

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.**

Thursday, September 28, 1961.

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

**QUESTIONS.****COMPREHENSIVE INSURANCE.**

**Mr. FRANK WALSH:** I understand that since January this year the major insurance companies have imposed further tariff charges for comprehensive motor vehicle insurance, particularly for vehicles under hire-purchase, on which a much higher premium must be paid. Owners of vehicles under hire-purchase agreements must pay the first £25 damage if the driver involved in an accident is under 25 years of age, and the first £15 damage if he is over that age. If the car is freehold, I understand that at the option of the owner he may cover the full amount of damage or have an excess of £10. Will the Premier cause an investigation to be made into this matter with a view particularly to having charges in at least two cases reduced? Will he ascertain why a higher premium is charged for a car under a hire-purchase agreement and why a higher excess operates when the driver is under 25 years of age?

The Hon. Sir **THOMAS PLAYFORD:** The Leader's question relates to comprehensive and not compulsory insurance. Many companies, known as non-tariff companies, have rates different from those of other companies. As far as I know, there is no set rate for comprehensive insurance, and from personal knowledge I know that the charges of some companies are different from those of others. This insurance is not compulsory and is therefore not under the Premiums Committee, so I doubt whether anyone in the State except the companies concerned would have the information that would enable anyone to determine whether their charges were reasonable or not. I will submit the Leader's question to the Prices Commissioner to see whether he can provide any information concerning it. I doubt very much whether there is any information in the hands of the Government at present to enable me to answer the Leader's question.

**RESERVE BANK BUILDING.**

**Mr. COUMBE:** Many multi-storeyed buildings are being erected in the City of Adelaide and notice has been given of more to be erected shortly. I understand that preparations are in hand for vacating the site in Victoria Square

where the Reserve Bank is to erect a large building which will provide accommodation for State Government departments. Can the Premier say when its construction is likely to commence?

The Hon. Sir **THOMAS PLAYFORD:** I understand that it is due to commence after this Christmas.

**WATER WASTAGE.**

**Mr. KING:** The Minister of Works promised to obtain a report as to what truth there was in the assertions we have heard from time to time about the large quantities of water that flow through the River Murray mouth to the sea. I believe the Minister now has that report.

The Hon. G. G. **PEARSON:** Unfortunately, the circumstance the honourable member has recited in his question is all too true. In years of high rainfall in the catchment areas a great quantity of water, which we are at present unable to impound for future years, flows into the sea. The Engineer-in-Chief reports:

During years of high flood the greater proportion of the water flows to the sea as there is nowhere that it can be stored.

I think he could have inserted there the words "at present". His report continues:

For example, in 1956-57 the flow through the mouth was 38,000,000 acre-feet—fifteen times the capacity of the enlarged Hume reservoir. In very dry years insufficient water reaches the lakes to compensate for evaporation, and in the year 1944-1945 no water whatever flowed to the sea—in fact during that dry period there was no flow past the barrages for 14 months. The flow ceased for several months in 1957-58 and for shorter periods in other dry years. During the thirty years from 1931 to 1960 the total flow to the sea was 250,000,000 acre-feet, but half of this flow occurred during the six flood years.

The River Murray is the least reliable of all of the world's great rivers, and during the years for which records are available the total annual flow has ranged from 40,000,000 to 2,000,000 acre-feet—a range of twenty to one. This is of course the reason why the provision of large storages is essential if the best use is to be made of the waters of the Murray.

**PUBLIC RELIEF.**

**Mr. QUIRKE:** When speaking in the Budget debate yesterday, the member for Adelaide (Mr. Law) gave members some disturbing and well documented evidence concerning the method used by the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department in handling some of the unfortunate people who are forced to go there. I should not like to allow those statements

to go unchallenged. If the charges are true, they are a reflection on the State. Will the Premier examine the charges brought by the honourable member for Adelaide (I am sure, in very good faith) and bring down a report?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The statement of the honourable member for Adelaide did not contain the names of the persons concerned—

Mr. Lawn: They are available, though.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Nor did I have the opportunity of checking on the actual case in point, so I cannot speak regarding the persons concerned, but I can tell the honourable member something of the department's policy in this matter. The Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department makes available to certain classes of people assistance additional to the pensions and other social service benefits provided by the Commonwealth Government to meet what may be regarded as hardship cases. But that is not general practice: some other States do not give anything at all to anybody. The department takes the view (and this is the policy it has laid down) that the general taxpayer is not obliged to pay hire-purchase charges on luxury items as this is hardship assistance and the department will not provide money for such use. On some occasions where persons have entered into hire-purchase commitments and the assistance has been stopped, arrangements have been made for the hire-purchase company to stand over the charges for a period so that relief can be granted; but if the department assumed the obligation of making hire-purchase payments, that would not be fair to the taxpayer, nor would it achieve the object for which the money was provided by Parliament.

Secondly, a person may have luxury assets and, if no payments are to be made upon them, the department makes advances but it expects that any equity will be cancelled at some future time. I understand that it never regards television as something that has an appreciable equity, and that it never requires repayment in regard to television sets.

Mr. Jennings: They would be hired, anyway.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: They may not be. I assure the honourable member for Burra that the department gives the utmost consideration to cases of hardship, but what is involved is whether it will meet hire-purchase charges on what may be regarded as luxury items. The department's policy, which is not new, has never been to meet such hire-purchase charges.

#### AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE COURSES.

Mr. HARDING: My question arises from the speech made yesterday by the honourable member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) who said much about agricultural science. His speech, however, leaves some doubt as to whether agricultural science courses are to be undertaken in our area and high schools. At present the reason given (and rightly so) for the lack of such courses is that trained teachers are not available. Naracoorte has such a course up to the Leaving standard, I understand. The branch of the Australian Primary Producers' Union at Naracoorte, comprising primary producers and parents who desire that their children should take such a course, are encouraging them by awarding bursaries. As a matter of policy, will such a course be established at Penola when the high school is opened there—because that school is in a primary-producing district similar to Naracoorte?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: Let me at the outset say that perhaps a little too much has been made of this report to which the member for Onkaparinga referred last night, because, after all, it is merely a draft report made to the education committee of the Council of the Adelaide University by an informally constituted subcommittee of that committee of the council. The Director of Education has supplied me with a copy of this subcommittee's draft report together with his comments, but I regard both the report and his comments as confidential, at any rate at this stage. I do not intend to express any opinion now on any aspect of the report, including the subject of agricultural science to which the member for Victoria has referred in his question.

Mr. Frank Walsh: Does Mr. Shannon possess information that should not have been disclosed?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: I am not suggesting that at all.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: Several members of the committee have the report. I am not quibbling about that except to say that my copy was supplied to me by my own Director of Education, together with his comment, for my use and information. I have regarded both as confidential and do not desire to express any opinion on either the report or the Director's comments at this stage—and that includes the subject of agricultural science, about which the member for Victoria has asked his question.

But I consider that the subject of agricultural science is becoming, and will rapidly become, an increasingly important subject in our secondary school curriculum; and it would have been a more widespread subject in the past (and would be at present) but for the retarding influence of the lack of teachers qualified to teach this important subject. Fortunately, in recent years we have had a special course on which some of our brightest teachers are engaged at present, and we hope, from next year onward, to be able to turn out in increasing numbers highly qualified and extremely able teachers of agricultural science, who will teach not only at Urrbrae but also at many of our country high schools. I do not take the matter further than that at this stage, or say whether it is a proper subject for matriculation requirements or not but, from the point of view of secondary education, we in the Education Department (and, I am sure, those in the independent colleges as well) regard it as a subject of increasing importance. We hope to spread it far and wide in our larger country high schools.

#### UNIVERSITY LECTURER.

Mr. CLARK: There are still pertinent questions unanswered in the case of the historian, Mr. Brenner, who was refused a permit to enter Australia to be lecturer in economic history at Adelaide University. Latest reports say that he admits he was a member of the Stern gang in Israel; but that was at the age of 16, and he states that he never took part in any raids against the British. He joined as a matter of political sympathy, not for violence. He said that about 10 years ago he had applied to be a member of the Communist Party in Israel because at that time he believed it to be the best way to achieve Socialism in Israel.

Mr. Brenner, who has apparently been accepted in London for 10 years, claims he has been convicted in this case without a trial. As the State Government subsidizes the university, and taxpayers have a certain right to know the true situation, will the Premier institute an inquiry into, or obtain a report on, why Mr. Brenner was appointed to a position at Adelaide University and then refused entry into Australia?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The honourable member is no doubt aware that the South Australian Government is the only State Government that does not have any representation on a university council: in every other

State the Government either appoints the entire council or has a majority of members on it. As this Government has no representation upon the council I suggest that the honourable member address his remarks to one of the Parliamentary representatives on the council who may be able to supply information on this matter. I obviously have no knowledge of the sources of information available overseas to the Commonwealth Government, so I cannot help the honourable member there either.

#### SUPERVISOR OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

Mrs. STEELE: In reply to a recent question about the appointment of a supervisor of school libraries, the Minister of Education said that the Public Service Commissioner had agreed to his request that a conference should take place between the Public Service Commissioner, the Principal Librarian and the Director of Education when the Director returned from recreation leave. I understand that this conference has been held. Has the Minister further information on its outcome?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: On numerous occasions I have publicly expressed my belief in the importance of both public and school libraries in our education system and my concern at the long delay in making an appointment to the position of Supervisor of School Libraries. In reply to a question from the member for Burnside on August 22, I said that I would ask the Acting Public Service Commissioner whether he would call a conference between himself, the Director of Education and the Principal Librarian of the Public Libraries Department to see if they could come to some finality concerning this important appointment.

The Acting Commissioner, who is now Commissioner, moved very promptly in response to my request. The Director of Education was absent on leave at the time, but immediately on his return the Commissioner, Director and Principal Librarian met to discuss this matter. Arising out of the conference, the Commissioner reported to me on September 19 that he was of the opinion that before an appointment of a supervisor was made, the scheme of organization of the school library system should be carefully examined by a library authority and that the Principal Librarian of the Libraries Department (Mr. H. C. Brideson) with his experience and the information gained by him on his recent overseas tour was such an authority.

The Commissioner, therefore, recommended that the Libraries Board be asked to make

the Principal Librarian available to investigate the organization and supervision of the school libraries system and furnish a report thereon with suggestions as to any alterations or improvements in the system which would in his opinion ensure its efficient working. On the same day I approved of this recommendation and wrote to the Chairman of the Libraries Board requesting that the Principal Librarian be made available as soon as possible to conduct the suggested investigation. Approval has been given to my request but it will naturally take some time before the report is completed and a further period before the recommendations made can be implemented.

Therefore, with the concurrence of the Director of Education, I approved of the Commissioner's recommendation that Miss Joan Shaw be seconded from her position of Lecturer-Librarian at the Adelaide Teachers College to take over the duties of Supervisor of School Libraries in an acting capacity until the commencement of the 1962 College year, or such earlier time as other satisfactory arrangements can be made. Miss Shaw commenced her new duties this week. Miss Shaw has had 12 years' teaching experience and has held her present position of Lecturer-Librarian since 1955. As a capable and stimulating professional officer she will efficiently perform the duties of this important office until a permanent appointment can be made.

#### EGG PRICES.

Mr. BYWATERS: I have previously directed the attention of the Minister of Agriculture to the position of poultry farmers in my district who are concerned about the present low prices they are receiving for eggs. As we are entering the flush season the position will probably not improve. Some farmers are already producing at less than their costs of production. One return which I saw yesterday was 2s. 5d. a dozen whereas the cost of production, according to Department of Agriculture's figures, was 2s. 6d. a dozen. Will the Minister obtain from the Chairman of the Egg Board a report on the future of the poultry industry and whether some relief will be forthcoming soon? Although I am not reflecting on the Egg Board, in which I have the utmost confidence, and I am entirely in favour of orderly marketing, the present returns are causing grave concern to poultry farmers.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I am glad to hear that the honourable member is not reflecting on the Egg Board, because no doubt

he was listening the other day when my reply to the member for Barossa revealed that the board's charges amounted to 5½d. less than the lowest charge applying in any other State. That illustrates the board's efficiency. My own experience is that it has been conscientious in marketing the eggs and active in trying to establish some basis for co-operation with the other States. The other States, in varying degrees and varying ways, would like to achieve a co-ordinated scheme, but many difficulties must be overcome. These have been discussed in the last few months in the hope that some agreement can be reached. Whether the price of eggs is below the cost of production is a theoretical argument. One cannot prove anything one way or the other; it depends largely on the efficiency with which the producer runs his business. I shall refer the question to the Chairman of the Egg Board for his comments.

#### HEATHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. SHANNON: A few months ago I asked the Minister of Education a question relating to the letting of tenders for the construction of the Heathfield high school, and he expected that tenders would be let some time after this session started so that the school might be built for the opening of the 1963 school year. Will the Minister indicate what he has in mind for this school, as I am certain people in the area will be happy to know whether they can have it or not?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: Earlier this year I anticipated, from information supplied to me, that tenders would be called for this school by about August this year, but the Public Buildings Department found it would be impracticable to call for tenders until later this calendar year. However, in view of the rapid increase in the rate of building construction, when tenders are called the slight delay will not affect the target date for the completion of the building, which is still February, 1963.

#### POLICE TRAINING BARRACKS.

Mr. FRED WALSH: Has the Premier a reply to a question I asked on June 21 about the future policy of the Police Department in respect of the Thebarton police training barracks?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Commissioner of Police reports that, prior to the purchase of Fort Largs, police cadets carried out all the phases of their training at the Thebarton police barracks in company with adult trainees. However, the accommodation

provided was far from adequate, making it necessary for the majority of them to reside out of barracks. This is undesirable, particularly for lads from country areas. Also, as some of the classes were held in the open, there were many distractions from other activities in the area—motor cycle training, band practice, equitation, drill, etc. There are 246 cadets in the department, and it is intended that eventually all such trainees will receive their training at Fort Largs, but this will not be possible until sleeping and messing facilities have been considerably increased. The maximum accommodation available at present is for 70 cadets, the first 40 of whom are installed at Fort Largs. A further 30 will enter next week, the army having kindly lent beds, mattresses, pillows, tables and chairs to furnish the place. This has enabled the Police Department to give more efficient training to a greater number of cadets, but Thebarton barracks is still "bursting at the seams". The following branches of the Police Department are still housed at Thebarton: motor traffic division, advanced driving wing, motor transport section (with its workshops, etc.), adult training classes, senior cadet training classes, mounted cadre and stables, police band, wrecked and faulty vehicle compound and headquarters of regions "B" and "D" and No. 12 (southern) division. It is intended to transfer the police horses to Fort Largs as soon as suitable stable accommodation is available in the area. The existing stables at Thebarton will be modified to house police transport at present not under cover. It is intended that all sections of the police now occupying the Thebarton barracks will remain, with the exception of the training division, cadets and the mounted cadre, as, apart from finding a suitable location, the cost of establishing them elsewhere would be enormous.

#### BEACHPORT POLICE STATION.

Mr. CORCORAN: Has the Premier further information in response to a question I asked on September 20 about a rumour concerning the closing of the Beachport police station?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: There is no truth in the rumour that the Beachport police station is to be closed.

#### ROLLINGSTOCK.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Has the Premier a reply to questions I asked during the debate on the Loan Estimates about railway rolling-stock?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I understand that the Leader was particularly interested in the tracks in the Port Lincoln division and workmen's sleeping vans, and I have obtained the following report from the Railways Commissioner:

Provision in the Loan Estimates for work on the tracks on the Port Lincoln division was made under the heading "New Works—Annual Provisions", and it is expected that the Loan expenditure on relaying and ballasting will amount to £50,000 during 1961-62. The greater part of the rehabilitation work is provided for under extraordinary maintenance and is included in the working estimates. An expenditure of £145,000 during the current financial year is contemplated. The policy of relaying the tracks on the Port Lincoln division will be pursued within the limits of the resources available year by year. The programme for the provision of workmen's sleeping vans includes the reconditioning and re-equipment of 30 existing vans, and the provision of 45 new van bodies which will be mounted on existing under-frames obtained from surplus rollingstock. Of these 45 new van bodies, 15 will be fitted with workshop space and will be mounted on the under-frames of retired end-loading suburban cars. The remaining 30 van bodies, which would be without workshops, will be mounted on under-frames of retired caboose and "900" class cars, which are shorter in length than the under-frames of end-loading suburban cars. These bodies will be of steel construction. The £80,000 included in the 1961-62 Loan Estimates provides for the construction, mounting and fitting of 10 new van bodies as well as the Loan proportion of the expenditure involved in reconditioning and re-equipping five existing sleeping vans. This expenditure presents the first part of the total programme. It appears that the saving of £3,000 a van suggested by the Leader refers to a proposal to use the existing suburban end-loading car bodies rather than build new bodies. I am advised by the Chief Mechanical Engineer that these existing bodies are not suitable for the purpose and that considerable work would be involved in placing them in good order after stripping and re-positioning the windows, partitions, etc., to suit the van lay-out. I am satisfied that the proposals I have approved are more satisfactory than those suggested by the Leader.

#### ELIZABETH TRANSPORT.

Mr. QUIRKE: On many occasions I have heard the member for Gawler speak about the transport facilities from Elizabeth to Adelaide, and it seems to me that that is a growing problem. At least twice a week I travel along the Main North Road, and in the morning there are always many people on the sides of the road, and more particularly children who attend secondary school near Gepps Cross. I fill my car with those children and other people

do likewise. It appears to me from my discussions with these people that the town has outgrown the existing transport medium; if it were in the middle it would be all right, but now it is on one side of the town and the distance from one side of Elizabeth to the other is considerable. I think the time has arrived when increased transport facilities should be given to the many thousands of people now residing in the town. Will the Minister of Works ask the Minister of Roads whether it is intended to increase the transport facilities for that town and, if it is, when such a scheme will operate?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I shall endeavour to obtain a report from my colleague.

#### WATER PUMPING.

Mr. LAUCKE: I understand that resumption of pumping on the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline is imminent and that a fourth pump has been installed to increase the throughput of that pipeline. Can the Minister of Works say, firstly, what overall increase is expected in the pipeline's daily discharge and, secondly, whether these pumps will result in a greater head of water being discharged into the Warren reservoir?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: It is intended to commence off-peak pumping on the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline at 11 p.m. tomorrow and to continue it. The quantity of water we can pump with the four units in operation is 42,500,000 gallons a day; that is in the off-peak part of the day. That represents an increase of 9,500,000 gallons a day on the capacity of the three-unit pumping, which is 33,000,000 gallons a day under the same conditions of pumping, namely, off-peak. It represents not quite an additional one-third, but slightly less. Actually, if we were getting the additional output from the fourth unit, without considering anything else we would expect an additional 11,000,000 gallons a day. The reason for the disparity is that, when pushing more water through a pipe in a given time, the total head increases; therefore, the resistance is greater and the efficiency and output of the pumps somewhat reduced. So, instead of getting the increase a layman might expect, we get slightly less than that.

The output through the Warren pipeline is governed primarily by the capacity of the spur line from the Mannum-Adelaide line to the Warren reservoir. I do not expect—although I may not be correct, for I speak without reference to the Engineer-in-Chief—that there

would be an increased throughput unless the higher head in the pipeline, due to the fourth unit, provided additional pressure which might affect the output through the Warren pipeline slightly. The Engineer-in-Chief believes that with the greater draw-off from the Warren system due to the increased consumption, the enlarged capacity of the Warren-Paskeville trunk main, and the addition of the Yorke Peninsula system, it may become necessary to consider either further boosting or a larger diameter pipeline for that link between the Mannum-Adelaide line and the Warren reservoir at some future date. That point has not yet been reached, but it may have to be considered later.

#### OIL EXPLORATION.

Mr. RICHES: I understand the Premier now has a report from the Mines Department regarding the result of boring for oil by Santos Ltd. at Wilkatana. Can he make that report available to the House?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Acting Director of Mines (Mr. Parkin) reports:

The Wilkatana area near Port Augusta was tested by Santos Ltd. Several drill holes were sunk into the early Palaeozoic (Cambrian) limestone and slight traces of grease were reported. These limestones are now thought to represent possible ancient oil source beds long since deprived of any liquid petroleum they may have contained. Exploration was switched to other areas of greater potential. The matter is mentioned on page 14 of the report tabled in Parliament.

#### MYPOLONGA PLANTINGS.

Mr. BYWATERS: During the debate on the Loan Estimates I drew the Treasurer's attention to the need for extra plantings at Mypolonga and also for a domestic and stock water supply for that area. If the Treasurer has not yet obtained replies to those questions, will he get them as soon as possible?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I thought I gave the honourable member replies to the queries he raised. I pointed out at the time that the cost of the high level water supply was very great indeed, that irrigation water was supplied to the area at present and that the Government was attempting to find something that would be not such a heavy burden on the taxpayer to provide. That is the position at present. Investigations are being made to see whether a scheme that would not be so utterly uneconomic as the one previously suggested can be arranged. Regarding additional high land irrigation areas, we have now electrified large areas along the River Murray,

and under those circumstances almost every week a new scheme is being established and conducted by private enterprise without the provision of finance by the taxpayer or from our Loan programme. As they are financed from private sources, they are, in the opinion of the Government, very desirable because they provide for development without depleting funds for departments. In fact, tomorrow, I will have the privilege of inspecting a large new irrigation area provided by these means. At present I can say that it is not the Government's policy to establish new Government areas, because we believe that that is being satisfactorily achieved by other means.

#### ELECTION OF SENATOR.

The SPEAKER laid on the table the minutes of the joint sitting of the two Houses for the choosing of a Senator to hold the position rendered vacant by the death of Senator Rex Whiting Pearson, indicating that Mr. Gordon Sinclair Davidson had been appointed.

Ordered to be printed.

#### BULK HANDLING OF GRAIN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CITY OF ENFIELD LOAN) ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. COUMBE brought up the report of the Select Committee, together with minutes of proceedings and evidence.

Report received. Ordered that report be printed.

#### THE BUDGET.

The Estimates—Grand total, £91,544,000.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from September 27. Page 956.)

#### THE LEGISLATURE.

Legislative Council, £12,417.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla): Last evening, the member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) accused members on this side of not worrying much about the Budget. He said, in fact, that the Budget posed a problem for anyone who wanted to criticize it. The member for Torrens (Mr. Coumbe) pointed out that it was difficult to make a critical comment about something when there was nothing that could be criticized. This accusation does not really

bear inspection because in the Budget debate it is well known that members on both sides take the opportunity to deal with matters affecting their electorates. Apart from that, it is practically impossible to deal with anything about the Budget except generally.

Members are all aware that the Treasurer's Budget statement consists of a general resume of affairs concerning the State followed by much statistical material and, to aid us in our discussions, we have the Auditor-General's report. The Leader of the Opposition has not the privilege of seeing that report prior to his having to make his speech on the Budget. We have this report because it is an expert review of all Government departments. The report covers 322 pages and it is impossible for any member to examine it and criticize at all intelligently the operation of all departments unless he can give weeks of study to the problem.

Furthermore, I think you will agree, Mr. Chairman, that members refrain from making stupid criticism of Government departments when they cannot say whether this or that amount should have been spent in a particular way by a department. The only practical course for members to adopt is to deal with the Budget generally, and that is what members both on this side and on the other side have been doing in accordance with the usual custom. So the criticism of the member for Onkaparinga fails.

He also accused us of being prophets of doom. He was referring, of course, to our remarks about the unemployment situation, but I remind members that the Treasurer himself has regarded this as one of the most important, if not the most important, of the problems affecting this State. In his speech on the Address in Reply the Treasurer referred to the present unemployment as being of great importance to us, saying that it could easily resolve itself into a hard core of unemployment. At other times this session the Treasurer has emphasized the importance of this problem, so we make no apology for dealing with it at considerable length. In fact, the Treasurer himself in his general Budget remarks has stressed ill effects of unemployment upon the State. We are justified in drawing the strongest attention to this because members opposite are members of the very Party which, in the Commonwealth sphere, has been responsible for the economic and fiscal measures that have produced this situation.

I shall summarize the reasons why we consider this matter so important. So far from

lacking confidence in our country, we are full of confidence about the future of Australia provided there is a change of political management and policy. That confidence has been expressed by the Australian Labor Party over the years in many practical ways: for example, in the setting up of a comprehensive migration scheme, and in the successful conduct of the affairs of this country during the greatest war in which we have ever been engaged. We have every reason to be concerned about the unemployment situation, not only because of its effects but because of the attitude of Commonwealth Ministers. Let me summarize those effects. I shall not deal with them at length but we should have a summary to see what the attitude of the Commonwealth Ministers is.

First, the number of unemployed today is the highest since the Second World War, and the unemployment percentage since 1956 has been consistently above levels that were previously normal. Secondly, the unemployed today are losing about £2,000,000 a week in wages; they are running into debt and are suffering from insufficient relief in many ways that cannot be expressed quantitatively. Thirdly, Australia is losing about £4,000,000 a week in terms of production lost through unemployment. Fourthly, there are serious repercussions on our migration programme; and, fifthly, a hard core of unemployed and unskilled people is being formed.

If these matters were honestly admitted and faced and adequate steps were being taken to rectify the position, it would not be so necessary to emphasize them; but we find that there is a determined attempt on the part of Liberal Party spokesmen to minimize the seriousness of the position. We find misrepresentation of the position by the use of statistics that do not reveal the true position of wage-earners. We find expressed by Liberal Party spokesmen satisfaction and pride at having checked an inflationary trend by means that have, in fact, placed the full burden on those least able to bear it. We also find that there is substantial evidence that the accepted and just policy of full employment is being abandoned for a policy of a so-called high level of employment. We find that there is nothing to remove the impression that similar means will be used again to check any subsequent inflationary trend. To listen to Liberal Party spokesmen we cannot but feel that unemployment is a matter of percentages but, to the person out of work, it is a tragedy of the very first order.

So, for these reasons, we make no apology whatsoever for laying great emphasis on this problem.

I have referred in these remarks to the question of a so-called high level of employment. That phrase means that we always have a pool of unemployment. I think it was Professor Hytten who once said that a pool of unemployed was desirable, and somebody made a crack that "it was cool in Hytten's pool". It certainly is. I was interested to notice in this month's *Rydge's Journal* an article that countered the idea that there was some value in having a pool of unemployed. *Rydge's Journal* is a business and financial publication and certainly has no Labor attributes. The article, headed "The Ogre of Unemployment", was written by Mr. J. R. Wilson, a Master of Economics. Paraphrasing the article, he says that it is not true that the presence of a pool of unemployed increases productivity among those still employed. He said that the leveling up process of full employment has gone a long way to promoting industrial peace and to spreading a sense of unity of purpose and co-operation. He also asserts that unemployment, used as a goad, can only sharpen industrial antagonism.

Members opposite referred to the Opposition members as prophets of doom, but I can recollect two or three years ago Professor Oliphant lecturing on the dangers of nuclear warfare. He was described then as a prophet of doom, but I do not think any person—even members opposite—would classify President Kennedy as a prophet of doom for saying something more stringently and stronger than did Professor Oliphant.

I was interested recently in a speech by Dr. Westerman, the Secretary of the Department of Trade. He gave the Agricultural Bureau an oration and pointed out to primary producers what their position would be if Great Britain entered the European Common Market. He indicated what might happen if Great Britain were unable to secure any concessions for Commonwealth countries. I was intrigued to notice that the next day Mr. Strickland received considerable publicity for the remarks he made elsewhere that day, but that Dr. Westerman, who gave the Agricultural Bureau oration, received only a few lines, none of which related to his pertinent comments. Was he a prophet of gloom? There is apparently a constitutional inability on the part of some people to face facts. I do not believe that the Australian people are incapable of facing the facts of a



situation. I heard Dr. Westerman's talk and noticed that when the primary producers were leaving after the meeting they were talking among themselves. They were obviously impressed by the talk, but were also most concerned. None of them would have wanted to be led up the garden path by wishful thinking on the question of Great Britain's entering the Common Market.

The Conservative Party in Great Britain, which is the counterpart of the Government Party here, employs similar tactics. Mr. Macmillan, with his policy of "You've never had it so good" has allowed things to drift until Britain has reached the stage where it is almost impossible for it to abstain from entering the Common Market. Yet at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference this spring there was no mention of this subject. It was not discussed when the opportunity arose, and it was not until Great Britain was on the verge of entering the Common Market that the Commonwealth countries were told of the situation and conferences were held. There is no point in trying to conceal facts from those most likely to be affected. If we had been told the facts we could have acted far more rapidly and far more intelligently to combat the difficulties that will arise from this situation.

Our Leader made many constructive criticisms of the Budget proposals, and without traversing the ground he touched on, I wish to refer to one aspect in particular. He pointed out that the estimated surplus last year was £312,000 but that the actual surplus was £2,188,000. From that surplus a grant of £1,000,000 was made to the Electricity Trust. The Leader said that the grant was made between March and June and that it was to be used for a power line to the South-East. He also said that that amount was held by the Treasury during the period when the maximum possible amount should have been expended to relieve unemployment. Unemployment was most acute at that time and every effort should have been made to alleviate it.

In his Budget speech the Treasurer pointed out that the building industry was not working to capacity and he warned builders against thinking that there were unlimited funds upon which they could act to carry on their businesses, as though there were not likely to be any restrictions. We know that the building industry is not working to capacity and that there is a tremendous unsatisfied demand for houses. The Leader pointed out that the

index of completions by the Housing Trust during the last five years revealed that on a per capita basis the trust completed five per cent fewer homes than it did five years ago. I suggest that there were avenues in house building whereby this £1,000,000 could have been spent to far greater immediate effect in alleviating unemployment than by placing it to the credit of the Electricity Trust. What is more, this money was placed to the credit of an organization that has tremendous assets (£82,000,000, I believe) and which has never had any difficulty in securing loan money from the public. Its loans have always been rapidly subscribed. This money could have been diverted to purposes that could have served the State far better at that time.

The member for Burnside made one or two remarks to which I wish to refer. I was surprised to hear her describe what happened at the oil refinery site at Port Stanvac as "industrial blackmail". Blackmail is a serious crime and is usually regarded as being a form of extortion by somebody who knows something discreditable about somebody else and who, consequently, is able to extort money on the assumption that that information will not be revealed. I was surprised that that word was used in this instance. As a matter of fact, the initial approach on this subject was made by the Trades and Labor Council to Kellogg's by letter. The letter they received from the American firm gave the council every reason to expect a special site agreement to be made similar to agreements that had been made on similar undertakings elsewhere in Australia. On that score, the member for Burnside said it was difficult to reconcile unemployment and the Opposition's professed concern about it with a claim made by the trade union movement for an extravagant and unwarranted allowance for men employed at the new oil refinery, mainly on the ground that she described as industrial blackmail that had been applied to contractors undertaking similar work in other States. I doubt very much whether the honourable member was conversant with the details of what had taken place in other States, and I am sure the term "industrial blackmail" was wide of the mark. That term is particularly offensive when applied to trade union matters of this description.

The trade union movement held a meeting on the site in the usual way. After all, as most men there agreed to a proposal and carried it out afterwards, following the normal practice of the trade union organization, it is

hard to see why that description should be applied to the matter. The member for Burnside seems to forget that ordinary awards are minimum payments; and surely it is not a crime to endeavour to get something above a minimum payment. Private enterprise organizations as a matter of course always attempt to get the maximum that the market will stand and are not beyond employing monopolistic and restrictive practices to achieve their ends, yet I have never heard this described by members opposite as "industrial blackmail."

I shall now refer to the two opal fields in my electorate and to improved arrangements made as a result of discussions I had with the Minister of Works and the Engineer-in-Chief (Mr. Dridan). I am pleased to be able to say that we agreed on a proposal that was a considerable advance in the water supply to those two fields. The proposal not only has been accepted by the progress association at each field but has also placed both fields on an equitable basis regarding payments for water. It has been agreed that each progress association will refund to the department 30s. a thousand gallons for the water carting the department is doing. I thank the Minister for his interest and for assisting both fields in this direction. As a condition of the Coober Pedy association's paying this amount, the department has agreed to supply good water instead of two-thirds good water and one-third somewhat brackish water, which has not been received favourably by the residents. Water is now being carried to both fields from a place 80 miles away and, in the case of Coober Pedy, the weekly cost to the department is £130.

At Andamooka, the bores that have supplied the field satisfactorily have tapered off gradually because of the extended dry period. At Coober Pedy the normal supply is caught in an underground tank of 500,000 gallons capacity, which is completely empty, and I take this opportunity to warn people against going to those two fields in search of opals or work. The population at both fields has been growing steadily in the last few months because of the unemployment situation and, with the coming of summer, conditions will be worsened. There will be little water for washing and probably only sufficient for cooking and drinking. If people go there and are unaware of the conditions, they will suffer great hardships. In introducing the Budget the Treasurer said:

South Australia is at present the only source of precious opal in Australia. The Andamooka and Coober Pedy fields between them produce stone worth £600,000 annually.

That is much below the correct figure, and there is a reason for that. The Mines Department gets its figures from a limited number of buyers, and I am sure it will admit that the figure is conservative and does not reflect actual production. As I said earlier in this session that exports of opals from this country were worth at least £1,000,000, I should like to put the record straight so that no-one would think I was exaggerating the situation. In its preliminary bulletin for 1960-61, the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics records that exports of opal for 1960-61 were worth £1,122,281, the main buyers being Japan (£770,000), West Germany (£135,000), and the United States of America (£114,000). Bulletin No. 55 points out that exports of opal from Australia in 1957-58 were worth £297,000; in 1958-59, £460,000; and in 1959-60, £940,000. These figures show that there has been a steady increase in exports over those years, and that opal exports are now valuable for Australia. I mention this to indicate that not only has the help given to these fields been appreciated but, in view of the production to the country, it has been warranted.

I now come to another matter concerning my electorate—the need for a resident magistrate in one of the northern towns. At present a magistrate visits Whyalla once a month, usually for one day, and the remainder of the court work is carried out by justices of the peace. The number of justices is limited, although steps are being taken to increase the number. Nevertheless, with the rapidly growing population at Whyalla many more cases are coming before the court and there is a great need for more frequent visits by a magistrate in order that justice may be adequately dispensed. Many justices make no pretence of having had any legal training, yet they are required to deal with complex legal cases which, if not adequately dealt with, could have serious legal repercussions. I hope that this matter will receive early attention so that a resident magistrate may be appointed in one of the three major northern towns—Whyalla, Port Augusta or Port Pirie—to serve this area. There is no doubt that one is urgently required to meet the situation I have mentioned.

Previously I have referred to the cost of building blocks offered for sale in Whyalla for those who wish to build homes. Last March I

drew the attention of the Minister of Lands to the price of blocks that had been offered shortly before at prices ranging from £320 to £340. It is interesting to find as a result of the representations made that some blocks were offered recently at an upset price of £245 to £260. The number of blocks offered was 30, but only six were actually sold at the upset price. I believe that another five or six were subsequently sold. I think that that shows that the ordinary working man simply has not the cash to purchase building blocks at present. I was interested to see another statement in the press subsequent to the sale of these blocks in which it was stated that Crown lands at Whyalla were being offered for major home building area extensions. It said that more than 180 building blocks were being offered to prospective home builders and the price of allotments would be either £100 or £135. That constituted a very big reduction, and the article went on to say that any application from the Housing Trust for any or all of the allotments would receive favourable consideration from the Land Board.

When similar statements have been made in the past I have noticed that the trust has absorbed, if not all, most of the blocks concerned. Therefore, I cannot help wondering whether this issue of about 180 blocks is for the purpose only of the trust or whether they are being offered at this greatly reduced figure in view of the fact that the recent sale was a comparative failure. I think it bears out what I have said that it is not the slightest use offering blocks at high figures to prospective home builders in a rapidly extending town such as Whyalla if you expect to get people to buy them and build their own homes. We are anxious to see as many people as possible buying blocks and building homes, but undoubtedly if the cost of these blocks is high there will be few takers. I have drawn the attention of the Minister of Lands to the prices of these blocks and pointed out that this was almost worthless pastoral land before it was subdivided, and even if a block has to bear the cost of road making, paths and kerbing there is no reason, so far as I can see, for the prices being as high as £320 to £340. In fact, the very much lower figure I set out in my correspondence on this subject would cover all these costs and still show the department a comfortable profit on its deal.

As to the Housing Trust programme in Whyalla, I realize that the waiting time there is much less than in the metropolitan area, but I think there is a special case for stepping

up the building programme in view of what it means to the State in other directions. In saying that, I refer particularly to the necessity for there being no delay in the planning of the steelworks. It is obvious that the construction of the steelworks and their operation when completed in a large measure is dependent upon a building programme that keeps pace with requirements. The Acting Minister of Lands in a recent statement is alleged to have said that the trust completed 407 houses last year at Whyalla compared with 306 the previous year and that this year the Housing Trust plans to begin 363 houses. It does not say how many it proposes to complete this year. Under the Indenture Act the Government undertook to build 400 homes a year and subsequently the Broken Hill Proprietary Company put up a case for an increase to 500. They are certainly needed, because at present there is a waiting time of about six or seven months, even for people working for the company. The company has a priority, not only on all new trust homes, but on all homes that become vacant. The accommodation in the town in other directions is taxed to capacity. We have people arriving who have made no proper provision for accommodation and who find themselves in very difficult circumstances. From what I have stated regarding the company's priority in securing trust homes, it will be obvious that a person who works for anyone other than that company has an even longer waiting time. In fact, it is almost impossible at present for people in that category to get accommodation.

It is obvious that for every 1,000 men employed by the B.H.P. there will be another 200 or so engaged in auxiliary services. It is just as necessary to have them employed as to have the 1,000 men working for the company. The position has arisen where there are many men who have gone there to work and have had to leave their families in migrant hostels in Adelaide. They have to pay £4 15s. a week for board at the company's hostel. The charge for the wife and children of a worker living away from his family and earning £15 a week, and many of them are earning about that amount, would be about £6 3s. a week in any of the migrant hostels in Adelaide. They have not the money to visit their families except at fairly long intervals. This is a very undesirable situation and has resulted in some of them leaving Whyalla after working there for a short time and finding that they could not carry on under those conditions. I make this plea not because I wish to see Whyalla get any particular privilege over other places,

but I point out that the functioning of the steelworks in the shortest possible time will be of tremendous advantage to the State from the point of view of employment in other directions.

On the question of steel and its production, I was interested to notice in the recent *Monthly Summary of the National Bank*, dealing with the wide range of increased imports into this country during the past year, that the largest increase was in the group comprising metal manufactures and industrial raw materials, which rose by £72,000,000 to £288,000,000 during 1960-61. The most conspicuous increases in that group were in the imports of iron and steel products, including bars, rods, ingots, tin plate and sheet, which totalled £54,700,000, or nearly £32,000,000 more than in 1959-1960. I draw the attention of the Committee to that fact because it bears out the validity of our arguments from this side in past years on the necessity for getting a steelworks operating in this State and of stepping up the production of steel products in this country.

The former Director of the Mines Department (Mr. Dickinson) emphasized in his successive reports that rarely in any country had steel production ever kept pace with the requirements of an industrial economy that was moving along at a reasonably rapid pace. That certainly has been the position in Australia. Further, I think we would all agree that if we had a greater steel production today not only would we not be having this high volume of steel imports but we would be able to export steel at a very competitive price. In fact, it could be one of our most valuable exports at a time when we need exports most. We should be doing everything possible to see that there is no delay in setting up this steel industry in South Australia, getting it under way, and assisting towards the end that I have just mentioned.

In his Budget speech the Treasurer said that the most important ingredient for rapid recovery was probably neither physical nor financial, but an attitude of mind and confidence. I will conclude my remarks by saying that confidence all round can only spring from the restoration of full employment, and that means not only confidence but the necessary economic and fiscal measures which only a Labor Government would be prepared to introduce. I support the motion for the adoption of the first line.

Mr. JENNINGS (Enfield): It has been a quiet day so far, so I do not intend to harrow the already contused auditory organs of honourable members. I congratulate the honourable member who has just resumed his seat on a very thoughtful and well-reasoned address. I only wish that a few more Government members had been interested enough in a little education to listen to it. I support the first line without any great enthusiasm and without any confidence that this Budget is likely to have any beneficial influence whatsoever on the great economic problems confronting Australia today.

It is extremely difficult to work up any wild interest in a Budget like this. As someone has said, it is only a list of receipts and expenditures, and none of us is really in a position to find much fault with the way the available money is to be disbursed. The best we can say, perhaps, is that £1,000 or £10,000 or £1,000,000 should be taken off a particular line and added to another one, or something like that, and, of course, we would still be left in precisely the same overall position. However, what we do quarrel with is the complete lack of policy and imagination displayed by the Government in this Budget. Apparently it has become just a matter of pride on the Treasurer's part to balance the Budget, and apparently his supporters are duty bound to re-echo that pride whether or not it is in the interest of the people of the State, at any particular time, for our Budget to be balanced.

Mr. Millhouse: Are you suggesting that it is not in the interests of the people of the State that our Budget should be balanced?

Mr. JENNINGS: I am suggesting, as the National Bank suggested, that it would have been much better if, in times like this, we had budgeted for a deficit. It clearly is not correct to budget for a surplus or to try to balance the Budget during a period of gross unemployment. Only yesterday a member on this side quoted from the latest *Monthly Summary of Australian Conditions*, issued by the National Bank of Australasia. I am sure that the member for Mitcham will not deny that the National Bank has always been a bastion of Conservatism in this country.

Mr. Millhouse: I think it was referring to the Commonwealth Budget, wasn't it?

Mr. JENNINGS: That bank trenchantly criticized the Commonwealth Government for budgeting for a deficit of only £16,000,000. Obviously the bank considered that the deficit

should have been much greater in order to stimulate industry and create more employment. We heard members on the other side—the member for Torrens, for instance, and the member for Burnside (she is absent but we will have to include her)—applaud the Government, in an almost nauseating fashion, for its Budget. I do not think any other Government member spoke, so I cannot single out any more. Surely the Treasurer himself is becoming a little doubtful about his wisdom, because only the day before yesterday his great friend in Victoria (Mr. Bolte) budgeted for a big surplus, and I think the Treasurer will agree at this stage that if Mr. Bolte budgets for a surplus the correct thing to do is to budget for a deficit.

The various sums detailed in the list of receipts and expenditure are mostly things that we can more appropriately deal with when we discuss the lines. Generally speaking, the Budget is probably efficient as an accounting instrument; it is certainly far from efficient as an economic instrument to lessen unemployment and so enable our people to be fully employed, to enjoy what should be their inalienable right to work, and at the same time help develop this country. In this regard the present Budget promises nothing and will certainly achieve nothing. Of course, this conforms strictly to the economic policies of all Conservative Governments, which believe that the best Governments are those that govern least. All Conservative Governments are prepared, of course, to legislate to interfere with individual rights and the rights of working class organizations when it suits them, but, on the other hand, they are extremely loath always to legislate in a way which might interfere with what has been euphemistically described as private enterprise, but which in effect is nothing but big business or monopoly.

Some members spoke as though the economic depression was ended, but they were only being loyal to statements made by the Prime Minister and the Treasurer. A report in the *Advertiser* recently indicated that the best that the managing director of General Motors-Holden's could promise was that there would be a long hard pull before we achieved economic stability and that all we could do was to wait and see what would happen. Does anyone believe that the enormous spending power lost through the stand down of workmen will not have a further deleterious effect upon our economy, having regard to the consequent snow-balling effect? I do not think we can say that we are around the bend, as Mr. Menzies and Mr. Holt say.

Mr. Bywaters: Which way?

Mr. JENNINGS: I would know which way to interpret it. The member for Mitcham said that I was talking only about Commonwealth economic conditions, but I shall now give him some information about South Australian conditions, as contained in a summary by the National Bank of Australasia Ltd. Under the heading "Secondary Industry" there appears the following:

In the main, secondary industry continues to function at around the quieter levels of recent months. There has been a further reduction in the labour force in some establishments and reports are still coming to hand of switchovers to a shorter working week and temporary shut-downs. The seasonal quietness in the paint industry during the winter months has been accentuated this year by the slackness of the economy and factories are working at reduced levels of output. Sales for house painting are holding up reasonably well compared with last year but there has been a decline in demand from industry, especially from manufacturers of washing machines and refrigerators, and from the automobile industry which uses large quantities of paint. It is said that any slight downward movement in the cost of raw materials that may have occurred has been offset by higher wages and a relative increase in overhead charges resulting from reduced output.

Under the heading "Retail Trade" it says:

Hardware merchants report quiet trading in most sections during August, and although sales showed a slight increase over July figures, they were below the level of August last year. The demand from the building industry for galvanized iron, builders' and plumbers' hardware, and other steel goods remains slack. Most other items, such as domestic hardware, gardening requisites, and paint, have also been difficult to sell. The comparatively mild winter has adversely affected the sale of heating appliances, especially kerosene heaters. Fencing materials, merchant bars and certain sizes of netting are now more readily available, and, in most cases, ample stocks are held. August sales of general household appliances in both the wholesale and retail trade were maintained at very much the same level as in July, but, in most instances, turnovers were down when compared with August last year. The demand for TV has slackened as a high percentage of people in metropolitan and nearby country towns now possess sets. Sales of washing machines have fallen off and there are few buyers for radios, radiograms, records and pianos. In most suburban centres, retail trade remains dull with purchases directed mainly to essential lines. There have been staff retrenchments by the larger stores, which report that they are maintaining figures with difficulty. Some country areas have enjoyed satisfactory trading but in most cases the seasonal quietness is more pronounced this year than last.

On Tuesday last the member for Burra, who is not in the House at the moment, felt impelled like a modern Sir Galahad, but without the shining armour, to come to the defence of the member for Gouger. I do not know why he was impelled to do that, unless he thought that some Opposition members had said too much about the honourable member. If that was the reason I assure members that I agree with what he said. Mr. Quirke did not realize that my colleagues were actuated by altruistic motives. I thought that I would be able to knock a little bit of sense into the mind of the member for Gouger, but I realize that there would be as much hope of doing that as there would be of an old man with one eye and one arm putting 1 lb. of butter in a wild cat's ear with a red hot poker at midnight. I assure members that I had no intention of reflecting upon the member for Gouger. In fact, I intended to congratulate him on drawing the attention of members to the constitution of the Transport Control Board. Perhaps he did it unwittingly, though he certainly did it in his consistently peculiar fashion, but most Government members will agree that the Opposition has been for many years drawing attention to the fact that in South Australia we have many boards and trusts that have become a law unto themselves and are not responsible to a Minister or to Parliament. The Transport Control Board is a minor example of that. There are many more important examples, such as the Housing Trust, the Municipal Tramways Trust and the State Bank. Parliament has no direct control over them and there is little opportunity of our ascertaining what goes on in those organizations.

It seems that the Treasurer does not have the control he should have over the instrumentalities that depend on him for public finance, unless there is a back door way of dealing with them. However, and this may be a little closer to the truth, he can evade his responsibility by drawing attention to the fact that they are not answerable to Parliament or the Government. Really the member for Gouger should have been criticizing the Government that he supports instead of criticizing, as he did, the membership of the Transport Control Board. It is interesting to note that, whilst the member called for the present board to be dismissed and replaced by more competent members, the Chairman is a gentleman who for many years was a Country Party member of this Parliament. I did not worry about what the member for Gouger said of

our Leader because I realized that the Leader had opportunities to speak for himself on this matter and was well able to do so. I may, out of loyalty, have felt obliged to defend him if the criticism had emanated from a different source, if it had been more harsh, or if we had known what it was, anyway.

I remember that I was once placed in the position of having to defend my former Leader from an attack made on him by the previous member for Torrens in a debate when the Leader (Mr. O'Halloran) did not have a chance to answer the charge levelled by Mr. Travers, a gentleman for whom I have always had the friendliest feelings. He said that Mr. O'Halloran was a Communist. On that occasion, different from this, I thought I supported my Leader (if I may say so with all that modesty that is the principal ingredient of my character) and I think that Mr. Travers rather regretted having made the statement. But this is altogether different, because it was almost impossible to listen to the speech of the member for Gouger and, reading it in *Hansard*—realizing of course that *Hansard* inevitably dressed it up a lot—it was impossible to understand it properly even then. I remember a classic by Dickens entitled *Dombey & Son* in which was a very laudable character named Captain Cuttle. He had a great friend named Captain Bunsby, and so great was Captain Cuttle's admiration of Captain Bunsby that he would scarcely make any important move in life without discussing it fully with his friend. When he asked Captain Bunsby's opinion he always got a completely unintelligible reply, and Dickens said that apparently the good Captain Cuttle's admiration for the opinions of his friend rose in direct proportion to the immensity of the incomprehensibility of his replies.

I have always believed that the member for Gouger thinks that the less intelligible he is the more profound he is. That is another reason why we need not worry about what he said of the Leader of the Opposition because, for all we know, he may have been nominating him for the Nobel Peace Prize or the Magarey Medal or anything else. However, I still maintain and congratulate the member for Gouger on his basic criticism of the Transport Control Board and I hope, in his usual way, he will persist in trying to alter the opinion of the Government about the board's constitution.

This afternoon the Treasurer, in answer to a question from the member for Burra about the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department arising out of a statement made

yesterday by the member for Adelaide, said that the speech of the member for Adelaide contained no names, so he did not know how he could make an investigation. Firstly, let me assure the Treasurer that the names are available, but it is rather unusual, surely, for the Treasurer to say in Parliament, critically, that the names of private individuals have not been mentioned in a question.

Mr. Lawn: He has told me before it is unethical.

Mr. JENNINGS: We all know it is unethical to mention names of people who have no chance to speak for themselves and who can be humiliated by having their names bandied about in public.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: The Treasurer was not complaining: he wanted to know whether the names were available.

Mr. JENNINGS: I said the names were available, but the Treasurer sought, by his statement, to write down the validity of Mr. Lawn's statement by saying that Mr. Lawn was not prepared to give the names, although he was obviously prepared to do that.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: I think you have misinterpreted it.

Mr. JENNINGS: Well, if that is the case we can soon put it right. We are prepared to give the names of the persons and the name of the company that got in touch with Mr. Lawn on the matter, in addition to the name of the credit manager of the company. The name of the company is H. G. Palmer Pty. Limited, and its credit manager is Mr. James H. Harvey. Most of us have found, since the advent of television principally, that we have had much to do with all television companies regarding the difficulties people become involved in on hire-purchase agreements, and of all the companies this is one that goes farthest out of its way to be fair to people in difficulties. The member for Adelaide read out many sad cases but I have had many similar cases.

Mr. Lawn: Will you repeat the first two lines in which the company's officer made all the names available?

Mr. JENNINGS: That passage was read last night, as the member for Adelaide said, but let me read it again: The words are: "Proof of these cases can and will be presented should you require it." I had a case almost identical, I think, with the worst case cited by the member for Adelaide last night. A widow with about five children received a widow's pension and supplementary assistance from the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department. She had a friend who bought

her a television set and was paying the instalments. When she made her declaration to the department and had to answer questions about the things she had in her home, apparently she was more honest than cunning and said she had a television set in her home. The department then refused her relief to the extent of the weekly instalments on the set although they were not being paid by her.

I could give numerous examples but surely it is not necessary after the many examples the member for Adelaide gave last night. I could say a little more about the same department. Sometimes (in fact frequently) members are asked to take up cases with the department to get maintenance for deserted wives. I can cite one case of a woman in my district who was deserted by her husband. It was not the kind of case where the man clears out, goes to the Northern Territory and cannot be found. He was still working in the same job on a very good salary and was well able to pay the maintenance that the court had ordered against him; but, I suppose, through some sort of spite—as so often happens when ill-feeling arises in these domestic disturbances—he let the arrears run up until they amounted to £100, or something like that. This woman telephoned me and asked me if I could do anything about it. I said I would immediately get in touch with the Chairman of the board, which I did. About three days after that, she got her arrears in full. I cannot remember just what they were, but they were well over £100.

It was a few months before I heard from her again. She telephoned me and said, "I wonder if you can help me again?" I said, "Why—haven't the payments been kept up?" She replied, "No; I haven't had one payment since you rang the Chairman last time." So I telephoned him again and within three or four days she had the arrears again. Why has a member of Parliament or somebody else to telephone the department to get arrears of maintenance paid? Why couldn't the department, knowing where the man was and that he was well able to pay, have got the payments regularly from him? I have done this for that woman not only twice but on several occasions—though not since the present Chairman of the board has been in office, I admit. It was when Mr. McNally was there or, when he was not available, it was through Mr. Cook, the Secretary. This is one department that needs scrubbing out and re-organizing.

I want now to refer to Gepps Cross hostel. Since the temporary houses are now being removed at a fairly reasonable rate, the Gepps

Cross hostel is about the only cancerous thing remaining in my electorate. There was some talk during the debate yesterday of a certain building in Adelaide being an eyesore. It may be debatable whether or not it is, but it is certainly not debatable that the Gepps Cross hostel has all the ear marks of an eyesore and all the hall marks of heartbreak. There is almost no hope for anyone who enters there. I do not like to bring my mind down to sordid politics (in fact, it is almost impossible for me to do so) but I remember when the Housing Trust took over this hostel; it was shortly before the 1953 State elections, when it was obvious to everybody that the then Liberal member for that district (Prospect—Mr. Whittle) had a strong challenger. At that time this district was in the Commonwealth electorate of Sturt and it was obvious that the then member for Sturt (Mr. K. C. Wilson) had a strong challenger. The Treasurer apparently thought he could save Mr. Whittle and Mr. Wilson by arranging for stovettes to be put into each of those huts at Gepps Cross, to mollify the occupants until the elections were over, apparently. Unfortunately for Mr. Wilson and Mr. Whittle, it did not work out quite like that, and the Gepps Cross hostel has been a source of political embarrassment to both Commonwealth and State Governments, through the Housing Trust, ever since.

It is a terrible place. Certainly, it is better that the people there should eat after cooking their meals on their little stovettes in their individual huts, but eight families still have to use one set of toilets, and they take it in turns to clean them. One member of one of the eight families is rostered to clean them. That is not a very satisfactory job for one member of one family who is cleaning up after the members of the seven other families, which may have entirely different standards of hygiene. Then what are called the ablution blocks are also shared by eight families. I understand that the menfolk usually want to shower at about the same time before going to work and they have to queue up to use the shower. Again, eight families have to use the same laundry block. A roster is drawn up for the women and, if a woman through sickness does not wash her clothes at the appropriate time, it causes confusion, chaos and, sometimes unfortunately, some enmity—because these people do not live in conditions conducive to friendliness between neighbours. Also, there is no privacy whatsoever. A person cannot sit down in his front yard or back yard because there is no front yard or back yard there. If

the children are let out of doors, they play about on the dusty road in the summer or on the wet road in the winter, almost under the wheels of passing motor cars. It is almost impossible for a place like this to be made happy. I realize that. However, it would be possible at least for the place to be made a little more attractive for the time that the people have to stay there. Surely the roads could be even temporarily repaired. However, any measures taken would be only palliatives. I ask the Government to consider seriously tearing down this place and getting rid of the blot on South Australia that it is by re-housing the people in proper houses.

Mr. CORCORAN (Millicent): I support the first line of the Estimates. I am not in the habit of speaking frequently but am taking advantage of this last opportunity that I shall have of addressing the Committee. Members know that I shall be retiring voluntarily at the end of this session. I do not intend to discuss the merits or demerits of the Budget—I will leave that to honourable members to thrash out—but, first of all, I want to pay a tribute to the late Senator Pearson because I have not had an opportunity of doing so in this Parliament. I was in this Parliament with him between 1945 and 1947. I got to know him then and, even when he transferred his activities to the Commonwealth Parliament, I met him frequently and we were always on friendly terms. I regret his passing because he was a comparatively young man. I acknowledge the loss the nation has suffered and convey my condolences to his wife, his brother (our Minister of Works) and his family.

I congratulate the new member for Central No. 1 in the Legislative Council, the Hon. Frank Kneebone, on his election. He will make a good representative and will prove an acquisition to that Chamber. I regret the deplorable apathy that was associated with that by-election. Our people are privileged to enjoy the franchise, but if they did not have it there would be much weeping. A big price has been paid to maintain their freedom. Hundreds of thousands of our men died on the battlefields of France and Flanders in the First World War, in which the Treasurer, the members for Stirling and Victoria and I participated. I know what sacrifices were made and I regret the apathy evinced in the recent by-election for Central No. 1. I do not know what can be done to remedy the situation. Our people should develop some responsibility as citizens. I do not know if it would be possible in our schools to inculcate into the



minds of our young boys and girls the desirability of taking an interest in Parliament and in those who are trying to determine their destinies.

I entered this House in 1945 and served until I was defeated at the polls in 1947. I participated in several campaigns before I was elected and know what it means to be defeated. In 1947 I was defeated through the then Prime Minister, Mr. Ben Chifley, introducing banking legislation. I had no regrets about my defeat, but I did regret that Ben Chifley did not accomplish what he set out to do. He realized the possible consequences of his action, but when he believed something was right he was prepared to fight until he could fight no longer. I took my defeat as philosophically as I could and I went to the declaration of the poll and said to the people of Naracoorte—because I represented Victoria in those days—“I am disappointed, but not discouraged or demoralized. I bow to your decision, but I will come again if fate decrees I am still well and I will see then if you have lost confidence in me.” I was beaten by only 26 votes from a total of over 11,000.

I came again, and, although I was not successful on the first occasion, I won the seat from Mr. McLachlan who was a great friend of mine and a worthy opponent. In fact, in all my political campaigns, I never had the displeasure of fighting a person who was not a worthy opponent. I was proud to know them and still am. I returned here with the confidence of the people, but it was during my term from 1945-1947 that I established sufficient confidence in the people to help my return. I did not moan when I was defeated, although I remember that some of my Commonwealth colleagues, and one in particular, did not take their defeat as philosophically. The one, whose name I shall not mention, contested the next elections, but he never came back. The public respect men who can take defeat. I have no regrets about my term in this Parliament.

Mr. Bywaters: And the people have no regrets.

Mr. CORCORAN: I do not think I have any enemies here: if I have, I do not know them. I know that the Government tried to bring about my defeat on every possible occasion, but that was the Government's prerogative and right. I used to say to my opponents, “You fight, and fight hard. The harder you fight, if I can survive, the more meritorious it will be on my part.” I hold

nothing against them. Although I am to retire I hope that after the next election the name Corcoran will remain in this Parliament.

Mr. Lawn: So do we all.

Mr. CORCORAN: I am looking forward to my son Desmond entering this House. He has been endowed by nature with the attributes to fill a place in this House. I realize that it will be a tough fight, but I would recommend him to the public. I have five sons and each would be worthy to occupy my position because they are honest, but they do not all have the same qualifications as my son Desmond. I hope I will be excused, but I am not trying to exaggerate his qualities. I hope he does win at the next election, but I am not going to be like so many people who say, “Our man is going to win. He has it in the bag”. No-one should have that degree of confidence. A man can go through a district to try to sense public feeling towards him, and although he may be encouraged, a doubt always exists and does not leave him until the final figures reveal whether the seat has been won or lost. All members in swinging seats or in doubtful seats—and even in some apparently certain seats—have some worries until the results are known.

During my term I have never made nation-rocking speeches. I have never left the back bench and I have no regrets about that. I have never sought other than to serve my district. I know it would not do if all members had that attitude because we would not then have men filling the positions that must inevitably be filled. I came here to serve the people, and I have done so for about 11 years. I am now going out, but I have no regrets about that. I am proud of my association with all the people I have known here and of having served the people I represent.

An encouraging feature about the last election was that I almost doubled my majority. I then thought that I would retire as I was reaching an age when I was no longer capable of doing the job properly. Since the last election I have been worried at times about whether I would be able to do the job; I would not have stayed in Parliament if I had not felt I could. Nobody could charge me with having discriminated between the two political creeds in attending to the needs of the people of the districts of Millicent and Victoria. When anyone came to me I was concerned only with his problem.

However, when Labor policy was involved, I supported it and fought for it here. I look upon politics to some degree as an accident of birth: if a person is born a Liberal he remains one. The same applies to religion, but we never try to mix religion with politics. The Returned Servicemen's League of Australia—a great organization—is supposed to be non-political and non-sectarian, and I have often said that while it retains that policy it will continue to function but immediately it abandons it it will perish. I have served the people in my district; I am well-known there; and I want to walk out from this House without any blemishes on my name.

Mr. Hughes: You will.

Mr. CORCORAN: It will not be my fault if I do not. I do not want anyone to be able to say, "I approached Jim" or "I approached old Corcoran (as they probably call me now) but he would not do anything for me." I hope this may give some advantage to my son, although he did not use me up when he stood for the pre-selection; he did not mention my name or his war service. The Treasurer and I both trudged through the mud and slush in Flanders in 1915 and we know all about war and the futility of it. You, Mr. Acting Chairman, fought in a war that was supposed to end all wars and make the world safe for democracy, but you can judge for yourself whether it achieved that purpose. War is utterly futile, and I cannot bear to think about it. It is remarkable that this country has advanced as much as it has; it has survived two major wars and has lost, on the other side of the world, at least 100,000 men and women, whose burial places are indicated by little white crosses. May this Parliament be guided by their example to do the right thing.

I thank all who have helped me. I thank the Ministers of the Crown; although sometimes misunderstandings have cropped up between us, none was intended. I know they have big responsibilities and that we cannot expect them to smile all the time. If I happened to be in a mood that did not blend with their attitude there might have been friction, but I forget all about that as I am big enough to rise above it. When I walk out of here I hope I shall be able to claim the friendship of everyone. I am grateful to the Ministers, the Treasurer, and members of my Party for standing behind me. The Government has helped me achieve much of what I have fought for; if it had not adopted a sympathetic attitude, I could not have got what I did. I always

pointed out to my constituents that I could not direct the Ministers, that I could only appeal to them and, if I had a fair case, my requests would probably be considered.

I cannot speak too highly of the various Government departments. Some members may have reason to condemn them, but I have not. I know that many of the things I have achieved would have been hopeless but for their wholehearted co-operation. This applies to the Commonwealth Taxation and Pensions Departments and to the State Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department. I have heard the Children's Welfare Department condemned and, although I do not suggest that the person who condemned it was not correctly stating his experiences, thank goodness I cannot criticize it. I am grateful to that department for its assistance in many cases, and I generally try to acknowledge my gratitude. I know that sometimes it may be dilatory, and I have accused it of being so. I have had reason to criticize the Public Buildings Department, but I have always pointed out that I have been on the outside looking in. If I were an officer of the department I might not do any better.

I know that our Leader, for whom I have the greatest admiration, can be entrusted with the responsibility of taking over the Treasury benches after the next election, and that is quite possible. Irrespective of the gerrymander we talk about, it can be done. The Leader is an even greater success than was generally expected by members of my Party. He works hard; indeed, my only concern is that he may overdo it. He has not a constitution like that of the Treasurer. May the Treasurer continue to enjoy good health, but a change is as good as a spell.

I have been a member of the Labor Party all my life and I shall die one. I was a great admirer of the late Ben Chifley, who built up an economic foundation in this country during the Second World War and also during the ensuing period of peace, and those foundations still remain. I heard his biography over television the other night. I sat alone and listened and my one regret was that all South Australians could not have listened to it.

I must thank my Party colleagues and hope that they will continue with their efforts. They can never be demoralized, so I appeal to members opposite not to be too harsh in their criticism and accuse them of being socialistic Communists. They are none of that. They are working solely for the benefit of the people and they are honest in their efforts. Even if a member does not agree with their tactics,

I ask him to be big enough to allow them to adopt their own methods of approach and then we shall get somewhere. Do not allow petty things to spoil our friendship.

We live in a country where every man has the opportunity to give expression to his own political and religious ideas. We have developed a spirit of tolerance. That is the kind of attitude we want and it was this freedom which Australians fought for and for which thousands died. The achievements of our men in the First World War helped to put Australia on the map in its rightful place among the nations of the world. At a meeting of the League of Nations, Mr. Woodrow Wilson, the President of the United States of America, questioned the right of such an insignificant country like Australia to be present. He asked the then Australian Prime Minister, the late Mr. William Morris Hughes, "Whom do you represent?" to which Mr. Hughes replied, "Sixty-thousand dead Australians," and no more was said about it. Australia took its rightful place among the nations of the world and I hope that she continues to do so.

The international situation at the moment is not very bright, but I do not think for a moment that Khrushchev will do anything desperate. He is just trying to have a demoralizing effect. When an appeal is made to him not to do something he just doubles his efforts to make the position even more sinister. Every dog has his day and I suppose that he will have his day. Let us hope to God that he never attempts to drop an atomic bomb, because if he does it will be the end of civilization.

During the First World War poisonous gas, among the worst things for humanity, was used. I was there among the gas myself and many a time I wore a gas mask for four or five hours. One had no need to be told to look after his gas mask; one made sure that he did so. Some men could not develop the habit of breathing properly in a gas mask and had to be sent out of the fighting line. Although it was available, poisonous gas was not used in the Second World War, I think because those in control realized the awful consequences and the possibilities of human destruction. I also believe that that feeling will prevent the use of atomic bombs. I sincerely hope to God that it does.

I pay a special tribute to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Frank Walsh) and hope that he will continue his fight. He has done a great job in his new office and all I am worried about is that he will work too hard.

One word from me and he does as he likes! If he is too severely critical of the Budget, that is his right; that is what he is here for. It is said that a healthy, virile Opposition is necessary for good government. He may be the Leader of the Government after next March, because the Labor Party can win. It does not have to pick up many seats. There may be some inevitable reactions against the Commonwealth Government. It happened to me when I was beaten in the district of Victoria. It is not a nice sensation when one resigns from his job, as I did after holding it for 23 years, and then after serving for a period is defeated. I reared a family of nine children, went through the depression, and never sought a penny from the Government. That is why I deplore the present unemployment. The late Mr. Ben Chifley built up such an effective economic position when he was in office that Australia had no unemployed people during the period of the Second World War and thereafter while he was Prime Minister. It was a remarkable achievement. He had great statesman-like qualities and could see what was ahead. He utilized much of his time to improve his knowledge of finance and ultimately became recognized as a financial wizard. May he rest in peace.

I am not like I used to be when I could get up in Parliament and make a speech without difficulty, although I do not say there was much in it, and when my voice was such that the people at Millicent could almost have heard me from here. Today we have the member for Port Adelaide (Mr. Ryan), who has so much vigour, which I am glad to see, and the people at Port Adelaide can almost hear him when he is speaking in the House. However, with me, Father Time marches on and inevitably he will catch up with everyone. I recall what Mr. McAlees, a former member for Wallaroo, once said—that he did not want to die with his boots on—and I hope that I do not either. I am hoping that I will live for a few more years. I certainly will not forget my old friends in Parliament, but will come in to have a look at them. Whether or not my son is elected for Millicent at the next election, I will do my best to help whoever is returned. I thank honourable members for their patient hearing.

Although I have spoken for a fairly long time, I have expressed my feelings as they appealed to me. I hope that this Parliament will continue to function for the benefit of the people and that the days of unemployment

will soon vanish. I was District Clerk at Tantanoola during the last depression and had to administer relief and it was a most demoralizing experience, because anyone who had been thrifty and had accumulated a few pounds was forced to spend that money before he could get relief. Fellows with decent little bank accounts had to produce them, and if they had withdrawn any money from the bank they had to produce the receipts to show how they had spent it. Once a fortnight, no matter how far they had to travel to the town, they had to report to the office so that they could be questioned by the police officer who had to carry out that job. Then, when they had boots and clothes issued to them they had to go and work in them. I thought that was getting pretty near to slavery. The council used to instruct me to put them on certain jobs; I told them what jobs to do, but I never went to see whether they did the jobs or not because I did not believe in the principle and I was willing to risk dismissal in not doing it. We had a pretty arrogant chairman who used to ask for reports, but somehow or another he did not get them.

I hope that state of affairs never arises again. The man who knows the horrors of unemployment is the man who has experienced it. If we marched all today's unemployed down King William Street we would not see the end of the column; the Anzac Day march would not be in it. Let us hope that present conditions will improve and that something will happen soon to provide work for those unfortunate people. In the last depression some men with as many as seven or eight children could not get jobs, and their families were in desperate need of food and clothing. I am not suggesting it is anywhere near as bad today. I have the fullest and most sincere sympathy for those who are unemployed today, and I conclude by expressing the hope that something will be brought forth to enable those people to obtain employment.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart): I think that members who have just listened to the very fine address by the member for Millicent will have been struck by the sincerity of his speech, which was more eloquent than any of the fine phrasing or polished sentences that any of us could have put together. It has been my privilege to be associated with the honourable member during the whole of his political career, and I do not think that anybody in the history of Parliament will ever walk down

the steps, when the time comes for him to relinquish office here, with a prouder record. I do not think anyone has brought a broader outlook to this House than Mr. Corcoran, and I am sure that he will take with him the congratulations and best wishes of all who have worked with him. Perhaps it is his way of life, but I have never known Mr. Corcoran to say an unkind word about anyone and, conversely, I have never known anyone to say an unkind thing about him. I am sure that stands to his credit, and I should like him to know that he has the admiration and respect of us all. I congratulate him on the speech that he has just delivered.

Comments have been made during the course of this debate upon the way the Budget has been presented. I do not propose to go over the ground so ably covered by the member for Whyalla, who said that since the Budget is merely an apportionment of Government expenditure between department and department which is made available these days under the revenues accruing from our own raising and from the Commonwealth Government, which really controls the purse, members find themselves in a position of not being able to criticize one item in the Budget without running the danger of doing it at the expense of some other item. However, I want to briefly discuss one or two principles that are involved. Some members opposite have found some source of satisfaction in the fact that the Treasurer has been able to balance a Budget—to present to us a Budget with totals at the end of it that balance. Some have called it good housekeeping. Indeed, the member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) said that he was very satisfied with the cook. The Treasurer indicated in an earlier debate that it was so much like housekeeping that the State Government had to apportion the amount of money available to it into 12 equal compartments and spend that much money each month; if there was an over-expenditure in one month there would be less money than normally would be available for the succeeding month. Most people understand finance at the housekeeping level, and if a household budget had to be balanced only by reason of the fact that some had plenty and other members of the household could not be provided for at all, that surely could not be regarded as good housekeeping. I think every woman in the land would agree with that. If the only means that she had of retaining the *status quo* and preserving the standard in her household for some members was by putting the others

out of the household or denying them anything at all, she could not claim that was good housekeeping, even though she could balance her budget.

That is precisely the thing that is happening in South Australia today, so much so that there are some who can say, "I am satisfied with the cook," or "I am satisfied with the housekeeping." However, there is little ground for satisfaction to those who are not in work—to those whose home budgets are unbalanced. The economy of the State is not balanced as long as there are home budgets that are out of gear through no fault of the houseowner or breadwinner, as we experience today. I do not know that any one of us is really able to assess the full situation, and I am not at all convinced that statistics can tell us the true story. We have to read the statistics that are presented to us, remembering how they can be juggled to meet almost any argument. I think the member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) showed us how that figure of 2.5 per cent unemployed, which has been referred to and accepted in many quarters as the real position obtaining today, could be 4 per cent or even more when all the relevant factors were taken into account.

Be that as it may, we have to accept those figures and read them in the light of our own experience. My experience as I left Port Augusta to come to Adelaide this week was that there were five men standing on the roadside, not together but at five different positions about 15 miles apart, and not with their swags as we saw them in 1933, but reasonably dressed men with their suitcases looking for a ride from Port Augusta back to the city. Apparently they had gone north looking for work but did not find it, and were now seeking a ride back to Adelaide. I could not help thinking of the people in Adelaide anxiously waiting to hear whether the breadwinner had succeeded in getting work and whether there would be a wage envelope in the offing, or whether there would be no help at all. I have experienced this sort of thing before, but this week I experienced more of it and I wonder whether the number of unemployed people is increasing, or whether this was merely coincidence. These people are wandering over the State like nomads. They do not want to receive only unemployment relief. They have the gumption to look for work, and in the process often find themselves in difficulties.

This Budget would have had more appeal for me if it had considered some of these things, instead of whether or not the figures measured

up. Consideration should have been given to the needs of the people, even if it meant budgeting for a deficit. More could have been done by the Government in making funds available to councils for public works. Councils all over the State have said that they could find work for many men if money were made available to them, and it would have been in the places where the unemployed men lived. There is always a difficulty associated with providing work for men some distance from their homes. The councils were ready to embark on a works programme if the money were available to them. Surely in these days when unemployment has reached such a position this is the time for work to be implemented. The councils, believing that they had a proposition that would help them, the State and the unemployment position, sought a conference with the Treasurer, but my information is that he refused to discuss the matter with them. I can be corrected if this statement is not true. It was brought back to the Municipal Association, and it was said that the Treasurer pointed out that no good purpose would be served by receiving the deputation. I disagree with him on this matter because even if it had meant budgeting for a deficit money should have been made available to the councils in order that they might provide the work so desperately needed, and where the men concerned lived.

I have had some experience in local government and the financial arrangements between the State and the councils are such that the Salisbury District Council is not the only one that looks like going bankrupt. Councils are being placed in an impossible position today and it is significant that in South Australia in the last 25 years there has not been one council set up to function with finance made available under the Local Government Act. Even at Port Stanvac the footpaths and roads are not being provided in the same way as councils have to provide them. If it had to be done that way, there would be no Port Stanvac. Elizabeth, Woomera and Radium Hill have not been able to provide their own footpaths and roads. If the people had been told that they had to find all the money needed for this work the towns would not have been established. If the Budget had provided long-needed finance for councils to assist them in carrying out a works programme, which they know is necessary for the development of the State, and which can now be carried out more economically than when labour is at a premium, a good service would have been rendered to the people. There would have been a

humanitarian attitude adopted towards the people who need help most. I emphasize that because when a country as a whole reaches a difficult economic situation it is always the poorer section, and the section least able to bear the brunt, that has to stand the full force of the impact of any economic depression.

In my electorate we have a housing problem that has not been solved, and it is as urgent today as ever. It has been brought about by the fact that there is no provision in South Australia for housing in country areas widows, single women, or women and children left in difficult circumstances when the husband has been sent to gaol. Extreme hardship occurs sometimes in these cases. We have a number of such cases at Port Augusta. In some the bread winner has been sent to gaol. The wife and the children have committed no crime yet they have had to pay a terrific penalty and take great punishment. Nowhere in the State is there an opportunity for them to get a house. The Housing Trust says that because there is no guarantee that the rent will be paid no house can be made available. In the name of humanity what is the answer to this problem? The medical officer attended the last meeting of the Port Augusta Council and asked questions. I do not know the answer. The matter has been placed before the Treasurer and we have suggested that the proper authority to deal with the situation is the Housing Trust. We asked that an investigation be made and the Treasurer agreed. Officers of the trust came to Port Augusta and were apprised of the situation. They agreed that houses should be made available and said that the trust would make available 12 houses a year if the council guaranteed that the people chosen to occupy them came from houses unfit for habitation and if the council condemned the dwellings in which the people were living and arranged for their demolition.

The council accepted that proposition which seemed to be a commonsense approach, but has not managed to get even one family housed in a home provided by the trust under that arrangement. Years have gone by and we are still in the same position that we were in then. One widow is living in a place that the medical officer said was dangerous to health. There was a draught coming through and the weather could not be kept out. That lady's husband was a soldier who gave his life in the service of his country. The State has some obligation to that lady and to the young lad she is rearing. The present owner of the house she occupies does not wish to spend

money on it, but desires to pull it down as soon as he can secure vacant possession, and he wants vacant possession as soon as possible. He has been waiting two years for it.

The Government should closely examine the housing position arising out of the occupation of sub-standard houses in Port Augusta. The Government is tackling the situation for those who can pay an economic rent. In order to meet a similar position in Adelaide the trust has been able to build widow's flats and make some provision for them. Why is a distinction always drawn between people living in the metropolitan area and those living in the country? Why is any responsibility for the people flatly refused once we get out of the metropolitan area? I can understand the Housing Trust and the Government when they say that they ultimately want to cover the State, and they must make a start somewhere. They have been a good many years making a start outside the metropolitan area. I am able to appreciate the Treasurer's difficulties because, whilst he is sufficiently socialistically inclined to support to the limit the Housing Trust and its work, he is handicapped by the reactionary element in the Commonwealth Government that will insist on money for housing being given to private enterprise.

The Commonwealth Government does not look favourably on housing trusts and housing commissions. Instead of more money being made available for work through instrumentalities such as the Housing Trust, we are getting progressively less and we now find ourselves in a position where we can build skyscrapers for insurance companies and reach the uppermost building limits in the metropolitan area for offices, but cannot find a shelter for people who need houses. Perhaps there is nothing wrong with that, but I do not think it measures up to some of the principles for which we stand, and it is incumbent on someone to raise his voice on behalf of those people who are not getting the deal they should receive. We will have an opportunity of discussing, line by line, the items that are included in the Budget and I shall reserve further remarks for that occasion.

First line (Legislative Council, £12,417) passed.

House of Assembly, £18,801; Parliamentary Library, £8,270; Joint House Committee, £12,268; Electoral Department, £61,052; Government Reporting Department, £45,324; Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,

£4,073; Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement, £2,495; Miscellaneous, £49,991—passed.

#### CHIEF SECRETARY AND MINISTER OF HEALTH.

State Governor's Establishment, £10,895; Chief Secretary's Department, £20,191; Statistical Department, £34,492; Audit Department, £76,183—passed.

Printing and Stationery Department, £321,437.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): How much longer is the Government printing office to be domiciled in its present building? Can the Treasurer say whether another site has been approved for the department and whether much investigation has been undertaken?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): The Government has been conscious for a considerable time that the Government Printer needs another site. One problem associated with the matter is that the site must be adjacent to Parliament House because much of the printing done is connected with Parliament. Secondly, the land needed has to be sufficient to provide considerable ground floor space because a modern printing office requires three acres. The Government has investigated the possibility of getting three acres within reasonable distance of Parliament House and I believe we may be able to arrange for the transfer of land at present occupied by the Engineering and Water Supply Department opposite the police barracks at Thebarton. The land comprises seven acres and the Government hopes to get three acres for the printing office, which would then face the Port Road. Negotiations are proceeding.

Line passed.

Police Department, £2,864,400—passed.

Sheriff and Gaols and Prisons Department, £524,754.

Mr. BYWATERS: Can the Treasurer say why Mr. Allen and Mr. Glastonbury are to go overseas? I think it is a good move. I am pleased that this year a psychiatrist was appointed for the treatment of prisoners, because any effort made to rehabilitate them is in the interests of the community generally. It is much appreciated by those connected with the welfare side of after-prison care. Also, the increase in the number of probation officers is well warranted and is showing good results. I am sure further research in this direction commends itself to all members.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Can the Treasurer say whether provision is to be made for alcoholics?

Mr. RICHES: Some time ago the magistrate of the Northern District urged strongly that a probation officer be appointed somewhere in the Northern District—at Port Augusta, Whyalla or Port Pirie—to report on and assist in welfare work among juveniles appearing before the local courts. Can the Treasurer say whether an appointment has been made and, if so, where? If an appointment has been made, what are the duties of the officer? If the Treasurer has no information, will the magistrate's request be further considered?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: True, Mr. Allen and Mr. Glastonbury are going overseas to examine modern methods of rehabilitation undertaken by other countries, particularly as applying to alcoholics. This problem has caused the Government great concern. Some time ago a committee was appointed to recommend to the Government legislation to enable an institution to be established and work effectively. That committee has done much work on this matter but, unfortunately, we have not in Australia an institution of this type in operation.

In Queensland there is a limited institution along these lines but it was considered that the obtaining of up-to-date information, particularly from Europe, the United States of America, and Great Britain, about the treatment of alcoholics and the establishment of institutions for their treatment would be a great step forward. At the same time, the Sheriff will look into the whole question of the rehabilitation of prisoners. Those honourable members who went to Cadell could not but be impressed by the changed attitude over recent years towards the care and training of prisoners. Whereas previously anyone who went to gaol was regarded as forever forsaken and incapable of rehabilitation, now we know that people who have been sentenced come out of prison and, as a result of their training, frequently take their place in society as good and useful citizens.

I am sorry I have not to hand the information that the member for Port Augusta (Mr. Riches) desires. I have heard the matter mentioned by the Chief Secretary but I cannot tell the honourable member what stage it has reached. As far as I know, there is no line on the Estimates dealing with the substance of his question but I will inquire and inform the honourable member in due course.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: I assure the Government that the overseas visit by the gentlemen referred to has the approval of my Party. We know the outstanding work the Sheriff has done in the interests of prison reform. It is not his responsibility to construct prisons but, undoubtedly, he has improved the treatment of prisoners in his care. We should do all we can to overcome the problem of alcoholism and I am sure that Mr. Allen will do his utmost to find an answer to the problem while he is overseas.

Mr. BYWATERS: The disease of alcoholism is responsible for heavy losses to State revenues annually and if, as a result of the visit overseas by Mr. Allen and Mr. Glastonbury, this loss can be minimized, the visit will have been worthwhile. I know of men from my electorate who have been imprisoned. Their families have received help and consideration from the probation officers during their absence. These officers are trained in this type of welfare work

and in the after-care of prisoners, and they work far more than their required hours. They go the extra mile. Mr. Glastonbury is a Christian gentleman who inspires confidence and I believe he has been the driving force in guiding other probation officers. The Prisoners' Aid Association is vitally concerned with this problem, and it is interesting to note that during the last three years £3,000 has been allocated to the association annually. If the association saved only six prisoners a year that would represent a handsome return on the Government's investment. However, I am sure that its work is responsible for saving many more men, and it is worth greater consideration in future.

Line passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.25 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, October 3, at 2 p.m.