

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, October 3, 1963.

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

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR.

The **SPEAKER**: I notice in the gallery the Hon. J. D. R. T. Tilney, T.D., member for the Wavertree Division of Liverpool in the House of Commons and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations. I invite the honourable gentleman to take a seat on the floor of the House, and I ask the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition to escort the honourable gentleman to a seat on the right-hand side of the Speaker.

The Hon. Mr. Tilney was escorted by the Hon. Sir Thomas Playford and Mr. Frank Walsh to a seat on the floor of the House.

QUESTIONS.**FREEWAYS.**

Mr. **FRANK WALSH**: As my question involves Government expenditure, it is addressed to the Premier, although it involves the Minister of Roads. In the daily press this week reports have appeared about the Government's intention to construct freeways. Will the Premier indicate whether the freeways mentioned in these reports are those recommended in the Town Planning Committee's report; whether the Government intends to acquire land; and, if it does, whether such acquisition will be at Land Board valuations?

The Hon. Sir **THOMAS PLAYFORD**: The Highways Commissioner's report was tabled this week. I am not sure whether it is on members' files but if, after looking at it, the Leader lets me know what supplementary information he wants, I will see that it is supplied to him immediately.

Mr. **HUTCHENS**: Just before the House assembled, I received a telephone call from one of my constituents who explained that he had been negotiating a sale of his property. The sale had so progressed that a deposit had been paid and he, in turn, had made a purchase of further property in order that he might carry on his manufacturing when the deal was finalized. He said that the Highways Department had intervened and said that the sale could not proceed as the area was in the way of a proposed freeway. I do not expect the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Roads, to give me an answer on that now, but will he inquire of the Minister of

Roads and tell me what the procedure is in regard to this type of transaction? My first intention was to take this up as an individual case with the Minister but, after further consideration, I believe it to be a question of public interest as many people will be involved in similar transactions, so will the Minister make the inquiry and report to the House at a later date?

The Hon. G. G. **PEARSON**: Yes.

THEVENARD BOAT HAVEN.

Mr. **BOCKELBERG**: I understand that an officer of the Harbors Board has recently visited Thevenard and has been, shall I say, "spying out" the land with a view to constructing a boat haven there. He also approached the District Council of Murat Bay regarding a road to the nearest site where he could get suitable rock. Can the Minister of Marine say whether the Government intends building a boat haven at Thevenard?

The Hon. G. G. **PEARSON**: It is correct that an officer of the Harbors Board recently visited Thevenard, and one of the objects of his visit was to investigate the possibilities of a fishing haven. The honourable member will be aware that some time ago this matter was raised and an inquiry was made, but the project was left in abeyance for the time being. The officer got back, I think, the day before yesterday and he has not yet furnished a report on his visit, so that the General Manager yesterday had not seen the report; nor have I. In any case, a decision regarding fishing havens would be made on a recommendation of the Minister of Agriculture, but the report of the officer will outline the possibilities of establishing a haven and the physical matters involved. As soon as I have a report of his visit, I will furnish it to my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, for his attention.

DELINQUENT GIRLS.

Mr. **HUTCHENS**: Yesterday I directed a question to the Minister of Education about wayward girls and the remarks made by His Honour Mr. Justice Travers. The Minister in reply said, amongst other things:

However, there seems to have been some misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the remarks made by Mr. Justice Travers, because there is power under certain circumstances for the judge to commit a delinquent girl to a reformatory.

I understood from the remarks made by the Minister that he was saying that there had been some misunderstanding of the reporting

of the learned judge's remarks, but I have heard with some concern that it has been read by at least some people that it was thought that the Minister was reflecting upon the learned gentleman. Will the Minister make his explanation clear in order that there may be no misunderstanding?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: Yes; I shall be pleased to do so. From the necessarily abbreviated report in the *Advertiser* this morning of my extempore reply to the question, it may be considered that I was suggesting that there was some misunderstanding on the part of His Honour Mr. Justice Travers concerning the law. To reflect on His Honour would be the very last thing I would desire to do, first because he is a great personal friend of mine and, secondly, as we all know, before he was elevated to the bench he was an eminent Queen's Counsel experienced in every jurisdiction of the law and also, of course, the acknowledged leader of the criminal bar; and, if he does not know the Criminal Law Consolidation Act, I do not know who does. What I said and what the honourable member was good enough to quote—that there was some misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the remarks made by His Honour—is a very different thing. But, as I said also yesterday, the Attorney-General is asking the Crown Solicitor for an opinion on the matter, to be referred to Cabinet fairly soon. It will be discussed and, no doubt, a decision made in the near future. I take the opportunity while I am on my feet of saying that I am sure all members of Cabinet and Parliament and, I think, the vast majority of the public are indebted to His Honour for the very outspoken remarks he made on an immensely important subject.

MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS.

Mr. HEASLIP: An article in the *Advertiser* of September 30, under the heading "Doctor Plan Criticized", refers to a five-year plan to give Australia more family doctors, and states:

The self-employed family doctor could well become a figure of the past if the present trend in modern medicine continues, according to a survey in South Australia. There has been a marked increase in recent years in the number of doctors taking up salaried service and a reduction of the numbers in general or specialist practice.

Writing in the September issue of the *Medical Journal of Australia*, Dr. H. Lander, a senior lecturer in medicine at the University of Adelaide, says that the movement is not only among recently qualified graduates but also among those previously well-established in both

general or specialist practice. It seemed very likely that this change in the pattern of medical practice was occurring to a greater or lesser degree in every State.

The medical practitioner is important to both country and suburban areas, but in suburban districts the doctor is available immediately to a family in trouble. I ask the Premier, representing the Minister of Health, whether he has anything to say on this vital matter, and also on the importance of the general practitioner compared with the specialist?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: This matter has received consideration by Cabinet recently. I do not want to debate the question of medical practitioners compared with specialists, but what has concerned Cabinet is the shortage of general practitioners, particularly for service in country areas. Several larger country centres in this State, with adequate population, need medical services, but we have been unable to obtain general practitioners for them. Cabinet has authorized the Minister of Health to write to the Australian Medical Association seeking its assistance in introducing a scheme providing additional medical practitioners in country areas.

Other States have this problem; New South Wales, for instance, declares country areas where there is no medical practitioner and appoints a migrant who would have the necessary qualifications except that no reciprocity exists between the university of the country whence he came and the universities here. My Government has been most concerned that certain of our rural areas have not had sufficient medical practitioners available to give an adequate service, and a letter has been written to the A.M.A. asking if it will consider the introduction of a scheme to give adequate services to country areas generally.

SCHOOL CROSSING INSURANCE.

Mr. TAPPING: An extract from the *Advertiser* of September 30, under the heading "School Crossing Insurance", states:

The Education Department had taken out insurance policies to cover both personal injury to schoolchildren (including monitors) and public risk at school crossings, the Minister of Education (Sir Baden Pattinson) said yesterday.

I express concern about the railway level crossing at Taperoo, known as the Gedville Road crossing, which is used by scholars from three schools in particular—the Taperoo High School, the Taperoo Primary School and the Taperoo Roman Catholic School. The article suggests that the cover of insurance would be only for

crossings on roadways. As there is no warning device at the Gedville Road railway crossing, will the Minister of Education consider including it, and similar crossings, in the insurance policy being taken out by the Education Department?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: I shall be only too pleased to consider the matter, but as it raises a rather broad issue of Government policy I will take the earliest opportunity of discussing it with my colleagues in Cabinet, with a view to Cabinet's making a decision on the matter.

AGRICULTURAL SCHOLARSHIPS.

Mr. McANANEY: It is understood that scholarships are made available each year by the Government to students in agricultural economics, which necessitates their attendance at the University of New England in Armidale, New South Wales. A comparison of the courses involving agricultural economics at the Universities of Adelaide, New England and Sydney indicates a substantial common content. A possible distinction is that Adelaide emphasizes an economic policy, including an agricultural policy, New England emphasizes farm management, and Sydney is strong in the more technical agricultural subjects. Will the Minister of Education institute inquiries as to the possibility of making scholarships tenable in Adelaide, as it would mean a considerable saving in costs to the Government and less interruption to the family life of the students awarded scholarships?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: I shall be pleased to do so. The honourable member has not only raised a good question but has supplied me with very valuable information. I, personally, was not aware of the similarity in the content of the courses at the three universities. Because of that I thought it was only natural and proper that students from South Australia would have to go to New South Wales, because of the lack of facilities for them in this State. I very much sympathize with them and their parents because of the added expense and the separation from families by going there. The Vice-Chancellor of the university is a most co-operative person, and is willing to the best of his ability to consider all these matters. I shall be only too pleased to take up the matter with him in the first instance to see whether the honourable member's request can be given effect to and, if so, under what conditions, and whether it can be done in the near future. As soon as I have had the benefit of discussions with the

Vice-Chancellor, and have ascertained the views of the University Council on the matter, I shall be only too pleased to convey them to the honourable member and to the House.

MOTOR REGISTRATIONS.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Recently I asked the Premier whether the Government would consider an amendment to the Motor Vehicles Act to enable owners of fleets of motor vehicles to have a common expiry date for the registration of their vehicles. The Premier informed me that he would take up the matter with the Registrar of Motor Vehicles. He said it seemed to have some merit when applied to a man with several motor vehicles. Can he say what progress has been made in the matter, and what is to be done about the suggested amendment?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I received a comprehensive report on the matter from the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, a copy of which I shall be pleased to pass on to the honourable member. On balance it did not appear that much would be gained from the proposal. Fleet owners change their vehicles at various times, and it would have meant their taking out registrations for short periods to keep the registration of all their vehicles in line. After the honourable member has had a chance to study the report and see the advantages and disadvantages as set out by the Registrar, I shall be pleased to hear any further representation he may like to make.

TRANSPORT PERMIT.

Mr. HALL: My question concerns a delinquent department for which I believe the Premier ultimately is responsible, namely, the Transport Control Board. I believe that this year the transport of fat lambs to the Gepps Cross market was made permissible for all commercial carriers so long as they obtained permits. I instance a case that happened last Tuesday and Wednesday. A local carrier arrived home at 9.30 on Tuesday evening and found that a client had left orders for a consignment of lambs to be taken to the abattoirs market for sale next morning. This carrier was unaware that a permit could be obtained after hours, so he set off to the abattoirs with the lambs next morning, having left word with the local stock agent to telephone for a permit for him whilst he was on the road. This agent telephoned the board soon after 9 a.m. on Wednesday. An officer of the board, on inquiring of the local agent and finding that the load had already left for

the abattoirs, refused to issue a permit. It had been regarded locally that the purpose of the permit was merely to obtain a fee for the board, and the carrier was willing to comply with that requirement. In fact, he tried to obtain the permit as soon as possible. However, the board is now obstructing his intention to provide it with a 5 per cent fee and I understand that it could launch a prosecution. Can the Premier say whether this is just the rearguard action of a waning and, I hope, a disintegrating form of personal restriction, and will he see that no prosecution is launched in this case, so that the matter of free transport of fat lambs to the abattoirs can be clarified?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will inquire into the facts of the case and see that there is no untoward prosecution. The Government is now preparing legislation that will be a big departure from the present legislation. For instance, the continuance of the board and the future action it will be able to take will be involved in the new legislation. It is now in a fairly advanced stage of drafting, and I hope it will be ready for the House soon, probably within a fortnight. Members are well aware of our problem in this State regarding transport control because of section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution, which has meant that hitherto interstate carriers have not contributed to the cost of our road system and have been completely untrammelled in using our facilities without paying towards their upkeep. The whole question has been the subject of close examination and drastic alterations of the law are proposed, some of them affecting the functions of the Transport Control Board.

FRUIT CANNING.

Mr. BYWATERS: The Auditor-General's report, under "State Bank", states:

As a result of the inability of two cannery companies to repay advances made by the bank under guarantee by the Treasurer, £400,000 was allocated to meet eventual losses.

As these losses mainly resulted from ridiculous price-cutting in the industry and as these price-cutting methods are still practised as instanced by an advertisement in the *News* yesterday for Riverdale sliced cling peaches at 1s. 6d. a tin (which is well below the cost of production), the Government must inevitably incur further losses. Will the Premier call a conference of cannery managers and proprietors, all of whom I understand are receiving some form of Government assistance, to see whether an understanding on prices can be reached?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Unfortunately, this problem would be much deeper than one that could be solved by a mere getting together of local canners to arrive at common selling proposals for this State. The honourable member is no doubt aware that the present intense competition on the local market does not spring only from South Australian canneries: it has been commenced by canneries in other States, many of them co-operative canneries. The case the honourable member mentioned refers to the growers' co-operative cannery which is starting competition in Riverdale peaches. At present the Commonwealth Government is considering proposals which no doubt will require supplementary State legislation. The whole purpose of the consideration is to decide on some scheme that will prohibit excessive competition on the local market. We realize that overseas sales are frequently made at a price that is highly competitive and even unprofitable. Our surplus has to be sent overseas and we must get the best prices we can. There is no reason why the grower and the canneries should compete on the local market with consequent unprofitable local sales. The present consideration by the Commonwealth and State is to decide on proposals that would enable an equitable loss to be taken by the industry on exports and a reasonably profitable price level to be maintained upon the Australian market. The overseas position of certain products this year is much brighter than it has been in the past and several of our overseas canning commodities will be, I believe, sold at a profitable level. For instance, last year pear prices were at a most unprofitable level, whereas this year I am assured that for canned fruit of a suitable quality there is a ready profitable market. This State will be prepared to enter into a proposal with the other State Governments and the Commonwealth Government to ensure that an adequate price level is maintained on the Australian market and that any losses made on exports will be equally shared.

BILLS OF SALE ACT.

Mr. COUNBE: Has the Minister representing the Attorney-General a reply to a question I asked prior to the recent adjournment regarding the Government's intention this session to amend the Bills of Sale Act?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: I cannot give a definite reply because, although this matter has been considered by my colleague (the Attorney-General) and there have been two or three discussions, the problem is not

as easy as it may appear. The Attorney-General is again investigating it with his advisers and I have no doubt that he will refer it to Cabinet again soon. As soon as he has done so and a decision has been made the honourable member will be informed.

DISTRICT COUNCIL ACCOUNTS.

Mr. LAWN: At page 221 of his report the Auditor-General comments on irregular book-keeping methods of some district councils. Has the Premier's attention been drawn to this matter and is any action contemplated by the Government?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: If the irregularities are State irregularities the inevitable practice is to refer them to the Crown Solicitor for investigation and, if there is fraudulent intent or misappropriation, appropriate action is taken. The usual procedure when other authorities are concerned is to report the matter to the appropriate authority and ask it to take the necessary action. I will have the matter examined to ascertain whether any action is necessary and inform the honourable member later.

DECIMAL WEIGHTING.

Mr. LAUCKE: Has the Premier further information in reply to my question of yesterday regarding the introduction of decimal weighting in Australia?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have inquired into the matter and I find that I was incorrect in my assumption that the matter had been raised with the Commonwealth Government. It has not, and I have now given instructions that the honourable member's question is to be referred to the Commonwealth authorities. I also inquired about the practicability of the proposal and found that it is regarded by experts as being very difficult to introduce.

LAND SPEED RECORD ATTEMPT.

Mr. CASEY: I address my question to the Premier. Over the past six months numerous reports have appeared in the local press (and only recently in the *News*) about Mr. Donald Campbell's likely return to South Australia to make an attempt on the land speed record at Lake Eyre. Can the Premier say whether the Government intends to assist Mr. Campbell, as it did previously, by providing police personnel and Engineering and Water Supply Department personnel, plant and machinery?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Government has not received a request in this matter. Four or five weeks ago Mr. Campbell

came to my office and said that he hoped Lake Eyre would dry out sufficiently for him to make an attempt on the record. At that time, however, he did not know precisely the condition of the lake or whether his sponsors in London were prepared to back him in his attempt. I have read in the press since then that the sponsors are prepared to back him and I have no doubt that if the lake dries out he will probably again seek to break the world record there. The expenditure incurred by the Government when the last attempt was to be made was mainly on communication: providing a causeway on to the lake and doing some work on the roads. I have been informed that the causeway is in a suitable condition, as there has not been much deterioration, and that the roads are adequate. The Government would be prepared (as it is on all occasions) to provide proper police assistance to protect the public. It would be necessary to police the speedway, and the Government would undoubtedly provide police assistance as in the ordinary course. However, I do not contemplate any special expenditure regarding a further attempt.

TOMATO GRADING.

Mr. LANGLEY: Will the Minister of Agriculture say whether it is true that inspectors of the Agriculture Department are not able to enforce the correct grading of tomatoes to be sold on the Adelaide market for size and colour and to insist that the grower's name be on the boxes, as is done in Western Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland? Also, is it true that the draft that is ready to be presented, which will give authority to inspectors to enforce grading regulations for tomatoes sold on the Adelaide market, is being prevented from becoming law by the controlling body (the tomato growers' section of the South Australian Fruitgrowers and Market Gardeners Association)?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I will give a considered reply to the honourable member's triple-barrelled question later. I do not know of any sinister opposition to these regulations, and I have not had the name of any organization connected with this matter in mind, but I will get the full story for the honourable member as soon as possible.

COLLECTION OF BETS.

Mr. FRED WALSH: Regarding a report in the *Advertiser* yesterday of a question that I asked of the Minister of Education, I should like the *Advertiser* reporters to know that there is more than one member named Walsh

in this House, and that I have no desire to bask in the reflected glory of the Leader of the Opposition.

Yesterday the Premier laid on the table amendments to the Betting Control Board rules relating to bookmakers. Although I accept them in general, I am not sure how rule 2(d) will affect the collection of bets. This rule provides that every bookmaker shall, by 3 p.m. on Thursday in every week, deliver to the board a schedule setting out the particulars of each cash bet made at a meeting held during the period of seven days ending upon and including the previous Friday and in respect of which money remains due but unpaid to the bettor. This appears clear to me. However, the practice has been for those schedules to be held over until possibly the following Wednesday week after a meeting, and perhaps later. I know this because I have been to collect bets at the board's office and the sheets have not been returned. Will the Premier ask the Secretary of the Betting Control Board whether this amendment will interfere with the practice of collecting winnings on the Saturday after bets are made, as punters often collect winnings then instead of waiting to collect them on the day? If that practice is not interfered with I, and, I think, the general public, will be happy.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will get a report from the Secretary of the Betting Control Board (Mr. Alexander). Although I do not know anything about this, I assume that this rule has been designed to ensure that the punter is betting with someone who is able to pay. The board has certain functions to fulfil to see that every bookmaker is honouring his legal obligations, and I think the purpose of this rule is to protect the punter from any gradual slipping back financially by any bookmaker. What the honourable member has said about settling bets on the next race day seems to be reasonable, and I will take up this matter with Mr. Alexander to see whether that practice is interfered with in any way. If it is, I will submit the honourable member's request to the board.

MORGAN-WHYALLA MAIN DUPLICATION.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Has the Premier a reply to a question I asked during the debate on the Loan Estimates about the duplication of the Morgan-Whyalla main?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes; the funds allocated for the financial year 1963-64 for the Morgan-Whyalla main No. 2 will permit the laying of 36 miles of pipeline, of which about five miles will be for the rising main in the vicinity of Robertstown, and will also allow for the completion of the 100,000,000-gallon reservoir at Lincoln Gap. By the end of June, 1964, it is expected that 83 miles of the pipeline of this project will have been laid.

CLERICAL ASSISTANTS.

Mr. RYAN: On August 21, I asked the Minister of Education whether a full-time junior clerical assistant in schools would be preferable to a part-time adult assistant, and the Minister said that the Public Service Commissioner, who had jurisdiction over clerical assistants, was investigating. Will the Minister say whether the question has been decided and, if it has, what are the results of the inquiry?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: As I informed the honourable member some time ago, persons engaged on clerical work in our departmental schools are not employees of the Minister of Education but public servants. Accordingly, I referred the honourable member's request to the Public Service Commissioner, who has been investigating this matter from time to time. Regarding the specific request, I have received from the Public Service Commissioner a report which states, *inter alia*:

A part-time assistant up to 20 hours a week is supplied to a secondary school when the enrolment exceeds 400, and a full-time assistant when the enrolment reaches 800. Obviously, when a school is nearer 800 than 400, the position becomes more acute, but there must be some arbitrary dividing line. The normal school hours are 30 a week. Because of this fact, clerical positions in schools are generally best served by part-time appointments, and there are some disadvantages in having young girls alone in a school after all or most of the teaching staff have gone home.

Similarly, the normal recreation leave of a clerical assistant is three weeks per annum, whilst the school holiday period totals approximately 12 weeks. This raises problems of occupying the schools' clerical staff during vacation periods and, although there is work to keep them busy some of the period, it is not a practical proposition in most cases to have them attending the school for the whole of the holiday period. (Some, but not all, can be profitably used in Head Office for part of the time.) However, these have not been the principal factors in determining the extent of clerical assistance provided.

It was estimated after inquiry that, speaking generally, the volume of clerical work which could reasonably be taken off the hands of the teaching staff would not exceed 20 hours a week when the enrolment was 400. It is

neither in the interests of the Government nor in the interests of an employee that he or she should be employed on a full-time basis if in fact there is not the volume of work to occupy the officer full time.

Although Mr. Ryan has not referred to any particular school, I have taken the Port Adelaide Girls Technical School as an example, because he previously specifically referred to this school. The enrolment at this school is at present 600, and the authority existing is for part-time clerical assistance up to 20 hours a week. As the size of this school is almost exactly half way between the 400, for which 20 hours of clerical assistance is provided, and 800, for which a full-time assistant is considered justified, a working week of approximately 30 hours would *prima facie* be warranted. In fact, the clerical officer at this school works 20 hours a week, and no request has been made for any increased working time except for a short period at the beginning of each school year.

I imagine that the concluding paragraph may act as a spur to the honourable member and his constituents to make the necessary application.

EGG PULP.

Mr. McKEE: I understand the Premier has a reply to a question I asked on August 28 about the varying prices charged for egg pulp by the South Australian Egg Board.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have the following report from Mr. Anderson, the Chairman of the South Australian Egg Board:

With regard to the question concerning the price of egg pulp, I have to advise that the methods for price of pulp as fixed by the board have varied slightly. Going back to the period of the first pulp year after the Controller of Eggs under National Security Regulations terminated on December 31, 1947, the pulp year was fixed from September 1 to August 31. The method of fixing prices from then until the pulp year ending August 31, 1951, was to fix a basic price for the first two months of the pulp year, *i.e.*, September and October, and for each subsequent month an increase of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per lb. to cover the cost of storage, interest, etc. From the pulp year commencing September 1, 1951, the $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per lb. was increased to $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per lb. to cover interest, storage, etc. This practice carried on until the pulp year ending August 31, 1958. From the commencement of the pulp year 1958-59, *i.e.*, September 1, 1958, the following price range was fixed:

- 2s. 11d. per lb. up to 350/40 lb. tins
- 2s. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. from 351 to 700/40 lb. tins
- 2s. 10d. per lb. from 701 to 1,750/40 lb. tins
- 2s. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. from 1,751 to 3,500/40 lb. tins
- 2s. 9d. per lb. from 3,501 to 8,750/40 lb. tins
- 2s. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. from 8,751/40 lb. tins upwards.

This quantitative price range remained in operation until the pulp year ending August 31, 1962. For the pulp year 1962-63 a flat rate was fixed for pulp, irrespective of the quantities used. This meant, in effect, that a firm buying one tin of pulp a week paid the same price as a firm buying 200-250 tins a week. From September 1, 1963, *i.e.*, the present pulp year, the board has reverted to a range of prices as was in operation from 1958 to 1962.

METROPOLITAN OPEN SPACES.

Mr. LAUCKE: My question concerns future open spaces in the metropolitan area. I refer to a statement in the *News* earlier this week made by Mr. A. E. Welbourn, a city architect and the President of the Adelaide Division of the Australian Planning Institute. Mr. Welbourn is reported as having said:

The metropolitan councils might not agree with the Town Planning Committee on recommendations to establish an authority to buy open spaces. If this happened and councils could provide no satisfactory alternative, then the Government might have to impose its own solution.

I ask the Premier: first, what has the response been thus far to the questionnaire sent out to the various councils? Secondly, are the councils situated in near-metropolitan areas included in the list of those to which these questionnaires have been sent? Thirdly, what would be the Government's reaction to Mr. Welbourn's statement that the Government might have to impose its own solution to the problem of future open space provision if the councils did not co-operate in this matter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Answering the first part of the question, I understand that all metropolitan councils were included and received the letter that was sent by the Government asking for their advice on this question. All councils, including the newer ones, were included. The replies from the councils are not yet sufficiently to hand to form an opinion as to what the councils' decisions will be. The last matter is purely and simply a supposititious question and I do not want to go into it, except to say that as a general rule the Government does not desire to force upon councils something that they do not want. At present, recreation areas are clearly within the province of local government authorities, and although the Government is prepared to assist them, I doubt whether Parliament would want to force a decision on councils.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

Mr. McKEE: Can the Premier say whether the Government has considered establishing a

public accounts committee as suggested by the Clerk of the House of Assembly (Mr. Combe) in his report on House of Commons procedure? The establishment of such a committee has been advocated by the Australian Labor Party on several occasions.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: No. The Clerk's report was to Parliament and the Government has not considered it. On previous occasions when this matter was raised the Government took the view that it was most necessary to have complete control over money before it was spent. That is why this State has always had such positive laws regarding public works and the Public Works Committee. It is necessary that every project of any size involving the State in considerable expenditure be adequately examined before it is embarked upon. We have felt in the past that we have had sufficient control and that is why the Estimates are so detailed. Incidentally, the amount of money that may be spent under Governor's warrant in this State is ridiculously small. The Government has approval to spend only £100,000 a year on any items that are not included in the Budget lines. That is a totally different approach from that in other States, where Governments can, almost at will, involve the State in large expenditures and Parliament does not have the opportunity to criticize this. We have taken the view that the time to look at your money is before you spend it, not after. Looking at it after you have spent it is not so profitable as doing it before.

Mr. Lawn: You are lucky to be able to look at it before you spend it.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Government has not considered the Clerk's report because it is normally a matter dealt with by Parliament.

The SPEAKER: I might add to the Premier's remarks that that is a question that will be referred to the Standing Orders Committee.

GAWLER RIVER FLOODINGS.

Mr. HALL: The Premier is aware that recently during heavy rains severe flooding was experienced by market gardeners along the Gawler River. Has the Premier considered placing monetary proposals before Parliament that would enable a grant to be made to district councils in the Gawler River area with the object of straightening the course of the river, taking out dead trees and generally cleaning up the river so that water may flow more quickly from that area to the sea?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have received a deputation from the northern suburbs, including the Elizabeth and Salisbury areas, about the floodwater problem which has arisen and which will intensify as more building takes place in that area. I have informed the councils concerned that the Government would be prepared, subject to Parliamentary approval and to a favourable recommendation from the Public Works Committee, to participate in a proposal to assist in the drainage of that area in the same way as it has participated in the drainage of the south-western suburbs, the River Torrens area and some country areas, such as Renmark. Subject to a satisfactory scheme being evolved and the recommendation by the Public Works Committee, the Government would be prepared to subsidize the scheme in the same way at it has assisted other schemes. If the honourable member would like something more specific, I suggest that he peruse the legislation covering the south-western suburbs drainage scheme, which would be the type of proposal applicable in this case.

Mr. HALL: I appreciate the answer although it concerned an entirely different scheme, but I am pleased to note that it was favourable. The scheme I had in mind was a cheaper but not an alternative one. Will the Premier allocate funds for a cheaper scheme to have the Gawler River, which is entirely north of the scheme he referred to, cleaned out so that floodwaters will get away to the sea more quickly and not flood the surrounding market gardens?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I regret that I was off target in my answer. The reply in regard to the Gawler River is that I have had no representations from local government bodies on the matter. These matters must be initiated by the local authority because that authority also has some obligation. If the Gawler District Council is the appropriate one and submits a proposal, I will have it examined carefully.

SITTINGS.

Mr. LAWN: Can the Premier give any information regarding the sittings of the House next week?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Government does not intend to ask honourable members to sit after dinner on Tuesday and Wednesday next week.

KAPUNDA RAIL SERVICE.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: On the Kapunda to Adelaide rail service, a train leaves Eudunda each week day at 6.23 a.m., Kapunda at 7.02, and arrives at Adelaide at 8.34. The car and trailer used are of a very old type, known as a 75 type; they are uncomfortable, and relaxation and reading are almost impossible. I am informed that about 30 people use this service. In view of the Railways Commissioner's policy to provide the best railway services possible, will the Minister of Works ask his colleague, the Minister of Railways, whether a Bluebird service can be provided on this route?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I understand a Bluebird service operates on this line but not at this time of the day. Is that correct?

Mr. Freebairn: Yes, but I am referring to the morning service.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will ask my colleague to obtain a report from the Railways Commissioner and let the honourable member have it.

PILDAPPA WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. LOVEDAY: In view of the recent statement about the probability of Tod reservoir water being laid on to the Pildappa area, can the Minister of Works give the House further information on the matter and say whether a decision has been reached?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: A decision has not been made and I am unable to tell the honourable member when I shall be able to report to him. The matter is one of many that the Engineer-in-Chief is working on at the moment and as soon as I get a report I will inform the honourable member.

PORT AUGUSTA LAND.

Mr. RICHES: Some years ago the Highways Department approached the Port Augusta Corporation asking for its co-operation in re-routing the main road through the central park lands in order to provide a better access to the Great Western bridge for through traffic. The only alternative would have been the crection of a second bridge, involving the moving of the Commonwealth Railways Department's coal gantries. The corporation co-operated with the department and the road was surveyed in a most awkward fashion on the only route possible, through the central park lands. Since then, other developments have taken place. The high school, which borders this new road, has found itself in

need of additional land. Land is also required for the adult education centre and for the central oval. In addition, the Commonwealth Railways Department has changed from coal-burning locomotives to oil-burning locomotives, and there does not appear to be the same need for the coal gantries as there was formerly. Representations were made to the Highways Department about 12 months ago to see whether the land that had been taken for the road purposes could be returned to the corporation because of the urgent need of the other instrumentalities I have referred to. Highways Department engineers, I understand, have approved of a route that would cross the gulf eventually near the coal gantries, but a final decision apparently rests with the bridge engineers, who would be required to give a decision if and when a second Great Western bridge was needed, and also with the Commonwealth Railways engineers. I am not concerned about the bridge at this stage because I feel that it is something for the distant future, but the town is very much concerned about the possibility of securing (for the purposes I have outlined) the land which at the time was made available for road purposes. Will the Minister of Works put before his colleague the matters I have placed before him today and ask whether the land can be released to the corporation so that it can be made available in turn to the Education Department, for the central oval, and for the adult education centre at the earliest possible date?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The honourable member has set out the matter very clearly and I will refer his remarks to my colleague for a report.

CROP PROSPECTS.

Mr. LAUCKE: Although estimates of the quantities of wheat, barley and oats that may be harvested this year can at this stage be rough estimates at best, has the Minister of Agriculture any information from his advisory officers in the various agricultural districts that would indicate crop expectancies, and, if so, broadly what are those expectancies?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: Although I am willing to argue about this matter in private, I would rather depend on my technical officers to give a considered report, and as yet I have no forecast to give. I will get one as soon as possible.

THE BUDGET.

The Estimates—Grand total, £103,306,000.
 In Committee of Supply.
 (Continued from October 1. Page 894.)

THE LEGISLATURE.

Legislative Council, £13,900.

Mr. COURCE (Torrens): I support the adoption of the first line. In my opinion this Budget has several remarkable features associated with it, and I am sure that all members will agree when I point them out. The first is that this is the Treasurer's 25th consecutive Budget, and on behalf of all members I congratulate him on the achievement. Twenty-five consecutive Budgets is a remarkable effort. I am sure that it is appreciated not only by all members in this House but by the people of the State generally. In addition to this being his 25th consecutive Budget, it is remarkable for the fact that this is the first time that any Budget in South Australia has exceeded the £100,000,000 mark. Both in receipts and expenditure this is a milestone in the history of the State, and it occurred at a time when South Australia exceeded a population of 1,000,000 people. The Budget is remarkable because it shows the change that occurred last year in our financial position. The Estimates for 1962-63 forecast a deficit of £603,000, yet, because of our improving economic position, of which we are all aware, the actual result was a surplus of £297,000. The Treasurer has announced in his financial statement that, to avoid severe increases in taxation and to meet increased demands, this Budget will show a deficit of about £492,000. I submit that the people of this State appreciate what this Government is doing to expand the services for the community, as shown in this Budget, and that they appreciate very markedly the benefits of stable government which this Government has given.

The Budget totals £103,306,000. Surely this must indicate the expanded services being provided by the Government for the community. It certainly indicates the financial stature and strength that this State has achieved over recent years, and it is little wonder that the Leader of the Opposition, when speaking on Tuesday, could find so little to criticize. The Budget is sound and solid, if not spectacular. It carries on the policy applied by the Government last year of maintaining and encouraging activity at a high level, and I think that is extremely important. It is spectacular only because of its size and extent; it cannot be spectacular, in my opinion, under the present

arrangement when so little of the taxation pill is being left to the States today under the uniform tax system, which of course gives most of the revenue-raising and taxing powers to the Commonwealth. As a result, our State Budget is robbed of much of the public interest that surrounds the Commonwealth Budget. We know that when a Commonwealth Budget is imminent people look forward to it for weeks ahead and all sorts of rumours circulate; and when it arrives people listen avidly for news of possible concessions. That is not quite the position with the State Budget today. However, in my opinion this occurrence does not lessen the importance of the State Budget to South Australia. In fact, in some ways it imposes the necessity for greater care by the Treasurer because of his limited taxing powers and ability to raise funds, and certainly it places greater responsibility on members of Parliament to carefully scrutinize the Budget details.

The Budget figures and the Auditor-General's Report indicate how State expenditure has grown so remarkably over recent years. In 1943-44—just 20 years ago—expenditure in the Budget was £15,659,000; by 1953-54 it had risen to £50,565,000; and for this year ahead of us the figure has grown to £103,306,000. In other words, in 10 years the total expenditure we are being asked to vote upon has doubled, and that in itself is a most remarkable thing. I suggest that this indicates very forcibly the growing financial strength of this State.

However, with all this growth and greater expenditures that we are encountering today, we find a few matters that give cause for concern, and one of these is the cost to the taxpayer of the various functions of government. Only five years ago—in 1957-58—the cost to the taxpayer of the function of government was some £33,000,000. Today it has risen to £50,000,000, an increase of £17,000,000 (or 50 per cent) in a matter of only five years. That figure represents the excess payments which must be made from State taxation and Commonwealth grants. This is a significant movement, and I do not know what can be done about it.

Mr. Law: What does that sum include?

Mr. COURCE: It represents the difference between the receipts that come in from the various departments and the total cost that may have to be met by State taxation and Commonwealth grants. I now refer briefly to the Treasurer's comments on page 1 of his Financial Statement, because they are so important, taken in retrospect. He said:

However, 1961-62 stands out as the year in which the Government was able to take the action which, in retrospect, can be seen as vital in assisting to maintain a reasonable stability in the State's affairs. The principal decision was to push ahead as quickly as possible with a programme of capital works, committing all Loan moneys expected to become available, using the revenue surplus of the previous year, and planning to allow the Loan Fund to move further into deficit.

We can now see that that was the move which sparked off a resurgence of employment in this State, and we can appreciate the wisdom of the move, because it certainly paid off and is still paying off. The Government deliberately pushed ahead with public works to give a boost to employment, and this provided a stimulus and a spur to the economy which has been very widely appreciated by all sections of the community. I am sure that some of these benefits will be reflected in future Budgets. Had this action of deliberately committing as much of the Loan moneys as possible to the encouragement of employment not been taken, I am sure the Budget we are considering today would have been markedly different. I am certain that we are all pleased that that action was taken and that it paid off so well.

Turning to the question of interest payments on long-term loans, it is pleasing to see at last the lower rates that are now being applied on public borrowing. As we all recall only too well, 1961 was the peak rate of £5 7s. 6d. per cent for borrowing on money for public works. Fortunately, on the last figure available (July, 1963) it dropped to £4 10s., or 4½ per cent, and that incidentally was issued at a discount giving a yield of £4 11s. 1d. This fall in rates will considerably reduce the cost to the State of new borrowings and ensure worthwhile savings. Overall it will reduce the annual cost of loans that have recently matured and are being replaced by loans at these lower rates. The considerable increase this year will not resemble the sharp increases of recent years but I warn honourable members that in the next few years loans maturing will necessitate heavier repayments to meet these commitments. In 1964-65 about £42,250,000 worth of maturities must be met and in 1965-66 the figure will be almost £51,000,000.

In departmental allocations there are some rather spectacular increases that closely follow the trend in the Loan Estimates that were considered by this House some time ago. The same trend in mostly the same departments is evident in these allocations. For instance, the allocation for mental health has

increased by 14 per cent, Hospitals Department 8 per cent, Health Department 12½ per cent, Police Department 8 per cent, and Education Department 7 per cent. The last one referred to incidentally followed a large increase of 11 per cent last year and 14 per cent the year before and the additional 7 per cent is remarkable. The allocation for Minister of Education (Miscellaneous) has risen by 9½ per cent, Engineering and Water Supply Department 7½ per cent, Mines Department 9 per cent, and Agriculture Department 15 per cent. These are not small increases by any means and are not the increases one would expect to accrue automatically through some slight expansion and slight rises in costs. They are the result of worthwhile expansion. I am sure the honourable member for Adelaide, who is showing such an interest in these remarks, will note that the emphasis is on social service departments and I remind him that I said, when speaking on the Loan Estimates, how pleased I was to see such increases being devoted to these departments, especially in the line for hospitals.

Mr. Lawn: I should like to see you include the Welfare Department as well.

Mr. COUMBE: I put them all together and call them social services. Another rather spectacular increase is that of 9½ per cent for Minister of Education (Miscellaneous) but if we look at that together with Chief Secretary (Miscellaneous) for the list of grants to various organizations and societies we notice that the number of those bodies grows year by year, necessitating greater Government assistance. Certainly this help is greatly appreciated by the bodies concerned, almost all of which are voluntary organizations qualifying for subsidies. I referred to mental health in the Loan Estimates debate and welcomed the expansion in that department. We are given to understand that the Minister of Health has authorized the replanning of some mental health organizations and hospitals in this State and I believe that Dr. Cramond is busy preparing plans. I am the first to welcome this and to say that some of these reforms are overdue.

Mr. Lawn: I'll say!

Mr. COUMBE: I am pleased to see this expansion and I hope that it will be commenced as soon as possible. The total estimated vote for this section alone is £1,593,000, which is £200,000 more than last year and by no means small. Although we all agree that better and greater facilities can be provided, it is interesting to note (and it is with some concern that I do note them) the comments by

the Auditor-General in his report on this section of the Hospitals Department regarding charges—or absence of charges. I am not suggesting for a moment that charges are being made for patients in mental hospitals but this facet is rather disturbing. The Hospitals Department does not charge for patients in mental hospitals generally although there are a few exceptions, including interstate visitors. No hospital benefit is paid by the Commonwealth Government to an age or invalid pensioner patient while he is in a mental hospital, even though he is otherwise qualified to receive one.

Mr. Lawn: Have you seen a summary of my speech?

Mr. COUNBE: I am not a seer like the honourable member for Adelaide.

Mr. Lawn: I think that someone looked in my drawer.

Mr. COUNBE: I shall compliment myself and say that we both have great minds and think alike. No contribution is made on behalf of the mental patient by the Commonwealth Government to the Hospitals Department. It seems absolutely inequitable for people who would otherwise have no daily avocation and would be qualified to receive an age or invalid pension that the moment they go into a mental hospital they lose their pension and this Government loses it. I could understand if the pensioner entering a mental hospital were to lose his pension and the pension were paid to the State Government or to the department to help in the patient's upkeep in hospital. This is a common occurrence in some hospitals where the pension is paid to the hospital authority towards the patient's keep in hospital, but usually the pension stops and the patient, the State Government, or the department does not receive it. I cannot see why this State Government could not be reimbursed by the Commonwealth Government at least to the amount of the pension for the upkeep of the pensioner in the mental hospital.

Mr. Jennings: We are 100 per cent behind you.

Mr. COUNBE: I am glad to hear that the honourable member and I have a common interest.

Mr. Lawn: I think you heard what I said before the adjournment of the House.

Mr. COUNBE: I usually listen intently to what the honourable member has to say. I hang on his every word!

Mr. Lawn: I made a speech like yours prior to the adjournment on September 4.

Mr. COUNBE: I cannot recall it but I believe what the honourable member says. The position is still further aggravated when we realize that the Auditor-General's report shows that the cost per patient per day in a mental hospital is £4 8s. The State receives no reimbursement from the Commonwealth. I do not suggest that the State should charge for a bed in these hospitals, but I strongly emphasize that it is time the Commonwealth Government came to the party on this measure. I know that the Minister of Health has often made representations to the appropriate Commonwealth authority but so far nothing has happened; undoubtedly he will keep on trying. In recent years pressure has been applied by both Parties of this Parliament and by outside organizations and other people throughout Australia. In some private hospitals the difficulty was overcome. Anomalies existed in relation to various hospitals, particularly those catering only for senile patients. I believe that this problem will be overcome, and I hope it will not be long. At the moment the State is paying the whole cost; if reimbursement were made by the Commonwealth, more money would be available to carry out further improvements in the care and treatment of mental patients. The money thus saved could still be kept within the department and used for the benefit of patients through improved techniques.

It is interesting to notice the trend in recent years in hospital bed costs. This was the subject of fairly close investigation by members of the Public Works Committee when considering the rebuilding of the Royal Adelaide Hospital. Figures in the Auditor-General's report show that in 1959 the daily cost a patient at the Royal Adelaide Hospital was £5 13s. 4d., whereas today it is £8 12s. It will be interesting to see what the position is when the hospital is completed and modern equipment is installed. This will not be for six to eight years. Naturally, in that time costs will have risen.

Mr. Lawn: How long did it take the Public Works Committee to approve the new buildings?

Mr. COUNBE: About three years. The honourable member will be the first to agree with the committee's report where it shows a saving to this State of about £8,000,000 in the building of this hospital. Despite this saving, the new building will still provide similar if not better facilities and will be built in half the time. The committee deliberately

took a long time over its report and rejected the 1961 plan.

Mr. Shannon: The 1962 plan was adopted, and that is not very old, really.

Mr. COUMBE: Exactly. I know that the honourable member for Adelaide's colleague, Mr. Fred Walsh, who is a member of the Public Works Committee, will agree with what I am saying. Let us compare costs at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital with those at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital originally had few patients. In 1960 the daily cost of a bed was £11 2s. 8d. and this year it is £9 12s. 7d. Because more beds are being used the cost has been reduced.

Mr. Ryan: Wasn't that hospital recommended by the same committee?

Mr. COUMBE: By an earlier committee. It is interesting to compare the cost of £9 12s. 7d. at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital with that of £8 12s. at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. It must be borne in mind that they are both teaching hospitals.

Mr. Riches: Compare those costs with costs in country hospitals.

Mr. COUMBE: Yes, I notice that the Wallaroo Hospital showed an immense increase!

Mr. Riches: The costs at country hospitals are still lower than at Adelaide.

Mr. COUMBE: I do not say they are not, but I point out that one or two facilities are offered at the Queen Elizabeth and Royal Adelaide Hospitals that are not available anywhere else in South Australia, and they are available for country people as well as those living in the metropolitan area. I am not criticizing these costs but merely comparing them. It is difficult to see why there is the discrepancy and it will be interesting to see what happens when the Royal Adelaide Hospital is completed. The outpatients' daily cost at the Royal Adelaide Hospital in 1960 was £4 13s. 8d. and in 1963 it had increased by £2 2s. 5d. to £6 16s. 1d. This shows the general trend in running costs. We must face the fact that these costs increase every year, but the reason for the increases needs close scrutiny.

I express my appreciation of the assistance the Government has given in recent years to the Adelaide Children's Hospital, which is in my district. It is a very special hospital. In my opinion it is not the Adelaide Children's Hospital, but really the South Australian Children's Hospital, because it provides a first-rate service not only for city children but for children throughout the State. Probably many honourable members have at one time or another attended at the hospital to visit their

children or those of friends. I have done so on many occasions and I pay a tribute to its medical and nursing staffs. Grants to it by the Government in recent years have been rather remarkable. In 1958-59 the grant was £496,000; in 1959-60, £591,500; in 1960-61, £594,000; in 1961-62, £1,006,000; in 1962-63, £1,159,000; and this year £909,000 is proposed: a total over the six years of about £4,750,000. I appreciate, as I am sure all honourable members do, this assistance by the Government. At the moment a rebuilding programme is being undertaken, and the figures for this project have been included in the amounts I have quoted. The figures for the actual rebuilding are: 1960-61, £100,000; 1961-62, £500,000; 1962-63, £650,000; and proposed this year, £350,000. The reason for the reduction is that it is expected that the building will be completed this financial year. In four years the Government has granted £1,600,000 to this hospital and, as the Government provides a subsidy of £2 for every £1 raised by the hospital, it can be seen that about £2,500,000 has been spent on buildings, maintenance and services for this hospital in that period. It can also be seen that there has been a magnificent response to appeals for assistance made by the hospital.

I turn now to certain items in the Auditor-General's Report, the first of which relates to the Engineering and Water Supply Department. The passage to which I refer is in heavy type in the middle of page 70, where the Auditor-General comments on interest charges. The Engineering and Water Supply Department is doing a magnificent job, and I place on record my admiration of the way it carries out its work, but it must concern members of this Committee, who are charged with the responsibility of examining and commenting on this report, that total interest charges absorbed 65 per cent of its earnings.

Mr. Ryan: That has been the Opposition's concern for some time.

Mr. COUMBE: I agree, and it has been the concern of members on this side.

Mr. Ryan: Apparently it has fallen on deaf ears.

Mr. COUMBE: Perhaps it has not. I am not sure what the answer is. The cost of water schemes is terrifically high and the income, particularly from some of the country schemes, is low. I know that the member for West Torrens agrees with me that some of the country schemes we, as members of the Public Works Committee, have been asked to investigate will return almost negligible revenue.

Mr. Laucke: What about the indirect benefits?

Mr. COURCELLE: The honourable member anticipated me. I was about to say that I did not know the answer to the increasing charges, because we do not provide water for farms; we provide it for the benefit of people. If we clamp down on some of these schemes, the people and the districts will suffer. I agree with the honourable member that the people, and the State indirectly, benefit from these schemes. In some cases I have been doubtful whether the advantages will be as high as claimed, and whether in view of the low return greater care should not be taken before agreeing to some of the schemes. Generally speaking, however, it is difficult for a member to refuse any reasonable application for extensions to a district. I believe it is the policy of this Government to extend services when any reasonable request is made, and that is a reasonable policy.

An interest charge that represents 65 per cent of earnings must cause concern, especially when it is realized that last year it was 59 per cent. If we continue with the present policy (which, incidentally, I hope we do) of providing as many services as reasonably possible, we must have higher deficits in our Budgets or there must be increases in charges.

Mr. Ryan: Aren't you reversing your argument as compared with electricity?

Mr. COURCELLE: I have not mentioned electricity today.

Mr. Ryan: Not today; previously.

Mr. COURCELLE: An organization with which the honourable member is closely connected is at present making representations in another State for increased rates of pay for men employed by the Electricity Trust. This, of course, is not likely to reduce the cost of electricity to the ordinary household consumer.

Mr. Clark: We support that.

Mr. Ryan: We do, but the honourable member is reversing his argument.

Mr. COURCELLE: I am not, and after I resume my seat I shall be pleased to discuss this with the honourable member.

Mr. Ryan: I would rather discuss it publicly.

Mr. COURCELLE: I am not sure what point the honourable member is trying to make.

Mr. Shannon: He is trying to make your speech for you.

Mr. COURCELLE: It appears that many people are trying to do that. We must get a balance between the needs of the State and the cost of water supplies, and I believe we

should continue our policy of expanding the State's resources and providing more services to the people. If we do not provide services, the State will tend to stagnate. In recent years the Government's policy has been to push ahead with extensions to help primary producers, residents, and industry. That is one of the reasons why we are able for the first time to support a population of 1,000,000 people and why in the last 25 years our population has increased by 70 per cent, whereas the increase for Australia is only 60 per cent. In introducing this Budget, the Treasurer made certain comments about water supplies similar to comments I made in the Address in Reply debate a few years ago. He said:

Ten years ago the average daily consumption of water per capita in the metropolitan area was 77 gallons and this has now increased to 112 gallons. This increase has brought with it both financial and physical problems particularly as growth is taking place mainly in the summer months. The maximum daily consumption per capita in 1953-54 was 167 gallons, but by 1962-63 the maximum had risen to about 260 gallons.

As he said, garden watering is one of the principal causes of increased consumption. These figures highlight the terrific increase in water consumption in the metropolitan area. As more and more houses are built, the per capita increase will become greater, because almost every new house has a hot water service (which uses more water), the people seem to have more showers, and they install washing machines and water softeners. Although all these things are highly desirable, they waste water. Naturally everyone buying or building a new house wants to have a nice garden, which is most desirable, and the consumption of water increases as a result. However, we must face up to an increased per capita consumption of water. This highlights the need for additional natural storages, and the fact that we are building the Kangaroo Creek reservoir and are planning to build the Chowilla dam, which will provide pumped water from the River Murray eventually, will assist. However, the cost of water to the metropolitan area is largely dependent on the availability and capacity of natural storages and on the cost of pumping water. In a drought year, the pumping cost can be considerable. I forecast that before many years, even if we have other seasons of bountiful rains like the present season (when every reservoir has been overflowing), a terrific amount of pumping will have to be done to keep up with the demand.

In this Budget we have an item, even this year when every reservoir has overflowed, for the pumping of water in the Mannum-Adelaide main. Even if year after year our reservoirs are filled, the natural increase in population and house building in the metropolitan area will mean that the cost of pumping water will be increased. With bad luck in one or two years it will jump considerably and have a serious impact on the State Budget.

Mr. Shannon: Has the honourable member any idea how the cost of the proposed Murray Bridge to Adelaide main will affect the Engineering and Water Supply Department's finances?

Mr. CUMBE: I hate to think what the interest charges, not just the pumping charges, will be.

Mr. Shannon: The present expenditure on the Mannum-Adelaide main is a very big item.

Mr. CUMBE: Quite, but the money for that project may have been raised at a lower rate than that at which the money for the Murray Bridge to Adelaide main is to be raised.

Mr. Shannon: It is a big item for the department.

Mr. CUMBE: Yes. Shortly, we shall run out of reservoirs and have to come back to my old hobby horse—desalination. It is a costly process at present and I am pleased to note that something is being done by way of investigation to see whether costs can be reduced. That will have to come in the future.

The Hon. P. H. Quirke: The total interest charges to be met are £9,000,000 greater than the total amount of taxation collections.

Mr. CUMBE: That is true.

The Hon. P. H. Quirke: I want an answer to that from somewhere.

Mr. CUMBE: With a bit of luck the Minister may get the answer later in this debate. Unfortunately, I cannot look up the papers at the moment. The last item upon which I wish to comment is education. The Auditor-General has, in my opinion, rightly expressed concern at the rising costs of school buildings or buildings generally. He singled out schools as an example. His report shows the cost of some of the major school items, among which are, of course, the Teachers College, the School of Arts, and many high schools. He has suggested a greater scrutiny of the expenditure on some of our modern schools. I hasten to assure members of this Committee that my colleagues and I on the Public Works Committee are, too, concerned with this question. I know that the members for West Torrens (Mr. Fred Walsh) and Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) will be the first

to agree with me that we are most concerned about these rising costs. Today, it is not possible to build an ordinary primary school in this State for less than £100,000. That indicates how building costs have risen.

Mr. Loveday: Would it not be a good idea if some of the main beneficiaries from education paid more towards these schools than they do? After all, industry is one of the main beneficiaries.

Mr. CUMBE: Yes, I agree with that. I notice that the member for Whyalla was the first to agree with the recent action taken by private industry in his own home town where Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited gave £100,000 for the establishment of an Institute of Technology, and that was matched by another institution. I am glad the honourable member agrees with me. As I say, a new primary school cannot be built for under £100,000, and some of the high schools cost as much as £300,000, £400,000 or even £500,000 to build. The Public Works Committee is conscious, as everybody is, of the need to provide the best possible accommodation for pupils and staff. As a matter of fact, the accommodation and facilities provided in our latest high schools that I have been fortunate enough to see are in many cases better than those provided in our private schools and colleges, which is something to be proud of. I pay a tribute there to the designing architects in our Public Buildings Department. But I am concerned that money be not wastefully employed on what I would call "frills", that the State get its money's worth for the expenditure involved.

Mr. Ryan: What frills does the honourable member have in mind?

Mr. CUMBE: In some of these schools, the ratio of non-teaching space to teaching space seems inordinately high.

Mr. Shannon: It was, until the Public Works Committee got busy on it and reduced it considerably.

Mr. CUMBE: I know. The member for Gawler (Mr. Clark) is looking at me with interest; I know he agrees with what I am saying. Some of these things could be reviewed. When I say "frills", I must admit it is nice to have some things, but whether or not they are absolutely necessary I do not know. However, I know that the member for Port Adelaide (Mr. Ryan) is pleased with the new technical high school on the Port Road, opened recently. When he goes there the next time, I know he will be pleased with it. I want him to consider whether too much space

is wasted in relation to the actual classroom area. I am the first to advocate that extra-curricular items be included, but we should examine the cost. I should like the honourable member to look at this question and tell me later what he thinks.

Mr. Ryan: Would the honourable member include staff amenities as "frills"?

Mr. COUMBE: No—break it down! I said earlier that I was the first to agree that the pupils and the staff should have the latest amenities. One aspect with which I am pleased is that today all new school buildings are going up in solid construction. Until recently we were forced, through cost or inability to obtain materials but more importantly because of the time factor involved in getting the schools up, to have classrooms built in new buildings of timber construction, in many cases with a masonry spine. Today, I am pleased to say that all new buildings going up and coming up for approval are of solid construction. There is a timber classroom school at Cowandilla in the district of the member for West Torrens. It looks like a farm of timber classrooms. The sooner they go the better.

Mr. Ryan: Does the honourable member agree that solid construction is more economical over a long period of years?

Mr. COUMBE: I have always said that. Timber construction has been forced upon us by the exigencies of time on some occasions, but I am pleased that our new school buildings are going up in brick, and the proportion of timber construction will be only minor, to be used only until it can be taken away and replaced with solid construction. I am pleased that the Public Buildings Department is at the moment examining new building methods and materials. It is a remarkable Budget and I congratulate the Treasurer on presenting his 25th Budget. It is the first Budget over £100,000,000, and it occurs when the State's population is 1,000,000. In those circumstances the Budget is designed to maintain the State's public services and utilities in accordance with modern standards of development, and yet give a boost to economy, following the example set in the last Estimates. When these proposals are considered it is little wonder that the Leader of the Opposition could find little on which to hang his hat. Recent building expansion indicates the prosperity enjoyed by the people of this State. The achievement in reaching a population of 1,000,000 is a milestone in our history, and shows the people's confidence in the State's future and in the Government, which has made these things

possible. The people are enjoying the stable conditions provided by this Government for so many years, and wish to see this stability continue under the present Government. This will be achieved in no uncertain way if we continue to have such Budgets, which received overwhelming endorsement at the Stirling by-election last Saturday. I have the greatest pleasure in supporting the first line.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide): I have nothing to say in reply to the previous speaker—Little Sir Echo (H.M.V.) or the man on the flying trapeze. We have heard it before and will hear it again. This afternoon the member for Port Pirie asked the Treasurer whether the Government had considered the establishment of a public accounts committee. As usual, the Treasurer side-stepped the question and said that this Government, unlike other State Governments, was limited to £100,000 expenditure without its being subject to scrutiny and approval by a committee.

Mr. Ryan: What powers has the Public Works Committee got after it has made a recommendation?

Mr. LAWN: The Treasurer evaded the question. In the other States and in the Commonwealth Parliament a public accounts committee exists, but it does not examine the petty cash expenditure of the Government. It scrutinizes the receipts and expenditure of Government departments and often wants to know why amounts in the Estimates are as high as they are; and it also wants to know many other things. We cannot brush these things aside by assuming that a public accounts committee scrutinizes only minor petty cash expenditures. I have here a volume of information presented to Parliament by the Auditor-General. This report is usually received in Parliament on the day the Leader of the Opposition speaks on the Budget.

Mr. Ryan: Would that be done for a purpose?

Mr. LAWN: I do not know. On this occasion it was distributed whilst the Leader of the Opposition was speaking on the Budget.

Mr. Ryan: Even though we had adjourned for a fortnight!

Mr. LAWN: Yes. During the late Mr. O'Halloran's period as Leader this always happened, and on some occasions, when he was speaking, it was still not before Parliament. There is a wealth of information in this report, but no member has the opportunity to scrutinize it properly prior to the Budget debate. A few members may be able to glance through it before speaking, but no member has the

opportunity to closely study a report consisting of 337 pages because Parliament is sitting and because of his many other duties. One function of a public accounts committee is to closely examine the Auditor-General's Report and scrutinize the expenditure of the various departments.

Mr. Ryan: Are you saying that every State is wrong except South Australia?

Mr. LAWN: It depends upon how you look at it. The member who has resumed his seat, Little Sir Echo, would say that every other State is out of step but South Australia is right, and that the stable Government in this State is good for the people. Recently, in the district of Stirling, I heard young people say that they had never had the opportunity to see whether a Labor Government would be good, bad or indifferent.

Mr. Ryan: They all said one thing: that the Liberals had been there too long!

Mr. Hall: They did not seem to want a Labor Government, did they?

Mr. LAWN: In the public's estimation this Government is going down and down. In every election more and more people vote for the Labor Party compared with those who vote for the Liberal Party. The figures in the Yorke Peninsula by-election were significant, and I shall refer later to the figures for the Stirling District. The member for Torrens said, when praising the Budget, that the Government was carrying on the sound policy laid down last year. In listening to honourable members opposite I understood that they considered the Government had laid down a sound policy prior to last year, but the inference was that prior to that the policy was unsound. I agree with that.

The member for Torrens referred to the cost of government, and quoted figures and explained how it was calculated. If someone refers to the cost of government it is normally taken as the cost of the Legislature and of Government House, and possibly not much more. The figure covered by the Auditor-General in his report, and referred to by the honourable member, includes education, all social services, war obligations and other matters, all of which are expanding because of our growing population. I thought the honourable member might have devoted a longer period to the reference to public debt charges in the Auditor-General's Report, on page 21 of which appears:

For the year ended June 30, 1963, public debt charges amounted to £22,744,000, an increase of £1,406,000 over the previous year, made up of additional interest (£1,769,000) and decreased sinking fund payments (£363,000).

Then the Auditor-General set out the annual interest charges and sinking fund payments over the last five years. I will not read them all, but mention only the years 1958-59 and 1962-63. The total charges in 1958-59 were £16,075,539 and in 1962-63 they were £22,744,477. This shows how the interest charges are growing. I think the Minister of Lands interjected at the time that the interest charges were fast outgrowing our taxation revenue. The Opposition has raised this question on more than one occasion and claimed that most, if not all, capital works could be financed from national credit. I am not going to give members a long dissertation on the subject this afternoon. I have previously referred to the building of the East-West railway line, which was built free of cost to the taxpayers. The King of England sent the Minister performing the opening ceremony a message congratulating the Government on its socialistic policy and having built the line free of charge to the taxpayers. I fail to see why the Commonwealth Bank cannot finance capital expenditure on these works, for which each year we borrow large sums of money. Last year about £1,500,000 went in interest and sinking fund payments.

Last Tuesday morning the new member for Stirling was urgently summoned to Parliament House. I am sorry for him. He came to the front of the building in response to the summons, and we all know why he was urgently required here on Tuesday. He looked around the building and there was no welcoming committee for him. He came up the stairs into the centre hall, and still there was no welcoming committee.

Mr. Heaslip: You are wrong. There was a welcoming committee.

Mr. LAWN: Yes. A member of this Party escorted him around the building.

Mr. Heaslip: I met him on the steps outside and the welcome was shown on television that night.

Mr. LAWN: The honourable member dumped him on the steps where he met him. The new member came to the centre hall looking forlorn and lost, and had no-one to escort him around the building. I was not very far away but before I had the pleasure of showing him around the House, and extending the courtesy that should be extended to every new member, one of my colleagues beat me to it and did a good job. The honourable member did not have the welcome that has been extended to other members because his colleagues did not know whether he was for or against the Government. The honourable member will

learn as time goes on. We have a master, of course, and whilst in recent years there has been a little bit of unrest—

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: He did not have to sign a pledge before being nominated.

Mr. LAWN: I have not signed the pledge, either. The new member has to learn how the Party business is made up. On the other side they have a master. In recent years a certain amount of unrest has been displayed on that side of the Committee. This session there have been signs of unrest, but also a fair amount of rumbling from the back benches. Whether it is going to come out into open rebellion I have doubts, because I would back the master, who was not there to welcome the new member because he did not know whether he was for the Government. Then we have another group led by Little Lord Fauntleroy. It is an "against" group. They were not too sure whether the new member was against the Government or not. New members are subjected to a test before they are sure. I would have introduced the new member if I had had the pleasure of escorting him through the building, as the member for Rocky River should have done.

Mr. Heaslip: He did it.

Mr. LAWN: The honourable member said he dumped the new member on the front steps after having the television picture taken, and then he went around to look after his directorships. The new member has to learn how the Party system is made up. It has its "highbrow". I do not know whether he has any prowess in sport or not, but the Party opposite is renowned for having one of the greatest dancers in South Australia. Everyone will say that he is an expert in doing the twist. I believe that he is known as a greater performer of the circular waltz. It is peculiar how he can be an expert at the circular waltz because he can only keep in step with himself. As the master knows, I would hate to be a partner of his. Then they have the member for Bolivar.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. LAWN: They have a Casanova and a Minister for Air. I am rather taken with the Minister for Air. He is one of the most likeable chaps on the other side. He is placid, peaceful, yet most purposeful. Every day between five minutes to two and two o'clock we see him come through the door in a vigorous and determined manner and take his seat, and we can bet our last dollar that he will engage in the same routine. I envy the honourable member because when I watch him I think of the three "C's", because he looks cool, calm

and collected. I understand he is to be subjected to a pre-selection ballot. A letter was sent to the writer of the Mr. Adelaide's Diary in the last issue of the *Sunday Mail* inquiring about the honourable member. I do not know the person who wrote the letter, but I can assure him that the Minister for Air, although much older, is a fitter man than I am, despite his age. Whether or not a man is capable of carrying out his duties in Parliament does not depend solely upon the matter contained in that gentleman's letter. As a matter of fact, the late member for Stirling was a much older man than I, but he was a much more vigorous man than I am, so age is not everything.

I think the other side of the House has all the glory. It has the member with the tooth-paste smile; I refer to Little Lord Fauntleroy. When he comes into Parliament House he does not wear his lace collar, but he looks cute in a lace collar strutting along swinging that pint-sized umbrella and with a couple of Peter Pan novels tucked under his arm. When he goes into the Party room—I believe he was there yesterday morning—the master does not call him Little Lord Fauntleroy: he calls him Peter Pan—the little boy who refused to grow up. The member for Stirling will learn more about his colleagues in Parliament, for time will teach, and I wish him the best.

While I was speaking somebody made a remark about the electors' votes, and I promised the honourable member that I would tell him how they voted on September 28. The Australian Labor Party had not run a candidate for the Assembly District of Stirling since 1944, and I will not bother to go back that far for figures because I do not know what they were and even if I did I should be charged with comparing these results with something that happened 19 years ago. In any event, a redistribution has caused an alteration in the district since that date. In 1961, a Commonwealth election was held, I think on December 9. The Liberal and Country League—

Mr. Clark: Was that before it called itself the Liberal Country Party?

Mr. LAWN: Its members only call it the L.C.P. in the country districts at the time of a general election, otherwise it is known as the L.C.L.

Mr. Clark: Is there any reason for that?

Mr. LAWN: This year, of course, there has been talk of the Country Party sending an organizer into South Australia to organize a party here, and as a result we have

occasionally seen a reference to "L.C.P." On December 9, 1961, the L.C.L. Senate candidates polled 4,238 votes in that district compared with 1,582 for the A.L.P. I have given the combined vote of the two subdivisions of Strathalbyn and Victor Harbour, and can give the separate figures if necessary.

Mr. Ryan: I did not know there were so many misguided people down there.

Mr. LAWN: The L.C.L. vote represented 72.8 per cent and the A.L.P. vote 27.2 per cent. On the same day people in that district voted for the House of Representatives. Dr. Forbes was the L.C.L. candidate.

Mr. Ryan: Call me Jim!

Mr. LAWN: Yes, "Call me Jim" on the day he is canvassing for an election, but the day after that he does not want to know you! He polled 4,156 votes, and the A.L.P. candidate, Mr. Alcock, polled 1,811—percentages of 69.6 and 30.4 respectively. Now we come to September 28 of this year. Mr. McAnaney, representing the L.C.L., polled 4,089 and Mr. Stevens, representing the A.L.P., polled 2,273, representing 64.2 per cent and 35.8 per cent, respectively. It is obvious from those figures that the Labor Party vote increased considerably, whether compared with the Senate vote of 1961 or the House of Representatives vote in the same year. It is apparent that whenever the people have an opportunity to cast their vote for or against this Government the vote against is considerably increased. I do not have the figures available for the Yorke Peninsula by-election, but that showed that thousands more voted for the A.L.P. candidate on that occasion than had done so on the previous occasion. In conclusion, I wish to make a few brief references to some of the matters contained in—

Mr. Coumbe: The Budget?

Mr. LAWN: I have been speaking to the Budget all the afternoon: I have not been indulging in trapeze flying like the honourable member Little Sir Echo.

Mr. Coumbe: We have been waiting patiently.

Mr. LAWN: I think the honourable member must have been asleep, because I have made many comments on the Budget.

Mr. Clark: You must have; you have not been out of order.

Mr. LAWN: I refer now to the Auditor-General's Report, which must be related to the Budget. On page 177, when commenting on the Woods and Forests Department, the Auditor-General stated that there was a surplus in the department of £740,000, and that £360,000 of that was paid into general revenue.

Although the forests were established in a small way prior to 1924, it was the Gunn Government of 1924 that intensified the plantings in the South-East forests. For some years now about £250,000 every year—and £360,000 this year—has been paid into the general revenue of the State by the department.

Mr. Riehes: The Butler Government wanted to sell the forests.

Mr. LAWN: Yes. In 1924 the A.L.P. members were sitting on the other side, and when the Gunn Government invested money in the South-East forests the L.C.L. members who then occupied this side said the scheme would become a white elephant. Members today can see whether or not the L.C.L. members of those days had any foresight.

Mr. Bywaters: We were told the same thing about the Snowy Mountains scheme.

Mr. LAWN: On one prorogation night the Treasurer pointed out that what we said was recorded in *Hansard* and could be held against us. What was said in this House in 1924 certainly can be held to the detriment of the L.C.L., because its members said then that the money the Gunn Government was spending in the South-East forests would be wasted and that the scheme would become a white elephant.

On page 242 the Auditor-General refers to the State Bank surplus of £225,000, surpassing by £58,000 the record surplus in 1962 of £167,000. On page 202 reference is made to the Electricity Trust of South Australia with a surplus of £137,000. It would be better for this to go into either State revenue or as reimbursement to the trust than as a surplus to the old Adelaide Electric Supply Company. These are some departments where the Government is indulging in these business undertakings instead of leaving everything to private enterprise, and consequently taxpayers are receiving the benefit.

Mr. Loveday: Government members went to Stirling and said that South Australia would have Socialism if we won the by-election.

Mr. LAWN: We have much semi-Socialism at present. There is our State Bank, which is the people's bank. There is the Savings Bank also: that is an example of Socialism. It is Socialism not merely because it is our property and belongs to the people but because it is being used in the interests of the people and I challenge any member of the Government to say that the State Bank is not being used in the interests of primary producers and other people in this State.

Mr. Jennings: It could be used to better advantage.

Mr. LAWN: Yes, and to a greater extent. The Woods and Forests Department has been re-investing much of its profits in its business and has been contributing about £250,000 or more yearly to the revenue of the State for some years. On this occasion it has made a similar contribution. The honourable member for Whyalla reminds me that all sorts of statements were made during the recent by-election campaign. In fact I do not know whether the Minister of Lands was correctly reported, but in the *Advertiser* of September 24 he was reported as saying that if the Labor Party came into power following the by-election it would mean a dictatorship.

Mr. Loveday: He should know something about it.

Mr. LAWN: Yes, he is part of one. At the time the honourable gentleman made that statement there were 19 members on this side, 10 representing country districts and nine representing the metropolitan area. Had we been successful in Stirling there would have been 11 members representing country interests and nine in the metropolitan area. Yet he had the audacity to say that a dictatorship by the metropolitan area would exist if the Labor candidate won that by-election!

The Government Printing and Stationery Department is referred to on page 185 of the Auditor-General's Report as showing a surplus of £4,418. It is a wonder these great supporters of private enterprise have not attempted to get rid of the Printing Office. The honourable gentleman representing Rocky River is interested in a printing establishment in the city; perhaps we could give the business to him. I do not know whether that could be done under our Constitution. Can a member of Parliament trade with the Government? Possibly that is the only reason why the Government has not been interested in closing it down. If so, we are fortunate to have a Constitution that gives us some benefit.

On page 184 there is an item which is ever-important but which could become more important; and it is socialistic! It is the reference to the Government Insurance Fund. Unfortunately, this caters only for Government departmental insurance and is not available to the public. In the other States where there are State insurance companies available to the public, they are making handsome profits and paying better benefits, and their policy is subsequently followed in most cases by the other insurance companies.

Mr. Shannon: Have you looked at the last return of the New South Wales State Insurance Office?

Mr. LAWN: I did a couple of years ago and it was showing a handsome surplus. The workmen's compensation benefits paid by that office surpass anything else that I know of in Australia. They are practically double the benefits paid in South Australia.

Mr. Shannon: I like the word "practically"; it is a watering down.

Mr. LAWN: The honourable gentleman is agreeing with me that this Government is practically on the way out. I have been saying that for a long time, and he has come around to help me at last. He has always been opposed to me hitherto. It is only the casting vote of the Speaker that keeps this Government in power.

Mr. Ryan: He is uneasy.

Mr. LAWN: After the next election there will not be the casting vote of the Speaker to keep the Government in. On page 102 of the Auditor-General's Report there is a reference to £110,000 surplus in the Harbors Board Department. On page 232 a surplus of £257,000 of the S.A. Housing Trust is referred to. The Housing Trust over the years has made much money, which has been re-invested in its business. Assuming that the housing of people were left to private enterprise, we would not have the assets that we now have in the Housing Trust standing to the credit of the people nor would the people occupy reasonably decent houses. I admit they are a little small, but they are much better than they would get from private landlords and the rent is lower.

Mr. Ryan: Isn't that Socialism?

Mr. LAWN: Of course it is. The only reason that the Electricity Trust and the Housing Trust are not entirely socialistic is that they are not subject to Ministerial control or the direction of this Parliament: they are semi-socialistic.

Mr. Ryan: Didn't Government members tell the people in Stirling that we would introduce such socialistic schemes?

Mr. LAWN: That was the implication. In conclusion, at page 210 of the report is shown a surplus of £37,000 made by the Leigh Creek Coal Board. Leigh Creek coal has been providing a surplus for many years. It is better that this £37,000 should be going into the pockets of the taxpayers than into the pockets of private enterprise.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.47 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, October 8, at 2 p.m.