

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, April 13, 1960.

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

QUESTIONS.**RETRENCHMENTS.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier any further information about the question I asked last week concerning whether any of the employees retrenched from the Engineering and Water Supply Department earlier this year had been re-employed by that department?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—That report is not yet to hand. Of course, some research is involved in checking the matter, but I hope to have the report soon.

ALIENS' LAND TRANSACTIONS.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—Last session I asked the Minister of Lands a number of questions, some on notice, about the Government's intentions regarding those parts of section 24 of the Law of Property Act which prohibit the purchase by aliens of land without the consent of the Minister of Lands first being obtained. I expressed the hope that the provisions would be repealed and apparently my views are shared by other members because the member for Ridley (Mr. Stott) asked a question on this subject on the first day of this session. In August last the Minister said he would give the matter further thought with a view to considering the proposal for repeal. Has the Minister considered the matter further and can he express his views?

The Hon. Sir CECIL HINCKS—True, I said I would give the matter further consideration. I have done so and have discussed the matter with the secretary of the Good Neighbour Council and one of his committee members. They went away happy and will submit to me in writing their views on this matter. As soon as they do that I will take the matter to Cabinet and a decision will then be made.

GLANVILLE PIPE WORKS.

Mr. TAPPING—I understand there is a possibility that the Glanville pipe works will transfer operations to Sassafras, Grand Junction Road, Rosewater. Can the Minister of Works say whether that is so?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I will inquire and bring down a report for the honourable member.

IRRIGATION LAND WATER RATING.

Mr. KING—Can the Minister of Irrigation say whether the question of water rates for irrigation land has been considered and, if so, with what result?

The Hon. Sir CECIL HINCKS—This matter was fully discussed and considered by Cabinet last Monday. Because of the difficult season Cabinet has decided that there will be no increase in rates, which will remain the same as last year.

**ADELAIDE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
APPEAL.**

Mr. RYAN—Has the Treasurer a reply to my question of April 5 on whether commission is being paid on money raised by the Adelaide Children's Hospital appeal?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have received the following letter from Mr. E. H. D. Lines, the Chief Executive Officer of the Adelaide Children's Hospital (Inc.):—

We advise that the board of management engaged a Sydney firm of fund-raising consultants and organizers to raise £1,250,000. They have been paid a fee of £33,500 and guarantee to raise £335,000. They were engaged from January 5 to November 27, 1959, but as the guaranteed figure of £335,000 was not reached they agreed to carry on free of fee or charge until June 1, 1960, when the Door Knock Appeal will be completed, and it is hoped the guaranteed figure will be attained. No person or organizer is in receipt of any commission or percentage of money raised in this appeal. Most of the work is being done in a voluntary capacity by many hundreds of people in the city. Many kindred organizations in this State have full-time organizers on their paid staff to raise funds for their work.

**SANDERGROVE EXTENSION
ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.**

Mr. JENKINS—I understand that about 18 months ago a meeting was held regarding the proposed extension of electricity to what is known as Sandergrove Extension near Strathalbyn, and that recently a survey was made of the area. About 30 farmers in that district are anxious to know when this extension is likely as they have to replace worn-out machinery. Will the Premier ascertain when this extension is likely?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will get a report for the honourable member as soon as possible. I point out that the Electricity Trust, in common with other Government undertakings, always has difficulty in stipulating a precise date for the completion of expansion work. Firstly, it will not be known, for instance, how much money the trust

can have next year until after the Loan Council meeting which will probably be held in May or June. As the trust works inside a budget it is difficult for it to say when a supply will be available.

NORTH-WEST ABORIGINAL RESERVE.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Will the Minister of Works ascertain whether prospecting is proceeding at present in the aboriginal reserve in the north-west corner of this State and, if so, to what extent, by whom, and whether the interests of the aborigines there are being fully protected?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I am not able to say offhand whether prospecting is taking place in the reserve, but I rather think not. However, I will check on that. I point out that no person may enter the reserve without the specific written consent of the Chief Protector of Aborigines. From time to time requests come for people to pass through or enter the area. The Aborigines Board examines these carefully and grants permits sparingly and only to people whose *bona fides* are well established and whose character and intentions are beyond question. To that extent I assure the honourable member that the welfare of aborigines is being carefully watched in every way.

SOUTH-EASTERN DRAINAGE.

Mr. HARDING—Will the Minister of Lands say whether one can inspect a map of the proposed drainage of the South-Eastern Division of the Lower South-East, particularly the first phase, and whether one can obtain a copy of the map of the proposed drainage, particularly of drain M. and Mosquito Creek?

The Hon. Sir CECIL HINCKS—I will make a plan available if the honourable member wishes to see it.

POINT PEARCE: PENSION PAYMENTS.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question concerning pension payments at Point Pearce?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have a report from the secretary of the Aborigines Board, the relevant portion of which is:—

Payment of age pensions is being made to natives at Point Pearce and elsewhere in accordance with the direction of the Director-General of Social Services, which reads as follows:—

“Pensions in respect of qualified natives at Point Pearce and Point McLeay Set-

tlements will be paid to your department each fortnight by means of a group cheque. The cheque will be accompanied by a schedule showing the names of the pensioners and the amount due to each. As arranged during recent discussions with my officers the money will be placed in individual trust accounts for each pensioner; they will be allotted 15s. a week in cash and permitted to draw on the balance standing to the credit of their account for rent, purchase of foods, clothing, etc.”.

In accordance with this direction I advised the Superintendents of Point Pearce and Point McLeay to adopt the following procedure:—

- (a) A cheque for 30s. is forwarded direct to the pensioner from this office each fortnight.
- (b) Superintendents to issue orders for supplies of bread, butter, meat, firewood, electricity, stores, fruit and vegetables at an estimated cost of £2 10s. 2d.

That is not an arbitrary figure, but is calculated on a normal requirement and is varied at the request of pensioners at their own discretion. The report continues:—

- (c) Superintendents to issue orders for clothing, blankets, fares, or other requirements from time to time, at the discretion of the Superintendents, to be charged to balance of pension held in trust at this office.

In my letter to the Superintendents I stated, “It should be clearly understood that although the Director-General considers it is necessary to control pension moneys, these moneys are in reality the property of the pensioner, and a certain amount of discretion in the issue of stores, clothing, etc., will be allowed, always providing that a reasonable credit balance is maintained in the account.”

I take the opportunity to say that, whereas the honourable member from his question seemed to be under the impression that the Government and the department were in some way unfavourably disposed to co-operatives, in fact the reverse is the case. The superintendent of the station may issue an order on any store or storekeeper either on the station or in immediately adjoining towns. That position still obtains. If the pensioner desires to go to towns nearby to make purchases, he can get an order on a local store for that purpose. The Chief Welfare Officer of the Department (Mr. Millar), who came to the department from New Guinea, where he had had experience in co-operatives, is recognized as a skilled adviser in native co-operative affairs. In fact, he was requested to go to Queensland to attend a conference on native co-operatives and although he could ill be spared from the department I agreed to his going because of his wide knowledge of these

matters. When the co-operative was established Mr. Millar went to the station to discuss the matter with the native people concerned and to advise them thereon, and he has maintained an interest ever since.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Will the Minister of Works say whether I correctly understood him to say that pensioners at Point Pearce may always know the balance in their trust accounts, and that apart from the expenditure of the sums mentioned by him in connection with orders for food and clothing issued, and the 15s. a week paid, they may have the disposal of the remainder of the money in their trust accounts upon request to the superintendent?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—That is a fair assumption from the remarks I made. As I said, the Chief Protector in Adelaide has given specific instructions to the superintendent that the balance in the account is the pensioner's property and must be treated as such, having due regard to husbanding the resources of the person concerned, where such help and advice appears to be necessary. The trust accounts are kept at head office for accounting purposes so that mechanical means can be used for such purposes (and, incidentally, they have been installed) and the superintendent may not be able to say from day to day what is the balance in the account. However, it can be obtained readily, and the pensioner, by keeping a note of the expenditure, can know approximately what his balance is.

PORT PIRIE RAIL SERVICE.

Mrs. STEELE—Last week, when I asked the Minister of Works a question relating to the Adelaide to Port Pirie section of the Transcontinental train, I did not mention that I had heard adverse and critical comments by interstate passengers on the services provided on this train, as indicated by the three points I made: the lack of air-conditioned cars, the lack of facilities for refreshment, and the fact that the train stopped at all stations *en route*. Regarding refreshments: the West-East express arrives at Port Pirie just after lunch has been served on the train and though the Port Pirie refreshment room is open very few passengers take advantage of that facility, no doubt feeling that there will be further opportunities on the way to Adelaide. Regarding air-conditioning: will the Minister of Works obtain a report from the Railways Commissioner on whether fans could be installed in the compartments for the comfort of passengers? Will he ascertain whether, as the train stops at Bowmans, some arrangements

could be made, even if only on Saturday afternoons, to have the refreshment room opened? As we are trying to build up our tourist potential in this State, I consider it is a great pity if interstate visitors are influenced adversely by the lack of services on this line. Will the Minister get a further report along these lines?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Yes.

LEAVE ACCUMULATION.

Mr. FRED WALSH—A constituent of mine who for some years worked for the Electricity Trust left that employment because of certain domestic circumstances and went to work for the South Australian Railways Department as a toolmaker. He applied, I suppose to the Chief Mechanical Engineer, for his services with the Electricity Trust to count in respect of furlough that might be due. I communicated with the Minister of Railways, and several letters passed between us. Evidence was submitted in support of the application that two other people previously employed by the trust had gone to work for the Weapons Research Establishment and that their service had counted in respect of leave. In his final reply of April 7, the Minister said:—

Employees of the Electricity Trust of South Australia on transfer to a Commonwealth department are entitled under directions of the Commonwealth Public Service Board to count for furlough purposes prior service with the trust. These Commonwealth Public Service Board directions are made subject to provisions of the applicable Commonwealth Acts which do not, of course, apply to the South Australian Railways Commissioner.

Although we are not objecting to the decision of the Minister, it seems strange that a person can transfer from a State instrumentality to a Commonwealth department and have his services recognized, yet if he transfers to a State department his services are not recognized. Will the Premier refer to Cabinet the question of giving power to the Railways Commissioner to recognize services in similar circumstances to those I mentioned?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—This matter involves one or two questions that are not so simple to answer as the honourable member may imagine. There is, of course, an obligation going forward with this recognition of services, and whether the Electricity Trust would be prepared to enter into a reciprocal agreement with the Railways Department or the State Public Service in this matter would have to be examined. The Commonwealth and State have a reciprocal arrangement, so there is no problem there.

Mr. Fred Walsh—This was the Electricity Trust.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes, and that is not the Public Service of South Australia, but an entirely separate organization. Obviously, the Railways Commissioner would not be prepared to accept the obligation of recognizing service with the Electricity Trust unless there were some reciprocal agreement between those two authorities, so that if somebody went from the Railways Department to the Electricity Trust he would also share in that reciprocity. The Commonwealth and the State have a reciprocal arrangement, and a financial adjustment is made when a transfer takes place. It may be that there is an easy solution to this question, and that the State can accept the Electricity Trust on the same basis as it does the Commonwealth, but a reciprocal agreement would be necessary before that could be brought into operation. I will have the matter examined for the honourable member.

SEWERS CONNECTIONS.

Mr. JENNINGS—A householder in my district waited for some time for the sewers to be extended to his house, and when they were eventually extended he had the drain dug so that a connection could be made. It was then found that the levels were such that they would not permit drainage from the house, so the sewer was then extended to the other side of the house where the levels were apparently sufficient to allow effective sewerage. This involved the householder in the extra expense of digging another drain and having the original one filled in, and also the breaking up of cement paths and the disruption of his garden. Obviously, the department made a mistake, albeit inadvertent, in this matter, so if I give the Minister of Works the name and address of this man will he have the matter investigated with a view to recompensing him?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I will have the matter investigated.

ROBE SLIPWAY.

Mr. CORCORAN—A proposal that has been discussed for some time concerns the excavating of a channel from the sea into Lake Butler at Robe to provide a slipway and a boat haven. I understand that an estimate of about £87,000 has been obtained for the work. I have been asked from time to time what is going to be done about the matter, as the present unsatisfactory facilities there can only be used in calm weather and cannot be approached at all

in stormy weather. I understand that the co-operation of the district council was sought to obtain certain areas of land on the proposed route of the channel. Can the Minister say whether there is any possibility of this proposal ever being accepted?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—The scheme may come to fruition. The plans are particularly attractive, and no doubt it would be a very satisfactory project. On the other hand, at no time has there been a promise that the scheme would be implemented. The last statement I made on that was that we had been asked to get the land to enable a scheme to go ahead, and, on the basis that there was no commitment to undertake the scheme, the Government agreed to get the land if it were made available. I understood the district council had been working to that end. Most of the dealings lately have been with my colleague, the Minister of Works, who is the constructing authority for such a scheme. To my knowledge not all the land has yet been obtained. Although the scheme is a most attractive and very good one, I make it clear that it cannot be guaranteed at this stage. We have gone as far as to say that we will purchase the land if it can be made available. The honourable member says that the present slipway is unsatisfactory. A project is now being investigated to improve that slipway. It will not, of course, be as big a scheme as a channel into Lake Butler, but improving the speed of the winch by about three times would certainly make the slipway much more effective, and any risk to boats being dislodged or damaged while being hauled up would be reduced by the extra speed.

SITTINGS OF HOUSE.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Some honourable members who reside in country electorates would naturally like to travel to their homes to be present in their respective electorates to attend various religious services on Good Friday. Can the Premier say whether the Government will ask the House to sit tomorrow, or whether it intends to adjourn to enable those members to reach their homes in reasonable time tomorrow evening?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Government intended to sit tomorrow, but some members on this side of the House have made the same request as the Leader and, under those circumstances, with the concurrence of the House, at the conclusion of the sitting today we will adjourn until next Tuesday.

REMARK POLICE STATION AND COURTHOUSE.

Mr. KING—Can the Minister of Works indicate when tenders will be called for the work on the Renmark police station and courthouse?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The department expects to be in a position to call tenders for work on the Renmark police station on or before June 30 next.

BARMERA POLICE STATION AND COURTHOUSE.

Mr. KING—Can the Minister of Works indicate when tenders will be called for the work on the Barmera police station and courthouse?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Drawings for the work are completed and specifications are being prepared. It is expected that the department will be able to go to tender early next month.

PENSIONERS' COTTAGE HOMES.

Mr. TAPPING—My question relates to the building of pensioners' cottage homes by the Housing Trust. I believe that all members agree that the type of home being built is most satisfactory and that the rent is reasonable. We agree that the various denominations have done excellent work in providing accommodation for some elderly people, but many hundreds desire this type of accommodation in which to live the rest of their lives. The use of modern drugs has brought about a longer life span and there is a greater demand for this type of accommodation. Can the Premier indicate what will be the trust's policy on the building of this type of home in the next financial year?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The honourable member will recall that the homes were built under a special Act of Parliament and a special grant was received from the Commonwealth Government for the purpose. Under the legislation it was provided that all rents, less the necessary maintenance costs, would be paid into a fund, and that that fund would be used for the erection of additional homes. Apart from any other windfall becoming available to help in this matter there will always be a small increase in the number of the homes. The last time I checked on this matter the trust had almost completed the original programme with the money allotted to it, but I will get a report for the honourable member.

WHYALLA INDUSTRIAL SITES.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Has the Minister of Lands a reply to the question I asked yesterday about the allocation of industrial sites at Whyalla?

The Hon. Sir CECIL HINCKS—I have received the following report from the Assistant Director of Lands:—

The purchase of the old aerodrome at Whyalla has not yet been completed. The documents have been forwarded to the Broken Hill Proprietary for execution and on return settlement will be made and the industrial blocks which have been surveyed will be gazetted open to application.

VICKERS MACHINE GUN.

Mr. JENKINS—In this morning's *Advertiser* there is a photograph of a .303 Vickers machine gun, which will be replaced in the Army by another light machine gun. Can the Premier say whether the Government will have placed in our museum one of these guns, which proved to be the most effective short-range weapons in two world wars?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will have the matter examined.

RADIUM HILL SCHOOL.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked on April 6 regarding the provision of a competent technical instructor at the Radium Hill school?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have received the following report:—

No full time technical teacher has ever been appointed to Radium Hill. Mr. A. H. Raymond, who was previously head teacher at the school, was keenly interested in woodwork and taught that subject to Grade VII boys and also to adult classes. The present head teacher (Mr. J. A. Bronner) is qualified to teach woodwork and is teaching this subject to Grade VII boys. Mr. Franz Kanneman has been appointed part time instructor in woodwork for the Adult Education Centre classes.

WAR WIDOWS: TRANSPORT CONCESSION.

Mr. RYAN—Does the Government intend to grant a concession on public transport to war widows? I believe that the reason they were not included in those to receive this benefit in the initial stages was that they were not confined to the means test in connection with earnings. Some unfortunate people are in this category and because of age can no longer increase their earnings by working.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The question of what concessions can be granted, and to whom, is considered in relation to the

Budget each year. A note will be made of the honourable member's suggestion and it will be considered then.

BROKEN HILL TO ADELAIDE ROAD.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Last week, in reply to a question I asked, the Premier said he might have an opportunity of discussing with Mr. Heffron (Premier of New South Wales) the possibility of reconstructing and sealing the road from Cockburn to Burra or Jamestown in order to provide an improved highway between South Australia and New South Wales. Did the Premier discuss this matter with Mr. Heffron, and has he anything to report?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I regret that I did not have an opportunity of discussing this question with Mr. Heffron, as I promised the Leader I would, but I caught Mr. Heffron when he was extremely busy, and I was not able to discuss ancillary matters with him. However, before my visit to New South Wales I discovered that this question was not similar to the situation concerning the Eyre Highway, which is not bituminized on either side of the border. New South Wales has already established a bitumen road to Broken Hill, obviously without Commonwealth assistance. However, I will have the matter closely examined to see whether something useful can be done.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from April 12. Page 153.)

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla)—In the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech there is a reference to the reconstruction and sealing of the Lincoln Highway. This is proving not only a boon to primary producers on the eastern side of Eyre Peninsula in travelling to the city, but it will be of great advantage to them in marketing their produce in the ever-growing industrial centre of Whyalla, which will be an important market for them. There are many hundreds of miles of outback roads in my electorate, which are outside the jurisdiction of councils, extending to the Western Australian and Northern Territory borders, and the Engineering and Water Supply Department has recently received representations for the grading and rolling of some of them. Whilst no doubt those who make these suggestions do so in the interests of the area, some of the proposals are quite impracticable. The most important asset to that tremendous area, which is

sparsely populated, would be one good road to which the pastoralists, miners and other workers in the area could make their way by graded tracks, and the obvious route to serve the whole area would be from Port Augusta to Kingoonya, then north through Coober Pedy to join the sealed road at Alice Springs, which continues to Darwin. I believe that parts of this route are already straightened out in road form, and I mention this now because it is a tremendous project which should be considered rather than the expenditure of vast sums on feeder roads around the district. A main road passing approximately through the centre of the area would be of the greatest benefit to the greatest number of people, and there is no doubt that this particular route is being increasingly used by many tourists.

It is admitted that there are still grave shortages of teaching staff, and I endorse the Leader's comments concerning the need for Commonwealth assistance for education purposes. Large classes are still the order of the day and in one or two schools in my area teachers are attempting to teach 60 pupils in a class. This number precludes students from being given individual attention, particularly those who are backward. It is vital that our children should receive the best education. From discussions I have had with apprentices attending the Whyalla Technical School I have gathered that the Education Department is experiencing financial difficulty at present. In November each year it is customary for technical high schools to requisition for equipment for the training of apprentices, and last year Whyalla requisitioned for equipment for the training of 220 apprentices at a cost of £1,500. The Education Department wrote asking for the requisition to be reduced, and it was reduced to £950. The Education Department requested a further reduction and it was reduced to £500. Of course, this correspondence resulted in some delay in the delivery of the equipment, and the reduction of the requisition meant that some training had to be curtailed or deferred. Initially the requisition was quite normal and was regarded as necessary for that number of apprentices.

Last year it was also agreed by the department that an extra teacher would be required for these apprentices. There was a delay in advertising the position and apparently no suitable person applied and the job was readvertised. Ultimately a teacher was selected recently, but for the eight weeks pending his appointment the gap had to be filled and teachers doing other work were asked to attend

to this job. One of them had to work overtime, but the payment of the additional salary had to come from the school grant and not by the normal means of a cheque from the department from the salaries account. The school is being hampered in its grant fund by these delays and by a shortage of funds in the department itself.

Concerning the opal fields at Coober Pedy and Andamooka, I draw the Government's attention to a position, in connection with police visits, that could be improved upon. At present police officers visit the opal fields, usually unheralded, to catch offenders and to carry out other duties. People living on the fields have suggested to me that it would be of great advantage and assistance to people living there if the police were to make regular periodical advertised visits with a view to assisting residents to compile forms and with other matters. Both places have a community hall that could be used by the police for an hour or two so that residents with particular problems could be assisted by them. I am sure this attention would be greatly appreciated by residents of these isolated places.

I congratulate the Government on opening a school at Coober Pedy. This move is of particular importance and benefit to the native children in that area as they have been of rather a primitive type and have needed education, without which they have had no hope of entering our community and taking their proper place. I am sure this opportunity will be availed of by parents. I am also pleased that an additional teacher has been sent to Andamooka. Here again the native children will be greatly assisted by attention to their education, without which they cannot properly take their place in the community. This is a most important step in that direction.

I feel that the most remarkable aspect of the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech is that very little reference was made to the underlying reasons for the difficulties being experienced in the realm of State finances, apart from the dry season. We are all aware that these have been affected by the extremely dry season, but the only reference to the effects of inflation is in paragraph 24, where it is said that the increasing inflationary pressure warrants the retention of prices legislation for a further period of 12 months. This is surprising in view of the broadcast by the Premier in January last in which he had a lot to say about the impact of inflation on Government finances and on the need for a Premier's Conference to consider what he termed the

desperate financial situation facing the States following the recent increases in the basic wage and margins. In the *Advertiser* he is reported to have said:—

The effect of wage margin increases on State finances was a problem of great national importance which would be all the better for full and free discussion.

Surely if this matter was so important in January it deserved more than one fleeting reference in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech, which, as everyone knows, is really the Premier's Speech.

A significant feature of the Government's attitude on this question of inflation has been again demonstrated in the last few months. Whenever it becomes a question of a wage rise, inflation becomes a serious issue with the Government and every effort is made to influence the court against giving a judgment in favour of the applicant wage-earners. Professor Mathews, the Professor of Commerce at the Adelaide University, is reported to have said that he doubted whether we would have heard so much talk about inflation if the Arbitration Commission were not considering wage adjustment, yet the fact is that applications by wage earners for a rise have had their origin in the inflationary processes carried out by other sections of the community. How ever, we never hear of this Government's appealing for a Premier's Conference to deal with these causes of inflation.

We on this side of the House have repeatedly drawn attention to the inflationary effects of exorbitant interest rates, profiteering, and price-fixing by monopolies, land speculation and all other ways in which people aim to get money for nothing, but the Premier's reply has always been that nothing must be done to disturb these people because he has alleged that without their beneficent influence we would have had great unemployment or they might not have come here at all.

Mr. Millhouse—Do you think that is wrong?

Mr. LOVEDAY—That has been the answer, if the honourable member cares to think back to our suggestion regarding some curb being placed on some of these activities. It appears that we have had to let them have an open go or they would have refused to play. The curious thing about the present situation is that members of the Liberal Party seem to be undecided on whether inflation is good or bad; it all depends on who is getting the next slice of the cake. The Minister for Trade (Mr. McEwen) said he believed our economy was on a razor's edge. Mr. Holt recently

said that the position was not critical and reproved Mr. Bolte for making himself rather absurd by describing Victoria in one breath as the apex of prosperity and in the next as being in desperate financial straits owing to the margins decision. Exactly the same could be said of the Premier of South Australia, whose utterances have been in line with those of Mr. Bolte.

Members have just received the March issue of *Stability*, the *Advertiser* monthly bulletin. According to this publication everything in the garden is rosy and there is prosperity and progress on every hand, but only last January the Premier said we were facing a desperate financial situation. Perhaps all these Liberal spokesmen will one day make up their minds about the matter. The wage-earner, of course, long ago made up his mind; he is sick of seeing his earnings whittled away by prices rising against him and of hearing pompous lectures about adopting a reasonable attitude to the community when he approaches the court in a proper manner in an endeavour to catch up and to obtain a fair share of this greatly increased prosperity that is so widely publicized. While this propaganda concerning prosperity and stability was being carried on, the Commonwealth Government was paying its representative, Mr. Eggleston, Q.C., a handsome fee to appear before the Arbitration Commission to paint what has been called "the blackest picture of the Australian economy that has ever been presented."

Before examining what has led to the present inflated level of prices in this country let me say something about the origin of a price rise and who is really doing the chasing. Mr. Justice Foster, when giving his reasons for his opinion on the restoration of wage adjustments, said:—

In an inflationary period the wage received always lags behind the cost of living and the standard awarded to the wage-earner is eroded by price rises from the pronouncement.

In 1942 the present Prime Minister (Mr. Menzies) said:—

There never has been a period in the world's history when upward prices have been overtaken by upward wages. The prices rise first, the wages plod laboriously after them. I think we would all say "Hear! Hear!" to that statement. In 1949 the Prime Minister made his famous promise to do everything possible to put value back into the pound. He said:—

The greatest task is to get prices down. The Chifley Government has paid a good deal of attention to increasing the volume and circulation of money. It has largely neglected the

problem of what and how much that money will buy. The greatest task, therefore, is to get prices down.

Those who remember the period of the second world war, and afterwards, know that the relative stability of the price level in Australia during the Chifley Government's regime was envied by other members of the British Commonwealth. Since the Menzies Government has been in power, however, prices have risen at fluctuating rates, but the increase is said to have averaged three to four per cent per annum.

One authority has given the rise in retail prices in Australia between 1948 and 1957 as 98 per cent, 50 per cent in the United Kingdom, 26 per cent in Canada, 18 per cent in the United States of America and 52 per cent in New Zealand. In 1956 the Director of the Institute of Public Affairs pointed out that Australia was suffering more than any other English-speaking country from inflation. He gave details of his survey, and he is certainly not a representative of the Labor movement. In August of that year we witnessed an abortive conference in Canberra on the question. The six State Premiers and the acting Prime Minister attended with their economic advisers, but they could not reach agreement. It is interesting to note that the rate of inflation has varied widely, and the attitude struck by members of Liberal Governments has varied according to who is supposed to benefit. Some fluctuations are as follows:—In 1951 there was a rise in prices of 15 per cent; in 1951-52 a rise of 24½ per cent; in 1956-57 a rise of 9 per cent, and last year a rise of three to four per cent. I point out that possibly the greatest publicity and the greatest panic over it arose in the last year, when the rise was three to four per cent. The rise of 24½ per cent in 1951-52 is particularly interesting. According to the White Paper, the share of wage and salary earners in the national income fell from 47.2 per cent to 42.4 per cent—a fall of nearly 5 per cent. This represented a movement of about £200,000,000 during that year from one set of persons to another set of persons, the wage earner being the loser. Liberal members did not call that a crisis, although the recent wage increases amounting to £165,000,000 are being assailed as such. That was considered a national crisis, but, of course, the recipients were different.

Let us examine some processes whereby prices have risen since the present Commonwealth Government took office. Whereas the issue of bank credit has been controlled

through the Commonwealth Bank, the credit available through hire-purchase has substantially changed the situation of credit control. The present Commonwealth Government exempted hire-purchase companies from the provisions of the Banking Act of 1945, and in 1953 it also provided that the Treasurer no longer had to approve investments by the banks. The Commonwealth, therefore, can now only control banks' advances, not their investments. Consequently, the private banks have all invested in hire-purchase companies, and during the same period the hire-purchase activities of the Commonwealth Bank have been severely restricted, obviously to eliminate effective competition. The private banks now derive one-sixth to two-thirds of their profits from hire-purchase companies, and since 1953 the advances by hire-purchase companies increased from £89,000,000 to £400,000,000.

I noticed in the finance section of last Sunday's *Mail* that one of the largest of these companies has been paying 17½ per cent dividend. In the last five months its assets have grown by more than £10,000,000, and its total assets are now £80,000,000. The article was optimistic about the high dividends that would continue to flow from the activities of this and other similar companies. I must ask: how much productivity has been associated with the accumulation of that £80,000,000 of assets? What has been produced by that finance company?

Mr. Quirke—Debt.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Precisely, yet we hear so much about the need for the increase of productivity before increased purchasing power should be made available. No-one can say that those finance companies have produced anything of any use to this country—not one single thing—and yet they have made greater profits faster than any other organization in the last few years. However, we hear no loud criticism about this, and there is no panic statement about the tremendous unearned increment flowing into the pockets of people as the result of those activities.

Bank overdraft rates have also risen during the term of office of the Menzies Government. They rose from 4½ per cent to 5 per cent in July, 1952, and to 5½ per cent in April, 1956. Those increases applied to existing and new loans. The rate on public loans rose from 3½ per cent to 5 per cent in 1956, so that the interest payments of the States, local governing bodies and semi-governmental bodies have all increased enormously in this period. The individual, the business man, the primary pro-

ducer, the State, and all public authorities have had to pay more and have had to express this in the prices of their services. Mainly through this process the wage earner has found it increasingly difficult to purchase his own home in a reasonable time or to obtain sufficient finance to build.

Company policy has been responsible for taxing the public through prices. The *White Paper on National Income and Expenditure* for 1958-59 shows that for the financial year 1951-52, 23 per cent of the capital requirements of companies was derived from ploughing back profits. That percentage had risen to 56 per cent by 1958-59, and instead of relying on public investment these companies have been taxing the public, through the prices of their products, to provide their capital requirements. Regarding profits, the Australian Council of Trade Unions, in giving evidence to the Arbitration Commission, was able to show that most companies have secured profits this year at least 12 per cent to 20 per cent higher in the aggregate than last year, while their depreciation allowances in the last two years have risen by £115,000,000, a rise of 30 per cent. A recent copy of the *Financial Review* states that the earning rate of 1,079 public companies rose last year to 16 per cent. It is relevant to mention here the Arbitration Commission's comments. The Commission said:—

Considering these aggregate profits, and bearing in mind the other material which is before us, we feel that the position of companies is such that they are able to bear increases in award wages. We are aware that in the past increases have led to increases in prices, and we believe that in some cases increases in wages have been used as an excuse for increasing prices when these could have been avoided.

I pass on now to some of the effects of inflation. I have dealt with some causes briefly, but I will briefly illustrate how those causes have been working in our economy in various directions. As the Premier has said in his recent broadcast, it is the people on fixed incomes who are being hit hardest—the superannuated people, the 460,000 age and invalid pensioners, and others dependent on social services. We should not overlook the fact that child endowment is now worth about 50 per cent of what it was in purchasing power. The savings of small-income people who put their small sums of spare money into savings banks have steadily decreased in value and, as Dr. Coombs recently pointed out, this is being increasingly recognized by the depositors themselves. Of course, someone might ask, "Well, what about the fact that our savings in South

Australia are supposed to be the highest per head in the Commonwealth?" I point out, however, that that does not prove a thing. It could mean that the people in the other States have woken up more quickly than those in South Australia to the fact that their deposits are losing their value, and they have therefore invested more readily in other avenues where higher interest rates are offering. We should not, therefore, draw any false conclusions from that. It is interesting to read what Dr. Coombs of the Commonwealth Bank had to say on this point, and I do not think anyone would challenge his authority on this question. He said:—

As more and more people become aware of the fall in the value of their money holdings, as they lose the money illusion they will seek to protect themselves by buying assets which will not lose their value as the decline in the value of money continues.

Mr. Quirke—I like the words "money illusion."

Mr. LOVEDAY—Yes, they are very apt. In fact, it is an illusion that obscures the true position. Let us look at the effect of the decline in the value of money on investment in Government securities. I have some figures from the December number of *Economic Record*. In 1949-50 taxes provided 63 per cent of the money required for public investment in this country, but by 1956-57 taxes provided 89.4 per cent of the money required for that purpose. That shows very clearly that fewer and fewer people are prepared to invest in Government securities, and that more taxation is required to carry out essential public works. Yet we have the clamour—the reiterated clamour—from employers' organizations and private banking institutions on occasions such as this for taxation and Government expenditure to be cut. All members receive a document every now and then from one of the leading banks, and that is one of the catch cries that one can read in such journals whenever one happens to open them. All those organizations say that Government expenditure should be cut and taxes reduced. These are the people who, by their own policies, are responsible for the position of Government securities. It is their policies that are causing people to divert their money from public securities.

Many members are associated with local government and know that local government bodies are scratching hard to provide necessities in their areas. They cannot meet all the requests made. Their responsibilities are expanding. Much more is expected of them today than previously, and their problems are

becoming more difficult to solve. The secretary of the Australian Local Government Association has pointed out that 10 years ago the investment in community services in Australia represented 5.2 per cent of the total capital investment, but today it is only 4.8 per cent, which is a retrograde step, particularly as productivity has increased and population has been built up considerably in the period. He also said that any suggestion that too great a proportion of capital investment is being diverted to community services has no substance in fact, yet this expenditure is criticized by employers' organizations and private banks whenever they talk about inflation.

In this Chamber we have heard remarks about the tremendous speculation in land in the metropolitan area. We have been told that about 10 times the area of land is being sold than is needed for day to day development. It is being done because people believe it to be a safe form of investment. They feel that the price of land will always rise because of the great demand for it. Inflation has led to a tremendous amount of speculative buying of land, thus forcing up land values and making it more and more difficult for young people to buy a block and build a home. One building authority said that not long ago the price of the land represented one-tenth of the cost of the home, but now it is one-third in the same locality. A few years ago one could buy a building block in the metropolitan area for £350 or less, but today it costs about £1,000 or £1,500.

I have read that the average wage in Australia is now £22 a week, but that is affected greatly by the high salaries received by some people. About 1,000,000 Australian families have an income that does not exceed £17 a week and they have the constant problem of trying to meet their day to day expenses as prices rise. Much has been said about the need for increased productivity. In this debate the member for Albert referred to it, and I thought his remarks were very thoughtful. A psychological aspect is associated with this subject. I will read an extract from a book that throws a searchlight on the feelings of the person thrown out of work and the feelings of the person who knows that he is causing another man to be thrown out of work by his activities. I refer to remarks made by a coal-miner at a meeting of the Australian Institute of Political Science last year. We are all familiar with the meetings of this body. It meets every year to discuss Australian problems. I have not seen that it has ever

discussed the matter of monopolies and cartels, but one day it might get around to that. Last year the meeting discussed trade unions. When talking about one of the papers this coalminer said:—

In 1955, 793 miners lost their jobs, in 1956, 1,483 lost their jobs, in 1957, 1,185 lost their jobs, in 1958, 2,600 lost their jobs. Last year with less than 16,000 men in the mines Australia was producing 16,000,000 tons of coal—a million tons more than in the previous year. We have the sorry picture in the northern coalfield of towns that are dying and men out of work. It is hard for a miner to see how increased productivity gives a higher standard of living. Now I drive one of the big continuous coal cutting machines known as the "Joy Miner" and every replacement we get is a little bit bigger and a little bit faster. The first one I drove in 1955 produced one ton in one minute's operation but by now it does it in half the time. I get no increase in wages except cost of living increases so I am simply chasing the cost of living. My point is that increased productivity does not mean an improved standard of living—on the contrary, it means a worsening of conditions. As a loyal Australian and a miner, is it my duty to increase production if every extra ton of coal I produce means another workmate in the unemployment queue? Or, should I keep production the way it is and keep a fellow miner in his job?

Let us look at what all this means in relation to purchasing power. As many as 6,061 coalminers lost their jobs from 1955 to 1958. The mine owners continued to make substantial profits, but the position of the coalminer and his mate in 1955 would be something like this. The two men, or other workers, produced X tons of coal a day and received £20 a week each, making a total of £40. In 1958, with new methods, one miner, or other worker, produced X tons of coal a day, and received £20 a week. In the same year we had the position where the miner was working and the other man was unemployed. He received a maximum benefit of £6 2s. 6d., and his permissible income was £2, making £8 2s. 6d. a week. If he obtained suitable mining work we have one miner working at his original job and the displaced miner re-employed producing X tons of some other mineral elsewhere, and receiving £20 a week. In the first case we had a production of X tons, and the purchasing power was £40 a week. In the second case we had either a production of X tons with one man unemployed, the two receiving £30 10s. 6d. a week purchasing power, or, if both were working, a production of 2X tons and £44 16s. a week purchasing power. Actually the more they produced the less purchasing power they obtained. In that period I have

allowed for the basic wage increase of 25s. a week, and the marginal increase in the wage of a skilled tradesman fitter of 23s. a week. Therefore, I am not obscuring the position in any way.

People working under these conditions find it difficult to believe the story about the need for increased productivity. It is easy for us to understand that they will not pay much attention to lectures to workers in such a situation to act in what is termed a responsible manner towards slogans of increased productivity and restraint in wage applications. Until the community recognizes its responsibility to deal with this situation we cannot expect the people to act differently. The coal mines at Morwell in Victoria provide a classical example of automation. They have had automation applied to their methods of operating the gas industry. Morwell produces about one-third of Victoria's gas and only 250 men operate the plant. Although the price of gas is being increased, the wages of the men are pegged. The same sort of thing applies in the motor car industry. There has been a tremendous increase per worker employed in the factory but there has been no decrease in the price of motor cars. Every effort is made to keep wages pegged, despite fantastic dividends to shareholders in one company in particular.

Mr. O'Halloran—Are they local shareholders?

Mr. LOVEDAY—The local shareholders will not get a chance. It can hardly be described as voluntary the way in which preference shareholders have been dealt with. If one looked at the correspondence that passed between the company and one or two shareholders who did not want to sell one could see that they were placed in a position where they had to sell. The application to industry of automation and better management methods should result in lower physical costs of the final product, but these lower costs are never expressed in lower price. True, most products show a progressive improvement in quality, which may represent an increased physical cost, but in a well managed economy there would be a balance of these trends resulting in a stability of physical cost, which should be reflected in a reasonably stable price level. That would result in rising standards of living without the evils of deflation or inflation.

We have had much publicity on this question because there have been applications to the court for wage increases, but nevertheless there are one or two bright spots despite all the adverse and misleading propaganda from

some organizations. Professor Karmel said that it was completely impracticable and unreasonable to freeze award wages because there could be no guarantee that higher productivity would be passed on in lower prices. "The problem," he said, "is tied up with the competitiveness of industry and commerce." He concluded his remarks in the *Advertiser*—there was quite a long article on this subject—by saying, "The time is long overdue for making a thorough investigation into the whole paraphernalia of monopolistic and restrictive practices, with a view to their control and eradication and to the encouragement of competition."

Mr. O'Halloran—Hear! hear!

Mr. LOVEDAY—We have been saying things like that for years but so far nobody has paid much attention to them.

Mr. Jennings—The member for Albert agrees with it.

Mr. LOVEDAY—He agrees and, in fact, there are one or two Liberal members who have agreed on this occasion with that argument. Even the Federal member for Barker has agreed with it. Then we have Dr. Coombs and I do not think anyone will challenge his authority to speak on that question. He was speaking at the Fifth Summer School of Business Administration and he emphasized that "prices were determined by management rather than by market forces and that this had developed with the emergence of strong monopolistic elements in our economy." We have even had one or two members of the Liberal Party admitting in the last few weeks that to achieve stability a start must be made by those who manage prices. We on this side of the House could not agree more. I pass now to the history of what has been done by the Commonwealth Government to curb inflation.

Mr. Jennings—What?

Mr. LOVEDAY—Nothing much at all, but it is very interesting to see what it said it was going to do if the Liberal Party attained office, and what it has done in the years during which it has had the chance. In February, 1944, the present Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies, then in opposition, moved that the Commonwealth Parliament should seek powers to legislate with respect to several matters including the prevention of unreasonable restraint of trade, notwithstanding anything contained in section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution, and the prevention of inflation. He has been there for many years but so far we have not noticed any trend in that direction. A few years later when he was in office he opposed

Labor's move for the Commonwealth to have more power in respect of prices. He said the States could exercise these powers better and, of course, he was ably abetted by the Premier of this State. The Prime Minister knew perfectly well the States had never agreed on matters of this type and he knew that without their agreement price control could not be fully effective. That is the history of what has been done by the Commonwealth Government. The latest move was the appointment of a joint committee of the Commonwealth Parliament on constitutional review, and recently that committee put in its report. It has recommended that the Commonwealth Parliament should have power to make laws with respect to the issue, allotment or subscription of capital, the borrowing of money, and hire purchase. That report was arrived at by a joint committee and it has reached agreement.

The present Commonwealth Government does not possess the necessary powers but already the Prime Minister is saying that nothing can be done with regard to a referendum to get these powers because the history of referenda is so bad. He said that only on a few occasions has a referendum ever been carried for increased Commonwealth powers.

Mr. Millhouse—That is correct.

Mr. LOVEDAY—It is correct, but there is one thing he omitted to say (and no doubt the member for Mitcham will agree) that, whenever there was a referendum that was likely to affect the people who were supporting him, his Party and the press conducted a tremendous publicity campaign to prevent such a referendum from being carried. If the member for Mitcham casts his mind back over the referenda held in this country, he will admit that the campaigns of the Liberal Party and of the press have never favoured anything that would touch the people I have spoken of.

Mr. Millhouse—Has the Labor Party ever supported a proposal put by a non-Labor government?

Mr. Jennings—Yes, to increase Commonwealth powers on social services.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Definitely! These recommendations came from a joint committee, and I am sure that the members of that committee would not object to a referendum being held on the question, but it would be very interesting to see what the publicity campaign would be if it ever went to a referendum. None of us has any faith that it will ever come to a referendum. Some members must have a very good recollection of what happened in the last depression, and I mention this because it shows

right throughout the history of this whole affair that we have the same sort of argument brought up every time irrespective of the circumstances. Those of us who are old enough remember that in the depths of the depression there was a proposal for an £18,000,000 fiduciary issue. Wheat was then 1s. 6d. a bushel and about 30 per cent of the work force was unemployed. The proposal was that there should be £12,000,000 to guarantee a price of 4s. a bushel for wheat. A sum of £6,000,000 was to go to public works for the unemployed.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—You mean 4s. a bag?

Mr. LOVEDAY—No, I mean 4s. a bushel. Wheat was 1s. 6d. a bushel. There was a terrific campaign to prevent this. There was a committee formed in South Australia to prevent its being done. One gentleman of the intelligentsia of this State, a very learned gentleman, came out with a pamphlet, appropriately bound in yellow, and likened the proposal to the inflation that occurred in Germany. If members do not call that “irresponsible” I don’t know what is. That was irresponsibility of the highest order because the wheatgrowers obviously were in a terribly parlous position; the whole country was in a parlous position and something should have been done for the unemployed workers. There was no parallel between the proposal and what had happened in Germany. We know that the inflation in Germany was deliberate.

Mr. O’Halloran—To avoid reparations.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Exactly, yet this learned gentleman comes out with that pamphlet. Those are the things that are done whenever there is a crisis that may affect property owners. It is interesting to note that we had a deflationary situation then, and this same gentleman said we had to cut wages and that was very promptly done. The court did not waste any time about cutting wages then: it made a decision in the sharpest time ever known. The point is that we had a depression then and the policy was to cut wages. Today we have unexampled prosperity and the policy today is to prevent wages from rising, but nothing must be done to stop prices from rising. Is there a great essential difference in this? In other words, wages are kept down while prices are rising. We might just as well say we will keep prices stable and cut a bit off wages. Is there much essential difference? This same policy cannot be right for both situations, and it seems to me that there should be much hard thinking on this question to find out what policy, different from that being followed today, should

be applied to inflation. It is rather ridiculous to think that the same arguments are being applied to two situations that are completely different in every respect.

In 1953 the quarterly cost of living adjustments were abolished. This was going to stop inflation! The President of the South Australian Chamber of Manufactures for 1954-55 went on record in his annual report that year, after reviewing what had happened after the abolition. He said:—

The foregoing offers irrefutable evidence that not only has the abolition of the iniquitous system of automatic wage adjustments succeeded in stopping the vicious wages prices spiral that was sapping our industrial strength, but that, contrary to the oft-expressed view of certain trades union leaders and others, wages increases caused prices to rise and not the reverse.

I like those words “iniquitous system.” Of course, we know he was a bad prophet but, nevertheless, that was his thinking at the time. We hear similar arguments today despite the experience since quarterly wage adjustments were abolished in 1953. Subsequently we had people in high places who started talking a lot about over-full employment. They thought that was the cause of inflation. Their idea was to have a permanent pool of unemployed to keep wages down. It is always wages that have to be kept down. They would be happy to have a pool of unemployed idling away their time and becoming demoralized in order to achieve their objective. Although our unemployed reached over 70,000 that made no difference. One writer put it this way. He said:—

It apparently takes a large and perhaps socially unacceptable level of unemployment to break down a standard of inflation.

I submit that the time has come for a completely new look at this question. The impact on State finances is seriously affecting our public works and our community services which are all vital to the welfare of the people. However, there is nothing in the Lieutenant-Governor’s Speech to indicate in the slightest that there is to be any change in the attitude of the Government to this problem. On the contrary, the Government’s most recent actions in imposing hospital charges on those least able to afford them, and its pronouncements on the wages position, illustrate clearly its continued adherence to its traditional role. I support the motion.

Mr. HEASLIP (Rocky River)—Mr. Deputy Speaker, in speaking to the motion I should like to say at the outset that I am horribly disappointed that there are so few members

opposite. I do not think that I have ever addressed so few.

Mr. Corcoran—Look around your own side.

Mr. HEASLIP—It is opposite me that I am looking.

Mr. Quirke—The honourable member for Whyalla at one time spoke to three members opposite him.

Mr. HEASLIP—I say this because in making a speech I rely greatly on interjections from members opposite. They help me considerably, but on this occasion they are not here to support me and I regret that. I do not know where they are. I can only presume.

Mr. Quirke—The honourable member knows where they are.

Mr. HEASLIP—If they are seeking light I would say to them that we already have light and do not need it. Our eyes are already open; the light has been revealed and we are not fumbling in the dark. However, I regret the absence of members opposite because I appreciate their presence when I speak.

I join in the congratulations to our Royal Family. We should be forever grateful for our gracious Queen Elizabeth to whom we pay homage. Sir Robert George was better known throughout South Australia than most of his predecessors because he moved among the people, not only in the thickly-populated areas but in the country. He and his lady made themselves known to people and familiarized themselves with conditions throughout the State. I, too, congratulate Sir Cecil Hincks on his Knighthood—an honour he richly deserved, not only for his work here but for his work in Port Victoria, and also for the big sacrifice he made in serving his country. After he returned from the war, minus a leg, his sporting activities were restricted but he became a leader in his district and the people so appreciated his efforts that they elected him to this House. Now, after years of service as a Cabinet Minister, he has been honoured by the Queen. I join with previous speakers in their expressions of sympathy at the passing of George Hambour. During the time he was a member of this House we got to know and respect him, and although we did not all agree with what he said we respected his views, and we admired him as a man. I offer my sympathy to his wife and family.

The retirement of our Under Treasurer, Mr. Drew, is imminent. It is asserted that we lose too many civil servants because we do not pay them adequately and because outside offers

are financially more advantageous. However, the State has retained the services of such officers as Mr. Drew, Mr. Pearce, Mr. Bishop, Sir Edgar Bean and many others, who worked not for the monetary return they received but for the good of the State. We, as citizens, should be grateful to those men who have given their services to the State which, as a result, is much better than it otherwise would have been. Although Freddie Drew, as he is known, is retiring at only 65 years of age, we shall still enjoy the benefit of his knowledge and administrative ability on the various boards and committees to which he will still be attached.

At this stage I must pay a tribute to our Premier. He has been called a dictator, and we have been accused of being in his hands and doing what he tells us to do. Everybody in this House, and all the people of this State, will agree that Sir Thomas Playford has done more for South Australia than any other man. He will go down in history as our leading statesman. Sir Thomas is a man with whom one cannot quarrel, try as one might. He is hard to quarrel with.

Mr. O'Halloran—There is no need to quarrel because you differ on principles.

Mr. HEASLIP—I know. It is hard to pick a fight with him, but if one does Sir Thomas always wins the day. He has a phenomenal memory and is logical.

Mr. Jennings—He will go down in history like Hitler.

Mr. HEASLIP—If he can leave South Australia as he has built it up he will go down with honour, unlike Hitler. I am sure that when Sir Thomas retires—and there is no doubt he will be here as long as he chooses—the people of South Australia will not regard Sir Thomas as Hitler was regarded. Even if people do not think the same way as Sir Thomas, they will applaud him for the wonderful work he has done and is doing.

Mr. Jennings—It's a pity he isn't here.

Mr. HEASLIP—Quite frankly, I do not think Sir Thomas wants to hear about himself.

Mr. Jennings—I don't think he would strenuously object.

Mr. HEASLIP—He could, and probably would. Sir Thomas does not think of himself: he thinks of the people. He legislates for the people, otherwise he would not be in power today. The people think that.

Mr. Jennings—The minority of them.

Mr. HEASLIP—The majority, and that is why he is still Premier of South Australia. We have heard much about the wonderful job

he has done at Leigh Creek, but members opposite always interject that he did not put the coal there. Coal has been at Leigh Creek as long as Australia has been Australia, and it would still be there were it not for the efforts of one man to have it mined. Sir Thomas was that man—Sir Thomas Playford, the Premier of South Australia.

Mr. Jennings—I wondered whom you were talking about.

Mr. HEASLIP—Sir Thomas has utilized the vast coal reserves at Leigh Creek. It was there for thousands of years and would still be there if our Premier had not developed it.

Mr. O'Halloran—Of course, he received assistance from the then Federal Labor Government.

Mr. HEASLIP—I give credit to all who assisted him, but he started the project and supervised its development. As a result South Australia gets electricity at a cheaper rate than anywhere else in Australia, despite the geographical position of our low-grade coal deposits. We can generate electricity more cheaply than if we had to import coal from the eastern States. The member for Whyalla spoke about the New South Wales coalfields. New South Wales has the coal, but what is happening to it? Because of strikes and go-slow methods—which Mr. Loveday did not mention—the price of New South Wales coal is prohibitive. It was because we could not rely on supplies from New South Wales that we were forced to get our own coalfields working. The New South Wales coal is of higher grade, but because of the tactics of the miners we were forced to supply our own coal. At one stage we had to import coal because New South Wales did not supply our requirements. That was a tragedy and it is terrible that Australia's natural resources are not developed because of the tactics of some workers.

Mr. Jennings—They were not developed because of the way the miners were treated.

Mr. HEASLIP—That is another argument. The miners are treated so much better now that they only work machines instead of using shovels and picks. They work almost in luxury, but the member for Whyalla complains that they are not getting sufficient money. They are getting a lot more money today. They are certainly producing more coal per man, but Mr. Loveday overlooks the capital involved in providing machinery to enable the miners to enjoy better facilities.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Where did the money come from for the machines?

Mr. HEASLIP—From the people who put money into the mines.

Mr. Jennings—And made by the workers. Who dug the coal out? The shareholders didn't dig it!

Mr. HEASLIP—Who were paid to dig it out? Weren't the miners paid to dig it out?

The Hon. Sir Cecil Hincks—Perhaps they broke too many shovels.

Mr. HEASLIP—Not through over-use. They may have been broken through misuse. The fact remains that through the Premier's efforts we are mining coal and supplying cheaper electricity which enables our industries to compete with industries in other States and overseas. For many years we have heard much of the importance of water to South Australia, and as a country member I realize its importance. Today, we are practically dependent on water from the Murray; during the past summer 85 per cent of the people of the State were supplied with water from this source. Because of the long-sighted policy of the Premier we are now hearing about a big dam proposed to be established on the Murray. Although we do not need that water now, in future it will provide security against a shortage. No country can develop without water. It can have electricity, industries and homes, but they are of no use without water. Because of his policy of developing our water supplies and storages, the Premier is doing something for which the next generation will probably be grateful. Unfortunately, not all people in country areas get Murray water, the lack of which is one of our biggest problems in these areas, except, of course, in wet years. During the past 12 months Orroroo has been very short of water, despite the fact that it has a reticulated system. There are immense basins of underground water there, but it could not be procured in the past because of the sand problem. The Government had spent much money in trying to get it, and eventually succeeded and the bore has now overcome the water shortage. Recently the Government has been able to purchase the only bore at Melrose, which otherwise is without water, apart from inhabitants' own supplies. Today 16,000 gallons of water with a salt content of 35 grains to the gallon is being supplied hourly. Now that this water is available I hope the Government will not delay in supplying it to the residents. I now come to the question of the Booleroo Centre water supply.

Mr. Quirke—You had better not go there now.

Mr. HEASLIP—I am prepared to go there at any time. According to one person at Booleroo Centre, that town is being badly treated. He says that Booleroo Centre has no water. Actually it has a water scheme and during the worst possible period of supply this summer every inhabitant in the township was able to get 20 gallons a day. What about Appila, Melrose, Wirrabara and Tarcowie? None has received one gallon of water because of Government assistance, and yet Booleroo Centre thinks it is badly treated—that is according to the person referred to. He says the Government and I, as its representative, have done nothing for them. In the last two years the Government has spent no less than £25,000 on the Booleroo Centre water scheme, has erected a 1,000,000 gallon tank and provided pumping equipment, and yet this individual says they are badly treated. What about those towns the Government has not helped at all? This person has made many statements in the press and I will quote a few of them. This is what he had to say:—

During the three hours that Booleroo taps are allowed to run, Constable Barrett patrols the town ensuring that not a drop of water is used for any but essential household purposes.

That is quite inaccurate and misleading, because Constable Barrett has more to do than that. On the very day that that statement was made the taps in Booleroo were running and gardens were being watered. The writer then goes on to say:—

These heroes of the drought are Mr. E. H. Knauerhase, whose farm is three miles distant at Arwakurra, Mr. D. Christopherson, farming at Fullerville, and Mr. H. O. Rottke, who farms six miles out at Morchard.

There is no such person at Booleroo Centre as Mr. Rottke.

Mr. O'Halloran—Perhaps the writer could not spell correctly.

Mr. HEASLIP—Someone obviously did not know the names of the people. That is the kind of statement that people read. Then the writer went on to say:—

The water flowing in a yellow trickle from the town's taps has become undrinkable.

The water in Booleroo Centre was never intended to be used for drinking purposes. The man concerned has been there for 14 years and if he knew anything about the position he would know that this water was never drinkable. The statement in the press then continues:—

Mr. Ian Phillips, whose rainwater tanks have no more than 80 gallons of their 8,500 capacity, said:—"We are becoming desperate." He and his wife and their five children all have to use the same bathwater.

What a write-down for any town! I have lived within 14 miles of Booleroo Centre for 40 years and lived at Carrieton, a much drier place, but my wife, my children and myself never had to bathe in the same water, and we did not have any Government assistance in the supply of water.

The Hon. Sir Cecil Hincks—You provided for yourself.

Mr. HEASLIP—Yes, as most sensible country people do. Although the person concerned has a large tank, he is evidently too tired to put water in it. Because of this reference in the press, someone was so touched that he offered this gentleman some of his water, but the offer was never accepted. Evidently he did not want it, yet according to the press he was desperately in need of it.

Mr. Jennings—Perhaps he is not bathing so often.

Mr. HEASLIP—The president of the Booleroo Centre Progress Association, Mr. Phillips, is reported in the *Mail* of April 3 as having said:—

The town has become very bitter over the inaction of the State Government in this crisis. Politicians have for years been making promises about our water supply, but none of these promises has been kept.

Mr. Loveday—He did not say which politicians?

Mr. HEASLIP—He is implying that it is I, although he did not mention me by name. However, he mentioned Sir Lyell McEwin. The point is that the people in the town are not bitter, although they want water. I have heard that stated time and time again by people there. I could quote even more from press statements.

Mr. Quirke—Can't you give us something better?

Mr. HEASLIP—Here is another one under the heading "A town cries out for water":—

Booleroo Centre, today. Every drop of water is as precious as a diamond in this small, prosperous northern country town. This is the town where baths are a luxury; where no decent rain has fallen for months; where, unless it rains in three weeks, the baker will be out of business.

There was also the statement that the local hotelkeeper was going to "close up shop." I did not quite know to whom to attribute these statements, because in the *Advertiser* of April 2 it is stated that Mr. C. N. Phillips is president of the Progress Association, whereas in the *Mail* of April 3, after quoting what Mr. Ian Phillips had to say, it just states that Mr. Phillips is president. Now, in the *News* of April 4 it says that Mr. Ian Phillips is

president, but in the *News* of April 6 the name of the president is not quoted. Perhaps he was at Appila where he would find that the people there were much worse off than those at Booleroo Centre. In the *Advertiser* of April 7 is a letter signed by Mr. C. N. Phillips as president of the Booleroo Centre Progress Association, and in the *News* of April 8 Mr. C. N. Phillips is stated to be president. I know who is president. It is Mr. C. N. Phillips. Mr. Cecil Phillips, when he was questioned about these statements by local residents, said "I have been misquoted. The paper has not quoted me accurately." Who am I to say which is accurate? I know the statements are inaccurate. It may be the paper or Mr. Phillips.

Mr. Jennings—Which Mr. Phillips?

Mr. HEASLIP—Mr. Cecil Phillips. I know who is president. Mr. Ian Phillips is not the president of the association. Whoever made the statement, however, has done more harm to Booleroo Centre than could be done by any other means. Any member who wanted to publicize anything worth while would not get more than an inch in a column yet this inaccurate report has caused Booleroo Centre to be written down to the lowest extent possible. All these articles I have quoted appeared in the *News*, but no reporter was there to my knowledge; mostly, the report was compiled as a result of telephone calls.

I know that the hotelkeeper at Booleroo Centre will always be glad to see anyone, and so will all the other people of that town. The position is not really as bad as stated. Booleroo Centre is not such a bad town and I hope the papers that have written it down so much will give publicity to these remarks to try to restore its prestige. Anyone admitted to the hospital will get all the water and attention required. The hospital is a good one, and it has a good matron and nursing staff.

On April 7 a letter signed by Mr. C. N. Phillips, secretary of the Booleroo Centre Progress Association, appeared in the *Advertiser*. Since then dozens of people from that town and surrounding areas have telephoned or called on me to say that they dissociate themselves from what the president of the association put into print. Unfortunately, however, this man had a great deal of publicity, so much so that if Booleroo Centre is mentioned in any store in Adelaide people say they have heard something about it. I am glad that this town will get water from an existing eight-inch main at Caltowie, which is

25 miles away. Orroroo wants water, and it has just as a good a claim as Booleroo, but will there be sufficient water in the main to supply Orroroo if Booleroo is supplied? The time may come when we shall be sorry for what is being done in a hurry due to the outcry of one person. Appila and Wirrabara have no water, but they are not crying. I hope the fact that Booleroo Centre will get water will not make the other towns, which have not cried out, wait longer.

I can say nothing but good about Mr. Ramsay and the Housing Trust. He and his organization are doing a splendid job in supplying houses, both in the country and in the city, at a cheaper price for quality than could possibly be supplied by any other enterprise. It has been suggested that we should find means of getting cheaper houses, but we are only getting these houses cheaply because we have eliminated the margin of profit of someone in between, as the trust carries out the work at no profit. One private enterprise has been cut out and the trust has taken its place. Certainly the trust uses private enterprise as sub-contractors because it realizes that it is more efficient than Government enterprise but, if this is carried to its logical conclusion, I may ask, "Who supplies the money for building houses?" That money comes from wages or earnings, whether of companies or individuals. The taxes gathered from us go towards building houses. If we eliminate all private enterprise, where will we get the money to build houses? If as many houses are to be built the people will have to pay more taxation or more for each house, as houses cannot be built without money and the only source is from the individual.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Isn't the trust following the policy of building homes from the moneys received from the sale of other homes?

Mr. HEASLIP—Under the present policy £150 deposit is required and the balance is on loan spread over 40 years.

Mr. Fred Walsh—But the money received in rents and principal repayments is used by the trust to build new homes.

Mr. HEASLIP—If that were all the money we had to spend we would not be able to build one-tenth of the number of homes we are building.

Mr. Fred Walsh—What is the percentage received from the State?

Mr. HEASLIP—All the Loan moneys.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Did not the Premier say this afternoon, regarding cottage homes, that

the moneys received from rents were used to build other homes?

Mr. HEASLIP—I was not here when he said that, but I know that the moneys received cover very little more than the maintenance on these homes. The margin over the cost of depreciation, interest, and other charges goes towards the building of new homes, but more than this is needed. If we cut out the sources from which we get money we shall build fewer homes. The trust builds a good type of home cheaply, and anyone who gets a trust home is fortunate indeed. Most of us did not have such good opportunities to get homes as the young people have today. I congratulate the trust on what it is doing, and I think the scheme is a wonderful one.

I think members will remember that for years I tried to obtain an improved rail service to Gladstone and Wilmington. I appreciate that an improved service is now available, and I understand it is being patronized very well. Unfortunately, however, it goes only as far as Gladstone because of the lack of finality in plans for standardization, and as a result there is a 3ft. 6in. gauge from Gladstone to Wilmington. Although the rail service has improved, the mail service is not as good as it was before, which I cannot understand. We are paying more and more for our postal services. The *Advertiser* and the *News* are delivered within four hours of printing for 4d., yet a letter posted at Wirrabara at 5 p.m. on Friday is not delivered in Adelaide until Monday afternoon, and the charge for the service is 5d. We are supposed to have airmail for the charge of 5d., but there is no air service in the country. People in the country are paying extra but getting nothing for it. I know that is not the fault of this Parliament, but the Federal Government should do something to improve postal services, which are inferior to those of 40 years ago in the horse and buggy days.

From time to time I have referred to the necessity (for I think it is a necessity) of changing the system of charging for a hotel licence in South Australia. I was pleased when the Premier the other day replied to a question of mine by saying that he felt that, now that the High Court had found the Victorian tax on purchase was valid, he would explore the possibilities in South Australia of getting a more equitable basis on which to license hotels. Since last session the charges for licences for many hotels in my district—and I know this applies to hotels in the districts of the member for Burra (Mr. Quirke), and the Leader of the

Opposition as it applies to hotels in the district of any country member—have risen tremendously. For instance, the two hotels at Crystal Brook between them are paying £690 to serve Crystal Brook, whereas the biggest hotel in South Australia pays only £450. No-one can tell me that those two hotels in the little town of Crystal Brook are selling more liquor than the biggest hotel in South Australia. They would not sell more than half that amount, yet they are paying nearly double what the biggest hotel in South Australia is paying. That is not equitable or right. The one hotel in Wilmington was paying £60, but, because of the change of rating there, where the land values system has been adopted instead of the annual values system, the £60 has jumped to £300. Wilmington sells seven or eight 18-gallon kegs a week, and it is paying £300 for a licence to do it.

Melrose is a very small town, of probably less than 400 people, and certainly less than 500 people. It has two hotels, each of which was paying £60. Now they are paying £140 each in licence fees. This is not equitable and it is all-important that an alteration be made. I am advocating this not on behalf of the hotels but simply as a means of decentralization and the preservation of our little country towns. I do not care what anybody says, one of our clubs is our little country hotel where people congregate, not just to drink but to get together and talk about what has happened during the day or week, a place where they can exchange their ideas with one another. It is the same with our churches: it is essential that we have our churches in our small country towns for, besides being places of worship, they are meeting places where people can mix and converse. When young people take part in sport, it is not only the playing of the game that they enjoy; it is the getting together. It is the same with the hotels. If you kill any one of these, you will kill the little country town. The right way to kill it is by overcharging the hotels for their licences. I hope that something will be done about this matter.

Mr. Millhouse—What do you suggest?

Mr. HEASLIP—I suggest that we do what is done in practically every other State: we should charge a percentage on sales—a purchase tax, if you like. It has been ruled valid in Victoria although it was challenged. I venture to say also that the Government would get more revenue if it did that, without hurting the little country hotels that are at present paying more than they should. The Premier has suggested two types of licence, but I do not

think that would be the solution because many of these country towns are so small that they do not cater even for accommodation.

Mr. O'Halloran—A better system of valuation might help.

Mr. HEASLIP—Unfortunately, under the Act, there is no getting away from that; I have explored that possibility.

Mr. O'Halloran—There is no reason why the Act should not be changed.

Mr. HEASLIP—It can be changed but, under the Act, where land values are adopted, one has to accept the Engineering and Water Supply assessment; one cannot vary it. Where the councils were fixing the rates the charges were tolerable and reasonable, but there is no altering the Engineering and Water Supply assessment. That is where these hotels are getting it in the neck. I hope something will be done in that respect.

The Electricity Trust is doing an excellent job but, unfortunately, in the country areas there has again been delay because of insufficient money to go round. I know that the big mains are going from Port Augusta to Magill, and they are taking up all the money at present available; so we in the country, because of that, have to wait. All projects have been postponed 12 months or more, but the new system of single wire earth returns has made it possible to supply country people with electricity where it has not been possible before. There is a slight disadvantage or at least an extra cost, which I hope will be overcome: that is that the wiring of all these country homes under the single wire earth return system becomes very expensive because of the charges at different rates—for what is domestic light, what are pumping charges, and what are electric welding charges. We have to have so many meters that the wiring of these farm houses is expensive. I hope that with the progress that electricity is making, some method will be discovered that will overcome that disadvantage and that we shall be able to install a cheaper method of wiring in those country buildings.

The fact that in many cases we have not been able to ascertain when these lines will go through is putting property owners to great expense. If they can only know approximately when these schemes are to go through, they will be able to regulate their own private plants and the life of their batteries, and they will know whether it is worth while renewing their engines. That would be of great benefit to the property owners.

As regards roads, I think the Leader of the Opposition said he would desire more money for corporations. I would suggest more money for country roads, not main roads from Adelaide to Port Augusta, from Adelaide to Port Pirie, and so on. We have good roads there, but they are of little use to us in the country. The cross-roads, the feeder roads, are the important ones. Recently, one has gone through from Pirie and almost reached the district of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. O'Halloran—Oh no!

Mr. HEASLIP—At any rate, it has got as far as Jamestown, in the district of the honourable member for Burra (Mr. Quirke), and ultimately it will go up to Frome, I understand. That is a useful road that makes possible cross-travel instead of merely centralized travel to the city and back. Under the scheme of the Department of Education, certain roads in certain localities are getting more traffic on them than they were built for or ever had before. The school bus routes are the liability of the local councils, but they have not a sufficient grant to keep those roads in proper repair. A school bus cannot run on a road that is unsafe. It has to be up to a certain standard before a school bus, with its cargo of young children, is allowed to travel on it. It is embarrassing to the local councils.

I refer now to the Port Germein District Council. It has to keep the roads up to standard because of the school bus services, but it still does not get a sufficient grant to enable it to do so. Therefore, it has to rob its revenue from other areas, and use it on these roads. That is one channel where extra money is required. If it is possible to get more money for that purpose, I hope it will be granted.

Mr. O'Halloran—Should not we get a bigger share of the tax levied by the Commonwealth Government?

Mr. HEASLIP—That, of course, would be the ideal and right way. I agree that is where the money should come from. If this Government by representation could get it, that is the way, because all our taxes, apart from our licence fees, go to the central Government and we do not get them all back.

Mr. O'Halloran—Don't forget the sales tax.

Mr. HEASLIP—That is another one we are certainly not getting back. An increased grant for that purpose would be well worthwhile. As regards tourist traffic, I compliment Mr. Pollnitz on the job he is doing. I believe tourists are becoming more and more important to South Australia every year. Every year

tourists bring in fresh money, and that is what we want. The Festival of Arts was a great achievement by South Australia. I compliment those who organized it, although I do not agree entirely with the way it was run. However, it has been a fine advertisement for South Australia and a great success, and should be the means of making South Australia far better known overseas than it is today. Adelaide has beautiful streets. We have our beautiful North Terrace, but will the sight of cars cluttering up North Terrace encourage tourists to come? No! When I referred to this matter last session, I was accused of talking about it because of my interests in North Terrace, but that was not correct. I happen to know more about the traffic problems of North Terrace because of my interests there. In fact, the City Council has removed nine bays from the front of my business interests in North Terrace, so that portion is cleared. However, nine bays remain there still, and they are a traffic hazard. Traffic will not flow freely there until they are moved beyond Victoria Street. In fact, if I had any say in the matter I should move them all from North Terrace and have North Terrace as Colonel Light wanted it to be, instead of having the middle of it cluttered up with motor cars. It is there for traffic, not for parking.

In conclusion, I mention that last year the South Australian country areas had a terrific set-back, one of the driest seasons ever known. Despite that, we reaped 11,000,000 bushels of wheat, and in March we had more than 15,000,000 sheep. We should pay a tribute to the modern farmer who, despite the dryness of the season, was able to accomplish what he did. If it ended at that one dry season I believe it would be a good thing for South Australia and the country people in particular, as it would be a warning to the young generation, which has never seen a dry year, that just because we have had 12 bountiful seasons it does not mean that we shall have another 12 such seasons. However, it will be a real tragedy if this present season does not break soon. Most stock can be got out of the State and will not die, as they can be got rid of at a price, and that has greatly helped us over the past 12 months. If the season does not soon break we shall lose off the land hundreds of those people who have been educated to farming and done nothing else, but who through financial embarrassment will lose their properties. Should that happen it would be a tragedy for South Australia. Although the season has not yet

broken, there is still time for cereal planting, because even with rain in June we can grow cereals. However, if we have not got a break in the season by the end of this month we shall have to reduce our stock by millions.

I hope that we get rain and that the season breaks for the benefit not only of the country people but the whole of South Australia, because what actually happens in the country is ultimately reflected in the city. That has always applied and still applies. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. McKEE (Port Pirie)—I support the previous speakers and endorse their remarks regarding the birth of a son to Her Majesty the Queen. I, too, congratulate Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret on her forthcoming marriage. Although I do not agree with the principle of imported Governors, I regret the departure of Sir Robert and Lady George. They were a friendly couple, and were respected by all sections of the community.

I, like other members, was shocked at the news of the sudden death of George Hambour, and I extend my sincere sympathy to his widow, son, and relatives. I also congratulate the Minister of Lands on the high honour conferred upon him.

I am afraid there is little else in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech of interest to anyone outside the metropolitan area, and from what I saw of the Greater Port Adelaide Plan and the work being done there I would say that it spells the finish of decentralization of industry by the Playford Government.

I also take this opportunity of thanking members on both sides of the House for the help they have extended to me during my first session in Parliament. The welfare and future of Port Pirie vitally concern me. The recent announcement of further expansion by the Broken Hill Associated Smelters was rather encouraging news, and it is to be hoped that work will commence on this project without further delay. It is also hoped that when it is completed and in production further labour will be required, rather than that retrenchments should take place. Other matters concerning the future of Port Pirie are the complete rehabilitation of the wharves and the standardization of the Port Pirie to Broken Hill railway line. The long-winded attitude of the Government regarding the reconstruction of the wharves is causing great concern, and it is almost unbelievable to think that one of the State's best revenue producers has been neglected to such an extent that it is now in a

state of collapse in places. As well as being an eyesore to the city, it is also a continual danger to the general public. I sincerely hope the Government will give these two matters its urgent attention.

Recently the Premier visited Port Pirie and performed the official opening of our first industry and commerce fair, which was very ably organized by the Port Pirie branch of the Apex Club. We were grateful for the Premier's visit, not only for that reason but because, I am sure, what he saw there has helped him to realize the keenness and ambition that exists among the people to progress and to build a future for their sons. A recent press statement leads one to believe that an early start is likely on the standardization of the Broken Hill line. This is also encouraging news, not only for Port Pirie and Broken Hill but because it is a main artery in the transport system of the nation from east to west. It is also an attractive business proposition, too. Its annual returns are at present more than £3,250,000, and I feel sure that the authorities must realize that the returns could be much greater from a more modern and faster railway service. With the continual growth of Australia on a national scale, the amount of merchandise moving from east to west will continue to increase. I am sure that the authorities responsible for this project are aware of its importance to the economy of the nation, and it is to be hoped that every effort will be made to get this important project under way without further delay.

Educational facilities at Port Pirie and other country centres are something to which I draw the Government's attention. In these days of technology and science it is essential that the Government step up our educational programme, because it can never hope to compete with more advanced countries under our present system. We all know, or we should, that in the years ahead the burden of the decisions will fall upon the heads of today's school children, who must be educated to carry that burden. I believe that they must be far better equipped than any previous generation. I am sure educationists will agree that if we are to advance with scientific development we must educate our young children to meet the demands of modern industry. Thousands of young Australians today want jobs, a fact that is widely known by most members in this House, but industry today is being choosy, and even for apprenticeships in the minor trades youths are being asked if they

have their Intermediate or Leaving Certificate. I therefore ask the Government to acknowledge its responsibility to the children of South Australia who live outside the metropolitan area, because it is completely beyond the means of most parents to send their children hundreds of miles to further their education. The result is that country boys and girls are being deprived of their rightful place in society by the failure of the Government to establish universities where required in country areas. I also believe that in a democratic country the Government should give all possible support and encouragement to the schools, colleges and churches whose function is for the benefit of a nation.

Regarding recent increases in hospital charges, I say without fear of contradiction that a man's health is something of indispensable value to the whole community, as well as to himself primarily, and if some members of the community are unfortunate enough to lose their health their care should be the responsibility and concern of the whole community, not only for humane purposes but as a business consideration as well because, when people are sick, productive and consuming powers are lost. I am sure that no-one wishes ill-health upon himself or suffers himself to become a victim of an accident, and I contend that the restoration of his health is undoubtedly the responsibility of the society in which he produces and consumes. The Government's exorbitant hospital charges are certainly beyond the means of a working family, and the effort to pay those charges would certainly leave an aftermath of distress in the home.

Mr. Jennings—It would probably send the wage earner back to hospital.

Mr. McKEE—Yes, it would do that without a doubt—probably to Parkside. It appears to me that these exorbitant charges are being used to force the working people into paying 8s. or 10s. weekly (in some cases more) from their pay envelopes into medical benefit schemes when they can ill-afford to do so. It should be the purpose of a Government to work for the benefit of the whole community, with special care and concern for the needy.

Mr. Millhouse—That's our aim.

Mr. McKEE—I suggest to the honourable member that the Government is commercializing the health system of the State. My Party believes that a man's health should be guaranteed to him, as far as possible, without undue hardship to himself or to his family.

Another matter of importance is the State's outmoded Industrial Code and its penal clauses. At school we were taught that the source of

all our wealth was the land, and that is still true. Our primary products continue to earn us much money overseas, as well as at home, yet because of the Government's outmoded Industrial Code there is no coverage for our rural workers. It should be the natural desire that every child born into the community should be assured of social security. Is not every person justly entitled to enjoy the fundamental needs of life? But for the Labor Party's efforts there would be little or no industrial conditions today. There has been a continual battle to obtain the conditions that we have today, but there is still room for improvement. Should industrial conditions not only provide efficient workmanship and production, but also a feeling of satisfaction amongst workers. They get this satisfaction when due regard is given to their needs. It is well known that the world does not owe a man a living, but business, if it is to fulfil its ideals, owes man an opportunity to earn a living. From its early beginning the Labor Party has been concerned with personal freedoms, including the freedom of the workers to join trade unions and to live decently. To achieve this there must be a more equitable distribution of the wealth that accrues from improved methods of production.

Mr. Millhouse—Does your Party believe in people being forced to join trade unions?

Mr. McKEE—We do not believe in that.

Mr. Millhouse—You would not agree with the New South Wales legislation on that matter?

Mr. McKEE—No. The wealth of any nation depends upon its raw materials and its labour, skilled and unskilled. It should be the Government's duty to ensure an equal distribution of the wealth that is created. The excess profits being reaped by big business today are more than sufficient to finance Australia's development and to provide full employment for her people. During the war we were continually told that we were fighting for democracy, which meant freedom, but amongst the freedoms there must be the freedom from exploitation. Amongst rights there must be the right of each individual to a fair share in the national wealth and national income. The penal provisions in the State Industrial Code, the Federal Arbitration Act and other Acts are engineered for the purpose of restricting trades unions in their legitimate work of securing just wages and conditions for workers, as well as of taking away the liberty of the people, for which thousands of Australian diggers died. If the Government had the welfare of the people at heart it would

not hesitate to introduce amending legislation to remove harsh provisions and a dictatorship attitude.

Mr. Jennings—If it had the welfare of the people at heart it would resign.

Mr. McKEE—I agree. It should give back to the people their rightful freedom. Of course, there are many things we cannot accomplish by law or by any process of government. For instance, we cannot legislate morality or loyalty, but we can legislate to control greed. It is ridiculous to suggest that the recent increase in wages is the basic cause of inflation, or of rising prices. The Commonwealth Arbitration Commission recognized that the economy could absorb the increase in wages. It said that in view of the large profits, and because of other evidence placed before it, it was satisfied that companies were well able to bear the increase in award wages.

Mr. Millhouse—Did you write those notes before its judgment was given yesterday?

Mr. McKEE—I refer to the judgment of some time ago regarding the margins case.

Mr. Millhouse—Your comment is a little out-of-date now.

Mr. McKEE—I do not think so. I said that the commission was satisfied that companies were able to bear the increase in award wages. Price manipulation is being used to create a higher profit margin, which reduces the value of the worker's wages and forces him into the web of financiers associated with the hire purchase racket. The economy today is most involved, but I believe that the problem can be solved by establishing a form of equilibrium. Many workers are the victims of an unfair, vicious and lopsided form of distribution of the product of their labour. Like many people, I say it as a fairy story to claim that a wage rise forces up prices. This lopsided claim is made as if goods were being sold to the consuming public at a minimum cost, ignoring the fact that there is no such thing as price control and profit control, and that every section of the industry devoted to production is free to charge at will, except the worker who must fight for a basic wage lift or a margins increase. A system of distribution should be devised under which all persons contributing to the maintenance and development of increased production should receive their just share. I support the motion.

Mr. JENNINGS secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.09 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, April 19, at 2 p.m.