

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.**

Tuesday, August 22, 1961.

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

**QUESTIONS.****UNEMPLOYMENT.**

Mr. FRANK WALSH: According to this morning's *Advertiser* the Premier has indicated that the Government is unable to agree to provide additional money by way of long-term loans at low interest rates to councils to enable them to undertake emergency works to combat unemployment. I understand that the councils are expected to borrow from normal banking institutions—and I think £248,000 is the amount suggested. Information I have just received indicates that the Tasmanian Premier, Mr. Reece, has written to the Prime Minister asking him to reconsider his decision not to hold a special conference on unemployment. Mr. Reece suggests that, in order to provide jobs for the unemployed, the Commonwealth Government could supplement Government, semi-government and local government works programmes with finance at present spent on unemployment relief. Does the Premier agree with Mr. Reece's suggestion that this topic be discussed at a conference or that another approach be made to the Prime Minister?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: When the Loan Council meets annually it makes decisions on two matters. The first decision is upon the sum that may be borrowed for the States' financial programmes and the second is on the sum that may be approved for councils to borrow for local government and semi-government purposes. The Commonwealth Government is always anxious to keep the sum that councils may borrow within moderate limits because, if councils offer higher rates of interest, this affects the money market and the ability of the Commonwealth Government to raise money for its official programme. At the last Loan Council meeting the Commonwealth Government agreed to an increase of £10,000,000 in the official programme and £5,000,000 in the semi-governmental programme. More recently, after some representations had been made for a special conference to consider unemployment, the Commonwealth Treasurer announced in his Budget Speech that the Commonwealth Government would be prepared in the circumstances to allow an increase of £5,000,000 in the semi-governmental programme, and the suggested allocation to South

Australia was £248,000. That is a low figure, but it reflects the low quota we normally get for semi-governmental bodies. I explained to the deputation that saw me yesterday that all the cash resources at the Government's disposal were fully committed. In fact, in one regard the Government is over-committed, so it cannot make further money available to councils. I told the deputation that £248,000 had been approved and that I would do my best to see whether I could assist them in raising that sum. I think that clears up the first part of the question. I did not see the second press reference to which the Leader referred, nor have I had any communication from Mr. Reece. I do not know whether he intends that the conference should be a Premiers' Conference or a Loan Council meeting. Until I know what is desired I hesitate to say whether or not I feel it is worth while. I can satisfy the Leader's mind on one point, however. For many years the South Australian Government has had a fixed policy: that it is always prepared to attend any conference that any other State Government desires to call. It has never refused to attend such a conference on any matter and, if a conference on this matter were desired, the South Australian Government would be prepared to attend.

**SOLAR POWER GENERATOR.**

Mr. HEASLIP: The following item, under the heading of "Solar Power Generator", appeared in yesterday's *Advertiser*:

PITTSBURGH, Aug. 20.

A sun-powered electric plant which could bring light, power and trouble-free irrigation to millions of country dwellers in underdeveloped lands has been developed in Pittsburgh. The vice-president of the Westinghouse Electric Corporation's research division, Dr. S. W. Herwald, announcing the development of the thermo-electric generator, said it could become as commonplace in developing areas as the windmills which once dotted the landscapes of the underdeveloped areas. Dr. Herwald said the small, self-contained electric power plant was capable of sustaining individual families or villages by irrigating their land and supplying their household water needs.

As we have millions of acres of fertile land which lacks only water and which needs to be developed, can the Premier give any further information on this matter and, if not, will he investigate it with a view to seeing whether this method could be economical?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have no knowledge of the statement the honourable member has brought to my notice, but I have seen similar previous claims concerning solar power and I say that those claims have

not been justified: the cost involved and the amount of power that would be available would not make it economical for irrigation purposes. Secondly, the scheme would depend entirely upon the vagaries of the weather for its sufficiency. The problem of storage of electricity would arise and the supply would therefore be costly. I will see if I can obtain any information for the honourable member, but I can say that all previous investigations of plants have shown that they have not been very satisfactory.

#### SCHOOL TOILETS.

Mr. TAPPING: An article in last Sunday's *Mail* headed "Government action on school toilets urged" reads:

The Government should immediately improve toilets in schools, the S.A. Public Schools Committees' Association secretary said today.

"Parents are worried because of the spread of hepatitis and other diseases, and because of the effect on children where crowding into toilets occurs.

"Taperoo school had barely enough toilets for its 300 children five years ago. It now has 700 children but no more toilets. The school committee has been trying for years to get more without success."

Can the Minister of Education comment on the statement made by the secretary of the association or, if not, will he obtain a report on this matter?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: I can only make the general comment that in recent years the Government has embarked upon the most ambitious school building programme in the history of the State. I think that, all told, nearly 100 major projects have been approved; many of those are in course of construction, others are planned for early construction, and in others preliminary planning has taken place. In addition, there are perhaps some hundreds of minor works that have been approved by the Education Department and the plans forwarded to the Public Buildings Department for execution, but it is absolutely impossible for that department to cope with all the demands, either physical or financial, made upon it in any one year. The honourable member referred to the Taperoo school in his electorate. When that school was established the toilet accommodation was more than ample for requirements, but enrolments have increased and the accommodation is probably lagging somewhat at present. However, when the new infant school that has been approved is established the accommodation will be more than ample. I shall be only too pleased to refer to the Education Department and to the Public Buildings

Department the general question of toilet accommodation and the specific cases to which the honourable member has referred.

#### KIMBA AREA SCHOOL.

Mr. BOCKELBERG: When I visited the Kimba area school last week and was conducted around the school with the headmaster I noticed that the Intermediate class was working in the woodwork room, another class was occupying the library, and other children who needed extra tuition in some subjects were working in the office. One classroom was so full that some children were sitting with their backs to the wall and facing the rest of the class. A new area school for Kimba was placed on the Estimates last year, and that project has now been approved by the Public Works Committee. Can the Minister of Education say when this school will be built?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: The proposed Kimba area school is one of about 100 school projects to which I referred in my reply to the member for Semaphore. It has been approved by Cabinet, by the Public Works Committee, and by Parliament, and it is in the schedule of requirements forwarded by the Director of Education to the Public Buildings Department. However, it is not by any means high on the priority list. What the Director of Education has directed his mind to in the first instance is the provision of new schools where no school is in existence; he has left on a lower stage of priority the building of new schools where there is an existing school. I am sympathetic to the honourable member's request because I think that Kimba and some of the more outlying areas deserve greater assistance, but I cannot at this time even hazard a guess when the Kimba area school will be completed or even commenced.

#### EVANSTON SEPTIC TANKS.

Mr. CLARK: I have had numerous complaints recently from occupants of Housing Trust houses at Evanston South, which is south of the Gawler racecourse, about the unsatisfactory sewerage situation. Those people have septic tanks, but apparently these are constantly overflowing, blocking, and creating much nuisance. As this is so general to the area, some fault probably exists in the original septic tanks. It must be realized that the repair and draining of these tanks is the responsibility of the tenants, and this causes much hardship and an uncomfortable situation. Will the Premier obtain a report from the Housing Trust on this matter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes.

**CALLINGTON TO WOODCHESTER ROAD.**

Mr. JENKINS: Two weeks ago I asked a series of questions concerning several roads in my district, and I understand that an error was made in the information provided concerning the Callington to Woodchester road. Is the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Roads, able to clarify the matter?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I have a report from the Highways Commissioner in which he refers to the misunderstanding conveyed in my earlier reply to the honourable member. However, that report clears up any doubts. In my previous reply I gave the report of the Commissioner of Highways, to the effect that in regard to the extension of the sealing through Langhorne Creek, this could not be recommended at present as the District Council is fully engaged on the reconstruction of the Woodchester-Callington section of road. The Commissioner has informed my colleague that before the Works Programme for 1961-62 was prepared, it was hoped that the reconstruction of the Woodchester-Callington road could be carried out this financial year, but owing to heavy expenditure at the end of last financial year, it was not possible to include the work in the programme.

It is therefore not correct that the council is fully engaged on the construction of the Woodchester-Callington road, but consideration will be given to providing funds to the District Council of Strathalbyn to enable work to commence in 1962-63. The Commissioner adds that it is still not possible to recommend the extension of sealing through Langhorne Creek as the traffic count on the road does not justify it at this stage.

**UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF.**

Mr. RALSTON: If I may quote from the Mount Gambier press of last Saturday, it seems that a Councillor J. G. Gardner, of the Penola Council, introduced at the Penola Council the subject of unemployment, which he said was growing everywhere. We can agree on that; we know that is true. I am more concerned, however, with what appears further down in the report: Councillor Donnelly, the chairman of the Penola District Council, advised that a man was not entitled to relief unless he had been off work for a week. Councillor Donnelly said that he had been standing men down on alternate weeks but found under those conditions that they were not entitled to Commonwealth relief; so he had changed that policy and was now standing men down on alternate fortnightly cycles so that under

those conditions they could now apply. We appreciate what Councillor Donnelly has done; he is doing the best he can in the circumstances. In those circumstances, the employee would work for two weeks, the next week he would have no income, in the fourth week he would receive unemployment benefit, and then he would probably return to work. Obviously a man with a family could not meet his commitments for very long unless further aid were available. Can the Premier indicate whether State aid is available in the circumstances I have mentioned, and, if so, under what conditions?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department, which was the authority that provided relief in all hardship cases prior to the Commonwealth Government's providing unemployment benefits, is still operating and still making grants where hardship arises. The conditions are that an applicant has to apply to the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board, and the basis upon which relief is granted is hardship. Incidentally, I will get a report for the honourable member on the number of persons unemployed at Penola at present.

**SUPERVISOR OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES.**

Mrs. STEELE: I have on a number of previous occasions asked questions about the position of Supervisor of School Libraries. Except for two periods during which the position of Supervisor of School Libraries was filled, first by a woman appointee and more recently by a man who left to accept the position of librarian at the Children's Library, the post has remained unfilled for years. It is becoming a matter of public reproach that there is no Supervisor of School Libraries in this State, particularly when in more than 700 school libraries there are over 1,000,000 volumes for the use of children attending schools in South Australia. One reason is probably that in South Australia the post carries a salary of only £1,780 maximum in the case of a male appointee, and only £1,605 in the case of a female; whereas in Victoria the salary is about £2,300 a year for a man, and in Western Australia in a similar position recently created the salary offered was in the range of £2,190 to £2,410. In view of the Minister of Education's remarks at the opening of a new library at the Norwood girls technical high school last Friday morning, when he expressed concern at the delay in making such an appointment, can he say whether positive steps will now be taken to rectify the position?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: First, to clear up a popular misconception that the position of Supervisor of School Libraries is a teaching service appointment, in fact it is a Public Service appointment. Had it been a teaching service appointment, I should have asked the Director of Education a long time ago to second a properly qualified teacher to this position, if only temporarily. I personally deplore the long absence of any appointee to this position, because it seems to be incomprehensible when we have, as the honourable member says, over 700 school libraries in which there are about 1,000,000 books, quite apart from text books, and there is no person to organize or supervise or control the position. Because of the general dissatisfaction throughout the teaching service, all the numerous parent bodies, and the public generally, I intend to ask the Acting Public Service Commissioner whether he will call a conference between himself, the Director of Education, and the Principal Librarian of the Public Library to see if they can come to some finality concerning this important appointment.

#### MANNUM-PURNONG ROAD.

Mr. BYWATERS: I should like to say, first, how much I appreciate the fact that the Minister of Works notifies members when he has a reply to a question. I think it would be a good thing if all Ministers were to act similarly, because it would save having to ask a question several times. When we receive this advice, we know we are going to get a reply, and that is a good thing. My question relates to the Mannum-Purnong road, about which I asked a question last week. At that time I suggested sealing the approach to the ferry at Purnong and a deviation of the road known as Caunamont Hill. Has the Minister a report for me?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: My colleague, the Minister of Roads, informs me that a length of 1½ miles of the Mannum-Halidon main road from Mannum towards Purnong has been reconstructed and will be sealed during this year. It is planned to continue this improvement over the section on which the traffic count exceeds 100 vehicles a day. With present funds the low traffic count precludes consideration of bituminous sealing of the causeway near Purnong at the expense of more heavily trafficked roads elsewhere. Funds for the maintenance of this section in a satisfactory condition are made available to the local authority. Before improvements were made a

few years ago to Caunamont Hill, consideration was given to deviating to improve the grade and curve but, as this involved major earthworks and land acquisition, funds could not be made available.

#### LIVESTOCK ON "RED HENS".

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my question of August 1 last relating to the carrying of livestock on "red hens" in my district?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The Railways Commissioner states that it has been found feasible to transport the birds from Mitcham to Adelaide on another train having a consist of three cars including one baggage compartment.

#### TEROWIE COAL-TIPPING PLANT.

Mr. CASEY: Has the Minister of Works a reply from the Minister of Railways about the sale of the Terowie coal-tipping plant?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes. I have received the following report from my colleague, the Minister of Railways:

The Railways Commissioner advises that the Terowie coal-tipler plant has not been sold. Tenders were last invited for its disposal in 1960, but without result.

#### BERRI FERRY.

Mr. KING: Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked on August 8 about stationing an additional ferry at Berri and constructing another ferry landing there?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I have received the following report from my colleague, the Minister of Roads:

The department has 18 ferries, and operates 16 ferry services. Fourteen of these services have ramp approaches, and two, at Taillem Bend and Wellington, have jetty approaches. The latter two approaches are to be reconstructed, but the type has not yet been decided because of the very bad foundation conditions existing at these two locations. One of the spare ferries is for ramp approaches, and is in service for the greater part of the year, as six ferries have all steel hulls and must be regularly changed over, moved to Morgan, slipped, cleaned off and treated to prevent rusting of the plates. The other spare ferry is of the jetty approach type and was constructed in 1935. Major repairs are now necessary, many of the sheathing planks must be replaced, the yards remodelled and a completely new drive installed. After rebuilding, this ferry will be retained as a spare for the jetty approach types. Until Blanchetown bridge is completed, there is no spare ferry available for Kingston or Berri. The salient point is that there is only one change-over ferry for 14 services, not two.

**PENSIONERS' CONCESSION FARES.**

Mr. LAWN: Some time ago, as a result of a deputation from the Pensioners' League, the Government granted pensioners travel at concession rates on Municipal Tramways Trust buses and trams and later, because of representations in this House, it granted country pensioners two warrants a year to travel to and from the city. I have received a letter from the league stating the true position, which I found difficult to believe and which I checked. Pensioners cannot enjoy both concessions. If they have a concession card for the city they cannot obtain warrants from the country to the city. I doubt whether the Premier knows that this is the position because the city concession card applied before the rail warrants were granted. Is the Premier aware of the position and, if not, will he further consider the matter so that a country pensioner can have his two warrants to the city and, whilst in the city, have a concession card for travel about the city?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The position is clear. The pensioner in the city has the right to enjoy concession travel rates in the city, and that situation applied long before country concessions were granted. The Pensioners' League approached the Government and asked whether the Government would grant concessions to country people who did not enjoy the city concession. The country concession was granted to compensate country people for not having the city concession. The Government has stretched these concessions as far as possible. They are very expensive and it would not be the Government's policy to extend them further.

Mr. RICHES: Has the Premier a reply to my recent question regarding concessions to country pensioners travelling on the Commonwealth Railways?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have received the following reply from the Commonwealth Minister for Shipping and Transport (Mr. Opperman):

I have your letter of July 7, 1961, informing me of the concession rail travel now available in your State for country pensioners and seeking similar concessions in respect of travel by country passengers served by the Commonwealth railways. I am having the matter examined and shall write to you again as soon as I am in a position to do so.

**CLARENDON ROAD.**

Mr. SHANNON: At present the Highways Department is reconstructing the main road from Clarendon to Kangarilla and Meadows. A stony outcrop adjacent to the Clarendon

Methodist Church will, when the road is widened, create a bottleneck in the main street of Clarendon and, because of its proximity to a sharp curve, cause a traffic hazard. Will the Minister of Works ascertain from the Minister of Roads whether this stony outcrop could be removed while the Highways Department is working in the area rather than regarding its removal as a separate project for later?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will bring the honourable member's remarks to the notice of my colleague and ask for a report.

**INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT SPECIAL COMMITTEE.**

Mr. RICHES: Last week the interim report of the Industries Development Special Committee was laid on the table in this House. Has the Premier examined that report, and particularly the part that states that the committee's work in inquiring into the decentralization of industry would be greatly assisted if it were given the powers of a Royal Commission? Is the Premier prepared to accede to the request?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have seen the report and inquired about it. I understand that in connection with one avenue of its inquiry the committee heard from a private company that it was negotiating with the Government and, under those circumstances, believed it would be inadvisable to bring forward concrete proposals to the committee. I believe that was accepted by the committee. I have also been informed that two Commonwealth Departments declined to give evidence and said they would make written submissions to the committee. I point out that the appointment of a Royal Commission would not give that Commission the power to question Commonwealth departments, so my present feeling would be against establishing the inquiry as a Royal Commission. However, this has not been considered by Cabinet and I am speaking as a result of information I have received. No authority of this Parliament would be capable of forcing answers from a Commonwealth Department.

**MEAT PRICES.**

Mr. LAUCKE: As the present glut of lamb on the local market could be unduly prolonged to the detriment of both grower and consumer interests because of the undue disparity between prices received by growers and those charged to the public, does the Premier deem it desirable to stress to retailers the need for observing reasonable profit margins as an alternative to a firm control on retail prices?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I agree completely that there is a big disparity between wholesale and retail prices and that this is inimical to primary producers. Obviously, the higher the retail price the lower is the consumption of a commodity. The Government has always been concerned with that feature of the meat industry. Too frequently meat prices go up in times of scarcity but a reduction is forgotten in a glut. The whole matter is being examined to see whether there is some way of effecting some decrease in the margin without invoking the elaborate machinery of completely recontrolling this industry. The present margins are exorbitant and should not be maintained.

#### ELIZABETH SEVERANCE INQUIRY.

Mr. CLARK: I understand that recommendations by Mr. L. F. Johnston, S.M., on the severance of Elizabeth from the Salisbury District Council have been lodged with Cabinet. Will the Premier say whether Cabinet has yet considered the report or, if not, can he indicate when the report will be considered?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I understand that the Minister of Local Government has received a voluminous report, but it has not yet been considered by Cabinet. At this time of the year a vast amount of proposed legislation has to be scrutinized by Cabinet, and this takes up considerable time. I cannot say when the report will be considered, but it will undoubtedly be considered as soon as possible.

#### LEFEVRE BOYS TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. TAPPING: Has the Minister of Education a progress report about the building of the new LeFevre boys technical high school at Hart Street, Semaphore?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: The Director of the Public Buildings Department reports:

The target for the completion of the erection of the new LeFevre boys technical high school was for school opening in February, 1962. Although there were several early setbacks the progress of the contract work is now up to schedule and there is every indication that the school will be completed by the target date.

#### PALLAMANA ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

Mr. BYWATERS: Will the Premier ascertain from the Electricity Trust when work is likely to commence on the single wire earth return system of electricity supply for the Pallamana district?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes.

#### JURORS.

Mr. TAPPING: I have been approached by various people who have complained that some men have been appointed jurors two or three times within three or four years. That is wrong, because the person appointed frequently loses money and the efficiency of industry is undermined. Will the Minister of Education take up this matter with the Attorney-General to see whether a system can be introduced whereby, after a person has served, he need not serve again?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: If memory serves me correctly, two or three years ago I read a report from the Attorney-General setting out in detail the method of appointment and calling up for service of jurors. However, I should be only too pleased to obtain a report for the honourable member.

#### ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.

Mr. RICHES: Has the Premier a reply to a question I asked on August 10 regarding electricity supplies for residents in the foothills of the Flinders Ranges?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Assistant Manager of the Electricity Trust (Mr. Huddleston) has reported that the Electricity Trust is at present working to the limit of its design, planning and survey staff and is connecting consumers in country areas at a record rate. Only a limited number of unskilled men can be employed in the construction of transmission lines and it is not feasible to take on any more labour at present. During the past 12 months the number of persons employed by the trust has increased by 199 to the record total of 4,808.

#### LOAN ESTIMATES.

In Committee.

(Continued from August 17. Page 476.)

Grand total, £30,748,000.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra): I support the first line. The total of these Estimates is £30,748,000, with possibly some extra amounts for education and other things. These are the same as all Loan Estimates throughout Australia because they are always noteworthy for one thing, namely, that the total is not enough. I do not think anyone will deny that. The Treasurer and his Cabinet will not deny that if the amount were twice as large it could be used with expedition and with profit to the State. I think it is accepted by every

member that the sum provided is not enough for even the immediate necessities of the State.

My recent inquiries about unemployment have revealed interesting facts. If we put the figure of unemployed in the Commonwealth today at 115,000, and if we provided work for those unemployed at the rate of only £15 a week, nearly £90,000,000 a year would be required to provide that work; and £15 is just a small margin above the basic wage. If the same rule applies throughout Australia as in South Australia regarding the sexes, it means that if we paid unemployed women £10 a week the total involved would be reduced by £10,000,000 and that £80,000,000 would be required to pay £10 a week to the unemployed woman and £15 a week to the unemployed man. About 10,000 are unemployed in South Australia, in the proportions of 40 to 60—4,000 females and 6,000 males. Therefore, if we applied the same amounts of £10 for the female and £15 for the male (which are low employment rates—just a little above the basic wage) South Australia would have to find nearly £7,000,000 a year for this State's unemployed.

How are we to employ these people? I found out by close questioning—and it is devastatingly true—that practically 100 per cent of those people are unskilled workers. There is no unemployment in this State among the skilled workers. It is tragic that we have such a tremendous number of unskilled people who are today not able to obtain employment. By what conceivable means can we provide employment for those people in South Australia? This matter concerns all of us. Can any honourable member say what form of employment can be provided for these people? Will there be anything in the next 12 months or two years to provide work for 6,000 unskilled workers in South Australia, and is there anything in Australia that will provide for 100,000 of the same sort of people, at the rate of £15 a week and at a total cost of nearly £90,000,000?

We read in the press and hear over the air that we are coming out of this recession—that business is looking up. As the Jew once said: "Looking up all right—flat on its back looking up." If business is looking up it is looking up at the expense of those people who are unemployed. It looks as though we are going to adjust the position in Australia the same as it has been adjusted in America, namely, by becoming reconciled to a hard core of unemployed, unskilled people in perpetuity.

I want these questions answered: What provision can be made for the 6,000 in South Australia? How are we going to handle it? If we employ them in industry, what will they make? Where is the market for what they make? There is only one way to employ these people: on some project in which they do not make consumer goods. We are bringing more people here all the time and we must have the population here, but under our existing methods we shall never get out of the position we are in today. America is reconciled to the fact that seven per cent of the working population is unemployed; our total of unemployed is a little over two per cent of the working population, and that is bad enough. What must it be like in America, and how has it happened there? It has happened there in the same way as it has happened here. During the Second World War, no-one in America was unemployed, and no-one in Canada was unemployed, yet Canada has a tremendous army of unemployed today. During the war we made things other than consumer goods. Nobody was asked to buy them, and the demand for them was according to the demands of war.

Following the war, there was still little unemployment in America because of the operation of the Marshall Plan, under which enormous quantities of exportable goods were manufactured and sent overseas to the nations needing them. People who were earning their wages making these things were not asked to buy them. As soon as the Marshall Plan ceased, we saw the unemployment that is inevitable under the system that operates both here and in America. There will be that unemployment. As soon as we fully employ those people under the existing system (if it is possible to do it) then that much sooner we have another recession and they are thrown on the scrap heap. That is happening today, and it is inevitable in the future, because we in this country have not yet learnt how to live with prosperity and how to cancel out the money that has been used in production without causing inflation.

I mentioned at the beginning that there was insufficient money. I received a letter today from the Minister of Education. I should like to read this letter, not in any terms of criticism of the honourable the Minister or of the Government but only to illustrate the point I am making all the time—how we are continually sidetracked and stopped in our stride, how the progress of the country is being thwarted and held back, how even the

ordinary things in life that are available in the city are not available in the country—and why? I have now received a report on these matters concerning some amenities for a country school in my district. It begins:—

The matters raised by Mr. Quirke, M.P., in connection with the Black Springs School have been investigated.

Without saying what they are, this is the concluding paragraph of the report of the officer who reported to the Minister:

I must point out that the execution of any of the above works is dependent upon the availability of funds.

What are they? A new fence around the school, the installation of a septic system and the punching down of a bore to supply the water for it. We have heard here today of the incidence of hepatitis in some schools. Why aren't the schools equipped with this, that and the other? Why aren't they? Are we short of septic systems? Can't we get them? Is it impossible to punch a hole in the ground and put down a bore to obtain water?

Mr. Harding: A septic system will not function everywhere.

Mr. QUIRKE: It will work in this State. It will work admirably here, but not on solid rock. There is another method of doing it. It is not an insuperable difficulty. Difficulties arise where there is clay, but there are other methods of overcoming that. It is not a question of presenting difficulties about doing these things. My point here today is that you do not provide for the ordinary and necessary decencies of life. You do not carry them out—why? Because you have not some thousands of pounds with which to do it. Isn't that true? Is not what I said at the beginning true, that the Treasurer of this State could, if he were given £60,000,000 on the Loan Estimates, spend it wisely and for the benefit of this State? Does not every honourable member in this place know where in his own district much money could well be spent for the immediate benefit of its people?

I sincerely hope and trust that this will not resolve itself into what I am afraid it will resolve itself into—our being called upon to have a hard core of unemployment in this country, unskilled people, those with no trade or avocation, or no trade in which they are skilled. Are we to have a hard core and be prepared to live with it? The poor are always with us—is that to be our lot? Is it something that we as members of Parliament can tolerate for one minute, and yet can somebody give me any way in which that ultimate position

can today be obviated? Can anybody show me how it shall be done? What are we going to employ such people on? If these men have been thrown on to the industrial scrap heap by Government action, then the Government is called upon to keep them—for it is not their fault—and to keep them on a better basis than that on which they are kept today. That is charity government, a thing that a Christian world demands or should demand. I verily believe that, if that came about, before long we should find ways and means of seeing that they were no longer unemployed. The only thing that prevents their being employed is the lack of money to pay them for the necessary work that will employ them. You have to make the work available to them or pay them to live in decency as human beings. Those are the alternatives.

What do we want in that regard? I suggest something like this: Today, we hear that we are getting out of the recession, that business is looking up and that the value of hire-purchase agreements is falling (it fell £5,000,000 last month), that £5,000,000 less was spent than was spent the month before—or something like that. What happened? The products of industry in Australia to the tune of £5,000,000 were not sold. That is what it means. Let that continue and you will see how quickly you can go down hill. Look at this month's report from the National Bank of Australasia; look at the key figures in that. They tell their story. Ask honourable members to look at those things. We are not getting better; we are getting worse—further and further into a morass that can finally strangle us. It is useless for me or others like me to stand here fulminating against these injustices and these stupidities—because that is what they are. Surely to heaven if we can put articles and men into orbit and into space, if we can overcome technological difficulties in that direction, if we can fathom the intricacies of the atom and look at the whirling worlds that form matter, if we can look beyond the heavens into outer space, to the outer limits of space, cannot we employ the people of our country or must we be for ever so devastatingly stupid that we must pay millions of pounds (as we are doing here) in investigating scientific marvels (against which I have no complaint provided it is not being done at the expense of the army of people today living in this country in misery)? What is the purpose of it all if we have the conditions we have here today?

Mr. Harding: Ask Russia!



Mr. QUIRKE: Ask Russia! One thing at least that Russia has done—not under conditions which, please God, will apply here—is to solve the problem of unemployment.

Mr. King: How do you know?

Mr. QUIRKE: I take it they have because their very methods would ensure that nobody was unemployed there.

Mr. Harding: We can do that in war.

Mr. QUIRKE: We can do it in war, but not now. If Russia can do it under a totalitarian system on a basis of absolute materialism, cannot we do it on the basis of democracy and ordinary Christian charity? What separates us from them? Only this fetish that puts money above the souls and minds of human beings. That is what is happening today, and nobody can deny it. Until we overcome that and provide for it, we shall never achieve the progress and the goal that stand in front of Australia. Australia is a land of undeveloped spaces and we have an army of unemployed who could do the necessary development. The country is our heritage, but what are we doing about it? Are we going to wait until some other nation thinks we are unworthy of it and takes it from us? Will we be able to stop them? We want three times our present population, and quickly, too.

What proposals have we for employing our unemployed? To whom are we going to sell the products of our industry if we say, "We can only have industry provided we can sell the products of that industry at a profit"? We have sabotaged the lives of our people in order to build our overseas reserves on the European market. It was the god of the dollar and of sterling, and the people in Australia who worshipped that god, who did to Australians what has been done and we have to think differently to reverse the position. What could we do? A general demand should be made by all Parliaments of Australia—Liberal and Labor. The greatest division we have to overcome is the completely non-existent ideological division between Liberal and Labor. Both sides must see the futility of the existing position. No Liberal wants an army of unemployed with all the trouble, trial and tribulation it causes. The Labor Party does not want it either, and yet we have this constant blame: "We did this: you didn't do that." We cannot resolve the position while we adopt the old Roman code of divide and rule. We divide ourselves and the people in between rule us. We no longer rule in this country. The people who are living on our

division are ruling it, and the sooner we wake up to that the better it will be for us and the country.

A general demand should be made by all Parliaments of Australia, as representing the people of Australia, that the present system of monetary policy in Australia be so changed that there can be full employment without inflation. Is not that the first thing we have to do? What prevents people from being employed? The fear of inflation! The demand should be that sufficient money at all times be available for the continued and uninterrupted progress of Australia without the devastating effects of recessions which are now an inseparable part of our present monetary system. Can any member deny that? Have I proposed anything that is not substantiated by present conditions? If a sufficiently united demand is made we will achieve something, particularly if our Parliaments are truly representative of the people.

Today we are bringing into existence armies of young people totally untrained for life. Don't tell me that a child who has passed his Intermediate is trained for life, because I do not believe it and it is not true. What is the position in South Australia? The unemployment office says that all the people on its books are non-skilled. Every year hundreds of young people are growing to manhood in our bigger country towns and they are unskilled. How can they become skilled? Do they come to Adelaide when they have passed their Intermediate? If they have not passed their Intermediate it is no good their coming to Adelaide because it is demanded of apprentices today that they shall have passed their Intermediate. Can anybody tell me why? Is it necessary to have passed in English to be a good pattern maker? Some firms today quite foolishly insist on their apprentices going to psychologists who determine their I.Q. and say whether they will make good carpenters. It is beyond me! I have not words to describe that sort of nonsense, although I could describe it pungently and in an understandable way, but I do not think that you, Mr. Chairman, would let me go without rebuke.

Mr. Bywaters: Give it a try.

Mr. QUIRKE: I think members understand me thoroughly. Boys who have not passed their English, and, consequently, their Intermediate, are put on the discard. There are some children who cannot pass any examination. Did failure to pass an examination prevent people from building fine structures in

Adelaide before we accepted the present monolithic steel, concrete, glass structures? Who built Parliament House? Did the tradesmen who worked here pass the Intermediate? They were master-masons, master-carpenters and master-joiners. The work of their hands lives on after them. Nowadays apprentices must pass English! What English examinations did past tradesmen pass? They made themselves understood! Much nonsense is attached to our ideas of what constitutes progress.

To assist country children we want three technical schools with hostel accommodation established in the South-East, Mid-North and Upper-North, and we want them quickly. The boys will be able to live at those schools the same as teachers can live at training colleges in Victoria. At these technical schools boys could be given a year or two of training in a trade and then they could become apprentices when about 16 years of age. They would then be better fitted to leave home to enter apprenticeships in Adelaide. Today country people have to get rid of their children by sending them to Adelaide and boarding them out. Hundreds break under the strain. They return to the country untrained or, if they stay in the city, they join the army of unemployed.

This position must be met. In Victoria there are teachers' training colleges at Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong and Melbourne. Those attending at Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong are country students and those attending the Melbourne college are residents of Melbourne. If students have homes near any of the colleges, they have to live at home. Magnificent hostel accommodation is provided for students who have to live away from home, and I want the same for apprentices in the country. Until we get this we will go on building and building the army of unemployed, which is at present 10,000 strong.

These Estimates are for about £30,000,000 to which must be added an amount that the Treasurer knows, but is £30,000,000 sufficient? It is not within the bounds of possibility to do what I have suggested from this amount, but we must do it or we shall add to the army of unemployed. As a conscientious representative of my district and a member of this Parliament, I cannot sit here in submission to the conditions operating today. It is not the fault of members of this Parliament. We do not control the destinies of these people as we cannot get sufficient of what seems to be paramount above the souls of men—money—to give them their worth. This country must

revolutionize the condition of finance in order to be a country worthy of supporting a population of 20,000,000 or 30,000,000. How far away is that? Are we going to do it at the expense of the people who will form what is known in America as the hard core of unemployment. Here, two per cent of the working force is unemployed. When we have more millions here, will our unemployment figure be three per cent of the working force? I do not believe that is necessary; I will never believe it. I think there is sufficient intelligence amongst the Parliaments of Australia, if we can only get them to do it, to deal with this. I think the Treasurer of this State knows how to answer these problems. Although he is only one, he might give a lead, which he is often accused of doing. I wish he would give another lead and try to unite the Parliaments of Australia (not an easy task, even for Sir Thomas Playford) in a demand that this stupidity cease.

In the Address in Reply debate I spoke about how it was admitted that our system worked, not to the general betterment of the people but to their final obsolescence as unemployed in great numbers. It would take £7,000,000 a year to provide for the present unemployed of South Australia on the basis of £15 a week for men and £10 a week for women. It would take between £80,000,000 and £90,000,000 to do the same for the Commonwealth army of unemployed. Having got that money, how do we provide them with employment? That must be answered. This is a crying need today, but nobody is attempting to provide the answer. In the meantime we are destroying the minds and bodies of many people who should be inspired to look into the future and see Australia as it could be, and not to look into the future with eyes in which the dominant feature is despair about their future. I support the Loan Estimates.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart): I, too, support the Loan Estimates and wish to add what emphasis I can to the speech just given by the member for Burra about the need for some concerted action by people as a whole concerning unemployment. On the opening day of this Session the Treasurer said that unemployment was the greatest problem facing this State. After that announcement I hoped to see something in the Loan Estimates that would afford relief to the people of this State. Those looking for signs of a lifting from the depression, which all members admit our people have been subjected to, looked in vain for some indication in the

Commonwealth Budget of some measure that would afford relief to these people, who are facing anything but a happy future.

The incidence of unemployment was brought home to me more strongly in the last week than at any other time in the last 12 months; I was present in a union office in Port Augusta when, for the first time, young men 18 and 19 years of age were reporting that they had been unable to obtain work and had been on unemployment relief for two months. They asked whether something could be done to give them some hope of employment. One young man, who had been working for the Commonwealth Railways Department, had given his age as 21 in order to obtain work. Someone discovered that he was not 21 and, although his work was satisfactory and the ganger said there was not a keener employee in his gang, he had to be stood again in the bread line because there were no vacancies and the Commonwealth Railways Department could not employ anyone under 21. Another young man, who had been working in a furniture emporium, had been put off two months previously because of the recession, and had been on relief for that time.

I do not know anything more damaging to a young man's outlook than the spectre of unemployment. I know what strenuous efforts were made by the people of Australia before the last war to arrest the drift that occurred after it had been allowed to commence, but they were frustrated on every hand. Not until the war broke out was any solution found. I mentioned this matter in the Address in Reply debate, and I do not intend to repeat what I said then. However, I am pleased that the member for Burra has once more drawn the attention of members to the problem, because I confidently expected to hear more about it and about the steps this Government intended to take than we heard when these Loan Estimates were brought before us and when the Commonwealth Budget was introduced. My impression from hearing the speeches of most members opposite is that they firmly believe that the unemployment position in South Australia is not as bad as the figures indicate. Members on this side have been charged with exaggerating the position, but there has been a disposition amongst members opposite to regard it as advisable that there should be some unemployed. That feeling has not been expressed in this Chamber, as far as I know, but it has been expressed by Liberal members in the Commonwealth sphere

on platforms where our members have been associated with them.

That outlook is dangerous, and represents an attitude of mind that the people of the State should rise up against, because we will all be involved in this matter if the arrest is not made quickly. We were promised that the arrest would be made, and we were assured six weeks ago that unemployment had reached its peak and that things would improve, but they have not improved. Once Governments apply credit squeezes and start unemployment they cannot stop it at will: it cannot be turned on and off. I was very much disturbed at learning of a statement—I think it was a considered statement—made by the Commonwealth member for Barker (Dr. Forbes), who said:

Steps have been taken to remedy the effects where they have gone wrong, and as measures achieved their objectives they were relaxed.

Dr. Forbes was probably referring to such measures as sales tax on motor cars. True, when the Commonwealth Government thought the imposition of that sales tax had achieved the desired objective the sales tax was removed, but that has not placed men back in employment. It has not given new life to industry, nor has it repaired any damage caused to the young men of Australia. Dr. Forbes went on to say:

To have no person unemployed at any time would involve the degree of control of individual freedom which I am sure the people would regard as objectionable.

If he does not mean that there should always be some unemployed, what does he mean? It is extraordinary reasoning.

Mr. Clark: What on earth does it mean?

Mr. RICHES: The only significance that I can place on Dr. Forbes's statement is that he is firmly of the opinion that there should at all times be some unemployed.

Mr. Jenkins: That is not according to my personal discussions with Dr. Forbes.

Mr. RICHES: I wish to be fair to Dr. Forbes, and I should be pleased if, when I sit down, the honourable member for Stirling could tell me where I am wrong. I am quoting from the published report of a speech made by Dr. Forbes at Bordertown. If he has been wrongly reported I shall be glad to be told, because I am worried that any man of influence anywhere in Australia should have those views. I agree with the member for Burra that all people in responsible positions

should get together and express the desire of the people as a whole that this problem should be grappled with. Everybody who wants work and is willing to do a decent day's work should have full opportunity of employment.

I am glad that the churches, which are in direct touch with the people, are giving a lead in this matter. I read with much interest the statements made by the leaders of the various denominations who spoke with one voice and in no uncertain terms, particularly in the districts where unemployment was affecting the lives of their people most. Those statements called upon political and industrial leaders, and everybody else who could help, to see that this cancer was removed from the body politic at the earliest possible date.

The member for Burra asked what could be done about this matter, and what work could be provided for unskilled men. He is assuming that all unemployed men are unskilled, but in my experience that is not so. I cannot speak for the great body of the 6,000 unemployed: I can speak only of the men with whom I have come in personal contact, and I believe that by no stretch of the imagination could it be said that they are all unskilled. However, even assuming that they are unskilled, apparently it is impossible to provide work for every man in the job for which he has been trained, and he would have to work as an unskilled worker or start anew in some other work once he has been retrenched. I believe there are works that are crying out to be done, and I had hoped there would be something in these Estimates to enable some of those undertakings to be commenced.

At this time, when for the sake of providing employment and caring for people who need to be cared for we would have expected an expansion in Government works, we have before us a Loan works programme which is a reduction both on the amount voted last year and on the amount actually spent last year, whereas I had hoped to see an increase. We have been told that other works are going on in the State which are not directly associated with the programme we are discussing this afternoon but which will be voted upon later when we get to the lines, and that that will make up the difference. Last year there was a payment on the Loan works programme of £31,455,000, whereas the Loan Estimates for this year total only £30,748,000. The fact that costs have risen somewhat in the past 12 months indicates that the works programme we are providing for in these Loan Estimates is

substantially less than that provided for last year.

One thing that I thought might have been submitted to us for consideration and could be put in hand now with advantage to the State is the standardization of rail gauges. In previous Loan Estimates, provision has been made for surveys. Amounts have been placed on previous Loan Estimates for preliminary work in this regard, but this year there is no line at all. No provision has been made for standardization in either the State Loan Estimates or the Commonwealth Budget. If there is one thing that is important for the economic advancement of this State it is improved transport facilities. I had hoped that long before now further consideration would be given by the Commonwealth Government to building the line from Alice Springs to Darwin in the Northern Territory. We have heard many reports and submissions about the need for Australians to take an increasing interest in that part of the country and its development, and the Treasurer was right when 12 months ago he said that the development of the Territory would depend largely upon the completion of the north-south railway line. This is a time when the Commonwealth and State authorities should consider building those lines, and the standardization of the gauge between Port Pirie and Broken Hill ought to be undertaken at the earliest opportunity. Men could be employed on that work. It would pay dividends for the State. The best time to undertake that work is when labour is available. The work could be carried out, I am reliably informed, in conjunction with any work to be done on the western end of the line. The line to Mount Gambier was broadened. That work was carried out concurrently with the broadening of the line from Stirling North to Marree. No-one believes it is beyond the resources of Australia to standardize our railways and to do the two works concurrently. I have been reliably informed that, if the work could be done and rolling stock purchased concurrently for both the Kalgoorlie to Kwinana line and the Port Pirie to Broken Hill line, £500,000 in rolling stock alone would be saved.

The people of the State should rise, through their elected representatives, and with one voice express their disappointment and concern that this work is not to be put in hand. It should not be left to the Treasurer alone. Parliament as a body should speak for all the people of this State, enlist the support of all our Commonwealth representatives and, with one voice, place before the Commonwealth Parliament the

real needs for the development of transport services throughout South Australia and in the north.

Another work that could be put in hand is the rehabilitation of the railways on Eyre Peninsula. We have been told that the re-laying of the track, which is absolutely necessary if our railways are to give a good service on Eyre Peninsula, cannot proceed faster than five miles a year. That is supposed to be the average rate of the re-laying of a railway line. We have seen the Commonwealth Railways, by engaging men and without in any way interrupting the regular services on the trans-continental line, relay the line from Port Pirie to near Port Augusta at a rate of about 25 miles a year. The whole country would benefit if these transport services were improved. If money could be made available to the councils to carry out essential works in their areas so that employment could be found for men in the places where they lived, this would be another means not only of alleviating directly the unemployment problem but also of improving facilities and services in areas where they are sadly lacking and where the development of the State is being held up by the lack of these facilities.

Almost everywhere that tourist activity is mentioned we get a demand for access roads, and it is said that tourism could be considerably improved if only the tourist resorts were more accessible to our people. Is there a better time or opportunity for putting such works in hand than the days when labour is so readily available? These Loan Estimates indicate no stepping up of the volume of employment compared with last year. I am not saying that the Treasurer did not do the best he could in the Loan Council meetings to secure sufficient money to make this possible, but I am afraid I go a long way in my thinking with the honourable member for Burra (Mr. Quirke) when I say that the last war demonstrated to us that, whilst we have manpower, materials and resources, no public developmental works should be held up merely through lack of finance. The experts said that Hitler would have to cease fighting within six months because he would not be able to finance his war effort, and they were going to squeeze him out of the business of prosecuting the war by pulling the financial strings. The war has demonstrated to us, if the people have a mind to adopt some of the measures necessary in wartime and apply them to the solving of this problem, that this problem is not beyond our solution. This country has a great future,

but only as long as we give our young men an opportunity to express themselves, as humanity demands that we should.

I was interested in the representations made by the member for Port Pirie regarding the removal of the railway lines from Ellen Street, Port Pirie. Although they are in his electorate, the people of Port Pirie want them removed and re-sited in my electorate. I favour that proposition. The lines in Ellen Street have been a disability and hazard for Port Pirie for many years, and as long as I have been in this House members representing that electorate have advocated their removal. Just before the last State elections, at a ceremony when the lights were switched on at the Memorial Oval in Port Pirie, the Chief Secretary, representing the Treasurer, announced to the thousands gathered there that the Treasurer had included in his policy speech a promise to remove the lines from Ellen Street. That announcement was hailed with pleasure and interest. I read the *Advertiser* report of the policy speech thoroughly, but could see no reference to the removal of these lines. The council was subsequently assured that it was part of the Government's programme and that it was mentioned in the speech but that the *Advertiser* did not have room to print that portion of the speech.

I have always understood that a policy speech represents the programme that a Party will put in hand if it becomes the Government during the term for which it is seeking election. Having been assured that the promise was genuine, the people were entitled to look for some results. The proposal was submitted to the Public Works Committee which, when taking evidence, received a unanimous request from the district concerned for the re-siting of the lines on the Port Pirie wharf, but which found objection from the Railways Commissioner who said, in effect, that to remove the lines would cost £37,000 and that the work would show no financial return to his department and therefore he opposed their removal. I do not know how thoroughly the committee investigated this proposal, but I have a high regard for its work. It recommended in a report submitted to this House last year that those lines should be removed. As this is the last session in the life of this Parliament the people of Port Pirie were entitled to look to the Government to take some steps to honour the promise that was made, so they wrote to the Minister of Railways earlier this year asking him to inform them when this work could

be put in hand. They received the following reply:

With further reference to your letter of the 3rd inst, regarding removal of railway lines from Ellen Street, I have to advise that I took this matter up with the Railways Commissioner, who has informed me that the cost of removing these tracks and relaying them at the rear of the premises on the eastern side of the street is estimated at approximately £40,000 which figure pre-supposes that the necessary earthworks have been done. In addition, it allows for road surfacing only where the pulling up of the tracks would disturb the existing road surfaces. The Commissioner states that no benefit would accrue to his department if this work was carried out. On the contrary, annual charges to the extent of £2,000 would be incurred for which there would be no compensating saving. He feels, therefore, that he must decline to incur any such expense, and no provision has been made on his estimates.

I consider that this is a serious let down for the Port Pirie electors. I am constrained to make the charge that the Treasurer had no grounds for making that promise initially (he must have made it without any prior consultation with the Railways Commissioner) and it savours of a promise made to catch votes at election time. As a matter of fact, why the removal of the lines in Ellen Street was ever mentioned at a civic ceremony to switch on oval lights is beyond me. It was a rather strange procedure. Nevertheless it was mentioned and the promise was accepted. Despite the fact that the Railways Commissioner's attitude was conveyed to the Public Works Committee that committee recommended that the work be put in hand. The Government is apparently ignoring the committee's report and no provision is being made on the Estimates because the Railways Commissioner still takes the stand he took before the Public Works Committee.

I think there is an element of dishonesty in this whole business and this House should express its opinion of it. I invite the member for Port Pirie to submit a resolution to this House to give it an opportunity to vote on this matter. I suggest to Mr. McKee, who made eloquent representations on this matter when he spoke a few weeks ago, that if he will move that in the opinion of this House the recommendation of the Public Works Standing Committee should be given effect to I will support him. I should like to know what the stand of members would be on such an issue, because I believe that Parliament does stand for the honouring of promises that are made and that it stands behind

the Public Works Committee for whose recommendations it has the highest regard. This is some of the work that could be put in hand now or in conjunction with work on the Port Pirie wharves. If some other circumstance has arisen in the intervening three years the people are entitled to know of it, but they should not be fobbed off with a statement that the Railways Commissioner believes the work will cost from £37,000 to £40,000 and that no benefit will accrue to his department. The Commissioner's estimate of the cost was accepted by the Public Works Committee and the situation is not good enough for the intelligent people of the Port Pirie district.

I refer now to district matters, one of which is the education of children at the Umeewarra school. Conditions at the school are most disturbing despite the valiant efforts of some of the most noble women I have ever met. These ladies are women whose services should be recorded and recognized when honours are bestowed in the New Year or in connection with Her Majesty's birthday. If anyone has ever earned recognition in the Honours Lists it is the ladies who have devoted their lives and everything they possess and who have worked for 18 years without salary in the interests of the aborigines at that mission. However, in spite of their strenuous efforts nobody could be happy with the facilities provided at the mission for the education of the children.

There has been a division of opinion for two or three years among Government departments and the passing of the buck. The situation is known to the Ministers because they have accompanied me on inspections of the mission, but I believe the problem is still not properly understood. The Umeewarra Mission, which is managed by the ladies I have mentioned, is a home in which homeless children may live permanently. No-one can question the way in which 70 children are cared for or the way in which the home is managed. However, the mission also includes an aboriginal camp where adults and some families live, not all of them in houses, and where there is an aggregation of wurlies that now exceeds that of 12 months ago because more and more families are attracted as the services of the mission become known. Some aborigines come from the inland and some from other towns but they all live together on the mission.

Everyone agrees that where the children can enter departmental schools on an equal

footing with white children that is desirable and transport is provided, but whatever provision is made in that regard there will always be a need for mission schools in which the children may be taught in an environment in which they can be happy. That is necessary for children who cannot take their place alongside others who are more aware of living in our civilization. The children must receive tuition at the mission before going into the "white" schools, for often a boy may be 9 or 10 before he comes to the mission. He may not have had any schooling at all and it would be wrong to put that lad into Grade I with the girls aged five who may be starting school for the first time. That would not be fair to the remainder of the school or to the lad himself. About 70 children are being taught in schools on the mission in buildings which are approximately 13ft. by 14ft. and designed to each house 13 children. The teachers are expected to teach 70 children in rooms designed for 26 children and it is not good enough. At the beginning of this year the Education Department sent Mr. Piddington, of the Psychology Branch, and Mr. Price to conduct exhaustive tests and an examination of the children. Reports were submitted to the department but we have not been able to ascertain whether any notice is to be taken of the reports or what is the policy of the department.

The Minister of Works has been assuring me for the last three years that he has been looking around for a suitable building and that if a building could be found it would be placed on the mission. However, about three weeks ago the Minister, speaking in answer to representations made by the member for Port Adelaide, said that the Finsbury workshop could turn out buildings to meet all the requirements of the Education Department. Why can't we have a building at this school? The work of teaching aboriginal children at Umewarra in all their varying stages of development and coming from all the varying circumstances of home life and background is one of the most difficult jobs facing the Education Department. We should be giving them the best we have, but we neither give them decent buildings nor do we provide adequate salaries for their teachers. The teachers are not paid the ordinary Education Department salary and that is a scandal. They are paid on a subsidy basis at so much a child. As a matter of interest, the money the teachers receive is not taken by the teachers but is spent on the children for food and clothing. This is a grand work but it is

not being supported adequately by the Government.

Having said that, I now commend the department for the way it is providing houses but it is not providing nearly enough and it will be some years before it catches up on the private houses required. The dwellings are not of a standard we would like to live in, but they are much better than those the people have been used to and they are for the people who can be taught to live in a house. The aborigines are later transferred from those houses to established dwellings in the Port Augusta township. I believe that that experiment is working out most satisfactorily—so satisfactorily that because of the work done on the mission and the services that are available through our hospital more and more aborigines are being attracted to the mission. Therefore the problem is increasing. Once the aborigines have been used to a bed, they like its comfort; once they have been used to sugar they like it and are not content when they have a diet without sugar. They would rather live in wurlies nearby than out in the bush, because they are becoming accustomed to eating bread, meat and other foodstuffs that we eat. How a family can live in a wurley not big enough for a bed and dress their children in it and care for their clothing, I shall never understand. So long as there are people living in wurlies, it is fairer to the children from these places to be given the benefit of whatever education can be made available to them on the mission. I ask that this matter be treated as one of urgency and that on the question of education the aboriginal children should be placed on an equal footing with the white children. If it is possible for any more of these children to be sent into the departmental schools, let them be sent in by all means. It will be necessary for the provision to be good and permanent. Proper provision should be made on the mission itself for the teaching of those who in many cases need special attention—individual attention—in order to take their places in school.

At Port Augusta we have a Government hospital that has served a large and important district for more than half a century. Although the building is in reasonable order, its mode of operation is antiquated and outmoded. It is a centre of operation of the Flying Doctor Service in the north-east of South Australia, it serves the whole of the East-West railway and is also the centre of the Commonwealth

railway medical services. The staff is hampered because of inadequate facilities. I am informed by the doctors that it is almost impossible for a woman patient to obtain a private ward, that sterilizing facilities are not available in any of the wards, and therefore the working of the hospital is most difficult. The board of management has been making representations to the Government for a considerable time for the building of a new hospital, and as the result of conferences with representatives of the Public Buildings Department an over-all master plan was agreed upon and it was decided that all new buildings should be erected in accordance with that plan. However, it is feared that the Government has placed it in a pigeon hole. Plans were drawn up two years ago and submitted to the board, the medical officer and the matron and they spent many hours poring over them. They submitted suggestions for alterations, having in mind the aboriginal as well as the white population, and also all the services required from a Government hospital in that locality.

Finally, agreement was reached on the provision that should be made, but no-one has been able to obtain any information beyond that stage. We have been unable to get any information at all as to where the plans are and what progress has been made to give effect to them or when Port Augusta is likely to have a new hospital. We know that the Government has completed a fine hospital at Mount Gambier and new hospitals have been provided at Wallaroo and Port Pirie, and we think that Port Augusta should be the next on the list. We have been unable to get a satisfactory statement from the department, so I have raised the matter here. There is no line on the Estimates this year and so strongly do the people feel about the need for this hospital that I have been questioned about the work that has been approved for the Port Augusta gaol. Articles have been written in the press and reference made at council meetings and I have advised the people that it is not good policy to object to any work which could be carried out and that holding up one job does not necessarily mean that another job will be accelerated. That has not been my experience since I have been a member of this House. I ask that the Government have a good look at the need for a new hospital at Port Augusta and that the plans should be examined and the people given a clear statement of the Government's policy. I urge that this work should be put in hand at the earliest possible moment.

I know that the Minister of Education is proud of the work being done by his department and of the building operations it has embarked upon. However, I am wondering whether the programme is formulated in the interests of those who make the most noise, or whether the department is concerned as to the places where there is the greatest need. Recently I was interested to read statements by the Minister about his interest in libraries and to hear his remarks on the matter in this place. Does he not think that the Port Augusta primary school should have a library? Government policy is to have libraries at new schools, but they are denied to old established schools until room is available because of a reduction in the number of students. A library is as necessary in an old school as in a new one. I know that all works cannot be commenced immediately, but we wonder how long it will be before an old school can get a library. At Port Augusta children have been through the school since the first representations were made for a central library, yet nothing has been done about the matter, and the school committee has been unable to get information from the department that action will be taken. There is an urgent need at Port Augusta for the building of offices for the head master and the deputy head, and a central library. Representations have been made for additional classrooms, but I agree with the department that instead of providing them a new school should be built, and if possible some of the wooden structures there now should be dismantled. But a permanent building incorporating an office for the head master and a library are essential. We shall have to use every means at our disposal to bring the matter before the Minister because representations along the normal channels do not seem to get us anywhere.

The department has built a fine school at Willsden and the local people are proud of it. Unfortunately some of the wooden buildings are showing signs of disrepair, but I do not know what departmental policy is in this matter. An infant school was built with pre-cast concrete about two years ago, and although a toilet block was built at the same time it is not yet available for use. No doubt some of the delay is due to the quality of the soil. It was found that the building would have to be under-pinned, but more than 12 months elapsed before the under-pinning was commenced. When it was finished a long period elapsed before the plumbing was done. The Willsden school committee has written to



the Minister, the department, to me, and there have been articles in the local press and approaches have been made to the Public Buildings Department, but it seems that a long time must elapse before any important work is done in the country.

The Port Augusta West school wants its playing area extended. Many years ago deputations waited on the Director, if not the Minister, asking that the department secure an adjoining piece of land, and after long negotiation it was secured. The department has now had it for more than two years but it is still in the same state as when taken over. The Port Augusta Corporation is prepared to level the area. It is not looking for work as it has much to do, but it said that it would do the work if it could be done at the beginning of winter and not the beginning of summer. Whether it is done by the Commonwealth, the State or privately, most of the earth-moving seems to be done at the commencement of a summer, and in every instance it cost hundreds of pounds to hold the soil once it began to move. The department has a site for the training of apprentices at an adult education centre. In itself this is a fine conception, but provision has not yet been made for housing the school, and many difficulties are experienced. About three years ago the Director visited Port Augusta and selected a site in one corner of the school oval, which met with the approval of every school organization in the town, but nothing has been done to provide the building. A principal was appointed and sent to Port Augusta with practically no provision for housing the school. If the Minister has any control over this matter I hope that he will see that provision is made this year for the work to be commenced. It has not been listed as yet, but there is no more urgent work than the building of a modern adult education centre at Port Augusta. I believe that already there are more than 2,000 enrolments at the school. The Superintendent of Technical Education visited Port Augusta during Education Week and agreed that the town needed this school urgently, and not only classrooms and workshops but a hall similar to the one provided at Mount Gambier. He advised the Port Augusta people not to be satisfied until such time as the provisions at Mount Gambier were provided at Port Augusta.

I intended to refer to hire-purchase agreements in the Address in Reply debate but, as I did not do so, I warned members they would have to suffer more during this debate. I

ask the Government whether some further inquiry could be made into the terms of agreements drawn up by hire-purchase companies. I am convinced that not many people who sign them realize what they contain until some of the provisions are enforced. I refer particularly to that part of the agreement in which the signatory gives licence to a bailiff to enter his house at any time by force and take the article the subject of the agreement from wherever it is stored. If, for instance, the member for Burra purchased a portable radio under a hire-purchase agreement and failed to meet his commitments—

Mr. Quirke: That is probable!

Mr. RICHES: If so, it would be probable that, if he lent me the set to keep at my home overnight, he would be giving licence to a bailiff to enter my house and take away the set, and the bailiff would be indemnified against any claims for entry in that way. Surely people should be protected against signing such agreements. One good result—possibly the only result—of the legislation introduced last year was to eliminate this clause from many agreements.

Mr. Shannon: Do you want to protect the dishonest hirer?

Mr. RICHES: I will come to that. People who sign these agreements do not expect to find that they are signing away one of the fundamental rights that the British peoples have always taken to themselves—the right to prevent entry into their homes. A few weeks ago I was shocked when a woman came to me at Port Augusta and explained that, because of sickness, she owed £11 in back payments on some household articles and that while her husband was at work a man came to the door and opened it against her wishes. As the woman was not as strong as the bailiff, he was able to enter her home and take away not only the articles subject to the hire-purchase agreement but another article as well. She had been given notice that, unless payment of this amount were made within three days, action would be taken. Her husband was working in the Commonwealth Railways and his pay day was not until three days after the money was due. Also, he had accounts to pay for sickness. These people were not dishonest but, because of circumstances over which they had no control, they could not pay. If this transaction had been conducted by a local business house this could not have happened, as Port Augusta business houses do not do business in this way. However, several articles were

taken and the article not subject to the agreement had to be returned. Although this woman has been advised that she may have a claim against the bailiff for entering her home and taking the article not subject to the agreement, she cannot afford to pay the legal costs involved in protecting her rights. If she had had any idea that she was giving licence to servants or agents of the company to enter by force, if necessary, premises where the equipment might be thought to be situated, she would never have signed the agreement, which provided:

I agree to indemnify you and them against any loss or claim by reason of any such action.

I suggest that the Government look at this particular clause which, I understand, is fairly standard in hire-purchase agreements, and in the interests of purchasers see whether it is fair and necessary. Business houses can transact business without this type of clause and, since the passing of the legislation last year, in which it was made illegal to sell goods without deposit, many transactions conducted now are not subject to hire-purchase agreements. Many business houses are doing this not out of consideration for the purchaser but because it is the only way they can offer goods without deposit. The purchaser should be protected, and he could be protected by a close scrutiny of hire-purchase agreements. I was always taught that an Englishman's home was his castle. I think that applies to the average Australian workman, who is as proud of his home and wants to preserve his rights just as much as any other citizen of the realm. I do not think he would give company agents he did not know the right to enter by force any premises where it might be thought that goods under hire-purchase could be stored.

I now wish to refer to the Transport Control Board. If anyone takes any notice of what is said in speeches in this debate—and I have always had my doubts on that—I should like this matter to receive the attention of the Treasurer. The Government is to be commended for making temporary houses available to approved organizations at a nominal figure for rebuilding and providing services in other districts. These emergency houses, as they are being vacated under the re-housing programme, are being made available to approved organizations at £50 each, and many organizations in various districts are availing themselves of this offer and are thereby being helped. I consider this to be a generous offer. The Pensioners' Association at Port Pirie, with the

aid of the member for the district, bought two of these emergency houses, put them together and built a brick front on them, and by means of working bees they have made a hall measuring 40ft. by 25ft. in which they meet weekly and hold social functions. That hall would have cost about £3,500 if it had been built in the normal way. Churches are taking advantage of the offer and are putting two houses together to make Sunday schools, and youth organizations are also using those houses.

The Government is meeting the situation remarkably well. There is no doubt that at a cost of £50 a building this represents a generous offer. When it comes to transporting those buildings into the country the organizations find that in some instances—and I mention Port Augusta as an example—the carrier, recognizing that the Government has made a contribution, is himself willing to make a contribution by conveying these buildings from Adelaide to Port Augusta for £70 each. I think the normal charge would be about £120 for each building. He thought that, as it was good enough for the Government to make a contribution, it was good enough for him to do so, so he applied to the Transport Control Board. It is impossible to take these buildings on the railway; a break of gauge is involved at Port Pirie and, apart from that, the double or even treble handling and the difficulties involved mean it is not a proposition for the railways. After the carrier had offered that concession the Transport Control Board said to him: "You have to pay us 10 per cent on what you have been paid for this service." That is the board's policy, and I want to know why. It has not cost anybody anything. This carrier did not want the business, and there was no profit in it for him. He met the situation in the case of not one or two but seven buildings for various organizations, and he was charged this 10 per cent on the gross charge for his services. I am told that if he carries sheep or any other merchandise for a pastoral company from Balaklava to Marree, he has to pay only five per cent, and no question of a charitable organization or a reduced fee is involved. Where is the sense in the Transport Control Board's demanding 10 per cent in a situation like this when all the circumstances have been explained to it? Whom were they helping? I ask the Treasurer to look at this matter. I explained the situation to the board, and I received a reply which would not be accepted as satisfactory by any member of the House. It stated:

I submitted to my board your letter requesting that a reduced permit fee be applied to six temporary dwellings recently conveyed by road from Adelaide to Port Augusta. My board appreciates that the temporary dwellings now made available by the Housing Trust are available only to approved charitable and church organizations, but the above buildings are only a few of the type of temporary structure now being disposed of in considerable quantity and for which permits have been freely issued by the board for many months past. The board also desires me to point out that from time to time religious and charitable organizations are applying to the board for special permits for road conveyance of other goods including building materials and also road conveyance of its members by motor coach, and to introduce a concession fee for religious organizations would immediately raise the question of similar concessions applying to the innumerable organizations that are in existence. Therefore, the board has found it necessary to apply its standard fees where road transport is approved, irrespective of the applicant. The board has also found it necessary to apply the standard fee to goods or items which, due to their size, may be outside railway handling measurements, as in practically every instance the item concerned can be dismantled for rail haulage. My board is certainly sympathetic towards the present application for reduction in fee, but from past experience realizes that to grant same would create many anomalies.

The board says that, although the buildings are outside the size the railways could take, they could be dismantled and re-erected. Where is the sense in putting people to that unnecessary expense? The board spoke about creating a precedent. As I said earlier, this same carrier or any other carrier carrying stock or goods for pastoral companies pays only five per cent. If the board has no discretion, and if it is not prepared to consider an application on its merits, there is no justification for its existence. The board is there to reach a decision on circumstances that are explained and put to it, and to see that the best is done in the interests of the State. I ask: who is being helped by this policy? The board's action is completely unnecessary. Since it is not a question of taking away business that the railways could handle, no-one would have lost anything had the board encouraged the carrier to give his services free of charge. I do not think that Parliament would agree with the summary dismissal of the representations that were made.

The Minister of Works will recall that about three years ago, after representations over a fairly lengthy period, he visited the Port Augusta waterworks office and agreed that it was outdated, that it was in a bad state of repair, and that it should be rebuilt. A line was put on the Estimates in order that this

work could be commenced, but nothing was done. Last year again there was a line on the Estimates, but still nothing was done. This year we do not even have a line, and I want to know why. It is not fair that men should be working under the conditions they are obliged to in that office. Accommodation is needed for the waterworks superintendent and for a representative of the Agriculture Department. In addition, some accommodation will have to be provided for the Public Buildings Department and for a representative of the Aborigines Department. The only office for the Public Buildings Department is part of the front room of a trust house. Do honourable members think that that is satisfactory accommodation for a responsible officer controlling a large district in an important Government undertaking, that the office of the local representative of the Public Buildings Department should be his front room in a trust house? That has been so for years; it is not a temporary measure. We have not asked that the waterworks building be repaired, because it is not capable of repair. All the staff there has been working under conditions that the Government freely admits should not be allowed to continue, yet nothing is being done about it. Members will recall that every week in this session I have asked the Minister for a report but I still cannot obtain any information from him about the Government's proposals. The necessity of building a decent modern block of Government offices on that valuable site is urgent.

I should like also to get the ear of the Minister of Education on the policy being adopted by the Kindergarten Union in the apportionment of its funds among pre-school kindergarten committees throughout the State. It has adopted a policy of subsidizing the work only in centres where the services of a fully qualified teacher are available. The applying of that policy has meant that, when a committee in a country town secures the services of a fully qualified teacher and establishes a pre-school kindergarten on the assumption that it will be receiving a subsidy on the salary paid, and that teacher subsequently decides to get married or for some other reason leaves the town, then the subsidy is cut off completely and that committee is left high and dry. There is still a shortage of teachers; they are just not available. At Port Augusta we experienced this situation and went to the length of advertising overseas, establishing contact with a pre-school kindergarten

teacher from Germany, and assisting her in her passage to South Australia. I do not think any committee can be expected to do more than that. She arrived in Port Augusta and taught and, while she was teaching, the subsidy was available. After two years or so she left, and then the committee was right back to where it started from.

We have another committee at Willsden, serving an area where the services of a pre-school kindergarten teacher are urgently needed. It has to finance all its operations and assistance is not available to it. Whilst this shortage of pre-school kindergarten teachers is with us, would it not be possible to have qualified teachers established at a central point acting in the same role as a primary school inspector, and let women not entirely without experience be in charge of pre-school kindergartens, subject to the inspector who could come around, examine their work, put them on the right track and, if any part of their work was not up to standard, give advice where it was needed? Perhaps not the full subsidy given in the case of a fully qualified teacher but a subsidy that would encourage those committees to work and enable them to carry on could be given. That has been put to me by the chairman of the Port Augusta area school kindergarten committee, and I think it is a worthy suggestion.

I should like that to be placed before the Kindergarten Union as a suggestion whereby it could continue to give financial assistance to the committees which have enjoyed it and which are temporarily without the services of a fully qualified teacher. I do not think any committee anywhere would be without the services of a qualified teacher if one were available and, where a committee has gone to the expense of bringing a teacher from overseas, I think that establishes its earnestness and desire to carry out to the full the Kindergarten Union's requirements. Their work should be acknowledged and they should not be entirely cut off. The kindergarten teachers available are more readily available in the city, the result being that city kindergartens by and large, with few exceptions, are getting the whole of the subsidy that the State gives, while the country pre-school kindergartens are getting nothing. That is not desirable.

A matter raised by way of question this afternoon is the appointment of the Industries Development Committee as a special committee to inquire into decentralization. Members will remember that for several years in succession the late Leader of the Opposition

(Mr. O'Halloran) drew the attention of this House to the necessity for taking some definite step to encourage not only the decentralization of existing industries, services and Government departments, but also the establishment of new ones in country centres. His motion provided for the setting up of a Royal Commission. Each year this motion was submitted to members and each year they rejected it, until last year. I think a succession of by-elections where the people in the country were given an opportunity to voice their feelings on this matter demonstrated to the Government that something of a concrete nature should be done. Last year the Treasurer, although rejecting the suggestion that a Royal Commission be set up, stated that he was willing to ask the Industries Development Committee to undertake an investigation along the lines suggested in the motion of the Leader. The Treasurer's suggestion was accepted by the Leader and by other members unanimously. I suggest it was accepted under these terms. The late Leader of the Opposition said:

But I would point out that the Industries Development Committee, to which this important inquiry is to be referred if the motion as amended is carried, is a Royal Commission. There is not a scrap of difference between what I propose and what the Premier asks the House to accept.

The honourable member for Onkaparinga thought so too.

Mr. Shannon: I did not think it had the powers of a Royal Commission.

Mr. RICHES: The honourable member thought that the committee would have the powers normally held by the Industries Development Committee. It is a matter of concern to me to know that the committee has no powers at all. It has not the power of a Royal Commission, a Select Committee or of the Industries Development Committee in the conduct of this special inquiry. The Crown Solicitor's opinion is that it has no powers not normally conferred upon any ordinary committee of citizens as, for instance, a committee appointed by the Royal Automobile Association. Members unanimously approved the establishment of this committee, and members thought it would have powers equal to those of a Royal Commission. The committee should have that standing. If this committee is to bring down a report worth the paper it is written on, it will be necessary for it to pursue some of its inquiries in other States and to have discussions with leaders of industry.

Unless it can do so with the status of a committee appointed by Parliament, what sort of a response will it get? What sort of reception will it get from industrial leaders if it has the status of the committee of a football club? I suggest that every member thought the committee would have the powers normally conferred upon the Industries Development Committee, which has the power to require the production of documents and the power to require witnesses to attend.

We know that no Royal Commission or Select Committee appointed by Parliament can command the appearance of witnesses from a Commonwealth department, but if this committee were vested with those powers it would scarcely be necessary for it to exercise them. If a Commonwealth department knew that the committee stood high in the estimation of Parliament, I do not think there would be any reluctance on the part of officers to give evidence. The same would apply to some of our major companies. How can the committee get evidence from Port Pirie regarding its industrial development without consulting the Broken Hill Associated Smelters? Last year the Treasurer announced a £4,500,000 industry for Port Pirie. Nobody knew what sort of an industry it would be, where it was coming from, or anything about it. Eight months passed and then in a television broadcast the Treasurer announced that something had gone wrong and that the industry would not be forthcoming. Still no-one knew anything about the industry. How can the inquiry committee take evidence on the level of local government? How can local government handle this? How can it ever be considered on a local government plane, how can anyone get a picture of what is in view, what is being planned and what could be planned logically for Port Pirie or Whyalla without at some stage consulting the companies responsible for the major undertakings in those centres?

If we are going to appoint a committee with the status of a football club committee, how much notice will be taken of it? The Treasurer said that he had not had a chance to study fully the committee's interim report. I hope he will find it possible to devote time to so doing. The inquiry that is being conducted is difficult in the extreme: the problems are great and I am not prepared to say at this stage whether a solution can be found. We hope that some good will come out of the inquiry and that helpful recommendations will be made. I believe some helpful recommendations have already been made, but it would be

extremely damaging if this committee were left with the standing of only an ordinary committee appointed by a housewives' organization or some other body in this State. I hope that what I have said indicates that I am prepared to support the first line.

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens): I support the first line. In reading the Estimates and the Treasurer's statements I am struck by the fact that all proposed works are essential to the State's progress and development. This is not a time for marking time and playing safe. We should be thinking of pushing ahead with a financial programme of vision and boldness. These Estimates provide such an impetus to our economy. Within the limits of the funds available to the State the Treasurer has done remarkably well and is obviously building for the future. The Government has done its utmost to push ahead with an accelerated programme of public buildings, public undertakings and public utilities. It is a deliberate policy to absorb as many of our unemployed as possible. It is designed to create employment and, at the same time, to get useful productive work done. The work is of the type that can snowball in creating further avenues of employment. I heard derogatory remarks made by some members about the Loan Estimates, but how else could available money be apportioned? No useful suggestions have been made of alternative methods of allocating the money amongst the various departments. Of course we would like more money. Who wouldn't? We would all like more money to spend on our personal affairs, but in Parliament, as with our personal budgets, we must cut our coat according to our cloth. If more money were available we could undertake more projects, but with the limited available money the allocations have been made wisely with a sympathetic view to give the widest possible spread.

The total available from all sources, about £54,000,000, is about 10 per cent above last year's total and, if anything, this indicates that the Government has done its part, is doing its part, and will continue to do its part to boost things along. From the restricted funds available a State Government can do several things, but there are two main avenues available to it for the creation of employment. Firstly, it can increase its own work force in departments such as the Engineering and Water Supply Department (on sewers and water reticulation), the Harbors Board, the Railways Department, and in Electricity Trust undertakings. That would provide direct work for

gangs working on productive and developmental works. Secondly the Government could make funds available for public buildings and could offer employment opportunities to contractors constructing those buildings. The contractors possess the necessary gear and equipment and could quickly and readily employ more men on a given project. This, in turn, would employ many sub-contractors. The work of the Housing Trust must come within this second group because the trust employs many contractors and sub-contractors with numerous skilled tradesmen and unskilled workmen.

The Government, by making these funds available, is making a valuable contribution to the economy of this country in the employment field. The conditions I have mentioned are now being met in the Loan Estimates we are considering. I emphasize again that with the available funds—and all Government funds are limited—the Government has done its utmost to expand the economy and resources of the State and to create employment.

Having made these general comments, I shall particularize on several departments, the first of which is the Municipal Tramways Trust, about which we now hear so little. Members, in recent years, have become accustomed to seeing large sums allocated to the trust to keep its services operating. Amounts such as £700,000 or £600,000 were year after year allocated to it, but last year no loan was made available, and that demonstrates the splendid recovery made by that organization. This year there is to be a repayment of about £22,000. This will be the first time since 1950 that no loan has been made to the trust and I take this opportunity of commending the board of the Metropolitan Tramways Trust for the splendid recovery that has been made in its affairs.

Members should not imagine for one moment that the trust's worries are over. Far from it! However, its operations up to 1955, when it was re-organized, showed that it was going further and further into the mire financially. Now we have reached the happy position where the trust is receiving no loan and its latest report indicates that its deficit has been reduced by £58,000. During the last few years the trust has been progressively reducing its annual deficit. This is a matter of great interest to all members and particularly to metropolitan members who, a few years ago, were worried about the deterioration in the trust's affairs. The title "Municipal Tramways Trust" appears to be a misnomer because we

now only have one tram line. The title should be the "Metropolitan Transport Trust" or the "Municipal Transport Trust" because all the trams except those on the Glenelg line have been replaced by the more efficient diesel buses. Trams have gone out of some Sydney streets, but in Melbourne, after having been taken out of Bourke Street, they are now being replaced.

The Hon. B. Pattinson: Surely the honourable member is not suggesting that diesel buses are superior to the Glenelg trams?

Mr. COUNBE: The diesel buses are more efficient on the North Adelaide and Prospect routes. I did not suggest that the Glenelg trams should be replaced by buses. I said earlier that I commended the board for the way the trust was being run and that commendation includes its greater efficiency and better service to the public.

Mr. Frank Walsh: When do you think they will be out Marion way?

Mr. COUNBE: If the people of Marion do not have a bus service by now that must surely mean that their member has not done his job because I can assure him in my district we have a very efficient service.

Mr. Frank Walsh: Do they have a trust bus service?

Mr. COUNBE: I believe we have four trust bus services running through my district in addition to private bus services. The other semi-government department I wish to refer to is the Electricity Trust and a substantial amount has been provided for it from Loan funds. The recent successful loan, which was the second floated this year, was open for only about two days, when it closed, oversubscribed. I submit that this reflects the confidence of the general public in the affairs of the trust. The first loan was floated in March this year for £550,000 and this month we had one that closed for £900,000, making a total amount of £1,450,000 for the two loans. A large proportion of each was for conversion and this must indicate the confidence of the general public in flotations of this nature. These loans were at 5½ per cent, 10s. per cent above Commonwealth loans. The important thing, apart from the fact that the trust relies on the general public to support it financially, in addition to the funds supplied by Parliament, is that it indicates the trends of the general investing public. It would appear that these days they are turning more towards Government securities and trust investments as against fancy rates offered by debentures and registered unsecured notes. I

welcome this trend towards saner and sounder public investment. It indicates that the investors appreciate security and do not necessarily look for a quick return. The loans I referred to were for periods of six to 10 years. It shows that the public are looking ahead and taking a long-range view of investment.

I now refer to the conversion programme to diesels which has been going on in our railway service for some years and which is progressing near to its completion. We have noticed in the successive annual reports of the Railways Commissioner the marked improvements in efficiency and running costs that these services provide. There are now 150 diesel locomotives and diesel rail cars in the system and 13 more are on order. It has been calculated that last year diesel locomotives pulled 94 per cent of the passenger loading and that this year it will be 98 per cent. In other words, almost all the passenger traffic on the railways will be handled by diesels, leaving only two per cent for steam. That two per cent would apply largely to the Eyre Peninsula system. In the freight section, where one would expect the traditional steam engine to remain longer with us, last year the diesels pulled 88 per cent of the freight and it is estimated that during this year 93 per cent of freight will be towed by diesel locomotives. Most of the other seven per cent will be on the Eyre Peninsula service.

I am pleased to see that in the Loan Estimates two of these locomotives are to be provided on that narrow gauge system. Anyone who has had anything to do with steam engines knows that they are notorious for their low efficiency and for the huge quantity of coal and water they devour for a small tractive output. They are notoriously low in efficiency; in fact, anything between six and nine per cent efficiency is a high figure. The efficiency of diesels is very much higher, and they also have shorter shut-down periods for cleaning and refuelling, certainly shorter periods for shut-down for breakages.

It is interesting to read the figures on fuel costs. I am unable to give the cost a mile for oil fuel as against the cost of running steam locomotives, but it is known that the quantity of coal used each year is falling, whereas the quantity of fuel oil is increasing. The price of fuel oil is falling all the time. In 1956 it was £47 a ton, in 1960 it was £46 a ton, and a fairly big reduction in the price is expected. That is good news in these times when the price of other commodities is tending to rise. It indicates that greater efficiencies mechanically and commercially can be made possible on our railway system.

New schedules and time tables have been possible since the introduction of diesel locomotives. Although I cannot speak with the same authority as country members regarding "blue birds", I have travelled on them. In the metropolitan area it is strange to see a steam passenger train. The convenience to passengers on the diesels is much higher than it was four or five years ago. The speed at which these rail cars travel is really remarkable; they are reminiscent of the best electric trains on the Victorian suburban runs. I commend all those in the Railways Department, from the Commissioner down, for the implementation of this modern dieselization, which is world-wide. I am concerned about what is to become of the hundreds of old steam locomotives, many of which are at Port Adelaide and Mile End. Are they to be sold or wrecked? Is some recompense to be derived by the State from their sale?

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

#### JOINT COMMITTEE ON CONSOLIDATION BILLS.

The Legislative Council intimated its concurrence in the appointment of a Joint Committee on Consolidation Bills.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.30 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, August 23, at 2 p.m.