

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, September 21, 1960.

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

QUESTIONS.

RAIL LINK WITH MODBURY AND TEA TREE GULLY.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Can the Premier, as Acting Minister of Railways, indicate whether an extension of the Adelaide to Northfield railway line to Modbury and Tea Tree Gully is contemplated in view of the development taking place in that area; and whether the Government intends to suggest that a railway system or other means of communication be made available to serve that area which is being rapidly built up?

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

OIL EXPLORATION.

Mr. COUMBE—Some time ago much work was done at Innamineka in the north-east of this State, and subsequently oil exploration was carried out over the Queensland border. Since then we have had very little news of that work. Can the Premier inform the House of the latest developments there?

—The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The seismic party is still working in Queensland just over the border from South Australia. It is at present undertaking detailed work on behalf of the Delhi-Taylor Corporation, which is associated with Santos in that area. I understand that the work at present being done there is being done at the request and cost of the organizations concerned. I cannot tell the honourable member precisely what results are being obtained by this survey. The survey is being paid for from private funds, and it is not usual in those circumstances in any case to release the records because they are private and confidential but, as far as I know, the organizations concerned are still intensely interested in the area and work is proceeding.

DENTAL FEES.

Mr. HUTCHENS—It was recently announced in the *Advertiser* that the South Australian Branch of the Australian Dental Association had increased the minimum fee for a visit to a dentist from 15s. to £1 1s., and that an increase of 16 per cent in all other dental fees was also approved. I know of an instance of a dentist charging 21 guineas for extracting two wisdom teeth. Can the Premier say whether the Government will refer the question

of dental fees to the Prices Commissioner for inquiry and report, as the proposed charges will be crippling to the workers and to many people whose children need dental attention?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have no actual knowledge of the figures mentioned by the honourable member, but I will refer his question to the Prices Commissioner for report.

MOORLANDS COALFIELD.

Mr. BYWATERS—Yesterday, the Mines Department's report was tabled in this House. Among other things, it mentioned that a reappraisal of the Moorlands coalfield, near Tailem Bend, showed that brown coal suitable for open-cut mining existed in six places with an estimated tonnage of 32,000,000. Has the Premier a statement to make on the possibility of using Moorlands coal for the future development of this State and, if not, will he take up that possibility with the Mines Department?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Prior to the honourable member coming to this House this question received much attention, the then member for the district frequently bringing it to light. The best information we obtained then was that the coal was extremely wet and the overburden very high. In point of fact, of every ton of coal that would be mined there only 33 per cent of the material was combustible; the remainder was either water or ash. It was a low-grade fuel. German mining experts considered the matter but were unable to make any suggestion for the economic expansion of the field. The only use that could be made of the fuel would be for the generation of electricity. This State's lifeblood depends on electricity being made available at the cheapest possible rate. Dear electricity immediately places our industries in an uncompetitive position as compared with those in other States. Moorlands coal would not be economic for the generation of electricity and too much is at stake to use it. I point out that 32,000,000 tons is not a new figure: I heard it at least 10 years ago. However, I will ascertain whether there is any additional information available which could lead to a reappraisal.

STRUAN FARM SHEEP.

Mr. HARDING—I have been informed that recently 100 valuable sheep were lost at the Struan experimental farm. Has the Minister of Agriculture heard of this and does he know the cause? Was it because of molesting by dogs?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—As far as I know, the honourable member's suggestion is correct. These sheep were probably cornered near a fence by a couple of dogs and probably many were smothered in the stampede. I will ask the Director of Agriculture for all the information he has about it.

SOLOMONTOWN BEACH WALL.

Mr. RICHES—Is the Minister of Marine yet in a position to take to Cabinet or to the responsible authorities the proposal for granting a subsidy towards the cost of building a beach wall at Solomontown? The Minister will remember that some 12 months or more ago discussion took place at Port Pirie and he led us to believe that it would be possible to further negotiations as the work on the Port Pirie harbour got under way. Has he anything further to report?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Previously I did tell the honourable member that when the Harbors Board was about to commence work on the major reconstruction scheme at Port Pirie it would then be an appropriate time to further consider the matter he raised. As the honourable member knows, the Public Works Committee has submitted its report on the Port Pirie harbor improvement works and I shall be taking that project to Cabinet on Monday for consideration, and if approval is given then some definite time will be known when the work will start. At that stage I will be prepared to give further consideration to the scheme and consult Cabinet thereon.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY FOR TORRENS ISLAND.

Mr. RYAN—Will the Minister of Works ascertain whether it is intended by the Electricity Trust to supply electricity direct to Torrens Island, the quarantine station under the control of a Commonwealth department? I believe that the people there are supplied with electricity from a plant operating on the island itself.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The honourable member was good enough to discuss this matter briefly with me yesterday and I think he said that the present supply was a direct current supply and that there was some difficulty involved to inhabitants in purchasing the necessary modern appliances that could utilize it. Now that he has raised the matter officially, I will seek a report from the General Manager of the trust as to whether it has any proposal in mind for extensions to the island.

DRY DOCK FOR PORT ADELAIDE.

Mr. TAPPING—Has the Minister of Marine a reply to my recent question regarding the possibility of constructing a dry dock at Port Adelaide?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I referred the matter to the General Manager of the Harbors Board who has furnished me with a very lengthy report regarding this facility. It is too long to read, but is available to the honourable member if he desires it. Briefly, it confirms what I said a day or two ago, that although this facility is probably desirable it is one of those things that is not essential, and therefore for the time being has been deferred. The Greater Port Adelaide Scheme as designed originally included a location for the establishment of a dry dock, and under the revised scheme an area has been reserved for that purpose should at some future time it be decided to establish one. At the moment the General Manager confirms what I previously said—that this is a project that cannot be given serious consideration at the moment, but for which there is provision for its establishment in the future if circumstances and opportunity occur to provide it.

APRICOT GUMMOSIS.

Mr. LAUCKE—Recently claims have been made that apricot gummosis can be overcome by applying copper sulphate crystals to the ground below the trees, but schools of thought are divergent concerning the effectiveness of the treatment. Bearing in mind how deadly is this disease and how costly ineffective treatment can be, will the Minister of Agriculture obtain a report concerning the efficacy of copper sulphate as a cure for gummosis?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—Yes. A general method of dealing with gummosis has been developed over the years through a modified pruning process, but I will get a report from the Director of Agriculture on the question of copper sulphate and let the honourable member have it as soon as possible.

SALISBURY SCHOOL SITES.

Mr. CLARK—During the Loan Estimates debate, after giving thanks for the new schools in my area, I expressed some concern about schools south of Salisbury where intense development is taking place, and said that unless land were acquired soon it might be difficult to obtain suitable sites for schools. Has the Minister of Education a report on the matter?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I have considered the remarks made by the honourable member and I am pleased to inform him that the Education Department is fully aware of the great activity in new subdivisions that has been taking place in the area to the south of Salisbury in particular. The department is also aware of the necessity to obtain suitable school sites in good time to meet the future needs of the district. Consideration has already been given to the proposed purchase of suitable sites for primary schools at Salisbury Downs, Salisbury West, Salisbury Heights, and Brahma Estate amongst others. Investigations are being made into the possibility of securing sites for other primary schools and for secondary schools in the honourable member's electorate.

PORT PIRIE WEST PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Mr. McKEE—Has the Minister of Education obtained a reply on the matter of new sanitation blocks for the Port Pirie West primary school?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—No. I regret that a reply has still not come forward. I will endeavour to expedite it, but if it is not to hand tomorrow I shall have to write to the honourable member.

SEMI-TRAILERS.

Mr. NANKIVELL—On August 9 I drew the Premier's attention to the danger of semi-trailers standing on roads whilst inadequately lit and asked that the Road Traffic Act be amended to correct what appears to be an anomaly. I referred the matter to the chairman of the State Traffic Committee and he informed me that section 62a covered it. As the section does cover the problem to which I drew attention, will the Premier have the police invoke the penalties set out in the regulations?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—As far as I know there has been no letting up by the police in this matter, but I shall follow it through and get the Chief Secretary to issue instructions that all offenders must be prosecuted.

EYRE PENINSULA WHEAT SILOS.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Prior to the Show adjournment I intimated to the Minister of Agriculture that I would ask questions regarding wheat silos on Eyre Peninsula and I understand that he now has the replies. The questions are:—

- (1) What is the capacity of the wheat silos on Eyre Peninsula?

- (2) What is the anticipated tonnage of wheat expected at these silos for the coming season?
- (3) What quantity of wheat will have to be removed daily to provide sufficient space for daily receipts?
- (4) Is the capacity of the existing railway system on Eyre Peninsula sufficient to meet the necessary requirements of the forthcoming season?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I referred the first three of these questions to the South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited, and the answers given by it are:—

1. The capacity of wheat silos on Eyre Peninsula is 3,570,000 bushels.

2. Estimates at this stage are that the growers may desire to deliver about 4,200,000 bushels to Eyre Peninsula silos next harvest.

3. The quantity of wheat to be railed daily to provide sufficient space for daily receipts would be dependent on sales and shipments being arranged by the Australian Wheat Board from the Port Lincoln terminal during the harvest delivery period. In the event of two normal-size overseas cargoes being shipped from the terminal during December to early January, rail movement of 1,200,000 bushels from country silos to the terminal could be arranged to cope with the situation. This would involve the rail movement of 200,000 bushels a week, from, say, December 1.

I have not obtained a crop estimate from the Department of Agriculture. The fourth question is reported on by the Deputy Railways Commissioner, who states that the handling of the forthcoming harvest will be within the capacity of the Eyre Peninsula railway system.

RENMARK DAM.

Mr. KING—Will the Premier say whether the data collected regarding the Renmark dam has been evaluated? Secondly, if the dam site should prove suitable and the work is to proceed will he have the red gum forests growing along the river bank surveyed with a view to felling and storing the trees now in the water before flooding takes places?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Mines Department has been conducting investigations on the dam site, but I have not yet seen the final report on the matter. I believe that the report indicates that, so far as the embankment part of the dam is concerned, the area will be satisfactory. As far as the weir part is concerned, I believe that the sand is somewhat coarser than had been expected and there may have to be additional sheet piling to a greater depth than was first anticipated. That would naturally increase the cost of the undertaking, but these matters are not yet

finalized, and anything I say now is subject to qualification when the reports of the experts are available.

KANGAROO INN SCHOOL.

Mr. CORCORAN—Will the Minister of Education say whether a site has been selected for the new area school at Kangaroo Inn to serve Beachport, Robe, Furner, Greenways and other areas? I know that it has been decided to erect a school, but I believe the site has not been finally selected. If arrangements have not been completed to purchase a site, when are they likely to be finalized?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—As the honourable member is aware, after full investigations by responsible officers of the Education Department a suitable site was selected by them, recommended to me by the Director of Education, and approved by me, and subsequently Cabinet authorized me to negotiate with the owner for the purchase. Negotiations, however, have been protracted because the owner has been adamant in his refusal to sell the land or to discuss the matter. As the honourable member is also aware, local councils and parent organizations have been pressing me by correspondence and by deputation to endeavour to finalize the matter. The Government is always loath to proceed to compulsory acquisition until all avenues of negotiation have been exhausted. At the moment I am not aware of the final stage of the negotiations, but I shall take up the matter immediately with the Property Officer of the Education Department to get his final report on whether negotiations are likely to prove successful and, if they are not, I shall make a recommendation to Cabinet.

MITCHELL PARK BOYS TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—In reply to a question I asked yesterday relating to the Mitchell Park boys technical high school, the Minister of Works said:—

When the building programme was stepped up so extensively in the post-war period, and particularly in more recent years, it was found that there was a tendency to run short of fibrous plaster.

I understand that there has been a slackening off period in some sections of this trade. Although a splendid job was done with fibrous sheeting at the Mitchell Park primary school, and although the use of plaster board at the technical high school will cost £600 less than fibrous plaster, this saving in a contract of £170,000 is small,

particularly as the failure to use fibrous plaster sheeting could cause unemployment in this State. In view of these facts, will the Minister of Works ask Cabinet to reconsider this matter so that the trade may be kept fully employed?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I shall have the matter examined.

MURRAY BRIDGE ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE.

Mr. BYWATERS—During the Loan Estimates I asked questions and made suggestions relating to the Murray Bridge Adult Education Centre. I understand that the Minister of Education has taken up this matter with the department. Can he give me a reply?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I have considered the representations made by the honourable member relating to three aspects of the needs of the Adult Education Centre at Murray Bridge, but the appointment of clerical assistants in schools, including adult education centres, is a matter for the Public Service Commissioner. The appointment of a clerical assistant at the Murray Bridge Adult Education Centre has been under consideration, but no final decision on this matter has yet been reached. A request for additional funds for the centre was made on August 1, 1960, and I gave approval for a supplementary grant to meet its needs for the present calendar year. The growth of enrolments at the centre is being fully taken into account in assessing the appropriate amount for the grant for next year. The provision of additional buildings at the centre will be considered when the next building programme is being prepared.

TORRENS ISLAND DEVELOPMENT.

Mr. RYAN—I recently read an article dealing with a home-building blocks scheme operating in Queensland, where a private concern has built waterways and quays and subdivided adjacent land. The article further stated that Torrens Island, if available, would prove a successful venture as a tourist resort. Can the Premier say whether any approach has been made regarding a similar project on Torrens Island, or whether discussions have taken place regarding the transfer of the quarantine station to another site in order to make the island available as a tourist attraction?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—True, much development has taken place in Queensland in draining land and providing waterways to give small craft access to streams. This

has been an extremely popular innovation on the Queensland coast. Much work has been done, and some very large projects have been undertaken, one involving the expenditure of £5,000,000. Those schemes have been well received by the public in Queensland. A representative of one Queensland firm came to South Australia and inquired whether it would be possible to develop housing estates associated with waterways in this State. He stated that his firm would be willing to provide finance for such a scheme. That firm was particularly interested in the Harbors Board's reclamation proposition at the upper end of the Port River, in the water adjoining the main entrance to the Port River, and in Torrens Island. I pointed out to that firm that Torrens Island was at present the site of a quarantine station, and that I believed it would be necessary for the Government to make some other provision before the Commonwealth Government would be willing to release it. The Government's policy regarding the development of these areas has not yet been defined; it has not yet been decided whether the development should be undertaken by the Housing Trust, with the assistance of the Harbors Board, or whether we should allow some outside organization to undertake some of that development. Three entirely reputable firms have inquired about this matter, and I believe each of those firms would carry out any undertakings it might make. The matter is being examined by the Minister of Marine, and the Government has promised these firms that in due course it will decide on the matter and advise them whether it is willing to agree to any private development.

BURDETT, ETTRICK AND SEYMOUR WATER SCHEME.

Mr. BYWATERS—The Minister of Works is aware of a small water scheme in a portion of my district known as Burdett, Ettrick and Seymour. Because of the Government's intention to provide a water scheme from Tailem Bend to Keith, this small scheme was postponed to see if it would be possible to bring it from this new scheme, as suggested. Consequent upon that and because of the topography, this scheme was divided into two. One part, close to Murray Bridge, has been commenced. The other part is still being examined to see if it is possible to bring it from Tailem Bend, but it appears to me that it would not be possible to run it from the Tailem Bend end of the scheme. Has the Minister considered this

scheme further, because of its proximity to Tailem Bend, to see whether it would be better to take it from Murray Bridge (as originally planned) rather than from Tailem Bend?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The facts as outlined by the honourable member are in accordance with my own memory of the matter. I appreciate the fact that part of the scheme has been approved and commenced. The other part, more contiguous to Tailem Bend, was deferred pending a final decision on the route of the Tailem Bend to Keith trunk main. I think it is now correct that the route of the trunk main has been defined by the department, and its thinking is that the trunk main should not proceed in an almost due easterly direction from Tailem Bend to a high point of land east of Tailem Bend, as was originally thought possible and desirable, but that the route of the pipeline should go south-easterly from Tailem Bend and therefore more remotely from the area mentioned by the honourable member. How the area of Burdett and Ettrick, which is not at present being served, could be served requires some thought. I will discuss the matter with the Engineer-in-Chief to see whether it is still necessary to link this with the main pumping station at Tailem Bend, or whether it would be possible and desirable to divorce it from that scheme and attach it to the Murray Bridge scheme, or a smaller self-contained scheme from Tailem Bend to serve the area. I will let the honourable member have the Engineer-in-Chief's opinion as soon as I can obtain it.

WALLAROO EMPLOYMENT.

Mr. HUGHES—Has the Minister of Marine an answer to a question I asked yesterday concerning a rumour that a substantial cut would be made in the allocation of moneys for maintenance work by the Harbors Board at Wallaroo?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—No. I regret that I was busy this morning and have not had an opportunity to discuss the matter with the General Manager of the Harbors Board, but I will do so at the earliest opportunity.

MILE END GOODS YARDS.

Mr. NANKIVELL—Has the Premier, as Acting Minister of Railways, an answer to my questions of August 25 relating to facilities provided for the loading of heavy equipment at the Mile End goods yards? My questions then were:—(1) Has consideration been given to providing a traversing crane to handle loads of up to 10 tons, as the present crane is of

20-ton capacity and consequently slow in operation? (2) Why has the restricted length of track over which the present crane operates not been extended to correspond with extensions made to the electricity conductor line so that more trucks can be shunted on to this line at a time? (3) Why, in view of the responsibility and risk involved not only to the department but to the consignee in the loading of oversized machinery and equipment, is this task not the responsibility of a supervising foreman but delegated instead to a porter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Railways Commissioner reports as follows:—

(1) Yes, the matter is being considered at present.

(2) The lengthening of the runway for the present crane has been authorized but can be carried out only in conjunction with extensive alterations to neighbouring tracks. I have requested that priority be given to this work.

(3) It is the responsibility of the shed foreman, Mile End, to supervise the loading of heavy machinery, etc., and to see that trucks are not despatched with over-gauge loading.

ADELAIDE CORPORATION BY-LAW: STREET WASHING OF VEHICLES.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham)—I move—

That By-law No. 9 of the Corporation of the City of Adelaide in respect of Good Rule and Government, made on March 7, 1960, and laid on the table of this House on August 9, 1960, be disallowed.

This by-law and that from Prospect, which is the subject of the next motion, cover the same subject matter—that is, the repairing and washing of vehicles in streets—but the by-laws are not identical in terms. In the case of the Adelaide City Council by-law, an explanation was furnished by the Town Clerk of the City of Adelaide and it sets out concisely the objects of the council in making this by-law. This is what Mr. Veale said:—

Difficulty has been experienced from time to time in dealing with cases where the businesses of repairing, painting and washing of motor vehicles, and panel beating, have been carried out in public streets, resulting in the streets being left in a very untidy and dirty condition, particularly in the case of spray painting. The city solicitors, having examined sections of the various Acts and by-laws relating to vehicles obstructing streets, advised that these sections were not sufficiently wide to enable the council to take action, and suggest that the amending by-law be now submitted for approval.

I say at the outset that the members of the Joint Committee on Subordinate Legislation have every sympathy with the difficulties that the City of Adelaide has experienced, and the

objects of the by-law. There is no doubt about that at all. The only difficulty that we have experienced—and this is the reason for the recommendation for disallowance—is the terms of the by-law itself. That by-law, which is the subject of this motion, states:—

No person shall carry out or engage in any repairs, washing, painting, spray painting, panel beating or other work of any nature whatsoever on or to any vehicle in any street. The by-law as it is worded is short and extremely comprehensive. In fact, members of the committee felt it was too wide altogether because I point out to the House that it would in fact prevent anybody in the City of Adelaide changing a tyre, if he happened to have a puncture, without breaking the provisions of this by-law. It would also, in its turn, prevent temporary repairs being made by the Royal Automobile Association patrol if anybody got into trouble in the City of Adelaide area.

As I say, the members of the Joint Committee felt that that was too wide. Following the usual custom of the committee, the matter was referred to the honourable member for the district (Mr. Lawn), who replied by letter, from which I shall read only an extract:—

Concerning by-laws of the Adelaide City Council with reference to repairs, washing, etc., of vehicles in any street, I desire to advise that I have no objection to this by-law so far as it applies to businesses. I see no reason why any vehicle repair shop should carry out any of these duties in the street, but I would object to the council prohibiting the washing of a private vehicle. I know many homes in the City of Adelaide where there is no room to park a car and consequently the car must be left in the street or in a lane overnight, and any washing, etc., by the owner has to be carried out either in the street or in the lane.

As honourable members will see, of course, from the wording of the by-law, it is to prohibit that happening. When those comments were received by the Joint Committee on Subordinate Legislation, arrangements were made for Mr. Veale, the Town Clerk of the City of Adelaide, to come before the committee to give evidence. In the course of his evidence he told the committee that in fact the people that the council were most concerned about were dent knockers and wrecked car people (as he termed them), but also he did mention that icecream vendors have a habit of washing their vehicles in South Terrace. Nobody would deny that that is probably a nuisance.

I then put to him, "The point worrying us is that the amendment as at present framed would prevent a private person from washing

his car in the street and he may have no room in his backyard to do so," and he replied, "That is so. I thought that would be worrying you, and perhaps the other aspect of emergency repairs," which I have also mentioned earlier. He explained that when the council consulted its solicitors it was advised that it would be difficult to frame a by-law which would, at the same time, meet the problems the City Council was experiencing and also allow for the washing of private cars and for emergency repairs. I find it difficult to believe that a suitable by-law making those two provisions could not be framed. The Town Clerk said that it would be a matter of administration and that although the by-law undoubtedly created wide powers, nevertheless the council would not enforce them against the owners of private vehicles or in cases of emergency. However, he went on to say, "I am absolutely sure—whether it is sufficient for your committee is another matter—that in the administration of it, that would not be the thing that we are trying to control at all. I know that administrations alter and that such an assurance has some weaknesses in it, but in the present administration future cases of that nature would be taken on their merits and we would not be out after those people."

I have no hesitation in accepting what Mr. Veale said and in believing that he said it in good faith, but members of the Subordinate Legislation Committee (and, indeed, members of this House) do not look with favour upon a by-law that is so wide and sweeping in its terms and which, for its fairness, depends solely upon the discretion of council officials. That is not a good thing and for that reason, and because of the unsatisfactory drafting of the by-law which would be open to abuse in future, I move this motion. I emphasize that we are in complete sympathy with the council's object of trying to prevent spray painting, dent knocking and so on in the street. We sympathize, too, with its object of trying to prevent the commercial washing of cars and the washing of commercial cars in the streets, but we think that the by-law goes too far.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—I second the motion. I am pleased that the Subordinate Legislation Committee has moved for the disallowance of this by-law. I thank the committee for its courtesy in informing me that the matter was before it and in permitting me to make representations. I lived in Adelaide from 1913 until the 1930's and since then have been closely associated with the city.

I have relatives and friends living in Adelaide and frequently visit them, and as member for the district I have a fair knowledge of city dwellings. In 1929 I had a car, but I could not get it into my backyard because there were no means of entry and, as a matter of fact, if I could have lifted it by helicopter and placed it in my backyard there would not have been room for anything else. That is typical of hundreds of homes in Adelaide. Car owners living in such homes would be penalized if this by-law were accepted. They have to leave their cars either in streets or in back lanes. I was fortunate in 1929 because there was a back lane to my property. This was used by the dustmen when they collected the garbage and by woodmen when they were delivering wood, but there was no room to manoeuvre my car into the backyard. Car owners, if they want to wash their vehicles or make some mechanical adjustments, must do so in the streets or back lanes and they would be committing an offence under this by-law. If any driver (and not necessarily an owner residing in the city) had trouble with his car and got the services of the R.A.A. he would be committing an offence.

I am glad that the Town Clerk saw my point of view when he appeared before the committee, but I disagree with him that it would be difficult to draft a by-law to cover the situation. I support the council's attempt to promulgate a by-law to prevent business concerns from welding, dent knocking and spraying vehicles in the street, which should not be permitted. However, I find it hard to accept the statement that solicitors would have difficulty in framing an appropriate by-law. One has only to consider our laws generally. Let us, for instance, consider the law relating to murder. If any man kills another in self-defence he can be charged with murder, manslaughter or some other offence. He is not necessarily charged with murder. I cannot follow the reasoning that a by-law covering business people would necessarily involve private persons. If the council's own solicitors are unable to frame a proper by-law I hope that the council will change its solicitors because there are plenty of good solicitors in Adelaide.

Mr. Clark—We have three in this House.

Mr. Shannon—Four.

Mr. LAWN—The member for Onkaparinga makes the fourth, of course. We have the members for Mitcham, Norwood, Glenelg and Onkaparinga.

Mr. Hutchens—What about the Speaker?

Mr. LAWN—I am sorry, I forgot the Speaker. I am sure that, apart from the talent in this House, there are plenty of competent solicitors in Adelaide who could frame a suitable by-law. I hope the House unanimously accepts the motion to disallow the by-law.

Motion carried.

PROSPECT CORPORATION BY-LAW: STREET WASHING OF VEHICLES.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham)—I move—

That By-law No. 7 of the Corporation of the City of Prospect in respect of Traffic, made on March 21, 1960, and laid on the table of this House on August 9, 1960, be disallowed.

This by-law also has as its object the prohibition of repairs and the washing of cars in streets within the City of Prospect. When the by-law was submitted, with it came a brief explanation from the Town Clerk of Prospect and I will read it for the information of honourable members. It is as follows:—

The purpose of the amendment is to restrain persons from causing a nuisance and obstruction to the travelling public and householders in the vicinity by washing, cleaning, or effecting repairs (except of a temporary nature or rendered necessary by a sudden emergency) to motor or other vehicles. The practice of using the public streets for these purposes is becoming too common. The council has power of dispensation in a proper case.

Again, the Subordinate Legislation Committee is in sympathy with the council in its desire to prevent repairs being carried out in streets as a business and also the commercial washing of vehicles in the streets. Unfortunately, this by-law would also prohibit a private person from washing his own vehicle in a street. This by-law is not as sweeping as the Adelaide City Council by-law because it makes provision for the specific exception of repairs of a temporary nature or when a sudden emergency occurs. It would be all right for a person to change a tyre or call upon the Royal Automobile Association to assist him. However, the by-law prohibits the washing of private vehicles by private persons in streets, though it has a dispensation clause. Normally, Parliament has indicated that it does not like this type of clause very much. In this case the dispensation is more apparent than real, because it provides for dispensation by the council after a written application. It means that if a person has applied in writing to the council for a dispensation from the operation

of the by-law, he may wait a fortnight or more before he is permitted on one particular occasion during specified hours to wash his own car.

Mr. Shannon—Could not one repeat the request for dispensation?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—That would have to be done, because it applies only at one specific time and at one specific place. In effect, it means that the dispensation is more apparent than real. For the very good reason given by the member for Adelaide in support of the last motion, the members of the Subordinate Legislation Committee felt that it would be wrong and unjust to some people if they were not permitted to wash their own cars in streets outside their own houses. The committee understands that there are a number of dwellings in Prospect built on blocks of such a size that it is not possible to have the car inside the area except in the shed. That is the experience of two members of the committee who live in the district. Evidence was requested from representatives of the council, and the mayor, the town clerk, and Alderman E. G. Whittle gave evidence on the matter. I should like to quote the following evidence given by Mr. Pash, the town clerk:—

The matter was brought before the council last year when several cases around the district came to our notice from our traffic inspector, whereby a nuisance was being caused. In particular, they concerned the repairing of motor vehicles, and in particular semi-trailers. On investigation we found that we were more or less powerless to control this, which undoubtedly in this particular area was causing not only a nuisance, but a hazard, in that these people were continually doing not only temporary repairs, but more or less major repairs on these big vehicles with complete disregard for the comfort of the public. I emphasize again that members of the committee have every sympathy with the council in its endeavour to stop the practice. The town clerk went on to say:—

In regard to the washing down of vehicles, we have had complaints mainly again as regards commercial vehicles, where people just hose down the vehicle in an ordinary residential street. You get the mud and oily waste running down the street.

Again, members of the committee have every sympathy with the council in its attempt to stop that practice. The by-law went much further than that. The council representative said frankly that it would depend on the fair administration of the by-law to see that injustice was not caused to any person. That is not desirable. By all means have a by-law and have it enforced, but it is not a good thing

for a by-law to be drawn in such wide terms that would allow abuse or that we should have to rely on someone's word that it would be administered without injustice when in fact it would be possible to cover the objective of the council without having a by-law drawn as widely as this one has been drawn. To prevent the repairing and washing of vehicles in the streets we think the by-law goes too far and could cause injustice to some people who are physically unable to wash their own cars on their own properties. For these reasons, I move the disallowance of the by-law.

Mr. CUMBE (Torrens)—I am not opposing the motion, but wish to offer a few comments which I think are germane to the question before the House. The council, when considering this by-law to overcome the nuisance caused in the streets, decided to draw up the best type of by-law possible and instructed its solicitors to base it upon a by-law prepared by the City of Burnside, which was gazetted on September 4, 1958, and eventually accepted by Parliament. What more must the council do to get a by-law through this House, it having taken as an example a by-law already accepted by the House of Assembly. The only exception is that the penalty provided by the Prospect Council is lower. I draw attention to the fact that this practice could be dangerous and it is rather inconsistent of the committee in taking this action though I admit that the personnel of the committee does change from time to time. I think that the honourable member for Mitcham is magnifying the possible dangers. I do not want differentiation between one municipality and another, as perhaps is now suggested. Many honourable members have had long experience in local government and I suggest that the danger pointed out by Mr. Millhouse is not as great as he makes it appear. I know the way in which councils operate and by-laws are administered for the good of the residents in the council area. It was suggested that under this by-law a permit to wash a car in the street would have to be obtained every time a person wanted to wash his car, which would be ridiculous and absurd. What would happen would be that a permit would be given for a period. Where a person has no garage and parks his car in the street he can only wash it in the street, and the by-law permits that to be done, because there is a dispensation clause. When a council brings forward a by-law it is usually drawn correctly. I think the by-law we are now discussing is correctly drawn, and is in contrast to the one we have just disposed of. In view of the

inconsistency of the committee I do not think the disallowance of this by-law should be agreed to.

Motion carried.

SCAFFOLDING INSPECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 7. Page 978.)

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—If I understand the intention of the Bill correctly it is to make the Scaffolding Inspection Act have general application over all the State. At present it applies only to such areas as are proclaimed. Perhaps this is the type of legislation that Opposition members indulge in when they have nothing of more importance to bring forward. Bills of this nature have been introduced by Opposition members over many years. On one occasion the Government had a Bill amending the Act before the House and the Opposition moved amendments to it to give effect to the proposal in the present Bill. Over about 15 years the Opposition, when it has had nothing more particular to worry about, has introduced a Bill of this sort.

Mr. Riches—One has been brought forward in every Parliament.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—That is not correct. I think one has been brought forward, at most, six times in 15 years.

Mr. Riches—I did not say every year, but every Parliament.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I accept the honourable member's apology and agree that the Opposition has tried to amend the Act about every three years. The Acts Interpretation Act says that all amending legislation should be based on the assumption that it remedies an evil. What is the evil in the matter before us? The Leader of the Opposition said that the Scaffolding Inspection Act in other States has State-wide application, which was why he introduced the Bill. Do Opposition members think that is a logical reason for the introduction of the measure? We should rather consider the grounds for amending the legislation. The purpose of the Act is to provide reasonable safeguards for workers on scaffolding. If the legislation were made State-wide the position would not be improved. It would merely mean that some areas would be policed when there was no need to police them, and that it would be done at the expense of other areas where policing was necessary.

Because Queensland and Tasmania have a Scaffolding Inspection Act with State-wide application is not a valid argument that better protection is provided for workers there than in South Australia. In any case, if we do examine the matter in that light, I suggest that the evidence is completely the other way. In New South Wales the Labor Party has been in power for many years. In that State the Government is not impeded by an Upper House, except when the Upper House does not want to abolish itself. Generally, the Upper House there is susceptible to carrying out the wishes of the Lower House. The Leader of the Opposition was significantly silent about the New South Wales position, and so are Opposition members generally. They do not say that New South Wales has a Scaffolding Inspection Act with State-wide application because they know it does not have one. Its Act is drawn along similar lines to the South Australian Act. There are certain proclaimed areas in which the Act applies but there are also very many areas where the Act does not apply. It mainly applies in the thickly populated south-eastern part of the State and in Broken Hill but I believe it does not apply anywhere else and the remainder of New South Wales is outside the ambit of the Act. The Leader did not tell the House about Victoria where the position is precisely the same as in South Australia. In Victoria the Act applies only to proclaimed areas where tall buildings are erected. If we are to continue with interstate comparisons let us examine the Western Australian position. Again the Leader was significantly silent.

Mr. Loveday—He was not.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—If he said anything about Western Australia I did not hear him. The Act in that State applies to specific buildings and if a building is more than a certain height it comes under the provisions of the Act. If honourable members examine the proclaimed areas in South Australia they will see that this Government has not been remiss in its consideration of various areas when extending the operation of the Scaffolding Inspection Act. I believe the Act applies where there is any real need for it to apply. From time to time the Government has considered this matter and it is true that it has not always accepted every suggestion for an extension of the Act. It does not accept the suggestion that the Act should apply to the River Murray areas because it believes that the nature of the buildings in

the river towns does not warrant the operation of the Act there.

Mr. Bywaters—Murray Bridge is under the Act.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes, but I was speaking more of the upper river areas of Berri, Renmark and Barmera. What is the sense of having a blanket control over the whole State when we know that in many instances that law would be unnecessary and could be ineffective and when it might only lead to spreading the scaffolding inspectors so widely that their efforts would be ineffective or to the appointment of many more inspectors to enable them to inspect areas where no possible gain could result from their efforts?

The Leader did not demonstrate that the Act was defective from the point of view of giving protection to workmen. He came along with a totally different question. If this is so important why is it that in New South Wales, where a Labor Government has been in power uninterruptedly for 25 to 30 years, the same legislation operates as we have in South Australia? Honourable members opposite are significantly silent on this matter.

Mr. Fred Walsh—They may have a fuller coverage than we have.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The New South Wales Act applies only to limited areas of that State. If it is necessary to apply this Act to the whole of South Australia, as proposed by the honourable member who is interjecting, why isn't it necessary to apply the New South Wales Act to the whole of that State? The honourable member knows that this Bill is a stopgap one and I have been informed that it is introduced once during every Parliament.

Mr. Frank Walsh—Would you agree that the Act should apply wherever solid construction buildings are erected?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—No. I do not think it is necessary that the Act should apply in country areas where very low buildings only are being constructed. There is no more merit in having the Scaffolding Act applicable to solid construction buildings than there would be in having it applicable to timber-frame construction. I cannot see any sense at all in the honourable member's proposition. If a workman tumbled from a timber-frame building he would be just as likely to hurt himself as he would be if he fell from a solid construction building.

Mr. Shannon—He would have the same distance to fall.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes. This Bill does not satisfy the first requirement that any Bill should satisfy as far as its consideration by this House is concerned. In other words I do not believe it will, if passed, improve the position and I do not think it will result in any greater safety for workmen engaged on building construction. On the other hand I think it will so dilute the resources of the department in connection with this matter that the inspectors will be trying to police country areas where there is no necessity because of the type of building being erected. The inspectors need not be there and they could be much better employed in inspecting places where there is real danger to workmen on very high buildings in the course of construction. I hope that the House will not pass this Bill but that it will follow the course it has followed on so many occasions by giving it good consideration but not carrying the second reading.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla)—The House has today heard the Premier following one of his familiar tactics. It is the tactic of putting an argument in one direction and then using the same argument in a contradictory way in another direction. He told the House that there was no reason why we should amend this Act merely because of the provisions in Tasmania and Queensland. He asked why this House should follow the examples set by those two States. He suggested there was no reason at all why we should follow them simply because they had a complete coverage. Then he went on to say that because New South Wales and Victoria had an Act similar to the South Australian Act, we should continue to do what they were doing. In other words he used two arguments, one to show that we should not follow other States and another to show that we should follow them. The Premier used his arguments one way and then the other, but he cannot have it both ways and therefore one argument cancels out the other.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—The honourable member must admit that on a population basis my argument was valid.

Mr. LOVEDAY—The Premier would no doubt agree that human nature is much the same everywhere and if it is good enough to have complete coverage in Queensland and Tasmania then that is a pretty good argument for complete coverage here. Is there any great difference between the people building there and the people who are building here? Don't they take the same care? They are human beings the same as those in

South Australia, and the argument that they have a complete coverage in Western Australia is a good argument to have it here. Moreover, the Leader pointed out that, as no statistics were available, it was impossible to find out how many accidents occurred in areas not covered in this State.

Mr. Shannon—How would they be in the States that are covered?

Mr. LOVEDAY—Presumably it was found necessary to cover them or they would not have been covered.

Mr. Shannon—Have you the figures?

Mr. LOVEDAY—No.

Mr. Shannon—They would be interesting.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—Would the honourable member suggest that if it was necessary to do this here the Labor Government of New South Wales would not have done it?

Mr. LOVEDAY—The Premier did not mention the actual position in New South Wales. The Leader said it was impossible to find out without a tremendous amount of research how much of New South Wales was covered. I did not hear the Premier say how much was covered.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—I did; I said the south-eastern corner and Broken Hill.

Mr. LOVEDAY—I doubt whether the Premier knows exactly whether those parts are covered. If he knew the details he would have told us much more. There is a good reason for this coverage in this State. It is a safety measure that should be adopted in the circumstances.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman—Do you know of any accidents that would have been covered under this Bill?

Mr. LOVEDAY—No statistics are available. We know that this is a dangerous occupation and, if it is necessary to have supervision in such places as Whyalla and Murray Bridge, why is it not necessary to have it in other places where building is going on? What is the difference? The Premier said that the Leader had drawn attention to the position in Tasmania, but actually he did not mention Tasmania; he mentioned Western Australia and Queensland, pointing out that scaffolding legislation applied without any qualification to the whole of Queensland and that in Western Australia inspection applied generally to areas within 25 miles of the General Post Office. It also applies in the whole State to scaffolding exceeding 15ft. in height. Is there any reason why we should wait until accidents

become so numerous and so pointed in the public eye before amending this legislation to cover the whole State? I am satisfied that the Premier was simply using one argument to prove the matter one way and then using the same argument to prove the matter another way. This is something he often does. He said we bring this up just for something to have on our plate. We have brought up a number of things here over a long period, from year to year and from Parliament to Parliament, and we have not got them through. Are we to be accused of the same thing every time? Are we to sit quietly on measures that we want to bring?

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—We like to hear from the honourable member.

Mr. LOVEDAY—That is why we bring them up: we hate to disappoint members of the Government. The argument put forward by the Premier is surely the weakest we have ever heard on this matter. We believe it is now time to amend this Act. The Premier often talks about the great progress of this State and about the building activity in all directions, so surely this is the most opportune time for the Act to be amended. I hope the House will see that safety provisions of this sort are carried to their logical conclusion, and will fall into line and show that it is concerned about the safety of people in the building industry.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa)—This Bill was introduced by the Leader of the Opposition, and before making some brief comments may I express my personal concern and sorrow at the sickness that has befallen him and wish him a speedy recovery and return to this House. I am not in favour of this Bill, which seeks to inflict a blanket control over the whole State in respect of the provisions of the Scaffolding Inspection Act which at present is rightly restricted to certain areas only. I agree that buildings of a great height require scaffolding and that it should be inspected. However, clause 3 provides for the repeal of section 3 of the principal Act and for the insertion of a new section to provide that the Act shall apply and have effect in and throughout the whole of the State. In my opinion, it would be utterly impracticable to have such a wide provision covering the erection of, say, a prefabricated farm shed in a remote corner of the State. If this provision came into operation inspectors would have to travel hundreds of miles to inspect buildings, and there would be no call for this because, as often happens in

rural areas, farmers and their assistants erect sheds and buildings of various types without accident.

Mr. Loveday—Do you want a local government body to have a discretion regarding a by-law?

Mr. LAUCKE—There will be no discretion in this Bill whatever.

Mr. Loveday—What discretion is there in a local government by-law?

Mr. LAUCKE—There would be no discretionary power whatever, but an implementation of a situation quite unrealistic when it comes to building activity through a far-flung area of this State. An army of inspectors would be needed to go to all these places. This would be very costly and would serve no good purpose. My interest in this matter is particularly in respect of country districts. The accident rate is low on the type of building erected continually in country areas, which is indicated by the low premium payable for farm work under the Workmen's Compensation Act.

Mr. Bywaters—What is the height of silos in your district?

Mr. LAUCKE—In my opinion scaffolding on silos should be inspected.

Mr. Clark—But it cannot be inspected under existing legislation.

Mr. Quirke—It can be inspected under insurance.

Mr. Loveday—Would you have a proclamation for every silo?

Mr. LAUCKE—No. The provisions of the Act can be applied to any part of the State under proclamation but, where there is risk in the building of a high silo, the contractors would ensure that their scaffolding was of a type and strength that would completely and adequately cover the operatives. Silo building is a specialized activity carried out by skilled men, and I presume that the scaffolding used would be second to none. Most of the big contractors who erect silos would have excellent scaffolding placed so as to ensure maximum protection. If this legislation applied to the whole of the State it would catch in the net thousands and thousands of farmers and country dwellers generally who would be called upon, quite unrealistically, to have scaffolding inspected. It is those people who are endeavouring to have this Bill discarded, for it would impose further regimentation on the individual in his normal activities in respect of a risk no greater, perhaps, than in driving machinery and in his normal farming operations.

Bearing in mind the difficulties of policing this proposed State-wide legislation, there would be evasions left, right and centre because it would be so ridiculous to have to arrange for an inspector to come along to inspect scaffolding prior to erection going forward. I cannot see that this is a realistic approach to a given danger, and I think it would be wrong to impose on people generally the provisions of this Act on an entirely State basis. I oppose the Bill.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—I support the Bill. I cannot for the life of me understand the attitude of the Premier and his supporters. One day when it suits him the Premier will argue that the Party to which I have the honour to belong wants to take away country representation in this House; on another day he says that the country comes last, and, when my Party wants to give country people similar things to those enjoyed by people in the metropolitan area, he and his supporters oppose the move. The Government has the gerrymandered electorate system here, with the object not of giving country people something but of withholding it from them. Country workmen cannot go to the State Industrial Court to obtain awards to cover their industries. The country members sitting on the other side of the House are denying people who work in the country the right to go to the court and get an award.

Mr. King—They are all under Federal awards.

Mr. LAWN—The member for Chaffey would not know. Members opposite also deny country pensioners the right to travel on our railways at concession fares.

Mr. Laucke—A sick pensioner can come to Adelaide from the country at concession fares.

Mr. LAWN—I admit that sick pensioners can travel at a cheaper rate, but I am speaking about the position generally. All pensioners in the metropolitan area, sick or otherwise, travel on our railways and on our tramways buses at concession rates, yet the country pensioners cannot do so.

The SPEAKER—Order! We are dealing with the Scaffolding Inspection Act Amendment Bill.

Mr. LAWN—I am discussing country people being deprived of something. They are being deprived of this very necessary industrial legislation. The member for Barossa said that he was most concerned about the thousands of country farmers. Let me tell the honourable member that we on this side of the House are

concerned with people generally, and with saving life. We want to ensure, as far as it is within our power, that they will be protected.

Mr. Laucke—I am just as concerned as you are regarding anybody's welfare.

Mr. LAWN—The honourable member did not say that: he said he was concerned with the country farmers. Does the honourable member know what this Act intends? It is intended to protect workmen engaged on buildings, and to that end it provides that scaffolding shall be properly erected and inspected.

Mr. Laucke—My concern is as strong as yours; I assure you of that. Please be realistic.

Mr. LAWN—I will be realistic; I will answer the honourable member's points, and, I hope, convince him. He now says that he is as concerned as we are for the welfare of the people generally. I hope he means that, and that if the difficulties he envisages can be overcome he will support the Bill. Our concern is not for the thousands of people he spoke of who may wish to have buildings erected in the country, but for the thousands, or hundreds, or perhaps only 20 people in the country or city who have to work on these buildings. We want to ensure that our laws are such that the apparatus used in the course of erection of buildings is foolproof. We are not the only people who desire that. In Adelaide last year a safety conference was held between the trade unions and employers, with the object of reducing the number of accidents in industry. That is the object of this Bill. We want to prevent accidents, some of which, of course, are fatal, and we want to save lives. Surely there is nothing wrong in that! We want to give the country people the same protection as we have given the people in the metropolitan area. One day members opposite may charge us with wanting to take away something from the country people, but that is not our object at all. We are all the time endeavouring to give country people the same things as we have given the city people whether it be concession rail fares for pensioners, the right to go to the Arbitration Court for an award, or industrial protection such as we are discussing now.

The member for Barossa broke down his own argument when in reply to a question from this side of the House as to whether there were any silos in his district he said he thought that where a silo was being erected there should be an inspection of the scaffolding. He admitted on that occasion that he

was concerned with the welfare of the workmen. A silo may be 100ft. or more high. I have read on many occasions in the press that a person has been killed falling 20ft., and I have also read that a person has fallen four floors and lived. Whether the silo is 100ft. high or only 20ft. high is not the point, for it does not depend upon the height. The honourable member said that it would be utterly impracticable to have the provisions of this Act applied throughout the country. I do not suggest that there would be an inspector in every town in South Australia. At present, the Act applies to Murray Bridge.

Mr. Bywaters—And Whyalla.

Mr. LAWN—Yes, and Mount Gambier. A person wishing to erect scaffolding would know when he was going to do so, and he would notify the nearest available inspector of the time the scaffolding would be available for inspection. He could make those arrangements a week or a few days before, and the inspector would be available to come out and inspect. It is not utterly impracticable at all. Throughout the war all our factories were fully engaged, with thousands of employees working three shifts. Can the member for Barossa guess how many Commonwealth inspectors in South Australia and Western Australia were policing the Commonwealth Arbitration Court awards? Thousands of workmen are working under many Commonwealth awards. I do not know how many such workmen there are. The Commonwealth Government has an inspector in the various States to police those awards under which thousands of people in South Australia and Western Australia work. I invite the honourable member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke) to say how many inspectors he thinks would be required for South Australia and Western Australia to police the Arbitration Court awards.

Mr. Laucke—I shouldn't like to say.

Mr. LAWN—Let me tell him that right throughout the last war one gentleman policed the whole of South Australia and Western Australia. After the war two were located in Adelaide, one to look after South Australia while the other went away to see to Western Australia and come back again. That is the truth. The honourable member said the Bill would be utterly impracticable unless we had an army of inspectors, but that is not so. The statement I have made can be easily checked with the Commonwealth inspectors. So far as I know, only two cover South Australia and

Western Australia, incredible though that sounds. We have had to wait a little while, but we have had no real occasion to complain, to the best of my knowledge; the trade union movement has not had to complain to the Commonwealth Government about it. Although it is hard to believe that one inspector looked after South Australia and Western Australia during the war years and that after the war two were doing it, I can assure honourable members that it is a fact.

At Whyalla they would be notified when the scaffolding was erected. I doubt whether there are half a dozen scaffolding inspectors in the metropolitan area for all the building going on in and around the city. We would not want an army of inspectors. Mr. Laucke said that, if the Act applied to the whole of the State, there would be evasions left, right and centre. Honourable members on the other side of the House think of some queer arguments when stuck for a real argument. Why are they making laws at all if we are going to upset them because of evasions? Is not the Lottery and Gaming Act capable of evasion left, right and centre? The same applies to the Early Closing Act and the Licensing Act. In all these cases there are evasions left, right and centre. There are also evasions in the case of our court awards, both State and Federal. That is not an argument why we should abolish the Arbitration Court or the Lottery and Gaming Act.

Mr. Laucke—It would have to be enforced over the whole State.

Mr. LAWN—I do not know what the honourable member means by saying that it would have to be enforced.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Adelaide is making a speech.

Mr. LAWN—I am not receiving much help from the other side, and I am happy with the little help forthcoming. What the honourable member was about to put to me would have no more application than the Acts I have just mentioned. At present I know of scores of S.P. bookmakers who operated until the recent police "blitz", but I do not know one of them who is operating today. There is no doubt that the police are doing a good job in relation to the Lottery and Gaming Act, and I have no doubt that, generally, if this Bill is carried, 99 per cent of it will be enforced.

For instance, we have had arguments here about whether we should abolish hanging. In spite of the law "Thou shalt not kill", we still have the odd case. I think the honourable

member opposite would understand that, if we passed this Bill, there would be some small percentage of people who would get away with it, but I disagree that there would be wholesale evasions. Government members fail to realize why the Act is as it is at present. It was not framed originally as it is at present. The Premier gets up, talks about nothing, and asks his supporters to oppose the Bill. However, the member for Barossa did attempt to justify his opposition.

Mr. Bywaters—He is honest.

Mr. LAWN—He tried to advance a reason to justify his opposition.

Mr. Loveday—He did his best to.

Mr. LAWN—He made some contradictory statements, saying that if the building was as high as a silo it should have the provisions as asked for in the Bill. He then said he was also concerned with the welfare of the people in the country engaged in building. I think that the member for Barossa, if he were allowed to do so, would support the Bill.

The reason why the Bill exempts the country at present is not the reason advanced by the other side this afternoon. Do not forget that Mount Gambier, Whyalla and Murray Bridge were not included in the original legislation. The reason why the country was exempt originally was not because it was impracticable and utterly ridiculous, or for want of an army of inspectors: the one reason why the Act is as it is is transportation. Honourable members on the other side have overlooked the reason why the country originally was exempt from the provisions of the Scaffolding Act—transportation. It was not that an army of inspectors was required, that they could not do the job, and that the provisions would be evaded left, right and centre. The real reason—I do not know that I would disagree with that, for it was a long time ago—was that it was impracticable then for the inspector to travel around. He probably had to go from Adelaide with a horse and buggy, but later, as the years went by and motor vehicles came into being, the Act was extended to country centres such as Whyalla, Murray Bridge, Gawler and Mount Gambier. The inspector can run out from the towns in motor cars. The reason why the country was exempted was the difficulty of transportation. The inspector could even go from Adelaide to Murray Bridge, inspect the scaffolding and come home again in the same day.

I am trying to help Government members to understand why the Act is as it is. It is

not so for the reasons they have been trying to think up. In those days Parliament would have included the country but for transport difficulties. Had the members of the House at the time the Act was originally passed had our advantages of mobile transport, I have not the slightest doubt that they would have embodied in the legislation these provisions. With those few remarks, I trust that the House will agree that country people should not suffer any greater disability than that suffered by people in the metropolitan area, except where it is utterly impracticable to apply the Act. I know we cannot give them a deep sea port.

Mr. Loveday—That would be for the South-East!

Mr. LAWN—Yes, and one country town (Gawler) prior to the 1952 by-election was promised everything except a deep sea port. Apart from those things that are outside our jurisdiction, I believe the country people should enjoy the same rights, privileges and benefits as the people in the metropolitan area do. That is my honest opinion, and I know it is shared by my colleagues on this side of the House. I cannot for the life of me follow the reasoning on the opposite side of the House in the matters I have referred to and many others, for members opposite will not let the country people have the benefits enjoyed in the metropolitan area. At the same time, they try to justify their gerrymandered electorates. They say they have to have this country representation to look after the country people and so on, but that is a lot of tripe. In spite of that, they still withhold all these benefits from country people. I have pleasure in supporting this Bill.

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray)—I support the Bill. I point out, as others have done, that there is a discrepancy between certain country areas and other country areas. Murray Bridge, of course, has been mentioned this afternoon as coming under the Scaffolding Inspection Act. It was not always that way, but it is now, and it is appreciated because the Act protects the people of that area. The Premier this afternoon mentioned that it did not apply to the river areas, but, after my interjection, he mentioned areas further up the river. The Act should apply to places like Tailem Bend, a big industrial town. Mannum, too, is an industrial town with working people. Those two towns are not covered because the Act does not apply there, yet they are practically the same distance from Adelaide as

Murray Bridge, so how can one say that distance is the problem there? The member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke) this afternoon said it would be difficult in the country areas, and I interjected about the silos. Throughout South Australia silos are springing up in many outside areas—places where a few years ago one would not have expected such buildings. Because of the change to the bulk handling of grain, silos are increasing in numbers throughout the State. Recently additional silos were erected at Murray Bridge, where the Scaffolding Inspection Act applies, but unfortunately a serious accident happened and an inspector went to Murray Bridge to investigate the situation. I understand that the building contractor was not aware that Murray Bridge was covered by the Act. He had previously constructed silos at other places (including Lameroo and Bordertown) that were outside the Act, and he will soon be building more silos at Apamurra. This contractor employs the same workmen in a regular gang, and when he needs additional labour he recruits it locally. In one town the workmen were covered by the Act, but a short distance away they were not.

Silos are being built in the electorate of Barossa and the member for Barossa realizes that there is a need to protect the workers. He pointed out that the contractors are responsible citizens. I agree that they are honourable men who exercise every care. In fact, the scaffolding they use seems to me, as a layman, to be quite satisfactory. However, there is always the possibility of a contractor being negligent and if there is no legislation to provide protection to workmen then others may be neglectful. This legislation should apply at least to high buildings being erected in country areas. In Western Australia any building over 15ft. is covered by the Scaffolding Act. The legislation is necessary because if someone does not do the right thing a workman's safety is jeopardized. If this legislation is good enough for metropolitan workers, it is good enough for country workers. Men have been seriously injured or killed when engaged in erecting silos and all employees should be protected by the Scaffolding Inspection Act.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—I have always believed that anyone who introduces legislation should gather necessary statistics to support his move. The Premier's statement about legislation was axiomatic: legislation should be remedial and should not be introduced merely for the sake of introducing it if there is no real need for a change in the law. That

is fundamental. Any Party, or any private member, introducing legislation should prepare a proper case to prove that it is remedial. I regret the serious sickness of the Leader of the Opposition which prevents him from being present during this debate, but he could have secured statistics from Queensland and Western Australia, which have been referred to by members opposite, to show what has happened in country areas there where this legislation applies. That information would have been a guide. I do not know, but I have the feeling that the figures would not have been beneficial to the Opposition's case, because high buildings are normally not constructed in country areas, but in densely populated centres where land owners, to secure the utmost benefit from their land, are encouraged to build upwards. Such building activity is not necessary in our country towns which, overseas, would be regarded as villages.

The member for Whyalla took the Premier to task and said he was illogical for using examples of States where similar legislation applies to country areas. I did not see anything illogical in the Premier's argument, which seemed eminently reasonable. After all, as the Premier pointed out, if this is a beneficial and remedial Bill, surely New South Wales would be a guide. If this Bill is passed I should like to take a car journey with the member for Whyalla through to Cook to inspect some of the scaffolding that one would expect to be erected and inspected there. It would be a long ride. Then again, an inspector might have to travel to Oodnadatta.

I recently had to erect a building to house a pump on my bore. I suppose I should have had the scaffolding inspected, but it was not of solid construction. Obviously this law is essential in our major centres of population, and if I knew I was risking the life of one man in the country my attitude would be different.

Mr. Clark—But you do not know that you are not risking the life of a man.

Mr. SHANNON—There has been no evidence of that. The Opposition, which introduced this Bill, has failed in its duty. It has not brought forward any evidence of risks, which could be secured from information from the States cited by it.

Mr. Clark—Do you think it would have made any difference?

Mr. SHANNON—Certainly it would have, to me. One could have a couple of shillings each way on whether evidence from other States would support or damn the Opposition's case. The fact that the Opposition has not

used evidence from Queensland rather encourages me to believe that it would not support this move. Queensland is a far-flung State with wide open spaces and it baffles me how it can police its Act. Obviously there are parts where it is impossible to police the law. It is farcical to pass a law that cannot be enforced, for that brings the law into disrepute. A law is either good or bad: if it is a good law it should be applied and enforced, but if it is unnecessary we should not push people around merely for the sake of pushing them around. I do not believe that country builders will not take proper precautions. There are a number of small contractors in my electorate who build houses or sheds over 15ft. high and I have yet to learn of one of them failing to take proper precautions for their workmen. As a rule country contracting businesses are virtually family organizations. The workmen are personally known to the employer and the business is more of a family concern than an employer-employee undertaking. They never have labour troubles because they work in harmony. There are a few small builders (good solid workmen) in Hahndorf and Lobethal, but I have never heard of their having an accident with their employees. Are we to go to these people and say, "We are not going to trust you. You will be brought under the provisions of the Scaffolding Inspection Act, although you are only erecting small buildings. We are going to put you under the same laws as apply to the fellow who is employing 1,000 men on three or four big contracts in the metropolitan area."

Mr. McKee—Don't you agree that this legislation should apply to buildings over a certain height?

Mr. SHANNON—If that is the Opposition's wish, why didn't it introduce legislation accordingly? The member for Stuart informed the Premier that it was the Opposition's policy to have this matter considered by every Parliament. If the Opposition had given much attention to it, I should have thought that by now it would have known that Western Australia had the answer and would then bring in a new Bill. If the Opposition introduced something which I thought was good, irrespective of what the Premier said, I would vote for it. It would not be the first time, and it will not be the last. The member for Port Adelaide wants to get a vote from me and then be able to say, "We have got one vote from the Government side to get the Bill through the second reading".

After all it is not my Bill. I did not father it and I will not mother it either. I ask honourable members opposite to bring in a Bill in a form that is reasonable. It would be impossible to enforce the proposed legislation in Mr. Loveday's district because it would take a long time to travel from one side to the other, and the same would apply in Mr. O'Halloran's district. The Opposition makes the rather ridiculous suggestion that the legislation should have State-wide application, when it cannot have such application. My advice to honourable member's opposite is to reconsider their problem and come along with a suggestion that is not half-baked.

Mr. HUTCHENS secured the adjournment of the debate.

ASSEMBLY ELECTORATES.

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr. O'Halloran:

That in the opinion of this House the Government should take steps to readjust the House of Assembly electoral zones and the boundaries of electorates to provide a more just system for electing the House, which the Hon. Sir Thomas Playford had moved to amend by leaving out all the words after the word "House" first occurring, and inserting in lieu thereof the words "any reduction in country Parliamentary representation must correspondingly increase the tendency towards centralization of population and industry."

(Continued from September 7. Page 988.)

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—Once more I think that the Opposition will have to revise its ideas.

Mr. Lawn—His master's voice!

Mr. SHANNON—The honourable member is a bit of a cockatoo on this "master's voice" stuff. In and out of season the honourable member refers to "my Leader". That is not a bad policy. If you stick to your Party line purely and simply I know where that comes from—Grote Street. Recently on North Terrace we had a conference—

The SPEAKER—Order! I ask the honourable member to address the Chair.

Mr. SHANNON—Recently a conference of my Party was held on North Terrace when many motions were debated. Some were carried, others were defeated, and some even lapsed. These had no bearing on the attitude I should adopt to any legislation that comes before this Chamber. I am an absolutely free agent here to use the little talent that the Lord has been pleased to bestow upon me to

the best of my ability. I do not have to decide my policy on motions carried on North Terrace. Mr. Ryan has expressed some pride that he is a member of a Party in which people who are not elected—

The SPEAKER—Order! We are not debating that subject and I ask the honourable member to deal with the motion before the Chair.

Mr. SHANNON—The motion has a very vital bearing on elections. I do not want to dispute your ruling, Mr. Speaker, but to debate this question. It appears fundamental to me that the motion refers to the provision of “a more just system for electing the House”. I do not know what the words “more just” in this instance really mean. It is like trying to add a sugar coating to a pill that is already perfect. To use the words “more just” to my mind is the wrong use of the English language. The Opposition should say, “We want a just system.”

Mr. Jennings—Hear! hear!

Mr. SHANNON—Well, why don't you say so? I cannot understand the Opposition not doing its homework. It is surprising that it did not think of this before. Why not say “a just system” and leave it at that?

Mr. Ryan—And that is all we want.

Mr. SHANNON—The honourable member is prepared to come into this place and be told what to do by people who never elected him. He is proud of that background. He told me only a moment ago that he would accept the rulings of the Grote Street junta and what his Party would do if it were in control.

Mr. Lawn—We go out to the people and they know our policy.

Mr. SHANNON—I do not know whether the honourable member is trying to be facetious, but if he is, he is doing it very successfully. After all, he says nothing until he is told what to say by people whose names his electors do not even know. The majority of his electors would not know the names of the people who formulate his policy. This motion is contradictory in its effect to a motion which the Opposition was successful in having passed in a modified form earlier this session. This is a straightout contradiction of what the House has already agreed to—to pursue every possible avenue to spread our population throughout country areas rather than aggregate it in the metropolitan area. That motion was agreed to unanimously and now we are invited to get into reverse gear and do the very opposite. In fact, that is what would

happen if the motion were passed in the form in which it was presented. My good friend, the member for Adelaide, will not object when I say that my Leader on this occasion has given some thought to this problem and to its effect upon the economy of South Australia, because he has suggested that the House should amend the motion by leaving out all the words after “House” first occurring and inserting in lieu thereof the words “any reduction in country Parliamentary representation must correspondingly increase the tendency towards centralization of population and industry.” Obviously, this would improve the motion and help in providing a healthy state of society wherever we can successfully establish industries outside the metropolitan area. We should aim to do that.

I have found in my Parliamentary experience that the most effective voice that country electorates can have in getting things done is to speak through their members in this Chamber. There are also other methods, many of which are very successful, such as when an approach is made to a member to try to iron out little problems by approaching one of the Government departments on their behalf. These are time-absorbing things and every member knows that. I have some sympathy with honourable members in the metropolitan area because of the number of times they have to approach various Government instrumentalities on behalf of constituents. This would probably occur six or eight times more often than in my case. These members do valuable work. Honourable members opposite do not do enough homework and they have not done as much on this motion as they should have. Voicing one's opinion is one thing, but having it backed by substance is another, and it is substance that members opposite should have. I have no compunction in telling the Opposition that the motion will have the diametrically opposite effect to the one passed earlier dealing with decentralization.

Mr. Clark—It would have exactly the same effect.

Mr. SHANNON—I think that every honourable member will agree that the policy pursued in Canberra affects this State very vitally. Frequently, we are very concerned about our financial relations with the Commonwealth. I do not think a change of Government in Canberra, and the honourable member would support that, would alter the financial relations as between the Commonwealth and States. Because of the number of representatives that go to that Parliament from Victoria and

New South Wales, virtually the control of the Parliament is in their hands, irrespective of whether there is a Liberal and Country Party or Labor Government. Unfortunately for the other States the interests of Sydney and Melbourne are much alike. If members want to repeat the error from which we are now suffering and carry the motion, they will reap the whirlwind. If it is believed that the present distribution of Parties in the metropolitan area will be continued with a greater metropolitan area I will refer to some historical facts, which may lead some members to change their views on this matter. The electors are not the fools that some of us think they are. With them, two and two still make four. They can see when a Party seeks to secure an advantage for itself at their expense. They soon realize the position. It has happened in the Commonwealth arena.

When Mr. Chifley was Prime Minister there was a change in the electoral set-up at Canberra and it was hoped by the then Attorney-General that for nine years the Labor Party would have a majority under the new way of electing the Senate, which was to be elected by means of proportional representation. I am glad that the Labor Party in South Australia has seen the error of its ways and has rejected proportional representation. The Party now sees that such a system would be of no use to it. The result of it all was that the Labor Party went out of office at the next Commonwealth election. Sometimes when legislation is passed to get things tied up, and to get something that is desired, the electors wake up and instead of being led down the garden path they use the ballot box effectively. Both Parties in this House have already held some of the metropolitan seats. It could be quite a shock to some members who support the motion if they look at past elections in the metropolitan area. It may cause them to change their views on this matter. Members should look at the matter from the point of view of the good of the State. I do not think that the member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) would be offended if I suggested that it is the primary produce from the country that keeps the cities going. If it were not for that produce the cities would soon fritter away. What we get from the land affects our economy. If we forget that, our agricultural pursuits will soon decline.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Mr. Menzies will not agree with that viewpoint.

Mr. SHANNON—I do not care about that. He is entitled to his opinion, but I hope he

will heed what I have to say, and then he may be put right. In Australia we shall always be dependent upon our agricultural pursuits. Some people assert that Australia should be an industrial country exporting manufactured goods to the rest of the world, but there is a fundamental problem in that regard. Are we to have a 35-hour working week for the coal industry? If we are, is the coal industry to be the only industry with such a working week? When the 40-hour week came into being in New South Wales following on Government action it was not long before the 40-hour week became Australia-wide. If we have a 35-hour working week in one industry it will not be long before that will be the rule for every industry.

Mr. Ryan—It would do no harm.

Mr. SHANNON—I think it would do much harm.

Mr. Ryan—You said that about the 40-hour week.

Mr. SHANNON—I do not think that improves the case at all. If we become a nation of exporters of manufactured goods we shall have to manufacture them in opposition to countries that have longer working hours. I shall not refer to their standards of living, but only to their hours of work, and they work eight to 10 hours a week longer than our workers do. That puts us out of court as a nation exporting manufactured goods.

The SPEAKER—I think the honourable member is getting away from the matter before the House. I do not mind his making passing reference to these things but I do ask him to confine his remarks to the motion.

Mr. SHANNON—I do not propose to challenge your ruling, Mr. Speaker. I am merely pointing out the inevitable result if the motion is carried. It will mean the concentration of more people in the present big centres of population.

Mr. Clark—Read the motion. There is no mention of such a thing.

Mr. SHANNON—Did the honourable member listen to his Leader's remarks?

Mr. Clark—Yes.

Mr. SHANNON—They have been quoted several times. I do not believe in quoting *ad lib* from *Hansard*. It is not desirable to do such a thing and it is a waste of time for the Printing Department. Why reprint something with which we disagree? That is not for me. I am not built that way. The effect of the policy mentioned in the motion—

Mr. Clark—Labor Party policy was not mentioned in the Leader's remarks. You are not talking about what the motion seeks.

Mr. SHANNON—It is difficult to define what the motion seeks. What is the meaning of "more just"? The honourable member has been a school teacher, and a very good one in my opinion. I would be pleased if he would explain to me what those words mean. The Premier made it clear that the proposal to reduce the number of members from 59 in all to 56 in all meant the abolition of the second Chamber.

Mr. Clark—He was reading the motion to suit himself. That matter is not mentioned in the motion.

Mr. SHANNON—It is framed in such a way that we can read almost anything into it. I think it is best to take note of the explanation by the mover of the motion. If we do that we should know what is intended. That is what I have done. I listened to the Leader of the Opposition and unless a member did that he could not understand the motion. It was well that we had the explanation, and because of the explanation we are debating the matter. Without the explanation there would be no debate.

Mr. Clark—You would not understand what is a just system. You do not understand the truth.

Mr. SHANNON—The honourable member chides me for not understanding the King's English.

Mr. Clark—You said it.

Mr. SHANNON—I said what I thought was the truth. Can any member be more truthful than that?

Mr. Clark—Yes.

Mr. SHANNON—I did not know that there were several varieties of "truth." I am learning the English language fast. The honourable member should not have said that. He does not know the real meaning of "truth." "Truth" cannot be qualified, nor can "justice."

Mr. Clark—Not much.

Mr. SHANNON—On balance we are either just or unjust. These words do not require qualification. I think that on reflection the honourable member will realize that he does not need to qualify simple words. They do not require any more tinkering.

Mr. Jennings—Why do you say "any more tinkering"?

Mr. SHANNON—I know the honourable member's penchant and I do not want him to tinker with me.

Mr. Jennings—You are quite safe.

Mr. SHANNON—I know I am. I now want to refer to another matter that is inherent in the motion without its being specifically mentioned, namely, the abolition of the second Chamber. Members know that that is the ultimate goal. This is only the first bite of the cherry and the idea is that we should first wipe out the Upper House in South Australia and then wipe out the House of Assembly, leaving the whole of the power in Canberra. That is not denied and the Labor Party makes no bones about it. That is its policy. The Party is all in favour of uniform taxation, and this is a lead along the line to a unified system of government under which the unfortunate people living as far apart as from Broome to Cape York will have to go to Canberra for redress. This is the first step—wipe out the Upper House.

My Parliamentary experience is limited to this Parliament although, as a younger man, I aspired to another place. However, I do not think I would have been as happy there because I would not have had my friends from Gawler, Enfield and Adelaide to cheer me up. The bi-cameral system is important. The point about the motion is that there is more in it than there is printed in it. It is apparent that there are many things involved in this question that are not in the motion. The Leader clearly stated what was intended by the motion.

Mr. Clark—No, he did not.

Mr. SHANNON—Yes, he did.

Mr. Clark—He was asked what the Labor policy was, and he kindly gave it.

Mr. SHANNON—I know, from long experience, that Mr. O'Halloran is a kindly man. He is not only a gentleman, but he is a kindly gentleman, and, if he is asked a question and thinks that the inquirer should know the answer, he will provide the information. He has done that many times. I am not surprised that the member for Gawler should tell the House that the Leader told us kindly. He wanted us to know what was involved; and every member knows what is involved. I will give an example of how democracy works under the bi-cameral system, and I will show why it is better to have a second chamber than to abolish it. We had before us earlier a very knotty problem.

Mr. Jennings—Hire-purchase?

Mr. SHANNON—The honourable member is almost clairvoyant. That is the very thing I was thinking of and this House dealt with it

and made some amendments to the Hire-Purchase Agreements Bill. I know that many members were not pleased with the amendments and I know also, from what happened in another place, that it is obvious this House made some mistakes.

Mr. Clark—Does that mean that the other place must be right?

Mr. SHANNON—No. Some proposed amendments were defeated in another place, but they were not debated here. If members take the trouble to read the record of the debate in another place they will see there was a wide divergence of opinion and those matters will be referred back to this House for further examination. If any member of this House believes that, by having what amounts to a third look at this form of legislation, we are making fools of ourselves, I wish to correct that false idea. When this House deals with legislation that vitally affects the majority of the people of this State—and this Bill does that—no harm is done if members have a third look at it. We are all human and we all make mistakes, and I guarantee that this will not be a perfect Bill when the House has finished with it. If it had not been for our bi-cameral system of government it would not be possible for us to have a third look at the Bill and it would have become legislation. As it is, the majority of members will be responsible for the final legislation.

Mr. Ryan—Where will the dictates come from?

Mr. SHANNON—I will not take a dictate from anywhere. My dictates come from my heart.

Mr. Clark—It is a pretty tough old organ.

Mr. SHANNON—Joking aside, the bi-cameral system of government has stood the test of the British way of life. There are examples where the system has been discarded in the British Commonwealth. It has been discarded in Queensland and in New Zealand, but I do not think the people there have gained anything by abolishing the system, and I am sure, from my own experience in this place, that they have lost a lot by its abolition.

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray)—I support the Leader, and I am amazed that all the debate from members opposite should have nothing whatever to do with the motion.

Mr. Dunstan—It is not very amazing, is it?

Mr. BYWATERS—It may not be amazing to members who have been here longer than I

have, but I find it amazing. It seems rather strange that at the conclusion of the Premier's speech he should move the amendment he did. I shall refer just briefly to the motion introduced by the Leader because this is not a new matter and it has concerned the House for a long time. In the past motions have been brought down seeking some change in the electoral system and, on each occasion the Opposition has introduced this type of motion, the Government has objected that it would not work because it contained certain words. That has not happened on this occasion. The motion states:—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should take steps to readjust the House of Assembly electoral zones . . .

I emphasize that it says "the Government should take steps to readjust the House of Assembly electoral zones". It continues:— and the boundaries of electorates to provide a more just system for electing the House.

There has been some play on words as to whether "a more just system" is the right wording for the motion. I do not wish to debate that question, because I am not an expert on English, but at the moment there are people in addition to members on this side of the House who are far from satisfied with the electoral set-up that we have today. Many people outside this House are of the opinion that things are not right with our electoral set-up. Members only have to read the letters appearing in the *Advertiser* and the *News* from time to time to realize that. Leading articles also have been written in those papers and it must be admitted that the Labor Party does not enjoy their full support. Often both newspapers have referred to the unjust system that exists in South Australia and all that is asked is that the Government should do something about it. We are not asking for any frills or anything else to go with it, but we are leaving it entirely in the hands of the Government to decide what method should be adopted, and that has been done in the past.

All members know that from time to time boundaries need to be adjusted because of population changes and they are aware that in recent years changes in electoral boundaries have been warranted. All that is asked, as the honourable member for West Torrens said, is that it should be on a just basis. We want some persons to set up a system with no strings attached from either side of this House. It is not desired that the Government should dictate a particular issue or that it should tie

strings to the persons appointed. We do not want those people to be influenced by our political thoughts on the matter.

Mention has been made of the fact that the Leader, in his speech, quite naturally referred to Labor's policy. That is done frequently in this House, and we do not have to repeat it, because Government members are almost as conversant with it as are members of the Labor Party. That portion of the Leader's speech was drawn out by the Premier probably because he realized that he did not have a feather to fly with in debating this motion. There was nothing which he could criticize, and being an astute gentleman he drew out from the Leader the policy of the Labor Party on this matter—and that has been followed up by the member for Onkaparinga to furnish himself with an argument against this motion. I believe that was the only reason for the Premier's interjection.

The Premier said this motion had much merit, and because of that the House would have to give it very sincere and conscientious deliberation. I do not attribute to him those exact words, but that is the effect of what he said. Because of that, he had to find some red herring to draw across the trail enabling him to make some show of opposition to the motion. That is all that was brought out by the member for Onkaparinga in his speech, and there was nothing of a constructive nature tendered by members of the Government. They attack Labor's policy, but that is not mentioned in the motion. At the conclusion of his speech the Premier moved an amendment and asked the House to strike out all the words after "House" first occurring and to insert in lieu thereof the words "any reduction in country Parliamentary representation must correspondingly increase the tendency towards centralization of population and industry." Although we are not asking for this, we have no opposition to the amendment. However, it is not in accordance with the motion; there is no likeness between the motion and the amendment. In the early stages I wondered whether it was an effective amendment but, as a ruling has been given, I do not query it.

Mr. Lawn—The House could carry both, couldn't it?

Mr. BYWATERS—It could easily do so. However, they are two separate motions.

Mr. Dunstan—Provided that one does not cut out the other.

Mr. BYWATERS—Yes. If the amendment cuts out the motion it has not done any good because it has purely maintained the *status*

quo. It is superfluous and has no value; it is just a mass of words. It is purely negative and unnecessary. It is just the Premier's way to get his members to support something that could wipe out the motion moved in all good conscience by the Leader. I think the amendment is brought in as a sop to the Premier's conscience. The Premier found no argument with the motion but in an effort to get out of it he moved an amendment and of course drew across the trail the red herrings I previously mentioned. This afternoon we were told that the Labor Party took its directions from Grote Street, but I point out that when we take our directions we have had a conference representative of all sections of the Labor Party throughout the State, not only from the city.

Mr. Dunstan—Including ourselves.

Mr. Lawn—Members opposite take their instructions from the cherry growers.

Mr. BYWATERS—The conference is representative of all sections of people from all parts of the State—unionists, primary producers, members of local committees and all members on this side of the House. At the conference matters are decided by a majority vote which we accept as the wish of the people who put us in Parliament.

Mr. Clark—It is not just an expression of opinion.

Mr. BYWATERS—No. Last week the Liberal Party held a convention but, in view of the suggestions from the member for Onkaparinga that members opposite do not follow any suggestions made by that convention, what is the use of having it? People are brought down from the country who pass pious resolutions that will not be accepted by the Government, so it is just window-dressing or something to talk about.

Mr. Dunstan—Members opposite adopt the same attitude towards members of their Party as they do towards the rest of the State. The Government does as it likes.

Mr. BYWATERS—I believe that is true. These delegates go to some expense to come to the conference, discuss matters and pass resolutions, but the Liberal and Country League Government does not necessarily have to accept the resolution. This is the distinction between the Labour Party, which is elected by democratic people who put their views in a democratic way, and the L.C.L., which holds conferences and discusses and votes on motions which go into the waste-paper basket because the Government is not prepared to accept them. Much has been said about the difference between

country and city members, and a rather interesting point arose from the L.C.L. conference. There we saw a competition between country and city members. Under the heading "Close L.C.L. vote favours end of price curbs," the following report appeared:—

After a prolonged debate, the Liberal and Country League annual meeting, attended by more than 200 metropolitan and country delegates, yesterday adopted a resolution favouring abolition of price control. Many country delegates are understood, however, to have rallied to support the Premier (Sir Thomas Playford), who uncompromisingly told the meeting that continuance of South Australian price control was essential to maintain the State's stability.

The SPEAKER—Order! There is a Bill before the House dealing with price control, and I cannot allow the honourable member to debate this on this motion.

Mr. BYWATERS—I accept your ruling, Sir. What I was leading up to had no relevance to the Price Control Bill debate. I was trying to point out that it appeared that there was a difference of opinion between country and city members and that the city members were able, by their numbers, to defeat the will of country delegates.

Mr. Lawn—It made no difference what the result was.

Mr. BYWATERS—No, that had already been decided. The city members outvoted country members, yet the country members have the interests of the country people at heart, although the Premier says he wants to maintain the *status quo*! I agree with that, but that is not borne out in the press report because the delegates did not get a fair chance at the conference. Although numbers were not mentioned by the Leader, the Premier said that if there were 56 members each electorate would have 9,060 voters. We want larger country electorates. In the district I represent I would like to have three large towns with enough people to return one country member each; not necessarily to have more representation in the metropolitan area, but to have a population spread out in the country so as to allow for more country members rather than what the Premier suggested. Mannum, Tailem Bend and Murray Bridge are three towns in my electorate that could be developed so much that there would be a representative for each town, and this would increase the number of representatives in this Chamber. That could be adopted if the Government were sincere in its ideas on decentralization; but it is not, as shown by the fact that although in the past we have moved motion after motion it was not

until the Government could see the writing on the wall from the results of by-elections that favoured the Labor Party that the Premier thought he should do something about the matter. Members opposite have said very little about decentralization in the past because it would have affected their seats.

Mr. Lawn—They do not want it.

Mr. BYWATERS—It is natural that they do not, and they would be foolish if they did, but it is to the advantage of the State to have more representatives in the country and bigger electorates for them to represent. That is the angle I wish to develop. Since single electorates were adopted in 1938, the population in the city has increased at the expense of the country. In 1938, 54 per cent of the population was in the metropolitan area; 62 per cent is now in the metropolitan area, yet we still have the same number of country electorates. The Government has done nothing to bring about decentralization in that time. Although it has been said here that the country has been well represented in the past because of the number of country members, this has not been to the advantage of the State. I believe the only way to bring about an advantage to the State is to build up the numbers in the country to give the representation required, not to decrease the number of country members. It would be much easier for me to represent a town like Mount Gambier or some other city that is closely defined instead of a big area with few people. I would rather see 15,000 to 20,000 people in towns like Mannum, Murray Bridge and Tailem Bend and have other colleagues nearby. That is the thing we want to develop; we do not want to talk about reducing country representation. I do not think any member on this side of the House wants that. We want an equal distribution of population and we want to recognize the numbers and proportions and to have the population go to country areas. If possible, we want to increase the representation rather than reduce it.

The Premier's amendment is purely superfluous and has no value. We do not desire to see his amendment defeated unless it affects our motion. The Premier told us that, as there are 26 country members and only 13 metropolitan members, there is an advantage to country electorates, yet I point out that country people are suffering because of this very set-up. Let us examine what effect this has had on the education system, and the number of questions asked from time to time on this subject.

Not even one school in the country has a Leaving Honours class. This matter has been neglected by the Government although there are so many country members opposite. Country districts do not have sewerage facilities or many other things that the metropolitan area has. Another thing to which I will refer is water rates. I am now talking about people who have a rating, not those who pay a certain amount for water.

The SPEAKER—Order! I do not think the honourable member is in order in debating water rates in this debate.

Mr. BYWATERS—With due deference—

The SPEAKER—Order! I do not mind a passing reference to a matter like that but if the honourable member proposes to debate water rates in some detail, I rule him out of order.

Mr. BYWATERS—I wished to make only a passing reference to the subject, and therefore I was not going to question your ruling, Mr. Speaker, but as it has turned out I think you, Sir, will be quite satisfied with my remarks. The metropolitan area has a rating of 2s. 3d. a thousand gallons on the rebate water and, when the rebate water allowance is exceeded, the rate falls to 2s. a thousand gallons. Along the pipeline from Mannum to Adelaide the country areas served are paying 2s. 6d. a thousand gallons.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—But they are not paying any rates.

Mr. BYWATERS—Oh, yes, they are. The *South Australian Government Gazette* of July 28 of this year, which I have here, refers to it as a rating.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—I follow what the honourable member means, but what he overlooks is that in the metropolitan area three-quarters of the water is not pumped at all, whereas on the pipeline all the water is pumped all the year round. In the metropolitan area much water is provided from reservoirs, where there is no pumping.

Mr. BYWATERS—That may be so.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—Incidentally, the rate charged is a rate that was asked for by the people along the pipeline.

Mr. BYWATERS—That is different from what I understood; I understood that the rating was fixed.

Mr. Quirke—People don't pay land rating on those trunk mains unless they take water from them, do they?

Mr. BYWATERS—These people are under a continually reticulated scheme, the same as the metropolitan area. From observations I

have made it appears that it is just as expensive to supply water from the reservoirs to the metropolitan area as it is to bring water along the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline to the metropolitan area.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—This year most of the water in the metropolitan area won't be pumped at all, whereas most of the water along the pipeline will continue to be pumped.

Mr. BYWATERS—I think the Premier missed this point: the water from the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline has an interest charge.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—What has this to do with the motion?

Mr. BYWATERS—I am merely putting it as an example. If the Premier had been here very much during the afternoon he would have known what I am referring to, and if he had not interjected I would not have developed the argument, which I was using purely as an illustration. That is the sort of thing that happens when somebody comes in and, because he has not followed the full trend of the debate, becomes critical on some little point. The Premier has lost sight of the fact that whether or not the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline is in use the interest charges continue just the same. Had it not been for the metropolitan area that pipeline would not have been laid at all. Regardless of whether or not the metropolitan area uses that water the interest charges remain, and it is of some advantage to the State that the water is being supplied to some country areas. That is an advantage in the scheme, because it would not be a good thing if the plant were allowed to remain idle merely because the metropolitan area did not require water this year. I venture to say that before this summer is out, although a good supply of water is in the reservoirs at present, the metropolitan area will again be drawing on the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline.

This motion that the Leader, on behalf of the Labor Party, has moved has no strings attached to it whatsoever. The only alleged strings are those that have been surmised by the Government and by the Premier. The amendment he has moved is superfluous; it does not relate to the motion, it is unnecessary, and it is just a mass of words that do not mean a thing. I therefore say that it is just an attempt to try to defeat a motion which is required not only by members on this side of the House but by the people of the State as a whole for the benefit of the State. I appreciate the Government's attitude on this, because I remember reading on one occasion that the person who

holds four acres does not ask for a new deal. The Government has the advantage of the gerrymandered set-up, on which it has to rely to keep in office, and it does not want the motion considered. I support the motion.

Mr. COUNBE (Torrens)—I wished to approach this subject in a serious way, if I could, but I must confess that in reading the motion I had some little difficulty in deciding what it really meant.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Tell us what the amendment means.

Mr. COUNBE—If the honourable member gives me time I shall deal with that matter. I know, of course, what the motion hopes to achieve, but the wording is a little obscure to me. Several suggestions were put forward in debate by speakers on this side of the House but the member for Gawler (Mr. Clark) kept telling us that none of those suggestions were envisaged in the motion, and I was therefore beginning to wonder just what it contained. I had a close look at this question of what it hopes to achieve, and in particular at what is meant by a "just" system.

I shall not go over the ground covered so adequately by the member for Onkaparinga, but I think that in discussing such a motion it is important to know just what we are discussing and just where we are going. The word "just" is rather important, and the Opposition is relying upon that word to support the whole tenor of the motion. A thing is either "just" or "unjust". What is meant by "just", and to whom is it "just"? That is the whole basis of the question. Is it "just" to the people of the State if this motion is carried? Is it "just" to the Parliament?

Mr. Fred Walsh—You know better than that.

Mr. COUNBE—This was put forward in the Leader's motion, as the member for West Torrens knows very well. Is this to be "just" to the Labor Party?

Mr. Loveday—How dull you are today!

Mr. COUNBE—I had to listen to the member for Whyalla earlier in the day. Perhaps it might be "just" to the Liberal Party, or to anybody else who may be interested in contesting seats or in Parliamentary elections. The important thing is how this is to be defined, because the motion, in advocating that the Government take certain steps to bring in a more just system, envisages giving an instruction to the Government. I looked in vain to see what instructions were to be given to the Government if the motion were carried, because I assumed that was the object of the motion.

I fail to see that any concrete proposition has been put forward, either in the Leader's speech or in supporting speeches by members of the Opposition. In the absence of any concrete proposition, and in view of the member for Gawler's interjections to the effect that several suggestions put forward by members on this side of the House were not contained in the motion, I must base my remarks on what the Leader said in propounding his motion.

I shall try to prove that the motion, as it has been put forward, will mean a decrease in the country representation in this House of at least five members, and I shall tie this in with the Premier's amendment. On reading the Leader's speech we find that he clearly expounded the Labor Party's policy on this question. In response to an interjection by the Premier, he said that the Constitutional and electoral policy of the Australian Labor Party was the reduction of the number of members of the State Parliament by three, and that this was to be achieved by the abolition of the Legislative Council and the enlargement of the House of Assembly to 56 members.

In the absence of any other concrete proposal I must therefore base my remarks upon that statement. Let us see what it would mean to the House of Assembly electorates. Apart from the loss of representation of the Legislative Council members, it would clearly mean, as shown to the House by the Premier during his speech on this motion, the loss of several country members. The State population at March 30, 1960, was estimated at 939,576. We have, of course, to estimate the number of adults, and if we divide that number by 56 we get the quota for each electorate. Based on the proportion of about 63 per cent of the population in the city and 37 per cent in the country, it is likely that of the 56 membership of this House we would find that 35 would be city members and 21 would be country members. That would mean a reduction of five country seats from the present 26 country seats in the Assembly, plus the 12 Legislative Councillors holding country seats, because the official Labor Party policy is that the Legislative Council would be abolished. We would then have 21 country members altogether, instead of the 38 that now represent the country in both Houses.

I emphasize these figures to show the possible effect if this motion were carried, based upon the official policy of the Australian Labor Party as expounded to this House by the Leader. The Labor Party would take representation away from the country and give it

to the city, and I say again: Is this "just" to the country electors? Most country electorates are already too large; we have heard that opinion expressed in this debate, and they would become larger and therefore unwieldy under this proposal. The member for Murray (Mr. Bywaters), speaking a few moments ago, said he did not want a reduction in the number of country seats; in fact, he said he would like to see more country members to represent the country districts adequately.

Mr. Quirke—This motion does not say anything about that.

Mr. CUMBE—I know; nothing is mentioned here. There are no instructions given to the Government about what it should do and what is to be a more just system. Therefore, as I said at the beginning of my comments, I can base my remarks only upon what the Leader of the Opposition has said is his policy, because this motion is, as everybody realizes, introduced to forward the policy of the Opposition. Getting back to the point of leaving members out, if the honourable member for Burra wishes it that way—

Mr. Quirke—I am not leaving out any members; I am wondering how the Government takes steps to do a certain thing. That is all this motion says.

Mr. CUMBE—It is the Opposition's motion, as the honourable member knows very well. In fact, I have been waiting patiently in my seat to hear some proposition put forward. It is the duty of the Opposition, for it is its motion, to suggest to the Government what steps should be taken.

Mr. Loveday—You think the present system is just, do you?

Mr. CUMBE—I did not say it was.

Mr. Loveday—You could not say it is?

Mr. CUMBE—I said I did not say it was. I will get around to that in a moment.

Mr. Loveday—Could you tell us if it is?

Mr. CUMBE—My point is this: on the size of the electorates in the country, the Leader, speaking on this matter last year, said that his district was far too large, communications were negligible there, and the area was 132,000 square miles. Another important thing to remember is that Dr. Finer said in his *Theory and Practice of Modern Government* that an electorate should not be so large as to prevent personal contact between the electors and the member. Yet here we have this motion in effect advocating an increase in the size of electorates.

Mr. Loveday—What does Finer say about representation?

Mr. CUMBE—I have not the book here so I am afraid I cannot tell the honourable member, but I shall be pleased to show him the book later.

Mr. Loveday—It is a pity you left that bit out.

Mr. CUMBE—Today the effect of this would be as in the Commonwealth sphere. In the Commonwealth Parliament the thickly populated States of New South Wales and Victoria have 79 out of 122 seats; in other words, 65 per cent of the Australian seats are drawn from two States, so the control of the voting in the Commonwealth Parliament comes from those two States. I ask: is that just?

Mr. Jennings—Yet you claim that South Australia is increasing in population at a greater rate than the other States?

Mr. CUMBE—I am afraid the representation in the Commonwealth Parliamentary sphere has nothing to do with the birth rate. Many comments have been made in this debate on several aspects of the motion. In this debate we have heard phrases such as "We can't win"; "We won the election last year but we didn't win it by enough." When we hear comments like that by members of the Party opposite, I suggest they are completely wrong and that theirs is absolutely a defeatist policy. It is wrong for the people of the State and wrong for Parliament that a Party should say things like that. I suggest to honourable members opposite that the inference that the Labor Party cannot win under the present system is wrong. I suggest that it can win and that such sayings as "We cannot win" are completely false.

Labor could win an election under the present set-up without an alteration of seats if it had a policy acceptable to the people—and honourable members opposite know that to be so. It needs only two or three seats now held by the Government in either the country or the metropolitan area to be won by the Party opposite for it to win that election and form a Government. It is as easy as that. If honourable members doubt that, I ask them to recall that at the last election the Labor Party said it could easily win three seats in the metropolitan area and that, having won those seats, it could form a Government. That was said publicly, if not here in this Chamber then outside on the hoardings and in the press: "We will win these three seats and we will form a Government." It even went so far as to name those seats.

Mr. Fred Walsh—You have just called us defeatist.

Mr. COURCEL—You are saying those things which are defeatist in this very House, whereas outside the Labor Party said, "We can and will win these three seats." It went ahead and announced the three seats in the metropolitan area: Glenelg, held by the Minister of Education; Unley, held by Mr. Dunnage; and Torrens, held by myself. Those three seats were named.

Mr. Harding—What about Chaffey and Victoria?

Mr. COURCEL—My point is that in the metropolitan area the members opposite said, "We will win these three seats." For those three seats we saw an extremely concentrated campaign, one of the most vigorously fought campaigns I have witnessed. Very little expense was spared; a terrific team of organizers and others helped on those three seats, but the net result was that the Liberal vote in each case was increased, whereas the Labor vote fell. My point is that at the last election, which we compared with 1956, with the same areas and the same three sitting Liberal members—there is no suggestion of a gerrymander there because the position was the same as before—the policy put forward by the Labor Party was not acceptable to the people. It was as simple as that. Therefore, the Liberal candidate in each of those seats increased his majority while the Labor Party vote fell. So I say that, if the Labor Party had a policy that was acceptable to the people, it could win those three seats and, having won them, it could form a Government. In fact, we know that some of those seats could easily be won. Parts of my electorate at one time were held for Labor by the present member for Enfield and at another time by Mr. Baldock. Therefore, my seat, for instance, could be won, and it was said that the seats of Unley and Glenelg would be won on that occasion.

Mr. Riches—Do you think that, so long as the right Party wins, the system is all right?

Mr. COURCEL No. I am pointing out that it is simple for the Party opposite to win an election under this system. On the one hand it says, "We cannot win", and on the other hand it says, "We won the last election, but not by enough." It cannot have it both ways.

Mr. Jennings—We cannot have it one way.

Mr. COURCEL—Why don't you put your house in order? Speakers opposite have advocated decentralization, just as we have. A motion carried earlier this session truly

expressed the feelings of members of the whole House on decentralization. We have all said that we believe that the country needs to be built up, that more industries should go to the country and that more amenities should be provided for the people there. Yet the Labor Party by this motion seeks to lessen the effectiveness of country representation. The country members of the Party opposite say on the one hand that they support the motion, the effect of which would be to lessen country representation, and, on the other hand, that they believe in decentralization.

We all know the many services that country members on both sides of the House give the people in their districts. We appreciate the improvements in the services and utilities which have been provided for country residents and which are so vital to them. Many services have been brought to these areas from a direct representation by and through the energy of the country members themselves who have played a big part in that particular sphere. I suggest that these improvements have been a direct result of the intervention of country members. It would be a retrograde step if the country representation were to be retarded or reduced. We do not suggest that for a moment on this side of the House, and the amendment put forward by the Premier indicates in no uncertain terms what we on this side feel about a reduction in the numbers of country representatives. It is said that South Australia is progressing and forging ahead and we must not in any way put anything in the path of its progress. If the people living in the country are to share in this development, as they so richly deserve to, then we must foster decentralization.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Tell us about the amendment of the Premier.

Mr. COURCEL—If the honourable member cares to look at the wording, the amendment of the Premier shows what this side of the House feels about any proposed reduction of country representation.

Mr. Clark—No such thing was suggested.

Mr. Fred Walsh—You are talking about increases.

Mr. COURCEL—You were asking me about the amendment of the Premier. I have said it shows plainly how members on this side of the House view any proposed reduction in country representation. Getting back to the motion, about which honourable members opposite are so concerned, I said at the beginning of my comments that there was nothing in it to

indicate how the Government should implement any of these steps. It merely says:—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should take steps to readjust the House of Assembly electoral zones and the boundaries of electorates to provide a more just system for electing the House.

If the Leader of the Opposition, representing the members of the Labor Party, thought so much of this motion, I should have thought he would put forward some concrete proposals or suggestions to the Government as to how it should implement such a motion. Perhaps honourable members opposite do not think so highly of the motion because it is in such vague and loose terms, merely saying that "the Government should take steps" to do something. In effect, that is all it says. If the Opposition were sincere I should have thought it would put forward definite proposals instead of this vague suggestion.

Mr. Hall—All Opposition proposals are woolly.

Mr. COUMBE—Not all of them.

Mr. Jennings—Except the ones that are accepted.

Mr. COUMBE—As this motion is couched in such vague phrases I have had to base my remarks on what the Leader of the Opposition has said is the official policy of the Labor Party.

Mr. Loveday—Do you think the Government is ever likely to implement the Labor Party's policy?

Mr. COUMBE—What policy is that?

Mr. Loveday—The one you have been talking about.

Mr. COUMBE—Are you referring to the number of members?

Mr. Loveday—Do you think the Government would accept that?

Mr. COUMBE—I cannot speak for the Government, but I have my doubts. This motion arose as the result of a suggestion from the A.L.P. conference. This was discussed by the member for Onkaparinga, and by other members by interjection, and it is the official policy of the Labor Party. We all know the purport of the motion and this would be the first step to get rid of the Legislative Council.

Mr. Clark—There is nothing about that in the motion.

Mr. COUMBE—I have not heard that denied, and it is the official policy of the Labor Party.

Mr. Nankivell—Have you seen the official policy? Can you get a copy of it?

Mr. Clark—Don't be silly! We have distributed a dozen copies. You are too young to understand.

Mr. Hall—We would like a copy if you have one.

Mr. Clark—I have distributed three or four, but you wouldn't understand it if you saw it.

The SPEAKER—Order! I ask the member for Gawler to cease interjecting.

Mr. COUMBE—Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have before us a motion and an amendment. The motion suggests that the Government should take certain steps to do something which is not clearly defined, but the amendment clearly indicates what we believe would be the effects of the motion. It is clear that we must oppose the motion and support the amendment.

Mr. Riches—Do you believe in a just electoral system?

Mr. COUMBE—I canvassed that earlier. I have tried to find out what is meant by a just system.

Mr. Jennings—How about a more just system?

Mr. COUMBE—A system is either just or unjust: it cannot be more just. It is like the word "full." A thing cannot be fuller.

Mr. Clark—I have seen some fellows "fuller" than others.

Mr. COUMBE—Members on this side, and I in particular, support the Premier's amendment because it is obvious what will happen if it is not carried.

Mr. CLARK secured the adjournment of the debate.

THE BUDGET.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from September 20. Page 1047.)

Grand total, £85,516,029.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra)—This Budget represents a departure from previous Budgets in language and in compilation, and obviously a different hand worked on it. I like it. It is a most readable document and, what is more, it is a happy document about the State's well-being. There are matters that I can and will criticize, but any Treasurer who can produce a Budget like this is to be congratulated. It is not all-sufficient, and the Treasurer will hear my disagreements with some particulars, but times have been difficult, and will continue to be difficult for Treasurers trying to secure money for the well-being of the State and for the continued operation of the various State departments. However, on this occasion even those politically opposed to the Government can find little to criticize.

I regret that the indisposition of the Leader of the Opposition, of whom we are all so fond, has necessitated his absence from this debate, but I congratulate the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on the way he rose to the occasion at such short notice. He had to read a speech prepared for another person, and did so extremely well and, at the right places, he introduced his own interesting remarks. He merits our congratulations. It is not easy to perform the duties he undertook and carried out so faithfully and well.

We have listened to three most interesting speeches in this debate up to the present. The members for Mitcham, Norwood and Chaffey have made interesting contributions, and I hope that I do not depart from that rule. The member for Chaffey had the interests of primary industry at heart. He knew his fruit juices and he knew that 3,000 tons of tomatoes have been processed at Berri. He spoke for primary industry. The member for Mitcham told us what we have lost because of the departure from the original Federal idea, and the member for Norwood told us what we had gained by the departure and what we could gain. I do not know how I can work this out, but I set myself somewhere between the three.

Mr. Riches—You could end up in the tomatoes.

Mr. QUIRKE—Yes. I congratulate those members. The member for Mitcham is a member of the Liberal Party and a Conservative, and proud of it, whereas the member for Norwood is equally proud of his stand as a Socialist. In listening to them I was reminded of an experience I had in the old days when I was driving a team of eight horses abreast and the centre coupling broke. The control was on a rein on the offside and nearside horses and the more one pulled, the more the horses were pulled around. They were both on one central hook, but I ended up in trouble. The members for Mitcham and Norwood were both hitched to the one hook and were pulling with might and main to do the same thing, but in two different ways, and they were pulling at cross purposes. One of the factors that militates against their success in this is that whereas one man, as the member for Onkaparinga said, can do as he likes notwithstanding what his Party convention orders, the other has to do as he is told when his Party orders it. I do not think there can be any disagreement with that analysis of those two speeches.

The member for Mitcham glories in the fact of a balanced Budget. What is a balanced

Budget? We were told in 1930, 1931 and 1932 that it was necessary to balance our Budget. We were living outside our means and we had to come to heel. We balanced our Budget by taking away from people the things that were absolutely necessary for them.

[*Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.*]

Mr. QUIRKE—At the tea adjournment I said that Mr. Millhouse gloried in the fact of a balanced Budget. We have had a balanced Budget under all kinds of conditions, and a balanced Budget simply means that we have regulated our expenditure to our income. Expenditure can be cut down to balance a Budget, and this can make finance more important than people. We can have finance as the all-important factor, whereas in the life of a country the most important factor is the well-being of the people, who are the assets of that country. In that respect a balanced Budget becomes a fetish. Someone somewhere has said, "You must balance your Budget." There have been occasions when States have failed to balance their Budget, and in the Auditor-General's report one will find a list of South Australian Budgets over a period of years, some of which have been balanced and some not.

The general result over-all simply means nothing of particular interest to the people of South Australia except from the point of view that the Budget has been balanced. In this Budget the Government has a considerable amount of money to handle, and in the balancing of the Budget few people have gone short or will go short; but we cannot say, for instance, that education will receive all that it could possibly use. It is a fact that if we used all the money in the Budget we would still barely meet our educational requirements. I do not think that can be denied. It will take the maximum amount over a period of years to catch up with the deficiency in our educational sphere. I am not attaching blame to the Government for that. In fact, the Government and the Minister of Education have to their eternal credit achieved something in regard to education that was inconceivable a few years ago, but one is not going to say that it is sufficient. I say it is insufficient, but under the orthodox method of financing these things it is the best that the Government and the Minister can do. The Minister was probably allotted an amount to further the destiny of his department and he spent 98½ per cent of it. He had to cut his coat according to the cloth available. The amount of money at his disposal is not

unlimited. It is a fact that in the education of our children we could use much more money than is available today; but we balance our Budget and balance it according to the amounts of money we have. The Treasurer can make an intelligent guess at the amount that will be available to him.

Mr. Millhouse did not do very well when he used the Auditor-General's report to support the Treasurer's Budget remarks concerning the dead weight of public debt. The plain facts are that the Auditor-General's remarks are more in the nature of excuses for the national debt than anything else. Much has been said in this House about the dead weight of the South Australian debt, but for the first time to my knowledge in a period extending over 20 years some attempt has been made to say that the dead weight of the debt structure has no effect on the body politic of South Australia. I disagree with that. The Treasurer said that the dead weight of our debt charges was the highest in the Commonwealth with one exception, but it had given us a strong, diversified, and well-balanced economy. Surely, we are not to say that because we have a balanced Budget we have a balanced economy. We have a diversified economy—very much diversified but not balanced; in fact very much unbalanced.

I disagree with the statement that the debt structure of South Australia had given us a strong, diversified, and well-balanced economy. If that were applied to an individual who was heavily in debt could one possibly say that his position was well balanced? It would be so unbalanced that probably he would have to enter the Bankruptcy Court. That applies equally to the State. We have boosted metropolitan rail fares by 16 per cent, country rail fares by 6 per cent and hospital charges have been heavily increased. Water rates have been boosted by £1,000,000. In fact, all Government charges have been increased, but we have balanced our economy on debt. Is not that a fact? Can any honourable member disagree with the statement that our economy is balanced on debt? If one balances anything on debt, it is indeed a precarious balance. I am not taking sides in the matter, but simply showing that under the existing system we can make no progress, and I will produce figures to show that we are paying heavily for our so-called balanced economy. There is a tremendous debt burden on the South Australian railway system. For more than five years we have poured £20,000,000 into the railways in order to give them a balanced economy, but we have failed. No-one has ever clearly explained to me how

much of the debt on the railway system is real. To whom do we owe the money, and if the debt were written off who would lose? Although certain railway lines are now non-existent, we are still paying interest on the accrued debt involved in building them. Some railways have been reconstructed over and over again, but we still owe money on them; but to whom do we owe it?

Mr. Hall—Does not that come under the collective debt of the State?

Mr. QUIRKE—We should write the debt off, and give the railways a chance. I have much regard for the railways.

Mr. King—You do not use them much.

Mr. QUIRKE—I do not use them very much because in these modern days they do not fit in with the time when I require transport and they are not convenient to me because they run on fixed rails. However, the railways have helped to develop South Australia and I am not quibbling about the amount of money poured into them for this purpose. However, I have some doubts about the wisdom of asking the railways to collect from the people higher fares and freight charges, or to collect from the revenue of the State sufficient money to balance their Budget, when under existing conditions that is clearly impossible because often their method of transport is outmoded, and through no fault of their own. The railways are on fixed routes and nothing can be done to alter that. I should like my question answered. There must be an answer. If a Government department owes £40,000,000 or £50,000,000, then it must owe it to someone. I want to know to whom it is owed.

Mr. Hall—It is all in the Auditor-General's report.

Mr. QUIRKE—The report does not tell us that. I have read it. I want to know who is going to lose if we write off the debt.

Mr. King—The people who invest in Commonwealth Loans.

Mr. QUIRKE—You say that now, but when the honourable member gets up to speak let him prove it. I say that is not the answer. I can give an answer, but I prefer the honourable member to give it. I have been in this House giving answers for 20 years and members on both sides have been completely dumb. No-one has yet given me the answer though I have challenged members time and time again. I now ask the honourable member to give an analytical reply to the question. If any member can prove to me that we shall hurt someone by lifting the debt structure from the railways I shall be surprised.

Mr. Hall—If no-one is to be hurt, to whom do the dividends go?

Mr. QUIRKE—There are no dividends, only dividends to the railways to the tune of £14,000,000.

Mr. Hall—To whom is the interest paid now?

Mr. QUIRKE—I want that one answered. Has the honourable member any shares in it? I have none. I wonder how much of the present railway debt is real. Today the total debt structure of Australia is £4,000,000,000 and it is increasing by many millions of pounds each year. South Australia is said to have the highest savings bank deposits per capita, but that is only because South Australia has the highest debt. Every penny of money that comes into existence comes in the form of a debt. No-one can disprove that. Every advance creates a deposit and every repayment of an advance destroys a deposit. Can anyone challenge that? All money comes into existence as a debt. If we grub out of the ground millions of pounds worth of gold, in order to have a cash credit in the bank money is created for it. That is the principle of orthodox finance today.

Mr. Millhouse—So what!

Mr. QUIRKE—The honourable member for Mitcham accepts that, and the laws of the Medes and Persians have nothing on it. The honourable member is the most conservative member in his orthodoxy. He is no more conservative in his outlook in some respects than I am, but I am as proud of my conservatism as he is of his. We are told that this is a balanced Budget. It is, but the roads in South Australia are in the most unbalanced condition that they have been in during the last 20 years.

Mr. Harding—I do not agree with that.

Mr. QUIRKE—We have had a wet winter following on a dry year, but, of course, we are not in the South-East, which has the best roads in the State. Let the honourable member have a look at the road between Burra and Hallett, which is now worse than it has been for 20 years. It is in my district and the residents in the area and the local councils say that is the position. Let us have a look at the dead weight of the public debt. We have had two or three different methods of approach to the matter but I will give the real approach. So far everyone has just stumbled around the subject. I have some interesting figures regarding debt charges, and they can be found in Appendix No. 5 of Parliamentary Paper No. 18. They show an

amount of £13,485,000 for interest on bonds, bills and stocks, £858,000 for interest on Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement and railway standardization indebtedness, £140,000 interest on trust funds, and £3,444,000 for sinking fund including exchange. That gives a total of about £17,928,000. The proposed aggregate expenditure this year under the Budget is £85,516,000, of which £17,928,000 represents 20 per cent, yet we are told that the debt charges mean nothing. From all sources available to it, State taxation totals £11,148,000, which is £6,779,000 less than the debt charges, yet we are told that we have a balanced economy. I do not agree. I have some further figures of interest in regard to debt charges. Over the eight years from 1952 to 1959 inclusive the debt charges amounted to £98,671,000, just mere bagatelle! When we add to that the £20,000,000 that has gone to the railways over about five years we get a total of £118,671,000, which is equal to the present annual road grant for 13 years.

What does it all mean? We are told that it gives us a balanced economy. I know that the Treasurer has to work inside the present financial system and that he cannot obtain money in any other way, but the method used means that we have accumulated £118,671,000 in debt charges. Against that we can scratch up only £9,000,000 a year to spend on roads. All this money, represented in debt charges, has gone down the drain. Has any member an answer to all this? I am not quoting fictitious figures. They come from official papers that have been placed before Parliament. It is illuminating to note that in 1952 our debt charges amounted to £7,000,000; £8,000,000 in 1953; £9,000,000 in 1954; £11,000,000 in 1955; £13,000,000 in 1956; £14,000,000 in 1957; £16,000,000 in 1958; and £17,000,000 in 1960. That is progress about which we cannot be proud. It has been necessary to go into debt in order to achieve what has been achieved in South Australia, and there is no doubt that our achievements have been great. I do not discount in any way what has been done in this regard, but is this the end of it all? Are we to just put our head in the sand and say, "Let posterity look after itself" or are we to say "We have a responsibility to posterity"? Has the man with a title to land in Australia the right to let that land be torn to pieces by erosion? Has he the right to have much of it washed down the river to the sea and make it no longer arable? We have a Soil Conservation Act, which says that he does not possess that

right. As members of Parliament have we the right to accept an erosion process that will cause something to be passed on to posterity because we do nothing about it?

The whole system is wrong. That is why I stand midway between Mr. Millhouse and Mr. Dunstan in this matter of finance. Mr. Millhouse, who is a Conservative, says that this is the answer, and Mr. Dunstan, a Socialist, says that it is not because the State should own everything and apportion things amongst the people. I do not agree with either of them. In all the factors that are related to our economy the paramount thing is that each Government should have some control over its fiscal policy. I would like to see the finances of Australia in the hands of all the Treasurers. The Treasurers of South Australia and Victoria and other States, who have been elected to responsible positions by the electors in their respective States, should be co-ordinating the financial policy of this country. It should not be entirely in the hands of the Commonwealth Government. The Commonwealth Government should be in the picture, but the Treasurers of this State and other States should not go before the Commonwealth Government and the Loan Council as mendicants. I do not know what the Savings Bank of South Australia contributed towards the last Commonwealth loan, but country districts have received pennants and telegrams signed by the Prime Minister thanking them for subscribing. The Treasurer of this State will go to Canberra and bend his stubborn neck to the Mammon of iniquity there and he will plead for the money that was lent by the people of South Australia to come back to him, and the most infamous part is that the Savings Bank of South Australia lends money to the Commonwealth and receives in exchange the necessary bits of paper to show it has the money there. The Bank does not reduce the deposits of the people by one penny because it lends it. Everybody is able to get it. That is one place that can have its cake and eat it too.

The money goes to Canberra and the Treasurer asks for his portion of the Loan money that has been subscribed by the Savings Bank of South Australia. For the life of me I cannot see how anybody can suffer that in silence. I said that we have a big debt in South Australia. It amounts to about £330 per capita and our savings are £165 per capita, and they are the highest of any State. Tasmania beats South Australia with a debt figure of £426 but we can explain the difference in

the debt there because their savings are only £120. The Australian average is £229 per capita of debt over the various States and £131 in savings. Our savings never catch up with our debt any more than our income will ever buy the output of Australian industry because it just won't do it.

When I say it won't buy the output of Australian industry it is necessary for me to repeat what I said during the debate on the last Estimates. I shall refer again to that great Australian company with which I have no quarrel. I have said that the income of the Australian people cannot purchase the output of industry and I say also that the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited provided in wages £45,500,000 for its employees and took back £44,000,000 in profit. It had a £13,000,000 net profit and provided £12,000,000 for taxation, £11,000,000 for depreciation and £7,000,000 for plant depreciation. That industry pays £45,500,000 and its charges are £44,000,000. Do honourable members opposite call that a balanced economy, too? Somewhere in the economic structure there is £1,500,000 to purchase the output of the B.H.P. Company. It is not the whole purchasing power, but I want members to understand that everything is relative. Not one of the big employers in industry operates differently from the B.H.P. Company.

I am not criticizing the industry but I criticize the tremendous hire-purchase system that comes out of it. The honourable member for Norwood, with whom I heartily agree on this point, and heartily disagree with in other respects, said that there is an inner circle of finance in Australia outside the banks which is operating at a margin of profit that the banks never dreamed of because the banking system has never extracted heavy profits from the Australian people. This hire-purchase business is a parasite on the Australian economy. Various forms of debt structure are being manipulated by these people and I will have no mercy on them. They have no place in the economy of Australia because they are the most rabid blood suckers any country has ever had. I am not a "red-ragger" but there is no warrant for the continuation of what these people are doing to the Australian public and they should be stopped. How are we going to stop them? We say we cannot do it because the Commonwealth Government wants more power and it is only the Commonwealth Government that can stop them. We could stop them in their

tracks in South Australia if we had the guts to do it. We could stop them tomorrow if we wanted to and we should do that because if we did it in South Australia we should give a lead to the other States as South Australia has given a lead on many previous occasions.

This housing racket is a screaming infamy in South Australia. If the blood of Abel cried to heaven for vengeance that is in this, too. We cannot continue in this way. We cannot continue to have the sort of thing we have had recently from the president of the Stockowners' Association when he spoke at the 70th annual meeting of the association. That gentleman, Mr. R. J. McAuley, said that the return on capital from wool growing had fallen to the point at which serious disinvestment from the industry was threatened. Can we realize the implications of that statement? Everybody here who has any knowledge of primary industry knows the exacting work attached to growing a crop of good wool and the knowledge which is behind it. Without any trouble a man could obtain more from the investment of his money than from wool growing. I would sell everything and let the country run derelict through putting my money into something that would return nine per cent. In that way more could be obtained than could ever be got out of growing wool. That is what Mr. McAuley means.

This country cannot afford to have the leaders of primary industry speaking in that way any more than it can afford to have what the honourable member for Chaffey—and I thoroughly agreed with him when he spoke yesterday about the primary industry on the river—said when he stated that we could not afford to have those primary industries thrown into discard because the people who finance purchases overseas are so un-Australian that they are prepared to smash the Australian industries in the interests of their personal profit. Isn't that what they are doing and are prepared to do? Why should we be merciful to them? I will show mercy to people who are merciful and will show none to those who show no mercy. Those people are beyond mercy because they are prostituting their power to the destruction of Australia and we in this place are prepared to watch them do it without raising a finger to defend the people we represent. That is what Mr. McAuley's statement means, too.

Mr. King—Come, Come!

Mr. QUIRKE—The honourable member says "come, come" but I could go on dealing with one phase after another of this subject, but I do not want to. Everybody in this House knows where I stand on this matter. I think posterity will brand the people—and I say this after mature thought—who represent the Liberal Party today. They will be held by posterity as guilty men because they have permitted this state of affairs. It is usually accepted that the Labor Party does not represent the captains of finance. Who is going to take action against these people? Who represents them? Are they without representation? Somebody represents them.

Mr. Riches—They do not have to be represented. They control.

Mr. QUIRKE—The honourable member says they control Parliament. He and other honourable members would say that the only way to control them is to take them over—we must socialize. I would not do anything like that but I would enter into competition and charge one-half or one-third of the rates they charge. The Labor Party organization has a hire-purchase system, which shows how it can be done, and it is profitable and enables the organization to allow people to carry on without having to pay anything when they are hard hit. The Liberal Party could do that but it doesn't.

Mr. Riches—Every attempt we make is sold out when the Liberal Party gets in.

Mr. QUIRKE—It is a matter of making money available at a cheaper rate.

Mr. Riches—Hasn't the honourable member heard of the banking legislation?

Mr. QUIRKE—Yes, and the banking legislation does not preclude South Australia from doing it. Why doesn't the Bank of New South Wales have a savings bank in South Australia? It is because they are the bank for the South Australian Savings Bank in South Australia. In other places they have their own savings bank. Where lies the power to finance in relation to financing anything? I ask members to get this into their heads: it lies in the hands of the people who collect the savings of the people.

Mr. Riches—Who controls the note issue?

Mr. QUIRKE—The note issue has nothing to do with it. I remember that one honourable member here had something to say about the note issue, but the control of the note issue does not amount to anything. All the banks in Australia combined never had more than £30,000,000 of currency in their vaults out of the £400,000,000 that is current.

The rest of it is in people's pockets, up chimneys, in pots or behind bricks in hollow walls. Get it out of your heads that it means anything; it is only ready change. About 98 per cent of the transactions of this country are done in figures and by no other means. If the Savings Bank decides to give £1,000,000 to the Commonwealth Loan, what happens? Do they bundle notes into boxes and put them into a train, aeroplane or car and take them over? Nothing of the sort. It is just a transfer and entitles the Commonwealth Government to use £1,000,000, without pegging any deposits in the bank. The deposits are still there. The money is lent to the Commonwealth, which lends it back to the States, it is re-issued and portion goes back to the Savings Bank—and it is inflationary. I am not arguing about that, but it should be used for the benefit of South Australia. A total of £60,000,000 of South Australian savings is invested in the Commonwealth and a good percentage is represented in our dead weight charges today. Why do we continue with such a suicidal and useless form of fiscal policy? Cannot South Australia at least raise its voice in protest? We are in competition with one of the most ruthless ideologies that the world has ever known, and we are going down bastion by bastion. Every week we falter in our stride and lose caste. A swashbuckling individual in Cuba has now taken over all the Western assets, but do not forget that when the Western concerns were operating they did not operate for the benefit of the Cuban people. That is what precipitated the crisis there. Who helped? Was it us? No; Russia came in and said "If America will not supply oil, we will supply oil for the refineries put there by the American people."

Mr. Clark—What about the drongo from the Congo?

Mr. QUIRKE—That is another matter. This has happened in Indo-China and Malaya. The Malayan people, to whom we gave independence, do not know what to do because rubber is their lifeblood and we have developed synthetic rubber to such an extent that it is now proposed to make us self-sufficient for rubber to the exclusion of the Malayan people we are supposed to help. What will happen to them? Will we help them? We will send them to our colleges and to our universities and send them back, but to do what? Will we take their products? No. We are going to throw them into the arms of the opposition, and we are doing nothing about that. We are so self-contained and self-satisfied in what we call our

insularity (which is non-existent, as it went out with fast and high-flying aeroplanes) and so intent on our material well-being that we have no thought for other people. I hope we shall start a little ahead of their thinking of us, because I believe the sands of time are running out against us because of our attitude to this matter.

We cannot trade with India because the living standard of Indian people is such that they cannot afford to pay for the goods we produce at high prices because of our standards of living. We send goods there, but they cannot buy them because they are too expensive. Only a section of these people can buy our goods, although millions want them. All right: give the goods to them and we can finance them internally. There is a challenge; that can be done because the people we are opposed to are doing it, so we will have to do it.

Mr. King—The Americans are doing it.

Mr. QUIRKE—They are, as they are forced into it. Millions of people there are just as intelligent as we are, and perhaps more intelligent. They are there in their myriads. We down here in our complacency think that we can carry on as we are doing without any thought for them. Under the Colombo Plan we give them a few machines that they cannot use and do not want to use because they would upset their economy. We should give them every conceivable help we can give them to the so-called limit of our financial resources. These things are not mined from the ground, but are manufactured. There is a limit to the amount that can be manufactured with safety but, where we incur costs in the production of primary foodstuffs surplus to our own requirements, we can send those foodstuffs to them so that they can purchase them at a price they can afford to pay, and we can subsidize it here to meet our own cost of living standard. If we manufacture anything, the only medium of inflation that we talk about is the profit margin; the greater the profit the greater the inflation. The costs are distributed right through the economy and we should make it profitable to the people who produce to get their margin of profit. This cannot cause inflation because the costs of the manufacture of an article have already been distributed through the economy of the country.

Mr. Riches—You do not have to go to Malaya to find we are not helping people displaced by industry.

Mr. QUIRKE—I am talking about overseas. You could go inside Australia, and even South

Australia, to see that, but I was talking about what we are doing outside. We can do everything that we plan for the Australian people. Our people could be made the best-served people on the face of the earth but, if we did not do something for our neighbours, we would go under.

Mr. RICHES—If we do not do something for the Australians we will go under.

Mr. QUIRKE—I admit that, but we can do everything we can for Australians and make them self-sufficient, the best dressed, best fed, best housed and best cared for people with the biggest wages in the world, but, if we do not look to our neighbours overseas, all we have achieved will go for nothing in the next few years. I think the sands of time are running out in that regard. I do not want to sound a Jeremiah, but we are losing every punch in every round, and we have to admit it. I hope we start winning a round or two shortly. We might start in New York; I shall be very pleased if we do. We are up against people to whom materialism is the main factor in life, and who think a human being is only animated matter. When we are up against people with that sort of creed we cannot do anything with them, because they do not know any such thing as honour: expediency is the thing that rules them. What is right for them today can be equally wrong tomorrow—and we have ample evidence that that has happened and is happening. We have a different belief, but their belief is ruthless and we are supposed to be charitable. All right! Let us begin charity at home and extend it overseas to these people so that they will not believe the best thing in life is to have 2 lb. of rice instead of 1 lb.—and that is what it amounts to.

Mr. RICHES—Until you have sufficient to live on that is the big issue, isn't it?

Mr. QUIRKE—Of course it is. We must feed the people. I do not believe any Malthusian theory that we shall starve ourselves out of existence on this planet because we shall eventually have 3,000,000,000 people. I think that is nonsense, as we have only touched the fringes of our productive capacity. For instance, we have not even found the very basis of the nitrogen cycle upon which the whole protein value of the human race is based. We do not know to what extent we can go in that regard.

Mr. RICHES—The important thing is to distribute what we have produced.

Mr. QUIRKE—I have already mentioned that. Give it to them if they cannot buy it.

There is no reason why we should not do that, provided that the producer here gets money for his product. I will give an absolute parallel. During the war we produced wool, wheat and other things and sent them to England, but we did not receive any money or goods for these things, although every farmer was paid.

Mr. RICHES—Even when wheat was stacked in Australia.

Mr. QUIRKE—Yes, even when the mice ate it the farmer was still paid. Where did the money come from? From exactly the same place the Under-Treasurer of the United States said it came from when he wanted 100,000,000 dollars. That avenue is open to each State, but the only time our financial system works is when there is a war. We do not want a war, however; we want a system that will work when there is no war. I support the Estimates.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa)—I am afraid I cannot share the confidence of the member for Burra in his faith in the ability through manipulation of internal currency at one fell swoop, as it were, to bring about Utopia.

Mr. QUIRKE I have never advocated that.

Mr. LAUCKE—What the honourable member said would indicate that there is some easy way of correcting all the ills of the world by one easy movement. My views on finance are simply and fundamentally based on the time-proven principle that, if you make £1 and spend 19s. 6d., by way of investment or in consumer goods, you ultimately achieve a sound personal economy; but, if you make £1 and spend £1 0s. 6d., you are heading for an uncertain future. What applies to the individual applies, I feel, to States. I appreciate that a big use can be made of internal credit when there is no excess of money over goods. The greatest curse to any section of the community, particularly the lesser privileged, is inflation. It has an impact on that section of the community far more definitely and quickly than on any other. When I hear it suggested that a given situation can be met by the issue of more and more credit I can foresee a situation arising in which more harm will be done than the good that will be achieved. I like to see the under-privileged of the world receiving food. America did a marvellous job in sending to certain parts of the world huge amounts of surplus wheat, meat, butter and so on; it was a very admirable gesture, and one to be commended. At the same time, it is imperative that there be stability in industry on an international basis, for without this there ultimately may not be ability

to assist those we would desire to assist. Therefore, while I would like to feel that that which my friend the member for Burra propounds as being the answer could be the answer, I have very serious fears that what he proposes could be most detrimental in a very short while to our nation and to our ability to assist underdeveloped nations.

That which pleases me most in an appraisal of this Budget, and in a review of the Budgets over the past 20 years, both as a citizen and as a member of this Party which provides the Government, is the fact that the custodian of the public purse in this State over those long and eventful years has finished up with a clean sheet. The accumulated deficits to June 30, 1959, amount to £822,115. In 20 years of orderly direction of the State finance, that was the result.

Mr. Clark—Have you had a look at the public debt figures?

Mr. LAUCKE—Yes, there has been much discussion of that topic in this Chamber, but I venture to say that every person has a liability on his or her balance sheet. We have a debt, certainly, but through the moneys which constitute the debt have ultimately come abilities to produce wealth. In my opinion, there must at all times be a debit side as well as a credit side, and the debit side—that which is the liability of the nation—is the nation's asset in so far as through those expenditures further wealth is able to be produced. When I see the extent of our State public debt in relation to the assets of the State I have no fear that we are so weighed down with debt that there is no future for us; on the contrary, what pleases me so much in that respect is this: we have had a Treasurer in this State for 22 years who has methodically regulated expenditure on purposeful lines. I can sense—and I have thought so for years—that what he recommends in the way of expenditure will enable the creation of further wealth. When the measuring stick as to whether a given investment or expenditure is desirable is whether it will produce further wealth, then we can safely invest or expend those moneys. That has given us in this State—the most arid State in Australia, and one of wide distances—a system of water reticulation which enabled us last year in the worst season we have ever experienced to hold our sheep numbers at only 2,500,000 less than the record all-time high of 15,000,000 in the previous year. I venture to say that that very ability lay in the fact that we had water dispersed over so much of our State through the

purposeful expenditure by this Government originally. I believe in balanced Budgets, and that which applies to the individual applies to a State. If a person balances his budget he is secure and safe, and if a State balances its Budget then that State is fundamentally safe and sound.

Mr. Millhouse—The principles are exactly the same.

Mr. LAUCKE—Yes. It disturbed me to hear honourable members speaking glibly and easily at times as though the State was quite distinct and divorced in principle from a person. A State is no more than a collection of persons, and the principles that apply to a State apply equally to the individual. That principle has been observed in recent decades, and if there is a continuance of that principle then I look to the future with every confidence, to increased living standards for all our peoples, and to a stronger State from year to year. The past year commenced under very adverse seasonal conditions, and the Government had to budget for a deficit of £791,000. Then the position worsened. We had increased costs mainly arising through drought conditions, necessitating a huge outlay in water pumping, and simultaneously we had a decrease in revenues. This led to a position so aggravated by March of this year that His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, when opening this Session on March 31, stated that it appeared that the Government had an inescapable deficit ahead of it of some £1,800,000. That, plus a leeway in the previous year of £1,027,000, indicated in March of this year that we had £2,827,000 to make up—a pretty grim picture. Then, sir, the Commonwealth Grants Commission acknowledged the sound administration of the finances of this State through many years and recommended that the whole of the outstanding deficit of the previous year be made good by the Commonwealth. With better seasonal conditions we come to a much happier situation today. In presenting his Budget the Premier said:—

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 £450,000, or £94,000 more than the revenue deficit.

In my opinion that is a magnificent achievement, and one which redounds greatly to the credit of a commonsense down-to-earth man,

who knows finance as few others, to my knowledge, know it.

The Electricity Trust has done much in recent years to give equality in tariffs between city and country. When I entered this House some four years ago my late friend, the then member for Light (Mr. Hambour), and I strongly advocated a drive towards this equalization, because we both recognized the need for having industry on a common basis of cost. I mention this because we were accused a few days ago of not having raised a finger in respect to attaining a state of equality in the matter of tariffs for power as between city and country. That has been a matter of keen interest to me and to many members on both sides of the House. I am sure that all members are cognizant of the necessity for equality of charges. The trend in that direction has been quite marked, and I pay my tribute to the trust for its achievements and efforts towards that end over the past four or five years. We had eight tariff zones in this State at that time: we now have five, and of the five there is one which has a very narrow application, so in effect there are four tariff zones today in the whole of South Australia. We have the single meter system for farms which in recent times has meant a reduction of about 10 per cent in the charges to rural consumers—quite a major assistance.

With the introduction of the excellent single wire earth return system, which in many instances has replaced the previous three phase wire system, the installation costs of transmission lines are very much less. In addition, the capital rebate allowed to each country consumer who is a party to an agreement for a given group of users has resulted in the large saving of £200 to each consumer. That means that if 10 farmers desired power and the transmission line to the various farms was to cost £2,000, those ten £200 rebate allowances would cover the installation costs, and there would be no surcharge. That is a marvellous step in the direction of equalization of charges. Previously there was a system of charging for power on what was virtually an unending basis. Before the 10 years' contractual arrangement came into being, I understand the position was that those surcharges were to continue for ever.

Mr. Bywaters—That was some time ago.

Mr. LAUCKE—Yes, before the member for Murray and I came to this House. That 10 years' contractual arrangement has in many instances been reduced to five years, or even wiped out.

Mr. Bywaters—It is not a surcharge at all now; it is a standing charge.

Mr. LAUCKE—The chicken raising industry in rural areas is now being given the benefit of the lower "R" tariff, and the industry is therefore enabled to compete with metropolitan hatcheries. My point in raising this matter is to indicate to Parliament what has been done in the direction of equalization of charges, for which I am grateful. However, I shall not be content until the time has come when there is equality of charges throughout the entire State. When that time comes it will afford great assistance to country industry, and will remove the disability and the annoyance now existing.

I am pleased to see that the Agriculture Department's grant for this year is £800,000, £98,000 more than for the previous year. This department continues to do magnificent work in the rural areas in providing advice and so enabling farmers to produce more efficiently and to improve the quality of their production. The advisory services of the department are now a very fine investment and a boon to primary producers. The Agricultural Bureau system provides a meeting place for farmers to get the advice of the various advisory and extension officers. Wherever I move in my district I can sense how keenly producers appreciate the advice of the department, and how helpful that advice has been to producers. I have no doubt that last year's harvest results, light as they were, were in a large measure held to those remarkably good figures through the husbandry and knowledge gained particularly through the advice of the departmental officers.

I note that so far the State has spent £1,961,615 on the eradication and the prevention of fruit fly in this State. I regard that as an excellent insurance for the very important fruit industries in this State. It is much money but, bearing in mind that our fruit is worth, say, £10,000,000 in one year and that the fruit industry has been kept clean and free from this scourge of fruit fly, I am indeed delighted that the department has been so determined to ensure that fruit fly shall not take hold in South Australia.

The amounts of money being made available to the Aborigines Department afford me much satisfaction and pleasure. I am pleased that expenditure for the implementation of Government policy on native welfare has risen from £64,000 in 1949-50 to £357,000 in 1959-60. A further increase to £428,000 is provided for in these Estimates. Therein surely we can see

a clear acceptance of responsibility by the Government for native welfare and the activities of the department endeavouring to assimilate natives into our community so that they can take their place side by side with their fellow Australians. Whether they are white or black makes no difference. That move towards assimilation is indeed a good thing. I can well foresee the time when with this policy continuing we shall not have that blot on our history that we have not done all that should have been done for our natives. We are doing an excellent job for them now and I hope that this policy will ever continue until we have absorbed our original Australians into our communities.

A new industry which is coming continuously to this State and which is rising and growing is the tourist industry. The zeal with which the present Director of the Tourist Bureau (Mr. Percy Pollnitz) attends to his duties is already showing good results. This State is becoming known as a place with tourist attractions, of which we have plenty. We have them in the city; we have them in the nearby country areas; we have them in the Flinders Ranges and the South-East; we have them right across to Whyalla. There are places all over the State worthy of a visit from any person from anywhere overseas. I am pleased to see an increased grant to this bureau further to encourage tourists to this State.

In this matter, may I refer to a statement made here yesterday that disappointed me very much as it affected an honourable member for whom I have a very high regard. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Frank Walsh) referred disparagingly to a new building in this State that can and will assist greatly in attracting tourists to South Australia. I was dismayed and disgusted that derogatory reference should be made to an organization that has achieved something of which we can all be proud. We should cry to the housetops the virtues of that place, as it is worthy of it. Teething troubles certainly we concede—those things happen—but the hotel referred to by the Deputy Leader is and will be a major asset to this State. I hope that none of us will so speak as to give a wrong impression, both here and in other States, detrimental to the interests of this State and of tourists coming here. I have much pleasure in supporting the adoption of the first line.

Mr. McKEE (Port Pirie)—This is the second time I have had the privilege of listening to a debate of this type and I have been greatly impressed by the contributions from

honourable members on this side of the House. In saying that, I include the honourable member for Burra (Mr. Quirke). His ideas have much merit. I consider this debate one of the most important in this House because it affects people in all walks of life throughout the State. It concerns them because it indicates the terms upon which they will live for the next 12 months, and it is also a good opportunity to review the activities of the Government over the past year.

At this stage I should like to say that I am very pleased with the amount that has been allocated to Port Pirie for wharf rehabilitation and the removal of the railway line from the main street. The people of Port Pirie have long been looking forward to this. Of course, for many years Port Pirie has contributed largely to the State's finances and it will continue to contribute for many years to come. It is no white elephant. However, the people of Port Pirie and I are happy to know that at last Pirie's importance has been recognized, and we hope that work will commence on this important project soon.

Another matter I should like to touch upon briefly, which concerns me, is that on July 18 last I was invited to attend a wheatgrowers' meeting at Crystal Brook for the purpose of discussing the establishment of bulk handling facilities at Port Pirie. I was invited to join the official party, which consisted of several Government members and the Mayor of Port Pirie. Most of these gentlemen were given an opportunity to speak, but I was not. I am at a loss to know why I was ever invited to attend the meeting, because I can assure these gentlemen that I did not have to go to Crystal Brook and get half-frozen in the cold to be convinced that the farmers were keen to establish bulk handling facilities at Port Pirie. I was there as the member for Port Pirie, representing my constituents, the waterside workers and members of the Australian Workers' Union.

I believe, and I know that honourable members on this side of the House will agree, that the trade union movement today plays a major role in controlling our destiny. I believe also that the fortunes of the future should be what the majority of the people decide they shall be and not what we allow others to decide for us. But, as the representative of these people whose livelihood depends on full employment on the waterfront and elsewhere, I feel I should have been given an opportunity to express their views. I consider it was plain bad manners that I was not invited to speak.

After listening to honourable members opposite debating the Budget and reading the financial columns in the press, one would believe that we had a gilt-edged future, but the question is: where and to whom is the gilt going? What with the ever-increasing cost of living, the camouflaged water rates that we heard so much about yesterday from the honourable member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) and other interest rates and so forth, I am greatly concerned for the age pensioners and wage-earners. These people are getting further and further behind every week. I believe that all human beings, however different in gift and achievement, are equal in importance and dignity, and their incomes should be so distributed as to give everyone an equal chance of an active and enjoyable life.

Talking about money and who gets it, we need look only at General Motors-Holdens, Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd. and several other industrial giants that today are amassing millions from the workers' efforts—not forgetting, of course, the good old hire-purchase racket that over the years has robbed the workers of millions. I suggest that, if these big profits being amassed by these industrial giants today are not checked, if this high profiteering is allowed to continue, we have no hope of ever stopping inflation. If money is allowed to be poured into unproductive avenues, such as hire-purchase, we shall find ourselves short of money for Loan purposes for necessary work. Wages clearly are not responsible for inflation: wages are increased because of inflation. People who receive wages, salaries or pensions should have their payments periodically reviewed in the light of the prevailing circumstances of the cost of living and the difference in prices.

Mr. Millhouse—Doesn't that happen now?

Mr. McKEE—To a point, but not sufficiently. Our workers are still behind the cost of living by about 17s. or 18s.

Mr. Millhouse—Are you speaking of quarterly adjustments?

Mr. McKEE—Yes. I believe we should have quarterly adjustments.

Mr. Millhouse—Don't you believe that that would be an inflationary factor?

Mr. McKEE—Of course not. I will indicate presently how companies are jacking up prices and causing inflation. Workers on low incomes should not be forced to take two jobs as they are today. I know of several people who rush from one job to another in order to earn sufficient to survive. Some work up

to 60 hours a week. Why should wives be compelled to work in order that the family unit may meet household commitments? Married women do not go out to work from choice. A married woman's place is at home with her children. If it is prosperous for a married woman to work then we should all be Rockefellerers. To indicate the plight of young married couples let me refer to an article that appeared in the *News* of July 12 under the heading "Home Seekers Need Big Stake." It stated:—

Many young South Australian couples seeking a home of their own need more than £1,000 in hand if they are to avoid financial strife. Where is a young couple going to get £1,000 today? We know that it is impossible. The article continues:—

This is evident from a survey of the State's chief housing finance groups. The survey included banks, insurance companies, the South Australian Housing Trust, War Service Homes and the Co-Operative Building Society of South Australia. The survey revealed that the South Australian Housing Trust is the only organization in this State able to provide second mortgage money at a reasonable rate over a reasonable period. Very few organizations were able to provide a first mortgage loan sufficient to avoid a second mortgage.

Several banks and insurance companies have had to close their housing loan schemes temporarily because of long waiting lists. This is the picture in several leading finance groups:—

State Bank.—Under the Advances for Homes Act provides loans up to £3,000 at 5½ per cent over a maximum period of 40 years. Always has a long waiting list for loans. Temporarily closed. No second mortgage.

Commonwealth Bank.—Provides a maximum loan of £2,500 at 5 per cent for up to 30 years to its customers only. Temporarily closed. No second mortgage.

Savings Bank of South Australia.—Grants loans to its depositors of up to £3,000 for erection of homes or the purchase of newly-erected homes which have not previously been occupied. A limited number of loans of £2,250 is also available for the purchase of older-type dwellings. The loans are granted for varying periods up to 30 years. The present rate of interest is 5½ per cent.

The general manager, Mr. H. M. Caire, has stated that due to the accumulation of applications and inquiries, about 12 months could elapse before the bank would be in a position to deal in detail with any inquiries.

War Service Homes.—Provides an advance of £2,750 for ex-servicemen with no restrictions on type of house. Interest is 3¼ per cent over a maximum period of 45 years (£10 11s. a month). A waiting period of three months for those wishing to build and up to 20 months for a standing home. No second mortgage.

Co-operative Building Society of South Australia.—Provides up to 75 per cent of their

valuation (which is generally lower than present-day prices) up to 28 years at 5½ per cent. Has three times as many applications as can handle. No second mortgage.

Surely young couples deserve something better than having to resort to finance companies to be able to own a house? While this is happening to our young couples, our aged pensioners are getting barely enough to live on. The recent 5s. increase was an insult and by the time they receive it the cost of living will have increased sufficiently to absorb it. Many are suffering from malnutrition. These old people have every right to share in the increased prosperity that we hear and read so much about. The Treasurer said the State was bursting its seams with prosperity, but these people are walking the streets in threadbare clothing. Thousands of married women are forced out to work to meet household commitments and the workers, through hire-purchase, are in debt to the tune of £460,000,000, and the debt is increasing by £1,000,000 a week.

South Australian railway employees claim that because of the suspension of quarterly adjustments they have lost £1,500,000 in the past seven years. Basic wage earners and pensioners are living from hand to mouth. This struggle is not new to them. Back in the early days squatters, mine owners and manufacturers who held the purse controlled those who made the laws and the laws were made to suit their purposes. We are getting a serve of the same business today. The people who settled and developed the colony are getting barely enough to live on, whereas big business is prospering.

The total profits of Australian companies other than mining companies last year was £130,263,000—12.3 per cent higher than the previous year. Manufacturing companies' profits had risen by 13.4 per cent from about £74,000,000 to £84,000,000. Undistributed profits and money allowed for depreciation had risen by £36,000,000. It is obvious that big business leads the nation into inflation by making profits from every increase in production and by systematically jacking up prices in order to accumulate capital for further expansion, and by unrestrained pressure for sales which reduce the savings and increase the consumers' debt. That is obvious from the trend that hire-purchase is taking. People are going into debt at the rate of £1,000,000 a week. This policy of over-charging the consumer (and we cannot deny that the consumers are being robbed left and right) to

finance further expansion leads the economy further away from competitive private enterprise about which we hear so much from members opposite. It will be agreed that it is almost impossible today for anyone to establish a new business in a small way to compete with the existing giants. We have a case in New South Wales where Woolworths have just about monopolized the grocery trade; but, of course, when workers ask for an increase in wages we hear the old cry: "We cannot do that because it will create inflation and the economy of the country will be ruined."

It is the Government's duty to guarantee that Australian workers get a fair share of the prosperity of this great land. If workers and pensioners cannot be guaranteed increases in times of prosperity, it is difficult to imagine when they can be guaranteed such increases. Thousands of pensioners throughout Australia, including some in my electorate, and I should think in most honourable members' electorates, are living in desperate circumstances. Each increase in prices further depresses the inadequate pensions being received. Because of the Government's commercialization of the health system in this State they are forced to accept a reduction in their pensions and are being bulldozed into joining medical benefits schemes they can ill afford. I have pensioners coming to me every week worried about their hospital accounts. One elderly gentleman came to me only last week and he was so worried about not being able to pay his account that he broke down and cried. He is lucky if he has not already finished up in hospital because of this. Such people have to break down their smoking and other enjoyments in order to live. Surely we are not going to take away such little enjoyments from those in the eventide of their lives. The least the Government can do to repay these worthy old people who have played their part in developing the country is to provide them with free hospitalization. I support the Estimates.

Mrs. STEELE (Burnside)—I rise with pleasure to support the Estimates, and I make no apology for being one of the back-benchers on this side of the House who are vocal in their praise of the Budget presented by the Treasurer. I congratulate him, because undoubtedly it is a very buoyant Budget. I should like also to congratulate the Treasurer's officers who helped to compile it. It is pleasing that, considering the poor

season last year, the Treasurer is in a position to present such a Budget.

I shall first refer to certain services provided in our public hospitals, and I wish particularly to mention the provision of occupational therapists in metropolitan hospitals. These are provided for at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Bedford Park Hospital, Northfield Hospital, Parkside Hospital and the Morris Hospital. I made a survey of how many occupational therapists were actually employed at these hospitals, and this is what I found: at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, none; at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, none, but applications are being sought, although no appointment has yet been made; Bedford Park Hospital, none, although I understand they have a handicraft worker. At the Northfield Hospital, whence chronic cases are transferred from the Royal Adelaide Hospital and where there should be someone of this profession, there is none; at Parkside Hospital they have one trained occupational therapist, and there is also one at the Morris Hospital. There is no need for one at the Children's Hospital because of the age of the patients.

It is interesting to find that the Repatriation Department has six occupational therapists on its establishment, and also one at the Rehabilitation Department. At the moment there are two at Mount Breckan, and one at St. Margaret's Hospital. The Woodville Spastic Centre, which usually has two, has one at the moment, and the Scaforth Spastic Centre has one. I should like to expand on the importance of occupational therapists. It is a profession that is often confused in the minds of the public, who are not interested in this type of work, with a craft worker. There are many excellent craft workers in the employ of the Red Cross Society who are used as substitutes for occupational therapists. To become an occupational therapist one must undertake a three-year course of study and the only training centres in Australia are at Sydney and Melbourne. Immediately graduates pass out from these colleges they are absorbed by the big hospitals in the eastern States.

In making a survey of the position I spoke to the heads of most hospitals, and they all expressed concern at the great shortage of occupational therapists in South Australia. This is not peculiar to this State. Even the hospitals in the eastern States cannot get a sufficient number of these people. They are important members of the medical team working in collaboration with surgeons, physiotherapists, social workers and almoners. They are becoming more

than ever important members of hospital staffs, when we consider the increase in population, the increase in road traffic with its consequent toll, and the greater number of accident cases in our hospitals. I have spoken on this theme of rehabilitation before, and I stress it again on this occasion because it is most important that our community be informed of the need for teams of people who work in the rehabilitation of those injured in industrial, road or domestic accidents.

The next matter I want to mention deals with the Child Guidance Clinic. It is interesting to note that provision was made in the Estimates for this centre two years ago and again last year. When speaking to an officer of the Public Service Commissioner today I learned that there had been difficulty in finding the necessary skilled people with which to staff the centre. An appointment has been made of a psychiatrist, and I believe that applications will close at the end of this month for the position of psychologist and for social workers to be attached to the clinic. The importance of the clinic cannot be stressed too greatly, because it will be used by a number of institutions, and particularly by the Children's Court for the purpose of investigating cases that come before it needing psychiatric and psychological investigation. I hope that shortly the clinic will be in functioning order because, following on the establishment of a Chair of Mental Health at the University, its importance will be greatly strengthened.

I want to refer particularly to the matter of deaf education. Grants are made to Townsend House and to the South Australian Oral School. Townsend House, under the Chief Secretary's Department line, gets a general grant of £10,000 and under the Education Department line a grant of £17,000 with which to pay teachers employed at the institution. Under the Chief Secretary's Department there is a general grant of £1,500 for the South Australian Oral school, and a grant of £5,000 under the Education Department. This latter grant represents an increase of £3,200, and the money is spent on teachers' salaries.

In regard to the education of the deaf, members will recall that recently the Minister of Education announced that a conference would be held of people interested in this field of education. The meeting was held last Friday when it was agreed that there would be another meeting in a fortnight's time. These meetings are being held to discuss a plan that has been drawn up by the advisory panel for deaf and hard of hearing children.

I feel that this is a subject on which members should be better informed. The gist of the plan submitted to the Minister, and by him to various organizations, is that the Education Department shall take over control of deaf education. I propose to give members some of the background of the plan.

It is nearly 100 years since Townsend House was founded for the purpose of educating deaf children. It functioned for all those years until 1940-41 when there were two very serious epidemics in Australia of German measles or maternal rubella. The result was that children born to mothers who had suffered German measles in the first two months of pregnancy were born with some form of congenital deformity. Some children were blind, some mentally retarded, some were "blue" babies and some were deaf. In many instances the children had more than one disability. I am interested in those children who were born deaf. At that time Townsend House did not accept children under the age of six years. The parents of the children concerned (and there were a number in South Australia) decided that something should be done to provide pre-school education for these deaf children. In 1945 the South Australian oral pre-school group movement, which was a body of parents, was formed and it decided to found a school for the pre-school education of deaf children. It functioned at North Adelaide and started with an enrolment of 16 children under six years of age. The school grew considerably and in 1949 it transferred to premises at Gilberton, now occupied by the same group which had changed its name to the South Australian Oral School.

Mr. Millhouse—What is the age of entry now?

Mrs. STEELE—The trend in the education of deaf children has altered tremendously, and as with most children suffering from a disability of this nature the earlier they can get in the better it is. For instance, we have children referred to us when about one year old. This plays a big part in their education because when they come at 2½ years of age they have been adjusted socially and there has been some co-ordination. The parents can help a great deal. The school now accepts children from about two to two-and-a-half years of age.

Mr. Millhouse—Up to what age?

Mrs. STEELE—Seven plus, at present. From the Oral School they go to speech and hearing centres run by the Education Department. In about 1949 the State Government, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Govern-

ment, brought to Australia Doctor and Mrs. Alexander Ewing. Dr. Ewing has since been knighted, but his wife was the original authority on the education of the deaf, and she had interested her husband in the subject. They had conducted a department for education of the deaf at the Manchester University. They advised the South Australian Government on what should be done to set in order education of the deaf. The Education Department immediately sent to England a special teacher to be trained by the Ewings at the Manchester University. On her return she set in motion speech and hearing centres as part of the Education Department. They have functioned over the years and are situated at the North Adelaide primary school and the Woodville primary school. At the same time the Oral School sent to England a teacher who returned to be the director of the school. At this time there was a conflict of ideas as to which method of teaching was the best. The Oral School believed in the oral method, under which a child is taught to use the voice. The old-fashioned way was to teach the child by the manual method, but there was also a combined method combining the oral and manual methods.

Because of the conflict of ideas it was obvious that something would have to be done to prevent overlapping and if possible to bring about a co-ordinated system of education. Negotiations were undertaken by various organizations but little progress was made. In 1955 the Minister of Education set up the advisory panel for hard of hearing children. Part of its task was to evolve a plan to co-ordinate the system of education in South Australia making use of the existing organizations and the speech and hearing centres. In addition it had the overall supervision of all deaf children in all special schools and any children in Education Department schools who were found to be suffering from a hearing loss. I have the honour to be a member of that panel and over the last five years its efforts have been bent towards trying to get the best possible advantages for deaf children throughout South Australia. Its principal task was to prepare this plan and it prepared one and presented it to the Minister in November, 1958. That plan was circulated to various organizations including the British Medical Association, the Adult Deaf and Dumb Society, the Association for Better Hearing and the Commonwealth Acoustics Laboratory, in addition to the existing schools.

In 1953 another special committee was set up under the chairmanship of Mr. Cannon, an inspector of schools from Victoria, and it consisted of Dr. Neil Reilly, then secretary of the ear, nose and throat section of the British Medical Association, and Mr. Percy Pollnitz who represented the Treasurer. That committee made recommendations very much along the lines suggested by the Ewings when they were here in 1949, but again there was no agreement. None of the organizations concerned held out any hope that we might be able to produce a plan that would give these children the benefit of a co-ordinated scheme of education. At the same time the Deafness Guidance Clinic was set up by the Minister of Health, its purpose being to conduct a survey of all children at State schools with the idea of detecting any hearing loss suffered by any of the children and for the purposes of testing and making recommendations to the advisory panel or referring to the advisory panel any children that come before it.

In 1949 the Commonwealth Government set up the Commonwealth Acoustics Laboratory, a technical department charged amongst other things with the responsibility of testing children with the idea of fitting them with hearing aids. Those hearing aids are provided free by the Commonwealth Government. Any child whose parents suspect him of being deaf is first taken to his general practitioner, who no doubt will refer him to a specialist. The specialist sends him to the Acoustics Laboratory to have a test of hearing. If that child's hearing loss is so great that he needs a hearing aid, it is fitted free of charge and serviced for the remainder of its use.

At the same time both the Deafness Guidance clinic and the Acoustics Laboratory send reports to the advisory panel. So, what we are trying to achieve (and, I know, what the Minister is trying to achieve) is to build up confidence in the advisory panel so that parents will feel there is some source to which they can apply for advice as to the best way of educating their children. As a member of that panel, I feel it has achieved much success for hundreds of children have passed through its hands and it has been able to make recommendations as to how they should be educated or as to the schools they should attend. The panel produced this plan two years ago and it was circulated to the organizations but no agreement on any point could be reached, so it was referred back by the Minister of Education to the panel for revision. The panel has spent

three or four years trying to evolve a suitable plan on which everyone could agree.

Mr. Millhouse—What are the main stumbling blocks?

Mrs. STEELE—One is the classification of deaf children. Children can either be extremely deaf or hard of hearing and some people believe that the very deaf child needs the benefit of the combined method, and, therefore, that child should go to Townsend House which has both methods available to it. The Oral School is purely oral and takes only children aged from two and a half to seven years. From the Oral School children are brought for review before the advisory panel and the panel, on the basis of all reports it has on that child, the progress of the child, and its hearing loss advises that the child should go to a speech and hearing centre or proceed under the combined method. Both methods are taught at Townsend House so that the child can get either method at that school. The great advantage there is that it is a residential school and it is most suitable for children from the country. On the other hand the Oral School is a day school and many parents prefer not to have their children attend a boarding school at a tender age. As the school deals with them from two and a half to seven years, the parents often prefer to have them with them as family members.

There are a number of things on which the various organizations cannot agree, but the members of the panel feel that the plan it has now submitted to the Minister, which is being considered by the various organizations, is the nucleus of any plan on which a co-ordinated system of deaf education should be based. Indeed, the chairman of the advisory panel, who is also the Assistant Superintendent of Primary Schools (Mr. Whitburn), is going overseas and, while in America and England, he intends to bring himself up to date with the latest methods practised overseas. On his return, the panel will have further conferences to see if it can reach some measure of agreement.

I am sorry to have taken up so much of members' time explaining that, but I think it is better for them to have the background of this subject because it has been given much publicity recently and it will eventually be recommended to Parliament that the Education Department should, if that is the opinion expressed by everyone, assume the responsibility for the education of deaf children. I believe that, when that comes about, it will be for the general betterment of all

deaf children because the best facilities, equipment, and teaching staff available will be used to advantage. This is an expensive type of education because anything that requires special training needs teachers of the highest calibre with special training and that is one reason why we are grateful to the Government for making this increased grant to the Oral School. Last year the school had only 34 children but this year it has 57—more than it can cope with out of its own resources and finds the salaries for the teachers needed.

Handicapped children can only be taught in small groups, and no class should consist of more than six. Therefore, with 56 children a minimum of 10 teachers is needed, including perhaps one specialist in speech training.

During the Address in Reply debate I spoke about the provision of transport for handicapped children and I now wish to make this point: transport for physically handicapped children attending schools first came up in 1958-59, when £9,000 was placed on the Estimates. I was chairman of the committee that presented a plan to the Minister of Education to use a system of bus services. The Minister appointed a special committee, who advised that the service would be provided by taxis. That has been done and is working most satisfactorily, but £5,000 was placed on the Estimates in 1958-59 for providing this transport and only £1,178 was spent. This year £5,000 is again placed on the Estimates. In the report presented to the Minister by the committee set up by him it was recommended that only children who attended special schools (the Oral School and the occupation centres) should benefit from this plan, and £1,178 was spent in providing for these children.

On Monday night I attended a meeting of the Crippled Children's Association at which the Minister of Education was present. At that meeting it was said that to take children to Somerton House, where the Crippled Children's Association has now set up a special school, would cost £2,000 for transport alone. When we first presented the plan all organizations that were interested were present at the deputation that went to the Minister, and the hope was expressed that when the present transport owned by some of the organizations, including the Crippled Children's Association and Suneden Home, had to be replaced, the capital cost of the replacement would be met under the scheme. That was not accepted by the committee, but I point out

that this is a big item in the budget of the Crippled Children's Association, which is concerned about how it will carry on its present transport. I think Suneden is also experiencing difficulty. Further, as only £1,178 has been spent from the £5,000 allotted last year, I hope that further consideration will be given to helping crippled children attending normal schools who are crippled children on the books of the Crippled Children's Association.

The Hon. B. Pattinson—My recollection is that no request was made from the association for assistance.

Mrs. STEELE—In the original plan I think it was, but not since the Minister's committee presented a plan.

The Hon. B. Pattinson—I thought they came along with your deputation as a matter of courtesy but did not ask for assistance.

Mrs. STEELE—Every organization concerned with handicapped children was asked to be represented at the initial meeting, but the Crippled Children's Association withdrew at that stage, and then, just as we were about to present the plan to the Minister, they asked if they could be included and gave a list of the children attending normal State schools who found it difficult to get to the schools. These are the children to whom I hope some measure of help can be extended.

The Hon. B. Pattinson—I am sympathetic, but I am not aware of ever having received any request from the association.

Mrs. STEELE—I think the point the association made was that when it became necessary to replace vehicles it would then approach you, but in the meantime there were those few children attending normal schools who had great difficulty in getting to school from their homes.

Mr. Millhouse—How many children would be involved?

Mrs. STEELE—Not many; probably about 25. Some of them applied, but I think it was decided by the committee that they were not in the category that should be helped in that direction. Knowing some of these cases personally, I hope that this scheme may be extended to embrace them during this financial year.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.47 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, September 22, at 2 p.m.