

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, September 19, 1962.

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

QUESTIONS.

GAUGE STANDARDIZATION.

Mr. **FRANK WALSH**: Has the Premier a further reply to my recent question regarding the £50,000 grant from the Commonwealth Government for preliminary work on gauge standardization?

The Hon. Sir **THOMAS PLAYFORD**: The Railways Commissioner reports:

Between June 1, 1959, and June 30, 1962, £17,459 was charged against survey work in connection with the proposed conversion of the Port Pirie to Broken Hill railway. The above amount was expended as follows:

| | |
|--|----------------|
| | £ |
| Aerial photography and preparation of stereographic photographs and contoured maps | 16,132 |
| Provision of equipment for interpretation and assessment of photographic data | 236 |
| Salaries and wages of Chief Engineer's staff engaged on this project | 1,091 |
| Total | £17,459 |

The procedure adopted in examining the existing route and proposed deviations has taken advantage of the facilities available to the Government for the production of photogrammetric land plans and the economies inherent therein. Substantial progress has been made with this investigation and work is continuing. I might add that my impression is that the £50,000 provided was intended to include active survey work in the field, on the assumption that standardization would proceed. However, when approval was not forthcoming, the work was confined to the activities specified above.

Mr. **HUTCHENS**: I desire to address a question to you, Mr. Speaker, following on a question asked yesterday by the member for Eyre. Have you written, expressing the appreciation of this House, to the six South Australian Labor Senators, who acceded to the unanimous request of this Chamber by making extensive efforts to secure financial assistance for the standardization of gauge on the Broken Hill to Port Pirie railway line? If you have not, will you do so?

The **SPEAKER**: The reply to the honourable member's questions is "No". The honourable member realizes that the previous resolution was carried unanimously by this Parliament and I acted under instructions by this Parliament. I have received no instructions from this Parliament to do anything else.

INTERMEDIATE EXHIBITIONS.

The Hon. B. H. **TEUSNER**: Can the Minister of Education say, first, whether the additional Intermediate exhibitions and continuation exhibitions recently announced by him will be available for competition by students in the public examinations to be held later this year; secondly, whether the total number of exhibitions mentioned by him will be awarded, or whether they are to be awarded to such students only as attain a set minimum standard in the examinations; and, thirdly, whether they will be available to students of private as well as public schools?

The Hon. Sir **BADEN PATTINSON**: In reply to the first question, the exhibitions will be available for the public examinations this year. Regarding the third question, they will be available to students from private schools as well as to those from public schools. I should like to check in relation to the second question, and I will let the honourable member know tomorrow about minimum standards.

KALANGADOO-GLENCOE ROAD.

Mr. **HARDING**: Has the Minister of Works obtained a report from the Minister of Roads in reply to a question I asked on September 4 about the reconstruction of the Kalangadoo-Glencoe road?

The Hon. G. G. **PEARSON**: My colleague, the Minister of Roads, advises that construction work on the Kalangadoo-Glencoe main road No. 305 is being carried out currently by a departmental gang. This gang is a bitumen gang and will normally switch to sealing work from November to March. There will be no sealing on main road 305 this summer as materials are still not fully available. However, the road will be completed the following season regardless of any move by the bitumen gang. Funds are still being provided for maintenance to the two councils involved so that a reasonable road surface will be available throughout until work is resumed and completed.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT.

Mr. **RYAN**: Yesterday, during the Budget debate, the member for Adelaide voiced his dissatisfaction because, as far as he was aware, only six copies of the Auditor-General's report were available to members of this House and because at that time only one copy was available to 19 members of the Opposition. In this morning's *Advertiser* was a lengthy report which, without doubt, was based on the official copy of that report. Will the Premier say whether a copy of the

report was made available to the press, and, if it was not, can he say how the press obtained information from the document when the document was not available to members? After the House rose last night I came into the Chamber to try to obtain one of the few copies that were here, but there was only one copy in the Chamber then. I came into the Chamber again this morning to get a copy but there was only one copy here and, as that was on a Minister's table, I did not take it because I considered it to be his property.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I want to make one or two things clear to members. The Auditor-General is an officer of Parliament. He does not report to the Government; the Government does not see his report until it is tabled in the House. He reports to the Speaker, who represents Parliament in this matter. As long as I have been in this House, the procedure has always been the same. I do not know who is responsible for the procedure but, if it is possible for it to be altered, I shall be happy to have it altered. The procedure has always been that on the day when the report is sent to the Speaker copies are distributed to Ministers and the Leader of the Opposition. I would not have the slightest objection if that procedure were curtailed so that nobody got a copy until all members did. It would make no difference as far as the Government was concerned. After the report was tabled yesterday, I moved that it be printed, which meant that, as far as was humanly possible, it should be available to all honourable members as quickly as possible.

I have no knowledge of the source of the information that the press had but I presume that the same procedure was followed with the Auditor-General's report as is followed with all other documents: it has always been the practice that, when a document is tabled, it becomes public property. I should have thought that the answer to the honourable member's question was that, when it was tabled, the press asked the Speaker or the Clerk if they could see the copies available.

Mr. Lawn: Members cannot see it until it is printed.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: It is not the fault of the Government. I do not know whether any honourable member was refused a copy.

Mr. Ryan: I still have not a copy.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: If any honourable member was refused, I should be surprised.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Mr. Speaker, you are in a better position than I to answer these questions, because the Government has no control over the copies of the Auditor-General's report, its tabling, or anything incidental thereto.

Mr. RYAN: The Premier said that the Auditor-General's report was a document that was tabled in Parliament and then became the property of Parliament, and as such would be under your jurisdiction, Mr. Speaker. Did you make a copy of the report available to the press? If not, do you know how the press obtained the information it did when such information, in its tabled form, was not available to members? Thirdly, would the press have authority to enter this Chamber and remove documents left lying here?

The SPEAKER: The Auditor-General's report comes to Parliament from the Auditor-General's Department and only a limited number of copies are available. As soon as these copies are laid on the table of the House they are available. I have no knowledge of what happens between the Auditor-General's Department and the press. I agree with the honourable member and see no reason why, when the report is tabled, there are not sufficient copies for distribution to every member. Now that the honourable member has raised this question, which I think is very important, I will take steps to see that every member has a copy as soon as the report is tabled in the House.

RETURN TICKETS.

Mr. HALL: Has the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Railways, an answer to a recent question of mine about return tickets from Blyth to Adelaide?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: My colleague, the Minister of Railways, has informed me that it is true that the by-law, in respect of alternative route travel on country lines, has been altered to provide as follows:

Where two or more routes of travel exist, the return portion of the ticket may be made available for travel by an alternative route between the two stations shown on the return portion of the ticket on payment of the single mileage fare for the difference in mileage (if any). Break of journey will not be permitted on the alternative route.

It was found desirable to alter the by-law in this way, in order to overcome certain inequities in the use of alternative travel. The new by-law is similar to the existing practice in New South Wales. The honourable member refers to a person travelling from Adelaide to

Blyth and returning through either Snowtown or Clare. In this particular instance, it would be necessary for the traveller to purchase a single ticket for each portion of his journey.

SUGAR COMMITTEE.

Mr. CURREN: On August 28 the Premier, in reply to a question by the member for Murray (Mr. Bywaters) regarding the Fruit Industry Sugar Concession Committee, stated:

For some years the position regarding the sugar concession committee has been very unsatisfactory for South Australia as South Australian canners, in my opinion, have not received proper consideration from it.

On August 29 the Premier stated that the Fruit Industry Sugar Concession Committee was a "committee appointed by the Commonwealth Government in the interests of certain sections of the industry". The executive of the South Australian Canning Fruitgrowers Association has expressed disagreement with both these statements and is concerned that harm will be done to the price-fixing structure by such statements. First, will the Premier say in what respect the committee's operations are unsatisfactory to South Australia? Secondly, when was proper consideration not given to South Australian canners? Thirdly, will the Premier name the certain sections of the industry that he claims are favoured by the committee?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I am happy to comply with the honourable member's questions by bringing down for him and showing him some correspondence which I have had on this matter and which I think sets out South Australia's position. In South Australia we have varieties of fruit not ideal for canning. They do not give the same return for canning as varieties grown in other States. Over-pricing those varieties drives them off the market because they cannot compete. That is the ground I have for saying that. I shall be happy to show the honourable member a specific complaint received by the Government in connection with this matter.

MILE POSTS.

Mr. HEASLIP: Has the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Roads, a reply to my recent question about the erection of mile posts on the Port Wakefield main road?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: My colleague, the Minister of Roads, informs me that the provision of mile posts on principal roads within South Australia serves many useful purposes. Their use has been advocated for many years by many organizations, such as the

Royal Automobile Association, the Stockowners Association, the Chamber of Commerce and the Tourist Bureau, just to name a few. They are considered to be of great practical value to the members of the motoring public, and are used extensively on principal road systems throughout the world. At this stage the Highways Department proposes to mile-post only the national routes within the State, these amounting to some 1,850 miles. Preliminary work has commenced on National Route No. 1 from Gepps Cross towards the Western Australian border. The cost is negligible compared with the overall cost of road construction. The provision of the mile posts will also be of great value to the department as a means of accurately defining the position of various types of road structures, construction methods, signs and other equipment, stockpiles of screenings, etc. It is also proposed that police accident records be related to mile posts in order that proper accident studies can be made of particular lengths of roads. The posts will also be used as reference points for locating inferior lengths of roads, accidents and breakdowns in isolated areas such as occur on the Nullarbor Plain, where there are no other ready means of identification.

COURT STAFF.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: There appears on page 16 of today's *Advertiser* a report headed "Regret at Lack of Court Staff", which states:

The lack of staff to man the court for a case set down for hearing was referred to "with regret" by Mr. D. F. Wilson, S.M., in the Adelaide Police Court yesterday.

He went on to say:

It is not that there is no court available, but that there is no court staff to man it.

I can well conceive that such a state of affairs would be a considerable embarrassment and annoyance to their honours the magistrates and also an embarrassment to the administration of justice, and it is in all respects undesirable.

The SPEAKER: Is the honourable member giving information or is he quoting an opinion?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: You just got in in front of me!

The SPEAKER: The honourable member is out of order. Please ask the question!

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Will the Premier investigate this matter with a view to ascertaining the reason for the lack of court staff and also to ensuring that the same position does not arise in future?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I anticipated the question and have investigated the position. The staff referred to was clerical staff, and the position was that one of the officers who should have been available was ill, and another was on leave. The situation has always been that in cases of staff shortages in the magistrates' courts they apply to the Industrial Court, which immediately supplies the necessary staff if available. Yesterday an application was made for one typist, who was supplied. If the magistrates had taken the trouble to apply for two or three, they could have had them. The reason why staff was not available was the fault of the magistrates themselves.

EUDUNDA-ROBERTSTOWN RAIL SERVICE.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I understand that a change is planned in the passenger rail service between Eudunda and Robertstown. Will the Minister of Works ascertain from the Minister of Railways details of the planned alterations and the reasons therefor?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes, I will seek that information.

RAILWAY BEARINGS.

Mr. HALL: I understand that the biggest proportion of railway goods-carrying vehicles in South Australia is still equipped with plain general bearings, but that when roller bearings are substituted they afford great advantages in operating and some advantages in the economics of freight services. Will the Minister of Works ask the Minister of Railways whether there is a programme to modify the plain journal bearings in such rail trucks or to replace them with roller bearings; and whether an economic advantage arises from savings on hot boxes and in the power needed to pull trains because of the installation of roller bearings?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will ask my colleague for a report from the Railways Commissioner on these matters.

MURRAY BRIDGE ELECTRICITY DEPOT.

Mr. BYWATERS: Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked during the Loan Estimates debate about improving conditions in the Murray Bridge depot of the Electricity Trust?

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

Plans for new buildings at the Murray Bridge depot are under consideration but have not yet been finalized. In order to improve the present conditions, arrangements have been

made for three air-conditioning units to be installed temporarily in the huts before the coming summer.

WOOL AUCTIONS.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Recently I asked the Minister of Agriculture a question about the activities of the Japanese Wool Importers Association in eliminating competition between Japanese wool buyers at Australian wool auctions. Is he able to supply any information on this question?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I made inquiries about this matter, but could not obtain any interesting information. Wool marketing is outside my sphere of activity and it is unlikely that I can get much information for the honourable member. The type of threat he mentioned is what one must expect under an auction system.

POWERHOUSES.

Mr. MCKEE: Has the Premier received a report on the investigation of Port Pirie's claims for the proposed new powerhouse?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: This matter, of course, will be the subject of legislation and I do not believe it is proper for me to anticipate matters that will be discussed in legislation, so I will not make a long report about this. The Electricity Trust is preparing reports that I will submit to the House showing the advantages of the proposed site over any other site in the State.

MAIN NORTH-EAST ROAD.

Mr. LAUCKE: Has the Minister of Works a reply from the Minister of Roads to my recent question about the progressive widening of the Main North-East Road?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: My colleague, the Minister of Roads, has informed me that work has commenced on the widening of the Main North-East Road (Adelaide-Mannum Road No. 33) commencing near Hampstead Road. The immediate objective is to widen the pavement as far as Blacks Road and extend the work further as funds become available.

ABATTOIRS OVERTIME BAN.

Mr. HALL: I understand that the Minister of Agriculture is examining conditions at the Metropolitan Abattoirs with a view to improving the position and relieving the congestion that is now taking place. Can the Minister say whether it is possible to co-ordinate interstate transport and perhaps have surplus sheep marketed in the Melbourne market? Can he say, for instance, whether there is enough rolling stock to arrange for special trains and special

methods of transport, or does he consider that road transport is sufficient to move a significant part of our surplus to another State?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I will take this question up with the Minister of Railways. However, the Minister told me earlier today that he had been most reliably informed that last week 30,000 sheep and 5,000 lambs were purchased and sent direct to Victoria from Adelaide, and that in the previous week about 20,000 head left this State. The authorities, therefore, know a good deal about the position. I will take the matter up and obtain further details.

POLICE ACTION.

Mr. FRED WALSH: Has the Premier a report from the Chief Secretary concerning the matter I raised a few weeks ago about prosecutions in the Police Court for trivial offences?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have a somewhat lengthy report from the Commissioner of Police, and in view of the interest in this matter I think I am justified in reading it in full. The Commissioner states:

Failure of police to advise details of fine imposed:

The circumstances of the case referred to have been investigated and it transpires that this offence was detected by an inspector employed by the local corporation. The complaint was laid by the inspector and the case was prosecuted by counsel employed by the corporation concerned. The police had no connection whatsoever with the detection or prosecution of this offence. The only part which the police play in cases such as this is to execute the warrant, which they are legally bound to do.

Under certain circumstances, clerks of courts are required to advise persons who are dealt with in absentia, of details of any fine imposed. Provision has been made for this information to be conveyed by post, and an examination of the records held at the Brighton Police Station discloses that a letter was in fact sent to the person concerned advising him of the result of the court hearing. The records also reveal that letters were forwarded to two other persons charged under similar circumstances on the same day, and in each of these cases inquiries reveal that the letters were received. The failure to receive the letter in the case referred to by Mr. Walsh can only be ascribed to the possibility of the communication going astray in the post. It is unfortunate that when the parents of the person concerned sought information from the Brighton Police Station the constable interviewed was not aware that a letter had been sent by the Sergeant in Charge acting in his capacity of Clerk of the Brighton Police Court.

Prosecuting "Trivial Offences—Ridiculous Cases":

The allegations made by Mr. Walsh in relation to prosecutions for "trivial offences—ridiculous cases in the main" have been

investigated and found to be completely without foundation. It can only be inferred that his informant was completely ignorant of operating police procedure or inspired by malicious motives to bring discredit upon this department. The statement relating to the prosecution of women whose registration discs have been mutilated by their long finger nails when washing their cars, is, to say the least, ludicrous. There have been no prosecutions for any offences bearing any relationship whatsoever to the circumstances quoted, and in respect to the statement concerning "wind-screen wipers not being properly seated", I can only say that this condition does not describe any offence known to law. To safeguard the public against trivial prosecutions in traffic cases, an adjudicating panel has been operating for some years, and all such offences reported are carefully scrutinized by competent adjudicators before any prosecutions are launched. The city and suburban prosecutors have been interviewed and all disclaim any knowledge of persons being prosecuted for trivial or ridiculous offences. The magisterial heads of the city and suburban courts have been contacted and no incidents have been brought to their attention where members of the public have been prosecuted for such trivial or ridiculous offences. These gentlemen are in the best position to judge the type and quality of offences brought before the courts by the police, and would very quickly bring any questionable or unjustifiable prosecutions to official notice. Official police policy is opposed to charging members of the public with trivial offences and all reasonable precautions are observed to protect the public interest in this regard.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: PORT PIRIE UNEMPLOYMENT.

Mr. McKEE: I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr. McKEE: An article in this morning's *Advertiser* stated that 80 formerly unemployed men from Port Pirie had been given work in that area by the Engineering & Water Supply Department. Yesterday, the Premier, in reply to a question I asked, said:

I believe that about 80 men have already been employed in the area since the honourable member asked his question.

I should like the error rectified, because the men employed were not from Port Pirie but from other parts of the State.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE: Mr. R. F. RALSTON.

Mr. LAWN moved:

That a further month's leave of absence be granted to the honourable member for Mount Gambier (Mr. R. F. Ralston) on account of ill health.

Motion carried.

THE SAVINGS BANK OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition) obtained leave to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend The Savings Bank of South Australia Act, 1929-1959.

MAINTENANCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 5. Page 902.)

The SPEAKER: Honourable members will recall that when this Bill was last before the House I expressed some tentative doubts as to the regularity of its introduction. Standing Order No. 283 declares:

Every Bill which imposes a charge upon the people or authorizes the borrowing or expenditure of money shall be founded upon Resolution of a Committee of the whole House, submitted by a Minister, and agreed to by the House.

The foundation of a Bill upon a Committee resolution is a procedural formality, but one cannot ignore the fact that this Standing Order enshrines the principle of the financial initiative of the Crown. As I understand the Maintenance Act Amendment Bill introduced by the honourable member the Leader of the Opposition on August 29, 1962, it provides, *inter alia*, for the repeal of subsection (1) of section 22 of the Maintenance Act, which gives the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board discretionary authority, subject to any directions given by the Minister, to afford relief, whether in money or by the supply of commodities, to destitute or necessitous persons. In lieu of this authority to be cancelled, clause 7 of the Bill substitutes the following mandatory provision:

The Minister shall afford relief whether in money or by the supply of commodities to destitute and necessitous persons in a manner and subject to such conditions as shall be prescribed.

Clause 9 further provides for the repeal of sections 27 to 36 inclusive of the principal Act relating to the relief of children. Included in the sections proposed to be repealed are the provisions for discretionary authority for the Minister to grant applications for the payment of weekly sums towards the maintenance of a child (section 32), and for the payment of such sums out of moneys provided by Parliament for the purpose (section 34). Proposed new sections 27 to 36 contained in clause 9 provide that the Minister may grant a weekly sum towards the maintenance of the child and of the applicant who may be the parent or other individual person having care and custody of the child. Subject to a

direction in writing by the Minister, the payment of such relief may be discontinued, reduced or even increased. The maximum rates for assistance in future are to be fixed not by the Act but by regulation.

The Bill does not expressly state how the money for the proposed payments is to be appropriated. The Bill does not use either of the two usual drafting forms to indicate whether the Act without further appropriation is to be sufficient authority for making the payments or that the payments are to be made out of moneys to be provided by Parliament. However, I am of opinion that clause 7 of itself, without any further enactment by Parliament, not only authorizes the expenditure of money but in fact makes it mandatory for the Minister to afford relief, either monetary or by supply of commodities, to destitute and necessitous persons subject to prescribed conditions.

Clause 9 is permissive in character as the Bill states that the Minister may grant an application for payment of a weekly sum. Even so, if payment is approved by the Minister, it appears to me that such approval would authorize the expenditure of money from the vote "Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department" for maintenance and relief on the new conditions laid down in the Leader of the Opposition's Bill in lieu of the present statutory authority. In other words, the expenditure of this money would be in accordance with an authority contained in a Bill not introduced by a Minister.

I consider that there is not an element of doubt that clause 7 authorizes the expenditure of money and that a similar construction might reasonably be placed upon clause 9. I am loath to restrict the right of private members to introduce Bills or other motions for discussion in the House, but as Speaker I am bound to apply the Standing Orders as they exist. I am of opinion that the Bill brought in by the honourable member the Leader of the Opposition authorizes the expenditure of public money and, not having been submitted by a Minister, has been introduced contrary to Standing Order 283. I therefore rule that the Bill shall not be further proceeded with.

LAND VALUES ASSESSMENTS.

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr. Frank Walsh:

(For wording of motion, see page 764.)

(Continued from August 29. Page 765.)

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): The Leader was

courteous enough last week to enable the discussion on this motion to be deferred to give me the opportunity to examine it. It deals with a most important matter. It is one of the most complicated matters that could possibly come before this House, and it has over many years received consideration by Parliaments and by special authorities in, I think, every democratic country of the world. It is a matter of peculiar difficulty, and I do not believe anyone would be prepared to say that he had the precise answer to it. During the time in which I have been in this House, it has been the subject of some investigation. Although I will not quote the precise dates, my mind goes back to about the first year after I entered this House, when the Government of the day submitted water rating as a project to the Public Works Standing Committee. I believe at that time the Chairman of the committee was a Labor member and, if my memory is correct, it was Mr. Blackwell, who was later succeeded by the Hon. Sir George Jenkins. The committee took evidence and considered the matter but, after five or six years, it had not brought in a report on it. Finally, having considered it from various angles and having come up against the complexities of the problem, the committee submitted to the Crown Solicitor a question of law on whether it was a project under the committee's Act. I think it was probably most relieved when it was told that it did not constitute a project under the Act and that in those circumstances it was relieved from the obligation of bringing in any recommendation.

This House in recent years has seen the complexities of the problem. I think members will see from the fact that the committee was not able to reach a conclusion that it is not something that can be lightly dealt with. I do not deny that the best method of providing for land values to be assessed is a matter to be considered, and that that is a problem that everyone would desire to have dealt with. I know that the Leader was somewhat circumscribed in putting a motion before the House because a previous motion had already been before the House and, because of this, he had a problem in submitting a motion that did not contravene Standing Orders. However, the requests that the Government has had are not dealt with by this motion. I want first to say what I believe to be the best action and to indicate what I do not agree with in this motion. I think that the provision of a Select Committee is not the best way of doing this work. In the first place, a Select Committee

cannot be completely divorced from politics and it would probably comprise an equal number of members (or some suggested number) from both sides of the House. I am sure that a Select Committee in itself would run up against all sorts of problems and would not be, in my opinion, the best way of tackling this work.

Secondly, the terms of reference proposed by the Leader of the Opposition are, in themselves, probably too restrictive. Once one sets out to establish a term of reference and one sets it down in a precise form, as the Leader has set out to do, one excludes from consideration everything that is not precisely set down. I do not want to take up private members' time by making a long statement on this motion but, if the Leader and his Party would consider this matter, the Government would be prepared to appoint a thoroughly competent outside committee consisting of four persons from a cross-section of the interests chiefly concerned in this matter. The committee, comprising four persons, would be given a wide term of reference and would be put on to the job of considering the fairest way of working out the valuations under the relevant Acts. We are not the only people concerned in this matter: local government, too, is vitally concerned. The Government is interested in it from the point of view of the collection of water rates, succession duties and land tax, but the total amounts secured to the Government by revenue are, I think, probably exceeded by the revenue accruing to local government.

I am not sure whether, in total, Government revenues are exceeded in this field, but certainly, as far as land tax is concerned, the councils get at least three times the amount collected by land tax. I suggest that the Leader consider a proposition along these lines: first of all, that the Government appoint an outside committee comprising four persons.

Mr. Frank Walsh: What qualifications would they have?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: At this stage I cannot go into the composition of the committee except to say it would be a thoroughly competent committee but, to give the Leader and his Party some idea of the standing of the committee, I would suggest that its chairman be Sir George Ligertwood, who is probably one of the best brains and a man with one of the highest reputations for integrity in the State. He is most competent, an ex-judge of the Supreme Court, and a man, incidentally, whose services have been called upon in connection with this type of matter by no less an

authority than the Commonwealth Government. The Government would consider him a suitable chairman. That gives the Leader some idea of the competency of the committee that the Government would appoint.

The term of reference would be the best methods of working out valuations for various taxes raised by means of land valuations. The committee would have the opportunity of concentrating upon this task and I believe it would get somewhere with it. I am not prepared to support the motion as it is. If it goes forward in its present form, I ask the House to vote against it. Of course, if the motion is carried by the House, the Government will comply with it, but I do not believe it is the best way of dealing with this matter. I think it will get hopelessly bound up with politics if it is carried in this form, whereas an outside and responsible committee of highly competent people would be able to give some answers to the question—if answers are to be given at all.

Mr. Frank Walsh: I have to get over another hurdle. In view of the ruling given this afternoon, what about the committee's fees?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: On that score the Leader does not have to worry. In accordance with the ruling given this afternoon, the Government would appoint a committee and would take the appropriate Parliamentary steps to see that the committee had a staff and the necessary information available to it from all Government and other departments; it would also see that the amounts of money involved in conducting these inquiries were available.

Mr. Jennings: This is only a motion to the House.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: It would have to be done in accordance with the Constitution and Parliamentary procedure. I suggest that that is the best way of handling this matter. I have looked at the Leader's motion to see whether the best way of dealing with this matter would be by altering the terms of his motion, but there I find myself confronted with the same problem that confronts him: that we cannot discuss something that has already been the subject of a decision by the House. In those circumstances I suggest that the Leader might look at the proposition that I have put to him. If he has any further points he would like to discuss, I shall be prepared to discuss them. I ask leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

HIRE-PURCHASE AGREEMENTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 5. Page 907.)

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra): When approaching legislation governing hire-purchase in this State, we must always realize just how far hire-purchase has grown into the economy of the State and of Australia. As I have said here many times, today the income of the people of Australia in any one year does not purchase, or even nearly purchase, the output of industry in this country, and that income covers all phases of income—salaries, wages, dividends, and so on. The total of all that is not sufficient to purchase the output of secondary industries to the extent that it is consumable in this State. Therefore, there has grown up a system that is now inseparable from our economy—a system which means that a purchaser of consumer goods has to mortgage his income for several years in order to become the possessor of any item produced in industry today. It is so advanced in its application that by far the greater proportion of sales of motor cars and household goods in Australia today is under the hire-purchase system or some other credit advance system. When we realize that, we realize that employment in Australia is bound up with the success of sales of the products of the industries in which the people are employed. That is undeniable, so we must be extremely careful what impact we make on the conditions of hire-purchase.

We must not restrict sales to the extent that industry is reduced in size, because this would mean that employees could be retrenched. Every means possible should be used to ensure that the goods manufactured for Australian consumption are saleable, and if they are saleable only under hire-purchase we must be doubly careful to see that hire-purchase and credit advances are not restricted to the extent that the output of industry becomes, in some measure, unsaleable. The Bill is aimed at protecting the interests of the consumer—the purchaser of goods. Those who are supporting the measure in its entirety have implied that anyone who sells goods on a hire-purchase basis is bent upon defrauding the purchaser. I have not heard one good word for the seller of goods. Sellers are not all thieves. In 1960 we set out to correct many of the anomalies that resulted in abuses of the hire-purchase system.

Mr. Loveday: We stated that we wanted to correct the abuses.

Mr. QUIRKE: I know. I listened attentively to the debate and its tenor seemed to be

that anyone engaged in hire-purchase sales was likely to be involved in causing injustices to purchasers. Following the passing of the 1960 Act, certain suppliers of goods did not like the restrictions placed upon them and credit sales then became an issue. If injustices are apparent in credit selling, they apply more to the credit sales issue than to hire-purchase. The two systems are entirely different. Under hire-purchase the hirer does not own what he sets out to buy until he makes his last payment and the agreement is terminated. Under the credit sales system he becomes the owner immediately he signs the contract and as such he can sell the article he has purchased. The seller has no right of re-possession; he has only the right to sue for the money that is due to him. Under hire-purchase the seller can re-possess. We can go too far with the restrictions we place upon sales. Any Act that we pass affects not only the person who is prepared to victimize another but everybody—good and bad—and I am concerned lest by our actions we restrict sales and affect industry.

The principal abuse at which this Bill is aimed relates to the "floor plan" system. That, of course, was a scandalous thing and it obviously needed correction. I cannot imagine that any person who was responsible for the abuses from the "floor plan" system would be proud today of what was attempted. No matter how much money was paid by the buyer he could still be charged with the full amount by the finance company. That situation was utterly wrong and no member would oppose a legislative attempt to prevent that from happening again. I am concerned with the restrictions placed on other forms of credit sales. The Bill relates to all sales on credit with the exception of lay-by, budget account and monthly account, and any sales where extra charges are made. I am well aware that some extra charges are unwarranted. I do not believe that 15 per cent as a charge—this 3d. in the pound per month—is just: it is exorbitant. It works out at 15 per cent a year, and that 15 per cent is imposed, notwithstanding the profit that was made on the sale of the article itself. It was a penny in the pound instead of 3d. in the pound the return would be about 5 per cent, and I think that that 5 per cent, on top of the profit made, would be a justifiable charge, because, when all is said and done, that is the amount that these firms would pay for money when working on overdraft, as everybody does.

However, that idea is not incorporated in this Bill, which totally negatives all charges

of that description: they must not be imposed. I do not think we can do that, because all businesses work on overdraft, and if a person can get overdraft money at less than 5 per cent I hope he will let me know so that I can go into the market. That 5 per cent on top of the profit would be a fair charge, but this Bill says we must not charge anything, and I do not think we can impose that provision. We want to boost employment, and we do not want to put in anything, however small, that will restrict sales.

Mr. McKee: Such a provision should increase turnover, if anything.

Mr. QUIRKE: One would think it would, but it is the seller of the article and his capacity to raise money that I am concerned about. We in this place cannot possibly be the arbiters of the destiny of people running businesses. A nominal charge such as that which I have mentioned and which is equal to bank interest would be reasonable, but this Bill prohibits that. I know that there are plenty of places that do not make high charges, but there are others who impose extraordinarily high charges. One big firm in Adelaide has a budget system on which it charges 1s. a week or 1s. a month. Such an account is usually for small things like a pair of gloves, a hat, or handkerchiefs, which things are not long lasting; they are sales on a budget of about £20. That tribute is paid because a person has to use that form of budgeting. However, on investigation I cannot find that anybody complains about it. As a matter of fact, if we do not allow that sort of thing we deprive many people of the things they want but cannot immediately pay for. That applies right throughout the hire-purchase system, under which a person can make a small deposit and in many instances no deposit at all: he hands in some bit of junk as deposit which is probably thrown away. There are numerous ways of getting around the provision in that respect. Having made a small payment, a person becomes entitled to the use of the facility. Take, for instance, the washing machine, which apart possibly from the rubber tyre on a wheelbarrow is the greatest labour-saving device of all time. Under the hire-purchase system a person can start using that machine as soon as he makes the first payment, and if it takes three years to pay for it he has had three years' use of it. Because of the advantages accruing from the use of the machine over those three years the people are quite happy to pay the increased hiring charge; it is better than a rental

charge, because people are making the article their own all the time. We must be careful how we interfere with these things, because people want those articles and under the existing system they will never have sufficient money to pay for them unless they use one of these credit systems.

The provision I agree with is the one designed to stop the "floor plan" sales; I think that the other aspects of hire-purchase will work out their own destiny. If there are any abuses under the Act as it stands at present we know that ventilation here and in other places can correct those things. I have had one or two cases brought to my notice recently which indicate that where salesmen of the big companies have gone outside the pale of what they were expected to do the firms have taken corrective action, because they do not want any trouble these days. Any complaint that comes through Parliament about people selling books or articles of that nature results in those people immediately being put on the mat. That is one thing that has happened as a result of what this Parliament has done; it has built up a sense of security among the people of this State that there is a capacity in South Australia which will be used to correct any abuses that take place.

I am prepared to support that clause, but I do not like the others and I do not think there is any necessity for them. I do not think that in the future there are likely to be many abuses. The corrective methods have been applied; the ready acceptance by the Government of the Leader of the Opposition's clause to prevent what has happened before has become known throughout South Australia, and today the people of this State know that the Parliament is the protector of those interests and that any abuses that arise can be corrected at once. I would be fearful indeed of putting anything in the Bill that might in any way restrict sales, for this would have an immediate impact on industry. I would have very grave doubts about any measure that prevented people from obtaining, by paying a little extra, the use of things which they immediately require. I support the Bill to the extent of the clause that I have referred to, and I look forward with interest to the Committee stages when perhaps we can have more to say.

Mr. McKEE (Port Pirie): It gives me much pleasure to support any measure that will bring about a fair and reasonable method of hire-purchase trading. I cannot agree with

the member for Burra when he claims that this Bill would restrict this method of trading. I am inclined to think that if goods can be purchased more cheaply it is natural that that will put more spending power into the hands of the public; naturally, they will then purchase more goods, and this will help all round.

I agree entirely with the hire-purchase system of trading (although not, of course, as it is practised today), because it gives thousands of people the opportunity to acquire the amenities that are so necessary in our way of living today. However, I am sure that everyone will agree that the present hire-purchase system, as in the past, is today playing a major role in affecting the economy of Australia. If this unfair system is allowed to continue, I am afraid the economic situation can only get worse. It is exploitation of the worst type for all this money to be allowed to flow into the pockets of a comparatively few people. It should be the duty of this Parliament to bring justice to the working-class public. The people know that the system is wrong and that they are being robbed, but what can they do about it?

The working people, who have to use this method of trading, know that they are the victims of an unfair, vicious and lopsided distribution of the products of their labour. I have previously said that I do not dislike hire-purchase when it is used in a reasonable way but, under the present system, the hirer is forced to pay interest on money that he does not owe. This results, of course, in large sums of money being directed into the pockets of these get-rich-quick financiers. This unjust system, to my way of thinking, is morally wrong; when a family man is affected it is morally wrong. It should be Parliament's objective to ensure that no company or individual is permitted to grow rich by exploiting the essential needs of the average wage-earner. After all, it is the working people who produce these goods, and I do not think they should be forced into unnecessary debt to obtain them.

I understood the Premier and the member for Burra to say that they did not want to place any further obstacles in the way of this method of trading. I assure members that the present hire-purchase method has created some obstacle races for the working people who have to use it to provide a reasonable standard of living for their families. I am pleased that one of the main clauses of the Bill is aimed at putting a stop to the present vile practice being adopted by some finance companies that

have repossessed goods, which have been completely paid for by the hirer, because the trader has defaulted in his payments to them. Any person responsible for repossessing goods in these circumstances would have a hide as thick as a buffalo's, and I am sure some legislation could be introduced to control all methods of credit trading that affect the economy and the general welfare of the public.

It should be the responsibility of a Government to legislate to control greed. Legislation can be introduced to control greed, which is the main factor in the present hire-purchase system. I should like to see a complete investigation into this method of credit trading, because I believe the present set-up is designed to benefit only a few people. This method of trading, if used correctly and conducted by fair means, can be a great benefit to the State and the Commonwealth. I should like to see this Parliament introduce legislation acceptable to all concerned: I do not think that should be difficult to do. If people could buy at a reasonable interest rate the public would have greater spending power, and everyone would benefit from this. Higher production would bring full employment, and full employment would bring a demand for all types of household goods and other essential requirements.

Each session during the short time I have been a member of this House my Party has endeavoured to get the Government to bring about some worthwhile form of legislation to protect the buying public, but unfortunately the Government has been reluctant to do anything that might upset this monopoly dictatorship. Prices today are held by two means—monopoly control and restrictive trade practices. It is difficult to believe that this sort of thing has been allowed to go on in a so-called free country. I have heard about the tactics of bushrangers, but Ned Kelly could not hold a candle to the slick vultures operating today. The Government owes some protection to the workers who produce these goods. Our economy is seriously affected and we should approach this problem from the standpoint of the nation, not for the benefit of monopoly capitalism. I do not think any member opposite will ever convince me that the so-called free enterprise of today is not an enterprise of great monopolies. We read in the press every week that big hire-purchase firms are extending and buying property costing millions of pounds. This money is being extracted from the pockets of the working people of this State and the Commonwealth.

I support the Bill because its purpose is to prevent these people from evading the provisions of the Hire-Purchase Agreements Act. In addition, as a representative of the people it is my duty to support any measures that will protect the buying public. I believe that all honourable members have an obligation to their constituents when considering these amendments. I support the Bill.

Mr. HUGHES (Wallaroo): In supporting the Bill before the House, I make it clear from the outset that I am not opposed to hire-purchase in principle. I often think what an asset hire-purchase, in principle, would have been to some of our parents. It would have enabled them, too, to enjoy the benefits of a number of conveniences while rearing large families, as they did in days gone by. I often think what a washing machine could have done for my own mother, who had a family of eleven children; how a refrigerator could have saved her many anxious moments in storing the necessities of life so essential in rearing a large family.

Whilst there are many good hire-purchase companies that make finance available to enable the mothers of today to enjoy the amenities of home life, there are others that exploit the public unnecessarily and, as the Bill indicates, there are still others that evade hire-purchase legislation at every available opportunity. I was not surprised at the attitude and some of the remarks of the Premier on this Bill. He stated:

I intend to support the second reading but in Committee I will not vote for the first three provisions to which I have referred.

I think at that stage he was referring to clause 3, relating to credit sales, acting on the advice of his advisers that they should not be allowed; to clause 4, relating to new section 46a, dealing with bills of sale; and clause 4 dealing with new section 46b, relating to excessive charges, on the advice of his advisers that they should not be allowed. The Premier continued:

With a small amendment that I believe is necessary in the "floor plan" provision, I am prepared to accept that but, if the one provision that deals with credit sales remains in the Bill on the third reading, I shall certainly oppose the third reading. That would be a restriction that would impose a hardship on many people who use that form of credit. At this time it would be unwarranted. No case has been made out for anything to be remedied under that provision. Of the present practice I have had no complaint—and I get complaints about many things. It would be a needless intervention in business matters which, at this point of time, should not be the concern of the House.

With those reservations, I hope I have made my position fairly clear. If the credit sales provisions are still in the Bill at third reading, I shall oppose them, call for a division on the third reading and do my best to have the Bill defeated.

Since I have been a member of this House, that time has been marked by the number of Bills introduced by the Government that have been supported by the Australian Labor Party. Very few of the measures adopted by the Government have been opposed by the Labor Party while I have been in this House. This is because we, on this side of the House, believe that, even though the Government's measures are not nearly wide enough in scope to effect a lasting and substantial improvement in the economy and to have a beneficial impact on the lives of our people, half a loaf is better than none.

It has been pointed out during this session that certain legislation introduced by the Government had been advocated previously by the Labor Party. I personally would not mind if the Government stole the Australian Labor Party's policy because, by doing that, the Government would ensure that the man in the street got a better deal. It would mean a more equitable balance of trade and, in my opinion, a better balanced economy. Some of the features of the Australian Labor Party policy that this Government has adopted in part were described by the Government and its supporters as unworkable when those proposals were made in this House by Labor.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member will link up his remarks with the Bill.

Mr. HUGHES: I am linking up my remarks with some of the remarks made against the Bill by the Premier at that time. One would naturally expect that this Government, which was so soundly rebuked by the people of this State, would heed the warning given on March 3. But, no—it continues to disregard the opinions of the members on this side of the House, opinions that have been endorsed by a majority of more than 80,000 electors of this State.

The SPEAKER: This is not an electoral reform Bill.

Mr. HUGHES: I realize that and I am now going to link up my remarks with the Premier. The Premier has again thrown out the ultimatum to this Parliament: "Do it my way or I will take steps to throw the Bill out!" The Labor Party had hoped that the Government on this occasion would look at the position from a humanitarian point of view and would

have had a more realistic appreciation of the needs of the people of this country, if it is to progress and prosper and if our people are to enjoy the decent standard of living that is their birthright. No doubt, credit organizations have found it useful to set up joint bodies among themselves to study a variety of common problems and have found it profitable to carry out continuous studies of credit trade and technical problems associated with getting around the hire-purchase laws. I have often wondered how many people are caught up in the net of unscrupulous hire-purchase rackets. If one were to take the time to read the various clauses that some people set their names to when they undertake the responsibility of hire-purchase, it would make one quiver, because all the advantages of hire-purchase are on the side of the finance companies.

A constituent of mine interviewed me about a hire-purchase transaction that he had entered into. He purchased a motor car, the listed price at that time being £565. He traded in another car for £190, leaving him £375 to pay. He entered into an agreement to pay 30 monthly instalments of £17 11s. These amounted to £526 10s. With the £190 trade-in the total cost of the car was £716 10s., representing £151 10s. hire-purchase charges on £375. I have not worked out the percentage, but I think it would be a flat rate of about 18 per cent. The interest rate was high enough, but to cap it all the car was not in good order, as was claimed by the dealer, and within three weeks repairs cost about £70. To keep the car on the road it cost the purchaser almost as much in repairs as his hire-purchase commitments. Eventually the dealer was asked whether he would take back the car. He did so and undertook verbally that no further payments would be required. However, some time later, much to the disgust of my constituent, he received a letter from a finance company informing him that the car had been sold at a loss of £194 and requesting him to communicate with the finance company to arrange to meet this liability. My constituent then interviewed me and I prepared a letter for him to send to the finance company informing the company that he had communicated with his local member and unless the claim for £194 were dropped the matter would be placed before the Premier with a request that the whole of the affairs of this company be investigated. No more has been heard of this matter which happened almost 20 months

ago, but it reveals that unscrupulous hire-purchase companies do operate in South Australia. This Bill has been introduced in good faith with the object of assisting those unfortunate people who have been faced with problems arising from our present hire-purchase legislation. The Premier is not prepared to accept all of the provisions and we must either accept his proposals or get nowhere. We will have to accept the half a loaf which we consider is better than none at all. I support the Bill.

Mr. CLARK (Gawler): I support the Bill which seeks to tidy the present legislation and to prevent some of the abuses not covered by the 1960 legislation. It aims at coping with some of the new forms of evasions or avoidances—whichever the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) prefers—that have arisen from the 1960 legislation. In speaking to this Bill the Premier said:

. . . no matter how much we vary the form of this type of legislation we are frequently outwitted by people who find new ways of overcoming what has been provided.

I do not think the Premier could have found a more appropriate word than “outwitted” had he studied a dictionary before he spoke. I shall not quote extensively from what the member for Mitcham said, because that might give his speech an importance it does not deserve. However, he said:

. . . it is pretty obvious that people will not use it if they can find some more convenient way of doing their business . . .

He was referring to hire-purchase companies. He then engaged in some discussion of the words “evading” and “avoiding”. His point was that if people could find some way of getting around the provisions of the existing legislation, who could blame them. The Premier said that the provisions were frequently outwitted. We have introduced this Bill to tighten the present legislation. We want to make it less easy for astute businessmen—and I call them that, being a polite person—to evade, avoid, or outwit the present provisions. I agree with the member for Burra that hire-purchase has become an economic necessity in Australia. I do not agree that it is a good thing that this has happened.

Mr. Quirke: Neither do I.

Mr. CLARK: In some respects it is a bad thing. Many of my constituents are forced to use hire-purchase to acquire necessities, and whilst this has been a blessing, hire-purchase can also be a curse. In 1959 all members

received a nicely bound book—*The Philosophy of Hire-Purchase*. I think the author had a cheek to use the word “philosophy” regarding hire-purchase, but it did give the book a high-sounding title which, with the gold lettering on it, lent it some respectability. It is virtually an apology for hire-purchase. Members would agree with much of it, but they would disagree violently with much of it.

To justify my claim that hire-purchase can be a curse let me supply two illuminating examples. Recently two of my constituents came to me because they were worried about what might be described as a secondary hire-purchase agreement. Let me say at the outset that this system is entirely legal. A large company in this State adopted the idea that some of the people who were making hire-purchase payments to their finance company or to the firm concerned—and they are both the same, anyhow—were finding those payments rather large, and that it was a burden on people to have to pay such a large amount each month. Out of the goodness of their hearts and their benevolence they went around to these people—as a matter of fact, mostly they went to the wives when the husbands were not at home—and suggested to them that the burden of their hire-purchase payments would be much less if their payments were made less each month and spread out over a longer period. The firm told those people that it would be a godsend to them to have to pay £2 or £3 less each month.

Numerous people fell for this, which in a sense was a three-card trick. However, it was perfectly legal. Let me give just two fairly typical examples of what happened. One person originally owed to the hire-purchase company the sum of £296 8s., including all charges. When he came to me he had paid off £150, which meant that under the original contract he had £146 8s. still to pay. The company was very kind to him: it said, “We will adjust your agreement so that you can make 62 monthly payments of £5.” This meant that this man still had £310 to pay, in other words, about £15 more than his original debt, after paying £150.

The other case was somewhat similar, although perhaps a little worse. A man originally owed £342 2s. 6d. He had paid off only £96, and owed £246 2s. 6d. Under the new scheme that was arranged he had to make 73 monthly payments of £5 10s. a month, which meant that he still had £401 10s. to pay, even though his original debt had been only £342 2s. 6d. and he had paid £96 off that.

That is one of the little evasions, if we may call them that, that are employed. I prefer to call it "a system of outwitting". When I rang the manager of this company he was very polite and decent to me. He gave me a full explanation of it, and he convinced me that what his firm was doing was entirely legal.

I say that this is usury. The manager of that firm said to me, "After all, whatever names we have given to us we are money-lenders." Of course, that is exactly what they are. I am not suggesting that all hire-purchase companies are rogues; I believe most of them are acting completely within their legal rights in what they are doing. However, what we seek to do in our amendment is to make some of these legal rights illegal. I should like to quote from *The Philosophy of Hire-Purchase* which, at page 41, states:

The challenge to consumers to maintain a rational pattern of expenditure is inherent in the nature of hire-purchase.

Despite this statement, we find that every day salesmen are coming to the doors of houses and doing their very best to overcome that inherent challenge to have a rational pattern of expenditure regarding hire-purchase. I believe that if we had no door-to-door salesmen inviting people to buy television sets and refrigerators and such things, most of the weaknesses and the wrongs of this system of hire-purchase would cease to exist. I know we cannot legally prevent door-to-door salesmen, but I believe that if people could go along to a reputable firm where they knew they could purchase an article on hire-purchase, without in any way being induced by anybody to do so, but only when they wanted to purchase a particular article and when they were in a position to do so, many of the evils associated with hire-purchase would disappear.

Mr. Quirke: Can you understand why people in the country purchase from a travelling salesman when they can get a better deal in their own town?

Mr. CLARK: No. I am glad the member for Burra has raised this point. I have had numberless cases in Gawler and in the Barossa Valley, which I visit fairly often, of people who purchased articles from salesmen from the city or somewhere else and then discovered subsequently not only that their terms and their costs were not as favourable but that when they wanted service they had to wait possibly weeks for it, whereas the article and the service could have been provided immediately by their local man and they would have needed only to walk into his shop and get it from him. If a

person is a good salesman he can talk people into almost anything. Nobody can tell me that the person who wrote this book (V. H. Stanley Low) did not have his tongue in his cheek when he was talking about "maintaining a rational pattern of expenditure", when the representatives of the hire-purchase companies themselves go out of their way to persuade people to have a completely irrational pattern of expenditure. We know they do that, for it is their business. I do not blame the salesmen, because they do only what they are paid to do; they get commission, and they are paid by results.

Mr. Jennings: But it is our job to tighten things up.

Mr. CLARK: Yes, so that certain things cannot go on. Let me quote again from this worthy volume. We find, also on page 41, the following:

Many critics express the fear that the pattern of hire-purchase repayments often leaves too little for spending on food, clothing, and other essentials, but there is no evidence that this is so.

I ask honourable members: "How many members in this House, in the course of their experiences and their work in their constituencies, have not found people in the very predicament referred to in that quotation?" I know that the member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) will tell us that we cannot legislate to protect fools. However, I know of thousands of people who, unfortunately, have to put on a bit of a show by having things their neighbours have, although they cannot afford them. If this author thinks there is no evidence that people spend more than they should, he is entirely wrong.

Let me give another example. Last year a man employed in the Salisbury area whom I knew fairly well came to see me. This man had a very good job: I suppose he would have earned not less than £30 a week, and often a good deal more with overtime. When he came to see me he was most distressed because his wife was out of work. I said to him, "But you are doing all right, aren't you; you would get £25 to £30 a week?" He replied that it would be a poor week if he did not get £30 or £32 a week. When I asked him why he was worried, he said, "We are up for £28 a week for hire-purchase payments." This is an example that shows that if this man's wife did not work they were in a state of dire disaster. Despite these things, this book tells us that there is no evidence that people spend more than they should on hire-purchase! I think there is

plenty of evidence that they do. On page 45 is another statement that is rather illuminating. The author says:

In times of full employment, such as we must contemplate from now on in Australia, it presents no real drag on the finances of the people as a whole.

The book was written in 1960, and apparently its author could not foretell the credit squeeze that came on Australia in 1961. He expected that we were going to have a time of full employment, but we can never be sure that we will have full employment and, in times such as the recent credit squeeze, people who had gone in a little further than they should have done in hire-purchase because they wanted things for their homes found suddenly that they were not working at all. This happened particularly to those employed in the motor industry—and many are employed in that industry. These people suddenly find themselves without jobs but with large hire-purchase commitments. In times such as those hire-purchase commitments, even if they are not more than a man can afford when he is working, are an awful lot more than he can afford when he is not working, and, in some cases, when he is not receiving overtime. Also, people do not know when sickness or misfortune is coming. Despite these things, we are told that hire-purchase is no real drag on the finances of the people as a whole! There are many times when it is.

I did not keep account, but I think I would be conservative in estimating that 200 constituents approached me during the credit squeeze and sought some sort of assistance, asking what they could do about their hire-purchase commitments. In fairness to the companies, I must say that when I got in touch with them in almost every case I was able to resolve the difficulties of my constituents by arranging for payments to be delayed until they got back to work. I must also point out that most of the companies did not want articles to be repossessed in hundreds, as they would not have known what to do with them; however, the people were given a break when misfortune befell them. If the misfortune were of long duration, I shudder to think what could happen. The author of the book also states:

What is new and unique in the post-war era is a revolution in the thinking and spending habits of consumers. To a greater extent than ever before, people have been willing to go into debt to acquire durable assets, which have become part and parcel of today's standard of living.

I think part of the statement is worth noting. The author says that people have been willing to go into debt, but I believe that in many cases they have been pressurized into it. If any member believes that a man or woman cannot be persuaded against his or her will, let him come to my area and I will introduce him to many who were persuaded against their will. Only this week I had an example (and many similar cases have been mentioned in this House) of a high pressure book salesman who after two hours talked a woman into buying a set of books that the husband would not have at any price when he came home. That, of course, goes on. The author of this book says that people are purchasing durable goods—the things that become assets. However, I mentioned a person who had had a television set for two years and whose payments were extended to allow him to make another 62 monthly payments of £5. This meant that he had seven years to pay (and pay through the nose) for the set and, unless he is lucky, by the time he can proudly say that he owns the set it will not be much of an asset.

From what I have heard from Government members—and I am not trying to be facetious—it seems to me that their attitude is that anything that restricts business or profits (to most Government members the two things are synonymous) is a bad thing. We have been told that this measure will restrict business, but nobody has given any proof that it will do that. We do not want to restrict business, but we would be happy to see profit restricted. We want to make conditions better for purchasers. What always mystifies me in a debate such as this is that the only point of view that seems to penetrate the thoughts of members opposite is of the people doing the selling; they do not seem to think about those who are doing the buying. The amendments contained in this Bill, which I urge members to consider, are based on the idea of making the law such that it is not easy to evade. Before resuming my seat, I wish to quote one more passage from the book I have already mentioned. I ask all members to listen to this because I think it should win a prize! This was apparently written in all seriousness, but I feel sure that the tongue was not only in the cheek but half-way down the throat:

The social evils that have followed the development of hire-purchase all seem related to individual irresponsibility. Surely the people who have over-reached themselves in contracting hire-purchase commitments would have found some other way to get into trouble if hire-purchase was not available to them.

In other words, the author believes that the people who have over-reached themselves would, if there had been no hire-purchase, have been running around trying to find ways to waste their money. I believe that is complete and utter nonsense. We know there are fools everywhere, but I assure the House that the big majority of people who have told me about being in difficulties in relation to hire-purchase because of being out of employment or being sick, or for some other reason, were not fools. In the main, they were people who had perhaps gone into things without thinking, or who had been talked into getting something they would like to have had but could not afford, but they were not fools.

Mr. Quirke: I think in fairness you will say that many companies stood behind those people.

Mr. CLARK: I think the honourable member will agree that I said that a few moments ago. I believe sincerely that I could name dozens of them. My friend the member for Wallaroo (Mr. Hughes) made a pertinent remark at the beginning of his speech this afternoon when he said what a good thing it would have been if some of the older people (he mentioned his own mother and he made me think of mine, too) could have had the benefit of some of these things. My mother was a widow with five children and I do not think she could have afforded a washing-machine, even on hire-purchase, but many who could have afforded these things went without them. When the credit squeeze was on, I found many hire-purchase companies most co-operative and helpful. Sometimes people have been in difficulties and troubled with hire-purchase companies and I have managed to point the way and assist them or put them in touch with somebody who could help them resolve their difficulties. That does not mean that the difficulties have gone: they are still there. They are put off only for a period. I ask the house to support our amendments because they will help the general public of South Australia. Nobody has managed to show me how our amendments will harm genuine business.

Mr. RYAN (Port Adelaide): I support the Bill introduced by the Leader. At this stage I, together with my colleagues, would find it hard to support the views put forward by the members of the Government in opposition to our amendments. I have said many times—and it is apparent that I shall have to say it many more times—that, each time the Opposition wants to bring in any legislation in accordance with modern requirements, it gets opposition from the Government; but, if the

same legislation were introduced by the Government, its members would be the first to support it and say it was absolutely warranted to protect the people.

Some wild statements have been made about the intentions of this Bill and what the Opposition wants to do with it. The member for Burra (Mr. Quirke) today stated that in his opinion the restrictions we suggest on hire-purchase would have a detrimental effect on the production of essential commodities in this State and so reduce the buying of them. The same member and other Government members would be the first to ask for amending legislation if the system operating in big business today—and there is not much difference between overdrafts for companies and hire-purchase for the man with no capital—had rates similar to those charged by hire-purchase companies. The people representing business would be the first to voice an objection if they had to pay on overdraft operations the burglarious rates charged by the hire-purchase companies. What is the difference between a company producing its article on credit, such as an overdraft system, and the small man buying that particular article on hire-purchase? There is no difference whatsoever.

I fully support a system of hire-purchase for the small man. He needs every encouragement to buy goods that some years ago were considered luxuries but today are admitted, even by the court that fixes the wages of the workers, to be essential commodities. Nobody in this House by any stretch of the imagination can say that under today's system of living refrigerators are a luxury. They are an essential commodity in every home and we should protect those people not able to find the ready cash to buy such essential commodities.

When we introduce legislation for what is now, I believe, the greatest volume of business occurring in Australia, not only in South Australia but in every State of the Commonwealth (for hire-purchase has reached such proportions today that it is the largest volume of credit in Australia), we oppose the Government's attitude. The principle of the introduction of the Opposition's amending legislation is that there would be a bigger volume of trade if hire-purchase were controlled. When the Premier introduced hire-purchase legislation two or three years ago, he did it as a result of unanimity being reached between all States, but we have found that, since the introduction of that legislation, on each occasion that legislation is introduced, some people go out of their way to find

ways and means of dodging it. No matter what legislation is introduced, we always find some smart Alee who wants to find ways and means of dodging its effects. I do not think that has been illustrated more than in respect of the present-day hire-purchase system.

Members opposite may remember that originally the Opposition, with the support of some Government members on that occasion, was successful in introducing certain amendments to the hire-purchase legislation; but we found that, within six months of that law being proclaimed in this State, most companies operating previously under hire-purchase had devised another scheme so that they would not be conducting their business under the new Act. Every day in the week all these big companies are coming out with a system of "No deposit and £50 trade-in", but we all know that that kind of transaction or business is not in accordance with hire-purchase legislation.

We have been told many times when Opposition members have asked whether it is intended to bring such people under the provisions of the hire-purchase legislation that "the Government is watching the position closely and, if the position gets out of hand, it intends to bring down amending legislation to cover those companies that will not play ball under the Act." But what do we find? We find that, as soon as the Labor Opposition introduces legislation to rectify the anomalies in big business today, some Government members say, "We will not participate in your amendment." We witnessed the Premier today standing up and wielding the big stick once again, saying, "Unless you are prepared to withdraw some of these amendments, I shall make sure that the Bill is voted out." I see the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) laughing. We bring in the legislation and he opposes it but, if the Premier brought in the same legislation without alteration in the wording, he would probably be one of the first to support it. In fact, he would be told that he had to support it.

Mr. Lawn: He would say, "Yes, Master!"

Mr. RYAN: It is no good the honourable member's saying that he is not told what he is to do as far as his Party is concerned.

The SPEAKER: Order! This is not a Party caucus meeting.

Mr. RYAN: Some Government members are adamant that the Opposition's amendment to the Hire-Purchase Agreements Act will restrict sales and will not be to the advantage of business in general. Let me direct their minds back to the time when the original Bill was

introduced by the Premier in 1959, when he said (on page 1783 of *Hansard*):

The hire-purchase system has much to commend it.

Every member on the Government side will admit that the Opposition agrees with that statement. Not one of us is opposed to the principle of hire-purchase. We support it, but we wish to ensure that the people who are forced to use that system are receiving it on the best possible terms. The Premier's statement continued as follows:

It gives the wage earner an opportunity to buy essentials and to make life more comfortable thereby improving the standard of living.

The member for Burra (Mr. Quirke) has not long been a member of the Liberal and Country League but it is apparent—

Mr. Lawn: Did you say he won't be a member of the Liberal and Country League for very long?

Mr. RYAN: I do not think he will.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no clause in the Bill dealing with that.

Mr. RYAN: I am referring to the member for Burra. He is probably out of step with what the Premier, as the Leader of the Government, thinks on hire-purchase, because I am quoting from the Premier's remarks when he introduced the Bill. These comments also come home to some primary producers, because some of them believe that hire-purchase legislation is something beneath the dignity of primary producers, that it is something for the workers and that, therefore, L.C.L. members should concern themselves not with what happens to the workers but only with what happens to primary producers. If these people are able to borrow money by means of a bank overdraft there is no necessity for them to use the hire-purchase system. If the position were not serious it would be laughable. We hear the Government members say that the concern of the Opposition on hire-purchase transactions is ridiculous. It is laughable to them, but we are trying to improve the hire-purchase system. Will the member for Mitcham, as a so-called legal authority, state that it is not true that practically every big business company in Adelaide is probably deliberately dodging the hire-purchase law in South Australia? This morning's *Advertiser* is full of advertisements relating to goods that can be bought for no deposit and so much a week. Is that hire-purchase as we know it?

Mr. Millhouse: No.

Mr. RYAN: No, because some other form of credit has been created by these companies, and it is our sincere hope that this amendment to the Hire-Purchase Agreements Act will be carried to bring those companies within the ambit of the law operating in this State. It is the duty of every member of this House when business gets out of step with the law to face up to his responsibilities and support any attempt to amend the law to make those people subject to its control. That is what Parliaments are created for—not to dodge responsibility, but to face up to the law. Apparently, some members are prepared to dodge their obligations to the public of South Australia on this question. For the benefit of primary producers I shall quote further what the Premier said. He continued:

It allows the primary producer to buy implements and equipment which will help him increase production—

I emphasize the word "production"—

and assist in protecting him against seasonal fluctuations. It enables manufacturers and other operators (particularly the smaller ones) to obtain the necessary plant to extend their operations and to progress at a rate which they would be unable to attain otherwise.

This is all-important and it comes from the Premier. One would think when reading the statement that these are remarks of a member of the Opposition. The Premier continued:

It stimulates demand for consumer goods and so assists commerce and industry to achieve a higher rate of output with a resultant reduction in the unit cost of these goods which are eventually purchased by the community.

It is the intention of the Opposition to amend legislation that we find outmoded because of the actions of business undertakings. Nobody on the Government benches objected when the horse-and-buggy Road Traffic Act was brought up to date by this Parliament. Members considered that legislation was absolutely necessary and long overdue. Why cannot the same principle apply to the Hire-Purchase Agreements Act? We have found that since the Act has been in operation it has proved ineffective and has not covered the people it was intended to cover. Therefore, it is our duty to amend the legislation and bring it into line with present-day requirements. I emphasize that the difficulties encountered in South Australia on hire-purchase law are not peculiar to this State. Other States that introduced similar legislation, following on a request from the conference some years ago that they introduce legislation to achieve uniformity in the control of this important credit

system operating in Australia, experienced the same troubles we are now experiencing. However, other States are doing what the Opposition is now trying to do in this State. For the benefit of Government members I shall quote from the *Sydney Morning Herald* of Friday, September 14, under a heading "H.P. Law Change Planned". The article states:

The State Government will introduce legislation to protect the public against the practice of using credit sales to avoid the protection given under hire-purchase.

That is what the Opposition is trying to do in its amendment. Business people are creating a system that is outside the terms of the Hire-Purchase Agreements Act and they have created a system of using credit sales. If a company wishes to adopt a system that is outside the provisions of the law and that adoption results in anomalies with which none of us agrees, I reiterate that it is the duty of Parliament to introduce legislation to control such sales. The article continues:

The Minister of Justice, Mr. N. J. Mannix, said this in the Legislative Assembly yesterday in reply to a question by Mr. L. F. Bowen (Labor, Randwick). Mr. Bowen asked whether Goodwins Ltd. purported to sell articles on hire-purchase and then arranged for the purchaser to sign an agreement which said Television and General Finance Corporation of Canberra was the owner of the article. He asked if this often meant people who bought the articles had to face legal action which involved going to Canberra. Mr. Mannix said Goodwins Ltd., and other companies, both in their advertising and their sales methods, seemed to be imposing all sorts of charges and penalties on purchasers, and using credit sales to avoid the protection given under the Hire-Purchase Act. He said the Commonwealth and the New South Wales Governments had agreed to an amendment to protect the position of purchasers in cases where legal proceedings originated from Canberra, and there would be further amendments to protect the public against the use of credit sales instead of hire-purchase.

This illustrates that the practice of organizations trying to dodge the provisions of hire-purchase legislation is not confined to South Australia. However, some of the other States are prepared to meet their obligations and amend their law to overcome such abuses. I cannot understand why Government members adopt the attitude that legislation proposed by the Opposition is not good and they must oppose it. If we adopted the same attitude, particularly in view of the present state of the House, much valuable legislation would not be passed. We consider legislation on its merits and if as a Party, and on democratic

grounds, we believe that it is designed for the good of the people we support it.

Apart from the agreement on the Leader's motion about three weeks ago, I cannot remember an occasion since I have been a member when the Government has unanimously accepted legislation introduced or motions moved by the Opposition. Government members are elected to represent people—even though they represent a small minority only of the people—and they should support legislation designed to assist people. Hire-purchase is more availed of in Labor-held districts than elsewhere and consequently Opposition members hear more of the sharp practices arising from that system than Government members. I could refer to many instances of people being adversely affected by hire-purchase companies that have acted outside the law, but if all members recounted such cases this debate would last for hours. We do not want to make threats, as did the Premier when he said that we must either accept his proposals or he will throw this Bill out, but we appeal to members to recognize that this Bill contains many good provisions. It is a sincere attempt to remedy the defects of the present legislation. It will not harm production, but will do much to aid production and to help people who are obliged to use this system of credit. Most members opposite were originally opposed to hire-purchase legislation, but since then many of them have recognized its virtues. They should be sincere and support this Bill to remedy the existing legislation.

Mr. LAWN secured the adjournment of the debate.

THE BUDGET.

The Estimates—Grand Total, £96,854,000.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from September 18. Page 968.)

THE LEGISLATURE.

Legislative Council, £12,632.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla): This afternoon the Treasurer said that the question of making available copies of the Auditor-General's report was in the hands of the Speaker, and the Speaker said that in future he would ensure that all members received copies of that report. However, it is not merely a question of getting a copy of the report, but of getting it in time to enable members to give proper consideration to it before the Budget debate proceeds. Almost every year since I have been a member I have heard the Leader of the

Opposition, when speaking during the Budget debate, complain that the report has not been available. It is gratifying that today we have at last heard the explanation. I hope that we get copies of the report in future at least a week before the Budget debate to enable us to consider its ramifications properly. I have always regarded Budget debates as among the worst of the session. Of course, the reason is that members have not been able to become sufficiently well-informed on the whole subject to debate the Budget properly. It is claimed that the Budget is one of the most important measures introduced during a Parliamentary year, yet the standard of such debates is below the standard of debates on other measures simply because members have not proper information before them. The Budget is involved, and members are invariably put in the position where they can deal only with a few local items on which they are competent to speak. To deal with the rather involved financial ramifications of the State's affairs involves much study, and without the Auditor-General's report members cannot talk intelligently about them.

As the result of our protests each member now has a copy of the Auditor-General's report, but it is far too late to absorb what is in the report and to speak at length on financial matters affecting the State generally. We can only deal with the few matters with which we are closely associated. I cannot help feeling that there has been, as the member for Adelaide said, a move, as it were, to not worry about members being properly informed, and so curtail the debate without there being a proper discussion on what is considered to be one of the most important functions of government. I am glad that we have made this solid protest, which has produced some result. I hope that in future we shall not only get a copy of the report for each member but that the copy will be available about a week before the Budget speech is delivered.

I was interested yesterday to hear the member for Murray refer to the small and inadequate amount of £5,000 that is provided for a youth activity. I understand that there is great concern amongst people interested in youth welfare work because they consider that only a niggardly amount has been provided for their activity. I want now to give some information about what is being done in another State in youth welfare work. I visited Griffith, near Leeton, in New South Wales, where they have a police boys club. It is numbered 32 in the New South Wales Federation of Police Boys Clubs. I do not think that is the total number of the

clubs, but the number shows how widespread are the clubs. I was struck by the fact that although this town has a population of 8,000, with another 8,000 in the surrounding area on small blocks growing fruit, rice, wheat, wool, fat lambs and vegetables, there are 1,100 boys in the club. An interesting feature is that the club is supervised in general management by a police officer whose salary is paid by the Police Department. In addition to supervising, he has to organize functions for the raising of money. He told me that with the assistance of others, he had raised over £10,000 in the last 12 months. The club's building cost £50,000, and its activities include boxing, archery, billiards, weight-lifting, basketball and shuttlecock. There were five football teams, three playing Australian rules and two rugby union. The club has its own bus. The boys pay no fees and come and go as they please. The average attendance is 100 a day. Any misbehaviour is penalized by a short suspension, but I understand that is seldom necessary. The club is situated adjacent to an Olympic swimming pool run by the shire. In addition, there is a grassed area for various activities. The club is open until 10 p.m. each day. When I was there I saw a number of lads indulging in the various activities, and without any direction as to what they should do. They played the games they wanted to play and provided they conducted themselves properly no-one interfered. The club is run remarkably well. I think it is a fine institution and one that could be copied here. The management committee consists of representative people, including two ministers of religion, but there is no attempt to introduce any form of religious activity in the club. Obviously the boys are much at home and enthusiastic about the way the club is conducted. They have their own roneoed publication from time to time.

I give these details because I think it is something that could be emulated in South Australia. The Griffith area has the same population as Whyalla. I noticed in the shire hall that the total production in the area for 1960-61 amounted to £8,750,000. Griffith has every conceivable amenity. It has a high school with 900 students, a technical college, a fine shire hall built 12 months ago at a cost of £35,000, an Olympic swimming pool and a public library. The town was admirably designed by the same architect who designed Canberra. Although Whyalla has the same population it has an annual production that should be valued at about £15,000,000 a year, without considering the shipping activities and the production of pig iron. It has nothing like the

amenities at Griffith. The rates charged at Whyalla are considered to be the limit that the ratepayers can afford, and no doubt that is so, but they are only half the Griffith rates. This shows that where the people conduct their own business and retain the value of the production in the district it is better than an industrial area where the value of the production does not remain in the town. I thought this was a good comparison.

Mr. Hall: Did you say that the Griffith rates were only half those at Whyalla?

Mr. LOVEDAY: No. They are double the Whyalla rates, and the Griffith people can afford to pay them.

Mr. Quirke: You mean the irrigation settlement at Griffith?

Mr. LOVEDAY: Yes. This is an illuminating comparison. It shows the difference in the prosperity of two towns with a similar population. I cannot help feeling that there is no great satisfaction to be gained from the Budget. After having had a brief glance at the Auditor-General's report I feel that we are drifting seriously in a financial way. When we examine the Budget items it is obvious that there can be no suggestion about reductions in expenditure. In fact, every Budget item could do with more expenditure if we are to have the standards we would like to have. Yet at the same time we are budgeting for a substantial deficit, and, of course, we have done this over a fairly long term, with a few exceptions. Nevertheless, there appears to be little chance of our having a surplus, in view of the responsibilities with which we will be faced in years to come. Although there has been a tremendous increase in expenditure on education—one of the largest items in the Budget—there is still much room for desirable expenditure. The needs in that direction are more likely to increase than decrease in the future.

At present we have a Bill before Parliament dealing with Aborigines, and I am fairly sure that this will mean that there will be greater expenditure in the future if we deal adequately with that problem. No matter what item we look at we must admit that greater expenditure will be needed in future. The expenditure itself is increasing faster than the income that we can foresee. It may be said that we will have a greater population, that the expenditure will be spread over a greater number, and that we may get some considerable benefit in taxation and revenue as a result of that increased population. But, in studying the figures, as I have done very briefly, of receipts

and expenditure as shown in the Auditor-General's report from 1957-58 to 1961-62, I can see no indication that the position will be improved. I was greatly struck by the Treasurer's complaint about the failure (as he put it) of the Commonwealth Government to make sufficient money available for developmental projects. He said:

The State of South Australia would thereby be actually penalized for its very successful efforts to counter unemployment by the well-judged early use of its own resources. Whatever the reason, it is an unfortunate fact that Commonwealth finance provided for special projects to benefit the States in the past three years, together with comparable proposals for 1962-63, amount to a total of £131,000,000, and that South Australia's share of that total is £1,300,000, or a bare 1 per cent.

What struck me forcibly in relation to that is that a recent press report stated that some Commonwealth Liberal members denied that that was the position. We are interested to know just what the facts are in this matter, because we have the Treasurer here saying one thing and members of the same Party in the Commonwealth sphere saying something very different indeed. If we have been treated so badly by the Commonwealth, how is it that the local press, whenever the South Australian Treasurer has gone to a Loan Council meeting, has always pictured the Treasurer as being the dominant figure at the conference? If that is true, surely we should have received better treatment. I think that some of the chickens are coming home to roost regarding the propaganda that has been handed out to us in the past. I should very much like to know which of those two statements is correct, the Treasurer's or that of the members of his own Party in the Commonwealth sphere. There is not the slightest doubt, when one examines the Budget, that we depend so much on the Commonwealth that we are not masters in our own Parliament. Although we were told that we were no longer a mendicant State, as a result of the move that was made two or three years ago, it seems to me that we have departed very little from that position; we are still very much dependent upon the Commonwealth in what we can do.

There seems to be some indication from the Auditor-General's report and from the Treasurer's remarks that the cost of water is likely to rise in the future, and there is no doubt that pressure is being put on in that direction. I was very interested some time ago to discuss with the Treasurer the question of the receipts that have gone into Consolidated

Revenue from the sale of land in Whyalla and also from the royalties on iron ore. The Treasurer explained that these amounts went into Consolidated Revenue, and of course they did something to offset the cost of providing water in Whyalla itself. I notice in the Budget report that territorial receipts exceeded the estimate by £77,000. Those territorial receipts cover land sales, interest, and Crown land rents and licences. Under the heading of "Mines"; the royalties on minerals would be included. The Treasurer went on to say:

Land sales at Whyalla were greater than anticipated, and tonnages of iron ore and Leigh Creek coal mined were above expectation. Unfortunately, these figures in the Budget do not set out just what was done regarding land sales at Whyalla: they give only the total land sales for the State. However, in view of the fact that the Lands Department is, I think, able to sell land only in fairly large quantities in Whyalla today, as distinct from the rest of the State, I should imagine that most of the income received under this heading would come from the sale of residential blocks there.

I refer to those figures to show that a considerable amount is going into Consolidated Revenue from that source. Land sales increased from about £94,000 in 1960-61 to £155,447 in 1961-62—a substantial increase indeed—and I suspect that most of this income accrues from the sale of residential blocks in the city of Whyalla. The Housing Trust is now building in Whyalla at the rate of about 400 houses a year, which means an income to the Lands Department of at least £60,000 a year without taking into account the blocks sold to private purchasers and businesses. One business site was recently sold to an oil company for £15,000. It therefore appears to me that the city of Whyalla is contributing heavily to Consolidated Revenue from the sale of Crown land.

In addition, under the heading of "Mines—Royalties on Iron Ore"—although this sum is not specified here—I would think that out of a total of £401,000 taken into Consolidated Revenue in 1961-62, about £260,000 would come from royalties on iron ore sent from Whyalla. I hope that that will be taken into account when we hear talk of increasing water rates, because it will be a serious matter indeed if rates are raised in country areas. There is not the slightest doubt that the city of Whyalla is making a considerable contribution to Consolidated Revenue from those two

sources. Regarding Crown lands administration, the Auditor-General says:

The cost of administering Crown lands, which absorbs practically the whole of the receipts, as shown above, is due in part to the complicated and time-consuming processes which are carried out in dealing with land transactions in order to comply with the requirements of the Crown Lands Act.

He recommends some amendment to that Act to simplify procedures while still retaining any essential safeguards. I think it is desirable to amend that Act at an early date so that the cost of administering the department does not absorb practically the whole of the receipts.

I close on this note: that I consider we have been greatly hampered in this debate by the lack of information, brought about because the Auditor-General's report came to us much too late to be properly studied; consequently, it cannot be expected that the debate can be of the standard that it should be. I hope our request to have the Auditor-General's report made available earlier than in the past so as to give us sufficient time to properly study the Budget and its implications will be attended to without fail so that in future we shall be able to debate the Budget in a manner which is far more enlightening and which befits a measure concerning the financial obligations and future of this State.

Mr. McKEE (Port Pirie): I, like the member who has just resumed his seat, have not had much opportunity to peruse the Auditor-General's report. Some people look to the Budget for some benefit.

Mr. Lawn: They would be optimists, wouldn't they?

Mr. McKEE: I suppose they could be called optimists, but they look to the Budget for something that will benefit them or create full employment. The Budget affects the whole community. I have noticed that members opposite have always been keen to support previous Budgets, but that keenness is not forthcoming on this occasion. I do not know why they are not praising this Budget in their usual fashion. This is the Treasurer's 24th Budget and, to my way of thinking, it is no champion.

Mr. Lawn: It will be his swan song.

Mr. McKEE: He may get another one in. Members have heard the old saying, "His best friend is his smother." I cannot say anything in favour of the Budget. A few days ago I was speaking to a New Australian who had lost his business because of the trade practices indulged in by big monopoly firms that have

gobbled up small businesses. During the conversation I said, "How is business, George?" He said, "No good. I am no more in the business." I said, "What happened to you?" He said, "You know, when I first came here, I came with the intention of making my fortune but I did not make my salt." I said, "What do you put that down to?" He said, "The reason of my failure was Sir Thomas Playford's fault."

Members interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. McKEE: I shall now refer to my local problems—and I have many. One matter that has caused me much concern is the unemployment that exists at Port Pirie now. The position has always been bad for youths but, since the uranium treatment plant was closed, it has become steadily worse; in the area now about 200 are registered for employment. On Monday night a married man with six children called to see me and told me he had not worked since March. I have received letters from many people who have pleaded with me to help them obtain employment. I have done everything I can and have referred the matter to the Treasurer but, after reading the Budget, I am afraid there is nothing he can do because there is nothing in the Budget to provide work for these people.

Mr. Harding: There is work in the South-East.

Mr. McKEE: But these men are married. The Treasurer told me that the Engineering and Water Supply Department was considering a big job in the Poldo Basin, but a married man cannot be expected to go all the way from Port Pirie to Port Lincoln, which is 350 miles away.

Mr. Lawn: You don't know the Liberal Party! They expect the worker to do anything they want.

Mr. McKEE: I agree. How could a man with a wife and six children, and receiving only the basic wage, keep two homes going? People who leave their homes to work elsewhere see their children only two or three times a year, and that is not good. Their absence causes unrest and domestic strife, and sometimes deserted wives become an obligation on the Commonwealth and the State.

Mr. Corcoran: The family needs discipline.

Mr. McKEE: Yes, a young family needs the discipline and guidance of a father. I do not think the Government should direct these people to live away from their families. Unless something happens—it must be nothing short of a miracle, and it must happen quickly—I cannot see how the position in Port Pirie can

improve. The silos have been completed. The mechanization to be introduced will no doubt affect the waterside workers, the labour strength. It did at Wallaroo and there is no reason why it should not at Port Pirie. The following statement appears in today's *News*:

South Australian industrialists should heed the call made on them by the president of the S.A. Metal Industries Association, Mr. H. Skellon, to employ the maximum number of apprentices next year. Mr. Skellon emphasizes rightly that industry cannot afford to neglect this reservoir of skilled tradesmen. It is in its long-term interests to foster them. At the same time, the Minister for Labor, Mr. McMahon, urges employers to co-operate with his department in finding jobs for the 75,000 children who will leave school at the end of this year.

Unless we can do something for those people already out of work, 75,000 children will add to the pool. This position should be watched closely by everybody responsible for the welfare of these young people.

I should like briefly to refer to the wharf reconstruction work at Port Pirie. The Treasurer indicated that standardization would proceed even if he had to "go it alone". No provision is being made in the re-laying of the railway line for standardization when it eventually comes, so I feel that it is a long way off. It would be common sense to provide for it now. All this area is being sealed with bitumen and, if sleepers are being put down capable of taking only a narrow gauge line instead of the 8-ft. sleepers being laid, which I understand are required for the broad gauge, by placing one line in position when standardization does come it will be necessary only to take up the track in one place and move one rail out; but if the present work is continued, when standardization comes the whole lot will have to come up, all these sleepers will have to be uprooted and that will mean extra cost to the Government. So the present plan is very short-sighted. During the Senate debate on gauge standardization, Senator Paltridge said that the Premier of South Australia desired the Chowilla dam in preference to standardization. I know that the Treasurer has said that the dam is very important. We have neither standardization nor dam at the moment, so I do not know where we are going. The position does not look very bright there.

I am concerned that we are not retaining our young people in Port Pirie. It is not a good thing for any community to lose its young people. A major cause of this is the lack of Leaving Honours

classes there. If Leaving Honours classes were provided at Port Pirie, it would mean that the children could and would stay and finish their education there; but, when they come to the city, most of them do not return. Another reason why they cannot return to Port Pirie is that there is no employment there for them. The position there needs investigating. The town needs an industry to absorb these young people and to keep families together.

Another unsatisfactory feature about Port Pirie is the vacant Housing Trust houses. The only way in which the trust can let those houses is for somebody in the city with a large family who is unable to get a house in the city to go to Port Pirie. The trust sends him to Port Pirie. In one case, a man with six children went there. There is no employment available there, and I see no earthly reason why people should be sent to a place that has no employment opportunities. The trust should consider the lack of employment there before sending people to Port Pirie. This man to whom I have just referred is going to work in Adelaide and travel back and forth to and from Port Pirie at the weekends. I have a letter here that I received from the Minister of Railways (Hon. N. L. Jude) regarding the poor drinking facilities at various points of the railway buildings at Port Pirie. The letter reads:

My colleague, the Minister of Railways, informs me that drinking water facilities are not provided at Ellen Street, Port Pirie, for the public. It is considered that circumstances at this station do not warrant such provision.

Drinking facilities are not provided even for the railway employees. The Minister went on to say in his letter that the employees preferred, apparently, to purchase soft drinks from private sources of supply. I do not think that is a satisfactory arrangement, and I should like the Minister of Railways to reconsider this matter.

Mr. Hutchens: If a tap is not available, they have to buy drinks.

Mr. McKEE: I understand that the employees have to go to the toilet and drink water from over the handbasin. The Minister says that in some cases a water bag is provided. If water bags were provided in some offices, those working in the offices might realize that the position was not good, particularly in a hot climate like Port Pirie's. Sometimes the water in the water bags reaches 110 degrees. I can see nothing in the Budget likely to relieve unemployment at Port Pirie, so I

ask the Treasurer if he will consider these points that I have raised. I hope that something can be done soon to relieve the unpleasant situation obtaining there today.

Mr. RYAN (Port Adelaide): I had no intention of speaking at the outset, but one of the reasons prompting me to say a few words now is the answers given today regarding the Auditor-General's report. Yesterday my colleague the member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) objected to the fact that the Auditor-General's report was available in only very limited quantities. He raised his objection on behalf of each and every member of the Opposition. When I asked the Treasurer how certain other people could obtain a copy of the Auditor-General's report, he immediately referred the question to the Speaker and told me that the responsibility for tabling that important document was in the hands of the Speaker. However, when I asked the Speaker whether he was responsible for people outside Parliament receiving that document when it was not available to members, and how they received it, I received no answer.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: You realize it is a single document put on the table?

Mr. RYAN: It was made available to people outside the Chamber.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: That has been the practice in the past.

Mr. RYAN: It has not been the practice in the past: it has been introduced by this Government. Recently a regulation was tabled in Parliament and immediately that was done I went to the table to get the only copy available to members, but I was told that it was in the hands of the press and I would get it when the reporters were finished with it. If that is the way the Government wishes to run the business of this State, the Opposition should expose what the Government is doing.

Mr. Shannon: What has happened to the Leader of the Opposition's copy?

Mr. RYAN: I agree that some members on this side could read that document but I cannot say the same for some members on the other side. *Hansard* has recorded (and I believe it to be true) that during the debate on Loan Estimates the Leader asked the Treasurer, because this would be a record Budget for this State and because the revenues and expenditures dealt with in the Budget were to be the subject matter of a report by the Auditor-General, whether that report would be made available to members prior to the discussion on the Budget.

Mr. Jennings: We were promised that it would be available before the Budget debate.

Mr. RYAN: We were given an election promise by the Treasurer that it would be available, but that statement apparently went in one ear and out of the other. We did not get a copy. However, we had the spectacle of five Ministers with a copy of the report in this Chamber yesterday. The Government has only 19 members, but they had five copies between them as against one copy that was made available for 19 Opposition members. After the House adjourned I returned to the Chamber last night hoping that I might be one of the lucky ones who could see a copy of the Auditor-General's report, but not one copy remained in the Chamber half an hour after the House had adjourned.

Mr. Quirke: They had beaten you to it! You were too late!

Mr. RYAN: And the people least entitled to them were the people who had some of the copies. Thinking that someone may have taken the copies out and then realized that they might be caught up with, and had brought them back again, I searched the Chamber at 10.15 this morning in an attempt to obtain a copy of this, one of the most important documents ever tabled here. I could see one copy here.

Mr. Bockelberg: You said there was none a while ago.

Mr. RYAN: Have you just woken up? I said that I came here last night and there was no copy available, but one copy was available this morning. That copy was on the desk of the Minister of Agriculture and I did not want to be accused of stealing a document belonging to that Minister so I left it there. The amazing point is that this criticism was voiced yesterday and today each and every member has a copy of this document. However, the objection that I, together with the member for Adelaide, raised, is that had the Budget debate concluded last night we would have received this most important document 24 hours after the debate was completed.

Mr. Hall: What did you want it for if you are now going to ignore it?

Mr. RYAN: I am not going to ignore it.

Mr. Hall: You have not dealt with it yet!

Mr. RYAN: If I had been given the document in sufficient time I would have studied it and would have been able to give a considered answer on it. After the Treasurer had passed the buck on this important document and referred it back to the Speaker, the Speaker said that he did not know what had happened to the Auditor-General's report from

the time it left his office until it arrived in this Chamber. Section 39 of the Audit Act provides:

The Auditor-General shall, within 14 days after making and signing the said report, if Parliament is in session and actually sitting, transmit to the President of the Legislative Council and to the Speaker of the House of Assembly duplicates of the said statements accompanied by such report and appendices, and the President and the Speaker shall forthwith lay the same before their respective Houses.

If the insinuation was that something had happened to the Auditor-General's report after it left the Auditor-General's office and before the printed copy arrived here that is not in accordance with the provisions of the Act and it is up to members to see that the legislation for which they are responsible is observed in its entirety.

What was the spectacle that we observed? In this morning's *Advertiser* we saw a lengthy report dealing with certain aspects of the Auditor-General's report. That statement was not written as a result of a casual glance at the report. I had to read in the newspaper this morning of something members had the right to peruse and discuss during this debate. We have reached the stage where we have for too long seen the system of democracy slowly whittled away by people who consider that they are in an unbeatable position and therefore could not care less what the future holds.

Mr. Jennings: They should know better now!

Mr. RYAN: Yes, and I only hope that they give the electors of this State the right to decide for themselves which Party will govern this State. I believe that the Opposition will be able to give an absolute assurance that democracy will be the essence of any legislation introduced by it. A copy of the Auditor-General's report was delivered to me about an hour ago. It is in small print and contains 326 pages, yet the member for Gouger expects me to refer to its contents in detail. Whenever we have a Budget surplus the Government claims that it is a marvellous achievement. I agree that anyone who can balance his budget is doing a mighty job, but I cannot fathom the psychology of a Government which says, when things are bad, "We have done a wonderful job in balancing our Budget", and a year later, when things are equally bad, says, "What a wonderful thing we are doing. We have budgeted for a deficit." Those who control our State's finances should expend money in

accordance with the needs of the time. If it is necessary to budget for a deficit it is good government to do so. Prior to the 1961 election for the Commonwealth Parliament, the two major Parties announced their policies. One Party said that the Budget should be balanced; the other that there should be a budgeting for a deficit. Unfortunately for the people of South Australia the Party they elected planned for a balanced Budget, but within six months it adopted the Labor Party's policy of budgeting for a deficit.

We must all agree that the balancing of the Budget last year did not benefit the average citizen. What advantage was it to the man who was out of work, and on the dole, to read in the press that the State's Budget had been balanced? Would not it have been better for him to have read that the State had provided for a big deficit in order to re-employ those men who were out of work? If last year the Government could balance its Budget, when many were unemployed, the financial position should be much better now that the volume of employment has been increased, but last year we had a balanced Budget and now the Government is budgeting for a deficit. I am not opposed to a deficit provided it is expressly aimed at providing employment for people. The Treasurer must admit that the Opposition's proposals when last year's Budget was introduced were correct, because he has adopted them now. Why were they wrong last year? Once again the Treasurer has performed a complete somersault. The main object of those administering the State's finances should be to encourage expenditure to the benefit of the State's citizens.

We hear much of the assistance that this Government grants to industries, but an examination of page 31 of the Auditor-General's report does not support the Government's claims. In 1960-61 the amount guaranteed by the Government for assisting industry was £1,832,300, but last financial year it was increased by approximately £50,000 to £1,882,000. During the last 12 months, when industry urgently wanted financial assistance to enable it to carry on its normal functions and to retain its employees, the amount provided was only about £50,000 more than in the previous year. The Auditor-General's report states:

Guarantees completely released totalled £906,400 and reductions in terms of the various agreements, £54,700.

We are frequently told of the help the Government gives to industry, but the claims are

not supported by the figures supplied by the Auditor-General. I agree that the Government does guarantee some financial assistance to industry, but the amount guaranteed has remained virtually static instead of increasing. The Government's assistance is verbal: it hopes that industry will establish itself.

We are often told that the Government represents the country: indeed, one would imagine that the Labor Party did not represent the country at all. It is amazing that the Country Secondary Industries Fund has remained at £88,200. Last financial year the Government did not assist the establishment of one country secondary industry from that fund. Some members opposite may suggest that we must be careful in granting assistance to industry lest our money is whittled away, but, according to the Auditor-General, since the introduction of assistance to industry, the losses sustained total £25,100 and represent three-fifths of one per cent of the guarantees and loans made. That is positive proof that the money has been used to the best advantage. The losses could be written off as negligible. My criticism is that if we are to attract the industries we are told can be attracted to South Australia the Government assistance should be greater than it is. The Auditor-General is an unbiased officer, and his report should give us a true picture of the State's finances, but we cannot get that picture at such short notice. It has been said that in South Australia employment is increasing, and a rosy picture is painted, but according to the Auditor-General's report in 3,135 cases payments were made to necessitous persons, as against 2,733 in the previous year, by the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board. There has been an increase of about 400 in the people assisted. This assistance does not cover all who applied for it, and people who should be assisted. I believe that today writs were issued for the Council by-election on October 20. Once again we have a press pre-election campaign in support of the Government. The Auditor-General gives us a different picture. It is apparent from his report that there will soon be considerable increases in water charges, but we can be sure that no statement about increased charges will be made before October 20. If a statement is made there will be repercussions amongst the electors when they cast their vote that day. When I entered this place my first speech dealt with automation in industry.

Mr. Lawn: I think you referred to the Jervois bridge.

Mr. RYAN: I wonder whether there is any mention of the bridge in the Auditor-General's report. We have waited seven long weary years, but we have had no definite reply on the matter. People wonder why the Opposition asks for the establishment of a public accounts committee. If there were such a committee one of its first queries would be why there has been no decision by the Public Works Committee after seven long years. I agree with automation in industry up to a point, but unfortunately its effects have been ignored in the main by those who have installed it. Four years ago I said that unless automation was controlled properly by those in authority there would be a detrimental effect on both employers and employees. We have reached the stage where my predictions are coming true. We have a reference to it in the report of the Auditor-General, but it is not expressly stated. Dealing with the Harbors Board the Auditor-General said that a significant feature of the board's operations during 1961-62 was that the surplus for the year of £199,000 was £173,000 lower than for the previous year. When I spoke about automation I said that the Government was supplying it so that private industry could get the benefit of extremely cheap work, and that this should be reflected in the price of the products. If the Government made a reasonable charge for the implementation of the system it should be passed on to the purchasers of the products, but the automation created by the Government has assisted the Broken Hill Proprietary Company in its operations in this State. However, there has been no reduction in the price of its products.

We now have in automation what I predicted more than three years ago. I said at that time that ships unloading steel at Port Adelaide and taking back to Newcastle full loads of scrap steel were in port for three or four weeks. Now, with automation, the time in port has been reduced to three days. On that occasion four years ago I produced facts and figures on the loss of revenue to the State, and those facts and figures are now reflected in the comments of the Auditor-General. While the same number of ships is coming into Port Adelaide, the Harbors Board's revenue is becoming less and less as a result of those ships staying in port for a shorter period.

Whilst automation may be good, it is like hire-purchase: it has to be controlled. I charge this Government with having provided the

means for automation without taking one step to control it. We cannot pass this matter over lightly and say that these things will iron themselves out in the future. We will reach the stage where we will seriously regret that we did not take the initiative and make the necessary provisions to control something that could get out of hand.

Mr. Quirke: Have you any suggestions to make about how automation could be controlled?

Mr. RYAN: Some provision must be made for the people who will be displaced, and it is not being done.

Mr. Quirke: Can you suggest some appropriate provision?

Mr. Riches: A very good suggestion has come from the Port Pirie Trades and Labor Council.

Mr. RYAN: Yes. A shorter working week is one answer. The member for Burra (Mr. Quirke), as a businessman, knows that if automation comes about men will be put out of industry, and it will be impracticable to absorb them in other industries because those other industries will be introducing automation also and they in turn will be dispensing with labour. The honourable member knows that the men working in industry are the consumers of goods produced in this State. He is engaged in an industry, about 90 per cent of the production of which is consumed by people engaged in industry, and if those people do not have the necessary money to buy that product his company will not last for very long. Nor is his an isolated case.

Mr. Quirke: I agree with every word you have said, but you still have not suggested what provision could be made.

Mr. RYAN: The honourable member is now a member of the Government Party. What effort has he made to control automation?

Mr. Quirke: Perhaps I will tell you about it when you sit down.

Mr. RYAN: I hope the honourable member does not tell me that it is the Douglas Credit system; if that is his answer, he will be expelled from the Liberal Party, which will not have a bar of that.

Mr. Riches: The Port Pirie Trades and Labor Council has established a fund to which employers contribute.

Mr. RYAN: That is true. I know that the product of one company is being manufactured at a far cheaper cost than if manual labour were employed. The Broken Hill Proprietary Company is saving thousands of man hours in the shipping of its steel products into this

State and the export of steel from this State, but can anyone show me where there has been any noticeable reduction in the cost of the finished article? Yet the saving in cost over the last 12 months has been considerable. At the same time we find that the Harbors Board is losing revenue as a result of the introduction of automation. This is a matter that has to be tackled. Only last week I attended a conference in Sydney at which the future of automation was viewed with the utmost concern by the trade union movement. Although I cannot divulge any further information at this stage, I know that some big and important conferences are to take place soon in order to determine what safeguards can be taken and what can be done for those employees who will be displaced. It will not merely be a matter of displacing the worker, either; if we dispense with workers in industry as a result of automation, those up the rung will also be affected—the white collar workers, the administrative workers, and the managerial workers in industry will all suffer as a consequence. Whereas those people are now shutting their eyes to this important problem, they in turn might be caught in the net, and they will be the first to come out and ask why something had not been done about the matter.

According to the Auditor-General's report, the revenue from wharfage has fallen, and I do not think we need to be mathematicians to see why. Even an ordinary broken-down politician does not have to be told twice that if the revenue from wharfage is based on the tonnage of shipping in the ports each day, this revenue must decrease considerably. Whenever there is a strike we are told by the press that such and such a ship has lost £500 a day as a result of the strike. If a ship stays in port for only three days, instead of the much longer time that it did previously, it is only natural that this Government's revenue from wharfage will drop. I know that people say that we must have a quicker turn-round of ships and a quicker movement of commodities, and I do not dispute that. However, if this Government is to supply the means of increasing the profits of the companies concerned through reducing their costs of production, it should participate in the benefits of that reduction. So far as I can see, the Government has made no effort to claim any recompense for having supplied these companies with the means of automation.

While the Auditor-General is a very efficient and experienced officer and an expert on many subjects, naturally he cannot possess an expert

knowledge of the internal workings of any particular industry, and no doubt it is for that reason that he has not offered any comment on why the reduction in the Harbors Board's revenue has taken place. If it was brought to his notice that the Government was being adversely affected financially as a result of having supplied industry with the means of automation, I think his report would state his opinion on the subject.

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

Mr. RYAN: Often private enterprise is criticized for exploiting people in the services it provides. On reading the Auditor-General's report in relation to the Railways Department, one would believe that it was an annual report of a private company. Suburban and country passenger journeys last year were the lowest for more than 40 years, yet the earnings of £13,992,000 were £50,000 more than in the previous year. Is not that like private enterprise? I think it is the obligation of a Government to supply necessary facilities to the public at the lowest possible rate so that they are within reach of the people who need them. Some time ago, when there was a steep rise in railway fares, it was pointed out that although the increase might be instrumental in gaining further revenue it would have the adverse effect of driving customers away from the railways. That prediction has been substantiated by the Auditor-General's report.

Many services provided by the Railways Department leave much to be desired. About 18 months ago I, and, I think, the member for Burnside, the member for Port Pirie, and the member for Stuart, on numerous occasions brought before the Government's notice the poor facilities provided by this Government in linking up one of the best passenger services in Australia with one of the worst. I am referring to the service between Adelaide and Port Pirie, which connects with the transcontinental line from Port Pirie to Kalgoorlie. My experience in this matter is the same as the experience of others and, amazing as it is, it is the experience of the member for Burnside. In the summer this train is air-conditioned in reverse. When one steps into the Transcontinental at Port Pirie one steps from a hot box into an air-conditioned train. One must hear criticism levelled against the South Australian Government over the facilities provided to realize the discomfort of that journey. I raised this matter about 18 months ago; the member for Burnside also

raised it, but it is apparent that the criticism fell on deaf ears.

Mr. Clark: Have you ever tried to convince the Railways Department of anything?

Mr. RYAN: It is a Government department, and the will of Parliament should convince it. Is that not what Government departments are for? Is not Parliament here to express the will of the people?

Mr. Clark: You can express it all you want, but it will not make any difference.

Mr. RYAN: Then the fault is with the Railways Department. Apart from the Railways Commissioner, there is also a Minister of Railways.

Mr. McKee: Imagine a city station being without facilities for people to have a drink of water!

Mr. RYAN: But who would want the water? Would anyone want to drink boiling water? This criticism was made some time ago in the hope that the service provided by the Government would at least be slightly improved. I know that it would be extremely hard and costly to bring the Port Pirie service up to the standard of the service with which it connects but, when one steps from something extremely good into something extremely bad, the difference is most noticeable. The criticism of the public should be noted by the Government. How long does it take to consider these things? It has taken seven years to consider the Jervois bridge, but that should be the exception. We will not get it this financial year, so it will be at least eight years.

Mr. Fred Walsh: What about the Blanchetown bridge?

Mr. RYAN: Did anyone voice an opinion on that?

Mr. Fred Walsh: Of course they did!

Mr. RYAN: That is unfortunate for them.

Mr. Harding: What about the other end of the line, between Kalgoorlie and Perth?

Mrs. Steele: It is good.

Mr. RYAN: I travelled on it 18 months ago, and, if a new train has not been provided, it should be. The member for Victoria (Mr. Harding) fails to realize that we are not able to criticize something under the control of another Government. If we had control over the Kalgoorlie to Perth railway we would be entitled to criticize it. Four years ago the Hawke Government provided on the Estimates for a new train from Kalgoorlie to Perth, but this has not been proceeded with by the new Government. This was on electioneering hoardings during the recent elections in Western Australia.

Mr. Shannon: We have changed our policy! We are now criticizing other railways. I thought the honourable member was not going to do that.

Mr. RYAN: It really hurts when we offer direct criticism that is justified and warranted. Apparently the member for Onkaparinga does not go much farther than Bridgewater! My criticism of the Railways Department amounts to this: if it wants to increase its revenue and the number of passengers using the railways, there is no better time than the present for it to take steps to those ends.

One of the greatest problems confronting motorists is finding parking space in the city of Adelaide. If a decent rail service were offered to the public, they would use it. It is noticeable that the States of Victoria and New South Wales provide a suburban rail service and people in those States living some distance from their local stations are provided with decent parking facilities there. Therefore, they can travel from their homes to the station by car, park their cars, and use the suburban rail service into the city. The Railways Departments in those States make a special point of encouraging motorists, who drive to the suburban stations by car, to use the parking facilities at the stations.

Mr. Hall: How do you come to work every day?

Mr. RYAN: By railway, quite often.

Mr. Hall: Why not by car?

Mr. RYAN: Because the parking facilities, even to members of Parliament, are not what they should be.

Mr. Hall: How often do you come by train, as a percentage?

Mr. RYAN: One hundred per cent more than you do.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Port Adelaide.

Mr. RYAN: The railway is there as a service to the public. It should be used as a service but we should offer the best service possible and try to attract people able to use it. It is well known (I have checked on this from an authoritative source) that travel by rail between Melbourne and Sydney on the interstate line was very poor indeed until recently. Now, because of the standardization of the line between those two cities—which we in this State have not got and about which, if we had had decent representation in the Senate, we at least would have had an expression of opinion—when the Southern Aurora was introduced on the run between Melbourne and Sydney, people were turned away because the rail-

way could not cater for those wanting to use that service. It is a good service. The conditions under which people travel on that line are the best possible. I point that out to prove that, if a service is poor, no customers and little revenue are attracted but, if a really good service is offered, it attracts not only customers but revenue. The Railways Department at present has the ball at its feet. With the great congestion in the city of Adelaide, if it offered some similar service to that operating in other States and tried to attract people to use the railways, even on short journeys from suburban stations to Adelaide, it would ease traffic congestion in the city and build up railway revenue and the number of passengers travelling by rail. But what do we find here?—practically the lowest number of passengers carried on the South Australian railways for 40 years. The hard part is to counteract the fact that over the years the number of people carried on the railways has gradually decreased until last year it was the lowest for 40 years. The Government said, "We are losing patronage so we will push up the fares." That sounds rather like private enterprise's exploitation instead of trying to give the customers the service that is warranted.

I was approached prior to last Easter holidays about the Port Adelaide line. The service provided for the public holidays over the period of Easter was one train an hour—and the Railways Department says it is trying to attract customers to the railways! It is only driving them away. Unless something is done, next year we shall read in the Auditor-General's report that the number of passengers carried on the railways this year has been the lowest on record, and then we shall find that the Government must increase the charges to try to cover the loss of revenue caused by a decline in the numbers of the travelling public. The railways are a Government concern, provided at the lowest possible cost for travellers.

Mr. Hutchens: They discontinued the Northfield railway service.

Mr. RYAN: I realize that. I remember the comments in Parliament over that. I was one of those who wrote, in the absence of the member for Enfield, to the Minister of Railways asking him to take up the matter with the Railways Commissioner. I asked for that decision to be reconsidered. I offer criticism now in the hope that the Government will at least do something to protect its own utility. There is no doubt about this in my mind, in the mind of my Party, and in the mind of the public

generally: give us the right to go to the people and these things will be rectified.

Mr. Shannon: Look at the passenger figures in the Auditor-General's report on the railways. That hardly bears out what the honourable member is saying.

Mr. McKee: It is the lowest figure for 40 years.

Mr. RYAN: We offer our criticism in all sincerity for we believe it is warranted. We ask that it be accepted in the spirit in which it is given. If a service to the public can be improved, we are duty-bound to try to improve it for the people of South Australia. I support the first line.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra): I was reminded, when listening to this debate, of the statement in the Bible that no-one by taking thought can increase his stature by one cubit. The interesting thing about the debate is that despite all the talk that has taken place no one can increase by one penny the sum available under this Budget. The sum cannot be increased unless taxes are levied to reap the increase. This Budget has been carefully worked out and it is an endeavour to make the available money spread over as many of the essentials as possible to give all those things the maximum that can be given to them.

Mr. McKee: I suggest that you examine some of your previous speeches on financial matters.

Mr. QUIRKE: I shall have something to say about that before I finish, but I am talking of things as they are and in that case we have a certain amount of money and we cannot increase it by one penny. Even if the Opposition occupied the Government benches it could not supply one penny more than the sum provided in this Budget.

Mr. McKee: In that case we would not be in opposition.

Mr. QUIRKE: No, the Opposition would be the Government and it would be the Opposition's duty to oppose the Budget, but any member in this Chamber who is a realist knows that that much money is available and it cannot be more this year. Therefore, the only criticism that can be offered is that a little too much is provided for this and not quite enough is provided for that.

Mr. McKee: You made suggestions in your previous speeches.

Mr. QUIRKE: Yes, and I may do so again. Honourable members opposite should not adopt the attitude that my views on finance have at all changed.

Mr. Bywaters: We have heard a lot of opposition expressed by Government members against your views.

Mr. QUIRKE: Since I have been on this side of the Chamber I have discovered that members of this Party can express views that are opposed to fellow members' views. That is a recent discovery. My next point deals with the entry of the Auditor-General's report into Parliament. I have been here a long time and have never known the report to be introduced in a different manner. The practice has been for a certain number of copies of the report to come in one day and be distributed amongst the Ministers and the Leader of the Opposition. This is followed by a distribution to all members the following day, and I challenge members opposite to show that the practice has ever been different.

Mr. McKee: We have always complained about it.

Mr. Jennings: And you have, too.

Mr. QUIRKE: Of course I have, but the position is no different now.

Mr. Jennings: That does not make it right.

Mr. QUIRKE: I am not saying that it is right: the report should be here for the Budget debate and the accumulated criticism may bring it to us at that time, but the roaring crescendo of sound that says this cannot be done does not ring true. I believe that if the Auditor-General's report did not reach us until the last minute members opposite could not improve on what they have said.

Mr. Shannon: One member opposite obviously has not read it.

Mr. QUIRKE: I have never known the Auditor-General's report to make a great impact on what is said in this debate.

Mr. Riches: I think I remember the honourable member complaining because he had not received it.

Mr. QUIRKE: I think I did complain, and I am not being inconsistent when I say that I believe the practice adopted this year is similar to that adopted over the years. That position can be corrected without all the hours and hours of talking that have been spent on it. It could be corrected by a brief mention of the matter.

Mr. Loveday: That is the trouble: a brief mention would not have achieved anything.

Mr. QUIRKE: The loud noise that we heard yesterday and today has not resulted in any improvement on the practice that has existed over the years.

Mr. Lawn: We have the assurance of the Speaker about the future.

Mr. QUIRKE: I now wish to deal with a Government instrumentality and events that will have a terrific impact on the State in many directions. I refer to irresponsibility in relation to other people's problems and business transactions and the devastating losses that are occurring because of the action taken at the Metropolitan Abattoirs. Sheep are scheduled to be railed to Victoria with all the consequent losses attached to that action. I do not criticize the workers at the abattoirs for desiring an extra week's sick leave. Probably it is necessary for them to have that extra time, and an investigation might show that it is necessary, because wherever slaughtering takes place there is nearly always a putrefactive germ associated with it.

I remember coming back from the First World War when we travelled in what had been a frozen meat ship engaged in the New Zealand-United Kingdom trade. We were not on that vessel more than a week when orders were issued that any man receiving a scratch on any part of his body, no matter how minute the scratch might be, was to immediately treat that scratch with iodine, otherwise within 24 hours of receiving the scratch it would start to fester. I suffered by losing all the skin on my right hand through an infection, and all that was attributed to the fact that the ship had been engaged in the frozen meat trade and had acquired that germ on and in it, and the germ could not be eradicated. I had plenty of evidence that the germ was still there, because anybody who received the slightest rash had the experience of that rash becoming septic.

An extra week's sick leave may be warranted in the case of the abattoirs employees, but I do not know. Probably an investigation is necessary, but my point is that these employees hold no warrant to victimize, in an effort to gain their point, thousands of people who supply their bread and butter. There is too much of that going on today. Employees are all working overtime and an opportunity is taken to put this ban into operation at a time when the withdrawal of overtime is most damaging. That ban is not damaging to the abattoirs, but it is damaging to the man who is sending sheep down.

Mr. Nankivell: The growers!

Mr. QUIRKE: Yes, the growers.

Mr. McKee: They should not have that right?

Mr. QUIRKE: You could argue that that right could be taken away from them.

Mr. Shannon: We do not advocate that the men's rights should be taken away from them. They have their wages boards.

Mr. QUIRKE: I do not advocate taking anything away from anybody. People in such positions should be just.

Mr. McKee: Have they had justice?

Mr. QUIRKE: I am not discussing whether they have had justice. An injustice to them does not warrant an injustice to innocent people. They have a responsible authority to which they can appeal.

Mr. McKee: They have gone to the responsible authority.

Mr. QUIRKE: There could be an injustice—I don't know—but that injustice is no warrant for a far greater injustice.

Mr. McKee: I am pleased that you recognize that there could be an injustice.

Mr. QUIRKE: I am prepared to accept the decision of a tribunal on such an issue.

Mr. McKee: There must be something wrong for them to take this action.

Mr. QUIRKE: I do not know that that is strictly true either. Every year at this time this type of action is taken. It reveals a lack of appreciation of the rights of others when a miserable advantage is taken of seasonal conditions. The action that is taken does not hurt the Abattoirs Board but the suppliers of animals for slaughter. The losses incurred by the primary producers are out of all proportion—

Mr. McKee: What measures do you propose?

Mr. QUIRKE: Measures can be taken. Tribunals are available.

Mr. Casey: What losses are incurred? Can you give me any figures?

Mr. Nankivell: About 27,000 lambs have been carried over from last week.

Mr. QUIRKE: No-one knows better the impossibility of answering his question than the member for Frome.

Mr. Casey: I can give you the figures—twopence a pound has been lost in the last fortnight on export mutton.

Mr. QUIRKE: Wait a moment: twopence a pound on what quantity? The honourable member knows that the intake into the abattoirs is restricted. The few animals going into the abattoirs can be effectively handled by the workmen, but what about the losses on the train loads of stock going to Victoria? Even if the loss were a farthing a pound, it would be an injustice.

Mr. McKee: The workers are not suffering any injustice! They are not losing anything at all!

Mr. QUIRKE: Again we hear this cry about the worker. Who the devil is the worker? Would the workers have a job without the primary producers?

Mr. McKee: No, they depend on each other, but you want to take rights away from the workers and have it completely your way.

Mr. QUIRKE: Let us play fair. I stand up for the rights of anybody, the same as does the member for Port Pirie, but I want justice. This is not a question of what about the worker. Who is the worker?

Mr. McKee: Whom do you want justice for?

Mr. QUIRKE: Who is the worker? Is the farmer on the land a worker? Does a person have to have hobnailed boots and bowyangs before he can be a worker? Is the nurse in a hospital a worker?

Mr. McKee: Of course.

Mr. QUIRKE: The honourable member, in his capacity as a member, is a worker.

Mr. McKee: This has nothing to do with taking privileges away from workers.

Mr. QUIRKE: No-one is taking a privilege away from anyone.

Mr. McKee: You are taking away their right to strike.

Mr. QUIRKE: I am not. I have not suggested that. They aren't striking! I suppose, in actual fact, that if they do not want overtime they have the right to say so.

Mr. Shannon: It is a typically Communist move.

Mr. QUIRKE: It is the sort of thing a Communist would do at a time like this. I know that the member for Port Pirie is fair-minded, as are all members opposite, on these matters, but do not try to bolster something that everyone knows deep down is a rank injustice to a lot of innocent people.

Mr. Shannon: That is what the public thinks, too.

Mr. QUIRKE: Members opposite have accused me of changing my views on finance. I have not. I intend to quote from *Vital Speeches*, a book from the Parliamentary Library. It contains a speech by John F. Kennedy, the President of the United States of America, which he made at the Yale University. In it he reflects upon a type of thinking similar to what we have in South Australia today. He speaks of illusions. The first

topic relates to the size and shape of government and he states:

The myth is that the Government is big, and bad—and steadily getting bigger and worse. Obviously this myth has some excuse for existence. It is true that in recent history each new administration has spent much more money than its predecessors. Thus President Roosevelt outspent President Hoover and, with allowances for the special case of the Second World War, President Truman outspent President Roosevelt. Just to prove that this was not a partisan matter, President Eisenhower then outspent President Truman by the handsome figure of 182 billion dollars. It is even possible, some think, that this trend may continue.

We have exactly the same position. I shall not reiterate the Auditor-General's comments about the ever-increasing State debt, but my point is that under the existing system we cannot do anything about it. It must continue building up, just as President Kennedy states it is building up in the United States.

Mr. Loveday: That is one of the things that stultifies debate on the subject.

Mr. QUIRKE: Yes, and members are completely frustrated. Because of the present system we have not sufficient money to enable us to do everything that we want to do and that results in frustration. This is an expanding country. Members referred to automation and suggested that the cure was to start reducing the number of hours that men work. That would be a mere bagatelle when compared with the revolutionary ideas that must apply if we are to cope with full automation. I am sure that the existing financial conditions will not cope with automation. We need a completely revolutionized system of finance to cope with it. The Leader of the Opposition wanted to finance by means of a deficit Budget. He was howled down, but one is now necessary, and it will be necessary to have another. It will be inescapable unless we drive the people down by the weight of taxation. The theory is that if we have deficit Budgets there will be inflation, but that has not been proved. It has been said that if we use deflation we shall better the position, but that has not been proved, only the contrary. President Kennedy said:

The Budget, in relation to the great problems of Federal fiscal policy, which are basic to our country in 1962, is not simply irrelevant; it can be actively misleading. And yet there is a mythology that measures all our national soundness or unsoundness on the single simple basis of this same annual administrative budget.

He said that if we succeed in balancing the Budget the world will proclaim that we have

a sound financial position. It is said that if we have to finance deficit Budgets we must have inflation. Members know that that is the story in Australia. It is said that sound finance means a balanced Budget, but a balanced Budget can mean unsound finance in the interests of the people. President Kennedy continued:

If our Federal Budget is to serve not the debate but the country, we must find ways of clarifying this area of discourse. Still in the area of fiscal policy, let me say a word about deficits. The myth persists that Federal deficits create inflation, and Budget surpluses prevent it. Yet sizeable Budget surpluses after the war did not prevent inflation, and persistent deficits for the last several years have not upset our basic price stability. Obviously, deficits are sometimes dangerous—and so are surpluses. But honest assessment plainly requires a more sophisticated view than the old and automatic cliché that deficits automatically bring inflation. Isn't that what I have been saying for years? I do not say anything different today. We are in a country with an upsurge of population and distant horizons to go to, but we shall not do the job demanded whilst hamstrung by the conditions that operate today. President Kennedy also had something to say about confidence. Once a country loses confidence in its future it is in a bad way, and all Governments should aim at maintaining confidence in the condition of things and see that the people have the wherewithal to maintain their confidence. President Kennedy also said:

This is the true issue of confidence. But there is also the false issue, and in its simplest form it is the assertion that any and all unfavourable turns of the speculative wheel—however temporary and however plainly speculative in character—are the result of—and I quote—a lack of confidence in the national administration.

That is not naturally so. He also said:

This, I must tell you, while comforting, is not wholly true. Worse, it obscures the reality which is also simple. The solid ground of mutual confidence is the necessary partnership of Government with all of the sectors of our society in the steady quest for economic progress.

No truer words were ever spoken. He continued:

Corporate plans are not based on a political confidence in Party leaders but on an economic confidence in the nation's ability to invest and produce and consume.

There is a lesson for us. It is a matter always of who leads the Government or who leads the Opposition. The people ask for confidence in a person, and that person has to create confidence in the people. President Kennedy also said:

Business had full confidence in the administration in power in 1929, 1954, 1958 and 1960. But this was not enough to prevent recession

when business lacked full confidence in the economy.

We know what happened in those years. He continued:

What matters is the capacity of the nation as a whole to deal with its economic problems and its opportunities.

The capacity of a nation is its ability to deal with economic problems and opportunities. We have economic problems and great possibilities here but how can we handle them under the present system, irrespective of who occupies the Treasury benches? President Kennedy said also:

The stereotypes I have been discussing distract our attention and divide our efforts. These stereotypes do our nation a disservice not just because they are exhausted and irrelevant, but above all because they are misleading—because they stand in the way of the solution of hard and complicated facts. . . . The real issues of our time are rarely as dramatic as the issues of Calhoun's. The differences today are usually matters of degree. And we cannot understand and attack our contemporary problems in 1962 if we are bound by traditional labels and worn-out slogans of an earlier era.

Members will appreciate that this is 100 per cent true. In Australia, although we can see boundless opportunities ahead, we are still among the aspidistras and the antimacassars. Much of what we have has to be thrown out before we can get the full progress this country demands, and without it we shall not go far. We have made tremendous progress in South Australia. I do not write down anything that has been done in this State and in Australia as a whole, but we have about reached the peak of our possibilities without forcing our people into a millstone of debt. No-one can deny that. If it is not debt, it is heavy taxation. I have made it clear that I have not changed one bit about the way this matter of finance should be handled. The system will not function in the present conditions any more than President Kennedy says about America. We must not stand still. There must be a new approach to these things.

We are discussing a good Budget inside the limits of its capacity, but the capacity is circumscribed by the amount of money available. Members know that the amount of money available is insufficient. I am perfectly certain—and it can be demonstrably proved—that deficit Budgets are capable of giving more to this State. What stops the money being available for the standardization of the railway line from Port Pirie to Broken Hill? Is it because we have not the materials or the men or the will or the capacity to do it? No. Honourable

members know that the lack of money is said to be the only set-back to it. I deny that that is a reason for holding up this work. If money is wanted for the Chowilla dam or for that standardization work, and if the job is physically possible and utterly desirable in the interests of the economy of this country, there should be no difficulty about finding the money for it.

Mr. Corcoran: We would find it if there was a war tomorrow.

Mr. QUIRKE: Of course we would. I remember 1932, when we were battling. Wheat was 4s. 6d. a bag; one bushel of wheat was not worth much more than the bag itself, and the more the farmer produced the more he got into debt. We are getting that way now in our agricultural industries. We have been asked to produce more wheat, and as a result the primary producers have increased production by about 40 per cent, but their increased production at present-day values is not worth what it was in 1951. This is a vicious circle, and I issue the warning that if we had an utterly bad season this year things would be very bad indeed. However, I sincerely hope that this will not come about, and that we shall soon have bountiful rains to correct the position, because nobody wants a repetition of what happened years ago. Nor do I think that that state of affairs can come about again. I entirely disagree with people who say that there is likely to be a repetition of the conditions that operated in 1931 or 1932. However, we can have recessions, and they, too, can be damaging in their influence on a nation. When our primary production falls from £700,000,000 or £800,000,000 to a figure of £300,000,000, our system says that many people who are producing and earning their living subject to the vicissitudes of the weather must suffer as a consequence. That is wrong; it is an ancient code that no longer holds, because as soon as that happens down goes the whole economy of the nation, not through any instrumentality that we have set up but just through the change of the natural conditions over which we have no control.

I will never admit that we have not control over our own destiny, because we provide the wherewithal for people to live. In 1932 we were down, I remember those days, for they are printed indelibly on my mind. What happened in 1939? Wool was 7d. to 10½ a lb. during those years; I think it was 10½d. a lb. when the wool scheme was put into operation, and it was then lifted to 1s. 3d. a lb. in one fell swoop. A person could get more than

that for wool, but that was the minimum price, and that system operated well. With that, other things came into existence. Those schemes worked well, and nobody lost anything by them. Much of the wool was stored here in Australia, and even though it had not been sold the farmer received his money for it. Where did that money come from? I maintain that the possibilities are there. All honourable members know the evidence that I have produced about this change in the economy; it is printed in *Hansard*, page after page, year after year, and I consider that if my ideas about it have not been incorporated entirely in the Australian way of life they are coming closer every year. It is farcical to think that all the advances that have to be made in this country can be made only if we hammer the people down with taxation.

Mr. Hutchens: Wouldn't the social credit system encourage the influx of foreign capital?

Mr. QUIRKE: What does the honourable member want foreign capital for?

Mr. Nankivell: We want to maintain our balances overseas.

Mr. QUIRKE: Is it necessary to go overseas for money for internal use in Australia, such as for rail standardization? If we have to go to the United States to raise a loan there, the only real warrant for so doing is that we want something from America that we are not producing here.

Mr. Loveday: If there was a war tomorrow and we wanted a railway we would immediately proceed to build it.

Mr. QUIRKE: Of course we would. We would probably find then that we would run out of material because so much was being needed for other things. We must adopt an entirely different line of thought. We must get away from this idea that when a Liberal Party cannot do a thing the Labor Party takes over. Every member knows that while we have our present system one Party will not do any better than the other.

Mr. Nankivell: New South Wales got into trouble with overseas borrowing.

Mr. QUIRKE: Yes. One thing that is usually forgotten is that when we borrow money in America the money has to be repaid. There is such a thing as our loan in America being underwritten there; dollars are wanted over there, and the seller wants Australian money here, and as a result \$5,000,000, say, over there becomes the equivalent in Australian money here. No-one takes a bucket of gold from America and brings it out here:

capital comes here in the way I have mentioned. I do not disagree with that procedure, provided we do not go over there to borrow the money, as Queensland wanted to do. Queensland wanted to borrow money from the International Bank in order to build a railway out to Mount Isa. Nothing more stupid than that was ever thought of. The rails are rolled here, the timber for the sleepers is grown here, and the men are here to do the job. What prevents it from being done? Why go to America to borrow money?

Mr. Fred Walsh: The bank did not approve the loan.

Mr. QUIRKE: True; either it did not think the Australian asset was a good one, or else it was wiser than the men who asked for the loan. My ideas about what is necessary to bring about expansion in Australia have not changed one little bit over the years. I sincerely hope that at some time the expression of my ideas will bear fruit, but up to the present I have been a voice crying in the wilderness. I support the first line.

Mr. FRED WALSH (West Torrens): I wish to take advantage of this debate to comment on an answer given by the Treasurer this afternoon to a question I asked the week before last. The Treasurer read a reply from the Police Commissioner, who more or less ridiculed the allegations I had made regarding trivial charges. Information about trivial charges to which I referred was given to me by a police officer, but I suggest that the Commissioner should not attempt to find out who the officer is because, if he does, he will find that every member of my Party will do everything possible to prevent him from doing this and discriminating against the officer. When this matter was reported in the *Advertiser* on the morning after I asked the question, a responsible officer, who is a member of the Police Association of South Australia, telephoned me and told me that I was on the right track. He said that not only he but many officers were in accord with the views I had expressed.

Although the Commissioner ridiculed the allegations, he did not attempt to ridicule what was said about the trivial charge laid against the boy I mentioned for having a puppy on the beach. This boy was fined, and a police officer went to his home on a Sunday afternoon to arrest him. I suggest that the Commissioner study this case. I complained to him and to the Deputy Commissioner in March about the behaviour of patrons of a dance at the Henley Beach Town Hall. I

ask the Treasurer to note the letter that I sent to the Deputy Commissioner of Police, in which I said:

On several occasions in recent weeks, I have received complaints from residents in the vicinity of the Henley Beach Town Hall at the behaviour of patrons of a dance conducted on Saturday nights in the town hall. The behaviour complained of takes the form of drinking adjacent to the hall, mostly by teenagers of both sexes, some of the girls being only 15 or 16 years of age. The noise and their language are most objectionable to the people living in North Street, several of whom are ill, some seriously, and on Saturday nights from 9 p.m. till midnight there is no peace for them, which is aggravated by the unnecessary revving of motor cars. One frequent offender is a car with a Victorian number plate GFR-555, a Ford Zephyr. You will recall that I previously spoke to you by 'phone about this matter and I am advised that police attended there for a period the following Saturday night, and I understand one person was arrested for drunkenness. As far as I am able to ascertain, there has not been any police attendance since, but I am not suggesting this to be the actual position. I would respectfully ask that these complaints receive your early attention in the hope that they can be corrected.

I received a letter dated March 14 from the Police Commissioner as follows:

Your letter of March 13, addressed to the Deputy Commissioner (who is in hospital following an operation on his knee), has been referred to me. The matter of the behaviour of teenagers at the Henley Beach Town Hall will receive immediate attention. I must point out, however, that the police have been severely criticized in some quarters for "moving on" noisy and objectionable youths, but I am sure that the force can rely on your support in cases where they are genuinely endeavouring to carry out their duties.

I was told by the people who complained that nothing at all had been done. Only last week I was advised that this went on for a considerable time after the complaint was made, and it stopped recently only because of an open brawl in the street. As a result, although I am not sure whether the dance has been stopped, the behaviour has ceased. This behaviour continued from March onwards, however. I am not complaining about the whole Police Force, but I am complaining about some of the people who we are often told are doing so much to protect residents who pay their rates and taxes. I want it to be clearly understood that, if any action is taken by the Commissioner or any of his officers to try to find out who gave this information to me, they will find the whole of my Party up against them.

I was surprised at the attitude adopted by the member for Torrens (Mr. Coumbe),

compared with his attitude during last year's Budget debate; it was then completely different. Generally he is well worth listening to because he makes a valuable contribution to a debate, apart from the embroidery usually associated with his speeches in his eulogies of the Government, which I suppose we can naturally expect because he is a supporter of the Government. This year he said:

This State Budget is remarkable in several ways. First, it provides for a record expenditure and a record level of receipts. Secondly, it provides for a deficit of about £603,000 compared with an actual surplus last year of £507,000. It also provides, despite an all-time high in expenditure, for no increase in rates and charges for services provided by the Government to the community. . . . After examining the Budget I would call it a "confidence" Budget, because it gives a fillip to recovery and reflects confidence in the future of this State to grow and expand. It is interesting to read what he said last year. He was criticizing most severely statements made by the Leader of the Opposition who, together with other members of the Opposition, suggested that the Treasurer should have brought down a Budget for a deficit instead of the balanced Budget that he produced. I shall not quote all that the member for Torrens said last year, but during his speech, referring to the Leader of the Opposition, he said:

His was certainly the speech of one crying in the wilderness, and the farther he went the more he became lost. Surely anyone knowing anything about sound finance and good housekeeping must agree that the Budget has been balanced. It has not been balanced for some years because of the financial position of the State. From a sound business point of view the Treasurer of any State has an obligation to try to balance his Budget, and that has been done this time by our Treasurer, yet the Leader of the Opposition criticized him for doing it. In fact, he advocated a Budget with a deficit. I suggest that he would have been the first to complain if Loan expenditure had been reduced in order to make up a deficit.

Mr. Millhouse, by interjection, suggested that the Leader did not understand the matter, and the member for Torrens said:

Yes. The Leader cannot have it both ways. If we increase in one direction we must cut in another. The Budget provides for an expansion in almost every Government department. Practically all departmental votes have been increased.

Perhaps Mr. Millhouse will explain how he understands the matter this year, how we have a deficit this year. Perhaps he can explain how it was that the Commonwealth Government tried to balance its Budget last year and has since given us two Budgets with

heavy deficits. We on this side subscribed to the deficit last year and we subscribe to it this year. The Opposition in the Commonwealth Parliament strongly advocated it last year, and it did this year, also. We believe in this. We believe that in times such as the present it is absolutely necessary, but we believe that this money that has been budgeted for should be spent this year and not be just budgeted for and not spent, although the member for Torrens (Mr. Coumbe) himself referred to the fact that it was in excess of the previous year.

Last year only four departments out of the 14 actually spent more than was voted for them. The other 10 did not spend the amount of money voted for them—some spent considerably less. In my opinion, in view of the times we went through, that should and would have provided considerably more employment, particularly when the Government was saying it did not have the money. Surely when it voted the money it had it. I know one cannot just pluck it off a tree—I am not silly enough to imagine that—but, when the Government votes money here in Parliament, it can see the possibility of obtaining it. When the money had been voted, it should have been spent. I hope that all the money provided in this Budget will be spent by the various departments. I do not mind if it is exceeded in some instances, as it was in some cases last year.

Criticism has been made of the fact that we did not receive the Auditor-General's report in good time. True, it has often been the case that we have not received it at the time the Budget has been submitted to members but the member for Burra (Mr. Quirke) is not entirely correct when he says that we have discussed the Budget without having the Auditor-General's report. We generally get it within a day or so and we all know that the Budget debate has usually continued for the best part of a week. This year, it looks like finishing tonight, which is about the earliest I can recall that we have completed a Budget debate. Be that as it may, the information I have from the Auditor-General's report I have culled from the *Advertiser*. Probably it is condensed more expressly there than one could have condensed it in the time available had one gone through the report itself.

On the question of trivial cases, it is noted in the Auditor-General's report on the Administration of Justice, Law Offices, etc., that in the Adelaide Police Court 5,800 convictions for offences against by-laws of

the Adelaide City Council were recorded, and the police collected £27,700 in fines and costs in 4,600 cases. If there were 5,800 cases in 12 months there must have been many trivial cases included, or I do not understand much about breaches of by-laws. Of this amount, the council received £11,700 and the council's solicitors £16,000. How much of that did the Police Department get?—nil. It means that there should be a re-adjustment there but it does not appear to me that the Police Department should be a sort of collecting agency for the Adelaide City Council. That is one point that the Auditor-General suggests should receive the Government's attention. Just how to overcome that problem is a matter for the Government.

The Housing Trust requires serious attention. The Auditor-General says:

Delays in occupying houses have resulted in losses of income and deterioration which has involved additional payments. A number of houses were sold at prices lower than assessed cost during the year. Contract prices for houses being completed on the old basis of negotiated prices are higher than those under public tender and the trust is equalizing prices to some extent to avoid variations in sale prices in adjoining areas.

The Housing Trust surplus for the year was £263,000, a decrease of £266,000 on the previous year and the lowest since 1955-56. That seems difficult to understand having regard to rising prices, but it could be brought about by the fact that, having to compete with contract people building houses, like Reid Murray, Stokes and the like, and those who are subdividing, the Housing Trust might find it difficult, and that may account for some of the decrease in its surplus for that year. What concerns me most is the losses of income and deterioration that have resulted from delays in the occupation of houses, because there should be some way of overcoming that in view of the knowledge that we all have of people seeking houses who come to us from time to time. We know their difficulties in obtaining houses. I hope the Treasurer will look into these factors with a view to correcting them and seeing whether that anomaly can be overcome in some way.

The employment position seems to be improving but whether it will continue to do so it is difficult at the moment to say. I sincerely hope that conditions will improve. When we study the international position, we are inclined to be a little doubtful especially when we examine the views of people who make it their business to look into these things. I wish to refer to Professor Arndt's opinion on

this subject. Professor Arndt is Professor of Economics in the School of General Studies at the Australian National University. I receive many periodicals and journals from America and I know of the position there, and Professor Arndt's views bear out reports I receive from America. He has said:

The weak recovery of the American economy during the past year seems to have come to a stop and there are fears of another, deeper, recession. The slowing down of business activity in the major Western industrial countries, together with the persistent decline in most world primary product prices and increasing instability in the international payments system, has led responsible overseas commentators to draw ominous parallels between 1962 and 1930. In our own interests, as well as in everyone else's, Australian domestic policies should be directed as far as possible towards counteracting the drift towards depression and stagnation in the free world.

I believe that is good advice. I know that the unemployment position in America has varied little in the past 2½ years. The number of unemployed is still about 5,000,000 to 5,500,000 and despite all the agitation by labour organizations, the Americans have been unable to bring the number below 5,000,000. That is a terrific amount of unemployment and it represents 4 per cent to 4½ per cent of the American work force. If the Americans are unable to do anything about the position that, in turn, will be reflected in Great Britain and that country, too, is facing fairly hard times with unemployment. To some extent that position is having an effect on Europe and it will ultimately reflect itself in Australia. That result is inevitable unless we can develop markets in countries nearer to Australia.

Mr. Loveday: Those unemployment figures would not include part-time workers in the automotive industry.

Mr. FRED WALSH: No, it does not include those people. I do not think there is any doubt that Britain will join the European Common Market, and I believe that our leaders do not for one moment doubt that Britain will join forces with the European Economic Community. Britain will be compelled to do that. She cannot exist as an island in the North Sea and that will be the result if she does not join the E.C.M. Disregarding family ties, where would we be if Britain did not join? Britain would be broken and would not be able to help us. I believe this question goes far deeper than politics: it involves political and military considerations. The United States of America is backing Britain and we cannot turn to the U.S.A. as some

people may desire. The Communist bloc is opposed to the European Common Market. That must prove that the proposal has some value for the Western world, but even those people do not know the effect this arrangement will have on them. We do not know what the effect will be and our leaders should be trying to educate our people as to its possible effects on us. I do not believe it will affect us to the extent that some people imagine.

Mr. Jennings: Mr. Bury was sacked for saying that.

Mr. Shannon: He is still a member of the Liberal and Country Party.

Mr. FRED WALSH: And I believe that he will return to the Ministry some day if the Government is still in office. I believe that this matter will affect our future economic existence. I have studied this question and I have my own views with which many members on this side may not agree. I believe that when the Prime Minister (Mr. Menzies) and some of my Commonwealth colleagues return to Australia they may hold a view similar to mine: that Britain will be compelled by force of circumstances to enter the European Common Market. In that event we shall have to do the best we can for the future of our people. I have pleasure in supporting the first line.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart): I am speaking principally because of recent happenings in my electorate and because of some of the statements made during the course of this debate. The Treasurer's Budget speech when read in conjunction with the Auditor-General's report, seems to presuppose that whilst we are considering a Budget providing for a deficit this financial year no provision is made for any increased charges for water supplies and other services. The Treasurer has been commended for this. However, there is a reference in the Auditor-General's report, mentioned in today's *News*, which indicates that some thought has been given to the possibility of an increase in water charges next year.

We do not know whether the member for Torrens had any reason for his contribution or whether he had any inkling of what the Auditor-General was likely to report on. We do, however, know that the honourable member referred to the Budget as a "confidence" Budget and I note with interest that the 1959 Budget was also a "confidence" Budget according to the member for Torrens. It was so much a "confidence" Budget that the member said that not only did that Budget inspire confidence in the people, but it heralded

an economic revolution. He pictured a great future for South Australia, but something went wrong in the meantime and we have had the experience of men being dismissed and works being held up, not for any reason that he could have foreseen but because of happenings in Canberra which need not have happened, which should not have happened, but which we believe are now being corrected. The honourable member said:

The Treasurer has been able to avoid higher charges, rates and taxes, only by budgeting for a deficit. The alternative was to have higher taxes and some retrenchments. If such action had been contemplated I am sure it would have hardly been likely to promote confidence and expansion in industry and trade. In his report the Auditor-General has drawn Parliament's attention to the situation regarding water services. He points out that interest charges, totalling £2,694,000, absorbed 59 per cent of the total earnings. He said:

... it is inevitable that rising interest charges will necessitate frequent increases in rates if greater deficits are to be avoided.

I hope that the Government will not have recourse to that suggestion. I do not dispute the Auditor-General's figures but many factors must be considered, quite apart from the direct returns from water rating. We must measure the real value to the State of the expenditure on water services. We would have to include the value of whole communities. Whyalla, for instance, could not exist without expenditure on a water service. If the balance sheet were drawn up to include the worth of such communities, the amount of interest the State would have to pay on these water services would be much lower than 59 per cent and it would not be viewed with so much concern. I believe that to encourage industry the present policy must be continued. Two years ago the Auditor-General made a similar report on the Electricity Trust. He considered that the small margin of profit the trust was making was dangerous and he drew attention to what he considered to be a need for readjusting charges. That suggestion was resisted and the State has been well served as a result. Any action to increase electricity charges on that occasion would have been a mistake.

Since the days of Gladstone we have been reminded that finance is government and government is finance. The real controller of Australia's finance, and therefore the controller of the Governments of Australia, is the Commonwealth Parliament. The Treasurer, in introducing this Budget, referred to his keen disappointment that over the last three years South Australia had not had a fair deal in the

disbursement of special grants from the Commonwealth Government. He claimed that it was an unfortunate fact that of a total of £131,000,000, South Australia's share had been £1,300,000, or a bare 1 per cent. That fact is reflected throughout this Budget. We could claim that the sum provided for almost every line is inadequate and that works are being delayed. We know that when approaches are made to the Government about developmental work in various country districts we are told that provision cannot be made this financial year despite the fact that we are budgeting for a deficit, but that if the work can be deferred until the next financial year it may be considered. This failure of the Commonwealth Government to treat South Australia equitably is of concern not only to the area vitally affected by railway standardization but to every part of the State because the Budget has been trimmed in accordance with the Commonwealth Government's policy.

I believe that one of three reasons is responsible for this situation. First, it is not coincidence that the period in which South Australia has not received a fair deal is the period in which we have been a non-claimant State. We should measure the complaint in the Budget with the Treasurer's statement when he returned from a Premiers' Conference and announced that South Australia was no longer a claimant State and that no longer was there a need for us to go to the Commonwealth Government for grants. He pictured a great era of prosperity for this State because we were no longer a mendicant State. His present complaint concerns the deal we have received during that period—the last three years plus our envisaged treatment for 1962-63. True, we are no longer a mendicant State, but we are more mendicant now than we were before, and yet we have no appeal to the Commonwealth Grants Commission at which we can express South Australia's case. An amount of £1,300,000 out of £131,000,000 is so incongruous that such a situation would not have existed were we a claimant State and able to have our case heard by the Commonwealth Grants Commission. Why is it that South Australia cannot get what both Parties here would consider a fair deal? Is it because the State Government cannot present its case fully to the Commonwealth authorities? The officers who presented the claims when we were a claimant State still advise the Treasurer, and I have the utmost faith in the figures they present, although they

are challenged in the Commonwealth Parliament.

In the Commonwealth sphere we have people who are supposed to represent South Australia, but I am prepared to accept the figures supplied by our Treasury officials because I believe that they rate second to none. I do not accept the statement that our case has not been properly presented. Is it because the Commonwealth Government is not receptive and sympathetic? I believe that that is the position, and that South Australian influence in the Commonwealth Parliament is at an all-time low. Our requests are not being considered in the Commonwealth sphere and that is a reflection on our representation in the Commonwealth Parliament. I think that the South Australian influence has been dwindling ever since the last Commonwealth Labor Government was defeated. In those days we had two Cabinet Ministers and for a while that was continued by following Governments. Now we have only about half a Minister. It has slipped from two Cabinet Ministers with important portfolios to one Minister who spends much of his time travelling around Europe looking for girls. It is a reflection on the State, if ever there was one. What can we expect from a Government like that! Our Treasurer is entitled to complain bitterly about the treatment of South Australia, and we join with him in that complaint. The South Australian Minister, if he can be called such, is not prepared to speak in Cabinet for South Australia. He sides with the other people.

Last week in Port Augusta there was celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the turning of the first sod of the Commonwealth East-West railway line. It was an important occasion, and I was reminded of the importance of turning that sod 50 years ago. His Majesty King George V sent a special message from London for the occasion. The United Kingdom Government cabled its congratulations to the Australian Government. It was one of the few occasions when at the one time in a country town there was the Governor-General, the State Governor, the Prime Minister of Australia and the Premier of South Australia. They regarded the occasion as one of importance in the history of Australia, because it linked the transport systems of east and west. They pictured the time when the people of the various States would be drawn closer together and they heralded it as something that would bring federation in spirit, as well as in the legal

sense. I say these things to pay a tribute to the men who blazed the track, who lived in the outback, built the line with sleepers that had to be conveyed on the backs of camels, and made earthworks with teams of horses. That line was constructed in five years. At the reception last week we were told that another line would be built from Kalgoorlie to Perth. We already have a line there, water supplies available and townships established, yet the work will take six years. These are some of the interesting things that come from our reading of the events commemorated last Friday. It was of particular gratification to me to recall that it was a Commonwealth Labor Government that built the line. The Prime Minister at the time was Andrew Fisher.

This year also commemorates establishment of the Commonwealth Bank, which financed the railway work. It was not held up because we could not find the necessary money. I wish the member for Burra were in the Chamber now, because it was a practical illustration of what he has tried to tell us. It does us good to find out how the work was financed in the first place. A Labor Government of 50 years ago showed how it could be done. We had much pride in thinking back on what these men of vision did, and in remembering that they belonged to the organization of which I am proud to be a member. We now have the same platform and policy as they enunciated then. When the Commonwealth Constitution was drawn up it laid down that railway construction should be embarked on in the first 10 years of federation. Not only was there an agreement that this work should be done, but the elder statesmen of that day had the foresight to embody a time factor in the Constitution. We have not had the foresight to do that since. The Commonwealth Government has not honoured any of the agreements that it has entered into with this State in relation to rail construction since that time. It took over the Northern Territory, and it undertook to link Adelaide with Darwin by rail, but that seems to be as far away from fulfilment as it was when the Territory was taken over.

It does not seem to worry anybody in the Commonwealth Parliament that that agreement has not been honoured. How can we talk to other peoples about not standing up to agreements in the councils of world government when we pay such scant attention to the honouring of agreements that affect us so

closely? There came a time when the Commonwealth Labor Party was in office again. The Chifley Government then appointed a Minister for Transport (as distinct from the Minister for Railways) whose job it was to look at the transport systems of Australia, recognizing that in this land of vast spaces and long distances transport would become one of the greatest needs of our people if we were to export our production properly and achieve the destiny that those leaders had in mind for us. With characteristic drive, enthusiasm and foresight, the Hon. Mr. Ward set up a commission headed by Sir Harold Clapp. If he had remained in office just a little longer, Sir Harold would have brought about standardization in Australia. He did, in fact, succeed in getting through both Houses of the Commonwealth Parliament and both Houses of this Parliament an agreement to provide for the standardization of railways in South Australia. However, since that Government was defeated, no consideration has been given to honouring that agreement. Although this State had to take the matter to the High Court, it did not get anywhere.

Then came the time when it was necessary that the railways be modernized, when trends overseas demonstrated that it was no longer necessary to haul water and coal across these great tracts but that dieselization could change a railway system from one running at a loss to one running at a profit. Again, it was a Commonwealth Labor Government that authorized the modernization of the railways and placed the order for locomotives. Here is the irony of it. It placed the order for the diesel locomotives which made that transformation and which stamped the Commonwealth as the foremost railway organization in Australia today, yet the locomotive carries the name of R. G. Menzies. This honour did not arise from his own efforts, but was inherited. We do not see the name of Vic Johnson or any of the Ministers who were responsible for that work.

Mr. McKee: They could have given it the name "Darby Munro".

Mr. RICHES: We put a cyclist's name on it on Friday. At that ceremony, when another locomotive was named after the present Minister for Transport, the Hon. Hubert Opperman, the wish of the lady who named the locomotive was that this engine would drive the first train to travel on the new gauge from Fremantle to Sydney. I hope that that wish may come true. We do not

know how many millions of miles these locomotives can run, but some of them have already run for more than 2,000,000 miles. If South Australia tackles this problem of rail construction and faces up to the need for expedition in the matter of improving our transport services and goes on with the standardization of the Port Pirie to Broken Hill line concurrently with the Western Australian construction, there is no reason why that locomotive should not be in service to take the train from Fremantle right across the Continent on the one gauge. It is important for the people of Australia and for all the people of South Australia that that should be so. I believe that it will be so, and that this line from Port Pirie to Broken Hill will be built. The Government can rest assured that it will have full co-operation from the Opposition in its determination that that shall be done. It is a source of concern to us that this project should have to be financed entirely out of South Australian funds. I cannot believe that that will be so, for I think that the Commonwealth will have to see reason and will have to come to the party.

On that score, I wish to refer to some recent happenings. When the Opposition of South Australia saw that we no longer had any right to appear before the Commonwealth Grants Commission, when we saw the deal that South Australia was getting from the Commonwealth people, when we remembered that Senators Hannaford, Laught and Buttfield went to Port Pirie, Jamestown, Peterborough and Broken Hill and received V.L.P. treatment and promised support for the standard gauge line as a foremost policy and a top priority in their thinking, when they promised a line to Whyalla and a line from Port Pirie to Adelaide, we thought that surely those Senators would stand up in their places and speak a word for South Australia when the occasion arose in the Senate. It was therefore from the Opposition benches that the suggestion came that we ask our South Australian Senators in the Commonwealth Parliament to stand up to what they had told the people in our electorates and speak accordingly in Canberra. The resolution was submitted and carried, but when it went to Canberra it was rejected.

The resolution that went from this State was the unanimous resolution of this Parliament. I think it is perfectly true to say, despite what Senator Paltridge has said on the subject, that the resolution reflected the honest opinion of both sides of the House of Assembly

and the degree of importance that members placed upon this work. This Parliament did not receive the courtesy of a reply from the Senators. The Port Augusta council then passed a resolution asking the Senators to support the resolution which had been passed by the House of Assembly. Although the Assembly received only two or three replies to its resolution, the Port Augusta council received replies from all the Senators. As the Assembly has not had the benefit of the written attitude of the South Australian Senators direct, but merely replies from only one or two, I think I should outline the replies that the Senators sent to the Port Augusta council. Senator Mattner wrote:

I assure the council that I have used every endeavour to persuade the Government that the standardization of the railway gauge between Port Pirie and Broken Hill is an urgent necessity.

When he had an opportunity to do that in the Senate, he said it was a political trick and gave all sorts of reasons for not supporting it. Senator Bishop replied:

All Labor Senators who could speak in support of this proposal strongly supported the immediate allocation of moneys for the work. I assure you that with my senior colleagues every support will be given to the matter of funds for rail standardization.

Senator Cavanagh replied:

In speaking on the Budget prior to the decision of the South Australian House of Assembly, I had condemned the Federal Government for its failure to provide the necessary money for the standardization and particularly made a case out for Port Pirie which in my belief is today feeling the effect of the lack of standardization.

Senator Ridley replied:

As you are no doubt aware, my Party colleagues and myself took what measures we could in the Senate to voice the South Australian House of Assembly viewpoint, and I have no doubt that a similar policy will be adopted when the Budget Estimates are being debated.

Senator Laught replied:

I have, from time to time, clearly indicated that I support the Federal Government Budgetary proposals, and I voted to reject the amendment. I agree entirely that the modification and standardization of rail gauges is of great importance to the development of the State and naturally I appreciate the importance of Commonwealth Railways matters to Port Augusta.

I will confer with the member for Mitcham to see if he can tell me just what that means! Senator Laught says that he supported the Commonwealth Government's Budgetary proposal and voted against the amendment, yet he

is still in favour of the subject matter of the proposal! Senator Buttfield replied:

South Australian Senators did not support the resolution carried by the South Australian House of Assembly requesting us to support an amendment to the Budget concerning rail standardization. This does not, however, mean that we are not sympathetic to rail standardization for South Australia, and we are doing everything in our power to negotiate some satisfactory arrangements for this State.

It would be most interesting to know who she is negotiating with, on whose behalf she is negotiating, and the result of the negotiations. I hope that she can do a much better job than the Minister we have! Senator Hannaford replied:

While I agree that the modernization and standardization of rail gauges is extremely important to South Australia, I, being a Government Senator and realizing that it would be tantamount to an alteration of Government financial policy, could not give the proposal my support, and accordingly I voted against it. That reply calls for a little more comment than the others. He said he realized the importance of the proposal to South Australia. I doubt if anything contained in the Commonwealth Budget is more important to South Australia than rail standardization. He also said that it would be tantamount to an alteration of Government financial policy to accede to the request of the House of Assembly. The amendment was to the motion that the Budget Papers be printed. The Budget has not yet reached the Senate and, regarding his being scared that any alteration to the Budget to provide for a commencement of this work would in any way injure the Budget or embarrass the Commonwealth Government financially, let us remind him that this very week, before the Budget has reached the Senate, we have been told of alterations to it. Subsidies to be granted to oil companies were to be reduced, but that has been altered. The amount this will cost the Commonwealth Government would adequately meet the demands for a commencement of the standardization of this line. So much for their arguments! However, they could not resist the temptation to try to read Party politics into the whole move. I have forgotten the expression used (it is not an expression we usually apply in this State), but they singled out the Treasurer for special personal attack.

Mr. Millhouse: It is not the first time this has happened, even from your side!

Mr. RICHES: But there is a difference. I am grateful to the honourable member for his interjection because I had nearly forgotten to mention that not only did Senator Paltridge

come out with a personal attack, which I think was untrue and unfair, but he was supported by the member for Barker and the member for Wakefield. The Treasurer was also taken to task by the chairman of his own committee in Gumeracha, but I have yet to read a statement from any of his Ministers supporting him. If ever anyone seemed to be alone and deserted by his friends and Ministers, it was the Treasurer on this occasion.

Mr. Millhouse: That is nonsense!

Mr. RICHES: I will withdraw that statement if the honourable member can give one statement made by a Minister, particularly the Minister of Railways, since this controversy arose.

Mr. Millhouse: You know perfectly well it is unnecessary to indicate support.

Mr. RICHES: If our Leader had been attacked, he would have had plenty of support. There is still time in this debate for members opposite to tell me what significance can be attached to the ominous silence.

Mr. Millhouse: Not the faintest scintilla.

Mr. RICHES: I felt a little sympathy for the Treasurer, but evidently it was his own fault. I would not like to be the sole spokesman, but he has been in that position so often. He is left right out on his own when subjected to attack. Senator Paltridge—and this is the kind of attack levelled at the Treasurer—said:

I put it to you, Mr. President and honourable Senators, that in the light of all these factors—the criticism now made by Sir Thomas Playford and the manner in which he has played this political game—Sir Thomas has acted in a way which does not bring any credit to himself and may well contribute very largely to his political destruction.

Mr. Millhouse: Are you applauding that?

Mr. RICHES: No, but I would have expected that someone in the Liberal Party in South Australia would have risen to support the Treasurer in this matter, but the only statements reported in the press have been those made by the representatives of Barker and Wakefield, who supported Senator Paltridge in everything he said.

Mr. Dunstan: We did not support the Treasurer; he supported us.

Mr. RICHES: Senator Paltridge gave the Senate a picture of the scene in the South Australian House of Assembly when this motion was moved. He said:

Picture the scene for yourselves, Mr. President and honourable Senators. Picture the House of Assembly meeting, prayers being said, the Leader of the Opposition rising with a motion already written out, and the Premier

making the most unctuous speech that has ever been delivered in any parliament of this Commonwealth, supporting the Leader of the Opposition by arrangement, and then by special arrangement seeing that this piffle was sent to South Australian Senators by 4 o'clock that afternoon.

Senator Paltridge is not big enough to be able to conceive of a situation in which unanimity could be achieved on a subject of such great importance to so many people. It is obviously a situation with which he has never been associated and of which he is not capable of being a part. This is a reflection on the proceedings of this Chamber which, I think, does not reflect credit on Senator Paltridge and does not in any way answer the case that was presented on behalf of South Australia in the Senate.

Senator Paltridge went on to refer to a dinner held at Port Augusta at which he said the Treasurer was present and made certain remarks about standardization of gauges. I, too, was at that dinner, and I say that the statement of Senator Paltridge about the Treasurer on that occasion is a lie. It is a deliberate misrepresentation and does not give any impression at all of what the Treasurer then said. Then Senator Hannaford comes in supporting Senator Paltridge. Listen to this; this is a gem. Senator Paltridge is quoting Senator Hannaford:

He pointed out that before that committee made its recommendation it went to South Australia for the specific purpose of trying to induce the Premier to see the merit of the standardization of the Port Pirie to Broken Hill line.

Senator Hannaford was coming over to convert Sir Thomas Playford! There was a High Court action to try to make the Commonwealth Government stand up to an agreement that it had entered into. How do Senator Hannaford, Senator Mattner and the others

regard an agreement entered into between the two Governments? I can remember the First World War and the reference to what was called a "scrap of paper". Agreements, either to build a line from Adelaide to Darwin or to standardize the railway gauges in South Australia, seem to have no acceptance with the present Commonwealth Government. That is a serious commentary on the political life of Australia. As a result of the controversy that has arisen over this matter the Commonwealth Government will have to stand behind the State financially on this issue or else face political extinction in this State. Let it be known that the determination to carry into effect the standardization of railway gauges in South Australia is the will of the whole of the South Australian House of Assembly and whoever speaks thus speaks for us all. It is a work of first importance. We are not going to sit down without protest and have that financed entirely out of State funds and have every other work for which this Budget provides held up and delayed, with people going without and services being postponed, because South Australia is not adequately represented in the Commonwealth Government and in places where decisions are made. Other matters that I had intended to raise in connection with my own electorate I shall leave till the individual lines. I support the first line.

First line (Legislative Council, £12,632)—passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

MINING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.49 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, September 20, at 2 p.m.