they so desire and where they can obtain the most beneficial coverage and terms. I do not believe administration costs are saved through the utilization of only one company, because there is no need for the fund to collect the payments as the companies could collect them. It would be in the interests of all concerned if there were competition for this insurance, but apparently the Government does not believe in competition in this field. I urge the Government to consider allowing competition and the purchaser the opportunity to insure where he or she desires to.

Turning to the fire brigade contributions paid by the metropolitan councils, this is not the first time I have pointed out that they are unbalanced, being particularly high in some municipalities and in others comparatively low. I have a table referring to the metropolitan districts and showing that if the charges were made on an assessment basis each district would pay fire contributions commensurate with the protection it received and balance up with the other municipalities. Rather than weary the House by going through this table, I ask leave to have it incorporated in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

## Fire Brigades Board Contributions.

	Cont. to Fire Brigades Board, year ending 30/6/58			Annual values assessment, 1957-58	Rate revenue, 1950-51	Per cent as to annual values assessment	Per cent as to rate revenue
	£	s.	d.	£	£		
Adelaide . . . . .	33,654	8	11	4,741,473	711,221	.709	4.7
Port Adelaide . . . . .	12,482	15	10	1,331,258	278,107	.93	4.48
Woodville . . . . .	5,374	3	7	1,796,826	314,445	.29	1.709
Hindmarsh . . . . .	2,876	15	7	380,580	62,703	.75	4.602
Glenelg . . . . .	739	9	8	651,821	72,717	.11	1.016
Unley . . . . .	1,107	2	0	982,560	180,136	.11	.61
West Torrens . . . . .	1,937	3	11	1,419,823	191,658	.13	1.01
Prospect . . . . .	752	2	7	705,935	94,115	.106	.79
Burnside . . . . .	1,577	8	11	942,801	149,277	.16	1.05
Marion . . . . .	1,930	3	2	1,449,806	215,652	.13	.89
Enfield . . . . .	1,990	18	9	1,449,986	235,623	.13	.84
Brighton . . . . .	495	8	11	373,070	54,406	.13	.909
Mitcham . . . . .	1,558	1	2	1,164,611	174,618	.13	.89
Thebarton . . . . .	478	10	3	445,261	44,999	.107	1.06
Kensington and Norwood	379	11	0	284,632	41,509	.13	.91
Walkerville . . . . .	203	2	6	153,577	25,596	.13	.79
St. Peters . . . . .	325	18	0	358,015	34,166	.09	.98
Henley and Grange . . . .	389	8	6	326,087	47,603	.119	.81
Payneham . . . . .	384	0	6	363,984	51,310	.105	.74
Campbelltown . . . . .	318	7	6	420,681	60,319	.075	.52
Colonel Light Gardens . .	179	4	1	111,954	14,268	.159	1.26

Mr. HUTCHENS—May I now briefly draw attention to one or two figures. Port Adelaide with an annual rate revenue of £278,107 pays a fire brigade contribution of £12,482. Hindmarsh with a rate revenue of £62,703 pays a contribution of £2,876. Payneham with a rate revenue of £51,310 pays a fire brigade contribution of £384. The contributions seem to be quite unfair to some districts. Although the Metropolitan Fire Brigade stations are situated in various areas, if there is a big fire in Port Adelaide, the Woodville and the city brigades are called out. Many brigades go to Port Adelaide. If there is a big fire in Unley, the Unley and other metropolitan brigades are called out. Many municipal bodies believe there should be one fire district for the entire metropolitan area and that district should pay contributions according to the protection they receive. They are protected only to the value of the property within their area, and are rated accordingly. In the case of Unley, the rate revenue is £180,136 and its contribution is £1,107 2s. These figures show that Hindmarsh pays a contribution representing a rate of 2½d. in the pound, whereas Unley pays a contribution representing a rate of only .22d. in the pound of rate revenue. Good luck to Unley, but the position is that the Hindmarsh and Woodville fire brigades would go to Unley if required for a major fire there. The Government should consider this. I believe the Municipal Association

has agreed that it is desirable to have one fire district and that the fire brigade contributions should be shared as equally as possible by the various areas served. The method of charging in accordance with the water rate assessment would be a fair and proper way to fix fire brigade contributions. I support the first line.

Mr. McKEE (Port Pirie)—As a new member I have found it most interesting listening to the various speeches on the Budget. I congratulate previous speakers on their able contributions. It has also been interesting to hear members opposite making various points in defence of the Budget. The member for Burra (Mr. Quirke) said that the system on which it was based was rotten. Possibly, he has something there. A main point made by Government members was the dry season. The season has by no means been good and spending has been restricted to more or less essential needs. The member for Light (Mr. Hambour) said that had the season been normal there would have been a surplus. Although the previous year was a reasonably normal season, I did not notice any surplus.

Mr. Hambour—Did the honourable member realize that we were spending nearly £5,000,000 more?

Mr. McKEE—In fact, the position last year was worse than this year. Let us pray that we have a season better than normal next

year, or heaven help us! Droughts, of course, are serious. When the primary producer is badly affected, it affects the economy of the State generally. In some cases, however, I think the Government has spent money unnecessarily. For instance, there was the relaying of the railway at Ellen Street, Port Pirie. In view of the possible closing of that line in the not far distant future to conform with the reorganization and reconstruction of the harbour facilities there, I do not think that the large sum of money spent on this work was justified.

Mr. Fred Walsh—It was a short-sighted policy.

Mr. McKEE—I believe that one of the main problems is the present hire purchase system, which has a stranglehold on the workers of this country. The economy of the State is being dangerously affected by high rates of interest, which result in much money being directed into the pockets of a few get-rich-quick financiers. I do not dislike hire purchase when it is used in a reasonable way, but under the present set-up the family man is being exploited. In order for a man to enjoy peace of mind and raise a happy and healthy family it is most important that he should be able to supply himself, his wife and children with adequate clothing, food and accommodation. Honourable members will agree that a healthy population is very important to the economy of any country. It should be the Government's objective to ensure that no company or individual is permitted to grow rich by exploiting the essential needs of the average wage-earner. What happens is that the worker produces the goods and then has to go into debt to buy them. In these days of improved living standards it is reasonable for every housewife to have the opportunity to buy at least some mechanical aids of housekeeping which would relieve her of undue strain and increase her leisure hours. The trouble is that few families can afford the amenities of life that are so attractively advertised. In order that they shall not suffer in comparison with their neighbours, they secure the necessary finance by loans, cash orders, or hire-purchase. Undoubtedly, the hire purchase system has conferred some benefits on families, but the average wage earner cannot afford to pay the high rates of interest. Although unable to buy a much-needed washing machine or a refrigerator outright he may obtain one on no deposit and small weekly instalments. The machine thereby costs him nearly twice its

value, and when he makes his final payment, the thing is worn out anyhow, and so he returns into the vicious circle again.

But it is a different matter altogether when people of ordinary means are forced into the hire purchase field to buy a home. A home is not a luxury as is a motor car or a television set. It is the right of every married couple who hope to raise a family. Yet, for many an average young working man a home is just a pipe dream, or like the stars, beautiful to contemplate, but completely beyond his reach. I know of several large financial organizations which will advance you up to £3,000 at 6 per cent flat to build or buy a home. On a loan of say £2,200 payable over 15 years, one would pay back £24 a month and on the final payment one would have paid back £4,320, nearly twice the value of the home. Let there be no doubt about it, if at any time one falls behind in one's payment, one would be evicted and the home sold at auction under instruction from the mortgagee.

There would be no Christian charity or extension of terms for one is in the cold, hard hands of get-rich-quick financiers and it is just too bad if one cannot meet one's obligations.

The point is that there should be no necessity for anyone to be forced into the hands of these touch merchants to build, buy or furnish a home, and no-one should be forced into paying interest on money he does not owe. The Government should have the answer to their problem by providing all the necessary finance to assist these young people at a minimum rate of interest. It is only when the Government fails in this respect that private financiers come into the picture, with only one purpose, to get rich quick. So commercial capitalism is like the octopus—it continues to grow before the eyes of the victims, upon whom it fattens. And the victims are the workers of Australia. We read in the papers every week where one big hire purchase firm or another is expanding or buying property at the cost of millions, while 90 per cent of the general public are forced to spend the whole of their earnings from week to week to procure the ordinary needs of life; and yet the worker produces these goods by his labour, and serves them up to the public, but he never gets more than what someone else decides is enough to keep him alive. The value of the worker's efforts is decided by public tribunals, but the price he pays for his right to live is an arbitrary figure fixed by the powers of big business, who have the

things to sell. One does not need to be a Rhodes scholar to know that value is one thing and price another, and that there is a gap between them that keeps the buyer poor and the seller wealthy. I am sure that members on this side will agree that it is the duty of a Government to bring equality to the working-buying public, which, if done, would certainly improve the State's economy.

First line passed.

### THE ESTIMATES.

#### THE LEGISLATURE.

Legislative Council, £11,303—passed.

House of Assembly, £14,937.

Mr. QUIRKE—I, in common with many other honourable members of both Houses, was saddened to learn of the recent death of Mr. F. L. Parker, former Clerk of the House of Assembly and Clerk of Parliaments. Mr. Parker retired from these offices on March 31, 1953, after 35 years' service as an officer of Parliament. He was a Clerk at the table of the House of Assembly for the impressive period of 30 years, being Clerk of the House for 28 years, and was widely acknowledged as an eminent authority on Parliamentary procedure and practice.

Mr. Parker was the honorary secretary-treasurer of the Empire Parliamentary Association from the inauguration of the branch in South Australia in 1925 until his retirement.

He accompanied the Australian and New Zealand delegations to the United Kingdom and U.N.O. Conference in Paris in 1948. Mr. Parker was a foundation member of the Society of Clerks-at-the-Table in Empire Parliaments. He had been an invaluable contributor to their journal and a keen advocate of the society. Mr. Parker served with the Australian Imperial Forces in World War I in Egypt, Gallipoli and Palestine, attaining the rank of Captain. Those members who had the pleasure of knowing him will join with me in expressing deepest sympathy to his bereaved wife and family.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I am indebted to the honourable member for bringing to the notice of the House the passing of Mr. Parker, with whom so many of us were associated for a considerable period. He had a fine sense of duty, and guided the deliberations of this House for a considerable number of years as assistant to the Speaker. I am sure that every member will appreciate that Mr. Quirke brought this matter before us, because I am certain that the tribute paid to Mr. Parker is one with which many members wish to be associated.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.27 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, October 20, at 2 p.m.