

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.**

Wednesday, August 12, 1964.

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

**QUESTIONS.****WATER SUPPLY GRANT.**

Mr. HALL: While reading the excellent report in this morning's *Advertiser* of the Commonwealth Treasurer's Budget speech, I noticed the following reference to a water supply subsidy for Western Australia:

A number of projects submitted to us by State Governments have been under consideration . . . we have now decided to offer financial assistance to an extension of the Comprehensive Water Supply Scheme in Western Australia under which water will be reticulated to farms and towns in regions to the north and east of Northam and east of Narrogin. Subject to the Government of Western Australia matching our contribution on a pound-for-pound basis, we will make advances to that Government up to a maximum of £5,250,000.

Can the Premier say whether this marks a new field in which the Commonwealth Government will assist State expenditure? If it does, is South Australia likely to receive assistance in providing similar water schemes throughout its agricultural areas?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: From time to time, over a number of years, Western Australia has received from the Commonwealth assistance in regard to water reticulation. It is not precisely a new line on the Commonwealth Estimates: it has been on and off over the last 15 years, during which time slight assistance has been given to Western Australia for water reticulation. If I were asked whether this was favouritism to Western Australia, I think, to be fair, I would have to answer that it was not, for South Australia gets substantial assistance through the River Murray Waters Agreement under which the Commonwealth pays a quarter of the cost and South Australia and the other two States pay a quarter each. Of the capital expenditure of £14,000,000 on the Chowilla dam, which will be of immense value to this State, South Australia will provide only £3,500,000. The Eastern States, through the River Murray Commission, have had assistance from the Commonwealth Government for water reticulation. In those circumstances, I do not consider that we can fittingly criticize any assistance given to Western Australia, which has large and extremely dry areas and also has the same problem as we have in South Australia concerning water reticulation.

**USED CAR INSPECTIONS.**

Mr. HUTCHENS: On August 4, an article in the *Advertiser*, headed "Regular Car Check Urged", stated:

Compulsory annual inspection for road-worthiness of all motor vehicles was urged at the annual conference of the Chamber of Automotive Industries of Australia, which ended in Adelaide yesterday. . . The system in New South Wales, in which cars were inspected annually, had proved to be the cheapest and most effective way of maintaining safety standards.

In today's *Advertiser* appears a letter, over the signature of Mr. D. W. Daly, General Secretary of the South Australian Automobile Chamber of Commerce, in which he urges support for the automotive industries' policy and states that manufacturers today produce vehicles requiring little servicing. Mr. Daly points out that annual inspections would protect buyers of secondhand cars and would create a greater degree of road safety. Because of the urgency of this matter, will the Premier say whether the Government has considered introducing legislation to provide for annual inspections of motor vehicles?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Government has not made a detailed investigation, although the matter has been mentioned once or twice. As far as I can remember no formal document has been signed or a decision made. I have some reservations about the usefulness of this policy because, as all honourable members who drive cars know, any car—even the best—at any time can have a mechanical fault. If the vehicle is tested today it does not mean that it will be mechanically perfect tomorrow as faults can occur. A matter that could be considered by Cabinet is for a certificate to be made available for every car sold secondhand. This scheme would have merit and, although some costs would be involved, I believe a proper certificate would assist the secondhand dealer and the purchaser, who would know from the certificate the value of the car and its condition. If this scheme were properly policed the public could benefit from it. Cabinet is not considering any proposals for such a scheme at present.

**RIVER PARA BRIDGE.**

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: Has the Minister of Works received from the Minister of Roads the information that I sought regarding the proposal to build a new bridge across the River Para at Tanunda South?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I have received a report from my colleague, which states:

I have today approved of the calling of departmental tenders for the construction of a steel and reinforced concrete bridge on the North Para River, near Tanunda at section 644, hundred of Moorooroo on the Tanunda-Gomer-sal M.R. No. 116. The structure consists of 3 No. 47ft. spans with a 20ft. wide effective roadway width between kerb faces on a deck with an overall width of 28ft. 6in. The deck is carried on four lines of plated 24in. x 7½in. x 95 lb. R.S.J.'s. Spill through abutment footings and pier footings are sealed on prestressed concrete piled foundations. The total estimated cost is £28,000.

#### OFF-COURSE BETTING.

Mr. CASEY: Rumours have been circulating that the Premier has now decided the issue of a totalizator agency board. If he has, what are his recommendations to Cabinet? As the Premier said two weeks ago that he would make a statement on T.A.B. within two weeks, will he make a statement now? If he has decided to recommend the establishment of T.A.B. offices, does he recommend as many offices as were reported to be desired by the racing clubs, namely, between 60 and 100 in the metropolitan area, as well as others in large country centres, and a central metropolitan agency for all telephone bets?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: True, I said I would make a statement on this matter after Cabinet had considered it. Cabinet has considered it and has approved of certain recommendations which are being conveyed to the racing clubs that made the first submissions to me. Those recommendations will, I hope, be delivered to the clubs concerned this afternoon. As they should be in transit at the moment I shall not make a statement until the information has been supplied to the people who made the original submissions.

#### KAPUNDA RAIL SERVICE.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked on July 29 regarding an improvement to the Kapunda rail service?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: My colleague, the Minister of Railways, informs me that it is the intention of the Railways Department to build new passenger cars for use on the Kapunda line and other country lines relatively close to the metropolitan area. The project provides for the construction of nine power cars and three trailer cars, estimated to cost in all £600,000. In the programme for construction at the Islington workshops, and having regard to the probable amount of Loan funds that would be made available, this project has been included in the 1968-69 projective estimates.

However, it would be possible to fit in the construction of some of these vehicles somewhat earlier should the Government so desire.

#### ROAD TAX.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to a question I asked regarding a letter from a Mr. Schiller relating to the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The honourable member read a copy of a letter from Mr. Schiller to me during a recent debate and later asked me whether I would let him know the contents of the reply. I have now replied to Mr. Schiller and I ask leave to read my letter, which is rather lengthy.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: My letter to Mr. Schiller states:

I refer to your letter of July 17 wherein you wrote to me protesting against the charges levied under the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act. This Act is not administered by me and your letter would have been more appropriately directed to the Premier. However, as Members of Cabinet accept a joint responsibility and because of the wide publicity which this letter has evidently received, I propose not to pass it to the Premier for reply. The Government is very conscious of the importance of primary production in this State and of the need for adequate road services to serve all sections of the community. In the time that I have been a member of the Government, I have travelled widely throughout South Australia and have noted the extremely fine road system that we have in this State. This has been consistently improved in spite of the tremendous increase in the number of motor vehicles and the financial pressures inherent in road construction.

On a recent visit to towns on Eyre Peninsula, I noticed the very heavy road programme being undertaken there. Indeed, Ceduna was reached from Adelaide in a comfortable day's travel. I understand that it is the plan that within two years that town will be completely connected by bitumen to Adelaide, as is the present position between Port Lincoln and Adelaide. All this and other road works throughout the State require very heavy finance. You are no doubt aware of the constitutional difficulty of levying contributions for road maintenance from transports operating in interstate trade. It is not possible to obtain road contributions from such transports that are not equally applied within the State. Before the introduction of the Road Maintenance Act, many of these interstate road transports were operating without making any contribution whatever to the road services in this State. The position from the point of view of South Australians was growing rapidly worse, as the use of the roads was increasing at a great rate, and also because of the tendency of large industries to abandon the railway system in favour of a transport system which was getting

free use of its track. This matter had to be dealt with.

The Government could have chosen to introduce a Bill similar to that operating in other States. If it is accepted that something had to be done to avoid further deterioration in road finances, the Government had to decide at what levels the tax should be levied. It was reasoned that the great majority of farmers' vehicles would fall in the category of below eight ton capacity, and it therefore considered that the least possible burden would be placed on primary producers by selecting this figure. It is inevitable that some producers will be affected directly by owning vehicles of this size, and it is also clear that considerable amounts of freight to and from farms will be carried in taxable vehicles. Whilst every way possible was chosen to see that as little burden as possible would fall upon primary producers, it was in no way feasible to eliminate all effect upon them without invalidating the Act.

The Government has accepted in very many ways the desirability of financial assistance to primary industry. The assumption of responsibility for the unprofitable killing works at Port Lincoln, the heavy subsidies to extend electricity to farms, and the reduction in rates for electricity are examples of the way in which primary industry is helped. Indeed, only a fraction of the cost of the extensive road system on Eyre Peninsula would have been paid by the primary producers there. The extension of water supplies in country areas has long been an added cost to the taxpayer—for instance, whilst the average cost of water to the consumer on Eyre Peninsula is 2s. 6d. per thousand gallons, the actual cost approximates 17s. In very many other ways primary production has been assisted by the Government. I applaud this assistance and consider that it is most desirable. However, in this matter of road maintenance, you will see that it is just not possible to levy heavy road transport for a fair contribution without having some effect upon the primary producer. You will, I think, agree that this is made as small a burden as possible without totally invalidating the Act.

I note that the letter you have written me was copied in roneo and it appears to have been widely circulated. It was read in Parliament by Mr. R. R. Loveday, M.P., the Labor member for Whyalla, and on a subsequent day Mr. Loveday asked me to read out the terms of my reply to you. In the circumstances, you will appreciate that I am forced to conclude that this matter is being turned into an issue of Party politics. The most unsavoury aspect of this is that the Road Maintenance Bill was passed in all stages in Parliament last year without any adverse votes. Indeed, Mr. Loveday evidently did not think it was necessary to comment as the *Hansard* record shows that he said nothing about the Bill at any stage of its passage through Parliament. This belated interest only follows the very natural interest of hauliers and primary producers. I urge you to regard your present objection to the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act with the widest possible view and not in the narrow isolation of Party argument.

#### DESALINATION.

Mr. CUMBE: My question concerns desalination. Is the Minister of Works aware of a recent publication in the United States of America wherein President Johnson is reported to have said that America had achieved an economic break-through in the use of large-scale reactors for commercial power which offered a dramatic prospect of transforming seawater into water suitable for human consumption and industrial use? Also, is the Minister aware that the Russian newspaper *Pravda* has reported recently that a large plant designed in Russia can compete successfully with modern sources of water supply? Can the Minister assure the House that officers of the Government are keeping abreast of the latest developments so that, if and when desalination is necessary in South Australia, they will be conversant with all of the latest technological advances?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I am regularly in touch personally with sources of information on this matter and I receive reports in technical and other journals from world sources on the latest developments in desalination and the progress being made in that form of research. I know also that the Engineer-in-Chief is on the mailing list of all worthwhile technical journals and receives information. From time to time we compare notes about this in our regular discussions. Recently I saw a publication from the U.S.A. that I read with care, but I did not find in it (although it was a lengthy article and purported to be something new and important) anything that I had not seen before in a similar form in other publications. Vast publicity is emanating from the United States in particular on this matter but frequently, as I have already suggested, it is merely a rehash of something that has previously been put forward. I agree, however, that the important factor in the success of desalination is the cost of power. I have not heard from any atomic energy sources of any break-through in the use of large-scale reactors for commercial power which would be an important factor. I did not see the particular publication to which the honourable member referred, and which reported the comments of the President of the United States. As I am not a regular subscriber to *Pravda*, I have not seen any article that may have appeared in that journal. I repeat that success in this field depends entirely on the cost of power for any known system of desalination. I believe that, until some new approach is made to the problem of desalination either by the use of a catalyst or some other chemical or

physical agency, there is little prospect of real success in desalination from the cost point of view. I believe that a different approach is necessary before success can be achieved. Of course, improvement is being effected in eliminating scale in multi-flash and other similar types of desalination that tend to reduce the cost of the process somewhat and also allow higher temperatures and pressures to be used in the evaporative process. However, beyond that point I am not aware of any major break-through in this problem.

#### MOUNT GAMBIER SEWERAGE.

Mr. BURDON: My question concerns matters arising from the recent provision of sewerage at Mount Gambier and domestic water supplies. Rate notices are already being received by residents for this service as the mains and some connection points have been installed. A few people have actually had the sewers connected, but others, because of financial difficulties including the high cost of connection and alterations, have not as yet been able to avail themselves of the service. These people have had to pay the same charges as those who have received the service. In view of my previous and present requests on behalf of my constituents, will the Minister of Works consider a reduction in the present rate of 2s. in the pound on the annual assessed value for sewerage, and a reduction to 7½ per cent for domestic water supplies, as applies in the metropolitan and Elizabeth areas?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The answer to the latter part of the honourable member's question is "No". The Government has not yet seen its way clear to effect the reductions the honourable member requests. The cost of the sewerage scheme at Mount Gambier, and indeed in any country town, is extremely high. The honourable member may not know it, but about 18 months ago the Government did reduce the sewerage rate in country towns. That action was an earnest of our good intentions to keep the costs as low as possible. There is another way, however, in which householders, finding the cost of connections difficult to meet, may be helped. Any householder who finds that the cost of a connection from the department's point at the boundary of the property to the house is beyond his financial resources has available to him assistance from the department concerning the capital cost. Under this scheme the department will advance the necessary money that the householder cannot provide and this sum must be repaid over

a period. That is not a system that the Government can extend generally throughout the State, but it aims to help those people who need help. If the honourable member cares to make representations to the department on behalf of individuals or cares to make his representations to me, I shall try to see that they are considered sympathetically so that the people can have the use of this amenity at the earliest possible time.

#### GRAPE PRICES.

Mr. CURREN: I seek permission to read a letter I have received from the Upper Murray Grapegrowers' Association of South Australia, which states:

The committee of the Upper Murray Grape-growers' Association has requested me to write to you and ask if you would read the following from the floor of the House, and at the conclusion ask the Hon. Sir Thomas Playford, the Premier, a question.

During the recent wine grape harvest the Premier made funds available to the Wine-grape Growers' Association through the State Bank to finance an Emergency Co-operative Pool to process some hundreds of tons of wine grapes that would otherwise have been left to rot on the vines. This is the first time in the history of the South Australian wine industry that this has had to be done. The reason for this is that the wine makers took in a large tonnage of sultanas, not because they are a good wine grape, but because they are £5 a ton cheaper than the majority of other grape varieties which they displace. Neither New South Wales nor Victoria use sultanas in similar comparative volume to South Australia.

The letter was signed by Mr. Lou Nuske, honorary secretary. Will the Premier take up with the Prices Commissioner the advisability of increasing the price of sultanas to the wine-making industry, so that it is more in keeping with the price of other varieties purchased by winemakers?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have discussed this matter with the Prices Commissioner, but a problem exists about which I do not want to speak this afternoon, for time is not available. I will have the contents of the letter specifically examined and will inform the honourable member of the results.

#### AFFORESTATION.

Mr. HARDING: A rumour from a fairly reliable source is current that South Australian officials have been negotiating to purchase land in Victoria adjacent to the South Australian border for the purpose of afforestation. Can the Minister of Forests

say whether this is false, and whether any Australian State can establish a softwood forest in another State?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: This rumour is not correct. I do not know where it started, but the Woods and Forests Department in this State does not intend to buy land in Victoria. I would not like to say whether it could, but I should think it unlikely.

#### GAUGE STANDARDIZATION.

Mr. McKEE: It was announced last night in the Commonwealth Budget that the Commonwealth Government would make available £15,000 for surveying the Port Pirie to Adelaide railway line for standardization purposes. Can the Premier say whether this work will be carried out soon?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Two or three days ago I had a letter from the Prime Minister about this matter, but as the Railways Commissioner was not available at that time I made the letter available to the Deputy Commissioner. I have been unable to consider the implications of the letter, but the £15,000 in the Estimates covered the survey cost. No work on the line has been contemplated, nor has any been approved. I will let the honourable member have a more conclusive report when the full contents of the letter have been examined.

#### STUDENTS' DRIVING INSTRUCTION.

Mrs. STEELE: I understand that recently the Minister of Education in Western Australia approved, in the interests of road safety, practical driving—

The SPEAKER: Order! If the honourable member wishes to explain her question she must get the permission of the Speaker and the concurrence of the House.

Mrs. STEELE: May I have leave to explain my question?

Leave granted.

Mrs. STEELE: I understand that recently the Minister of Education in Western Australia approved, in the interests of road safety, practical driver-training for students at senior high schools. Has the Minister of Education any information about a similar scheme operating in South Australia?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: Although no really similar scheme operates here, for the last four or five years the Education Department has been working closely with the Commissioner of Police and his officers on the instruction of the older students in our secondary schools in driver training. Each year the

Commissioner holds at his Advanced Training Wing a series of courses for our older students. Each of these courses are attended by 25 to 30 students. There is no doubt that those students who complete these courses derive considerable advantage from them. The Education Department is considering ways in which a larger number of the older students in our secondary schools may receive this instruction each year and hopes to have full details of the Western Australian scheme shortly. When these details are available and other aspects have been further considered, the Director will submit a report for my consideration.

#### CHILDREN'S PROTECTION ACT.

Mr. DUNSTAN: Can the Premier say whether the Government intends to proceed with the legislation to amend the Children's Protection Act, which was on the Notice Paper last session but lapsed?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I believe that this is the Government's intention. If my memory is correct several matters were approved to be introduced in the Legislative Council. However, I will check and inform the honourable member tomorrow.

#### ROAD GRANTS.

Mr. RICHES: An item in today's *News* states that South Australia is to receive an additional £4,400,000 from the Commonwealth as announced in the Budget last night, and £500,000 of that will be an increased roads grant. Can the Premier say whether more money will be available to spend on South Australian roads, and if it is, whether grants that have been reduced can be restored to the sums councils previously expected to receive?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The sums announced by the Commonwealth Treasurer last night are the sums loaned to South Australia. I point out to the honourable member that previously a substantial credit was available in the Highways Fund. Last year the Commissioner of Highways achieved a higher rate of spending than previously. That would naturally increase any previous credit that existed. This year the only funds available to him will not be by way of a carry-over but only by way of those funds that come forward this year. Therefore, although his revenues are somewhat higher than last year, the Commissioner is forced to spend about £1,000,000 less this year than last year. That does not result in additional revenue to his department for it was not voted in the Commissioner's annual road programme.

## ELECTRICAL TRADES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: A recent decision by Commissioner Winter concerning the electrical trades awarded marginal increases of 15s. a week for tradesmen and proportionate increases for other classifications. I understand that the Electricity Trust is appealing against this decision. With a view to maintaining the satisfactory industrial relationships that have existed between the trust and the union, will the Premier consult with trust officers to have these increases agreed to, or insist that the full amount as awarded be paid to the persons concerned?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: It was reported to me by Sir Fred Drew that the Electricity Trust would appeal against the decision, but the appeal was based on rather a different issue from that mentioned by the honourable Leader. The Electricity Trust has often made payments to its employees in excess of determinations and it has earned the reputation of being an extremely generous employer. Indeed, I hope that the trust maintains that reputation. It does, in fact, in many cases pay amounts additional to those awarded by the court. One reason for the recent decision could have serious implications for this State. I speak subject to correction, but I believe that the State of Tasmania, which was similarly affected by this award, also appealed against it, so it is not something that is merely based on denying employees a couple of shillings, or whatever the sum is. A matter of principle is involved as to the way in which the award is made up, and the trust believes that that should be resolved. I assure the honourable Leader that the trust greatly appreciates the necessity to foster good personal relationships with its employees, and I also assure him that

the trust enjoys a certain amount of confidence on the part of its employees. A certain issue appeared to the trust to be important, and the trust believed that it should be referred to the appropriate authority for further consideration.

## PLUMBERS.

Mr. HUTCHENS: On Thursday last I asked a question concerning the shortage of plumbers and referred to a press statement which reported that the shortage was due to the refusal of the Prices Department to grant increased prices. I said at that time that I did not subscribe to that view. Has the Premier a reply to that question?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I shall quote from a report which I have received from the Prices Commissioner:

The newspaper reports to which the honourable member for Hindmarsh referred were apparently part of pressure tactics brought to bear on the Prices Department while it had under consideration an application by the Master Plumbers' Association for increased charge-up rates. (These tactics were employed by a series of correspondence and phone calls to the department, also adverse press statements). It is noted that one of the reports quoted a spokesman for the Plumbers' Union as saying that real estate agents were making inroads into the plumbing trades by setting themselves up as builders and putting a price on work to be done by the plumber, which was often less than that stipulated by the Prices Department. It has been known for some time that plumbers are often doing work at less than the maximum rates approved by the department. Although some plumbers are leaving the industry, the rate is only the normal rate due to deaths, retirement and various private considerations. Replacements appear to have more than covered any wastage.

Regulations under the Sewerage Act 1929-55 require plumbers to be registered by the Engineering and Water Supply Department. Registrations with that department show:

	Year ended June 30.		
	1962.	1963.	1964.
Master Plumbers . . . . .	626	658	659
Registered Plumbers and Drainers (Qualified plumbers who work for a Master Plumber)	348	399	450
Provisional permits—issued to newly qualified apprentices and New Australians under supervision of a master or registered plumber . . . . .	265	269	298
	<u>1,239</u>	<u>1,326</u>	<u>1,407</u>

The above figures are for plumbers in the metropolitan area and for country towns with sewerage. There would be plumbers operating outside these areas who do not have to register,

but the upward trend shown by the above figures is most significant. From May 31, 1960, to date, wages rates for plumbers have increased by 1s. 10.8d. an hour. Allowing for annual

leave, public holidays, sick pay, etc., the increased cost of labour amounts to 2s. 3.1d. an hour over this period. As against the increased cost, charge rates for plumbing work done on new homes have been increased by 3s. 6d. an hour and plumbing work done on older homes by 4s. 6d. an hour, and in addition a new rate has been struck for industrial work, which is 6s. 6d. an hour above the base rate of 15s. an hour which operated up to May 30, 1960. Current plumbing rates, including increases approved by the Commissioner on July 2, 1964, are as follows:

	Current maximum rate per hour.	Increase granted per hour.
	s. d.	s. d.
New work . . . . .	18 6	1 3
Work on occupied homes . . . . .	19 6	1 3
Industrial work . . . . .	21 6	New rate.

I consider the so-called shortage of plumbers to be an exaggerated statement, and if any

shortage does exist it is certainly no more acute than the position in a number of other industries as was outlined to the House by the honourable the Treasurer in his initial reply on this matter.

In this instance I am pleased to see that one of my officers agrees with me.

**AGED CITIZENS CLUBS.**

Mr. CUMBE: Recently I asked the Premier for information regarding the subsidies claimed by local councils in helping establish senior citizens clubs in their districts under the Aged Citizens Clubs (Subsidies) Act. Has the Premier that information?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Applications for assistance for the establishment of aged citizens clubs have been received from the following councils:

	Maximum Subsidy Approved.	Comments.
	£	
Glenelg . . . . .	3,000	Not yet claimed.
St. Peters . . . . .	3,000	Not yet claimed.
Unley . . . . .	550	Not yet claimed.
Walkerville . . . . .	2,000	Not yet claimed.
Wallaroo . . . . .	300	£237 paid for renovating Institute Hall for use as aged citizens club.
West Torrens . . . . .	2,623	£2,551 paid.

In addition to the above, the Corporation of the City of Prospect has inquired about a subsidy but has not submitted a firm application to date.

**BEEF ROADS.**

Mr. CASEY: According to the Commonwealth Budget, it seems that the Commonwealth Government has once again seen fit to overlook South Australia's urgent requirements for a subsidy for beef roads. Will the Premier consider placing these roads under the direct control of the Minister of Roads, in accordance with the suggestions I made in the Address in Reply debate yesterday, so that a direct approach can then be made to the Commonwealth Government?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: As this question involves policy, I ask the honourable member to put it on notice.

**FLINDERS GUMS.**

Mr. RICHES: Has the Minister of Works a reply to a question I asked recently concerning the ring-barking of gums in the Flinders Ranges?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The Engineer-in-Chief states that there is no departmental record of a waterworks reserve in the vicinity

of Spear Creek. A two-chain road follows Spear Creek for a distance of three miles in which a waterworks pipeline is laid which is used for diverting water from Spear Creek into the Port Augusta system. The Department's only interest in the area is the pipeline and headworks within the two-chain road, which is unfenced. I think the Engineer-in-Chief means that that is the department's only official interest, for it would not be correct to say that he had no interest in the area in a general way. Portion of the land in this area is used as a picnic ground, and the gums referred to may lie within the road or they could be on private property. There has been no departmental activity in this area for some time, and from inquiries made the Regional Engineer has ascertained that no employee of this department was responsible for the damage to the trees. I know that the honourable member would desire me to continue research into this matter to see if any further light can be thrown on it, and I shall be happy to do that.

**FISHING LICENCE.**

Mr. CURREN: It has been brought to my notice by a fisherman living at Renmark and formerly working a fishing reach near Lyrup

that his licence to fish the reach has been terminated because through an oversight and sickness he failed to renew his licence on the due date. I understand that several other fishermen on the river are in a similar plight, in one instance as a result of illiteracy. Will the Minister of Agriculture have this matter investigated and report to the House?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: If the honourable member will give me the details of the people concerned I shall investigate the matter.

#### WHYALLA DEVELOPMENT.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Has the Minister of Lands a reply to my recent question concerning plans for the development of Whyalla?

The Hon. P. H. QUIRKE: The honourable member stated that from time to time the Lands Department and the Housing Trust had presented to the Whyalla City Commission plans relating to a single area of the next development, and he went on to say:

This, of course, prevents the local government body from seeing its way very far into the future.

He asked whether it was possible to have a plan that would be more complete and enable the council to see at least some years ahead. The reply is that there are still many undetermined factors in the extension and future development of the town of Whyalla, such as designs for sewerage and a possible new tramway to be installed by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited, which make it essential to retain flexibility in the design for future extensions of the town. A plan has been made available by the South Australian Housing Trust showing the proposed routes of major roads and a copy of this plan has been supplied to the City of Whyalla Commission. The plan does not contain sufficient information to be regarded as a master plan, and it could be subject to alteration in the light of events in the future, but it does, nevertheless, give some guide to future extensions as contemplated at present. The planning authorities have a more detailed concept of future proposals than is shown on the plan, but in view of the necessity to retain flexibility to meet possible future developments, the proposals cannot be regarded as definite until all the factors which could necessitate alterations, have been determined. This will not be possible in the immediate future.

#### NORWOOD GIRLS TECHNICAL SCHOOL.

Mr. DUNSTAN: Has the Minister of Education a reply to my recent question concerning the resiting of the Norwood Girls Technical High School?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: Following my visit to Norwood with the honourable member and the Director of Education, I have received and approved of the Director's recommendations: first, that the present Norwood Girls Technical High School at Osmond Terrace should be closed and should be consolidated to the Kensington Girls Technical High School when the new buildings necessary for this purpose at Lossie Street are completed; and, secondly, that the name of the school at that time could well be the Kensington-Norwood Girls Technical High School. Sketch plans for these new buildings at Lossie Street have now been completed and estimates are being prepared to enable the work to be referred to the Public Works Committee.

#### PUBLIC SERVICE.

Mr. HUTCHENS: I was contacted by a person who was somewhat annoyed and who alleged that persons applying for employment in the South Australian Public Service were asked to state their religion. I have not had time as yet to check with the Public Service Commissioner's office. Can the Premier say whether this allegation is correct and, if it is, can he say why the question is asked? As some people feel that the answer to the question could prejudice their chance of employment, can the Premier say whether, if the question is unnecessary, it can be deleted?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I do not know that any such question is asked. The honourable member has mentioned it and this is the first time I have heard about it. It certainly has no bearing on the person who is employed and I do not know of any reason why it should be asked. If it is asked, I shall instruct that it be not asked in future.

#### STURT RIVER.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question on the speeding up of work on the Sturt River dam?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The Leader's question concerned the use of explosives in relation to the speeding up of the work on the Sturt River dam that has been carried out for the south-western suburbs drainage scheme by the Engineer-in-Chief. The bulk excavation down to the original dam profile was taken out using explosives. On the date of the inspection by the Marion council, final trimming of the southern abutment was in progress and no blasting would have been permissible at that stage. The reference to



the danger to "cranes and other equipment" is apparently a reference to the preceding phase of excavation, which consisted in the removal of an average of 3ft. more of excavation from the southern abutment than originally proposed and trimming batters due to the revised shape of the dam. The claim that no explosives could be used for deepening during this phase is not regarded as valid. On a number of occasions the Senior Resident Engineer intimated to the contractor that he should use explosives because he felt it could be safely done using controlled blasting techniques. However, the contractor chose not to adopt them, as he considered the results to be achieved questionable and the risks great for such shallow holes.

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#### ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on the motion for adoption of the Address, which Mr. Frank Walsh had moved to amend.

(For wording of amendment see page 135.)

(Continued from August 11. Page 355.)

Mr. CLARK (Gawler): I thank members for their consideration in allowing me to continue my remarks from last night. I wish to make a few remarks about education. I had intended to have much to say about what I consider is the regrettable and, indeed, deplorable decision about school canteens, but in the circumstances I hope to save those remarks for a more suitable occasion that I trust will be soon. I have been most interested in recent months by the number of requests that have come to me from school committees and other bodies interested in schools about the slowness of getting done certain jobs that have been promised. I refer in particular to such jobs as new toilets, heating equipment for schools, shelter sheds and so on. I am always happy to receive members of school committees and those concerned with schools as are other honourable members, who have no doubt received numerous requests of a similar nature to those I have received. Usually the requests concern projects that have been promised for a considerable time or, perhaps, half-promised. In these cases, it seems that part of the work is in progress or that the school committee has eventually become weary or even disgusted by the fact that the projects have not been completed in a reasonable time. Therefore, they come to see their member about it. I believe that it would be much better if these projects (some of which

concern a considerable sum) could be gone on with and finished without so much delay. I have often wondered why the department could not have a special building division to do the smaller jobs, and indeed, in some cases, the larger ones. Every member knows that, when a new school is to be built in his district or an addition made to a school, before long he is inundated with inquiries by interested people about when the job will be finished and whether it will be completed when required. Frankly, over the last few years it has been almost impossible to find out when a particular job will be finished. We know that the department has many works in progress, but any delays accumulate and snowball. My district has been fortunate to have had new schools built.

Mr. Lawn: It has good representation.

Mr. CLARK: Some credit may be due to that, and as the member for Adelaide is so complimentary I do not see why I should not accept his compliment. Many new schools are being built and alterations made but some concern has been expressed whether new schools and the alterations and additions will be ready on time. Recently, I presented a deputation to the Minister of Education from the Elizabeth High School Council. This deputation was concerned about the new wing of the school being ready for occupation next year. The Minister did his best to satisfy the deputation but could not say with any certainty when the building would be ready. I am not blaming him. He assured us that he had an assurance from the Public Buildings Department that it would do everything it could to have the new wing ready, but that does not mean that it will be ready. If the Education Department had a building division no one would be able to accuse the Public Buildings Department and the Education Department of passing the buck from one to the other. I have heard that accusation made, too. I am concerned whether the new wing at the Elizabeth High School will be ready for the next school year. I understand that this school will have 1,600 on the roll at that time and if the new accommodation is not ready difficulties may arise in dealing with the overflow. The department, no doubt, will be hunting in the neighbouring schools to try to find additional accommodation for these students but this will not be easy.

Recently, the Public Works Committee approved a new high school at Elizabeth West (a second high school for Elizabeth) and another at Salisbury East, both to be completed in February, 1966. A total of 1,800

children expect to require accommodation at the existing Elizabeth High School by February 1966 and 826 at Salisbury High School. I urge that steps should be taken to ensure that these buildings are ready by 1966. This is not far ahead and the position would be impossible at these schools if they were not ready on time. I shudder to think of the situation in the schools if this should happen.

Recently the Minister of Education gave me a complete reply of the policy of grassing areas at schools, and summarizing, the Government provides the land, agrees to meet the cost of ground formation, half the cost of installation for water reticulation and watering, and half the cost of grassing. The Government accepts no responsibility for the cost of maintenance of the ground and facilities after they are put down. I was interested to hear the member for Burnside quoting the experience of a school in her district with this problem. I know, as does the Minister, that it is costly to provide these facilities and that funds are limited, but school committees are also limited in funds. Once the area is grassed it is the responsibility of the school committee. Perhaps the departmental subsidy could be two-thirds instead of half as at present.

The Hon. Sir Baden Pattinson: Can the honourable member suggest where I can get the money?

Mr. CLARK: I am not in a position to do that nor would I have the temerity to suggest such things to the Minister, but often school committees attempting to do this job have in their way just as big a problem in finding the money as has the Minister in a much larger field. In new areas where parents have other expenses apart from the schooling of the children, it becomes increasingly burdensome. I am not saying that people are complaining about it, but it is an additional burden, and a little more assistance would be much valued and appreciated. One matter that received much publicity at the time of the last Commonwealth elections but has not received so much since, is the increased number of Commonwealth scholarships that a beneficent Government has granted. A total of 951 additional scholarships worth up to £200 a year for two years have been awarded to South Australian and Northern Territory schools. The amount is made up of £100 maintenance fee paid directly to the parent or guardian of the scholarship winner and a second annual payment not to be more than £100 for school fees and books. These scholarships will benefit parents with children

at independent schools more than the parents of children attending departmental schools. It is gratifying to see more Commonwealth scholarships available although, as in the words we often hear the Premier use, "I should like to see more but . . ." We want to remember, that, although it is good to see this increase, the number falls far short of the best level of Commonwealth scholarships that existed in 1950. I know scholarships have virtually doubled since then but, indeed, they would have to be doubled again to attain the 1950 proportion. In 1950, 734 students gained the Leaving certificate; 434 applied for Commonwealth scholarships, 62 per cent of whom were successful. I am informed by a most reliable authority that in 1950 almost all the students who had a reasonable chance of success at the university were granted scholarships.

However, a different story emerges from the 1962 figures (which are the latest figures at my disposal.) In 1962, 3,336 students gained the Leaving certificate, 2,350 of whom applied for scholarships, but only about 20 per cent were successful. When comparing the 20 per cent that received scholarships in 1962 with the 62 per cent in 1950 the difference is obvious. In 1962 my reliable authority informs me that only about one-third who had a reasonable chance of success at the university were able to obtain scholarships, so it can be seen that the 750 additional scholarships that are now being made available fall a long way short of the proportionate number of students that obtained scholarships in 1950. I appeal to honourable members, if they have any influence at all with their Commonwealth colleagues, to use that influence and to see whether the Prime Minister will increase the number of scholarships to even more than the present number. Members on both sides of the House would be surprised if I were not to support the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. Indeed, of course, I am supporting the amendment. I was surprised to see that most Government members virtually ignored the motion for the amendment. I thought that might have been just an early pattern but it has continued throughout the course of this debate.

Mr. Riches: We were not surprised.

Mr. Shannon: The Opposition would be more surprised if it were carried.

Mr. CLARK: I shall be surprised if it is not carried.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: Does the honourable member remember what the amendment is about?

Mr. CLARK: The honourable Minister has made it evident for a long time that he has a poor memory. My memory is better than his. I think one can always remember a certain thing if one bothers to understand it. However, when it is not understood, it is often a little difficult to bring a certain matter to mind. I am glad to see that the Minister is interested enough to make an interjection, though. The member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) had something to say about the amendment. In fact, he seemed to follow a pattern that has become obvious as part of his approach in this House. The pattern that he followed made it obvious that he could not find anything to say about the amendment. In fact, I think he probably realized that the amendment would naturally be out of sympathy with Government members' thoughts, which it certainly is. The member for Mitcham performed the old job of dragging a rather smelly red herring across the track. I do not know where he got it from. Perhaps it came from the Strzelecki track. He has a peculiar technique in this type of debate, for he has a habit of asking questions and answering them himself; then, if we on this side are foolish enough to attempt to answer the question again, and if our answers do not agree with his, he is inclined to sneer at us even more than he usually does. The attitude of the member for Mitcham reminds me of a happening in my district in 1953, the year after I was first elected to the House. I was hopeful then that I might be unopposed. Indeed, I would have been, but for the nomination of a gentleman who made a habit in South Australia of running as an Independent. I think that the member for Onkaparinga had his attention on one occasion, and the member for Angas had it on another.

Mr. Shannon: I do not begrudge it; the honourable member is quite welcome to it.

Mr. CLARK: When this gentleman opposed me he came to Gawler to canvass votes; he alighted from the train at North Gawler and proceeded to Willaston. Unfortunately for him (and this story is 100 per cent true) the first house he visited at Willaston happened to be occupied by a strong supporter of the Labor Party. In fact, I should be quite safe in saying that that man would possibly be the most one-eyed Labor supporter in South Australia—perhaps in the British Commonwealth of Nations! A week or so later I visited the same house, because the occupant was one of those good friends who looked after the interests of the Labor Party and, in this

case, my interests too. He told me of the Independent gentleman's visit and said he had asked his visitor some questions. I asked what answers he had received; he said, "I didn't give him a chance; I answered them myself."

The Opposition moved this amendment because members on this side were all appalled at the flood of price increases in the last few months and we were concerned at the cruel impact that it was having upon people on the low income brackets—the pensioners and those on a fixed income. Many people in South Australia are on a fixed income.

Mr. Jennings: We all are; I am, anyway.

Mr. CLARK: Yes, especially the people on salaries. It is hard to credit that such heartless people could criticize us for bringing this amendment forward, for it is a genuine protest against increased prices and a genuine attempt to see whether these increases can be checked. Surely it is obvious that it is our duty to bring this forward, and surely it is obvious to everybody that something must be done. I think every member must accept the fact that recent events have proved that our South Australian brand of part price control can only ever be partially effective, for, after all, it is not allowed to be any more than that.

I am not for one moment reflecting on the Prices Commissioner, nor would any member on this side of the House attempt to do that; I believe that within the narrow limits in which the Commissioner is confined he has done a particularly good job, but I believe (and I am certain members on this side would agree with me) that partial price control or even State price control can never be enough. And, indeed, I would be bold enough to say that I believe that only Commonwealth price control can possibly hope to succeed. If, Mr. Speaker, the result of this amendment of ours led to an investigation that could only bring us one step nearer to Commonwealth price control—one tiny little bit—it would have done some good. We do not wish to limit the scope of the inquiry at all: we simply want to give the suggested committee a chance to help those who are suffering from these price rises, which I think we could describe as incredibly numerous over the last few months. We ask every member in the House who bothers to seriously think over this, and who does not have lapses in his memory, to support us in this matter.

In conclusion, there is just one matter I should like to mention, and I shall mention it in the happiest way possible. The member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke) earlier in this debate

mentioned the five-choirs festival. Not so very long ago, when most of us were boys, most people used to think of education as something that was for only young children and teenagers, but over the last few years (I am very happy to see it, and I have mentioned this more than once in the House) there has been an outstanding growth of adult education. Many adults have come to realize the advantages they can gain from the various adult education centres throughout the State, and I am sure that what they have obtained from these centres has brought happiness and profit to themselves and, indeed, to others through the knowledge gained not only in handicrafts but in various branches of the arts.

I saw an outstanding example of this last Friday evening when the first performance in the Gawler Ozone picture theatre of this five-choirs festival was given before a capacity crowd, which was thrilled and exhilarated by one of the most outstanding choral performances it would be possible to see. Usually, I am not one to over-enthusiase about things, but I think that fairly describes the evening. This five-choirs festival was sponsored by the Gawler Adult Education Centre under the supervision of the Principal, Mr. John Chambers. It was held on two evenings, the first at Gawler, when the Minister of Education was the guest of honour, and the second at Tanunda, when the Premier attended. I particularly mention the five choirs that were associated with this because I believe it is something worth putting on record in this House and something well worth remembering: the Gawler-Barossa Oratorio Choir, conducted by Mr. Boyd Dawkins, M.L.C., the Loxton Oratorio Choir, conducted by Mr. John Potter; the Naracoorte Choral Society, conducted by Mrs. Margaret Hume; the Upper Murray Adult Education Centre Choir, conducted by Mr. Donald Belle; and the guest choir for the evening, the popular male voice choir, the Tanunda Liedertafel, conducted by Mr. Fritz Homburg, O.B.E. Incidentally, the Tanunda Male Voice Choir—the Liedertafel—has been in existence for more than 100 years, and it is a wonderful choir. I was very happy to see you, Mr. Acting Speaker, singing on the platform as a member of that Liedertafel. I do not say these things merely because you are occupying the Chair; you would know, Sir, that I have many friends in the Liedertafel, and I have always been fond of their singing.

This concert was really something outstanding. From the first notes of the *National Anthem* to the final soul-stirring strains of Handel's

*Hallelujah Chorus*, the audience sat enthralled. The Minister of Education was sitting next to me, and I know just how much he enjoyed this, as did I myself. It was a genuine thrill to one who has been associated with the Education Department to realize that this section of the department is promoting such activity. In conclusion, let me quote briefly a couple of paragraphs from the introduction in the programme that was given to us, for I think it probably aptly sums up the spirit behind the choral concert, which I hope will grow to something even bigger:

The genius in mankind for making music may be likened to a bloodstream of vitality in the body of the community: this enlivening influence has always been in evidence in the rural life of South Australia. In particular we have been fortunate in the number and quality of singers, and our choral societies. It is an important part of adult education to foster and encourage the development of cultural activity wherever this bloodstream exists. In the case of music this is done by attention to the needs of bands and orchestras and is also illustrated by the work of choirs and choral societies whose members are enrolled with adult education. All the adult education centres concerned with the work of the choirs making this festival are proud to be associated with the project, and we look forward to further possibilities of working together for the benefit of music and the arts in the South Australian countryside.

And so, too, do I. We can all be justly proud of the work done by these centres, and I have taken this opportunity in concluding my remarks to congratulate all concerned with this festival. I support the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, as amended.

Mr. LANGLEY (Unley): I support the motion as amended by the Leader of the Opposition, and I join with other members in expressing my deepest sympathies to the families of deceased members. I was pleased to hear the Deputy Leader speak of the retirement from this House of the members for West Torrens, Semaphore and Victoria. I heartily endorse his remarks, which were made in a sincere and able manner. Might I say that I am extremely pleased to have been associated with men of their calibre. I hope it will not be long before the members for Semaphore and West Torrens will completely recover from their present illnesses, and that all three members will enjoy a long, healthy and happy retirement. This would surely be a just reward for the services they have rendered to this State. I also congratulate the previous speakers on the contributions they have made to this debate.

Mr. Acting Speaker, for many years now the Electricity Trust has received glowing tributes which I am sure are quite in order. In my opinion one of the main achievements of the trust has been the opening up of our State's system of electricity. A number of appliances now in operation were unheard of a few years ago, among them being frypans, strip heaters, air conditioners, hot water systems and radiators, to mention only a few now being used extensively in most homes. Nobody will deny that these appliances are efficient and convenient, but there comes a time when they will cease to function. When this occurs (because people are prone to having an appliance repaired as quickly and as cheaply as possible) there arises a danger with which I am greatly concerned. This is caused because in many cases the people who are requested to effect the necessary repairs are not qualified. There is nothing to prevent people advertising tomorrow that they are electrical contractors who can perform all types of work, and if someone gets in touch with them to do a job there is nothing to stop them going ahead with the job.

An everyday electrical job not performed properly is inimical to public safety. Anyone can do electrical work and in many cases this is done by people not in any way qualified to do it. There are many pitfalls and these can lead even to death. The main themes of many amateurs in this field are: "I will do it myself"; "I know a mate who knows a little about it"; "Tom Jones fixed mine up recently and it is still going"; and "I will help you out for tonight but get an electrician tomorrow." Tomorrow never comes!

The amazing part about their helpfulness is that it generally works, but that is where the trouble begins. There are several ways that a wire, for instance, may be connected, but like all work there is only one correct way to do it; but who cares—it works.

The seriousness of this matter has been recognized in other States and to support this I am going to read a cutting from the *Advertiser* that is headed "New Law on Electricians" and is as follows:

Brisbane, February 20.

Following the nine electrocutions in Queensland and N.S.W. in the past week, the State Government has outlawed the do-it-yourself electrician. Fines of up to £50 are provided for anyone doing electrical work without the necessary qualifications. The new safety laws repeal the Electrical Workers Acts, which had been in force for 35 years. Electrical authorities said today that most electrocutions occurred through amateurs doing installation

and repair work. A householder or employer who hires an unqualified electrician is also liable to a fine.

It is gratifying to know that the seriousness of this matter has been recognized in other States and although due consideration has not been given to it in this State, I hope that it will not be long before the Government recognizes the need to bring down legislation to protect the unwary public from the dangers that are so apparent under our present system.

Mr. Hall: Does this mean that a householder could not repair his own electric jug?

Mr. LANGLEY: There is much danger in all electric work that is done and I believe that all who handle electricity face danger at some stage. All electrical work on appliances should be done by qualified people.

Mr. Coumbe: Could I renew a blown fuse in my house?

Mr. LANGLEY: Under the rules in this State the honourable member could do it, but if he did it, would he know what had caused the fuse to blow?

Mr. Hall: In other words, you say that a person should not be allowed to renew a fuse in his own house?

Mr. LANGLEY: Yes, because if a fuse blows there must be some reason for that and the unqualified person does not know what that reason is. Representations have been made and cases have been put to the Government on the need for this legislation but apparently they have fallen on deaf ears. This Government has had ample opportunity to protect the public from the dangers that come about as a result of unqualified people tampering with electrical appliances and installation. I want to say that so far as major installations in industry are concerned there is less danger of accidents occurring through faulty workmanship because work done in these cases is performed by qualified people.

I am not the only one who has concerned myself with this matter. Indeed, both the Electrical Trades Union and the Electrical Contractors Association of South Australia Incorporated have made representations to the Minister of Labour and Industry on the matter. In fact, I have received a letter from the Secretary of the Electrical Contractors Association and in his letter he has asked for answers to the following questions:

- (1) Is the public receiving adequate protection at the present time in the face of the freedom of operation by electrical personnel on extensions and alterations to electrical circuits?

- (2) Is it impossible for the Electricity Trust to police its own conditions of supply requiring such work to be carried out in accordance with the wiring rules of the Standards Association of Australia?
- (3) With the growing number of potential hazards being created through sub-standard work, will the Government assume responsibility in event of tragic consequences?
- (4) Is there an alternative to licensing, in recognizing the status of the young man who has successfully completed a contract of apprenticeship to the electrical trade? At the present time insufficient young lads are entering the trade because of this absence of status for the tradesmen in South Australia.

It would be appreciated if the Minister, who will no doubt read my speech, would be good enough to supply answers to the questions contained in the letter I have referred to. I hope also that he will give due consideration to my remarks.

If the present Government does not and will not see fit to introduce the legislation necessary to rectify this situation I can say only that, if the Party of which I am a member is returned as a Government after the next State elections, it will not hesitate to give effect to this legislation because it is aware of the dangers that arise from the present system and aware of the need to rectify the position.

Mr. Hall: You would make criminals of half the population.

Mr. LANGLEY: It is criminally wrong not to know anything about something. When somebody's life is lost in this way, that is criminally wrong.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: Your Party would prevent people from mending their own fuses?

Mr. LANGLEY: I am sure that the Minister knows that if a fuse blows there must be a reason for that; therefore, a qualified man is required to fix it. If a larger fuse than necessary is put in and the house blows up, who is to blame? Will the people who did the job themselves take the blame? Electricians and contractors who have been associated with electrical installations over a long period are belittled by inferior work. I now wish to refer to a report in the *News* of May 27, 1964, headed "Old Wires Warning", which states:

Wiring of many metropolitan houses was inadequate by present standards, and in some circumstances could cause fire. The administration manager of the Electricity Trust of S.A., Mr. S. E. Huddleston, said this today.

Mr. Huddleston said wiring of a few years ago could be overloaded by switching on too many heavy duty appliances. He continued: If the fuses are correctly wired, they will operate and cause inconvenience, but no damage. If, however, the fuses are wired above their proper rating, house wiring may become overheated, and in the worst circumstances, cause fire. Mr. Huddleston was commenting on claims by Mrs. Anne Thompson of Lower North Adelaide, whose house in Montacute Road, Campbelltown, was gutted a year ago. Arson squad detectives found the fire was caused by faulty wiring, and an insurance company paid on that basis. Mrs. Thompson said today that, fearful of another fire, she had had the wiring of her Lower North Adelaide home checked by an expert. The house was only nine years old, but the electrician had to completely re-wire it. Of six power points in the house only two were earthed, she said. Replying to Mrs. Thompson's claims, Mr. Huddleston said: "With the onset of winter, and the widespread increase of electrical heating, the Electricity Trust suggests that any people who have doubts about their wiring installation, should have it checked by an electrician. This applies particularly to older houses where the wiring has never been modernized."

If Mr. Huddleston's remarks are heeded by consumers, how would the person know where a qualified electrician could be obtained to carry out the inspection? I hope honourable members can see the folly in not licensing electricians and contractors who would safeguard the public. I assure honourable members that at least one in three houses in South Australia not wired in the last six or seven years would have many faults. Many new electrical appliances are now on the market and the public should be saved any future unnecessary expense.

Mr. Ryan: If electricians were not registered you would not know whether they were qualified or not.

Mr. LANGLEY: True. That is the main aspect of this matter. In one instance a person was paid for electrical work in a house but on inspection by the trust the switches and lights were there but no wires had been put in. That is an extreme case, but many house-wiring faults should be remedied by qualified electricians. Another matter, Mr. Speaker, in which I am extremely interested is that of physical training in schools, particularly primary schools. Without appearing ostentatious, I claim to know the value of this training better than most people. I recall during my early days at school the way in which teachers would assist students with this education without many facilities and equipment. They not only took an interest in this matter in school hours but also followed it up in their own time. I have no doubt that in

most cases this applies to the teachers of today, but I believe that it is not sufficient and that a more deliberate approach is required. Most people can recall the loyalty they had to their school colours and the pride they had defending them in the field of sport.

It is imperative, however, that an early interest should be developed in this direction in a child. For a child to be taught at this stage, a sense of balance is extremely important because balance is the basis of proficiency at any sport. No-one could imagine a gymnast who was clumsy, or a runner who did not have a balanced stride. Most of us know that a bowler with a wobbly run is inaccurate.

Mr. Clark: What about a wicketkeeper?

Mr. LANGLEY: He must be agile. A footballer who is continually falling over is of little use to his team. One look and, in most cases one can say "to be or not to be" an athlete. The earlier one is taught this fundamental the better: it allows the child who is being taught more time to develop the skills that enter into competitive sport. There is no better way, in my opinion, for a child to be taught this fundamental than by properly organized physical training. School teachers are equipped with the ability to absorb and impart knowledge whether it be academic or otherwise. I consider when staffing schools consideration should be given to the appointment of teachers who are not only capable of supervising physical training but also capable of demonstrating it. An example of the effect of this can be seen in my own district, and I refer to the Parkside Primary School. Last year this school was fortunate in having a young male teacher who was keen on physical training and who availed himself of every opportunity of imparting his knowledge of the subject to the students. In doing so he paved the way for better physical and sporting activity in the school. Unfortunately, at the beginning of this year he was transferred and a lady many years his senior replaced him. I have nothing personal against this appointment, but it did rob the school of a man who was willing and able to serve the school in this worthwhile capacity. The students suffered as a result: the enthusiasm and benefits they gained as a result of his efforts have been lost to them. I hope that the Minister will consider what I have said about this matter and that every effort will be made by the department to place, where possible, a suitable person to conduct this training. Young girls and boys, as a result of this training, will learn the way to win and

lose. Everyone will agree that this training, leading to active competition in sport, does much to develop citizens of the future.

It is becoming an increasing problem for aged citizens to cross main roads. In the inner suburbs a vast flow of traffic proceeds from the city at peak periods, and during the day it is often difficult to cross many main roads. Six main roads proceed from the city through the Unley district and in some places pedestrian lights have been installed. However, in many cases at shopping areas lights are not installed and our aged citizens have difficulty in crossing a main road to do their shopping or visit friends. The installation of lights at schools has greatly benefited this State and has also helped to reduce the accidents to schoolchildren. However, consideration should be given to the installation of traffic lights so that some protection can be given to our aged citizens to enable them to safely cross many of our roads.

Recently, approaches were made to the council and the Road Traffic Board for lights to be installed at the Goodwood subway. Several years ago a Mr. Voit, of Mill Street, Clarence Park, canvassed people in the area and obtained 168 names on a petition to have lights installed. This was not done and since then many minor accidents and a fatality have occurred. I hope that the Road Traffic Board and all councils in this State will realize that some protection must be given to our aged citizens in this jet age of fast-moving traffic. I should like to bring to the Minister of Education's notice (and I know he cannot keep abreast with the problems of every school) the need for improved facilities generally. Just recently I heard the member for Gawler referring to a similar matter. It is appropriate that members should speak on such matters affecting their own districts during this debate, and I am sure that great benefit can be derived therefrom. In my area, where there are some of the oldest primary schools in the State, facilities are below normal standards. The school buildings are in quite good condition but outbuildings and schoolyards, such as toilets and playing areas, are in urgent need of remodelling.

No doubt new schools are required, but I hope that due consideration is given to the permanent rebuilding of toilets and playing areas. It is not good enough when playing areas are flooded and toilets are substandard. The schools in the Unley district, the attendances of which are actually increasing instead of decreasing, because of the influx of more

families from overseas, need more classrooms. I am hoping that the Loan Estimates will allow for further improvements and amenities at the Parkside Primary School, Goodwood Boys Technical High School, Goodwood Primary School and Unley Primary School in order to bring them up to the required standard. Some of these schools have been in dire need of remodelling for years. At present new toilets are being constructed at the Parkside Primary School, but this work seems to be taking a long time. I do not know the cause of the delay; it might be due to lack of tradesmen, but the work has been proceeding for 13 months now and it is not finished yet. I hope that more tradesmen can be obtained and that we shall be able to improve liaison between the Education and Public Buildings Departments, something that would give great pleasure to the people connected with the schools concerned.

In the Unley district there are two places where mentally retarded children are taught and helped in everyday life. At the Suneden Retarded Children's School in Killiccoat Street, North Unley, the Principal, Miss Williams, carries out her duties very efficiently, and treats the children lovingly. The hours spent in helping these children, with co-operation from her loyal staff, have brought progress and joy to these youngsters, but to further the needs for continuing such wonderful work more facilities are required. The member for Semaphore (Mr. Tapping) and I have visited this school and we have nothing but praise for the way it is run and the help given by the staff. The present Government always makes a grant to Suneden and also helps with subsidies which are readily accepted and used for the benefit of the school. However, there is a waiting list for enrolments to the school, which worries Miss Williams. At present I believe 10 children are waiting to enrol but lack of space will not allow any further enrolments. Many of the mothers who work tirelessly for the school hope that, with further Government aid, accommodation will be available, and that the urgent need for the welfare of these children will be met. I hope the Minister concerned will give this matter his earnest consideration soon.

There is also a teaching facility for the mentally retarded in Maud Street, Unley. At this place young people of both sexes combine work and pleasure in a worthwhile manner, packing articles and doing work within their scope, which keeps them all happy and contented. They really enjoy this chance of being

of service to the community. I congratulate the sponsors of this scheme, and the manufacturers and merchants for their generosity in helping in this regard. I also congratulate the committee, parents and helpers who gave their services to help the worthy cause of these children at a recent successful fair.

At this point I would like to say how much the members and their wives enjoyed the visits to Perth and the Snowy Mountains this year. The visits were remarkable in many ways and, with the general mixing and team spirit, members were of the opinion that they were a team of champions, not individuals. What a striking success the Snowy Mountains visit was in particular! I express my personal gratitude for the wonderful organization by Mr. Jack Hull, Secretary of the Joint House Committee. In my experience I have never been on a trip that has run so close to schedule, something which no doubt, was due to Mr. Hull's efforts. I think all members agree with these remarks, and I thank the Speaker for making these trips possible.

I have listened to and read the remarks of various people relating to apprentices in this State. Every year we seem to find that whenever apprentices are required the employers are demanding such a high standard from applicants that many would-be apprentices are adversely affected. It is difficult for many to gain employment in the electrical and building trades today because employers are often demanding too high a standard of education. We all know that some people are blessed with scholarly attributes while others are not, but employers are asking too much of applicants and I am sure they would attract men of proficiency even if they were to place less importance on academic requirements. This applies particularly to the building trades. Many young men at school are poor scholars but proficient at manual work, and they make good tradesmen. I have employed one particularly apt apprentice (he is now a man) who was of a low educational standard when he commenced work. After his apprenticeship, and because of the way he applied himself to the electrical trade, he was near the top of the class in his final exams at trade school. Since then he has taught others and has been of great benefit to the trade generally. Therefore, I ask employers to consider an applicant not so much on scholastic values but on his aptitude to apply himself to the job. I am sure that our technical high schools are at present producing many young people who will make good tradesmen in the future if only they are given



the opportunity to adapt themselves to a job and are not judged only on the marks they receive at school.

Mr. HARDING (Victoria): I support the motion as originally moved. I join wholeheartedly with previous speakers in expressing my appreciation to Sir Edric and Lady Bastyan and my loyalty to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. We in South Australia have been singularly fortunate in enjoying the company and friendship of Her Majesty's representatives to this State. That does not apply only to Her Majesty's present representatives.

I deeply regret the loss by death of several members from this Chamber and elsewhere. Particularly do I miss my very great friend, the late Bill Jenkins who, as all members will recall, was known as my twin because of our age, military associations, and many other kindred interests. I am delighted to be so closely allied to the present member for Stirling (Mr. McAnaney), who in my opinion is a very worthy successor to the late Bill Jenkins. I also endorse the kind remarks by members opposite and on this side of the House to the two honourable members who have been absent recently on account of sickness. I express my sympathy and best wishes to both members and their dependants. I appreciate the kind words expressed by members opposite in reference to me. I have enjoyed my sojourn here for a number of years; it has been a great experience, and I have no regrets about retiring from office.

I do not intend to confine my remarks in this debate to my district. However, before proceeding to other matters I thank the member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Burdon) for congratulating the Government on the improvements effected at the Nangwarry sawmill. I also thank the Government for providing amenities not only there but in other Government mills. I am pleased about one matter of local interest which concerns the quantity of logs supplied by the Government to private mills in my district. Without the assistance of the Government in providing sufficient raw material from the Government forests, those private sawmills would be out of business, and for that reason, and for and on behalf of the employees of these private mills, I offer my thanks.

I intend to speak mainly on a matter mentioned in His Excellency's Speech, namely, the Honey Board. On behalf of the South Australian Apiarists Society and all apiarists of the Commonwealth, I thank the Waite Agricultural Research Institute, the Principal and

staff, particularly Mr. Keith Doull. They have gone out of their way to provide a meeting place for the South Australian beekeepers to hold their annual conference, which lasts for some three days or so. People come from all over South Australia and even from America to attend conferences there in that delightful setting. On behalf of the South Australian apiarists I also express appreciation to the Agriculture Department's officers who have greatly assisted beekeepers in their problems, particularly when the disease of foul brood has occurred in bees.

I should like to go back over many years' history in the marketing of honey, with which I have had a very long experience, probably as long as any person in Australia. In about 1924, in order to improve the marketing of honey I personally canvassed scores of apiarists on their properties, advocating a voluntary pooling system. That system was finally adopted and put into operation in this State. A charge of 7½ per cent was acceptable to the producers; 2½ per cent was to be credited to the Beekeepers Association, and 5 per cent to the agent operating the pool. The Western Australian honey pool was commenced at about this time, and that pool is still functioning. Distance from the other mainland States has made it unprofitable for the producers to dump surplus honey on the Western Australian markets.

I was elected an executive member of the first pool period. The South Australian honey pool operated for four years before closing through lack of supplies from producers, who at that period were able to, and did, sell outside for ready cash. Even the Chairman and some members of the management did that. My opinion is that voluntary pools, with spread payments, will operate only during years of depressed markets. Scores of thousands of pounds have been lost by producers in endeavouring to rely on separate State marketing schemes. I may say here that during my lifetime I can remember two tragedies through attempts to establish marketing schemes on a purely State basis. One of those schemes was established by the Eastern States Honey Advisory Council and its agent in Luton, England, with the idea of selling to the English people a brand of Australian honey as Australian honey and not otherwise. The other tragedy was the collapse of what was known as Walworth (Aust.) Industries. Those two tragedies cost the producers at least £220,000.

A full Commonwealth honey marketing plan was recommended by South Australian

representatives to an interstate annual meeting of apiarists in Sydney in 1945. The plan was flatly rejected by members of the Eastern States Honey Advisory Council, and at this stage the council, representing Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, in conjunction with their accredited agent, tried to establish this London floor, which cost the beekeepers anything up to £150,000 through losses. Following this, South Australian honey producers waited on the South Australian Government seeking legislation to provide for a State Honey Board, and this was approved and accepted by the producers in this State. I was appointed by His Excellency the Governor as the first Chairman, and I have been reappointed before the termination of each term until the present. A Commonwealth Honey Board was set up last year and is now functioning. The personnel representing each State on that board are undoubtedly the best available: they are the men most experienced to represent the industry.

Many problems have had to be overcome, and no doubt the experience gained by the South Australian Honey Board has greatly assisted the Commonwealth Board in many ways, particularly in the grading of honey to satisfy overseas requirements. I believe that in order to produce a successful scheme the main thing required now is an equalization of prices for honey in the various States. In other words, if any State has a surplus this should be exported and not dumped on an adjoining State, thus depressing the home market. The producers in the States exporting at a loss should be compensated by members supplying the home market. The matter of renewing or rejecting an extension of the South Australian Honey Board is entirely the concern of the apiarists of this State. It is no concern of any other organization and I have no intention (although I have been Chairman of the board since its inception) of persuading the members to vote one way or the other: it is in their interests and it is up to them to decide their own future by working out whether a State board is desirable or not.

I now turn to what will be rather a lengthy and dry discourse, although it deals with a sweet subject. Australia can claim some of the highest honey yields in the world. The record quoted in an article is an average of 784 lb. of honey a hive from 450 hives. As far as I know, that is the Australian record. It is therefore easy for beekeepers in other countries to think of Australia as a place where honey-getting presents no problem and

where it is easy to make a living as a honey producer. However, Australian beekeeping has its own serious problems, including the replacement of rich honey-producing virgin bush by nectarless pastures. Australian beekeeping, in common with other primary industries of the Commonwealth, is faced with a continuous reduction in the margin between costs and returns. Unproductive hives are usually about one in three or one in four of the total number. They include what is called nuclei—hives used in queen rearing, or for pollination only—and many hives that are not manipulated and do not produce surplus honey. In 1960-61 there were 5,693 registered beekeepers in Australia. Throughout the Commonwealth no more than 500 beekeepers operate on a full-time commercial basis with 250 hives or more. Indeed, about 80 per cent of all beekeepers own less than 50 hives. The increase in the total production of honey in Australia has been most marked since the war and reached a figure of 53,200,000 lb. in 1948-49. It is worth noting that in Victoria the average production per beekeeper increased from 347 lb. in 1913 to 7,086 lb. in 1960-61—a twentyfold increase. The gross value of honey and beeswax produced in 1960-61 was £2,445,000, but the value of insect-pollinated crops produced each year in Australia is about £30,000,000.

Costs of production are difficult to assess because no analysis is available of the cost of labour and transport and these account for over half the beekeepers' expenses. The price of honey has not increased at the same rate as the costs of beekeepers, but the greater efficiency in the industry has, to a large extent, compensated for this. Australian beekeepers normally produce far more honey than is consumed in the country, and the export market is therefore important. The proportion of honey exported varies from year to year according to the amount produced. A fall of £5 per ton on the export market could mean a reduction of £130 for a beekeeper producing 200 lb. of honey a hive from 250 hives. I shall now read some export figures so that honourable members may appreciate who are the greatest consumers of exported honey. In 1962-63, West Germany exported 10,303,636 lb. of honey valued at £561,000. When the price of honey increased considerably, to an all-time record, the import of honey dropped from 10,000,000 lb. to 3,700,000 lb. and the total receipts were only £261,000. Japan is becoming one of Australia's most important importers of other materials. The quantity of honey

exported to Japan in 1962-63 was 331,000 lb. valued at £21,000. In 1963-64, Japan had increased its imports of honey to 1,000,000 lb. and the value to £88,000. The United Kingdom may not now be Australia's greatest customer, but it is still our principal honey buyer. In 1962-63, it imported 14,500,000 lb. of honey valued at £707,000, and in 1963-64 it imported 12,500,000 lb. valued at £904,000. Therefore the United Kingdom is our biggest importer followed by West Germany and Japan.

Mr. Millhouse: Can the honourable member tell me whether it is possible to drown in honey?

Mr. HARDING: It would be a very sweet death. Concerning marketing, the stimulation of local sales is a logical means of improving the overall price of honey, and the per capita consumption of honey in Australia has risen since 1913. Local consumption was 1.1 lb. per capita in 1913, 2.4 lb. in 1950 and 3.1 lb. in 1960. The consumption of white sugar in Australia per capita is over 120 lb., which means that 120 lb. of white sugar is consumed per capita as against 3 lb. of honey. That is amazing. On a per capita basis, if the Australian people were to consume as much honey as is consumed in the Parliament House dining-room, there would be no export of honey from Australia.

Mr. Loveday: You say we are setting a good example.

Mr. HARDING: Yes. Australia's present population of about 10,000,000, however, does not consume all the honey produced in the country and the export market is still important. Some scope exists for improved sales of honey overseas if honey can be prepared as special lines. Tasmanian leatherwood honey is an example: it sells well for export at £150 a ton. Most graders and consumers in Australia would classify this honey in the manufacturing class, which suggests that there is a market in the world for various types of honey. It does not matter whether it is a strong or mild flavour. Some people like smoking different types of tobacco, others prefer cigars, others would rather smoke a pipe than cigarettes. That type of thing applies to honey.

Mr. Nankivell: What are the principal commercial uses of honey?

Mr. HARDING: Honey is a pure food. White bread is so pure that it is useless and is as damaging as white sugar. Doctors say that the most important vitamins are extracted from white bread and white sugar.

Mr. Laucke: The most important proteins are in bread.

Mr. HARDING: That is probably why one finds that in the tombs of the Pharaohs they had sugar, but I do not think they had bread. The greatest chance for beekeepers to improve the economic position of their industry lies, however, in increasing the efficiency of honey production. Costs of labour, transport and materials have increased, and beekeepers also have to contend with a continuing reduction in the area of bee forage available to them from native trees and ground flora. Agriculture in Australia is expanding, and new country is continually being cleared for settlement in most parts of the Commonwealth. In the past ten years the area under sown pasture has increased by 12,600,000 acres. Most of this country was originally in native vegetation and produced honey each year; unfortunately this is not being replaced by nectar-producing ground flora. Beekeepers must therefore be prepared to shift their bees more often and over longer distances to obtain good honey crops, or they must be content to have smaller crops, with lower transport costs. Areas are still available to be exploited. South Australian beekeepers are taking their bees 600 to 700 miles into the north-west of New South Wales and working new and promising country. Beekeeping in these remote areas requires good organization, and beekeepers must also learn the nature of the country and the flora, since the main honey-producing plants are new to them. One of the problems of Australian beekeeping is the financial outlay in extracting and processing equipment.

The value of insect-pollinated crops grown in South Australia is about £6,000,000 a year. This will increase as more crops are grown under irrigation. The climate in South Australia with hot dry summers and bright sunny days is ideal for the production of many seed crops such as pasture legumes, crops and grasses. Many of these, such as lucerne and strawberry clover, must be pollinated by bees.

Mr. Nankivell: They make good honey!

Mr. HARDING: Yes. In New Zealand the best honey is gathered from clovers, and this is a high-priced honey on overseas markets. Much honey is used in New Zealand and, while there, I noticed that of 20 hotels only one did not serve honey.

Mr. Nankivell: In other words, the change from the native flora to developed pasture is not going to affect production adversely?

Mr. HARDING: Yes, it will. Types of honey in the future will change because of the

lessening of the types of nutrient from which honey in the past has been gathered. They are becoming fewer and fewer every year but are the chief source in South Australia. This State has no hardwood forest areas and only four per cent of it has a 20in. rainfall and this lessens the possibility of establishing strawberry clover, without irrigation, satisfactorily. For instance, lucerne will be established under irrigation but any plant under irrigation will not yield honey as well as a plant under natural conditions. It appears strange that honey is generally produced more prolifically from something that is drought-stricken or trying to regenerate itself. It is nature's way of attracting insects to pollinate the seed cups that are about to form. Beekeeping is extensive in South Australia where strawberry clovers do not exist. From Wirrabara in the north beekeepers journey to the South-East to put the bees on to the strawberry clover.

The maintenance of a healthy beekeeping industry is vital to the economy of this State. As land is cleared and insecticides are used more widely and more frequently, the populations of native pollinating insects decline and honey bees become more and more important. However, Australian beekeeping suffers from many severe problems. Although at present we have the highest honey production a hive in the world, I believe that this can be markedly increased. As an example, our experiments on feeding pollen to hives on a blue gum flow increased honey yields from 101 lb. to 174 lb. a hive. As the State is developed, and as more natural vegetation is removed, the lack of pollen will become more intense. Research into bee nutrition is eventually aimed at the production of a true pollen supplement, but no substitute has yet been found for pollen. Bees are attracted to pollen by its odour, and each species of plant produces a pollen of a characteristic smell. The bees like some pollens—for instance, red gum—but not others, such as long leaf box. By treating the pollen with chemicals to remove the attractive odour, that pollen is made completely unattractive to the bees. However, if the chemical containing the odour is added to any inert substance such as cellulose, the bees are attracted to it and will gather it as they do pollen. Incidentally, the State average for lucerne seed production is 56 lb. an acre. By proper modern methods of keeping bees, we have obtained a yield of 11ewt. an acre, and I believe the potential yield to be in the range of as much as one ton an acre.

I refer now to an insect known as the lerp which is concerning many people interested in the preservation of certain types of eucalypt. This insect lives entirely on the foliage of trees. In the Eastern States the authorities concerned have sprayed hardwood forests to protect the trees from this sucking insect which lives on the leaf, enclosed in a web. This insect can eventually kill certain trees. The name "lerp" is derived from an aboriginal name "laarp" or "larp". Some of these insects form galls on leaves; some are free-living, while others form a sugary covering on the foliage. The lerp was a regular source of sugar to the Australian Aborigines. The study by a Mr. White concerns only the lerp on pink gum known as the hill or mountain gum. In general, infestation by this insect is serious only in the Upper South-East, although occasionally small pockets of heavy infestation occur in the Adelaide Hills. Mr. White's studies suggest that a wet winter followed by a dry summer is most likely to induce a sudden increase in population of the insect. The numbers of the insect are determined not only by the factors directly affecting it, such as climate and natural enemies, but also by the condition of the trees to which it swarms, and it seems that it is this combination of wet winter and dry summer that renders the trees more attractive to the insects.

Records show that the last severe outbreak was between 1915 and 1920, and it is to be expected that the present outbreak is bound to decline sooner or later. Between these scattered outbreaks there may be occasions when, through certain localized conditions, a heavy outbreak occurs in small isolated pockets. There appears to be nothing that can be done to control this insect and, in fact, if trees are sprayed, the new undamaged foliage will become attractive to the lerp, rendering spraying ineffective.

It is believed that the spread of the pest known as the Sirex wood wasp in Victoria, reported previously, has been effectively checked by control measures which have been rigorously applied in that State. These operations, together with fundamental research work that is being undertaken principally in South Australia and Tasmania, have been financed by a National Sirex Fund, and moneys will continue to be provided for such research. A most vigilant search is being maintained in South Australia, although the insect has not been found to exist in forests or other places in this State. Sirex infestations

were found on 534 properties over a wide area in Victoria. Incidentally, Australian pine forests cover 527,000 acres and were valued at £800,000,000 in 1963.

I recently visited New Zealand, having had the honour of being selected by the South Australian branch of the Returned Servicemen's League to lead a South Australian delegation to that country. I observed thousands of acres covered by what is known as manuka which, in fact, has extended over much land in the South-East, now being developed for closer settlement. I could not understand why these thousands of acres in New Zealand covered by manuka (which grows to a height of about 7ft.) seemed to be burnt. On inquiry, I ascertained that the areas had not been burnt but, in fact, were ready for burning in their dry state, then to be rolled and developed and brought into pastures for closer settlement. I discovered that manuka was prone to attacks by an insect which had caused the death of many plants over thousands of acres. Manuka is the New Zealand name for tea tree. The insect was first seen in 1937 in an isolated area in the Orari Gorge in the Southern Alps of New Zealand. Since then it has spread either naturally or through farmers inadvertently introducing infested tea tree to their own properties.

Although no proof may ever be obtained, it is believed that the insect affecting this plant, which could be wind-borne at a young stage, may have been blown across from Australia. Authenticated records of this theory exist in relation to certain Australian insects. A survey made by a New Zealand scientist about seven years ago established that this insect is widely distributed on species of leptospermum along the south-east coast of Australia from New South Wales to South Australia, and also in Tasmania. Its inability to destroy tea tree in Australia in the same way as it does in New Zealand is due to some factors in the ecology of the insect which prevent it from reaching the high population level that it apparently achieves in New Zealand. These factors may be climatic, or it may simply be that the insect in New Zealand does not have the same number of natural enemies as it has in Australia. In Australia we have developed much second-class country to a high standard for closer settlement and our research may assist the New Zealand Government in clearing land for closer settlement.

Mr. HUGHES (Wallaroo): I support the motion and the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition. Before proceeding

to explain my reasons for supporting the amendment, I take the opportunity to congratulate the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply, namely, the member for Eyre (Mr. Bockelberg) and the member for Stirling (Mr. McAnaney). If one analyses their addresses one finds much serious material therein. Indeed, I am confident that, after analysing the honourable member for Stirling's address, this House can expect a high standard of speech from him in the future. I also support the Deputy Leader in his complimentary remarks about the members who will be retiring at the end of this Parliament. I regret that two out of those three members are unable to be with us because of ill-health. I compliment the member for Victoria (Mr. Harding) on the way he has applied himself to the representation of the people of his district. I do not suppose any man in South Australia would be more conversant with the bee industry, and I can assure him that I have always listened to his addresses on bees with much interest because every time he speaks about them he seems to have something new to put before the House.

I do not suppose anyone in South Australia would have given more to the Labor movement than the member for West Torrens (Mr. Fred Walsh), and it is indeed regrettable that his state of health is keeping him from the House at this time. I am confident that had the honourable member been here he would have made a valuable contribution to this debate. I think that for about six of the seven years I have been a member of this House I have shared a room, as an office, with the member for Semaphore (Mr. Tapping), and throughout that time I found him a man to be looked up to and one for whom everybody had the greatest respect. I learned much from the honourable member, and I regret that he is not here to continue to share that room with me.

I support the Leader of the Opposition's amendment because the Commonwealth Arbitration Commission decided that the economy of the country was such that it could afford an increase of £1 a week in the basic wage of the workers to meet increased costs due to price rises prior to the commission's judgment. I emphasize the word "prior". The economy of the country was such that apparently there was no need for prices to have increased during the time referred to in the Leader's amendment. If honourable members were sincere in their remarks regarding the speech made by the

member for Stirling (Mr. McAnaney) when he seconded the motion, they would be forced to admit that there were grounds for the Leader's amendment. The honourable member even went so far as to suggest that something of a similar nature to that advocated by the Leader should be considered by this House, provided that it did not result in controls. The honourable member (at page 89 of *Hansard*) said:

As mentioned earlier, we spend millions of pounds on research to increase primary production. We have been successful in that respect, but we should spend more time and money to find out how a permanent balanced economy can be achieved, where there is always a demand for goods equal to our capacity to produce and the wage force available. After 20 years of research I am positive that this happy state of affairs can be achieved without undue interference with individual liberty and with a minimum of Government control. This is not conservatism but progressive liberalism, by bringing science into political management. I am confident that our better educated younger citizens will expect it and even demand it. After all, democracy—government by the people for the people—can best be achieved by leaving as many decisions as possible in the hands of the people themselves.

I have always advocated research to increase primary production, and the honourable member's suggestion to spend more money and time in order to achieve a permanent balanced economy appeals to me very much, particularly since he is positive that it can be achieved. I think that the Leader's amendment, if carried, would be a step toward that achievement. I entirely agree that we should leave as many decisions as possible in the hands of the people themselves, but on one condition, Mr. Acting Speaker, and that is that the heads of great financial concerns, business combines, and palace politicians, who have claimed a right to have their interests set apart from and preferred to those of ordinary men and women, are prepared to put a stop to their lust for personal power and success. It is the right of every individual to seek happiness and well-being in his own way, provided he does not seek them at the expense of his fellow men. However, I am afraid that from the early ages ruthless people have roamed the earth and, because of their greed and disregard for others, many people today are going short of the necessities of life. The amendment is designed to prevent further exploitation, and, if that can be achieved, then, and only then, will we have anything like a balanced economy.

In these days of changing techniques and modern inventions, what is considered as fair

and reasonable, and what commodities are considered necessary for decent living, change considerably in a short space of time. In view of what has repeatedly happened as an aftermath of any increase in the basic wage, and the immediate flitching of this improvement by the increase in prices (which has become very evident in the press this past week), there exists the urgent necessity for a committee of inquiry so that justice can be done to all concerned. We must think of the person on a limited income, particularly the pensioner, who has to pay the same as everyone else for a loaf of bread or a pint of milk. He also has to pay the same water rates and the same council rates. Increased prices to the unfortunate pensioner whose wife has not reached the pensionable age are indeed a burden. These people are expected to exist on a mere pittance, and this is a disgrace to the country.

Mr. McKee: The pensioner got a small rise last night!

Mr. HUGHES: The Commonwealth Government has just given him an insignificant rise of 5s., yet such people are expected to exist on a mere pittance, which is a disgrace to the country.

Mr. McKee: He has not got the 5s. yet.

Mr. HUGHES: No, he has not, and even when he does get it it will be only a mere pittance.

Mr. Clark: Especially if he smokes!

Mr. HUGHES: Yes. One has only to look at last week's *Sunday Mail* to see what these poor people have to put up with. In one picture we saw a man with a pram dragging home a load of wood to keep his family warm. That is shameful. The accompanying article stressed food and warmth, two of the most essential needs of the human body—particularly when it is growing old, as in the case of these people.

Some interesting statements have been made in this debate. I refer to one made by the member for Gouger (Mr. Hall) who, when speaking on roads as one of the most important matters in his district, inferred that Opposition members were never satisfied with the road-building programme, no matter how fair the treatment was. That was an exaggerated statement to make, particularly against country members. I represent a district with roads that carry an enormous amount of heavy and fast traffic in the transport of primary produce. Yet I do not remember having criticised the Minister of Roads or the Commissioner of

Highways for the treatment received in that area, and it is not because we have received all that has been applied for. There is still much work to be done in my district. However, I have confidence in the Commissioner of Highways and his officers.

The road between Kulpara and Paskeville is in a terrible condition for that type of road. After making representations to the Minister of Roads on behalf of the corporations in December 1959, in respect of repairs to the road in question, I was advised that the Commissioner's report stated that, although the widening and resurfacing from Kulpara to Paskeville was included in the list of future works, there was a considerable number of other roads of higher priority, and because of this he could not recommend the road in question for immediate treatment. I accepted this report. I did not run around complaining that I was dissatisfied with the report made through the Minister, as the honourable member suggests I did, and the people I represent in Wallaroo accepted it, too.

Later the matter was again brought to my notice by the Kadina, Moonta and Wallaroo District Development Committee, comprising representatives from the Corporations of Kadina, Wallaroo and Moonta and the District Council of Kadina. This committee was advised by me of this report and accepted it. Nearly five years has elapsed since the request and the report's being made available, and during the whole of that time no criticism has been levelled against the Commissioner of Highways for the work not being proceeded with. During that time other important roads in the area have received attention, but the point I wish to make is that the member for Gouger was wrong.

Mr. McKee: Is he ever right?

Mr. HUGHES: I wouldn't say he was always wrong, but he was wrong on this occasion when he said "We"—I presume he meant the Government—"will never satisfy a Labor member in his district. No matter how fair the treatment he receives, he never seems to think a fair share is enough."

Mr. Clark: That is just silly.

Mr. HUGHES: Of course it is, and this afternoon I feel sure that the Minister of Roads and the Commissioner of Highways would disagree with the honourable member's statement. I think everyone was thrilled to learn of the natural gas discovery at Gidgealpa. It is hoped there are sufficient reserves to warrant a long period of use of a pipeline. I was interested to hear the Premier say that

he desired to know by the end of this year about the available reserves at Gidgealpa because, by then, it would be necessary to plan for additional large-scale expansion of electricity supplies and it was desirable to use fuel from within our State rather than imported fuel.

Recently I read an article in the *Petroleum Gazette* stating that natural gas was being increasingly used as a source of energy in the world today. Relatively little use has so far been made of the vast potential source of energy because, apart from North America, the chief sources have been remote from major markets. Recent developments in the industry, such as new large discoveries and the successful shipping of liquefied natural gas to Britain, have altered the future outlook for world energy supplies and have already made less pressing the need for additional nuclear power stations. Continuing, the *Gazette* stated that the development of pipeline networks in North America, Europe and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had enabled natural gas to be taken to the consumer expeditiously and economically.

Only in Queensland, in this country, however, has natural gas so far been found in sufficient quantities to warrant consideration of plans for its commercial use. Since April, 1961, natural gas has been used successfully as a source of power for the electricity system in the town of Roma and is now responsible for powering 75 per cent of the generating capacity. Roma electricity consumers have benefited financially from the use of natural gas. In September, 1963, the price of electricity was reduced by eight per cent, the third price cut since the introduction of natural gas. The article further stated that two major powerhouses—Swanbank in the West Moreton coalfield and Calcap near the Calliope coalfield in central Queensland—to be built by the State Electricity Commission would be constructed to allow for the use of natural gas as well as coal. I believe that the welfare of this State depends largely on the development of our country areas and the restoration of the natural balance wherever possible between primary and secondary industries among the people. Having regard to all the circumstances, I can see in this new find an opportunity for the Government to erect a power station within the district of Wallaroo. When the Premier was giving the second reading explanation of the Electricity Trust of South Australia (Torrens Island Power Station) Bill, Wallaroo

was mentioned in the investigation as an obvious site away from the metropolitan area. During the debate on the Bill relating to the Torrens Island power station in 1962, it was apparent that difficulty was being experienced by members opposite to find arguments sufficiently convincing to prove why Wallaroo was not selected.

I believe there was a doubt in the mind of the member for Burra (now the Minister of Lands) about whether Torrens Island was the right place to build the station, because, when the member for Torrens said, "As this is a semi-governmental or quasi-governmental undertaking, it falls outside the ambit of the Public Works Committee, but if it were within its ambit the committee would recommend the Torrens Island site; make no mistake about that," the then member for Burra interjected, "How do you know?" That indicated to me that he thought the claims of Wallaroo were such that the project should be examined by that committee.

On behalf of the people I represent, I respectfully request that in the event of a powerstation being built as a result of the flow of gas from Gidgealpa being a success (which we hope it will be) every consideration will be given to having it established in the district of Wallaroo.

I was interested to read the final report of the Industries Development Committee sitting as a special committee to inquire into the decentralization of industry. Some of the findings are very interesting indeed, and I wish to refer to one point made by the committee. I want to be fair on this, so I should point out that the Government has already considered the matter, but I do not know how far it has gone. Under the heading of "Preference for Country Industries by Supply and Tender Board" the committee said:

The committee understands that in consideration of tenders the Supply and Tender Board gives a measure of preference to South Australian tenderers over tenderers from other States and from overseas. This principle could well be extended so as to provide some preference to tenders made for Government work by country contractors or manufacturers. Just how great the measure of preference should be, the committee is not able to advise, but it recommends that the Government give consideration to authorizing the Supply and Tender Board to let contracts to country tenderers providing the tender is within a set percentage of the tender which would otherwise be accepted, and providing also, of course, that the board is satisfied that the country tenderer has the facilities, including finance, to carry out the contract.

I believe that the Government in its wisdom has given this report some consideration, but whether it has considered it far enough to prevent industries from closing I do not know.

I regret to advise the House that W. H. May & Sons, of Wallaroo, an old firm established in 1874 as an engineering works and foundry during the copper era, which served the district and State well, found it necessary to close its doors. Another industry in the country was forced to shut down because it could not compete with the method of tendering that I understand is adopted by large firms in the metropolitan area. I am open to correction on this, but I understand that large firms will submit a ridiculously low price for some tenders to keep their plant operating between tenders, or to get work they are sure of. Profit during these intervals between big jobs is not important. I am told this is common practice, and perhaps it could be called good business; I do not know. But what of the smaller firm which has submitted a tender based on current production costs and which has carefully given consideration to the conditions of tender? The small firm, equally skilled and conversant with the requirements and aware of the reasonable profits, finds that a tender has been accepted because of a lower price submitted by a larger firm during its quiet periods of production. Although I have said it may be good business, it is also most unfair to the small firms, particularly those operating in the country that have to pay freight on heavy material both ways. This practice will eventually force the small firm out of business and I think will encourage a faulty and inferior article. If the closing of May & Sons were only a temporary shut-down, I would not be so concerned as I am, but that is not the case. This firm has been lost to the district and State. A loss of this nature is bad enough in times of peace, but should this country be faced with another war the loss would be tragic. During the last war May's foundry manufactured components for munition factories in South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales, and for many years it made brake blocks for the South Australian Railways until that department was able to make up the leeway caused by the needs of war. This applied also to the Commonwealth Railways at Port Augusta.

Contracts won by this firm for the production of hinges and desk stands have always given satisfaction. The Engineering and Water Supply Department has had pipes and valves manufactured by it. Castings for several firms in Adelaide have been produced.



The workshop was equipped for repairs to engines and accessories of vessels calling at Wallaroo. Many a ship's captain has been thankful when informed that engineers and equipment have been on hand. Many a vessel has had repairs done without delay to loading or departure. The service rendered to Yorke Peninsula and the State of South Australia by this firm has been invaluable.

For some time I have been deeply concerned at the amount of vandalism done by young people in this State. I was pleased to read in the newspapers last week that the Minister of Lands (Hon. P. H. Quirke) had drawn attention to this. It appears to be generally accepted that young people are the main offenders. The various acts committed have shocked councils, and repairs to buildings and contents run into large sums. The offenders seem to take a delight in breaking up conveniences built for use by the public. I have in mind a new brick toilet block which was open to the public for the first time. When the caretaker inspected the block next morning he found the pedestal filled with earth and stones, some of which had gone down into the pipes necessitating their cleaning and, in some cases, their removal. In another town the council built a similar block, including a large mirror over the wash basin, and three times within a few weeks the mirror and fittings were wrenched from the wall and seat covers torn from the toilets. This building is in the centre of the town and close to the business area, which would indicate that the vandals had planned their actions and not done them on the spur of the moment. I could go on relating similar acts of vandalism to this type of building.

Nothing is more heartbreaking to a committee which has worked hard to raise money for a project than to find a day or two before the official opening that vandals have defaced it with paint or tar. I have seen evidence of this type of vandalism. I have seen a piano with all its strikers broken off and thrown inside it after vandals had paid a visit to a local hall. I have seen a memorial window with a bullet hole through it; small trees uprooted after being planted by councils; two tractors badly damaged; and many other acts of vandalism.

What can be done to stop these senseless acts? Members of the Police Force cannot be asked to do more than they are doing already. Very often the community at large is apt to blame the police and expect too much from

them. If the public were more co-operative with the police in such matters and report any suspicious actions to them it would be fulfilling a very valuable service that could confidently be expected to be successful as a preventative measure.

I am confident that immediately the person who indulges in vandalism became aware that he has not only the police to contend with, but every citizen in the community as well, vandalism would decline. The time has arrived for greater co-operation between the public and police in an endeavour to protect public and private property. Another way to curb vandalism would be for the maximum age limit of offenders dealt with in the children's court to be lowered from 17 to 16 years. I believe that everyone would benefit if the age limit were reduced. At the age of 17 thousands of young people are doing the things normally performed by an adult. They can qualify for a driver's licence and I understand that they can open credit accounts (I am subject to correction on that point, but I have been told that that is the case). I have studied the last two Annual Reports of the Juvenile Court and was interested in the comments and statistics, particularly with regard to the 14 to 17 years age group. In the 1961 report, Mr. Scales, the stipendiary magistrate, said:

The delinquency figures show an increase during the past 12 months from 741 to 1,041 offenders, a rise of 40.5 per cent. Such a steep rise—the largest recorded in this Court—must be a matter for concern, especially as it follows rises of 26 per cent and 12 per cent in 1959 and 1960 respectively. The present figures are double what they were three years ago and treble what they were 10 years ago. The most active age group is that of the 14 to 17 years old children who contribute approximately 80 per cent of the offenders.

In the 1962 report (which I think was the last made), Mr. Scales said:

In the sense in which the term is used in these reports "delinquency" applies only to those offences which have a subjective element affecting the character of the offender. It does not apply to offences which are determined objectively by the mere doing of a prohibited act or failure to perform a statutory duty. For example, the failure to register a firearm, drinking within 300 yards of a public dance or exceeding the speed limit would not be classed as delinquency, but using a firearm in the danger of other persons, drunkenness in a public place or illegally using a motor vehicle would be so described. The statistics of offenders which appear in these reports relate only to those children who would be classed as delinquents within the meaning of the term. I read that because I did not want any misunderstanding. The report continues:

A much larger proportion of the offenders have this year continued with their education beyond the school leaving age of 14. Student offenders usually average 30 per cent of the total, but this year their number was 45 per cent. This does not mean that the incidence of crime has moved towards the younger children; the proportion of under 14 offenders has not changed noticeably from that of previous years.

To substantiate that, in the 1961 report the third table shows:

Age.	No. of offenders.
8 .. .. .	4
9 .. .. .	11
10 .. .. .	22
11 .. .. .	34
12 .. .. .	68
13 .. .. .	105
14 .. .. .	178
15 .. .. .	178
16 .. .. .	206
17 .. .. .	235

This shows that the number of offences increases in the 14 to 17 years age group. In the 1962 report the number had dropped. It is not necessary for me to read those figures, but anyone who does will see that the number of offences increases proportionately in the 14 to 17 years age group.

Concerning vandalism, the 1962 report, when discussing wilful damage and offensive behaviour, stated that 71 males were convicted without penalty or fine; three males were put into reformatory and none into industrial schools; five males were placed in custody and control of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department; 31 males and one female came under the Offenders Probation Act on bond; 15 male cases and one female case were under supervision; six males were dismissed (including the Offenders Probation Act); 16 cases were withdrawn or not proceeded with, and none was sent to the Supreme Court. This made a total of 147 males and two females—an increase of 76 over the previous year. It seems that predominantly males commit wilful damage and offensive behaviour offences. I know honourable members have received the report and studied it.

Mr. Riches: Would you be surprised to know I was told in New York that in Chinatown there is no delinquency, and that is attributed to parental control and family influence?

Mr. HUGHES: I am surprised to learn that. I agree with the reasons for the lack of delinquency because I think that they are correct. I am keenly interested in youth welfare. I have been associated with organizations of young people for more than 30 years

and have learnt to respect their views. I have a high opinion of most of our youth today. I consider that young people would think twice about committing an act of vandalism if they thought their neighbours would read about the offence should they be apprehended and charged in a court. My experience with youth leads me to say that the fear of the appearance of a report of their crime in the press gives them a sense of responsibility toward their parents and society. I have not arrived at this decision lightly. In combating vandalism, as with other court crimes, preventative measures are more important than remedial ones. I trust that the Attorney-General will have this matter examined and, if possible, give it a trial in the hope that everyone, including the teenagers would benefit if the age limit were reduced.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): I shall not delay the business of the House in speaking to this debate. However, I express to honourable members opposite the sympathy of members on this side for their member who is seriously ill and who is absent from the House and I sympathize with him. Another of the Opposition members is in indifferent health. I am sure both members have the esteem of all members on this side of the House, and we greatly regret that they are not here today because of ill-health. If the Leader should be communicating with either of them I should be pleased if he would convey this expression, and the hope that each of them will speedily regain his good health and soon return to the House.

The Address in Reply debate gives every opportunity to advance new ideas or to provide solutions to old problems. I shall not traverse all matters raised by members during the debate. They ranged over a wide field, but I assure members that, although I shall not reply specifically to each one, it is the Government's policy to analyse the Address in Reply debate. Frequently suggestions emanating from members are adopted, according to Government policy. That practice will be followed this year. Any matters suggested by honourable members on either side will be examined to see whether they can benefit the community.

I now speak more particularly to the amendment. I do so for two reasons: first, because no-one seems to have said much about it although it is an amendment to the Address in Reply. I have listened to members but, with few exceptions, they have talked about everything else. Incidentally, if it should be carried it will be claimed to be a vote of

no confidence. When an amendment to an Address in Reply is moved it should be based upon matters capable of being supported and of having some beneficial action.

South Australia is the only State that has maintained completely a Prices Department. A Prices Department with a limited capacity has been maintained in Queensland. The two States in which members would have expected a Prices Department (Tasmania and New South Wales) do not have one. We must remember that we are living under an Australian Constitution. One fundamental principle of it is contained in section 92, which states that trade, commerce and intercourse between the States shall be absolutely free. If members consider the implications of section 92 they will realize that when New South Wales (a major producing State and the largest industrial State) withdrew from and abandoned price control it seriously affected any effective price control in the other States. Tasmania has not had such an effect. I believe that the Tasmanian Government did not intend to abandon price control. Its legislation was not re-enacted. Tasmania does not, to any extent, influence cost factors in Australia. New South Wales has a tremendous influence, because that State, the home of the steel industry, has the steel which is the basis of all our manufacturing. New South Wales is also the home of the coal industry. Victoria has been the home of the textile industry. If we look at the implications of the price control abandonment in New South Wales we immediately realize the futility of the Leader of the Opposition's suggestions, because the prices of most commodities purchased in South Australia are influenced in some form by manufacturing charges levied in New South Wales. Suppose that tomorrow there were an increase in the price of steel in New South Wales of the type used for refrigerators. What possible solution could the committee the Leader has suggested offer to deal with that problem? This committee could do nothing that would have the slightest influence upon the price of steel in South Australia.

Mr. Jennings: Did the Premier think of those things when he opposed the 1948 prices referendum?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I opposed something totally different in that case. Let me put the honourable member's mind completely at rest: I am still of the same opinion on the matter as I was then. I do not believe, as the honourable member

believes, that effective government can be obtained by merely centralizing government in one place. I shall continue to hold that view and I believe the honourable member probably holds a similar view on the occasions when he rationally considers matters. When the excellent price-fixing organization that had been set up was abandoned by the Chifley Government the States took it up effectively. The control by the States was effective until the whole set-up collapsed when New South Wales abandoned price fixing. This left a tremendous gap that soon became evident in other States when they adopted a similar course, except in South Australia and, as I mentioned previously, to a lesser extent in Queensland. South Australia has maintained an effective oversight of price fixing notwithstanding considerable pressure from interests that could be normally regarded as supporters of the Government. This Government has never wavered in maintaining a price-fixing organization in South Australia; it has never wavered in reintroducing price control upon a commodity if it found that the freedom from control had been abused. Therefore, if one State has carefully considered the interests of the working-class people in relation to prices it has been South Australia. It is rather interesting to examine the official figures of price increases in South Australia and to make a comparison as between States. We find that, notwithstanding the fact that South Australia is far removed from the centres where particular commodities may be produced, overall our price structure has been the most stable in the Commonwealth, and it is continuing to be the most stable.

In the last two weeks some fairly violent price fluctuations have occurred, because of a number of reasons. I have a report from the Prices Commissioner setting out categorically what has taken place in price changes and the reasons for them. My Cabinet colleagues will bear me out when I say that the Government has been most reluctant to increase charges on any commodity. Every alternative measure has been studied to find a way to reduce prices rather than to increase them. In comparing commodities under the control of the various State Governments we reach some rather interesting conclusions. Take electricity as one item: no increase in the price of electricity has occurred since 1953. However, since that time six awards have been made against the Electricity Trust involving substantial wage increases. If members compare the basic wage of 1953 and the margins in vogue then with the position

today they will see that since 1953 the trust has suffered steep increases in expenses in one of its major items of expenditure—labour costs. However, no increases in electricity charges have occurred in that time.

In fact, there have been four decreases in charges, most of them not general, but nevertheless significant to some sections of the community. I believe they have all been significant for the State. That is just one example. Take the housing situation and our stability in housing costs! The Government has been using a large proportion of its Loan money, which in many instances was badly needed for other activities, for housing loans under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. In fact, on some occasions South Australia has taken more of its Loan moneys for housing than either New South Wales or Victoria. This was done solely for the reason that money from Loan funds which we divert through the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement can be obtained at a rate one per cent lower than can be obtained in any other way.

As honourable members know, housing is one of the most substantial items affecting the workers' pay; I think every honourable member will admit that that item is probably as great as any in the household budget. The fact that we have maintained such stability in housing and in Government charges generally is evidence of the policy that my Government has followed through a somewhat difficult period of steeply rising overseas prices and steeply spiralling costs in Australia. The cost structure in Australia itself is tremendously influenced by overseas prices. For example, if the price of beef in America goes to a high figure it is immediately reflected in the price of stock at the abattoirs and, in turn, that is reflected immediately in the retail price of meat in the shops.

I do not know whether members opposite would go so far in their philosophy of control as to say, "Well, we are not going to allow a person to export his meat overseas: he has to keep it in the Australian market because we want it here." I certainly would not go that far. The future prosperity of this country and the well-being of the individual worker must depend on our building up an increasingly sound export policy, and if we can get good prices overseas for our commodities it is all to the good. In recent years the prices of many of our primary commodities and our metals have risen steeply. When the price of zinc goes up it follows, almost as night follows day, that the price of

galvanized iron goes up, because zinc is an important cost factor in the production of galvanized iron.

We are limited in a number of ways in fixing prices in South Australia. First, we are limited by the fact that the other Australian States have, to all intents and purposes, abandoned price control. With the exception of Queensland, which has only partial control, the other Australian States have abandoned it. South Australia has hung on to this control, and I believe that in the difficult circumstances it has done it with much benefit to the consumer. Secondly, the prices of many commodities in this State depend upon an import price, which this Parliament cannot control. Thirdly, many of the prices in South Australia depend upon world parity prices. We have no control on these. Should we embark on a policy (which I believe would be disastrous) of saying, "Well, it does not matter what the oversea price is: you are a citizen here and we are going to control you to the extent of not allowing you to export"? World price fluctuations must have an effect in South Australia. I cannot imagine members opposite who represent country districts advancing such a policy. It would be disastrous if we said to the milk producer, "Butter prices have gone up overseas, so you must keep your butter here and sell it at so much." I cannot imagine that type of policy being accepted by any country people.

In these circumstances, I believe the Leader's amendment is a bit of camouflage. The Opposition has really had not much complaint about administration by the Government, and instead of having some legitimate complaint it puts up one of these airy-fairy stories about wanting to do something for the consumer. Having got to that stage, the Opposition then drafted an amendment to the Address in Reply. It seems quite innocent, but if carried it would be regarded as a vote of no confidence in the Government.

I will now deal in rather more detail with some of the matters that supposedly have given rise to the Leader's amendment. I have from the Prices Commissioner a list of the price increases that have taken place, and in most instances the Commissioner has given the reason that compelled him to make an adjustment. I also have something that the Opposition apparently has not yet thought about, because it is not dealt with in the Leader's amendment. I refer to price reductions, a list of which has been supplied by

the Commissioner, together with the reasons for them. Members opposite have not worried about reductions.

Mr. Lawn: Prices have increased here by 2.6 per cent in the last 12 months.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will deal with this question of increases and reductions because if nothing else it is an interesting exercise in that it will give honourable members some insight into what the Prices Department is doing in this matter. I know from the many letters I have received from members opposite, and also from my own side, that members generally appreciate the work being done by the Prices Commissioner. Many members have submitted cases where they believed that a person had been overcharged, and in due course they received a reply stating that the charge had been examined and found to be excessive, and as a result a refund has been given. I think the largest refund I ever obtained for any member here on behalf of a constituent was about £800, and other substantial refunds have been made. I believe members opposite generally respect the Commissioner's work and that is borne out by the fact that the Opposition's amendment asks that he be a member of the proposed committee of inquiry.

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

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Prices Commissioner has furnished me with a report of increases and decreases in prices of commodities, and he has set out the reasons for them. I think it will explain to honourable members the problem that arises in this matter if I deal with the commodities *seriatim*. I do not intend to deal with them all or with all the price changes that have occurred but, if I deal with some of them, it will at least show honourable members opposite the nature of the problem and generally how the Prices Department works.

Mr. Lawn: Will you say when the alterations, either up or down, took place?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes; it is all here to the extent that we require it. I should explain that many commodities are decontrolled but, although they are, they are still kept under close supervision. They are decontrolled usually with undertakings given by the particular industries concerned that they will observe certain margins or rules. Although they appear as decontrolled items in the schedule, they are, nevertheless, items in

respect of which the Prices Commissioner has the right under the Act to make an immediate investigation. He can bring them back under control through Executive Council without delay, and the fact that he can exercise that control enables the Prices Department with a relatively small staff to do an effective job. The fact that an item is decontrolled means not that we have washed our hands of it but that we have made some satisfactory arrangement with that industry; but we have always reserved the right to come back and recontrol an item if it appears to bear an excessive charge to the public.

The first item in this schedule is butter. An increase of 2½d. lb. in the retail price of butter took place on June 20, 1964. It was an Australia-wide determination. Is any member opposite prepared to say that the butter producer did not deserve that increase? The last price increase in the butter industry occurred four and a half years ago. This increase has come about as a result of a national survey by the Commonwealth Government. As honourable members know, the butter industry operates under a board appointed by that Government. While we can criticize the increase in the price of butter, is any honourable member opposite prepared to say that the dairyman should not have been granted a price increase? I do not believe that any honourable member opposite would say that, because he knows that we cannot have an economy in which one section of the community is held down unfairly. If we are to have butter production, which is a big and important export industry, we have to give the producer a fair return.

This increase was determined after the Commonwealth Bureau of Agricultural Economics had made an extensive investigation, which showed that the industry should in fact have more than 2½d. increase. But as the price is high the industry decided that, in the interests of getting a bigger volume of sales, producers would not go to the fullest extent that their costs of production would have allowed. Is any member opposite prepared to say to a committee, whose composition I will discuss in a few moments, would be more competent to deal with this problem than the established Commonwealth Bureau? The members of this bureau are investigating the industry closely.

The second item, which falls into the same category, is cheese. The increase here has been from 1d. to 1½d. a lb., also on June 20 this year. The next three prices, bracketed

together, are those of beef, mutton and pork. All are higher than they were in July, 1963. Beef is 7d. a lb. dearer, mutton 3d. a lb., and pork 6d. a lb. Two or three factors are connected with that. There has been a series of drought seasons in our northern beef-producing areas. The honourable member for Mitcham, who has shown an interest in the improvement of roads in the Far North, asked a question about the numbers of stock available. One has only to look at the stock figures to see that the figure of 21,000 head of stock available each year tumbled to 7,000 head. This shows the serious consequences produced by drought conditions in the Far North. Although the prices have risen for the consumer, this has been a disastrous period for the producer. Does the member representing that district say that we should prevent a grazier from getting a return to compensate him for the disastrous drought conditions?

Bacon and ham prices have risen by between 1d. and 6d. a lb. for various types, but that is purely and simply a seasonal fluctuation. Few types of meat are more subject to fluctuations than are pig meats. It is well known that when pork prices are high production increases and prices regulate themselves downwards. Honourable members opposite have not said that the producer is being over-paid. Ham, beef and pork sandwiches have risen in price by 1d. in July this year because of the rise in price of the commodities referred to. Pies rose in price by 1d. in 1964, but the price of pasties remained unchanged. The price of block cake rose 3d. a lb. Again, the price rises were the result of an investigation into increased costs of production. Once there is an increase in marginal rates and an increase in the basic wage, the cost of the commodity involved must rise. This is inevitable for, if the price of labour is increased, so automatically is the price of the commodity.

Mr. McKee: Not necessarily. Why do they put up the price of labour?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: For the same reason as the Prices Commissioner raised the prices of these commodities. A tribunal goes into applications made by trade unions for increased wages and, if it finds there is a case, it awards an increase. Members opposite want it both ways. They do not seem to realize that the biggest factor in production costs is labour and, if the cost of labour is increased, inevitably there will be some alterations in the cost structure. I

ask members opposite to consider what Labor Governments do, and they surely are not trying to load things against the worker.

Mr. Lawn: What about your Commonwealth Government?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Let us for the moment keep to State issues, which this is at the moment. When labour charges increase in New South Wales, does the State Government there say that in the circumstances fares will remain the same? If members study the fares in that State they will see that they are much higher than those here.

Mr. Hutchens: Have you lost sight of the fact that we asked for an inquiry into price increases before the basic wage increase?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: No, I have not overlooked that, but the honourable member is overlooking the fact that there have been six adjustments in wages, not one. In some instances it has been possible for industry to absorb the cost of wage increases, and in some cases the Government has said that it must do so because its cost structure would allow it to do so. Before bus fares were altered by the Tramways Trust, there were six wage adjustments. The time comes when industry, unless it is to go bankrupt or cease operations, cannot afford to overlook increased costs heaped upon it. It is elementary in production that if costs increase sale prices must increase also. Members opposite think that only one thing should go up—wages. I agree that wages should be fixed on a proper basis, and I do not complain when they go up. We take steps to meet that.

*Members interjecting:*

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I listened to members opposite with a great deal of patience. I never interrupt members. I ask the member for Adelaide to let me advance my case; it may be a bad case, but let me advance it without interruption, if I may. Members opposite cannot see that for an industry to continue in operation it must be profitable. If we want to have employers we must have industries that can afford to pay the wages. Is any member opposite able to say otherwise? All that members opposite say is, "We will put up the cost of production, but we will peg the selling price."

Mr. Lawn: Hear! hear!

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: It is elementary that members opposite do not understand what the problems are.

*Members interjecting:*

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable the Treasurer.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Bus fares have gone up. All of the increases that took place in wages for five years were absorbed by the Tramways Trust, but there have been six wage increases since September, 1959.

Mr. Loveday: Why were they made?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: What do members opposite expect? Do they expect that the Treasury will subsidize the Tramways Trust to a greater extent to enable it to pay these wages? If they do, then surely they must suggest some avenue for increasing taxation to enable the Treasury to do it. However, I noticed that when the Commonwealth Treasurer last night included an increase in taxation in his Budget, honourable members opposite him did not approve of that at all. In fact, everybody said that it was shocking; but it is inevitable that if the cost of production is put up the increased charges must be met from somewhere.

*Members interjecting:*

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I am not going to reply to interjections. I want to develop an argument and I believe I have the right to do that. Honourable members opposite know as well as I do that if an industry can absorb costs the Prices Commissioner makes it absorb them. I could quote many cases where the Prices Commissioner has told industries they must absorb increased costs. In the Arbitration Commission's decision (and I am not criticizing its decisions) it can be seen from the individual returns of the judges that one judge wanted the wage increased by so much; another judge did not want it increased at all; and another judge wanted another amount. Honourable members should appreciate from that that the Commission does not have a precise basis for fixing the wage. Therefore, when the judges as a whole say that in their opinion industry can absorb extra costs, that must not be taken to mean that every industry can absorb every cost; it must be taken as a general rule of the Australian economy. For instance, the judges have never said that the Municipal Tramways Trust can pay increased costs without making increases in its fares and it is necessary only to look at its balance sheet to see that the trust, for the last 10 years, has made a loss on every occasion. I have heard honourable members opposite say that the judges said that industry could absorb increased costs. In most cases, probably costs can be absorbed, but in many cases they cannot be.

Mr. Loveday: That is where we want an inquiry.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Where is the honourable member's inquiry going to get him? We are making inquiries and where an industry can absorb increased costs it has been told to absorb them. The Leader's amendment is rather interesting. It says, in effect, that appeals are to be made against decisions of the Prices Commissioner and that the Prices Commissioner should be on the appeal board. Have you ever heard of anything so ridiculous! Today the Prices Commissioner is the fixing authority and I have never yet refused to accept any of his recommendations.

Mr. Riches: Did the Prices Commissioner fix the price of the *Advertiser*?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The *Advertiser* applied to the Prices Commissioner and he investigated its costs and reported that the charges were not unmerited. If honourable members look at the cost of the paper used in the *Advertiser*—

Mr. Ryan: Look at the profits, too.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will look at the profits. The member for Port Adelaide (Mr. Ryan) does not want anybody to make a profit, and how a community could run without profits being made, I do not know. In reply to the interjection of the member for Stuart (Mr. Riches), the *Advertiser* submitted to the Prices Commissioner a request for an increase in price which was investigated by the Commissioner before the *Advertiser* increased the price. The Prices Commissioner did examine the price of that newspaper.

Mr. McKee: That makes a joke out of price control.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The member for Hindmarsh on two occasions has asked questions about prices. We were told that by holding plumbing prices down we were driving people away from the industry, and that was the basis on which the questions were asked. The newspaper article was based on that point.

Mr. Hutchens: Wait a minute! Be fair! I said that I did not subscribe to that.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I did not say that the honourable member supported it. I said the basis of his question was the statement that holding down plumbing prices would affect the plumbing industry. It can be shown that the plumbing prices have not been held down to the extent that it affected the number of persons employed in the industry.

Mr. Hutchens: I followed up the question.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I am not criticizing the honourable member, but I am emphasizing the position as outlined by questions the honourable member asked. In this instance prices were adjusted to enable the industry to continue, but that is not what the Leader wants. He does not want the prices to be adjusted. I do not know how the plumber will get paid, but the Leader wants prices held down. That is the basis of the problem that my honourable friends opposite have not taken the trouble to consider. For instance, electrical installation costs have increased by 9d. an hour. The basic wage increase and other costs are involved in fixing that cost.

Mr. McKee: How about funeral costs?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The cost of red bricks has been increased by 10s. a thousand. The last increase was 4½ years ago and every honourable member knows that the brick industry involves much labour and cartage. The price of cream bricks did not increase and the additional costs had to be absorbed by the industry. The price of sand was increased by 6d. a ton. The last increase was seven years ago and during that period six increases in wages were announced apart from any other increase that may have been involved. The cost of plumbers' brassware increased by 7½ per cent due mainly to increased costs of brass and wages. The cost of brass is determined by the overseas metal price. What does the committee of inquiry do about that? It could say that people could be retrenched because the industry could not afford to pay the wages, but that would not solve anything. Hair cutting costs have increased by 6d. Some hairdressers wanted it increased by 1s. but the department intervened and the investigation resulted in an increase of 6d. However, if the basic wage and margins are increased why should not a hairdresser receive some benefit? Why should the benefit accrue only to one section of the community? Most hairdressers are self-employed and if their costs are increasing why shouldn't they receive some benefit?

Footwear margins have increased for men and women by 2½ per cent, but the interesting thing is that we are selling footwear in South Australia at a substantially lower price than in the States where it is manufactured. We hear much about spiralling costs and everything else, but surely honourable members do not think that price control here is inefficient when it can achieve that result! Builders' hardware prices have risen between 5 per cent and 30 per cent but it is equally true that

wages have increased sharply. In some instances the overseas world prices of raw materials for hardware have risen by 70 per cent. The price of beer has risen by 1d. a glass and 1d. a bottle, the last increase being four years ago.

Oregon has risen by 21s. 6d., which is entirely due to the higher landed costs and the increase in duty. That is the sort of thing we are up against! What committee suggested by the Leader and supported by Opposition members could cope with that particular problem? Soft drinks have risen by 1d. to 2d. a bottle. In one instance the last increase in those commodities occurred in 1958 and in the other two instances in 1960. Conversely, lamb prices are 4d. to 5d. lower than in the same period last year, although I do not claim that that is due to price control; it is actually due to a seasonal condition and something quite outside price control, because lamb prices are largely dependent upon the overseas demand for lambs as well as upon the local supply and demand. Potatoes are 1d. a pound cheaper than in the corresponding period last year, which again is because of a seasonal condition.

Flour is down 52s. a ton, which is due to the fact that the Commonwealth Investigation Committee ordered a reduction in the price of wheat. That reduction was examined here and the Prices Commissioner accordingly made a number of orders: flour dropped by 52s. a ton, bran and pollard 20s. a ton, plain flour 2d. for a 6 lb. bag, self-raising flour 2½d. for a 6 lb. bag and feed wheat (for the poultry industry and such like) 1s. 4½d. a bushel. The price of bread dropped by ½d. for a 2 lb. loaf delivered. That followed the reduction in the price of flour. Block cake prices dropped by 4d. a pound, because the Commonwealth had reduced the sales tax, which was immediately passed on to the consumer. Small cakes came down by 1d. each, again a sales tax concession. Biscuit prices came down from 4d. to 8d. a pound, another sales tax concession. Honourable members seem to overlook these items when they are speaking. They notice when the price goes up, but they fail to notice reductions. Jelly crystals came down from 1d. to 3½d. a packet, again a sales tax reduction, and canned fish came down from 5d. to 1s. 6d. a tin for the same reason. Cornflour and custard powder (16oz.) came down from 2d. to 4½d. a packet.

Mr. McKee: Did these reductions apply all over the State?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes, they were made generally. I do not say the



reductions applied in every State, but they were the reductions ordered or agreed upon in consultation between the Prices Commissioner and the industries concerned. Ice cream came down, the one pint bricks from 1½d. to 2½d. and the large bricks from 7d. to 9d., again as the result of sales tax reduction. Baby foods came down by an average of 3d. a tin in July 1964. There have been two reductions of 7d. and 6d. in the price of eggs, both as a result of seasonal conditions. In the last fortnight eggs have come down by 1s. 1d. a dozen. Nylon cord tyres for trucks have come down by £1 19s. 6d. to £10 18s. a tyre, because of the reduced cost of the nylon tyre cord. Cornsacks have come down by 4s. 3d. a dozen due to reduced landing costs, and wool packs have been reduced by 8d. each for a similar reason. Sulphuric acid has been reduced by 20s. a ton by order of the Commissioner, and that, incidentally, is a tremendously important item to our primary industries. That decrease was made as a direct result of a cost investigation by the Prices Department.

Superphosphate was brought down by 12s. to 13s. a ton, and that again was due to an investigation by the Prices Department. Incidentally, the cost of superphosphate in New South Wales has risen. A further reduction of £3 a ton for superphosphate was ordered, to ensure that the Commonwealth bounty was passed on to the consumer. Prices for standard grade petrol and premium grade petrol were both brought down in August, 1963, by ½d. a gallon as the result of a cost investigation by the department. Premium grade petrol was brought down a further ½d. in June, 1964, as the result of another cost investigation. Power kerosene came down 1d. in March, 1964, again a cost investigation, and distillate was brought down 1d. a gallon for a similar reason. Diesel oil was decreased by 10s. a ton, also as a result of price investigation.

Although my friend the Leader of the Opposition criticizes our system, it is rather interesting that every other State waits on us to make a new determination on petroleum prices. Then immediately an approach is made to the petroleum interests in that State to have the price fixed on an Australian basis. Although what is happening here is said to be so inefficient, the Premiers of New South Wales and Victoria have both openly stated that the oil companies must conform to the South Australian price. Incidentally, while the companies are conforming to the South Australian price the retailers in the other States are not

conforming. Consequently the price of petroleum products to the motorist in the other States (with the possible exception of Queensland, which might be on the same levels as we are) averages about 1½d. a gallon, I think, more than in South Australia. One has only to go over the border into Victoria to see this happening. Does that look as though the Leader had good grounds for his complaints? The many items in respect of which price reductions have been effected are all conveniently forgotten by our friends opposite. They say, "This is something very good; we shall not see this. But, look, something else has gone up by a fraction. We must make a song about that. It is good politics to do so." I do not believe it is good politics to do that. If price-fixing is to be maintained, it must be done only upon a fair basis. Surely everyone is entitled to a reasonable reward for his exertions, be he a store-keeper, a worker for the Electricity Trust or a worker in any other walk of life—a primary producer, if you like! I could say much more about the reasons for price alterations but I feel that I have already stated the case amply. I have spoken for longer than I intended, and I apologize to honourable members for that.

In conclusion, I should like to draw attention to the composition of this board of inquiry that the Leader has been able to think up. The first person he has on the job is the Deputy President of the Industrial Court and Public Service Arbitrator (Judge L. H. Williams). The member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) and the member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) will bear me out when I say that at present if any section of our community is in difficulties it is magistrates and such people. We have been piling work on to the Deputy President of the Industrial Court and I can assure the Leader that it would be completely impossible for the Deputy President to undertake this work unless he were to drop the work that Parliament had given him specifically to do—the making of necessary adjustments in the wages and conditions of a whole host of Government employees who are continually applying to him for alterations of awards. Is he to drop that work and take up this task? Incidentally, it would be work that he would not be particularly in touch with for he has not the background to this work that Mr. Murphy has. Mr. Murphy has a trained and competent staff that has been dealing with the problem for many years.

The next person the Leader has suggested is the Auditor-General. In a few weeks' time

we shall have our customary complaint from honourable members that the Auditor-General's Report is not on their files. On one occasion one member opposite made a powerful speech about the report not being on members' files. In that year the printer had made a mistake and had not cut one of the leaves—incidentally, it was one of the principal leaves. I was interested to see some six weeks after the report had been on the member's file that it still had not been manipulated so that it could be read! Do honourable members seriously suggest that the Auditor-General should be taken off his normal duties at this time of all times when he has to prepare his report, which we hope will be ready by the time the Budget is presented? Should we put him on to this task of chasing rainbows merely for political purposes to suit the Leader of the Opposition? I suggest that we should not.

The next member on this suggested committee is the Prices Commissioner, with whom I have already dealt. The next is one person nominated by the Chamber of Manufactures. I understood from the remarks of some members opposite that these people were the big bad wolves. It is rather strange that these people, whom members opposite say are forcing up costs, should be sought by them to investigate costs. Another suggested member is a person nominated by the Trades and Labor Council. If it came to an accountancy matter, I suggest that Mr. Murphy would be able to explain the issues involved.

For these reasons, I ask the House not to accept the amendment, which is designed to be a no-confidence motion. I think it has been placed on the Notice Paper for purposes of a political discussion rather than for an investigation into the real problems of our economy. I thank members for the attention they have given to this debate. I promise that their remarks will be analysed for any useful suggestions that can be adopted, but I cannot accept the amendment moved by the Leader.

Mr. CORCORAN (Millicent): I support the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply, as amended. The Premier expressed his regret to the member for West Torrens (Mr. Fred Walsh) and the member for Semaphore (Mr. Tapping) because of their recent illnesses. I want him to know that we appreciate his remarks, which I am sure the Leader of the Opposition will convey to them.

I read in the *Sunday Mail* or in Monday's *Advertiser*, in a report about a choral competition at Tanunda and Gawler, that the Premier had descended from the gods. Far be it for

one who has risen from the depths to counter all the arguments put forward by the Premier against the Leader's amendment, which has been supported by Opposition members most effectively and ably. I do not think any member would disagree if I said that no member of this House is as expert as the Premier at producing Aunt Sallies and then knocking them over one by one to suit his own purposes. He does this most effectively. As I am relatively inexperienced, I do not think I can deal with all the points he raised, but I shall mention some of them.

First, he said the amendment was, in fact, camouflage, that it was airy fairy, and that it was produced by the Opposition as a political stunt. I believe that members on this side of the House, the members of Her Majesty's Opposition, are a responsible and intelligent body of men who are greatly concerned with this aspect. The amendment was not intended as a political stunt; it is a serious matter. It is so serious that the Premier devoted almost an hour (it may have been more) to answering the remarks of the Opposition on this subject. At the outset he said that the South Australian and Queensland Governments were the only two Governments that had maintained effective price control. I believe he did say that the system in Queensland was not as effective as that operating in South Australia. The Premier said that, because New South Wales and other States did not have price control, this had an effect on prices in this State, and he dealt with certain items which made this apparent. Members on this side could not disagree with this because this could be so.

I remind the Premier that at a special Premier's conference held in 1956, called to discuss the inflationary spiral of that period, the matter of price control by the States was discussed at length. I believe that the Premier, by stating that the price control structure in this State was affected by the lack of price control in New South Wales, admitted that price control was necessary. Indeed, he made the point that it was necessary for every State to have some degree of price control. The Opposition maintains that there should be a uniform system of price control throughout the Commonwealth, and that there is no better body to administer price control than the Commonwealth Government.

Reverting to the 1956 Premier's conference, the then Labor Premier of New South Wales spoke strongly in favour of re-introducing price control in his State under certain conditions.

So, too, did the then Labor Premier of Queensland, (Mr. Gair). I have a copy of *Hansard* containing quotations from this conference, and they prove that these people at that stage were concerned with price control in relation to wages. However, they were not prepared to go into it unless it could be a uniform system administered effectively throughout the Commonwealth. Therefore, the New South Wales Government has recognized the need for a uniform system, but it has not yet had the co-operation of other States necessary to allow the introduction of uniform price control.

The Premier said that Mr. Chifley dropped price control and he referred to certain statements made in 1948, but I point out that Mr. Chifley was forced to drop price control when the 1948 referendum failed. On that occasion the Premier had something to say about price control and I do not think that he was in favour of it. It is also interesting to note that the Tasmanian Parliament recently saw fit to appoint a committee that will report back to it on the subject we are dealing with. That Parliament has seen the need for a committee of inquiry, as the Opposition in South Australia has seen the need. In discussing the increases that have taken place in prices in this State over the last 12 months, the Premier related almost every item to the wage increases. In each case he said that the increase arose from an increase in the cost of labour, which was the most expensive item for industry to bear. From this, should I assume that the Premier did not think that the £1 a week increase in the basic wage was necessary? Should I further assume that the Premier disagrees with the Arbitration Commission's ruling in this matter? I understand from the ruling of the commission that the increase in the basic wage was necessary because, during the intervening period since the last increase, prices had risen sufficiently to justify it.

I was surprised to hear from the Premier about the many reductions in prices. Although the Premier's information on this matter would be accurate, are the Commonwealth Statistician's figures to be considered wrong? I take it that from the sample items from which the statistician derived his figures, he still arrived, at the end of the last quarter, at a 2.6 per cent increase in the cost of living, so that it can only be assumed that the reductions in prices have been far outweighed by the increases.

This matter has been amply covered by Opposition members. I believe that this amendment is a responsible amendment and I sincerely hope that it will receive the support it

deserves, not only from Opposition members, but also from Government members. The Premier referred to the membership of the committee suggested by the Leader of the Opposition. I suggest that it would not have mattered one iota who the Leader had suggested should make up this committee because the Premier would have made similar remarks, whoever was suggested. There is no necessity for me to pursue this matter further as I wish to speak about matters concerning my district.

Initially, I shall deal with the major expansion foreshadowed for my district. An announcement has been made about the steps to be taken to put certain plans into effect. On May 6, 1964, the Premier announced a £6,000,000 expansion by Apeel Limited at Snuggery in the South-East not far from Millicent. He said that the expansion would almost treble the number of people employed by this firm from the present 125 to 350 in about two years, and to 550 by 1970. The Premier also said that in order to house families affected by this expansion the Housing Trust would construct about 400 houses in Millicent in the next three years. The expansion programme would involve the installation of a second high speed machine and conversion of other products sold by the company; the transfer of packaging and marketing facilities to the plant site at Snuggery; and the use of an additional 40,000,000 super feet of pulpwood.

The people of Millicent were appreciative of this news, and the leaders of the community expressed their pleasure at this expansion, because new families would come to the district, facilities to care for them would expand, and they thought the announcement might lead to further expansion. On July 16 of this year the Premier announced in the *Advertiser* the possibility of further expansion in this field. His statement, under the heading "Pulp Plans Revised", was as follows:

Agreement between the Government and private forests which could lead to the establishment of a paper pulp industry in the South-East was announced by the Premier (Sir Thomas Playford) last night. He said on ADS7 and 5AD that negotiations were "virtually concluded" on matters which would have an important bearing on forest industry expansion.

An agreement had been signed with Cellulose Australia Limited to entitle that company to 50 million super feet of timber a year. "This will enable Cellulose Australia Limited to double its present production" the Premier said. Agreement has also been signed between the private forests and the Government and

this will enable consideration to be given to the establishment of a pulp mill using the surplus timber available. Australian Paper Manufacturers Ltd. has asked for a short-term option over the surplus timber to enable it to check the processes used for pulp-making.

"I believe that, in itself, will make possible the complete use of both Government and private-forest timber. It is of great importance to the South-East."

I could not agree more with the final paragraph of that statement. People in the Mill-cent district were extremely pleased with the decision about these industries.

Mr. Riches: The honourable member should be; he has been asking for it long enough.

Mr. CORCORAN: But I do not believe, however, that the final result was the one intended by this Government initially. I believe that if Harmac Limited had proceeded at Mount Gambier it would have done so at the expense of the two industries already there. I say this because, until the negotiations with Harmac ceased, it was impossible to obtain from the Government any information as to whether the applications that had been made by both Cellulose Australia Limited and Apcel Limited for additional supplies of pulpwood would be granted. I believe that the Government, about 12 months ago, was not greatly interested in the development of these two industries. Cellulose Australia Limited commenced functioning in extremely difficult times, shortly before the Second World War. The machine that it had ordered was a modern one at that time but I believe it was held up on the wharf in Hamburg, Germany, and was never received. The company resurrected a machine which I believe came from a scrap heap, but it is still functioning effectively. I have a particular affection for this company because I worked for it at one time, and one could not wish for a better employer. Indeed, there is an extremely happy relationship between employer and employee even to this day. At present, Cellulose Australia Limited has expanded to the extent that it has installed a second board machine. This is a modern machine and, although it is working at about only a third of its capacity, its output will increase in the future as the demand for its product increases. I hope this company will continue to prosper. I am pleased to know that 50,000,000 super feet of timber, an increase of 30,000,000 super feet on the original figure, has been guaranteed to that company, because this will give it some incentive to increase production as well as the security of knowing that the supply will be available when it is required. I hope the

company will be able to make use of that supply over a considerable period of time.

Mr. Bywaters: Do not the people of South Australia have shares in that company?

Mr. CORCORAN: The Government has assisted this company in many ways. In fact, the company possibly owes its very existence to the Government.

Concerning Apcel Limited, I stand to be corrected here, but it seemed that when this matter was first raised, particularly in regard to its expansion, the Government showed a marked lack of interest. The history of this matter, which I shall now develop, proves that the Government was not as interested in it as we are led to believe. I first came to know of the company's expansion authoritatively when I read a report of the Chairman of Australian Paper Manufacturers Limited, Mr. C. S. Booth, in the *Advertiser* on September 24. The report states:

The plans of Australian Paper Manufacturers Ltd. to expand the Apcel plant near Mount Gambier depend on the necessary pulpwood supplies being made available by the South Australian Government from its State forests. The Chairman of A.P.M. (Mr. C. S. Booth) says this in his annual review, released after yesterday's annual meeting. The recently concluded agreement with Kimberley Clark Corporation envisages major immediate and subsequent expansion of manufacturing at the Apcel mill. However, unless these supplies are made available, the additional capacity will have to be installed in another State. . . .

I have no doubt that that article was placed in the *Advertiser* for a very good purpose. Possibly it was put there for the benefit of people such as myself who would see there was a possibility that this development would be lost to this State and would go elsewhere. The only course open to me then was to question the Minister of Forests, and therefore on October 1 I directed a question to the Minister and quoted the press article to which I have just referred. My question was:

Because of the importance of this matter to the district, will the Minister of Forests say whether any approach has been made to his department on this matter and, if it has not, will he say what his department's policy will be when an approach is made?

I think that was an appropriate question. I was seeking information not only for myself but for the people of my district, many of whom had read this article and all of whom were interested. It has always been my understanding that when a member asks a question of a Minister the reply becomes public property and is there for all to see: it is an answer to the people that member represents, and not only to the member as an individual.

Mr. Bywaters: It is for the information of the people of the State as a whole.

Mr. CORCORAN: The Minister of Forests asked me to put the question on notice, and there was nothing objectionable about that because the question dealt with a matter of policy and no doubt the Minister wanted to study it. I therefore proceeded to place the question on notice, and on October 8, 1963, I asked the Minister the following question:

1. Has an approach been made to the Government by Australian Paper Manufacturers Limited in connection with an increase in the supply of pulpwood for its Apcel plant near Millicent?

2. If so, what was the outcome of this approach?

3. If no approach has yet been made, what is the Government's policy in this matter?

The Minister replied:

1. Yes.

2 and 3. The matter is being considered in connection with the general development of State and private forests.

I was pleased to know that at that stage an approach had been made by this firm to the Government, but of course I was naturally anxious to know more than had been indicated, so on October 15 I asked the Minister the following question:

My question concerns the guarantee of additional supplies of pulpwood from the Government to Apcel Ltd. at Snuggery in the South-East. On Tuesday, October 8, the Minister of Forests, in a reply to a question I had placed on notice, said that the matter was being considered in connection with the general development of the State and private forests. Since then I have sought further information, and from what I have been told—and I believe my information is reliable—Apcel Ltd. plans not only immediate expansion but subsequent major expansion, and this will occur only if additional pulpwood supplies can be guaranteed by the Government, otherwise the intended expansion will go to another State. I have also been told that, if the company is not aware of the Government's decision on this matter within the next 2½ to three months, this expansion will probably not occur. As I consider this matter of vital importance to my district, particularly as it will cater for much female labour, will the Minister indicate the issues involved in this matter and say when a decision is likely to be reached?

The Minister of Forests replied:

Actually, this question should be put on notice. Instead of replying to the question today I will consider it and see whether I can obtain further information for the honourable member.

On October 16 I asked the following question:

Has the Minister of Forests a reply to a question I asked him yesterday regarding additional pulpwood supplies for Apcel Limited in the South-East?

The Minister replied as follows:

Under an Indenture Act passed by the House of Assembly, assented to on November 9, 1961, and amended on June 13, 1963, Harmac has until the end of the year to make a decision as to whether or not the firm will go ahead with the project. The Government has had no notice served upon it that the company will not go ahead. One of the partners of the company—MacMillan, Bloedel and Powell River Limited—has signified to the Government that it is not proposing to continue its interest, but it is the belief of the Government that Harmac is negotiating to get other interests to take its place. Until a formal notification has been given to the Government that the contract with Harmac will not proceed, the Government is not in a position to enter into any further negotiations. If Harmac is not successful in attracting a suitable associate, the Government will confer with the private forest interests to determine a policy which will assure the continued development of both the Government and private forests.

This caused me some alarm, because it was clearly indicated by the Minister that further negotiations could not proceed until after December 31, but, at that time, because I was genuinely concerned that we might lose this industry, and in view of the almost "gun at the head" attitude of the company at that time—"If you do not give it to us, if we do not know by a certain time, we may go to another State"—I, for one, was not prepared to test them. In view of this, I directed a further question to the Minister of Forests, on October 17, as follows:

My question, directed to the Minister of Forests, concerns the supply of pulpwood to Apcel Limited in the South-East. What concerns me deeply at the moment is that it is now apparent from the Minister's reply to a question I asked yesterday that no further consideration will be given until the new year to Apcel's application for an additional supply of pulpwood. As I have already pointed out, Apcel desires a decision before then, evidently in order to facilitate planning. Will the Minister give Apcel's application conditional consideration so that the firm can be advised before the end of this year what decision it can expect in this matter in the event of Harmac's serving notice on the Government that it will not proceed with the pulp mill at Mount Gambier?

The following reply was given:

I ask the honourable member to place that question on notice.

On October 22 I asked the following question on notice:

Is it the intention of the Government to give conditional consideration to the application of Apcel Limited for additional supplies of pulpwood and to advise Apcel Limited of what decision it can expect in this matter in the event of Harmac (Australia) Limited serving

notice on the Government that it will not be proceeding with the pulp mill at Mount Gambier?

The Minister replied:

The matter will be considered if the circumstances described actually arise.

I thought I had pursued the matter with the Minister as far as I could go, and I think I paid him all the respect due to him in the matter, because up to this stage, at any rate, I did not attempt to by-pass him and go elsewhere. However, I was not satisfied with the replies I had been given to my inquiries, so on November 14 I directed the following question to the Premier:

Last month I directed a number of questions to the Minister of Forests regarding additional supplies of pulpwood for Apcel Limited, near Millicent. In one of his replies, the Minister said that, under an Indenture Act passed and amended by this House, Harmac had until the end of this year to inform the Government whether it intended to proceed with the pulp mill at Mount Gambier. Further, he said that, until formal notification was given to the Government, the contract with Harmac would not proceed. He also said that the Government was not able to enter into further negotiations, and I take it that meant regarding the additional supplies of pulpwood. Has the Premier had any further indication from Harmac whether it will proceed at Mount Gambier?

In reply, the Premier said:

Probably the strictly correct term was not used in reply to the honourable member's question if it was stated that we would not be able to consider other negotiations. The answer that should have been given was that we were unable to conclude other negotiations, because while Harmac has still the right, as it has, to take up the option, obviously we could not conclude any other negotiations on the assumption that Harmac would not take it up. I can take the position a little further than the Minister was able to take it in reply to the honourable member's last question. Since he asked the question in the House the principal of an American firm that is interested in Apcel has come to South Australia, and on behalf of his firm he has told a conference comprising members of the Forestry Board, the Minister of Forests and me what the firm's desire would be regarding expansion here. Also, a representative of the other associated firm—Australian Paper Mills—has been to South Australia and has discussed with us the expansion that firm could contemplate here. I have promised Australian Paper Mills that I would take the discussions a step further with Mr. Alstergren, the Chairman of Directors of Harmac. While the House is sitting it is not always possible to chase up such detailed matters, but I assure the honourable member that during the next two or three days I shall discuss with Mr. Alstergren the proposals which are at present only taking preliminary shape but which appear to the Government to be extremely interesting. I cannot take the matter

further. When a big industry is involved, fairly careful detailed consideration must be given to the subject. Personally, I was impressed with some proposals that have been explained to us; others did not seem so advanced, but nevertheless I believe they have reached a stage where I should discuss these matters fully with Mr. Alstergren to see whether a policy could be evolved that would be acceptable to him because, after all, he controls a large area of the private forests that would be involved in any transaction, even if the option over the State forests were exercised. I shall inform honourable members as soon as anything of any value has transpired. I can only say that discussions are proceeding.

Note that the Premier said:

I shall inform honourable members as soon as anything of any value has transpired.

The next I heard of the proposal, however, was on the Premier's television programme on Wednesday night, May 6. Meantime, I had written to the Premier asking for any further information he could give me on the matter. I even went to the extent of saying that I would treat any information from him as confidential if he wanted me to do so, but the information was not forthcoming. The questions I have asked can be read in *Hansard* by anybody who wishes to read them. I am disappointed that the Premier did not see fit to give me any information on the project until it was announced by him on television. As I said before, when I commenced asking questions I did not think the Government was as interested in this project as it could have been. Admittedly the project is in my district. We are not complaining about that because we are extremely happy that we have it.

The Hon. P. H. Quirke: If you are not complaining, what are you doing?

Mr. CORCORAN: I will complain about the way I was ignored in this matter.

Mr. Riches: This is not an isolated case.

The Hon. P. H. Quirke: What are you suggesting should have been done?

Mr. CORCORAN: I do not know that I have suggested anything. I have simply led up to what I am saying by explaining the part I played in the matter and the Government's lack of interest in it. I took much interest in it until the end of the year and then the announcement was made on television. I was completely ignored. Even though I had written to the Premier, I had not been able to get any information on the project. This led me to believe only one thing: that the Premier was making political capital out of it. At times the Opposition is accused of making political capital. We have an industry in the South-East—

The Hon. P. H. Quirke: Everything you are complaining about led up to it.

Mr. CORCORAN: It led up to it in the final stages, but I was left in the dark and, as I pointed out, I was extremely worried. I had pursued this matter relentlessly and did not think it would turn out as the people in my district and I wanted it to turn out. My constituents wanted to know what stage the proceedings had reached but could not get any information other than what I could provide. Of course, I was quite satisfied with the Premier's reply to the final question because I knew then that constructive steps were being taken to look at this important matter. In his announcement on May 6 the Premier said that the Government would instruct the Housing Trust to build about 400 houses in Millicent during the next three years, and that this would be necessary to cater for families that would go there as the result of this expansion.

The Premier has informed me (and I am pleased to know this) that, as far as he is aware, these homes will be of single-unit construction. There is no indication when these homes are to be built, but I know that plans are in hand for their construction. At present the housing situation in Millicent is rapidly becoming acute. The position is deteriorating, and is almost at the stage where there is a waiting time of six to nine months for a home. Admittedly, this is not a long waiting period when compared with some other areas, but I hope that it will not be long before the Housing Trust makes a definite move on the construction of these homes in order to house the people coming into the district, as well as those in the district who are waiting for a home. My colleague, the member for Enfield, pointed out yesterday (quite correctly) that the Government today is building fewer homes than it was building in 1961. The honourable member produced figures to prove his statement. Where homes are required quickly in areas such as Whyalla and Millicent, the satisfaction of the demand must have an effect on areas in the metropolitan area where the waiting time for rental accommodation is five or six years. I stand to be corrected if I am wrong.

Mr. Hutchens: Not a minute less.

Mr. CORCORAN: My point is that rapid expansion is required in certain areas. Rapid expansion is being achieved at Whyalla and I hope it will be achieved at Millicent. Such expansion must affect housing in other areas, yet fewer houses are being built today than were being built in 1961. As the member for

Enfield and the Leader of the Opposition said, the rate of house construction is falling although the population is increasing rapidly.

Concerning the 400 homes the Premier said would be built at Millicent, I have been approached on this matter by the members of the Tantanoola District Council. Tantanoola is a small, pleasant town situated about 10 miles south of Millicent in a rich rural area. The occupants of that town are extraordinarily hospitable people with a wonderful community spirit. The town has 12 trust homes in addition to the homes that have been established for some time. The members of the Tantanoola District Council, hearing of the rapid expansion proposed for Millicent, naturally want a piece of the cake. They have suggested that it would not be impracticable for the Housing Trust to build some of these 400 homes in Tantanoola. They were not greedy in this request, for they mentioned a figure of about 20 homes out of this total. This is a proportionately small number, yet the Councillors consider that even that number would assist their town. It would probably make the town big enough to warrant the installation of essential services that are not provided now. I refer to water supply and sewerage.

Mr. Shannon: How many people live there?

Mr. CORCORAN: The district has a population of about 700.

Mr. Shannon: It is too few for sewerage.

Mr. CORCORAN: It may be. I am not suggesting that sewerage should come there if the 20 houses were built, but at least it would be a start. This town is ideally situated for the industries of Apcel and Cellulose. It is two miles away from them and is a pleasant place in which to live. It is 10 miles from Millicent and 20 miles from Mount Gambier, and it has shopping facilities. The 12 trust houses constructed in the town have never been empty.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: Do you think the houses for the extra labour required by Apcel should be built at Tantanoola?

Mr. CORCORAN: I am not suggesting that at all. I said that this small town wanted a small piece of the cake, and the council suggested that a figure of 20 would not be out of proportion when 400 houses were to be built at Millicent. Perhaps it is not a practical suggestion, but the matter should be considered. The council has written to the Premier, but I do not know whether it has received a reply. I should like this matter to be considered favourably as it would not affect Millicent to any great extent.

Mr. Bywaters: It seems a reasonable request.

Mr. CORCORAN: It would help this small township which, I am sure, will never die.

Mr. Ryan: It would be the closest town to the expanding industries.

Mr. CORCORAN: Yes, it is two miles away. When I refer to Mount Burr the Minister of Forests may think that I am concentrating my speech on him, but that is not intentional. It was pleasing to read in an interim report tabled by the Public Works Committee yesterday that the committee had recommended the construction of a log bandmill at Mount Burr at an estimated cost of £111,000. Mount Burr is a Government town that originated about 30 years ago. I believe it has about 200 houses, as well as shopping facilities, churches, a community hall, and public and sporting facilities including an oval. The population is about 1,000. The sole industry is the Government sawmill, which is a most efficient mill, and I am pleased to see expansion occurring at this mill. I was alarmed to read this week a statement in the *South Eastern Times*, published at Millicent, about Mount Burr. Headed "Doubts on the future of Mount Burr township", it stated:

Doubts on the future of Mount Burr as a permanent township were expressed at the Beachport council's meeting on Wednesday, during a discussion on the need for a block of public toilets. Cr. R. A. Hirschhausen said he had been informed, unofficially, that there may be people living in Mount Burr in 15 years from now, but no longer.

A councillor has seen fit to make this statement. He says that he had been informed unofficially and, although there may be no accuracy in the unofficial report that he received, it does give rise to anxiety on the part of the people living in Mount Burr. If indeed this town were to close down one could well level criticism at the Government for having recently provided sewerage for that area at a cost of £156,000.

Mr. Shannon: Does that look as though the town is to be closed down.

Mr. CORCORAN: I am talking about a statement in the paper which I think should be refuted or confirmed by the Government, and I am asking the Government now, or the appropriate Minister—

Mr. McKee: Put a question on notice!

Mr. CORCORAN: I do not think there is any necessity for that. I have the opportunity to explain this matter in more detail now than at question time, particularly if I comply with the Speaker's recent request for members to be brief in asking questions. This press statement has no doubt aroused curiosity among

the people in the town of Mount Burr and surrounding districts, and I ask the Minister to investigate the matter and ascertain whether there is any truth in the statement.

In conclusion, as I did not have the opportunity to do so when I commenced my speech, I want to express my sincere sorrow to the families of the former members of this Parliament who have passed away since the last session. I do not intend to say any more than has already been said about these people except to add that they served this State well and will not be soon forgotten. I should also like to endorse the remarks of the member for Unley (Mr. Langley) in wishing those members who are to retire from the House at the end of this session a long, happy and healthy retirement. As the member for Unley said, that would surely be a just reward for the services they have rendered to this State. I trust that the friendship that I have formed with those members will continue despite their leaving this Chamber. I support the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply as proposed to be amended by the Leader.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga): I associate myself with the remarks expressed by previous speakers and pay a personal tribute to Her Majesty for the wise choice she made in selecting her representative in South Australia. I know of nobody who is not happy with the services of Sir Edric and Lady Bastyan in the high office they hold here. Before getting on to the one topic alone that I wish to discuss, I should like to join with other members in congratulating the member for Eyre (Mr. Bockelberg) whose speech, if I may say so, was one out of the box. I did not expect from the honourable member so thoughtful and so constructive an address. His speech was well worthy of our attention. The same applies to some degree to the member for Stirling (Mr. McAnaney). I do not think these two members would object to my saying that they are both relatively inexperienced, and therefore they deserve all the more to be congratulated upon their efforts.

I express my deep sorrow to the relatives of the deceased former members. Although I have written to those they have left, I should like my name associated with the expressions of sympathy uttered in this debate. The member for Semaphore (Mr. Tapping) is absent from this Chamber because of ill health. The honourable member was for many years a colleague of mine on the Public Works Committee, and I learned to have



a high regard for his judgment and his assiduousness. One of my present colleagues on the committee is also sick. I refer to the member for West Torrens (Mr. Fred Walsh). I wish both these members a speedy return to health and strength.

Something unusual has occurred in this debate. Indeed, I find some difficulty in remembering, in my long experience, the like to have occurred before. I do not know whether the member for Millicent (Mr. Corcoran) is the simple son of the land he would lead us to believe he is in inviting members of the Government Party to vote for their own demise. I do not know whether the honourable member really knew what he was suggesting, but if he did he is perhaps not so simple that he thought we might swallow such an idea. Obviously, it is not the practice for a vote of want of confidence to be treated lightly. I point out to honourable members the doubtful wisdom of the choice the Opposition made to give a riposte to the Premier when he replied in this debate. It is the usual thing on such an occasion for the Leader of the House to reply. The Opposition in its wisdom selected the member for Millicent, and I must agree that the honourable member's speech will read very well in Millicent. However, I am going to take the awful risk of forgetting the parish pump, and I will deal with what at the moment is before the Chamber, which is the vote of want of confidence moved by the Leader of the Opposition.

The member for Millicent—although he did not say so—seemed to express pleasant surprise when the Premier read for the information of the House details of the various items on which the Prices Commissioner (Mr. Murphy) had given information as to movements in price structure over the last 12 months. Are we to be so simple in this place as to think that the Opposition did not have the opportunity of getting from Mr. Murphy all the information that the Premier supplied this evening? Every private member is well aware that anybody can go down and discuss any price problem with Mr. Murphy, whose door is always open. I am certain in my own mind that there is a history to this motion, and I propose to disclose that history. I do not think for a moment that the motion is quite as simple as some people would suspect it was: I think it has a very definite purpose, and I believe I can uncover the purpose the Opposition had in mind. If the member for Millicent had taken the opportunity (which he had when he

was speaking on prices) to deal with the information provided by the Prices Department and given to the House by the Premier, I would have said, "Well and good." That is what I should have expected from the Opposition. If members opposite were to reply to the Premier, I should have expected that reply to deal with the matters he had raised. But what did we get? We got one item in respect of which the Commonwealth Statistician's figures disclosed there was a two-point-something rise in cost. That is a misleading statement. Anybody who knows anything at all about these price figures knows that they are collated by authorities. He would know at once that the figures quoted by the member for Millicent (Mr. Corcoran) related to the direct cost of living. They are what we call the C series index figures, and are items that have a direct bearing on the cost of living. That is why they were prepared and published. They have no relation at all to the general economy of the State. There was no content in those figures dealing with industry or commerce.

Mr. Loveday: Nor to the people.

Mr. SHANNON: They had one element only in them. The member for Whyalla is long enough in the tooth to know that what I am saying is correct—that the figures quoted related only to the C series index.

Mr. Loveday: They were far more relevant to the question than individual items.

Mr. SHANNON: I should not have thought so. I do not know whether the honourable member recollects what the Premier said, but I shall not weary honourable members by going over it again. In my opinion, he swatted a fly with a sledgehammer. I do not think he left the honourable member a feather to fly with, but I remember him mentioning that in South Australia we sell ladies' and gentlemen's shoes, manufactured in the Eastern States, at prices lower than those obtaining in the Eastern States where they are made. Of course, that may not have had much effect on some members (I do not know) but, if this were a genuine attempt to deal with what the Leader calls the spiralling cost structure from which society is suffering, it should have suggested an effective method of handling the problem.

Let me come to the background of this amendment. First, I point out that the mover of this no-confidence motion was the Leader of the Opposition. I shall not read to honourable members all that he said, for to do that I should be here until tomorrow morning, but

his speech occupied nine and a half pages of *Hansard* before he dealt with what was apparently the paramount matter.

Mr. Millhouse: He just tacked it on at the end.

Mr. SHANNON: Exactly, but I took the trouble to look at his speech. In it he said a few funny things, but we realize the intention of the amendment. On the face of it, it could be accepted, but I have some reservations about that, which I propose to discuss. The Leader said:

I have no hesitation in stating that any special cases of exorbitant charges that I have referred to the Prices Department have been handled promptly and efficiently and considerable reductions have been obtained in many instances.

Apparently, therefore, the Prices Commissioner is the nigger in the woodpile. That is the Leader's own statement on the matter. I thoroughly endorse his comments about Mr. Murphy, who is a most competent and conscientious officer. I wonder whether anybody has taken time off to consider how the amendment saw the light of day? Where was it born? I think it was born in Caucus; in fact, I am sure it was, and I am sure also that Caucus decided that this would be one thing the Government would find difficult to answer.

Mr. McKee: You must admit it is giving you some trouble.

Mr. SHANNON: On the contrary. I will now come to the meat of the matter. The Labor Party knew, by virtue of sickness in its family, that the amendment could not be carried. The member for Hindmarsh (Mr. Hutcheus) informed the House of the state of health of the member for Semaphore (Mr. Tapping). I agree that it is a most unhappy occurrence. However, the Party of which he is a member knew all about that, so obviously the amendment was put forward for one purpose only; it was not put forward with any intention of having some constructive effect on the spiralling price structure.

Mr. Frank Walsh: What a lousy mind you've got.

Mr. SHANNON: I know. Unfortunately, I can read some people's minds. They are as clear as glass.

Mr. Frank Walsh: I would not go too far with it.

Mr. SHANNON: I will go farther if I wish.

Mr. Frank Walsh: Do not go too far!

Mr. SHANNON: Is that a threat or a promise?

Mr. Frank Walsh: I do not want to have to look up my records, you know!

Mr. SHANNON: That is a great shame! I do not intend to look up records at all; I intend to deal with the motion. The Leader threatens some dire pain for me. Perhaps I shall survive it; I hope I shall. The Leader is apparently a little annoyed that I have been able to read the signs of the times, and my experience in this place has meant that it is not unusual for me to have the ability to do that. I lived through the 1938-1941 Parliament, and I do not think there has ever been a greater variety of votes of no confidence in the Government than there were in those years. That Government was led by Mr. Richard (later Sir Richard) Butler, and I was the unhappy Government Whip. I learned in a hard school to assess fairly accurately the motives of the Opposition. The motives in this case are glaringly clear. Obviously members of the Opposition knew that this motion could not be carried and that it could have no force or effect on the rising cost structure, because they knew they could not carry it. The Leader himself admitted that this was in effect a motion of no confidence in the Government. The Opposition knew that, and it also knew that all its members would not be here to carry it. I am afraid that I am speaking now with a certain diffidence because you, Mr. Speaker, could have been called upon to decide whether the Government remained stable or not if all members had been present and had voted. I admit that. However, when looking at the problem and deciding what it would do for a little window dressing the Labor Party, knowing that it could not muster its full strength, thought it would give it a go in any case and see if it could not get something out of the wreck.

I was surprised to hear from the member for Millicent (Mr. Coreoran) that the great Australian Labor Party has a policy on the price problem. He told us what previous Leaders in New South Wales and Queensland had to say about the matter at a Labor conference. It was that if every State would enter the field and take active steps to institute price control they would be in it, too. Am I to assume, and I think it is a fair assumption, that if unhappily there were a change of political government in South Australia the Labor Party would adopt the great Australian Labor Party's policy and discard price control, as New South Wales has done, until every State in the Commonwealth fell into line? That is, in fact, what the member for

Millicent said. Perhaps he did not realize that, as he is inexperienced in this House, and this could be some justification for his lack of understanding. However, there is only one construction that can be put on what he said. It was a thin excuse for any Labor man to give for dropping price control in the light of what so-called supporters of the Party say in this Chamber about price control. If the Labor Party, as a body, is so enthusiastic about this, why has it not done something about it in those States where it has the power to do something? It makes me suspect that we are dealing with a matter that was not seriously considered as having any forceful effect, but something that would give Opposition members a peg on which to hang their hats.

Generally, when members opposite finished with parish pump matters they merely supported the amendment moved by the Leader and had nothing more to say about it. Perhaps one or two members said more, but most of them did nothing more than just support the amendment. This can be borne out by reading *Hansard*. If this was all members opposite had to say about the amendment, why

move it? I shall leave it to each reasonably-minded person to work out for himself; but to me it is obvious.

The House divided on the amendment:

Ayes (17).—Messrs. Burdon, Bywaters, Casey, Clark, Corcoran, Curren, Dunstan, Hughes, Hutchens, Jennings, Langley, Lawn, Loveday, McKee, Riches, Ryan, and Frank Walsh (teller).

Noes (17).—Messrs. Bockelberg, Brookman, Coumbe, Ferguson, Hall, Harding, Heaslip, Laucke, McAnaney, and Millhouse, Sir Baden Pattinson, Mr. Pearson, Sir Thomas Playford (teller), Messrs. Quirke and Shannon, Mrs. Steele, and Mr. Teusner.

Pairs.—Ayes—Messrs. Tapping and Fred Walsh. Noes—Messrs. Freebairn and Nankivell.

The SPEAKER: There are 17 Ayes and 17 Noes. There being an equality of votes, I give my vote in favour of the Noes. The question therefore passes in the negative.

Amendment thus negatived; motion carried.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.34 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, August 13, at 2 p.m.