

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, August 23, 1962.

The SPEAKER (Hon. T. C. Stott) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

GAUGE STANDARDIZATION.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I move:

That Standing Orders and Sessional Orders be so far suspended as to enable me to move a motion without notice as follows:

That South Australian Senators be requested to consider moving in the Senate the following further amendment to the motion that the Budget Papers be printed, namely: "but that the Government be requested to make provision for adequate funds to enable the standardization of the railway line between Broken Hill and Port Pirie to be carried out in conjunction with the State of South Australia."

In asking for this suspension I do not desire to develop my reasons for the motion other than to intimate that its acceptance would afford a reasonable opportunity for the Senators to be consulted over the weekend so that they could then move my suggested amendment to the motion concerning the Budget Papers.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition has moved that Standing Orders be so far suspended as to enable him to move a motion without notice. I consider this to be a matter of urgency. I have counted the House and there being present a majority of the members I accept the motion. Is the motion seconded?

Mr. HUTCHENS: I second the motion.

Motion carried.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: I thank members for their courtesy and move:

That South Australian Senators be requested to consider moving in the Senate the following further amendment to the motion that the Budget Papers be printed, namely: "but that the Government be requested to make provision for adequate funds to enable the standardization of the railway line between Broken Hill and Port Pirie to be carried out in conjunction with the State of South Australia."

I think it can be agreed at the outset that the situation regarding railway gauge standardization, particularly of that section between Port Pirie and Broken Hill, has been explained many times. Its importance is well known to the people of South Australia and of the Commonwealth. It may seem that we are trying to insist on directing the South Australian representatives in the Senate. The Senate is recognized as representative of all States of the Commonwealth, and we should

realize that the States have equal representation. Unfortunately, on some occasions we have to assemble as a Parliament to fill the vacancies in South Australia's representation that have been caused by death or other factors. Therefore, we do have the constitutional right to have some say in what our Senators can consider in the interests of the State they represent. There is nothing dictatorial in our attitude in insisting that they do something. We are submitting this motion to give the South Australian Senators a recommendation from this Parliament; in particular from the popular House. I am not saying that another place is not aware of the position, because the Labor Party has members in that House and three members of the Ministry are there who are aware of the need and the desirability of standardizing the railway between Port Pirie and Broken Hill.

I think I mentioned only last week what the Manager of the Broken Hill Associated Smelters Proprietary Limited at Port Pirie said regarding the increased cost involved in the transportation of ore from Broken Hill to Port Pirie, and the desirability of reducing freight rates so that his company can at least maintain its fair share of the world market, which I understand is 10 per cent. The Commonwealth Government has advised the South Australian Government that it will make available the sum of £1,300,000 for the provision of a certain number of diesel-electric locomotives for this line, together with other rolling stock. The important matter associated with this resolution is the announcement by the Premier that it was the Government's intention to commence certain works associated with the standardization of this line. I said previously that we, as a Party, were not here to sabotage anything in the interests of the progress of the State. At the same time I was not prepared to make a move until I knew whether the State would be safeguarded financially as a result of its own efforts in this direction. I do not think I should be challenged on that stand. I move this motion to help South Australia. At the same time, I do not think it would be wrong of me to suggest that a third rail be laid from Port Pirie Junction to Adelaide.

I move this motion to remind the Senators of South Australia, if they are not already mindful, of the urgency of this matter for South Australia. We on this side of the House do not intend to enter upon a lengthy debate in this matter but, in view of the gravity of

the situation, those members who are vitally affected through their district representation should have the opportunity to express their views. I do not desire the debate to continue after four o'clock and I hope that, before then, this motion will be carried in the interests of the people of South Australia.

The SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded?

Mr. CASEY (Frome): It gives me much pleasure to second the motion and, in doing so, I point out that about three-quarters of the length of the line between Port Pirie and Broken Hill is in my electorate. Peterborough has the major South Australian rail junction apart from that in Adelaide. The ore transported from Broken Hill to Port Pirie last week was about 19,000 tons, but the weekly figure has been as low as 11,000 tons. However, under the scheme introduced by the Commonwealth Government to provide diesel-electric locomotives and ore-carrying waggons it is hoped to increase this tonnage, thereby reducing costs to the B.H.A.S. at Port Pirie. Unfortunately, it has been found on trial runs that have been conducted with diesel-electric locomotives on the existing track that the time taken to complete the journey is practically the same as that now taken by steam locomotives. Therefore, even with the introduction of the diesels the quantity of ore transported on the line will not greatly exceed the present quantity carried. For that reason, as far as the B.H.A.S. is concerned, no great economies can be expected in connection with the line.

I profess, primarily, to be a South Australian and, secondly, to be an Australian. It has often been said that Australia should be governed by one Parliament, but, in a case such as this where we have a national project vital to a State such as South Australia, we, the members of the South Australian Parliament, are in a position to voice our opinions strongly and point out to the Commonwealth Government the urgent need for this undertaking to be completed in South Australia and in particular in the locality that I represent. As I have previously said, rail standardization is of the utmost importance to Australia. We have far too many breaks of gauge and in this atomic era, as we call it, it is of prime national importance that rail standardization should be commenced without delay.

I commend the Leader for moving this motion that we bring to the notice of the Senate the importance of providing a standard rail link that will traverse Australia from east to west. Most of the ore carried

on this line bears a freight rate of about 70s. a ton. I believe that zinc is carried at about 70s. and lead at 68s. a ton. With the falling overseas lead prices and increased production at Broken Hill to counter those falling prices, it is essential to the B.H.A.S. that costs be reduced as quickly as possible. For that reason, the gradients on the line, particularly between Paratoo and Ucolta and between Peterborough and Jamestown, have been surveyed. The lines will have to be re-laid in those localities in order to cater for the increased tonnage to be hauled by the diesel-electric locomotives. As I said earlier, I doubt whether more ore can be transported by the diesel-electric locomotives on the existing track than is being transported today by steam locomotives.

We have evidence that most of the maintenance work can be done at the Peterborough workshops, and therefore the hub of the railways in that area will always be Peterborough. That concerns me directly, because the town of Peterborough is in my electorate. Recently, some members of the Commonwealth Parliament toured my electorate to investigate this matter, and although the tour was conducted on a non-Parliamentary basis, I do not think the members of that party could honestly have appreciated the true position. I therefore maintain that the members of the State Parliament have a duty to the people they represent to inform the Commonwealth Parliament of this State's needs. For that reason, I have much pleasure in seconding the motion.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): The Leader's motion required the suspension of Standing Orders, but after the short time he gave me to look at it I agreed that it was a matter of great urgency and of great importance to South Australia. Although I have not been able to examine closely its constitutional aspect, the motion appears to me to be in line with the purpose for which the Senate was established, and to be expressed in language to which I do not think any honourable member could object. Under those circumstances I am prepared later this afternoon, if the Leader so desires, to let the motion go to a vote, and I will not oppose it.

The motion does not appear to conflict with the constitutional function of the Senate, which is to look after the interests of the smaller States. If one takes the trouble to study the debates that took place when the Commonwealth Parliament was established, one will

see that from the inception a fear was expressed by the smaller States that they would be remote from the Commonwealth capital, that their representation in the Commonwealth Parliament and the Commonwealth Cabinet would be small, and that they would not be heard. That was the very reason the Senate was established. If we examine the voting strength and the whole set-up of the Senate, we will see that it was designed scrupulously to provide for every State to have an equal voice in the passing of Commonwealth legislation. The casting vote of the President is often required because, under the present set-up there may be 30 votes for a motion and 30 votes against it. In other words, it is necessary to have a majority of the members voting to have a motion carried, but a quorum must be present at the time.

Constitutionally, this House has a right to express its views on the matter. The motion is directed not along Party lines, but to all Senators. I would have objected if the motion had been directed to the Senators of only one Party. This is a matter of the utmost importance to the State and under the circumstances the motion should be carried in a manner befitting the dignity of this Parliament. The only points to consider are whether we have reached the stage that makes it necessary for a motion of this description to be carried, whether our action is premature, and whether we have negotiated in the normal way and not got satisfaction. Here again I agree with the motion.

I have been in politics during the whole period of the negotiations on this matter. I know the circumstances that applied when the first recommendations regarding standardization were made. I had an intimate knowledge of Sir Harold Clapp, the gentleman who conducted the first negotiations. I was present at all the conferences held on the matter. Probably, from a direct point of view, I have more knowledge of the associated matters than any other politician in the Commonwealth today.

Looking at the matter from the South Australian angle, what are the issues that have arisen, and what are South Australia's views on them? Sir Harold Clapp recommended that the railway lines of Australia as a whole, with the exception of the South Australian railway system on Eyre Peninsula, should be standardized. In other words, his recommendation was that the railways of Western Australia, Queensland, Victoria, and

South Australia, with the exception I have mentioned, should be brought into line with the Commonwealth east-west railway gauge from Port Augusta to Kalgoorlie, with the New South Wales gauge, and with the gauge of the small portion of the Queensland railways running from the New South Wales border to Brisbane. I am speaking of something that took place many years ago and I do not want members to quote any figure I give. I do not want it to be put in the wrong context. If I remember correctly, the total capital expenditure involved in the recommendation was £263,000,000. That involved the whole of the railway system of Australia, including the Northern Territory, and it went before a conference.

The Commonwealth Government of the day said it was prepared to accept the recommendation and asked the various States if they would agree, but the conference did not reach any favourable conclusion. In the first place, there was violent objection from Queensland. I believe (this is my own interpretation of its reasons) that its objection was that it thought that standardization would inevitably draw much of the commerce from southern Queensland, which went through the capital of Brisbane, to Sydney and therefore to the realm of New South Wales. New South Wales accepted the Commonwealth proposal. If my memory is correct, Mr. McKell was its Premier at the time. Victoria and Western Australia did not accept the proposal, but South Australia accepted it without any provisos, so that right from the inception this State has accepted the proposal. However, the conference was not a success because of objections from other States. New South Wales was the only other State to accept the proposal, which would have involved it in a considerable financial obligation even though no alteration was necessary in its railway system.

Mr. Loveday: About what year was that?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: From memory, I think it was 1943 or 1944; it was the first conference to consider Sir Harold Clapp's report. Incidentally, the history of why he carried out this work is interesting. He had been appointed Director of Aircraft Production and, after his department had been set up for some time, as he had had long experience in railway administration in Victoria he was given this work in lieu of aircraft work on which he had been engaged during the war. The matter rested for some time, and during the intervening period New South Wales withdrew its support, saying that,

although it wanted to see standardization go ahead, it considered that, as it was obvious that it was not going to be of general application, it could not provide money for something that would be at the most a piecemeal standardization. That State, which was to provide money for other States, withdrew that part of its support. As far as I know, New South Wales has always been in favour of standardization but it withdrew from making a heavy financial contribution toward railway works in other States because it considered that it would not be standardization as such.

The Commonwealth Government did not think the matter should rest as it was, and it then entered into negotiations with South Australia. Again, I am speaking only from conjecture, but I think the Commonwealth Government and the then Minister for Transport (Mr. Ward) believed that if an agreement could be reached with South Australia for the standardization of railways the other States would of necessity have to reconsider their previous decision. The second negotiations were undertaken with South Australia alone. I attended the conference and the question was fully discussed. I explained to the Commonwealth Government that we had limited finance available. The present agreement was drawn up and signed by the Chifley Government on behalf of the Commonwealth and by myself on behalf of South Australia, and it was ratified by both Parliaments.

Mr. Riches: Unanimously.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Unless my memory is incorrect, every speaker who spoke on the matter supported the legislation. I think the question was determined on the voices without a division being taken, so it can be considered as a unanimous decision. What has been the position since then? Immediately upon the ratification of the agreement the Commonwealth Government signed project orders for work to commence in the South-East. It was understood that it would be impossible for South Australia to work a third gauge, so we agreed to change over to a broad gauge. South Australia will have to meet the expense of converting back to the standard gauge at the appropriate time. Incidentally, the work has been designed to enable the conversion to the standard gauge at a minimum cost, and I believe it can be accomplished within two or three weeks when the time comes. A minimum of work is involved. The rolling stock has been designed for easy and rapid conversion.

When the work in the South-East neared completion the South Australian Government wrote to the Commonwealth Government stating its desire that further project orders be signed for work in the Peterborough Division. We asked for £50,000 to enable survey work to be undertaken in the Peterborough Division, but that request was refused. South Australia offered to pay the £50,000 for the survey if the Commonwealth Government experienced difficulties in making the appropriation, on the understanding that it would be recouped as soon as the work proceeded, but that offer was not accepted then. However, some time later the Prime Minister announced in a policy speech that his Government would make available £50,000 for survey work. That amount was duly appropriated to the State and, I think, has been fully expended on the survey work that has been done. But I believe that was about seven years ago. Since then other projects have been commenced in other parts of Australia. The Commonwealth Government undertook the standardization of the line from Melbourne to Albury; it has undertaken the heavy responsibility for the modernization, not standardization, of the Mount Isa railway line—a project costing about £26,000,000; and, more recently, it has undertaken the standardization of the line from Perth to Kalgoorlie. The Commonwealth Government is now voting money on its Estimates to provide for these works.

I point out to members—as I would to the South Australian Senators were they here—that the three States affected by those projects had categorically refused to accept the offer for this standardization work when it was first made by the Commonwealth Government. I want it clearly understood that I do not in any way decry the fact that the Commonwealth Government is making money available for Western Australia, Victoria and Queensland. As a matter of hard fact, when the Mount Isa line was due for discussion at the Loan Council meeting, one or two representatives from other States discussed it privately with me because they wanted to oppose that work proceeding on the ground that it was an unfair preference to Queensland. I used every influence I had—and I believe successfully—in getting the other States to agree to that project. When the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited discussed the conversion of the line from Perth to Kalgoorlie I immediately publicly supported it, because I believed it was in the best interests of Australia as a whole. However, that does not alter the fact that

South Australia is also a member of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Mr. Bywaters: We want a fair go.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: It does not alter the fact that geographically South Australia has a harder row to hoe than any other State. It does not alter the fact that the South Australian people, in the interests of developing their State, have gone without many of the things that citizens of other States have had. Our people have supported a policy directed not to easy living at the moment, but rather to a consolidation of our assets and the development of our State. If members examine the Loan Estimates they will see that most of the money is being diverted to the task of trying to consolidate our economy and develop our State. I do not care with which State we are compared, and I do not care who is judge, I am confident that the people of South Australia have done extremely well under hard circumstances and can compare favourably with other people in other parts of the Commonwealth. I do not claim credit for that for the Government. The people should get the credit. I believe that under those circumstances we have every right to ask our Senators to see that the rights of South Australia are not ignored. The financial supremacy of the Commonwealth Government has grown to such an extent that unless every State gets a fair share of the handout from the Commonwealth Budget each year, we will have completely different standards of living and performances in the various States. A few weeks ago I took out figures dealing with Commonwealth expenditure on special projects. My definition of "special project" is one that gives benefit to only one State or to only some of the States and is not shared by all States, although we know that many Commonwealth expenditures are shared by all the States. For instance, consider the reimbursement of the petrol tax; each State gets its share of that money. In recent years, however, in the Federal financial set-up there has been an entirely new element, which I personally welcome. I believe that on the question of national development the position of the States today, with their taxation rights curtailed and their finances limited, is that they cannot provide the large amounts needed for national development. I agree with the Commonwealth's coming into the field of making money available for national development. If South Australia is to go ahead, it must be with the assistance of Commonwealth

funds rather than its own prescribed revenues that are under the control of this Parliament.

I make it clear that I do not oppose the Commonwealth's making money available for national development. Indeed, I believe we will not have effective national development unless the Commonwealth Government takes an active interest in it. Having said that, however, I believe it is necessary for every State to get equal consideration in the distribution of these moneys. I have had figures taken out for the last four years which show where the expenditure has benefited some States specifically and not Australia as a whole. In the last four years I find there has been an expenditure of Commonwealth money within that classification of £131,000,000. The figures for three of those years were obtained from Commonwealth Treasury returns and for the fourth year I took the figures from the Budget Papers of the Commonwealth Treasurer. Included in that £131,000,000 is a substantial amount for the Snowy River scheme. The electricity supply that will be provided as a result of that scheme will go exclusively to Victoria and New South Wales. For the purpose of allocating this money between the States, I have taken half the amount spent on the Snowy River scheme and added it to New South Wales and Victoria, although strictly speaking all the money has been spent in New South Wales. I quote from memory, but I think I am substantially correct. The figures are: New South Wales £46,000,000; Victoria either £51,000,000 or £53,000,000; Queensland £18,000,000; Western Australia nearly £16,000,000; and this year South Australia will get £1,300,000 (to which must be added £50,000, making our total £1,350,000). Tasmania has received absolutely nothing. That means that South Australia, which is providing 10 per cent of the Commonwealth revenue and has approximately 10 per cent of the Australian population, is getting only one per cent of this money. I do not think that anyone could justify those figures. The South Australian amount is in respect of the State that has the lowest rainfall and the greatest developmental problems.

We have the peculiar position of the Commonwealth Government assisting harbour work in New South Wales for the loading of coal, but when the South Australian Government has to undertake harbour work in the Port Pirie and Port Augusta districts at considerable expense for the export of lead, amounting to £2,500,000, it becomes purely and simply a

State matter. At the moment the Commonwealth Government is providing money for the establishment of harbour facilities in Queensland and the latest is that it is starting to provide money for land development in that State. I am not criticizing the Commonwealth's national approach to development, but if we are to have this type of thing, let us all be in it.

There is one other thing. Is it possible in this modern day and generation for the Senate to be effective? My answer is the Senate representation that Queensland has had over a period of years. One has only to look at the great benefits Queensland has enjoyed in many ways because, when anything affects the interests of that State, Party allegiances suddenly disappear. Talk about the sugar agreement and see how divided the Queensland Senators are and how wide apart they are! They are so close that one could not stick a hairpin between them. That is why Queensland has had, in my opinion, such significant advantages in special protection for its industries. There is no earthly reason why the sugar industry in Queensland should get greater protection than the South Australian canned fruits or egg industries. I am not decrying any help being given to Queensland; but if we are to live in this type of economy and the industry that is in difficulty in one sphere is to get special Commonwealth protection, I cannot see why that protection should apply to only one industry. Any secondary industry has the right to approach the Tariff Board, and secondary industries generally are represented in the Commonwealth Parliament by the big city interests. Their interests are well and truly protected by the big city interests. On many occasions this cuts across Party allegiance; honourable members have seen that.

However, I do not want to speak any longer except to say that I believe (and I submit this to the Leader for his consideration) a separate motion should be moved at the end of the debate on this motion. I suggest to the Leader that either this be moved as a separate motion after his motion has been voted upon or it be added to his motion by way of amendment:

That a copy of the foregoing resolution be transmitted forthwith by the Clerk of the House to each Senator for the State of South Australia.

I support the motion and commend the Leader for moving it.

Mr. McKEE (Port Pirie): I support the Leader's motion. First, let me say that I

appreciate the permission of this House to speak on behalf of the people I represent in their protests to the Commonwealth Government about its refusal to grant financial aid for this important project. Having listened to the Premier, I am pleased to learn that he, too, supports the motion. I support it because I believe that the standardization of the Port Pirie to Broken Hill line is important to the general economy of South Australia, and to the Commonwealth. It is important to the survival of existing industries, particularly the lead smelting industry at Port Pirie which, as all members know, is the bloodstream of Port Pirie. Without it Port Pirie would no doubt be a ghost town. I think I pointed out during the debate on the Loan Estimates this week that we are now losing ore traffic to Cockle Creek in New South Wales. From Broken Hill to Port Pirie is less than half the distance it is from Broken Hill to Cockle Creek; but, of course, there is a modern rail service to Cockle Creek which is more convenient than the shorter haul on the narrow gauge line to Port Pirie.

Most people will appreciate that Port Pirie has recently suffered a severe setback with the closure of the uranium treatment plant. Also, the improved installations and modern loading devices on the wharves at present being reconstructed at Port Pirie will no doubt result in gravely affecting the demand for waterside workers on the waterfront there. We had that experience at Wallaroo. Do not think for one moment that I oppose progress where the modernizing of installations is involved. Bulk handling installations and modern loading devices on the wharves and in industry generally are things that one cannot afford to turn one's back on.

I have said many times that this type of progress is not progress if it puts people out of work and on to social services, where they become a drain on those taxpayers who are employed. The Commonwealth Government's decision on standardization will aggravate the already serious unemployment position in South Australia. I know that the Premier himself realizes the importance of this line being standardized and what it means to the economy of this State. If he did not think it was so important, I am sure he would not have made the announcement recently that he was prepared to "go it alone". I said also in the debate on the Loan Estimates that, if the Premier's proposal to go it alone was a workable proposition, he would have the support of every member of this House—and most

certainly mine. This line is of national importance, because it would provide a standard gauge link across Australia from east to west. Also, the Commonwealth defence aspect has to be considered. We are all aware of the present unrest in countries close to our shores, and we must acknowledge it as something that cannot be lightly ignored. The fact that the Commonwealth Government has refused to provide the money for this project has no doubt been a grave disappointment to the people of South Australia, and those people who had some faith in the Menzies Government are quickly losing it.

I support the motion because I believe that the welfare and future of South Australia depend on the modernizing of this important rail link between east and west across the continent of Australia. Also, it would be a major step in the advancement and development of our country. It is the duty of the Senators of this State to do their utmost in the Commonwealth Parliament for the people they represent. There appears to be some fly in the ointment regarding this standardization that few people know much about. Having heard the Premier, I am sure the people who read the papers tomorrow will agree with him entirely, as we do here this afternoon, but whether the Premier knows any more than we know—well, that is a matter of conjecture. I do not begrudge any State the assistance it gets from the Commonwealth Government because, as the Premier pointed out, we are all a part of the Commonwealth; we all belong to it and we are all entitled to assistance.

The Commonwealth Government has its problems as we have ours, and it needs money to carry on, as we all do; but so do the people who are unemployed. I can give many instances where people have just about paid for a television set and have had to go on to social services and, having lost the equity that they had in their home amenities, the set is lost because they cannot get social services while they own a television set. These things are important to the little people, just as standardization of the railway gauge through South Australia is important to the welfare and economy of the people of this State. The Premier said he would like to be fair to everybody, but I still believe that somebody is being unfair to the people of this State by not telling them the facts. Somebody must know. The Premier was kind enough to hand me a copy of a letter in which the Prime Minister (Mr. Menzies) said he was not

interested in carrying out gauge standardization in South Australia for another three years. If the Premier is prepared to "go it alone" our people will be interested to know how he will raise the necessary funds. Will he take funds from the Education Department or some other department or will he bring down Supplementary Loan Estimates to provide the money? The people want to know where the money is coming from because they have to provide it. I support the Leader's motion.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga): I join with the Premier in his clear statement of the disparity between the many special grants made to other States from Commonwealth funds and the few special grants to this State. Everybody is aware that, under our uniform taxation system, the weight of money is, and always will be, in the Commonwealth coffers and that it is from these surplus funds that moneys are disbursed for special services. As the Premier said, if we are not all in we cannot be part of the Commonwealth. Obviously, if special efforts are to be made on behalf of various States, every State should have its case heard. We have a particularly good case here and I will develop it later.

Firstly, we could justifiably address this motion to every Commonwealth member from South Australia whether he be a Senator or member of the House of Representatives. Each of our Commonwealth members has an equal responsibility and the singling out of one House is perhaps not the correct approach.

Mr. McKee: I am prepared to include both Houses.

Mr. SHANNON: I believe that each South Australian member elected to the Commonwealth Parliament has equal responsibility to our State. The Premier spoke of closing the ranks of Queensland Senators regardless of Party allegiance. There was no such thing as Party allegiance in their case. They sought the very best they could get for their people. I do not notice the same sense of urgency prevailing amongst our appointed representatives. I do not see both Parties combining to fight for the things they know South Australia should enjoy. I believe our representatives on both sides exhibit a lack of enthusiasm, and I do not exclude my own Party when saying that any more than I exclude our opponents. I lay this charge at the door of both sides. There is a lack of enthusiasm in getting together to build a case for the people who sent them to the Commonwealth Parliament, irrespective of the House to which they have been

elected. I would broaden the scope of the resolution to include Commonwealth members from South Australia in both Houses. They should all have this motion directed to them. South Australia has been parsimoniously dealt with in the matter of Ministerial office in the Commonwealth Parliament. Not long ago we had two Ministers: we now have only one, whereas Tasmania, which has a very small population compared with ours, has two. In the voices that really count in framing policy we are parsimoniously dealt with. That is not because we have no capable people to perform the necessary duties. We have people with the necessary ability. We should direct this motion to all Commonwealth members from South Australia.

Regarding the impact of the refusal of the Commonwealth Government to agree to honour what is not only a moral, but also a legal, obligation, there is, on the part of the Commonwealth Government, an obligation to the people of Australia, not only of South Australia. Are we unmindful of what has happened on our doorstep? Do we realize the turmoil from which the world is suffering? Are we such fools that we will carry on spinelessly hoping that nothing will happen and then wait for it to happen before taking action to save the State? I believe they are points of major importance. Obviously, South Australia is going to be the blind spot in our transport system unless this standardization is completed. It should be completed, not only from Broken Hill to Port Pirie but also from Port Pirie to Adelaide and finally from Adelaide to Melbourne. Not only these major links, but also the subsidiary links should be standardized, because they would be of great advantage to the State. I believe the spur lines should be standardized but they can be left until last. They could wait for a time, but the major links should be completed immediately. The major line, which is the subject of this motion, will when standardized give us uninterrupted east-west movement.

It is easy, in times of danger, to be up and doing, but it is in times of peace when everything, according to some people, is going all right that we have the opportunity to take the steps that will finally be vital to our safety. If we do not take those steps in times of peace we will find in times of war that we are faced with shortages of material and labour. The labour force will be engaged elsewhere protecting this country from invasion and we will have neither the men nor the

material to do the work. This project would help absorb the unemployed. Admittedly, this State is not faced with such a serious unemployment problem as are some other States. We are much better off than they are, but we still have a pool of unemployed and they should be engaged on some work. Our figures in this field have had a bearing on the approach by the Commonwealth Government to its spending of funds in various States. I do not criticize Queensland nor am I jealous of it, but I cannot see why a national programme such as the standardization of the Broken Hill to Port Pirie railway line should take second place to the development of land in Queensland for settlement purposes. I do not deny that our land should be fully developed for food production. However, one thing that strikes me as being fundamentally weak in the argument is that that project is put in front of a scheme that would be a life-line for us in time of emergency, and it appears to me that that is putting the cart before the horse. We will be developing a land which we cannot protect because we are not adequately served by transport; the enemy could come in and we would be at such a disadvantage that we would be a ripe plum for him to pick: we would have developed the land not for ourselves but for him.

These seem to me to be arguments that cannot be answered when the matter is looked at from a national point of view. I should like the Leader to consider directing his message to every South Australian member in the Commonwealth Parliament, because I do not believe that any one of those members will be unmindful of the voice of this Parliament, speaking unanimously, as I believe we will today, on this matter. I do not believe that we should select just the one House for this purpose, and, in fact, probably the operative House in matters of policy is the House of Representatives. It appears to me that all we will do by the motion as it stands is embarrass our Senators and leave scot-free people who are equally guilty and who have equal responsibility. I do not favour doing that; I should like to see the motion directed to all South Australian members in the Commonwealth Parliament. I have no objection to the spirit which activates the motion; in fact, I am all for it. However, I should like my suggestion taken into account, and if the Leader thinks it worth while I should be happy for him to incorporate it when he is considering the amendment suggested by the Premier.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla): I am very pleased to support the Leader's motion, and in view of the Premier's excellent explanation of the matter I propose to be very brief. He pointed out the inconsistency with which the States have been treated in developmental matters. I think it is not only a question of inconsistency regarding the amount of finance supplied for these developmental projects, but also one of the priority of claims. These negotiations have been going on for more than 20 years, yet we find great increases in Commonwealth funds for developmental projects of comparatively recent origin, and certainly projects which from a national viewpoint cannot be claimed to have greater importance than the one we are discussing today.

The Premier, in his Address in Reply speech, said that he had put in a modest proposal for the standardization of the Port Pirie to Broken Hill line over a period of seven years. He went on to say that he had actually tapered off his proposal because the Commonwealth Government was making available £1,300,000 for 12 diesel-electric locomotives and 100 waggons. His proposal was that this State in the Commonwealth Budget be granted an additional amount this year of only £800,000 from the total Commonwealth Budget of £2,091,000,000, a comparative drop in the ocean, Mr. Speaker, considering the enormous sum involved; in fact, it amounts to only .04 per cent of the total Budget. The Premier went on to say that anyone who looked at the Commonwealth Budget of £2,091,000,000 would know quite well that if there were any desire to commence this work the provision of £800,000 would not be an embarrassment in any way. I think that is a particularly important point. It is very interesting to see what Mr. Holt, the Commonwealth Treasurer, had to say in his Budget speech regarding present-day conditions in Australia. He said:

By most tests, this country is in a position of great strength today. Production and sales are improving in most branches of industry and trade in all States. Externally our position is as good as we have known it for very many years. Capital is flowing in; money for investment and for current spending is abundant.

Yet we have this niggardly treatment of this standardization proposal. Projects such as the Mount Isa railway and the beef roads in Queensland have received very large amounts. We have no quarrel with the decision to push on with those projects, but the inconsistency of the Commonwealth's attitude to projects in other States gives us the greatest cause for

annoyance and a feeling that we have been most unjustly treated in this manner. For example, the amount provided for the Mount Isa railway this year is £8,195,000, compared with £3,750,000 last year. On the question of the strategic value of the standardization of the Broken Hill to Port Pirie line, I point out that the defence vote was increased this year by nearly £7,000,000, but although this has been running at more than £200,000,000 for some years there is very little to show for it. Surely, if there is anything of strategic value in Australia it is the standardization of railways.

The member for Frome (Mr. Casey) referred to the strategic value of this particular section of standardization, and I wish to draw the attention of the House to another aspect of the strategic value as it affects my own electorate. The Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited's development at Whyalla will lead to the establishment of a very important steelworks, and one of the reasons for its establishment in that area is its strategic situation, just as the area was developed during the last war to some extent because of its strategic position. All the iron ore and pig iron leaves Whyalla by sea, and when the steelworks is finished all the steel will have to go by sea until such time as there is a railway link with the standard gauge line at Port Augusta. It is most important from a strategic point of view that all these vital materials have an outlet by rail as well as by sea, because it is obvious that the sea would be a dangerous outlet in the event of another conflict.

During the last few days in this House it has become apparent that unless we can get extra finance from the Commonwealth for the standardization of this line, other projects and services which are vital to the development of the State must necessarily suffer. I am very happy that apparently the whole House will be together on this motion this afternoon. Seldom has there been anything of such great importance to the State, and I hope that on this occasion we shall see the Senators acting together for the benefit of this State. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart): I congratulate this Parliament on the fact that it is coming together and speaking for South Australia with one voice. I think that if that pattern can be followed by those who represent this State in the Senate, we can hope that something may yet be done this year to facilitate this

standardization which all people, not only those living in South Australia but all who have glanced at our railway systems throughout Australia, recognize as desirable. All impartial investigations that come to us from the Commonwealth sphere show that this work is absolutely essential in the interests not only of the State, but of Australia as a whole.

During the war the then Commonwealth Government set up a Ministry of Transport as distinct from a Ministry of Railways. That would be a good move today. Then we could give attention to the provision of transport facilities across the continent from east to west and from north to south. There is as much need in peacetime as in wartime to bring people together by these links and to facilitate trade within Australia. It was the Minister for Transport and not the Minister for Railways who commissioned Sir Harold Clapp to make the inquiries that led to the propagation of the standardization proposals. If this matter is seriously viewed on a national scale there is nothing in the problem that cannot be solved. No-one can say that the provision of the money the Premier says is necessary to commence the work would embarrass Commonwealth finances. The Premier made a point of this and I do not think there is more to be said than has been said from time to time officially on behalf of the State by the Premier himself. During the Address in Reply debate he said we had every reason to believe that a sum would be included in the Budget presently before the Commonwealth Parliament providing for the work to commence, but the money has not been provided. It is, therefore, competent for this House on behalf of the people to go to the Senate as the last court of appeal. In the Senate we have equal representation with each of the other States. We should ask our representatives to get together so that the mind of the South Australian people can be expressed.

The standardization of the Broken Hill to Port Pirie line should be done concurrently with the standardization of the Kalgoorlie to Perth line. Members have heard me advocate this ever since the Perth line was discussed. It will be a sad day for South Australia if this is not done for we shall lose immeasurably to the west, and in South Australia no district stands to lose more than the district I represent. Manufacturers in Adelaide will notice the difference if in every direction in which they want to transport their goods there is a

break of gauge, whilst manufacturers in other States will be able to transport their goods without a break of gauge. This will give a great advantage to manufacturers in other States. I want to quote a statement by a previous Commonwealth Railways Commissioner (Mr. Hannaberry) on this subject. He made it at a dinner in the presence of some Commonwealth Ministers at Port Augusta, following on the announcement about the commencement of the standardization work between Albury and Melbourne. He said that as soon as that line was standardized it would become increasingly difficult to get further interest in railway standardization in Australia. It seems that Mr. Hannaberry's words had special significance, when we recall the attitude of the other States in this matter today. The motion expresses the mind of this place and I congratulate the Leader of the Opposition on moving it, as well as the Premier on receiving it and placing it above Party politics. He gave a lead to the House in allowing a full discussion on the subject in an atmosphere where we can all come together.

Mr. Jenkins: Every member realizes that it is a vital issue.

Mr. RICHES: I do not want to develop that. There are other issues that are vital, but we do not have the same degree of unanimity. Perhaps in the past the House might have been taken more into the Premier's confidence. If that had happened we might have had fuller reports on the negotiations that have taken place from time to time, but that is past history. The important need is that the Commonwealth Parliament should know that South Australia speaks with one voice on this matter, that it is a matter of urgency for this State, and that it is not localized in any way. We confidently look to our representatives in the Commonwealth Parliament to speak similarly with a united voice on this matter when it comes before that Parliament, realizing that it is a matter on which they must make a decision. The responsibility is on all of them to stand in their places and be heard.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra): I am happy to join with the Leader of the Opposition in this motion, but unhappy about the state of affairs that has necessitated it. The Premier very well outlined the responsibilities of the Senate as may have been intended by the framers of the Commonwealth Constitution, but it has degenerated far from that and today is no

more than a Party House. It has lost its effectiveness in the defence of the people of this State. That has been apparent for some time to any student of Commonwealth politics. When people go from South Australia to the Senate they think only of themselves as members of the Commonwealth Parliament and forget that they are representatives of South Australian districts, as well as Senators from South Australia. Like Mr. Shannon I do not exempt any of them from anything that might happen to them if the motion is carried. Over the last few years they have proved themselves to be poor material indeed as a fighting force.

Although this motion, if carried, cannot do much more than be a mild sort of reproof to our Senators, I hope it will be the forerunner of even stronger action if we are left in the doldrums in the development of the State. The figures quoted by the Premier this afternoon were an outstanding indictment of the condition of things in Canberra—when members can and will complacently sit down and see such a differentiation in the amounts made available to the various States. I do not suggest that we alter the motion; what the Leader has moved is sufficient for today, but it is not sufficient in perpetuity and, unless things change radically from what is happening now in Canberra, a more severe type of censure should be levelled through this House. If it is, I will support it happily.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): As a rule, when replying to a debate I like to have something to which to reply, but on this occasion the motion has been commented on so favourably that I have nothing to which to reply; all members favour it. I do not agree with the member for Burra that the motion should have gone further or that we should instruct South Australian Senators to do something. Although I should like to be able to indicate our feelings to members of the House of Representatives, it is not possible to do so by the motion to which the Premier has agreed. South Australia is a State within the meaning of the Constitution and we have some authority regarding the Senators representing us. However, I should not like to be a member of the national Parliament and be told (especially if I were a member of the House of Representatives) that someone in the South Australian Parliament had said that I must do something because of the action of the State Parliament. That would be an encroachment on Parliamentary rights.

Undoubtedly the Premier has a long-standing knowledge of what has taken place regarding standardization. I am sorry we were not able to obtain all that information from time to time, but at least what the Premier said was recorded and will be forwarded not only to Senators but to all members of the Commonwealth Parliament for their information. When the motion is carried I will ask permission to move a further motion on how the resolution will be conveyed so that there will be no complications. I am happy to know that the resolution that will be submitted to South Australian Senators has received the endorsement of this House.

Motion carried.

Mr. FRANK WALSH moved:

That a copy of the foregoing resolution be transmitted forthwith by the Clerk of the House to each Senator for the State of South Australia.

Motion carried.

QUESTIONS.

PENNINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Mr. RYAN: Some time ago I introduced to the Minister of Education a deputation representing the Pennington Primary School Committee, and I think the Minister will agree that it presented an extremely good case for a new primary school in that district. On several occasions the Minister has told me that he has not been able to advise me of the department's building programme. Now that the Loan Estimates have been tabled and are being discussed, I find that this school is not included. However, I believe the good work done and intended to be done by that committee may be discontinued if it is told that no provision appears on the Loan Estimates and no indication has been given of when a school can be built in the area. Can the Minister reply to the deputation?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: I well remember the deputation introduced by the honourable member, the strong case put to me by him and by members of the committee, and the previous correspondence and representations to me concerning the school. The school is considered necessary, and at one time it was considered urgent; not that it is no longer considered urgent, but some others have come crowding in on us and it has been necessary to include them in this year's Loan Estimates. I am already having preliminary discussions with the Director of Education concerning the departmental programme for

1963-64, and I am hopeful that the Pennington Primary School will be included in that programme. As soon as I have any further information, I shall be only too pleased to convey it to the honourable member.

BLACKWOOD MAIN ROAD.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: The main road between Belair and Blackwood has, in the last few weeks and months, been in a shocking condition because of the laying of a water main from Blackwood to Belair. Although everyone in the district gladly acknowledges the reason for digging up the road because it heralds the near completion of the Blackwood and Belair water scheme, I should like to know what plans have been made for the reinstatement of the road subsequent to the completion of the laying of the mains. Will the Minister of Works obtain a report from the Minister of Roads?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I shall be pleased to do that. I am not sure whether the restoration of the road is the responsibility of the Engineering and Water Supply Department or the Highways Department. In any event, before road construction is completed it is always desirable to allow some time to elapse for the compacting of the soil. That always presents a problem, no matter how efficient the machinery employed in tamping and consolidating. The road usually subsides unless sufficient time elapses. The department does its best to ensure that no hazards exist, but rough conditions must persist during the consolidation period.

ROAD UNDERPASSES.

Mr. TAPPING: In the August issue of *Report*—issued by the Australian Road Safety Council—under the heading “Underpasses for Children” the following appears:

Canberra's new suburbs are to have underpasses so schoolchildren will not have to cross main roads. Announcing this the Acting National Development Commissioner (Mr. W. C. Andrews) said engineers and planners were working on the principle that the individual was more important than the motor car. In the layout of the new suburbs special emphasis would be placed on safety and convenience.

As many South Australian schools are constructed on main roads, and more are proposed, the Canberra proposal could well be considered as a safety measure. Will the Minister of Education examine the proposal and bring down a report in due course?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: Yes, I shall be pleased to do so.

ROAD TRANSPORT.

Mr. BOCKELBERG: In view of the continuous rise in primary production costs and the uncertainty of livestock markets, will the Premier consider permitting transport drivers to backload after they have delivered stock to the Metropolitan Abattoirs or to some central market?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Government has no authority in this regard. This matter is under the control of the Transport Control Board and I will refer the question to it.

CHOWILLA DAM.

Mr. HUTCHENS: An article in today's *Advertiser* indicates that Senator Buttfield questioned Senator Spooner (Commonwealth Minister for National Development) about the proposed Chowilla dam and that Senator Spooner suggested the need for another Premiers' Conference. Senator Buttfield indicated that she had been informed that New South Wales had asked the Commonwealth Government to meet the New South Wales share of the cost of the dam on the understanding that New South Wales would repay that amount and the interest. Has the Premier any knowledge of this, and what is his attitude on the suggestion of another conference?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have received an inquiry from another source about the report, but I confess that I have not yet read it and do not know what is involved. The facts are that the Commonwealth Government called a conference in Canberra with the States of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia at which we considered a report from the River Murray Commission on the Chowilla dam project. The Commonwealth, Victorian and South Australian Governments favoured the project proceeding. New South Wales supported the project but stated that it did not have sufficient finance available to enable it to meet its share. It was committed to two major dam projects, one the Wyangala dam on the Lachlan River, and the other the Blowering dam. Those two projects will cost about £30,000,000. New South Wales has major commitments in other directions and it is unable to meet its share of £3,500,000 for the Chowilla dam project. It asked whether the Commonwealth Government would advance that amount for it, and said it would meet interest and sinking fund commitments on the debt, because, unless that were done, it could not proceed with the project for three or four

years. As far as I know the Commonwealth Government has not agreed to put up that amount on behalf of New South Wales and the matter seems to have gone into a backwater. No active negotiations are proceeding. A press reporter this morning said that a further conference about the use of water from the Menindee dam for a temporary period had been suggested. I know nothing of that, although it was mentioned at the last conference. I do not know whether another conference is contemplated, but if it is, South Australia will attend. I make it clear that any such makeshift proposal would not meet South Australia's water requirements or provide any long-term security.

Mr. JENKINS: I think the Premier stated that all parties were in agreement, but that New South Wales was unable to meet its commitments under three or four years. I was wondering whether it would be possible by negotiation or some kind of agreement for those parties who were agreeable to go ahead and find the finance to proceed with the work when plans were ready and for New South Wales to come in with its share at the end of, say, three or four years, which would probably be before the dam was completed. Could that be negotiated?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The River Murray Waters Agreement is between the Commonwealth and the South Australian, Victorian and New South Wales Governments, and it sets out the conditions under which work can proceed. When the Budget is introduced soon, the honourable member will see a line representing South Australia's requirements in relation to the River Murray Commission for this year. I doubt very much whether Victoria or the Commonwealth Government would be prepared to go as far as the honourable member suggests. It would mean that, instead of New South Wales paying its share as the other States would, it would leave its payments until the last year of the project and therefore would not have to pay interest on the money during that period, as would the other States (and it would be a substantial amount). It would not be fair for South Australia, Victoria and the Commonwealth to have to put a disproportionate amount into a project the benefits of which would be shared equally by all the States concerned.

BALAKLAVA WORK CAMP.

Mr. HALL: During the last 12 months a large Engineering and Water Supply Department camp has been sited near Balaklava.

This has been a source of trade for local storekeepers and they are anxious to know for how much longer that camp will remain. Has the Minister of Works any information on this, and, if not, will he obtain it?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The primary purpose in establishing the camp at Balaklava was related to work on the Warren trunk main. When I last inspected the progress on that main, work had proceeded as far as Kulpara. I should think that by now it would have almost reached Paskeville. The member for Wallaroo (Mr. Hughes) may be able to confirm this. When the main reaches Paskeville that will be the end of the project apart from minor works, including adjustments to lateral mains and services from the new trunk main that require adjustment because of a slight alteration in the route of the replaced main. I understand that much of that work will be controlled by the Engineer for Water Supply and not the Engineer for Construction. The Engineer for Construction has been in charge of the major work and has controlled the work on the trunk main. The Engineer for Water Supply employs groups of employees throughout the country to undertake minor work. If that is so in this case, I should think that when the project has been completed as far as Paskeville the Balaklava camp will be disbanded. From memory, I believe that the camp equipment and labour force may be moved northwards and used on the duplication of the Morgan-Whyalla main.

LOTTERIES.

Mr. LAWN: I understand that some years ago an instruction was issued to the press by the Police Department that when referring to any share in a lottery in another State by a South Australian, the press should not use the word "lottery" but "windfall", the reason being that if the press referred to prizes coming to South Australia from lotteries in other States that would encourage gambling here. Last week several prizes came to South Australia—one worth £25,000 and another worth £100,000—and in each case the press used the word "windfall". The press has carried out this instruction for many years. Is the Premier still of the opinion that the use of the word "windfall" has discouraged South Australians from participating in lotteries in other States and will he consider reviewing this matter, as the situation seems ridiculous?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I would not have the faintest idea whether the

use of the word "windfall" has discouraged participation in lotteries in other States. I doubt very much whether any of our departments has the information.

COUNTRY LIBRARIES.

Mr. LAUCKE: I believe it is necessary and desirable to facilitate the widest possible distribution throughout the State of free library services under the Libraries (Subsidies) Act. I should like to see more country institutes in particular being used for branches of the free library system. If, in the appropriate circumstances, the local council would be declared an approved body jointly with the institute committee—

At 4 o'clock, the bells having been rung:

The SPEAKER: Call on the business of the day.

LOAN ESTIMATES.

In Committee.

(Continued from August 22. Page 671.)

Woods and Forests, £1,150,000—passed.

Railways, £2,330,000.

Mr. BYWATERS: With the advent of diesel-electric locomotives in recent years there has been a noticeable reduction in the work force at Tailem Bend, particularly in the locomotive workshop. There is a line on the Estimates dealing with diesel servicing at Tailem Bend and I am sure more of this work could be done there to encourage people to remain at this centre. The reduction of the labour force at Tailem Bend on the locomotive side has given much concern to the local people, including the business houses and the railway workers. Although there has been no retrenchment of the labour force, whenever a man retires he is not replaced. All these things tend to create the thought that the workshops at Tailem Bend will soon cease to operate. That would be deplored. I appeal to the Government to provide extra work in the maintenance of diesels and for the manufacture of some rolling stock at Tailem Bend. Only on Tuesday, in reply to a question, the Treasurer referred to the manufacture of certain railway rolling stock in South Australia. I think the matter should go further and consideration be given as to whether it is possible to manufacture some of the component parts of diesel-electric locomotives. This would help the industry generally and would assure railway workers that they were being adequately provided for.

We have seen a great reduction in the labour force at Tailem Bend, particularly in the servicing of locomotives. The need to prevent the drift of people to the city is as great as ever, and we must watch the position closely. The member for Frome (Mr. Casey) is concerned about the position in his electorate. The Government and the Railways Department must see that men are not taken away from an area where they have spent much money. When men are moved from area to area, all areas are affected. Sufficient work should be available to maintain the *status quo* and not allow the position to deteriorate. I realize that we must advance with mechanization and dieselization, but we do not favour the taking away of work from an area and leaving little in its place. The position can be counteracted by introducing other work there. It is not the first time, and it is not the last, that I make this plea on behalf of Tailem Bend. The work in the town must be maintained.

At Murray Bridge the signal cabin is to be mechanized, and men will be displaced there. I know they will be cared for, but they will not be replaced on retirement, and they will probably have to suffer some pay reduction because of reclassification. A man studies for examinations, passes them and then has to either shift to some other area or accept a drop in pay. And that is a hardship, whichever way we look at it. Often these men have children engaged in secondary education and, out of consideration for them, they frequently accept lower wages rather than move to another area, because that is the lesser of two evils. The Railways Department must consider these things, particularly in view of increasing mechanization. We should be able to make the component parts for diesel-electric locomotives, and more work of that type could be done in this State.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): I note that the estimated payments for last year for the Railways Department amounted to £2,600,000 while the actual payments amounted to £2,448,412, leaving a surplus of £151,588; and that this year it is estimated that £2,330,000 will be spent. During the debate on the last year's Loan Estimates I contended that further amounts of money should be provided for an attempt to improve the tracks, particularly on the West Coast. I said then that the staff had been commended for its efforts in merely keeping the trains on the lines on account of

the poor condition of the track. In reply, I was told that sufficient money had been allotted, that it could not be increased beyond what had already been provided, and that it would provide a certain amount of work for the work force. This surplus of £151,000 concerns me. Why did we estimate for a certain expenditure and have a surplus, which must have been transferred to some other purpose, when work could have been proceeded with to use up a reasonable proportion of the £151,000? The Treasurer has said that three important projects are to be undertaken, one of which is some work on the standardization of the line between Port Pirie and Broken Hill. We are providing £270,000 less this year for railways than last year, yet the Treasurer has said that he will be fully taxed to meet all these commitments. Can he give me further information on the figures of expenditure I have mentioned?

Mr. CASEY: I was disappointed to note the decreased provision for railways, because much of the passenger rolling stock is in bad condition. Recently, when travelling on the Broken Hill line, I noticed that two suburban-type cars were provided on the express. These cars did not have toilets and their use on an interstate city-to-city service for a distance of 140 miles shows a complete lack of ability on the part of the Railways Department to appraise the situation. The railways provide a public service and the rolling stock should meet the requirements of the general public. I have previously spoken of the passenger accommodation provided on the narrow gauge line between Terowie and Broken Hill. That requires attention. I believe that the railcars used on the service have square wheels because recently, when travelling in a railcar, I was forced to stand as the rough ride would not allow me to remain in the seat. The Railways Department has lost much patronage on that line through the provision of poor services.

Mr. Nankivell: Do you suggest that the department should provide a service rather than a paying service?

Mr. CASEY: I am more concerned with the accommodation provided for passengers.

Mr. Frank Walsh: What is the position on the express?

Mr. CASEY: Ordinary standard coaches are used from Terowie to Broken Hill, but a lead should be taken from the Commonwealth Railways Department and air-conditioned coaches should be provided. Last Tuesday morning I joined the train at Peterborough when the

temperature was about 35 degrees. A Bluebird system operates from Terowie to Adelaide. I believe the provision for railways should have been more than last year in an effort to provide better facilities for passengers.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): In addition to the provisions in the Loan Estimates the Railways Department will have at its disposal £1,300,000 for the purchase of the 12 diesel-electric locomotives and 100 ore waggons. I believe that the diesel-electric locomotives will be available before the waggons are provided. Therefore, the total programme is very much bigger than last year's. The Leader of the Opposition said that the railways had a small surplus last year, but I point out that it is impossible for the Railways Commissioner to determine in advance the progress that will be made by contractors. He is obliged to make progress payments as the contractors do the work. Last year's surplus was sufficient to allow the Commissioner to operate for only three weeks in the current year so the provision was close to the mark. Having made certain commitments it is not possible for the Commissioner to spend money elsewhere, because if he did that and subsequently a contractor had to be paid, he would not have sufficient funds. If a contractor should proceed with his contract a little more slowly than anticipated the Commissioner is left with a small unexpended amount. The contractor cannot proceed more quickly than the specified dates because delivery times are fixed. On the other hand he may not qualify to receive all his money by June 30. The Commissioner did not have his money taken away from him: it was merely that the contractors did not draw on the money as quickly as had been expected. That will happen at any time, but frequently the reverse happens and people get ahead of their contracts. The money provided this year is substantially more than was provided last year.

Mr. NANKIVELL: The remodelling of the railway yards at Keith has resulted in a great improvement. The siding at Keith is probably one of the busiest in the State at certain times of the year. Much superphosphate is handled there, and at times it is difficult to clear the many trucks in the yard without demurrage charges being incurred. The question arises as to whether the spur line associated with these new yards should be retained. This spur line—a dead-end line—is being used at present to stand superphosphate trucks, and

it serves a most useful purpose. I should like the Commissioner to look again at this matter to see whether it would not be more advisable to include this spur line in the general workings of the yard rather than to take it up as at present planned. I consider that the workings of this yard would probably be assured for the future by the retention of this spur line, and that its removal could result in considerable inconvenience.

I am sorry that no mention is made of the remodelling of the Bordertown yard. That yard is most difficult to operate, because it runs in a half circle and three or four men are needed to keep contact between the guards at the back and the drivers at the front of trains. Inconvenience is also caused because of the present siting of the crane in the yard. Further, it has been difficult to get bagged grain out of this yard because shunting cannot be provided on two days of the week. I hope the remodelling of this yard will be seriously considered soon.

On several occasions I have mentioned the Melbourne Express time table and its effect on the people living between Keith and Tailem Bend. Originally, these people were able to catch the so-called Overland express; it is an Overland express as such only in this State: once it crosses the border it not only has square wheels but it stops about every two or three miles at small sidings. A wayside coach is put on at Serviceton, but no such coach is provided in South Australia. Although I agree that some sort of express time table should operate, I see no reason why this should apply only in South Australia. The departure and arrival times of this train are convenient for the people who are travelling right through, and provided those times are not affected unduly I consider that the people living between Keith and Tailem Bend could be catered for. Something should be done to improve their rail service. At one time they could catch the express in the morning and return on it at night. Also, the Bluebird service was reasonably convenient for them until the time table was altered, but now these people either have to spend a night in Adelaide, catching a train about 12 noon one day and a return train leaving Adelaide at 11 a.m. the following day (which does not enable them to do very much business), or they have to catch the train at 2.45 a.m. and return home at 1.30 a.m. the following day. That is a long day for people who live only about 100 miles from Adelaide.

I maintain that the Bluebird time table should be restored to what it was previously to suit the convenience of the people in this area, or alternatively that the request I made that Coonalpyn be a permanent stopping place for the express should be reconsidered. Coonalpyn is almost midway between Keith and Tailem Bend, and by travelling only 15 or 20 miles people could go there to board trains, instead of having to travel long distances to Keith or Tailem Bend.

For four years I have been anxious to see the Pinnaroo service improved. This train, a mixed limited, is very profitable to the Railways Department but most unprofitable from the passengers' point of view. My main concern is for the people in that area, who are asking for a daily train service. The people at Pinnaroo, only 160 miles from Adelaide, are deprived of a daily service such as is available to many other places in the State. It takes five hours to travel the 116 miles from Geranium to Adelaide, and about seven hours for the 160 miles from Pinnaroo to Adelaide. If the Railways Department does not wish to change the present time table, it could put on a passenger bus service as it has done between Riverton and Spalding. This bus service could cater for passengers between Pinnaroo and Tailem Bend, thus ensuring them a daily service. If that is not possible, I should appreciate the Minister's taking this matter up with the Commissioner with a view to investigating the possibility of providing a daily return passenger service on this line. The fact that there is no passenger traffic at present is no argument, because no-one wants to incur that inconvenience and spend that amount of time travelling such a short distance.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will see that those matters are examined by the Commissioner and will inform the honourable member.

Line passed.

Harbors Board, £1,907,000.

Mr. CORCORAN: I have been asked to ascertain whether any money has been set aside this financial year for groynes work at Beachport. The two groynes that have been established on the southern side of the jetty have been most effective. They have caused much sand to be deposited on the south side beach, but on the northern side there is danger of the beach being washed away. At present it cannot be described as a beach. The residents want to know whether

money has been set aside this financial year for the construction of groynes on the northern side.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: As far as I can remember, the work done was paid for under a special line on the Revenue Estimates the year before last, but I shall make a check. I do not think this work has ever been done under the Loan Estimates. We had a problem there and we were in difficulties from time to time, so it is interesting to hear that the experiment has been successful.

Mr. TAPPING: Can the Treasurer tell me what improvements are in mind respecting the line dealing with "improvements to pilot vessel, £10,000"? This appears to be a large sum.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will get the details for the honourable member. I think the expenditure concerns a complete overhaul of one of the vessels now in operation.

Mr. Ryan: A new engine.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I thought it was something like that.

Mr. RYAN: On several occasions I have brought to the notice of the Minister of Marine the deplorable condition of the passenger terminal at Outer Harbour. It is known on the waterfront as "the birdeage". The Fremantle and Sydney authorities have provided passenger terminals that must be seen to be believed. When passengers arriving by ship at Outer Harbour see the passenger terminal they must be afraid to land, because their first impressions of South Australia on seeing the terminal would be that this is a primitive State. On one occasion a South Australian Senator brought to the notice of the Commonwealth Minister for Customs the conditions existing at Outer Harbour for passengers and the handling of baggage. Within a week of the approach the Minister made an inspection.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: And said it was all right.

Mr. RYAN: That must have been after he made the inspection. Under present conditions it is difficult to say who are passengers, who are Customs officials and who are waterside workers. The baggage is placed in a corner of the terminal. Irrespective of what the Commonwealth Minister for Customs may have said (and I do not think he said it was all right) it is the prerogative of the Harbors Board to supply better facilities. Will the Minister of Marine bring them up to a

reasonable standard? At present the service provided cannot be criticized, because there isn't any.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have been through the passenger terminal on a number of occasions, both as Minister and as ordinary passenger, inwards and outwards, and have seen passenger terminals in other parts of the world. To meet the Pacific trade in Sydney a new passenger terminal has been built. It is a posh place, but uneconomic, and is there to deal with the luxury trade. With the commitments facing the State we are unable to spend £7,000,000 on a project of that description. Our terminal is well up to world standard. I have done some travelling from time to time and have seen the facilities at Southampton and other places. Undoubtedly we could spend money on our terminal and make it more attractive, but we have more urgent commitments. True, the Commonwealth Minister for Customs inspected the terminal, but it is also true that as a result of the inspection we got nothing. His inspection did not pay a dividend.

Line passed.

Engineering and Water Supply Department, £11,460,000.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Regarding the Lincoln Gap to Iron Knob main, what arrangements have been made regarding the reticulation of water in the Iron Knob area? Will it be on the same basis as water supplied at Whyalla or will there be a special arrangement?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I regret that I cannot give the information that the honourable member seeks. One of the conditions under which the main was extended to Iron Knob was that the water sold there would bear the additional cost of reticulation. The Broken Hill Proprietary Company Ltd. agreed to pay an additional rate for the water it used. That is a broad outline of the scheme, but there will be a departure from the general arrangements if the water is taken on to Kimba as proposed. That would mean that the scheme would no longer be exclusively a Broken Hill Proprietary Company Ltd. scheme and that in fairness some adjustment would have to be made. I am not sure of the method by which distribution in the district will be undertaken. I have had a conversation with the honourable member and he knows that the view has been expressed that some form of local government or local control for Iron Knob should be established because that town will increase considerably in size and because there is no

form of local control at present. Until those details are worked out, I doubt whether there has been a decision about reticulation for the part of Iron Knob not covered by the B.H.P. Company. However, I will get the information for the honourable member.

Mr. JENKINS: The sum of £7,000 is provided for the Brinkley water supply. I spent a day or two inspecting the water system in that district and found that pressure at the extremities was low. Following my visit, the Minister of Works had some pipes re-lined, which improved pressures. Will he consider some future scheme to further improve pressures? As this scheme is connected with the Murray Bridge system, the rapid increase in building will mean that people at the extremities will be deprived of water. Will the Treasurer say what this provision is for?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will see that the honourable member gets that information next week.

Mr. HEASLIP: Provision is made for an expenditure of £11,000 for the Booleroo Centre water supply. Of this sum, I understand that £1,000 is to complete the Booleroo water scheme, so there is a balance of £10,000 for the extension of mains to Wirrabara. This seems a small sum for extending mains linking up with the Caltowie-Booleroo scheme and taking water to Wirrabara. Will the Treasurer say whether this small sum is for the commencement of the work and whether further money will be made available in next year's Loan Estimates?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I assume that that is the position.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: The Treasurer said that another £187,000 was provided for the Clarendon-Belair-Blackwood water scheme. I assure him that it is greatly appreciated, but I am perturbed by his further statement that it is expected that by the end of June, 1963, the scheme will be advanced sufficiently for operation. I have kept in touch with the Minister of Works on this matter and as late as April 9, 1962, I received from him a letter in which he said:

In reply to your letter of March 16, 1962; I advise that the end of November or the beginning of December, 1962, is still the target date for the commencement of the operation of the permanent pumps at Clarendon.

That would herald the full coming into operation of the scheme. The Minister went on to say that because of possible delays the station would possibly not be in operation before

early 1963. Now it seems from the Treasurer's statement that it is to be put back a further six months. People in my district have been waiting a long time for this, and the most serious aspect is that unless something unforeseen happens they will have to go through another summer without having a satisfactory water supply. If the Treasurer cannot clarify the matter now, will he take it up with the Minister of Works?

Another matter intimately connected with water supply is the sore point of sewerage. I well remember the first letter I ever received from the Treasurer after I became a member of Parliament and the pleasure it gave me. In that letter, dated May 25, 1955, he said:

An aerial survey has been made of the Blackwood-Belair-Eden Hills area and the contour plans prepared by the photogrammetric section of the Department of Lands are now to hand. A sewerage scheme is being designed. In view of the hilly nature of the district and the fact that many sewers will necessarily serve more than one of these towns, it is impracticable to prepare an estimate for Blackwood only. No reliable estimate can be made until the design has been completed, but on present indications the cost of the scheme to serve this locality in its present state of development would be not less than £1,250,000. Further expenditure will be necessary on extensions as more residential development takes place. As soon as the necessary designs have been completed, I will see that the matter is submitted to Cabinet, which is the preliminary step necessary to have the matter placed before the Public Works Committee.

In the years that followed I had several letters from the Minister of Works (then Mr. Malcolm McIntosh) to the same effect. One letter was written on June 12, 1956, and it indicated that a comprehensive scheme for Belair, Blackwood and Eden Hills was being considered. I received another letter in 1957.

Mr. Clark: That is only seven years. I have hundreds of letters like that.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I do not know the honourable member's experience, but my experience in dealing with this Government is that if something is to be done it is done.

Mr. Frank Walsh: What is the estimated cost?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: In 1960 it was £1,600,000. In the Budget debate in 1960 I acknowledged what I had been told by the present Minister of Works (and I acknowledge it again)—that an adequate sewerage scheme could not be provided until there was an adequate water supply. On that occasion, when I respectfully reminded the Treasurer about

the matter, he was charitable enough to say that he could only assume that I would not allow the Government to forget it. That was two years ago and I have since waited patiently for the water. The area needs sewerage. Since 1955, when the Treasurer wrote his first letter to me, the population of the area has increased by 33 per cent. I have freely accepted the advice that until water is provided we cannot expect sewerage. Whether we will get the water next June or, as I hope, next December, I do not know, but I am prompted to again actively take up with the Government the question of sewerage for that area. Can the Treasurer indicate the Government's plans in this connection?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I am grateful that the honourable member so cherishes my communications: I shall write to him again. He realizes that a problem arises because the area is at a high altitude with varying levels. Initially attempts were made to supply water from the metropolitan area, but they were costly and inadequate. The Government believed that it would be better to provide a completely adequate service for all purposes from the Clarendon weir. That work has been delayed and I am not sure of the finishing date. I assure the honourable member that the plans I set out in the letter he treasures have not been forgotten, and it expresses the Government's policy.

Mr. HALL: Land has been acquired for the Bolivar treatment works, but full settlement has not been made in all cases. I understand that litigation is contemplated in some instances because the landholders are not satisfied with the price offered them by the department. Can the Treasurer indicate the present position regarding the acquisition of this land?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Many acquisition notices have been served on landholders in that area. Some have been prepared to negotiate, but others seek a price higher than the Land Board recommended. Legislation provides means whereby disputes can be settled. I believe some of these cases will proceed to the court for arbitration.

Mr. RYAN: At present the Public Works Committee is investigating a project to sewer the Mansfield Park and Woodville Gardens area at a cost of about £577,000. The committee has not yet presented a report to Parliament. Can the Treasurer say whether the £674,000 provided for sewerage new areas includes an amount to enable the commencement of this project when the report is presented to Parliament?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: No. Before we can proceed with the Public Purposes Loan Bill I have to table a certificate that no amount is included for any project estimated to cost more than £100,000 that has not been reported upon by the Public Works Committee. That committee's report has not been received and so provision cannot be made for that work in these Estimates.

Mr. HARDING: I understand that the Penola water scheme has proceeded to the stage where the bore has been sunk and pipes have been laid. Can the Treasurer indicate when that scheme will be completed?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have no details, but I assume that the work will be completed this year. The provision of £30,000 would encompass a year's operation.

Mrs. STEELE: A couple of years ago the higher areas of my electorate faced many difficulties, and I express my appreciation to the Engineering and Water Supply Department for the manner in which it has attempted to relieve the situation. It is pleasing to note that the Beaumont and Stonyfell tanks are almost completed and that they will be brought into commission this year, thus serving people in the higher levels of my electorate. In an interim report from the Public Works Committee it is stated that the construction of a high level trunk main from the Mannum-Adelaide main to the Wattle Park service reservoir has been recommended at an estimated cost of £745,000. When completed, this will do much to improve the water supply of the area. In the meantime steps have been taken to improve services in the foothills. Many small pockets that were unsewered have been serviced in the last year, and I express the appreciation of residents whose houses have been serviced. My electorate is expanding northwards. Many flourishing market gardens have been subdivided into residential areas and consequently much building activity is taking place. It is difficult for the department to keep pace with the requests for sewerage connections. I have been pressed by one of the councils in my area to take up this matter with the Minister and he received my suggestions sympathetically. I know that more work is asked of the department than it can possibly undertake. It has been stated that an area across the river in another electorate has had sewerage installations provided, but as the Minister said the other day this is because the subdividers have paid the amount necessary and therefore the work was done by the department. This

area has given much concern to the council involved because of the contour of the land and the type of soil. It is most anxious to get the sewerage scheme for the area if possible. Many residents are not aware of the problems facing the department. I know that if any consideration can be given to this project in future it will be much appreciated not only by the residents concerned, but also by the Campbelltown Council.

Mr. BOCKELBERG: I express my appreciation that funds are provided for extensions of the water supply on Eyre Peninsula from the Polda Basin. I assure the Minister that the work being done is appreciated. On behalf of the people concerned I thank him.

Mr. JENNINGS: For many years I have raised the question of sewerage for Mansfield Park and Woodville Gardens, and recently I have had the valued assistance of my esteemed colleague, the member for Port Adelaide. We have been told that one of the difficulties was that there was not likely to be any extension of the sewerage system in that area, which contained mostly temporary Housing Trust houses. They have now been removed and houses are being built there. I believe that the trust has made certain submissions to the Minister. Is the meagre amount of £674,000 to cover this year's expenditure on sewerage in new areas?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON (Minister of Works): That amount is to be spent in the Adelaide sewerage district this year. Obviously, the whole resources of the department cannot be made available for one project. Planning has reached a fairly advanced stage. There are urgent requirements for sewerage in other districts. I think we can expect something to be done soon in the districts mentioned.

Mr. TAPPING: Last night I made my contribution to the debate purposely to enable the Minister of Works to consider my comments. Reference was made to Emu and Freer Streets at Semaphore where the department has asked those living there to contribute £25 17s. a year for five years. The people concerned object strongly. Only 14 houses are concerned and about 12 vacant allotments. I understand that the cost of the scheme is £4,500. The Minister said that if the people agreed to the added cost involved, a line would be put on the Estimates. It is a burden on these people to pay £25 17s. a year for five years. I consider that this is creating a dangerous precedent, because in years to come an amount of £50 may be required before a

scheme is started. In these streets are young people with young families who are buying houses and furniture on instalment, and the charge mentioned is too burdensome. The Port Adelaide Local Board of Health and an officer from the department have made an inspection and there have been reports of a rising water table. The resultant stench is shocking. I agree that some special rate should be struck, but I should like the Minister to consider reducing the figure to something more realistic.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I think that the honourable member has somewhat answered his own question. He used the term "realistic". The facts are that the £25 17s. being asked is a realistic figure in relation to the cost of the service. I understand only a few houses are involved and a few vacant allotments. Revenue from the vacant allotments is very low. The main has to go to the full length of the streets and if pumping were involved to lift the sewage to a trunk main, the cost would be high.

I do not say that I know the geography of the area, but it is the principle of the matter with which I am concerned. The fact is that, where people are building houses on this sort of land, they get some advantage by being able to buy their land at a reasonable price, which attracts them to go to places where perhaps sewerage is difficult. If this were a new subdivision, the Engineer-in-Chief would probably say that he could not economically sewer such an area under the present law. People get the advantage of cheaper land by accepting the disability of low-lying areas. Therefore, their costs are kept to a minimum, and this, naturally, attracts them.

In providing services to houses scattered as they are at present, the cost in relation to each house is high and the revenue to be derived from such a project on ordinary rating is low. This is not a new principle. When a subdivider comes along, under present arrangements, and wants to subdivide low-lying land, we frequently not only enter into an agreement with him to provide the capital cost for the whole of the works involved but, in addition, we require of him a capital contribution to the scheme, which money is absorbed by him eventually in the sale of land in the whole project. It is a non-recoverable capital cost and a substantial contribution to the total capital cost of the scheme. So, whichever way we look at it, the capital input has the same effect: it enables the department to construct sewers

and give services to people which otherwise it would not be able to do. We try to be helpful and supply services, but we cannot go on servicing scattered development.

The honourable member's case is by no means a particularly scattered development: some development is much more scattered than that, wherein the ratio of tenements to vacant land is much lower. But, if we reduce this point to its ultimate conclusion, we could be called upon, under the principle the honourable member lays down, to sewer a house a long way from existing houses or an existing sewer main.

Mr. Tapping: But this is near an existing main.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I am trying to develop the principle. The honourable member lays it down that, because the first house is in the metropolitan area, it ought to be sewered at a reasonable rate. In the case of people living a long way from a sewer main, we say that either we cannot service them or that we can service them if they are prepared to pay something as they live some distance away from the nearest main.

Mr. Lawn: But this is very close to the main.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I am not arguing that; I am arguing something else. I shall be happy to look at this case and see whether the cost offered to the applicants is too high, or higher than is justified by the circumstances. If we can find a way of helping the honourable member and his constituents, I shall be happy to consider it.

Mr. Tapping: I fear an outbreak of gastro-enteritis will be most probable down there if these circumstances continue.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: As I have said, I shall look at it. They are being asked for this contribution for a five-year period, after which time the rate will return to normal. So it is not a burden for all time. I agree it comes at a time when it may not be convenient to meet it, but no cost ever comes at a time when it is convenient to meet it. That applies to everyone. I cannot guarantee the honourable member anything, but I will certainly examine the matter.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.20 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, August 28, at 2 p.m.