

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, September 6, 1960.

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

QUESTIONS.

LEIGH CREEK DOCTOR.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—For some time there has been no permanent resident medical practitioner at Leigh Creek. Once or twice doctors have been located there for brief periods, but I understand the last of these, who had been practising there for some months, left late last month. The population of Leigh Creek is approaching 1,000, including a number of women and children, and there is a fairly substantial population in the surrounding pastoral areas that may require medical assistance from time to time. I understand that the Electricity Trust has made strenuous but unsuccessful efforts to encourage a doctor to go to Leigh Creek. As the nearest doctor is at Hawker, over 100 miles away, it certainly poses a problem and causes anxiety for the residents of Leigh Creek. Will the Premier see whether some scheme can be evolved to encourage a resident doctor to practise at Leigh Creek?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The honourable member is correct in saying that the Electricity Trust has done everything in its power to secure a resident doctor for Leigh Creek. As far as I know, the area would be profitable for a doctor stationed there. Some years ago, when I was personally associated with Leigh Creek, there was an arrangement whereby the Government made a guarantee for a doctor serving the area, but as he never called upon the guarantee I can only assume that his financial returns from the town were adequate. It has now become more of an established centre for pastoralists in the surrounding districts than it was earlier. I will discuss this question with the Minister of Health to see if it is possible to find some way out of the difficulty, which I admit is great.

OVERSEAS PUBLICITY.

Mr. HARDING—An article in this morning's *Advertiser* criticizes the lack of publicity in Australia House, London, and suggests that State Government offices overseas are "leaving for dead" Commonwealth offices in publicizing Australia. Mr. Mallam, M.L.A., said that yesterday. Can the Premier say what sources of information are available in London to people inquiring about Australia, particularly South Australia?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Any person making specific inquiries about South Australia at South Australia House, which is now located in the Strand, would get immediate assistance and the information would be secured for him. I have not seen any criticism of the work Mr. Greenham is doing in London. My knowledge of the work would leave me to believe that the office is well run and is giving expert attention to the problems that arise. Australia House is a Commonwealth authority and I do not presume to know much about it.

ENGLISH IN SCHOOLS.

Mr. HUTCHENS—An article in this morning's *Advertiser* headed "Poor Speech Criticized" states:—

"There are indications that some candidates are failing as a result of superficial teaching during some of their school life, and worse still, are being given wrong information, particularly in the part of the course dealing with poetry," the examiners continue . . . The examiners state that some teachers had put an embargo on "got." This led to such nonsense as "He became married," "And as I become to know him," "He procured a cold" . . .

Can the Minister of Education say whether this article is based on fact; whether he has seen it and received a report; and whether steps have been taken to remedy the difficulty that students find themselves in?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I have not seen the article, but I have "procured" a cold myself. From time to time I have read and heard similar criticism and I am sufficiently optimistic to think that I will hear it for many years to come. I remember, a few years ago when, at the University, I opened a seminar for secondary teachers of English from departmental schools and from the independent schools and colleges, I had the temerity to suggest that perhaps one cause of failures in English would be that the schools (both departmental and independent schools and colleges) no longer taught a sound grounding in grammar. I was, however, assailed on all sides as being far behind the times and was told that the modern teachers of English were infinitely superior to their predecessors, but I still have grave doubts about that. Secondly, I think far too much is left to the teachers of English and other subjects and that many parents and other elders in the homes are far too careless in their speech and undo much of the teaching done in the schools. I do not know what more I can do. I will read, mark, learn and inwardly digest the article and

refer it to the Director of Education and the superintendents to see if they have any comments.

DOCTORS' FEES.

Mr. TAPPING—Has the Minister of Education obtained a reply from the Attorney-General to my recent question relating to fees charged by doctors for examinations of persons charged with driving under the influence of liquor?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The Attorney-General has provided the following report from the Crown Solicitor:—

Since this question was asked by the honourable member on August 10, 1960, discussions have taken place and the opinion of the Crown Solicitor has been obtained. Apart from the question of what is a fair remuneration for a medical practitioner for the examination of persons alleged to be under the influence of intoxicating liquor, some doubt has arisen as to the interpretation of the relevant provisions of the Justices Act dealing with the allowance of witness fees to expert witnesses; and consideration is being given to the introduction of amending legislation to clarify these provisions. The whole matter is one of considerable difficulty. Although a medical practitioner may be willing, as stated by one of the special magistrates, to attend one of his own patients in the early hours of the morning for a charge of 30s., it by no means follows that all practitioners would, or should, be prepared to attend at the City Watchhouse for the purpose of examining a person alleged to be under the influence of intoxicating liquor, for the same charge. However, discussions are proceeding with the police medical officers with a view to some arrangement being made as to fees which will be satisfactory to all parties.

MURRAY BRIDGE CHLORINATION PLANT.

Mr. BYWATERS—Has the Minister of Works a reply to a question I asked during the debate on the Loan Estimates debate about the chlorination plant to be installed at Murray Bridge?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Of the sum of £20,000 provided in the Loan Estimates for Murray Bridge, only £1,000 is for chlorination, and this is intended to cover preliminary work only. Chlorination will therefore not be introduced at Murray Bridge during the 1960-61 financial year. It is hoped that structures and plant will be completed during the following year and, if so, chlorination will then be introduced.

EGG SALES.

Mr. LAUCKE—The Victorian Egg Board has introduced a new grading for eggs which provides for a class covering eggs larger than the present 2oz. No. 1 grade. I understand that these large eggs will be paid for at a premium of 6d. a dozen above the existing No. 1 grade. In South Australia these over-size eggs have in the past been down-graded to pulping prices rather than commanding the premium price. Will the Minister of Agriculture say whether consideration will be given to introducing into our classification a similar grade to cover oversized eggs in the interests of growers?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—It is fairly widely accepted that the standard sizes for South Australian eggs are greater than in most other States. This has come about as a result of insistence over the years on a good-sized egg. I have not heard that any change is contemplated in regard to oversized eggs, but I shall be willing to ask the Chairman of the Egg Board to comment on the question and to let the House have the report.

PORT PIRIE WEST SCHOOL.

Mr. McKEE—Will the Minister of Education say whether plans have been approved for the erection of new toilet blocks at the Port Pirie West primary school?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—If they have been approved, the information has not been conveyed to me. I shall try to obtain the information as soon as possible and let the honourable member know, either today or later.

PORT ADELAIDE GIRLS TECHNICAL SCHOOL.

Mr. RYAN—Has the Minister of Education a reply to my recent question about the date when tenders will be called for the Port Adelaide girls technical high school?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Tenders were called in last week's *Government Gazette* for the building of a girls technical high school at Port Adelaide, comprising 12 classrooms, craft rooms, laboratories, library, administration section and change rooms. The buildings will be of pre-cast concrete construction and tenders will close on October 19.

COOBER PEDY WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question regarding water supplies at Coober Pedy?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have a lengthy report and a docket from the Engineer

for Water Supply, but I think it is best to reply in the following terms:—

Last year, the Mines Department made investigations regarding a site for a bore at Coober Pedy, but there does not appear to be any site in the area which would yield a better quality or quantity of water than the Stuart Range bore. The latter bore is available and usable in case of emergency. The cost of another underground tank, with necessary headworks and piping, would be approximately £30,000.

In view of this, as the bore is available in emergency and as the tank has not failed yet, the expenditure does not seem to be justified at this stage.

LYRUP ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

Mr. STOTT—Last week I asked the Premier a question regarding taking over from the Renmark Irrigation Trust the electricity supply for Lyrup. I was slightly misinformed of the position; although I mentioned a deadlock had existed, that was probably not correct, although the rest of my statement was. I discussed this matter in Renmark over the weekend and I understand that negotiations are taking place between the Electricity Trust and the Renmark Irrigation Trust, but that no solution has been reached because the Irrigation Trust may be asking too high a price. I was informed that the trust was awaiting further communication from the Electricity Trust in this matter, which has been held up for a considerable time. The people of Lyrup are not getting an adequate supply of electricity because the lines are obsolete, and consequently they are worried about the position. As the Electricity Trust has not moved further with its offer to the Renmark Irrigation Trust, will the Premier take up this matter with the Electricity Trust to see whether the problem can be overcome with a view to getting an adequate supply of electricity for the people of Lyrup?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The honourable member said that there was some difficulty in this matter and I contacted the Chairman of the Electricity Trust, but as far as I can see there is no disagreement in the matter: it is merely a question of getting a scheme that is acceptable to all parties. The Chairman of the Electricity Trust reports:—

Some time ago negotiations were conducted between the Electricity Trust and the Renmark Irrigation Trust regarding the electricity supply in the Lyrup area, but no agreement was reached. Recently—

—and I emphasize the word “recently”—the Irrigation Trust asked the Electricity Trust to again look into this matter, and a new

investigation is now being made by the Electricity Trust. This will be completed shortly and the results passed on to the Irrigation Trust.

WILD LIFE OFFICERS.

Mr. RALSTON—I noticed in the *Government Gazette* of August 25 last that an appointment of an Assistant Wild Life Officer had been made in the Fisheries and Game Department. I understand that applications were called for four or five positions connected with this project. Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether the other positions have been filled, and if they have not, when an announcement on the appointments can be expected?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—The other appointments have not been made, and I do not know when they will be. We are at present looking for people with the required qualifications for the jobs, and as soon as we can get them I will announce the appointments.

SUNDAY SPORT ON SCHOOL GROUNDS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—My question relates to grounds under the Recreation Grounds (Joint Schemes) Act. I understand that there is a controversy because councils that may desire to permit Sunday sport on these grounds are told that they are not permitted to do so because of some arrangement with the Education Department. Can the Minister of Education say whether this is so, and whether the Education Department would object to the use of such grounds for such Sunday sport as is held under arrangement with the Chief Secretary's Department?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Soon after my appointment as Minister of Education I was informed that for many years it had been the policy of the Education Department not to permit school grounds or ovals to be used on Sundays for sport of any description. From time to time I have given decisions in accordance with this policy, but I have never been able to discover the authority for the adoption of the policy, either by way of provision in the Education Act or the regulations or any decision of Cabinet. Neither the present Director nor the Deputy Director of Education has been able to supply me with any relevant information on the subject. That deals, of course, only with school grounds and ovals. I think one or two decisions along those lines have also been given in relation to grounds that are shared by councils and the Education Department—either that sport is forbidden or it is not the

desire of the Education Department to allow those grounds to be used for sport. I could not make any statement on a question of policy, because the matter goes far beyond the Education Department and raises the whole question of Sunday sport and of whether the department would have the authority to decide either for or against the holding of sports on their grounds. I should like time to consider the whole matter, to look up what authorities, if any, there are, and (if necessary) to refer the question to my colleagues in Cabinet for their opinion.

GEORGE'S CORNER.

Mr. RICHES—The Premier will recall that, as Minister representing the Minister of Local Government, he promised to obtain for me a report on the desirability of erecting warning signs at George's Corner. Last weekend another semi-trailer turned over at this spot, making the fifth in three months. Has the Premier obtained a report from the Highways Department, and if not, will he also consider calling for the Police Department's report as to what action it might consider necessary to make this corner safe for the travelling public? I understand there has been a police report on each accident that has occurred.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The reports are not yet to hand, but, as the honourable member desires them, I will obtain reports from both authorities.

HOSTELS FOR MENTAL PATIENTS.

Mrs. STEELE—Some time ago I addressed a question to the Premier regarding the setting up of hostels for the temporary accommodation of discharged mental patients until such time as they could be re-established in the community. Since then a recommendation that consideration be given to such a proposal has been expressed in the annual report of the Director-General of Mental Hospitals. The Premier undertook, when I asked the question, to get a report on this matter. Can he inform the House of the latest developments?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have had this matter examined by Dr. Birch who has reported to me that he is not yet able to make a recommendation to Cabinet. Some other complex matters have to be considered, one of which would be the fact that this would be a hostel for people for only a very limited time. The question would arise what action could be taken if they did not choose to move

on at the appropriate time but proceeded to make it a long-term residence, as so frequently happens in cases like this. Dr. Birch is at present preparing a report and recommendation and, when they are available, I will advise the honourable member.

NEW POWER STATION.

Mr. TAPPING—Last week the Premier announced a plan to build a new power station on LeFevre Peninsula which would burn either Newcastle coal or oil, depending on economics. While the project would be beneficial to the district and State, it is my duty to point out the possibility of a dust and soot nuisance unless provision is made to combat it in the final planning of such a station. Will consideration be given to the provision of a precipitator to avoid such emissions?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Although I outlined one or two alternatives that at present would be most attractive regarding a power station being erected in this State, I made it clear that no decision had yet been reached to build a power station on LeFevre Peninsula. In fact, no decision has been reached at this stage. As regards the latter part of the honourable member's question, a precipitator would be considered by the trust in the event of a power station being erected in any area where there was a density of population.

LAMEROO RAILWAY STATION.

Mr. NANKIVELL—Can the Premier, as Acting Minister of Railways, ascertain whether the Railways Department intends to construct a new platform and station at Lameroo; and, if so, what form the construction will take and when the work is expected to commence?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will get a report for the honourable member.

MURRAY BRIDGE PARCELS OFFICE.

Mr. BYWATERS—Last year I brought to the notice of the House the need for improved facilities for the Murray Bridge parcels office, pointing out that the amount of work transacted there made the existing facilities inadequate. Following on that, a visit was made by the Assistant General Traffic Manager and the General Engineer of the Railways Department. While they were there, they looked also at the side loading ramp to be provided at the stock yards at Murray Bridge. Will the Premier, as Acting Minister of Railways, get a report regarding the progress on these two projects?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes.

LIGHTING OF SEMI-TRAILERS.

Mr. HARDING—On the way to Naracoorte last Friday, I passed the scene of an accident, involving a semi-trailer loaded with motor cars, several hours after it occurred. I did not notice any reflectors or warning signs as I approached. I reported the accident to the Keith police and was told that there was a constable there. Can the Premier, as Acting Minister of Roads, obtain information from the Police Department about the fatality that occurred at Naracoorte over the week-end, slightly east of the Naracoorte-Apsley Road? Can he ascertain particularly whether there was sufficient lighting on the rear of the vehicles at the time of the collision?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes.

PENSIONERS' CONCESSION FARES.

Mr. BYWATERS—Questions have been asked in this House about concession fares for country pensioners as well as for city pensioners travelling on public transport. I realize the great advantage it has been to city pensioners to have concession fares on public transport, but am mindful of the fact that concession fares on the railways would be a big advantage to country pensioners coming to the city. Has the Premier any further information on the matter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—No. The Government has examined this matter and has decided on some special arrangement to be implemented soon to assist pensioners in certain circumstances who have to travel for medical reasons. But, as a general concession for the whole of the State, the answer is that the Government has not been in a position to implement such a proposal.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The Premier will recall that last week I arranged for a deputation from the Pensioners' Association to meet him tomorrow at 4 p.m. to discuss concession fares. Are we to assume from his reply that little purpose will be served by the deputation waiting on him, or will he assure members that the Government will fully consider the deputation's request?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The member for Murray asked whether the Government had considered this matter: I said that it had and that its decision until now had not been to accord it. That does not mean that I will not be prepared to receive the deputation and to consider any additional evidence or representations it makes. The fact that I agreed to meet the deputation shows that I

am happy to consider the matter. The question of the member for Murray was totally different.

MEAT WORKS FOR PENOLA.

Mr. RALSTON—I draw the Premier's attention to the following report that appeared in the *Border Watch* of August 23 last:—

A meeting of 165 primary producers at Penola last night appointed a committee to inquire into the establishment of a co-operative abattoirs and meat works at Penola.

The report continued:—

Mr. Densley and some other speakers thought that while there was no question of continuity of supply in the South-East, the retailing side would be a problem to overcome. He offered the project 14.7 per cent of the metropolitan trade, which would be equivalent to half the amount produced in the abattoirs at Penola.

This press statement could prove misleading, in that it would appear that the marketing of the 14.7 per cent would be almost automatic. I very much doubt whether that would be the procedure. It would be the responsibility of the proposed abattoirs to arrange the sale—

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member must not debate the question.

Mr. RALSTON—I suggest that the procedure would not be as reported in the press. Can the Minister of Agriculture make a statement on the issues I have raised?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—The Hon. Mr. Densley very well understands the position and I am sure that he would put it correctly to the meeting. Possibly the report is slightly misleading, but what Mr. Densley would certainly have done would be to repeat to that meeting the conditions that had been offered to other abattoirs prepared to start in the country areas over 50 miles from Gepps Cross. Those conditions are, in brief, that the abattoirs may sell meat in the metropolitan area to the extent of 50 per cent of its own kill on a poundage basis and not exceeding one-seventh of the total of the meat sold in the metropolitan area. That does not imply that anybody is going to sell the meat for the abattoirs. It can sell up to those limits if it desires. That offer has been made to any abattoirs that have contemplated starting operations and no doubt it would be repeated to any abattoirs that could establish credentials.

TELEVISION CONTESTS.

Mr. HALL—For some time it has been known that South Australians are debarred from entering some interstate competitions, including contests organized by manufacturers

of breakfast foods and similar goods. However, I understand that lately this situation has been brought to the fore because of a television programme for which no entrance fee is required and in which prizes are distributed. South Australians are debarred from entering this competition. Does the Premier think it desirable to permit South Australians to enter such competitions?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—It is frequently assumed that South Australians are not permitted to enter these competitions because of the provisions of our Lottery and Gaming Act. I can assure members, however, that it has nothing to do with that Act, but is related to the Trading Stamp Act which was passed by Parliament to ensure honest trading so that the public would not be deluded into buying goods for more than their value because, through forwarding coupons, they could secure a towel or something of that nature. If the honourable member examines the Trading Stamp Act and advises me what sections he considers unnecessary for the protection of the public I will refer the matter to Cabinet. The Trading Stamp Act has been extremely good legislation in the interests of fair trading. I think it was passed unanimously by this House many years ago. It has protected local industries and has been entirely satisfactory. I have not heard of any commercial activity asking for its amendment or removal.

HOUSING.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Can the Premier say how many houses the Housing Trust will build this financial year under the Country Housing Act in addition to the 40 for which provision was recently made in the amendment of that Act?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Speaking from memory, I believe that the total sum voted by Parliament under that Act was £360,000, which was sufficient to erect 140 houses. In addition, there would be a slight increment because the rents of the houses go toward building additional houses. I think that when I introduced the amending Bill 141 houses had been erected and the whole of the money provided by Parliament had been spent.

Mr. STOTT—In yesterday's *Advertiser* in the "Melbourne Letter" the following appeared:—

It was a black week, too, for many young home-builders, who were shocked to find that the Victorian State Savings Bank had restricted housing finance. Builders said that the bank had decided not to grant loans to people who had not had an average of £350 in the bank for at least a year.

Young people had begun building in the belief that they would be granted loans when their houses were completed, but after paying for land and house deposits they did not have enough money in the bank. One building firm said it would have houses worth nearly £200,000 on its hands, and another said it would have to put off men.

This morning I had interviews with people who are interested in house building in South Australia. One had just come from the South Australian Savings Bank and said that he was unable to get accommodation for finance for one of his clients. Can the Treasurer say whether there is any restriction on this type of finance from the Savings Bank? Are the South Australian Savings Bank and the State Bank following the lead of Victoria or has all of the money available from those banks been absorbed by the Housing Trust, which does not make money available for private financiers?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—As far as I know, the provisions the honourable member mentioned as applying in Victoria do not apply in South Australia, except that I understand the Commonwealth Bank requires an applicant to have been a customer of the bank for at least a year and to have had an average deposit of £300. The Savings Bank and the State Bank have no similar provision. I would not favour the introduction of such a provision. Regarding the second question, obviously the money for this year has not been spent. Recently the State Bank opened for applications and many were received. The State Bank never closes for applications from country areas and it is always prepared to consider such applications. The Savings Bank this year has allotted a larger sum for housing than it provided last year, but it does, in fact, intelligently distribute the money each month over the whole year. It has to do that because it depends on money coming into the bank to finance persons entering into housing contracts. It has to spread its advances over the whole of the year.

HOSPITAL EMERGENCY PLANT.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Minister of Works a reply to a question I have asked from time to time regarding the installation of an emergency power unit at the Port Augusta hospital?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have inquired of the department as to the general practice relating to the provision of emergency power installations where the hospitals concerned are connected with a supply from the Electricity Trust, and I have obtained the

following report from the Director of Public Buildings:—

Most country hospitals, such as Mount Gambier, Barmera, Port Lincoln, etc., do not have an emergency power supply in the case of the failure of the electricity supply. Only three cases of unscheduled interruptions to power have occurred at Port Augusta this year and these have been of approximately one hour's duration.

When the Electricity Trust is scheduled to make an interruption to supply because of work on mains, etc., it makes available a movable plant to keep hospitals in supply during the period of such interruption. The report continues:—

A stand-by plant to cover the total needs of the hospital would be very costly and would require a skilled operator. A small plant to supply emergency needs would also need frequent attention by a skilled operator and an electrician would be needed to disconnect various sections of the hospital's reticulation when the plant was not needed. By the time this is ended the Electricity Trust of South Australia supply would probably be restored. On the face of it, because of the practice enumerated in the report and as Port Augusta is close to one of the major headquarters for electricity supply in this State, it seems to me that the provision of a plant would scarcely be justified. I am sure that in the event of an emergency the trust would be anxious to see that the hospital's essential needs were met in one way or another.

NOXIOUS WEEDS.

Mr. RICHES (on notice)—

1. Are local government bodies or the Department of Agriculture experiencing any difficulty in enforcing the provisions of the Weeds Act as amended in 1959?

2. Are the provisions proving satisfactory in dealing with—(a) noxious weeds on roads; and (b) noxious weeds on private property?

3. Is it proposed to take any action to make the legislation more effective?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—The replies are:—

1. In replying to this question, it is pointed out that the Weeds Act, 1956, has been effective for a period of only about three years. Furthermore, a considerable amount of time was needed for local government bodies to organize their resources and plan their programmes to meet the commitments of the new Act. The effectiveness of the Act can therefore be gauged effectively only by results achieved over the last 18 months or so. In the great majority of cases, local government

bodies are receiving excellent co-operation from landholders. There have been a few landholders whose attitude has been unco-operative but only in two or three cases have councils found it necessary to take legal action to obtain compliance with the Act. Similarly, the Department of Agriculture has found the response of local government bodies to be generally satisfactory. Many councils have needed the assistance and guidance of technical officers of the department and in some cases some stimulation and encouragement. Some difficulties, however, are inevitable in the administration of any Weeds Act. To a large extent these are basically due to the lack of satisfactory control measures for certain weeds. The solution to problems of this kind lies in weeds research work. Other difficulties are being overcome as experience in administration of the Act is being gained and as local authorized officers are being better equipped technically.

2. The provisions of the Act have proved generally satisfactory with respect to weed control both on roads and on private property. The new Act provides a much better approach to the problems of weeds on roads than the previous Act did. The responsibility now rests with the local government body, although the owners of land adjoining weed-infested roads may undertake control measures if they wish to do so. There has been no basic change in the administration of noxious weed control on private property.

3. The working of the Act and of Regulations thereunder is under continuous consideration by the Weeds Advisory Committee, with a view to recommending any amendments which may appear desirable in the interests of effective operation. Apart from this, measures designed to increase the effectiveness of the Act are concerned with the training of local authorized officers. As anyone familiar with the Act will readily appreciate, these officers play a vital role. The Department of Agriculture's weeds officers are devoting a great deal of time in discussion of weed problems with individual councils. It is planned to expand this service to councils by holding regional weeds conferences for local authorized officers. Such conferences would not only provide a medium for the Department of Agriculture to extend technical information but would also provide an opportunity for local authorized officers to exchange information and experience on all aspects of the Weeds Act's administration.

GREATER PORT ADELAIDE.

Mr. Coumbe for Mr. MILLHOUSE (on notice)—

1. How many industrial sites prepared under the Greater Port Adelaide scheme have been sold?
2. Who are the purchasers of such sites?
3. How much has been paid by the purchasers for these sites?
4. How much has been spent to date on the Greater Port Adelaide scheme?
5. What is now estimated as the total cost of the scheme?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The replies are:—

1. (a) Four industrial sites have been sold, one site leased and active negotiations are in hand for the sale of a further four sites.

(b) In addition, extensive tracts of land have been developed and transferred to Government authorities for school site and housing purposes.

2. (a) Globe Timber Mills Ltd. L'Aire Liquide Societe Anonyme. Bradford Insulation (Contracting) Ltd. Harris Scarfe Ltd. Adelaide Timber Vacuum Pressure Impregnation Co. (Lease).

(b) The Education Department. The South Australian Housing Trust.

3. (a) The sales to date of industrial sites involve the payment by the purchasers of amounts totalling £159,273.

(b) The sales to date of school and housing land involve the payment by the purchasers of amounts totalling £200,324.

4. Approximately £4,500,000 covering wharf reconstruction and extensions, modernization of port facilities, etc.

5. The total estimated cost of the whole scheme at at January 1, 1960, including both completed works and remaining projects, was approximately £45,000,000, of which about £8,000,000 involved in the acquisition and development of land will be recoverable.

ELECTRICITY.

Mr. RALSTON (on notice)—

1. How many kilowatt hours were generated for the year ended June 30, 1960, at each of the following power stations:—(a) Osborne A; (b) Osborne B; (c) Port Augusta; (d) Port Lincoln; and (e) Mount Gambier?

2. What was the generation cost per kilowatt hour at each of these power stations?

3. What type of fuel was used at each of the power stations?

4. What amount was used and what was the cost appropriate to each power station?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Chairman of the South Australian Electricity Trust reports:—

1.—

	Kilowatt hours generated.
Osborne A	57,885,480
Osborne B	917,456,200
Thomas Playford (Port Augusta)	716,033,700
Mount Gambier	40,269,880
Port Lincoln	15,003,490

1,746,648,750

2. The power station at Port Augusta and the Osborne power stations feed into the trust's interconnected system. Overall costs of generation are not kept separately for these stations. The combined cost per kilowatt hour supplied to the system from the Port Augusta and Osborne stations was 1.15d. a kilowatt hour. The corresponding figure at Mount Gambier was 1.95d. and at Port Lincoln 2.47d.

3. Osborne power station used New South Wales coal, oil, coke and a small amount of Leigh Creek coal. Port Augusta power stations used Leigh Creek coal. Mount Gambier power station used wood waste. Port Lincoln power station used fuel oil.

4. Except for Leigh Creek coal, all trust fuel is purchased by competitive tender and it is not considered to be in the best interests of the undertaking to make these cost figures available. The total cost of all fuel used during the year was £4,038,440. The following amounts of fuel were used:—

	Tons.
Osborne stations—	
New South Wales coal	373,833
Oil	77,139
Coke	13,375
Leigh Creek coal	433
Port Augusta stations—Leigh Creek coal	673,679
Mount Gambier station—wood waste	93,579
Port Lincoln station—furnace oil . .	5,578

MOUNT GAMBIER HOSPITAL.

Mr. RALSTON (on notice)—

1. What was the total number of patients admitted to the Mount Gambier hospital for the year ended June 30, 1960?

2. What was the number admitted for each month during that year?

3. What was the number of beds available?

4. What was the daily average number of patients?

5. What was the daily average number of days of bed occupancy per patient?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The replies are:—

1. 3,947.

2. 360 July, 1959; 330 August; 373 September; 313 October; 332 November; 321 December; 353 January, 1960; 259 February; 331 March; 292 April; 353 May; 330 June; total 3,947.

3. 130.
4. 89.7
5. 8.3 days.

COAL SALES.

Mr. TAPPING (on notice)—

1. Has the sale of Leigh Creek coal to consumers in the metropolitan area been restricted?

2. If so, is it intended to restore supplies later?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The replies are:—

1. Yes, for bagged household coal.
2. No—unless demand materially increases, which is unlikely now that winter has ended.

PENSIONERS' COTTAGES.

Mr. TAPPING (on notice)—In view of the heavy demand for pensioners' cottages, is it the intention of the South Australian Housing Trust to incorporate this type of home in the housing scheme about to commence on LeFevre Peninsula?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Chairman of the South Australian Housing Trust reports that the trust will incorporate "cottage flats" for pensioners in its housing programme on LeFevre Peninsula.

JUSTICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Legislative Council intimated that it had agreed to the House of Assembly's amendments.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (PUBLIC SALARIES) BILL (No. 2).

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

PUBLIC FINANCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

BUSH FIRES BILL.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Forests) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to provide for the prevention and control of bush fires and other fires, to repeal the Bush Fires Act, 1933-1957, and for other purposes. Read a first time.

ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE.

His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, by message, recommended the House of Assembly to make appropriation of the several sums for the purposes set forth in the accompanying

Estimates of Expenditure by the Government for expenditure during the year ending June 30, 1961.

Referred to Committee of Supply.

THE BUDGET.

In Committee of Supply.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—(Premier and Treasurer)—This, my 22nd Budget, I put before the House with a greater sense of confidence in the strength of the State finances and assurance of progress in the State's economy than ever before. The progress over the post-war years, which followed a war effort of which we were justly proud, has been quite unparalleled in Australian history. That record has now been capped by the State passing through the worst drought since settlement with its finances and its economy actually in better shape than ever before. We have entered the year 1960-61 with seasonal conditions and outlook as good as ever we have known them.

The immediate past year commenced under adverse seasonal conditions and the Government was forced a year ago to budget for a deficit of £791,000. To be forced to do so was most disappointing as it was the first year in which the State was to operate free of its dependence upon special grants recommended by the Commonwealth Grants Commission. In the months following the bringing down of my last Budget seasonal conditions even worsened, reducing the State's anticipated revenues and increasing its expenditure obligations, particularly in the cost of pumping water from the River Murray to supply both the metropolitan and country areas. Then at the middle and during the latter half of the year considerably added costs were placed upon the Government by substantial increases in wage and salary margins.

The Government, in order to meet the financial problems posed by these circumstances, kept expenditures very closely under review to ensure all proper economy and efficiency, and saw to it that its revenues were fully collected in all reasonable and proper circumstances. It secured some added revenues by imposing a one per cent tax on hire-purchase transactions from February last. In order to finance the inevitable deficit on Consolidated Revenue Account it carefully scrutinized its Loan expenditure programmes and eliminated any expenditures which could be held over without seriously affecting the service and welfare of the people, or jeopardizing the economy of the State.

At the opening of the Parliamentary Session on March 31 last, His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor revealed that the outlook at that time was for a deficit in 1959-60 of about £1,800,000. That was the situation as the Government and others closely in touch with affairs saw it at that stage. We had at that stage also an outstanding deficit from the **previous year of just over £1,000,000**, and there was no assurance that it would be fully covered by the final recommendation of the Commonwealth Grants Commission. To cover a prospective deficit of £1,800,000 and some possible residue of the previous £1,027,000 deficit the Government planned to retain a significant surplus on Loan Account, but quite clearly could not by such means fully cover such a large sum without cuts in works expenditure greater than could be contemplated.

During the last three months of the financial year the situation changed radically. The early autumn rains were so bounteous and so widespread that first we were able to reduce pumping of water, and then to cease entirely. The whole economy reacted to the radically changed seasonal outlook, and increased revenues resulted from increased rail loadings, harbour activity, land transfers, hire-purchase transactions, stamp duties on commercial documents, and the like. We were fortunate not to have any fruit fly outbreaks, meaning considerable saving on budgeted expenditure. The position was also materially relieved, although only temporarily in this particular instance, as anticipated marginal adjustments of teachers, police, and nurses were not made until after June 30, and thus did not impinge on the 1959-60 accounts. During the last three months also, the effects of the Government's most careful efficiency and economy efforts became increasingly manifest. On top of this the Government was delighted that the Commonwealth Grants Commission recommended, in view of the responsible conduct of the State's finances over a long period of years, that the whole of the outstanding deficit of 1958-59 be made good by the Commonwealth.

As a consequence of this extraordinary improvement in the State finances, which makes very clear the strength of our economy, the Government was able to take immediate action in releasing Loan funds, hitherto earmarked to finance a large revenue deficit, to ease the more urgent demands in house finance and construction and in essential public works.

It was able to put in train immediately plans for more comprehensive housing and other works than had previously seemed possible. In particular the Government was able to announce a plan for rapid replacement of temporary homes by permanent dwellings and **call for immediate tenders for the work**. As a final result, the Treasury accounts for 1959-60 recorded a deficit on Consolidated Revenue Account of £311,000 only, whilst the deficit of the previous year had been fully recovered. What is more, the 1959-60 deficit was entirely covered by a current surplus on Loan Account of £315,000, which, with a carry-forward of £90,000 from the beginning of the year, meant a balance in hand of Loan funds of £405,000, or £94,000 more than the revenue deficit.

For the year 1960-61, therefore, the Government is in the happy position of starting off with its finances well in order, a fine seasonal outlook, its expenditures being conducted upon a basis of efficiency and economy following most careful recent reviews and controls, and revenues generally buoyant. I need hardly say, therefore, that I feel bound to contemplate this year at least a balanced Budget. We shall, of course, continue to experience the effects of last year's drought in rail and harbours revenues because there will be very little grain to be transported until the new harvest is available. There will be some continuing effect upon public revenues through the reduced spending power of the rural community. We shall have to find an additional £1,500,000 or thereabouts to pay increased wage and salary awards in respect of margins for a full year in all categories, whereas last year increased payments were made for part of the year for most awards but not at all for teachers, police, and nurses. In addition we shall naturally assume considerably increased expenditure obligations for social services in accordance with increased population, and in particular for education. On the other hand, the Government can confidently expect expanding revenues consistent with the expanding population and a prosperous economy; it estimates that our share of the tax reimbursement moneys will increase by £3,000,000 approximately; it anticipates an additional £1,000,000 approximately in water and sewer collections arising from a review of property assessments upon a more up-to-date though still very conservative basis; the Treasury will benefit by a full year of hire-purchase tax and amended hospital fees for a full year; and naturally it may antici-

pate very greatly reduced expenditure upon water pumping. Last year, when forecasting a deficit because of most adverse seasonal conditions, I made the following statement:—

It is, I believe, quite justifiable procedure to budget for a deficit to this extent for it would be improper to call for a curtailing of Government services to cover the gap, or to make temporary increases in taxes and charges for that purpose. Over a period of years, taking good years with bad, it should be practicable to secure an overall balance so that minor surpluses arising in good years may offset the deficits of adverse periods.

Now, in view of the favourable conditions and prospects I am proposing a surplus in the current year adequate to cover the £311,000 deficit of last year and leave a nominal surplus of just over £1,000 for the two years together. To do this, I would remind members, will relieve the necessity to divert Loan funds to cover the past deficit and release them for their normal and proper purpose of providing for essential public works and development. Indeed, I have already made proposals in the Loan Estimates which contemplate the release of these funds. The aggregate expenditure estimated for 1960-61 is £85,516,000, and revenue is estimated at £85,828,000, indicating a surplus of £312,000 for the year.

The Government has no present proposals for any special increase in taxes and charges. Members will recall that recently some modest adjustments were made in rail charges corresponding to added costs and that early in 1960 a hire-purchase tax of one per cent was imposed. The Government will continue to ensure that Crown revenues are collected where properly and reasonably due, and from time to time will re-examine charges for services provided in relation to their costs. In particular the Government has under examination the actual experience in application of the new hire-purchase tax to ensure that its operation is fair and efficient. If necessary, the Government will not hesitate to take further legislative action if there is evidence of significant evasion or inequities in application.

Because of the Government's constant attention to economy and efficiency in its reviews of expenditure, because of the greater measure of self-help and community effort practised by the people of South Australia than is the case in most other States, and because of the recent great progress in the State's economy, South Australia's taxes and Crown charges remain, on balance, the lowest in Australia. I am

confident that we shall in these circumstances achieve a modest surplus in 1960-61, adequate to offset the deficit of 1959-60.

THE YEAR 1959-60.

Actual revenue for 1959-60 amounted to £80,277,000, exceeding the estimate by £745,000. Apart from hire-purchase tax receipts, which accounted for £162,000 in five months of operation, other stamp duties realized £289,000 more than estimated. This latter increase was brought about, in the main, by considerable increases in the number and value of conveyances and mortgage documents assessed for duty. Succession duties realized £2,360,000, which was £210,000 in excess of the estimate. In total, expenditure for 1959-60 was £80,589,000, which was £266,000 more than the amount provided for in the original estimates. The cost to the Budget for increased wage and salary margins was almost £500,000 in 1959-60, so that other expenditures were, on balance, contained well within the original estimate. There were, as is inevitable, variations in either direction going to make up this net variation in expenditure, and Supplementary Estimates were passed by Parliament late in the year. The main variations in expenditure from the original estimates were in respect of interest and sinking fund payments, Hospitals, Engineering and Water Supply, and Agriculture Departments, Railways, and Chief Secretary—Miscellaneous.

Expenditure on debt servicing exceeded the estimate by £238,000, principally as a result of loan conversions. Additional funds were required, and provided in the Supplementary Estimates, for Hospitals Department. Extended pumping in connection with providing an unrationed water supply, principally to the metropolitan area, involved the Engineering and Water Supply Department in expenditure £202,000 in excess of the Budget estimate. These increases were offset in some measure by savings on Chief Secretary—Miscellaneous, where in certain cases institutions and subsidized hospitals were unable to attach the full amount of grants provided; on agriculture, where provision made for possible fruit fly outbreaks was fortunately not required; and on railways, where working expenses were reduced partly as a result of reduced traffic offering, and partly through reduced operating costs. A detailed analysis of the financial transactions of 1959-60 will be available to members in the Annual Report of the Auditor-

General, which I anticipate will be tabled when the House resumes to consider these Estimates. A wide range of information is included, as is customary, in the Budget Papers.

ESTIMATES FOR 1960-61.

RECEIPTS.

The Estimates of Revenue, copies of which have been made available, show details under the various headings, of the amounts which I estimate will be received in 1960-61, compared with actual receipts under the same headings for 1959-60. In total, I estimate that an amount of £85,828,000 will be received. This exceeds last year's actual revenues by £5,551,000.

I will now review the principal items contributing to this increase. State Taxation receipts are estimated at £11,840,000, the increase over last year being £692,000. For stamp duties a full year's operation of the stamp duty on hire-purchase agreements and the continuing increase in the volume of business as shown by the number of conveyances, mortgages, cheques and documents submitted for stamping, are estimated to yield £335,000 more revenue than last year. The hire-purchase stamp duty which realized £162,000 for the five months of operation last year is estimated to produce about £400,000 this year. As predicted when the legislation was introduced, there is no evidence that this duty has produced higher prices to customers nor that it has had any adverse effect upon business.

In fact, I will give the following figures. For the March quarter of 1959, the number of hire-purchase agreements was 33,473, with a value of £5,843,000. The figures for the same quarter in 1960 were 37,494, with a value of £7,961,000. For the June quarter of 1959, the number of agreements was 34,900, with a total value of £6,300,000, while for the same quarter in 1960 the figures were over 35,800, with a total value of £8,554,000. So that honourable members will see that there has been no slackening in hire-purchase. The tax has not had any adverse effect upon the companies, nor has it been passed on to the consumer.

Motor vehicles taxation revenue is expected to increase by some £211,000, but this will have no net effect on the Budget as the proceeds of motor taxation, less costs associated with the Motor Vehicles and Highways Departments, are transferred to the Highways Fund pursuant to the Highways Act.

Receipts from public works and services are estimated at £41,963,000, an increase over last

year's receipts of £3,251,000. The principal increases envisaged are:—

	£
Education	154,000
Harbours	196,000
Railways	809,000
Waterworks and Sewers . .	1,200,000
Hospitals	130,000
Interest and Sinking Fund	
Recoveries	683,000
Registrar-General of Deeds	48,000

The increase in education revenues derives almost entirely from the larger Commonwealth grants which will be received for university purposes. The payment of these sums to the University, together with the provisions which the State must make to qualify for these grants, appear in the Estimates of Expenditure under Minister of Education and, in so far as the Waite Agricultural Research Institute is concerned, under Minister of Agriculture.

Harbours revenues are estimated at £2,500,000 and the increase of £196,000 over last year is expected to accrue to the department by virtue of the more extensive utilization of the bulk handling facilities with the expectation of a better agricultural season. Further, charges for handling coal at Osborne were increased from July 1, 1960, following increases in costs of operation.

Last year railway revenues fell as a result of the poor season. It is not anticipated that the amount of grain to be handled in 1960-61 will differ substantially from the 1959-60 tonnage of 716,000 tons, because in fact there was a substantial carry-over of grain stocks at the commencement of 1959-60, whereas there is a very small one this year. It is anticipated there will be some increase in mineral and general merchandise traffic. These traffic increases together with the adjustments in general freight tariffs as from August 1, 1960, and in special rates, will bring in over £700,000 extra railway revenue.

Receipts from water and sewer charges are estimated at £6,283,000, an increase over last year's receipts of £1,200,000. Of this about £200,000 is the natural increase in revenues due to increased supplies and connections for both water and sewers, whilst approximately £1,000,000 will result from revaluations of assessed properties upon a more up-to-date basis.

South Australia is in a far less favourable position as regards water supply than any other State in Australia. It has no natural reservoirs and only one river of any real consequence. Despite these handicaps South

Australia occupies an enviable position in the Commonwealth in regard to the development of its water supply and sewerage undertakings. More than 9,000 miles of water mains convey water under pressure to 96 per cent of the State's citizens. In the metropolitan area 99½ per cent of the population are directly served by the water supply system and 96 per cent have been provided with sewerage facilities.

Last year Adelaide's record drought was accompanied by record water consumption, yet in spite of these unfavourable conditions, it was the only capital city in Australia in which no water restrictions of any kind were imposed. The State's achievements in conserving water and distributing it far and wide through more than 9,000 miles of mains have contributed a great deal to encourage industrial development. In fact, no industry has ever turned its back on South Australia through any doubts as to the ability of the State to provide its water requirements, however great these requirements may have been. These results could not have been achieved without heavy capital expenditure followed by increased revenue expenditure on the operation and maintenance of the completed works.

Water supply works estimated to cost £40,000,000 are now under construction in various parts of the State, and the estimated cost of sewerage works in progress in the metropolitan area and country towns is £16,000,000. This year the capital expenditure on water supply and sewerage will amount to £9,000,000, and this will bring the capital invested in these two services up to well over £80,000,000.

Every new undertaking financed from Loan funds adds to the State's interest bill and involves additional expenditure on maintenance and operation. Although water and sewerage extensions earn some revenue immediately they are completed there is usually an appreciable lag between the time the capital is spent and the time substantial revenue is earned. Moreover, it is only the actual service lines that directly earn revenue, and the heavy expenditure necessary on dams, pumping stations, large trunk pipelines, and sewage treatment works often gives little or no direct return.

The cost of electricity for pumping water from the Murray through the Morgan-Whyalla and Mannum-Adelaide pipelines and from bores last year was £922,000, and this imposed a heavy burden on the State's finances. Fortunately, satisfactory rains this year have

filled all of the State's major reservoirs, except Tod River and South Para, and it is estimated that the cost of electricity will be reduced to £364,000. While it is impracticable in some cases to levy rates sufficient to meet all capital and operating costs on a particular undertaking, those who directly benefit from water and sewerage works must ordinarily accept the main responsibility for meeting the costs involved. Water and sewerage rates, particularly in metropolitan and township areas, must be regarded not as taxes but as charges for essential services, without which industry and commerce could not exist, and without which living standards would revert to those existing last century.

The cost of operating the water supply systems will vary from year to year according to weather conditions. It would neither be practicable nor equitable to vary the charges each year to meet these changing circumstances, but it is necessary to maintain these charges at a level which gives a satisfactory average annual return and keeps any subsidy from Consolidated Revenue down to a reasonable figure. With this fact in mind it has been found necessary to make a complete revision of property valuations. While this revision has been made on a most conservative basis it has had the effect of bringing valuations more into line with present market values. Most ratepayers will pay somewhat more than previously. The increases will not be uniform as the comprehensive revision disclosed a number of anomalies, and these have been corrected. Charges for these services will still be most reasonable, and in fact the extent to which the charges have risen since pre-war years is far below the increases in commodity prices generally and in wage levels. The total water and sewer rates on a normal five-roomed house will amount to approximately £20 a year, representing only 7s. 8d. a week for an efficient sewerage service and ample water for all purposes.

Accounts for water and sewer rates are only rendered once a year and for this reason the full impact of any increase falls upon the ratepayers at the one time. Many difficulties would be involved and a great deal of new equipment would be necessary to change over to six-monthly billing. This aspect is receiving full consideration and, in the meantime, arrangements have been made whereby those who receive an account for both water and sewerage will be permitted to defer payment of the sewer rates for a period of two months. I have spoken on this matter at greater length

than has been my custom, but there is a considerable amount of untidy thinking regarding water and sewer rates and it is necessary, I believe, to emphasize the important part which water plays in the economy of this State and at the same time to point out that the State's natural water disadvantages have not prevented the Government from placing its citizens in a position at least as advantageous as the citizens of any other State.

Hospitals receipts are expected to amount to £2,215,000, an increase over last year of £130,000. The operation for a full year of the new scale of hospital charges, which came into effect from February 1, 1960, will yield approximately £300,000 additional revenue in 1960-61, whilst the extension to the lists of approved pharmaceutical prescriptions will attract an additional £60,000 under the Commonwealth pharmaceutical benefits arrangement. As an offset to these increases the amount to be claimed from the Commonwealth under the tuberculosis scheme will be less by some £253,000 than last year, when claims covered a period of 21 months and the period during which the State carried the expenditures pending reimbursement was reduced from twelve months to three months.

Interest and sinking fund recoveries are estimated to amount to £8,353,000, an increase of £683,000. This increase follows the additional **Loan funds advanced** through the State Bank for Advances for Homes and to semi-governmental bodies, principally the Electricity Trust and the Housing Trust. Increased interest credits are also anticipated in respect of departmental accounts and from funds held temporarily at the Reserve Bank. Departmental and miscellaneous receipts call for no particular comment. Full details are set out in the Estimates.

The amount to be received from the Commonwealth for 1960-61 as taxation reimbursement is shown as £30,700,000. Last year I explained to members in some detail the operation of the new formula for determining the amount of this grant. The figure included in the Estimates is based upon the latest information available to me of population and wages which are the variants in the formula. Whilst it is not a finally determined figure I feel confident it will be subject to only very small final adjustment. Incidentally, I questioned the Commonwealth's computations at the last Loan Council meeting and a review has been made by the Commonwealth authorities which shows that there was some mistake in their computations. This will benefit all States to

the extent of about £2,500,000 I understand. I may say that the Commonwealth Budget papers have disclosed an estimate almost £250,000 below this, but more recent information upon population distribution at June 30 last, and average wages paid during the year ended June 30 last, have indicated a significant increase.

PAYMENTS.

The Estimates of Expenditure, containing details of proposed payments by departments for 1960-61 have been tabled. They provide for—

	£
Annual payments for which appropriation is contained in special legislation	23,084,000
Proposed payments in respect of the various departments for which appropriation will be sought in an Appropriation Bill founded on the Estimates	62,432,000
<hr/>	
Making a total of payments proposed for 1960-61 of ..	85,516,000
<hr/>	

Full details of all proposed payments are contained in the Estimates, and explanations of the various appropriations will be made by Ministers during the debate in Committee on the various lines. I will confine my remarks to some of the more important and noteworthy items for which provision is made.

The increase in proposed payments under special Acts is £1,681,000. This increase is mainly associated with increased payments of interest and sinking fund on the public debt. At a later stage I will give details of the net increase in the public debt and of the operations of the National Debt Sinking Fund during 1959-60. The increased payments for debt servicing follow as a necessary result of the net increase in the public debt and as a result of the proposed further borrowing of this year. From time to time concern has been voiced in this House at the extent to which the public debt has increased in post-war years. Concern has also been expressed at the increase in what the Auditor-General, in his report, describes as "dead weight of public debt".

It is true that the public debt has increased greatly from some £109,000,000 in 1945 to £339,000,000 as at June 30, 1960. This increase, expressed as a figure per capita, is greater than the increase for any other State in the Commonwealth except Tasmania. I make no apology for this. On the contrary, I acknowledge the increase as both desirable and necessary. South Australia's entitlement

to a better than per capita share of Loan funds available is regarded with no little envy by the other States, and I assert with complete conviction that the careful expenditure of these borrowed funds on water, transport, power, schools, hospitals and other services has been a major factor in the development of South Australia into a strong, diversified, well balanced economy.

As for the increase in the "dead weight", that is, the extent to which undertakings fail to recoup to the Budget full interest and sinking fund charges attributable to them, an examination of the nature of such undertakings should readily relieve all concerned. They comprise, in the main, school and hospital buildings, the necessity for which no-one would deny. They include land improvement and development, country water supply undertakings, country rail services and other developmental expenditures. The impact of these activities on the Budget in 1959-60 will be revealed in the Auditor-General's report to be considerably greater than in 1958-59, not only because the Budget had to carry the debt servicing charges on a growing volume of capital expenditure on schools, hospitals, police and other buildings, but because the effect of the drought will be revealed in temporarily increased costs for pumping water and in reduced earnings of railways and other public undertakings. Though they may not result in direct monetary returns to the Crown sufficient to recoup all charges incurred, these capital expenditures provide services to the people, in both the country and the metropolitan area, without which we could not possibly have supported the increase in the population and the very great progress which we have achieved. From an accountant's point of view these expenditures may be labelled "dead weight" but they have made, and are making, a most essential contribution to the well-being and prosperity of the people of this State. It is equally vital to the development of the State and the well-being of its people for the capital facilities provided to be efficiently staffed, operated and maintained. An examination of the Estimates of Expenditure will reveal that substantially increased provisions are proposed for these purposes, particularly in the social services fields.

In the field of health it is of interest to note that the provision of £6,004,000 for the Hospitals Department is £637,000, or 12 per cent greater than actual payments made last year. Funds are proposed for practically a full year's expanded operation of The Queen

Elizabeth Hospital with all ancillary and supporting services, the opening of the new general hospital at Mount Gambier, improved staffing at country hospitals, particularly Port Augusta and Port Pirie, and for the development of further specialist services at Royal Adelaide Hospital. The Government has also made provision for an increased scale of salaries to be paid to nurses under a new agreement negotiated recently.

Within the category of law, order and public safety, a further substantial increase is proposed for the Police Department. The 1960-61 provision of £2,592,000 is £319,000, or 14 per cent greater than actual expenditure in 1959-60. The Government has allocated funds for the payment of a new scale of salaries and wages for members of the Police Force, and has provided for further strengthening of that force, which has for some time been below the authorized establishment.

The social service which is most in the public eye, however, and the one which has for years posed the most difficult problem for the Government is the provision for education. For 1960-61 the proposals for the Education Department envisage the spending of £11,783,000, which is £1,470,000, or more than 14 per cent greater than actual expenditure in 1959-60. Very large annual increases in the department's vote have been necessary because, while South Australia has expanded rapidly in population and in general development, the expansion in the number of children requiring education at State schools has far outstripped the rate of expansion in all other fields.

The last 10 years has been a period of unprecedented growth. Since the beginning of 1950 the total enrolments in the primary and secondary schools of the Education Department have more than doubled. At the beginning of 1950 the total enrolment was 84,073; in August this year it was 170,100. Further, the percentage increases in the enrolments at primary and secondary schools in South Australia have greatly exceeded the percentage increases elsewhere in Australia. From 1945 up to 1958 (the latest year for which comparable figures are at present available) the increase in South Australia was 121 per cent. No other Australian State had an increase of more than 92 per cent, and the average for all States was 81 per cent.

Full-time teachers in the Department's schools now number approximately 6,000. The Government is providing over £600,000 additional funds this year to pay salary increases

recently granted to teachers under an award of the Teachers Salaries Board and I believe that teaching is now a very well paid profession. Heads of the largest primary and secondary schools receive from £2,400 to £2,640 a year, the salary for the head teacher of a primary school with about 100 to 200 children rises to £1,980 per annum, and altogether there are nearly 700 positions now held by men in the Education Department carrying an annual salary of £1,980 or more. Young men straight from the teachers' college, after a four-year course, usually start at £1,170 in secondary schools, or after a two-year course, at £930 to £970 in primary schools. For women, recent changes have now opened up the possibility of appointment as heads of large primary schools. Even now there are about 250 women occupying positions with an annual salary of £1,500 or more. Girls from the teachers' college usually start at £995 in secondary schools, or £748 in primary schools.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the recruitment position for the teaching service is now becoming considerably easier. At present there are approximately 3,000 young people in training for service in the department, including 1,600 at the two teachers' colleges, 1,300 secondary school students who hold teaching scholarships, and about 100 who are undergoing other training. This year 420 students from the teachers' colleges took up appointments in the schools, and by 1964 this figure will rise to over 800 annually.

Improved arrangements have recently been made for the staffing of schools, which will reduce the number of transfers of teachers from school to school during the course of the year. To improve the standard of facilities for education throughout the country districts of the State it was decided recently to give the existing higher primary schools the name and status of area schools, to reclassify them and to make it possible to appoint additional senior masters or senior mistresses to the secondary divisions of these schools. It was most gratifying to me, and a tribute to the planning and budgeting of the Education Department, that I was able to approve and submit to this House expenditure proposals for the department to the extent of 98½ per cent of aggregate funds requested. The reduction that was made was primarily in connection with teachers, and I assured the department that if it could secure teachers an additional appropriation would be available.

The story of education in South Australia is not only one of material and numerical expansion. There is also a growing keenness for education in the community generally. Parents are increasingly recognizing the importance of education for their children. Pupils in secondary schools are realizing more and more the value of a good educational equipment. The considerable increases in the proportion of girls and boys remaining at school on a voluntary basis is very pleasing, and there is evidence to show that the quality of the education received when students are willing and enthusiastic is much higher than it would be if they were compelled by law to remain at school after the present prescribed age for compulsion had been reached. One of the results is a much larger flow of young people to the University, the Institute of Technology, and other places of tertiary education.

The increasing demands for tertiary education are of course reflected in an increased demand for financial support from Governments, and a perusal of the Estimates of Expenditure will reveal that the Government has provided for greatly increased payments to the University of Adelaide and to the Institute of Technology, both from its own funds and moneys recovered from the Commonwealth for university purposes.

A somewhat different kind of social service in which the Government policy may not be so widely known is the care and assimilation of our aboriginal people. Expenditure for the implementation of Government policy on native welfare has risen from some £64,000 in 1949-50 to £357,000 in 1959-60, and a further increase to £428,000 is provided in these Estimates. It may be appropriate at this juncture to indicate the extent to which Government policy is being achieved. It is well to understand at the outset that these people in South Australia are in stages of development which vary from the primitive nomadic tribesman to those who are accepted as ordinary self-supporting members of the community. It must also be understood that the aborigine cannot be regimented and his development, according to our standards, cannot be forced upon him. Many have no wish to be assimilated and a policy involving compulsory removal from their natural environment would be tragically wrong. In the case of the more primitive people the Government's policy is not to try to make them adopt our way of living but to endeavour to provide better accommodation to replace insanitary shacks

and wurlies in primitive encampments, to provide grants in aid and other assistance to church missions for the improvement of their living conditions and physical welfare, to provide supplementary ration scales and medical supervision, and to develop reserves where tribal people and particularly their children may be encouraged, but not forced, to take some real interest in our way of life, so that eventually they may be encouraged to enter employment and live the life of a normal citizen.

As far as the civilized aborigines are concerned, the aim of the Government is to endeavour to house them in country towns where there is continuity of employment, to assist them to gain employment and to endeavour to protect them from exploitation. Special steps have been taken with regard to the education of the children, who are enrolled for attendance at State schools on exactly the same conditions as apply to white children. The Aborigines Protection Board endeavours to arrange for as many native children as possible from outback areas to be placed in private homes or in suitable institutions in order that the children may have the opportunity to receive a normal education and at the same time experience the benefits of a normal family environment. Secondary education and vocational training facilities are available to equip them to obtain their livelihood in various fields of employment in the community. During the whole of their education these aboriginal children are maintained by the Government and are given accommodation, clothing, books, and pocket money, without cost to the parents. There are at present over 300 such children in foster homes or institutions receiving education, and of these 39 youths and girls are attending secondary schools.

With steadily improving living conditions, more readily available medical attention and education facilities, and continued close supervision and encouragement and help from the Aborigines Protection Board, the Government believes that eventually the aboriginal can be developed to a standard where he can enter the community and discharge, with credit, his obligations as a citizen. I believe, however, that the successful assimilation of young aboriginal people into the white community will depend not only on the expenditure of Government moneys in housing, education, etc., but even more on the attitude of the community generally which must be prepared to accept them.

For the business undertakings there are several features which I consider to be worthy of comment. The proposed payments for the Engineering and Water Supply Department total £3,700,000, or £153,000 less than was spent in 1959-60. Whereas £922,000 was the cost of power for pumping last year, the very good season has permitted this year's provision to be reduced to £364,000. After taking account of this reduction and of a small increase in the State's contribution for River Murray maintenance works, the total available for the department's normal operation and maintenance programme is almost 14 per cent greater than expenditure last year. This provision will enable the department to effectively maintain its growing assets and to make good the measure of maintenance which had to be deferred last year because of the restrictions on finance.

The Railways Department has a total provision of £14,617,000, which is £353,000, or less than 2½ per cent, in excess of actual payments for 1959-60. Of this increase 2 per cent is due to higher salary and wage rates awarded, and only ½ per cent for all other costs. Such a small proposed increase in costs for the carriage of an increased volume of traffic is a further pointer to the success of the change from steam to diesel locomotion and of the achievements of the railways administration in its search for economy and efficiency in all sections of the department.

The proposed transfer to the Municipal Tramways Trust towards working expenses has declined yet again—from £94,000 in 1959-60 to a nominal amount of £30,000 for 1960-61. Members will recall that eight years ago the annual transfer to assist the trust was £700,000. Since then the consistent decline in the impact on the Budget has been most pleasing to the Government.

In recent years there has been a tendency for many people to look on South Australia's progress as being almost entirely due to the attraction and growth of secondary industry and to forget the very solid achievements in the other fields of rural production and mining. In rural production we have seen great advances made, not only in the opening up of land previously thought to be too poor for development, but also in vastly improved farming practices in the areas which were first opened up many decades ago. The South Australian Department of Agriculture has played a very significant role in this progress, both in fundamental research and in taking the growing store of knowledge to the man

on the land and helping him in his practical problems. For 1960-61 the department has been allocated a total of £806,000, which is £98,000, or 14 per cent, more than was actually spent in 1959-60. This will enable the department to expand its activities still further at its research and experimental centres and in its advisory services.

It is proposed to provide £574,000 for the Mines Department this year. The tabulated Estimates of Expenditure show this to be £55,000 less than the actual expenditure in 1959-60. However, it must be remembered that the Research and Development Branch of the department was taken over during the year by the Australian Mineral Development Laboratories and is now operating under the control of a council which comprises representatives of the mining industry and the Commonwealth and State Governments. The South Australian Government's contribution for 1960-61 of £135,000 towards the operating of the organization is provided under the Special Acts section of the Estimates. If the department's figures for actual expenditure for 1959-60 and proposed expenditure for 1960-61 were adjusted by deducting expenditures for those activities now carried out by the Australian Mineral Development Laboratories, it would be seen that for the other activities of the department additional funds of £50,000 are to be made available this year. This will permit the continuation and expansion of the valuable work of investigating, testing, and recording the mineral resources of the State.

In concluding my comments on proposed payments for 1960-61, I desire to draw the attention of members to two smaller but nevertheless important proposals. Under Minister of Lands—Miscellaneous, £36,000 has been provided for the purchase of a property of over 1,100 acres in the Humbug Scrub area to be used as a national reserve. Under Minister of Local Government—Miscellaneous, £46,000 has been set aside for the payment of a pound for pound subsidy to local authorities to assist in the repair of recent storm damage to foreshores. Honourable members will recall that severe damage was caused to suburban foreshores. The Engineer-in-Chief reported that the total expenditure on the necessary repair work would be £88,000, and provision has been made in the Estimates for a subsidy to the councils concerned which they can take up to the extent of £44,000 for this work. I will see that honourable members in due course have copies of the Engineer-in-Chief's report

so that they can see how it affects their districts. Each district has a certain allocation. Two small country centres applied for assistance, but they were not covered by the Engineer-in-Chief's report. One of those places was Moonta Bay and the other was, I think, Port Broughton. Although they are not mentioned in the report, provision will be made for the Engineer-in-Chief to report upon those two centres, and we will cover by a special appropriation, if necessary, a like subsidy to meet what he recommends. The £44,000 available for repair work at metropolitan beaches is based upon a 50 per cent subsidy of the cost of work recommended by the Engineer-in-Chief. Incidentally, the Engineer-in-Chief recommended the basis of subsidy. The provision and protection of public facilities in our hills and at our fine beaches is not only an encouragement to tourist traffic but is also desirable in the interests of promoting a healthy and active community.

PUBLIC DEBT.

The Public Debt of the State as at June 30, 1960, was £339,105,000 which represents a net increase of £21,403,000. This net increase is made up as follows:—

	£	£
Loans raised—		
New moneys (excluding temporary Treasury Bill finance)	25,463,000	
Conversions	14,231,000	
		<u>39,694,000</u>
Less—		
Conversion or redemption of matured securities	14,231,000	
Redemptions by National Debt Commission	4,060,000	
		<u>18,291,000</u>
Net increase in Public Debt	£21,403,000	

NATIONAL DEBT SINKING FUND.

Under the Financial Agreement, both State and Commonwealth Governments are required to make contributions to the National Debt Sinking Fund for redemption of State debts. At the beginning of the year the commission held a balance of £184,000 for debt redemption purposes on behalf of this State. During 1959-60 the National Debt Commission received £791,000 from the Commonwealth and £3,259,000 from South Australia as contributions in respect of the State's Public Debt. From a total of £4,234,000 available, the commission, during 1959-60, purchased and redeemed

securities on behalf of this State at a cost of £4,162,000. At June 30, 1960, a balance of £72,000 was in the hands of the commission for further redemption of debts.

GENERAL ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL MATTERS.

Now that the State has so successfully withstood the effects of drought, and faces the promise of a very good season for rural production, the dominating feature of our economy is once again the powerful impetus to expand. This is evident in population increase, in industry, in commerce, in building activity, in public works, and in living standards. The Federal Treasurer has very properly sounded a warning that there may be some danger that the widespread effort to expand could develop into an inflation. To combat that danger the Reserve Bank has taken some precautionary measures, and the Federal Government has proposed to exercise some moderating influence by budgeting for a small surplus.

Ten years ago the Australian community experienced a serious inflation when prices and costs rose very rapidly. Under such a situation very few people gain and the community at large are the losers. Those who gain are ordinarily those who contribute least to the community effort. In any inflation we find ourselves spending more and more upon community improvements but getting less and less real results. The ordinary citizen finds himself with increased money income but has to spend so much more upon his normal needs that he is progressively worse off. In any inflation there is the appearance of progress but a great deal of frustration and personal hardship. Accordingly it must be recognized that counter-inflationary measures are measures in protection of continued expansion and progress and of higher living standards. They are not measures designed to reduce those most desirable things. Counter-inflationary measures are measures of community self-discipline necessary in the public interest in just the same way as personal self-discipline is often necessary in a person's own true interests.

I think that perhaps there is a present tendency to overstress the risks of inflation in Australia, as the experience of 10 years ago is still fresh in our minds. This tendency has possibly been exaggerated by some recent price rises which have been brought about by features having no real connection with inflationary influences. The price of meat has

recently been very high indeed because of the dry season in southern and central Australia. Rents of dwellings let by private landlords have been permitted in certain States to rise belatedly towards the levels of other goods and services in Australia. Both these factors reflected in a price index number, whose composition is grossly out of line with modern consumption habits, have given a most exaggerated impression of price movements and a false indication that inflationary influences are already great. There is, therefore, at least an equal danger of over-estimating as of under-estimating the inflationary influences at present and in the immediate future. We must be careful not to let our fears deter us from soberly undertaking all proper measures to ensure the continued development and strengthening of our economy.

The State Governmental budgets, both Loan and Revenue, are clearly not inflationary. We are proposing a surplus on Revenue Account, and particularly when one bears in mind the growing contributions out of revenues to the National Debt Sinking Fund which substantially exceed necessary depreciation provisions, I believe the true surplus upon this State's financial operations in 1960-61 will be proportionately greater than the surplus proposed in the Federal Budget.

Major developments are in train in South Australia. Construction is about to begin on the large new oil refinery south of Adelaide. Very great expansion is on the way for Whyalla. Considerable industrial developments are being put into effect, and even greater ones planned by both our existing industrial establishments and by new ones. To parallel these the Government has recently submitted to Parliament works and housing proposals more extensive and imaginative than anything previously contemplated.

I forecast that as the year progresses economic activity and employment will reach peak levels. It will then be necessary, more than ever before, to put first things first. The community can undoubtedly live well, but it quite obviously cannot expect to finance considerable industrial expansion, provide for heavy migration, have record building of homes, schools, and hospitals, keep its public utilities in line with industrial activity and domestic demands, and still attempt to spend to the limit on day to day living. At least a fair measure of personal saving is necessary to supplement the institutional savings and the

public budgeting for surpluses. This is necessary to help provide for development and capital construction. In other words, many individuals as well as institutions, industries, and Governments must budget for surpluses consistent with their incomes if we are to achieve the ends we all desire. I have every confidence moreover that these things are within the capacity of our people and that they will be achieved.

I pay a personal tribute to the officers of the Treasury for the magnificent work they do in the control of the State's finances. This Budget is the first for many years that has not been prepared without the help of Sir Fred Drew. Mr. Seaman has taken over as Under-Treasurer, and the magnificent work first

started by Mr. Stuckey many years ago and carried out so amazingly well by Sir Fred Drew will, I am sure, be continued by Mr. Gilbert Seaman and the officers of his department. They do magnificent work which I am sure deserves the utmost commendation of all sections of Parliament. I thank those officers for the tremendous amount of assistance and good advice I get every year in the preparation of the Budget; it is the most material source of good advice that any Treasurer could have. I move the adoption of the first line.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.15 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, September 7, at 2 p.m.