

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, March 31, 1960.

The House met at 12 noon pursuant to proclamation, the Speaker (Hon. B. H. Teusner) presiding.

The Clerk (Mr. G. D. Combe) read the proclamation summoning Parliament.

After prayers read by the Speaker, honourable members, in compliance with summons, proceeded at 12.08 p.m. to the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech. They returned to the Assembly Chamber at 12.40 p.m. and the Speaker resumed the Chair.

DEATH OF MR. G. HAMBOUR.

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

That the House expresses its deep regret at the death of Mr. George Hambour, member for Light, and places on record its appreciation of his public services; and that, as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased member, the sitting of the House be suspended until 2.15 p.m.

I am sure that it came as a great shock to all honourable members when the passing of our friend was announced. During the time he had been in this Parliament he had won the respect and affection of all members for his straightforward and rather blunt expression of views, but, nevertheless, his sincere way of dealing with problems as he saw them. He was a man of conviction and possessed a great force of character. He learned the hard way, but in doing that he also learned to respect the other man's point of view. I often noticed how, with great respect, he listened to the views of a member on a particular topic, and how he was prepared to concede that that member's views were often as good as his own. I know of no person whom I would sooner have had for a friend than George Hambour when I was in trouble. I am certain that in time of trouble he was a sincere friend indeed.

George Hambour was an extremely good district man. Those present at the funeral last Sunday must have been impressed by the widespread representation of the whole of the district, and by the sincere mourning of his constituents.

I express to the relatives of the late member our sincere sympathy in their sudden and tragic loss. I am sure that all members want them to know the respect in which he was held in this House, and I hope that that will

be some consolation to them in their time of bereavement.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I second the motion. Unfortunately it is a motion that is moved in this House all too frequently. I cannot recall when the news of any other person's death has come to me with such a shock as did the news of George Hambour's death. I would have thought that he had many years of useful life before him, and to be stricken down in what one might call the heyday of his service to the community was tragic indeed. A man of strong conviction and independent thought, he was a valuable member of this House. He had many high principles and possibly the greatest of all his virtues was his charitable disposition. In his approach to his fellow citizens and their problems he always brought to bear a wealth of charity, which must have been a consolation to those who brought their problems to him. Today, in our own way, we are endeavouring to express the same charitable thoughts to his widow, son, and other bereaved relatives.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra)—I join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in expressing my regret at the passing of George Hambour. As all members know, the northern boundary of his district was the southern boundary of mine, and I do not think that, in the history of Parliamentary government, there could have been greater compatibility than existed between Mr. Hambour and myself as representatives of the people along the 100 miles of that boundary. It can be truthfully said that the people along the border of the two districts had two representatives. It was agreed that I should take the western end and he the far-flung eastern end. Actually we served both districts as it was most convenient to do so.

As I grew to appreciate the amazing qualities of George Hambour, I developed a keen affection for him, and his passing has left a great gap in my Parliamentary associations. All members will hold the same sentiments about his passing, and, as mentioned by the Premier, the tribute paid to him last Sunday at his funeral showed that many thousands of people mourn his passing.

I join with the Leader of the Opposition in paying a tribute to the greatest form of charity that a man can have: charity of thought, which was so exemplified in George Hambour. He would never willingly say anything bad of a person and if he did not think well of anyone he would always try to bring his good qualities

to the fore. He was a man of immense charity of thought. I mourn his passing and join with the people in the district in so doing. I pay a tribute as best I can in this House to a very worthy gentleman, and a very splendid representative of many people.

I associate myself with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in paying respects to the family George Hambour left so suddenly. I know that they deeply mourn his passing: we all hope that God will give them the blessing and the courage that they need at a time of deep tragedy in their lives.

Members carried the motion by standing in their places.

[Sitting suspended from 12.50 to 2.15 p.m.]

NEXT DAY OF SITTING.

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

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, April 5, at 3 p.m.

Motion carried.

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

The SPEAKER—I have to report that, in compliance with a summons from His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, the House attended in the Legislative Council Chamber where His Excellency was pleased to make a Speech to both Houses of Parliament, of which Speech I have obtained a copy which I now lay upon the table.

Ordered to be printed.

BIRTH OF ROYAL PRINCE.

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

That a Joint Address be presented to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor praying His Excellency to transmit to Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen the following Address:—

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty—May it please Your Majesty:

We, the members of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly, in Parliament assembled, desire to convey to Your Majesty and His Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, our warmest congratulations on the birth of your second son Prince Andrew. This happy event has been an occasion for great rejoicing by the people throughout South Australia. We take this opportunity of reaffirming our loyalty and devotion to the Throne and person of Your Majesty.

This motion has the entire support of every member. In this country we are all deeply conscious of the great importance to our well-being of being associated with the Crown. Throughout the course of our history we have

had signal benefits from our form of Government, which, of course, has the Monarchy at its head. Today, we are speaking on another aspect of Her Majesty the Queen—her love for her family and, notwithstanding her exalted position and many duties, the time and example she has given to the British Commonwealth in the conduct of family life. We all recognize that the basis of our community is a healthy family atmosphere and a healthy family life. We know what a great joy it was to Her Majesty and her husband to have had another Prince in their family, but that joy, I suggest, is shared equally by all sections of the community in this State, and we offer to Her Majesty and Prince Philip our heartiest congratulations on this great event.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I have great pleasure in seconding the motion wherein we affirm our loyalty to the Throne and person of Her Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth. We also congratulate her and her Consort, Prince Philip, on the birth of another child in their family. In this peculiar organization of self-governing democracies within the British Commonwealth we all recognize the Sovereign as our head and we, in South Australia, are particularly pleased to know that the Sovereign we recognize embodies two of the fundamental principles we believe are essential to community life: firstly, the love of family and, secondly, a Christian outlook on life. That, I think, is exemplified by the fact that the new Prince is to be known as Andrew—the name of the Patron Saint of Scotland. That, of course, means much to many people who have come from the Old Country, particularly from Scotland, and settled in the various far-flung portions of the British Commonwealth.

Motion carried.

Later, the Legislative Council intimated its concurrence in the resolution.

The SPEAKER—I have to announce that His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor has fixed the hour of 3 o'clock this afternoon for receiving the address to Her Majesty the Queen, for the presentation of which a resolution was carried earlier this afternoon. I ask members to accompany me to Government House for the purpose of presenting it.

At 2.53 p.m. the sitting was suspended to enable the Speaker and honourable members to proceed to Government House.

On returning at 3.10 p.m.—

The SPEAKER—I have to inform the House that accompanied by members of this House

and by the President and members of the Legislative Council, I proceeded to Government House and the honourable the President of the Legislative Council there presented to His Excellency the Joint Address adopted by both Houses this day, to which His Excellency was pleased to make the following reply:—

To Mr. President and honourable members of the Legislative Council and Mr. Speaker and members of the House of Assembly:

I thank you for your message of congratulations addressed to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty on the occasion of the birth of a second son to Her Majesty and the Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. I join with you in your rejoicings and your reaffirmation of loyalty and devotion to the Throne and person of Her Majesty. It will be my pleasing duty to forward your message for submission to Her Majesty the Queen.

QUESTIONS.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Can the Premier say whether a report has been received by the Government from the committee investigating the necessity of amending the Workmen's Compensation Act to bring our legislation more into line with that of other States, and, if a report has been received, whether the Government intends to introduce such legislation this session?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Because there was some change in the representation on the committee last year no report was received last year. I think it was the first time for some years that no report was submitted to the Government and Parliament. I have heard from the chairman of the committee that he expects to have a report ready soon, probably within a fortnight at the latest. I believe the terms of the report have been finalized and the report is now ready for signing for submission to the Government. I do not know what is contained in the report or what ground it covers. The Government's usual policy—and I have no doubt it will be followed on this occasion—is to submit the report to Parliament together with legislation to give effect to the report. I assure the honourable member that legislation and the report will be placed before Parliament, and I expect that the legislation will be in the terms of the report.

MATRIMONIAL CAUSES LEGISLATION.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—It seems likely that the Federal Matrimonial Causes Act will operate throughout Australia on July 1 next and that as from that date the South Australian Matrimonial Causes Act will cease to be effective.

That will mean that many subsidiary matters at present dealt with by the Master and Deputy Master of our Supreme Court will be dealt with only by the Supreme Court judges, for it is the scheme of the Federal Act that only the court as constituted in the various States will deal with these matters. As I did not hear any reference in His Excellency's Speech to an amendment to the Supreme Court Act, will the Premier state whether the Government intends to introduce an amendment to that Act to constitute the Master and his Deputy a part of the court so that they may continue to exercise all the functions they exercise under our State legislation?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—A similar question was asked in this House in the latter part of last session, when I said the Government did not intend to introduce legislation that session. There was doubt, firstly, whether the Government could introduce legislation that would affect a Federal Act and, secondly, whether legislation would be required in any case. Since the legislation has been passed by the Federal Parliament, the Attorney-General has spoken to me about this matter and has arranged for a senior judge representing the Full Court of each State to attend a conference in Canberra to consider this matter. I understand that the Federal authorities intend to make certain rules of court and procedure which will be Federal rules. This matter was not mentioned in His Excellency's Speech because we have not been requested by the Federal Government to make any alteration at present. Rather, the Federal authorities are considering the position in consultation with the Supreme Court judges of each of the States. I understand that a full conference of senior judges from every State will be held to deal with this matter.

PUBLIC SERVICE SALARY INCREASES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Will the Premier state whether the Government has decided if the 28 per cent marginal increase shall be applied to public servants, and, if so, whether the increases will be effective as from the first pay period in March?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I presume the honourable member is dealing with the question of increased margins in the Public Service. A report was received 8 or 10 days ago from the Public Service Commissioner and, as far as I know, it was gazetted today. If it was not ready for gazettal today it will be gazetted next week. As the honourable member has said, it dates back to about the 8th of this month.

KESWICK BRIDGE.

Mr. DUNNAGE—The Unley, West Torrens and Glenelg Councils have given much consideration to the traffic on the Anzac Highway and have concluded that the bottleneck at Keswick Bridge, which takes traffic to and from the Anzac Highway, is the big problem. Does the Minister representing the Minister of Roads and Railways know anything about the position? If he does not, will he ask his colleague whether the Government has considered this matter and, if it has not, whether it will do so?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—On no occasion when I have been in Cabinet has this matter been discussed, so I do not know what steps my colleague has taken. It has been given much publicity over a period. As I am not able to indicate what is in the Minister's mind, I will bring the matter to his notice and ask him to give me a considered reply.

BIRKENHEAD BRIDGE.

Mr. TAPPING—I have previously advocated in this House that there should be regulated openings of the Birkenhead Bridge because of the amount of traffic that traverses it daily. The position is now aggravated because the Jervois Bridge is in such a bad state of repair that from tomorrow the Port Adelaide Council will have to impose a limit of five tons on vehicles using it. In a report the Commissioner of Highways stated that this action would mean that each day another 2,000 vehicles would use the Birkenhead Bridge instead of the Jervois Bridge. I realize that it is difficult to regulate the opening of the Birkenhead Bridge because it spans the main channel in Port Adelaide, but the traffic problem is aggravated because even for small 16ft. yachts the bridge is opened forthwith. Will the Minister of Works take up with his colleague the advisability of making regulations to control the opening of this bridge for small craft, but excluding large steamers?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I presume that what the honourable member suggests is that the Minister may cause the bridge to be opened less frequently and that small craft may have to wait for a passage. I will bring this matter to my colleague's notice and ask him for a reply.

VICTOR HARBOUR LAND.

Mr. JENKINS—The recently-formed Yacht Club of Victor Harbour, which has made great progress, applied to the Victor Harbour Corporation for permission to build a club house

on the foreshore. This permission was granted in principle, but certain people threatened to take out a writ of restraint as soon as the building commenced. The corporation tried to find out in whose authority this land was vested and after several months of inquiry it was told that the land may be vested in the Minister of Marine, the Minister of Roads, or the Minister of Lands. As the corporation desires to be able to give an answer to the Yacht Club, will the Minister of Marine confer with his colleagues or take the necessary steps to define under whose authority the land comes?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Yes.

BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I noticed in recent press reports that a Victorian was prosecuted for refusing to permit a blood transfusion to be given to a child because the practice offended his religious beliefs. Can the Premier, who today represents the Attorney-General in this House, say whether the law in South Australia, while granting the utmost freedom of religion, would prohibit such neglect of a child, and whether it would allow a person to be prosecuted or penalized if he failed to protect the health of a child or any other individual?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Speaking as a layman without any legal knowledge of this matter, I would think that the law in South Australia would be similar to the Victorian law regarding this matter, but I doubt whether that really answers the honourable member's question as I doubt very much whether the present law in Victoria is satisfactory. We know that the child's life was not saved, and the fact that there was a conviction does not alter the fact that it did not enable the operation to be undertaken to save the child's life. This matter is receiving the attention of the authorities in several countries, and I believe that Great Britain is handling the matter by giving power to a public welfare body to take the child over for a short period to enable the operation to take place. The honourable member's question is important. I cannot answer it today, but I will see that a full report is obtained in due course. When that report is available I will see whether any public action is necessary.

FINDON HIGH SCHOOL LAND.

Mr. FRED WALSH—A matter that has been receiving attention for more than three and a half years concerns an area of about five acres of land adjoining the north western corner of the Findon high school. That land belongs to the Woodville Corporation. Much

negotiation and correspondence on this matter has been indulged in between the Education Department, the Woodville Corporation and the Findon high school council. The nearest these authorities got to a solution was a decision that a joint agreement could be reached between the department and the Woodville Corporation whereby the school would have the use of this land, which, although fenced, is not fully levelled or turfed, and has no other amenities on it. That suggested agreement provides that the school would have the use of the land from 8.30 a.m. to 4.45 p.m. on Monday to Friday, and from 8.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. on Saturday, those hours being considered sufficient. The department has been considering this matter which, as it provides for agreement between the department and another authority, is unusual. The Superintendent of High Schools, in a letter to the secretary of the Findon high school council dated August 12, stated:—

Procedures involved in a joint scheme for the Matheson Reserve are somewhat different from the normal. The Honourable the Minister of Education is being approached to decide whether approval, in principle, can be given to the scheme. If he does, it will be necessary for the Architect-in-Chief's Department to provide an estimate of costs. Subsequent to these steps, the Crown Law Office would draw up a draft agreement to be approved by both parties concerned.

The latest information, which makes the matter more urgent, is that the Woodville Corporation has been asked by an established sporting body in the Port Adelaide district for a long-term lease of this land, and if no agreement is reached between the department and the corporation the land will be lost to the Findon high school for all time. Will the Premier, representing the Minister of Education, obtain a report from the Director of Education on what has been done to obtain approval of the scheme referred to?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—This matter is an entirely new one to me, and I have no knowledge of its background. It seems to me that the proposed scheme as described by the honourable member is logical and sensible. I will call for a report and will advise the honourable member next week.

ADELAIDE TO PORT PIRIE RAIL SERVICE.

Mrs. STEELE—I recently travelled to Western Australia by the transcontinental train, and both going and returning was, coincidentally, a passenger on a Saturday afternoon over the Port Pirie to Adelaide section. On both those occasions the weather was extremely trying.

No buffet car was attached to the train, nor was any stop made for refreshments *en route*. In addition, the train stopped at practically every small siding on that section on both journeys. As the Adelaide to Port Pirie section constitutes an integral part of the transcontinental railway, can the Minister representing the Minister of Railways say whether consideration could be given to: (1) the provision of air-conditioned coaches for the comfort of passengers; (2) the attachment of a buffet car; and (3) making this section an express service in every sense of the word, so maintaining continuity of fine service across the continent?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I will ask the Minister of Railways for a reply.

PROSECUTION OF THE NEWS.

Mr. LAWN—Can the Premier say whether the Government intends to continue proceedings in the sole surviving libel charge against *The News*?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I should like the honourable member to put that question on notice, as it concerns the Crown Law Office. I will obtain a report for the honourable member if he puts his question on notice.

NEW DAM ACROSS RIVER MURRAY.

Mr. BYWATERS—A matter referred to in His Excellency's Speech this morning, and one which has been the subject of press reports recently, concerns the proposed dam across the upper reaches of the River Murray. Can the Premier tell the House the approximate location of the proposed dam? Can he say whether this scheme will entirely supersede the suggestion previously made regarding Lake Bonney, and whether any further assistance has been promised by the Federal Government in carrying out this scheme?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—There are three possible sites for the dam, and the various proposals are still being closely examined by the Engineer-in-Chief. For practical purposes the requirement of the dam would be that it would be below the junction of the Murray and the Darling, so that we would have the advantage of getting water from either of those sources into the storage. The scheme previously suggested for Lake Bonney would give a very limited amount of water, and upon investigation it was shown that the cost of that scheme would be very heavy in relation to the total amount of storage available there. This is becoming a serious and very urgent matter for South

Australia. By 1970 we shall be using continuously all the water that we can safely depend upon receiving under the River Murray Waters Agreement. As there is no possibility, in my opinion, of getting the eastern States to agree to a larger water allocation for South Australia, the only alternative, if we are to get extra water, is to take steps to store it in a peak period against a lean period, and it would not want to be limited. Under these circumstances the Lake Bonney scheme would not, I believe, measure up, because of its limited capacity and the heavy cost. The cost of the proposal in mind would be about £9,000,000 or £10,000,000. I have told the Commonwealth Government that South Australia would be prepared to take the responsibility for half the expenditure if the Commonwealth Government took the responsibility for the other half. If we were to ask the other States to come into the proposal it would become a River Murray Waters Commission scheme, and that would not ensure us another gallon of water, because under the agreement we are limited to 600,000 acre feet for our use, so it is to our advantage not to bring it into the general scheme.

I have seen the Prime Minister and some of his Ministers on the matter and I thought the reception was very fair, although there was no actual decision. In fact there cannot be one until a survey has been made. I have seen Mr. Bolte on the matter and again I thought the reception was fair. I intend to see Mr. Heffron next week. He has arranged for me to have lunch with him one day during that week and I will then place the proposals before him. I do not expect any grave objections from the two States. They would not be called on to contribute to the scheme, but there would be some advantages to them from South Australia having the scheme.

Mr. O'Halloran—They would not lose any water as a result of it.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—In fact, they would gain water. We would be able to take our allotment of water at any time of the year suitable to them. At present they are obliged to send us so much water every month. The fact that they send down surplus water during May and June does not relieve them of their obligation in January and February, so we can offer a working arrangement that would be beneficial to them also. In my opinion it would be the real way to solve this problem for South Australia on a permanent basis. I feel that the proposition will have the support of both sides of this House, and both

sides of the House in Canberra. I see no difficulty with Victoria and New South Wales when they realize what is proposed and that we are not infringing any of their rights in our proposal.

LAND SALES TO ALIENS.

Mr. STOTT—My question relates to the need for aliens to get a special permit from the Minister of Lands before purchasing land in this State. I understand that it is the only State requiring such a permission. I have been informed that the Commonwealth Government made representations to South Australia to do away with the need for a permit from the Minister of Lands before an alien can purchase land. It causes many delays, and I have been informed that there has been up to three months' delay in getting the necessary permission from the Lands Department. Will the Premier take up the matter with Cabinet with a view to following the lead of the other States and doing away with the need for aliens to get the special permit?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Recently the Minister of Lands received a deputation on this matter and he informed its members that he would submit to Cabinet the matter of whether it would be possible to introduce legislation to relax the provision, but I do not believe that it is a material question that requires legislation to support it at present. It is not all one-sided. In many instances aliens have had a great deal of protection because they have had someone to see that the propositions entered into have been fair and proper. The matter will go before Cabinet and the honourable member will have a reply to his question probably next week or, at the latest, the week after.

BANNING OF SONGS.

Mr. JENNINGS—I am sure that all South Australians have been touched by the tender solicitude for their moral welfare recently exhibited by the Chief Secretary in the banning of five songs by the American ghoul singer, Mr. Tom Lehrer, at his concert in the Adelaide Town Hall. My question is whether or not this notable beginning is to be carried to its logical conclusion. May we expect to have expunged from all our nursery rhyme books such melancholy subjects as Jack falling down and breaking his crown, mice having their tails chopped off by farmers' wives with carving knives and a little dog laughing at the distress of a cow jumping over the moon?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Legislation provides that in certain instances the Chief Secretary, where he thinks proper, should exercise censorship of certain material. In this instance, the material submitted to the Chief Secretary, in his opinion, warranted his taking action. I notice that similar action was taken in Queensland, so this procedure was not peculiar to South Australia. I have also been informed that this celebrated artist proposed to release a number of records upon the unsuspecting public of South Australia, but as a result of the action taken by the Chief Secretary, possibly these will not now go into circulation.

COUNTRY WATER SERVICES.

Mr. LAUCKE—As the implementation of a major water reticulation system to the rapidly developing areas of Modbury, Highbury, Tea Tree Gully and Golden Grove is dependent on the completion of the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline to terminal storage, can the Minister of Works indicate whether the completion of this main is still a high priority work and when it is expected to be completed?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have not in the last week or two checked to ascertain how the final work in connection with the completion of the pipeline is proceeding, but I will do so and let the honourable member know. We did take steps early this financial year to let contracts for the last of the work, in the building of the tanks and completion of the pipeline. There have been serious strains on the reserves this year, due to abnormal conditions, that may have retarded the work somewhat. I appreciate that there are a number of rapidly developing districts, which the honourable member has enumerated, that are dependent upon its completion, and certain assurances were given to the people therein and to the honourable member on their behalf that as soon as the main was completed we would consider servicing those areas.

COMPENSATION FOR FIRE DAMAGE.

Mr. RICHES—I have been informed that half a dozen land owners in the Napperby district were burned out or suffered severe losses as a result of fires that were started in an attempt to curb the original outbreak of the disastrous bush fire that occurred in the Flinders Ranges at the beginning of this year. No one criticizes what was done in that regard. It would seem that it was necessary for these backburns, but the landowners who suffered such severe losses are inquiring whether the

Government will be prepared to hear claims for compensation. Although they suffered heavy stock losses—and some will have to forgo stock holding for a couple of years at least—they are not asking for compensation for stock losses: they merely seek compensation for fencing that was burned. I consider this is in the same category as damage caused in taking fruit to curb fruitfly outbreaks: it is a loss sustained by a few for the protection of the whole. I believe their claim is legitimate. Can the Premier say whether the Government is prepared to have Sir Kingsley Paine or some committee investigate these claims?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The honourable member has asked whether the Government would consider providing compensation for fire losses. That is an entirely new procedure. The Government is certainly not responsible for the fire. The most that has ever been done previously is for a public appeal to be made when hardship is involved and the Government has, on occasions, contributed to such appeals with the support of Parliament.

Mr. RICHES—I am informed that these people were not burned out by the fire but by fires that were lit as breaks.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Before I could answer that question I would need to know more of the circumstances, because it could have far-reaching repercussions in the future. I do not know whether it is an obligation to be assumed by the Government. If the honourable member will supply me with the necessary information I will have the matter examined.

SOCIAL SERVICE PAYMENTS TO ABORIGINES.

Mr. DUNSTAN—As a result of the recent amendment to the Federal Social Services Act pensions are now payable to certain inmates of the Government aboriginal mission stations. In consequence of the form of the payment certain questions were asked in the House of Representatives of the Minister for Social Services as to the Federal Government's policy in relation to the payment of social service benefits to pensioners on mission stations. I do not know whether the Minister of Works has seen the reply by the Minister for Social Services, but it was to the effect that social service benefits would be paid to aboriginal natives along precisely the same lines as to other people in the community. In fact, payments are not being made to aborigines at the Point Pearce Mission Station on the same lines

as to other members of the community. The Federal Minister for Social Services has pointed out that to people ordinarily in the community who are inmates of benevolent homes the pension is split into two parts—£1 13s. a week is paid to the pensioner and the balance of £3 2s. a week is paid to the authority administering the maintenance. However, in the case of Point Pearce, it appears that on representations made by the Aborigines Protection Board the whole of the money is paid to that board which then deducts £2 10s. 2d. a week for food, light and fuel, and food in kind is given against this amount from the Government store, which means that the pensioner is not in a position to handle that money himself and cannot spend it at his own co-operative store, but must spend it at the Government store. The sum of £1 9s. 10d. is apparently allowed to accumulate, although I have been informed by pensioners there that they have never been told how much is in trust for them, and 15s. a week is paid to the pensioner, apparently to do what he or she likes with it. I am further informed that even on this 15s. a week a charge has now been made by the manager of the station of 2s. 6d. a week for electricity, a charge that was not previously made on the station and, so far as the Federal authorities were concerned, they understood that the charge for light was included in the £2 10s. 2d. deducted by the department. Will the Minister state why some differentiation has been made between aborigines on the station and people ordinarily in benevolent homes in the community, and why pensioners there cannot be allowed to handle their money and buy from the co-operative store instead of the Government store if they choose to do so?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—It is news to me if the facts alleged by the honourable member are correct. I point out, however, in the first instance that so far as I am aware—and I shall have to refresh my memory on the details before I am taken as being categorical on the matter—the method of payment of pensions by the Commonwealth varies considerably in various circumstances. The honourable member mentioned inmates of benevolent homes. However, in regard to pensions payable to natives resident on mission stations, cattle stations and other properties more remote, various methods are adopted for payment of the social services benefits, and they do vary in accordance with the type of institution at which the native normally resides or lives near. Therefore, a comparison between

the inmates of benevolent homes and natives at some other place is not strictly relevant. As to the details the honourable member gave, in which he mentioned Point Pearce, I will make an inquiry to ascertain the position, and let the honourable member have a reply.

APPOINTMENT OF NEW GOVERNOR.

Mr. LAWN—For some months now the people of South Australia have known that Sir Robert George's term as Governor would expire early this year, and he and Lady George have now returned to England. However, there has been no announcement by the Government of the appointment of a successor. We notice that Sir Mellis Napier has once again been appointed in an acting capacity as Lieutenant-Governor. I should like to know whether his appointment is temporary or on a more or less permanent basis; and if it is a permanent appointment is this a change of Government policy? Has it adopted the policy of the Australian Labor Party for the appointment of an Australian as Governor, or is it the result of the grave loss of prestige recently suffered by the Government by having eight out of nine charges against News Ltd. thrown out in the Supreme Court?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Sir Mellis Napier's appointment is of course a permanent one, and I think he has now held the position for some 15 years. The permanent appointment of a Deputy Governor means that he assumes office at any time the Governor is absent from the State, or between the leaving of one Governor and the appointment of a new Governor. There is no change of policy in that connection either in accordance with the Labor Party's policy, or against its policy. It is an appointment which holds in every State, I think, with one exception. I think that the Chief Justice of a State usually holds the position of Lieutenant-Governor, and he assumes office in the event of the position of Governor being vacant. There has been no alteration of policy in that regard. If the honourable member also desires to know whether in due course another Governor will be appointed, the answer is yes.

Mr. Lawn—How long, though?

DROUGHT RELIEF.

Mr. STOTT—The Premier will remember that there have been negotiations between the Commonwealth and the South Australian Governments in respect of the making of advances to farmers who suffered from drought. He will also be aware that submissions have been placed before him in that regard. Have they been

placed before the Commonwealth Government and has he any further information on the question?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The honourable member referred to a deputation introduced by him at which there were certain suggestions for the relief of drought-stricken areas. Those requests were placed before the Federal Government, but were not acceded to, that Government stating that it was not prepared to come into a scheme along those lines. More recently the member for Grey in the Federal Parliament (Mr. Russell) took the matter further by asking a question of the appropriate Federal Minister as to whether the Commonwealth would be prepared to consider a hardship grant in special cases, and again the answer was that the Commonwealth Government was not prepared to make any advances in that direction, as it did not consider it could come into such a proposition. I believe that the Wheatgrowers' Association of South Australia has also made representation in connection with the matter. However, more recently Senator Pearson, who asked in the Senate whether the Commonwealth Government would be prepared to consider hardship assistance, received a reply which appeared to be a slight reversal of previous statements, as the Minister said he would be prepared to examine the possibility of hardship grants in special cases recommended by the State Government. That has not yet been confirmed, so I cannot take it any further than the press report regarding it. I will inform the honourable member as soon as possible.

KINGSTON WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. CORCORAN—Disappointment has been expressed by the people at Kingston regarding the progress of the proposed water supply. A letter which I received from the District Council of Lacedepe, dated March 25, states:—

Council asks that you keep before the Government the fact that the citizens of Kingston are depending on the inauguration of the service for the coming summer. Will you be good enough to suggest that plans be drawn prior to July 1 in order that a contract can be let without delay as soon as funds are made available for the erection of the overhead tank? Does the Minister of Works know the reasons for the somewhat dilatory manner in which this work is being proceeded with? The district council is certainly not happy with the progress being made. Can the Minister also give any assurance on whether this work will be completed by next summer in order to meet the desires of the people of Kingston?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I will look into the matter and ascertain the latest position. I point out to the honourable member that very serious strain has been placed upon the department this financial year, and possibly in some cases it has had to divert to emergency work energies which otherwise would be normally employed in more routine matters. I do not know whether that applies to this particular project in any way, but I will obtain a report for the honourable member and give him the information next week.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORTS.

The SPEAKER laid on the table the final reports by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence:—

- Angle Park Boys Technical High School.
 - Automotive Trade School (Additions and Alterations).
 - Coomandook Area School.
 - Elizabeth Boys Technical High School.
 - Elizabeth Girls Technical High School (Additional Buildings).
 - Elizabeth Vale Primary School.
 - Mitchell Park Boys Technical High School (Additional Buildings).
 - Myponga Reservoir and Trunk Main (Modified Scheme).
 - Vermont Girls Technical High School (Additional Buildings).
 - Blackwood, Plympton, Taperoo and Willunga High Schools.
 - Campbelltown, Elizabeth, Gilles Plains, Henley, Seacombe and Millicent High Schools.
 - Magill Primary School (Additional Building).
 - Penola High School.
- Ordered that reports be printed.

LOXTON IRRIGATION AREA DRAINAGE SCHEME.

The SPEAKER laid on the table the report by the Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement, together with minutes of evidence, on a Comprehensive Drainage Scheme for the Loxton Irrigation Area.

Ordered that report be printed.

SESSIONAL COMMITTEES.

Sessional Committees were appointed as follows:—

Standing Orders.—The Speaker, Messrs. King, O'Halloran, and Quirke.

Library.—The Speaker, Messrs. Clark, Nankivell and Ryan.

Printing.—Messrs. Bywaters, Hall, Harding, McKee, and Mrs. Steele.

JOINT HOUSE COMMITTEE.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD moved—

That it be an order of this House that, in view of the creation of the Joint House Committee under the Joint House Committee Act, 1941, a Sessional House Committee be not appointed under Standing Order 404.

Motion carried.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD moved—

That a committee consisting of Messrs. Dunnage, King, Millhouse, Nankivell and the mover be appointed to prepare a draft Address in Reply to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor in reply to his Speech on opening the Parliament, and to report on Tuesday, April 5.

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.47 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, April 5, at 3 p.m.