

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, August 21, 1968.

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

### SUPPLY BILL (No. 2).

His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, by message, recommended the House of Assembly to make provision by Bill for defraying the salaries and other expenses of the several departments and public services of the Government of South Australia during the year ending June 30, 1969.

## QUESTIONS

### GAUGE STANDARDIZATION

Mr. CASEY: I understand that at long last the Premier has a reply to a question I asked on August 8 about the implications that may arise when the standard gauge railway line between Broken Hill and Cockburn is completed. Will he give that reply?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Discussions have been held over a considerable period by the three Governments concerned regarding the construction of a standard gauge railway between Cockburn and Broken Hill. The three Governments have had joint discussions with the Silverton Tramway Company. The final cost of the Cockburn to Broken Hill project cannot be determined until several matters, including the calling of tenders for the main line, the redesign of the Crystal Street station yard, the conversion of the mines sidings, and the *ex gratia* payment to the Silverton Tramway Company have been resolved. Under the provisions of the proposed agreement, South Australia will make a financial contribution similar to that applying to the work within South Australia. True, a possibility of legal action by the Silverton Tramway Company exists. In view of this, it is obviously not appropriate to comment further on the question of compensation or an *ex gratia* payment. The Government is fully aware of all the implications of constructing a new standard gauge railway to Broken Hill. Indeed, the previous Government was aware of the position and fully understood the delicacy of the negotiations and the need for many matters to remain on a confidential basis until the possibility of legal action was clarified.

### TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Mr. VIRGO: Will the Premier, as a matter of urgency, provide members whose districts are affected by the recommendations in the

Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study Report with a detailed map, enlarged and showing the exact location of the proposed freeways, rail rapid transit and land to be acquired, and will he also provide a complete list of the number of properties to be demolished and of the number of such properties upon which houses are built? Will the Premier treat these two matters as being of the utmost urgency?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I take it that all members have received a copy of the report, but I will check whether that is correct.

Mr. Jennings: It's not detailed.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I would think that the maps section of the report would be fairly complete.

Mr. Virgo: It is not.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: If it is not, the honourable member's request will receive urgent attention. I cannot commit the Minister of Transport until he considers the practical side of this question, but obviously the Government intends to be as informative as it can because of the number of persons involved and the obvious concern that honourable members have for their districts. I will do my best, and advise the honourable member.

### GAS PRICE

Mr. EDWARDS: Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked last week about bottled gas prices in my district?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUNBE: Since May 1, 1968, the South Australian Gas Company has been the Government contractor for the supply of low pressure gas in both city and country areas. Price in country areas is determined by adding a freight differential to a basic city price a pound of gas. In 1966, following representations from one Government department, the company decided to supply for domestic use to employees of that department living in Government-owned houses low pressure bottled gas at prices higher than Government rates but lower than the area domestic rates. Subsequently, the company extended this concession to any Government employee who could obtain departmental confirmation that he resided in a Government-owned house. This arrangement is between the South Australian Gas Company and individual Government employees as consumers, and is not connected with or dependent on the contract to supply low pressure gas to Government departments.

## WATER RESOURCES

Mr. CORCORAN: Will the Minister of Works give the interim reply that I understand he has to the question I asked recently about the employment by the Government of consultants to investigate the water resources of this State?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: The honourable member asked this question yesterday and, to assist him, I have obtained an interim report. This position has been reviewed, particularly in the light of several departmental reports that have been recently received by the Government from both the Engineering and Water Supply and the Mines Departments. These cover the North Adelaide plains (this report is currently being assessed by an independent consultant), the Bolivar effluent water scheme, and the underground water resources of the South-Eastern part of the State. This latter report is currently being studied with a view to considering what further work Government departments can undertake in research and development and to considering in what role any consultants might be most advantageously engaged. At the same time, some investigatory work is being carried out into the practicability of the desalination and future use of brackish and saline waters. It will be necessary to carefully draw up a specific brief on further exploratory and consulting work to be undertaken, but the Government, in line with its previous announcement, is determined that this type of work must be undertaken promptly.

## FISHING RESTRICTIONS

Mr. ARNOLD: Has the Minister of Lands received from the Minister of Agriculture a reply to my question about fishing restrictions?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The Fisheries and Fauna Conservation Department is conducting a study of the regulations applying to the fresh water fishery of the Murray River. As part of this study, "reach" fishermen have been requested to submit monthly returns of fish caught from individual reaches. In view of the scientific information available on these fish, there is strong biological support for the suggested increase in size requested by the Upper Murray Professional Fishermen's Association, and this matter is being examined. A further review of the regulations in reference to Murray River fisheries will be undertaken, probably next year, in the light of data obtained from fishermen's monthly statistical returns.

## SPEED LIMIT SIGNS

Mrs. BYRNE: Has the Attorney-General received a reply from the Minister of Roads to my recent question about speed limit signs?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: The Road Traffic Board will consider imposing speed zoning regulations on Montague Road and other roads in this vicinity at its next meeting scheduled for August 29, 1968. As soon as the appropriate speed limits have been fixed, action will be taken to erect speed limit signs.

## MURRAY BRIDGE WEIGHBRIDGE

Mr. WARDLE: Has the Attorney-General received from his colleague a reply to my recent question concerning the Highways and Local Government Department's weighbridge at Murray Bridge?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: Similar requests have been received from time to time but all have been rejected. Departmental weighbridges have been installed for the sole purpose of checking axle weights of vehicles in policing the provisions of the Road Traffic Act. Experience has shown that, if a weighbridge is manned at regular hours, it is useless as a point of detection of breaches of the Act and, for this reason, they are manned to an irregular day and hour pattern. Provision of weighbridge facilities for general use is a function carried out by private enterprise and, if a carrying company wishes to load at night to suit its own convenience, it should make arrangements for weighing accordingly.

## WALLAROO HARBOUR

Mr. HUGHES: Has the Minister of Marine a reply to my recent question about improvements to the Wallaroo harbour and, in particular, about the diversion of shipping from Wallaroo?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: Extensive inquiries were made in this matter, and the report is as follows:

The State Manager for British Phosphate Commissioners has been consulted regarding the discharge arrangements for the M.V. *Bellami* with a full cargo of phosphate rock *ex* Nauru Island. The vessel was loaded to her marks for a South Australian port of discharge with Port Adelaide for orders in the charter-party. On July 23, advice was received by the Manager from the Master of the vessel that the expected time of arrival off Port Adelaide would be July 30 and the deepest draft of the vessel would be 30ft. It was decided by the British Phosphate Commissioners to discharge the cargo at Wallaroo or Port Lincoln with first preference being Wallaroo. Inquiries were made with the Harbourmaster, Wallaroo, whether the vessel

could be accommodated on July 30. The Harbourmaster advised that the vessel would be too deep to enter the port on that day or several days after that, as the tides were approaching neaps. This would be correct, allowing for a 2ft. 6in. keel clearance which is considered a minimum for the Wallaroo channel. Predicted high water on July 30 at Wallaroo was 4ft. 6in. at 7.34 p.m. which would give approximately 3ft. 8in. on the gauge at 5.30 p.m. to berth in daylight. This would give a keel clearance in the channel of only 1ft. 8in. The larger type of vessels do not berth at Wallaroo in the hours of darkness, although departure is taken in these hours under good clear conditions. On the information given by the Harbourmaster to British Phosphate Commissioners, arrangements were made for the vessel to go to Port Lincoln, the optional port. Eventually the *Bellami* was delayed by adverse weather en route and did not arrive until July 31, on which day the predicted high water for Wallaroo was 3ft. 9in. at 7.56 p.m.

In regard to the questions of the safe berthing of vessels at Wallaroo, the Director of Marine and Harbors reports that all main ports in South Australia are relatively shallow and tidal and in some cases the approach to the berths consists of a dredged channel as in the case of Wallaroo. For all main ports a minimum keel clearance is laid down for the larger type of vessel using the ports and these clearances are the recommended minimum compatible with safety in navigation. In the case of Wallaroo, where the channel is in the open waters of the gulf and susceptible to slight swell at times, the keel clearances are 2ft. under the deepest part of the keel for vessels drawing up to 28ft. and 2ft. 6in. under the keel for vessels drawing over 28ft. These figures are slightly under the scale of figures adopted as a general rule in other ports of the world. For instance, in Sydney and Newcastle, a clearance of 10 per cent of the deepest draft is required which would mean that a vessel drawing 30ft. would have 3ft. keel clearance. I am quite satisfied that the keel clearances currently nominated for vessels using Wallaroo are realistic and that any decrease in these clearances would entail an unwarranted risk.

#### MAITLAND COURTHOUSE

Mr. FERGUSON: Has the Attorney-General a reply to the question I recently asked about the unsatisfactory condition of the Maitland courthouse?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I have discussed this matter with the Minister of Works, and the following is the information sought by the honourable member:

It is intended to provide new police premises at Maitland. Court accommodation is to be included in this proposal. In consultation with the Commissioner of Police, a planning programme is being formulated for works of this nature in the light of funds likely to

become available during the next three financial years, including 1968-69. The Maitland project will be considered for this programme. In view of priorities already determined, it has not been possible to provide on the 1968-69 Loan Estimates for the Maitland police and courthouse project.

#### PESTICIDES

Mr. BURDON: Has the Minister of Lands a reply to the question I recently asked about pesticides?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The Minister of Agriculture reports:

The Director of Agriculture reports that aspects of problems facing producers, or likely to arise as a result of importing countries adopting lower tolerances of pesticide levels in foodstuffs, have been discussed by the Australian Agricultural Council over a number of years. Attention has been drawn to the difficulty of meeting international standards for dairy products where D.D.T. is widely used for control of pasture pests, and all States are attempting to discourage the use of D.D.T. for this purpose as much as possible. In South Australia, research has been intensified and is continuing to determine alternative means of control of insect pests before taking any action to restrict the use of D.D.T. This research has been rewarding, and for the control of most of these pests satisfactory alternative chemicals are available. The most recent official recommendations for insect pest control virtually exclude the use of D.D.T. for dairy pastures, and the advisory services of the Agriculture Department will step up their efforts to bring this to the notice of dairy farmers.

#### FALLING ROCKS

Mr. GILES: In certain areas throughout the Adelaide Hills rocks often fall from the cuttings on to the main roads. Can the Attorney-General, representing the Minister of Roads, say who is liable for damage caused to vehicles that run into rocks falling from land owned by the Highways Department, and who is liable for damage caused to vehicles by rocks falling from privately owned land on to the roadway?

The SPEAKER: I do not know whether questions concerning the interpretation of law are permitted under Standing Orders, but I will allow this question. On questions involving the interpretation of law, the correct procedure is for the honourable member to approach the Attorney-General for an interpretation by the Crown Law Department. If the Attorney-General wishes to reply he may do so.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I am always co-operative and try, within my capacity, to help all members. I think the questions

asked by the honourable member fall within the rule in *Rylands v. Fletcher* but, because this is a complicated part of the law, I should like time to consider it. I will consider the questions and give the honourable member a reply in due course.

#### AIR POLLUTION

Mr. McKEE: I understand that the Senate Select Committee on Air Pollution has decided to inspect all major industrial areas throughout Australia in the near future. The Chairman of the committee (Senator Branson) has explained that the purpose of the inspection is to help State Governments in their efforts to control air pollution. Is the Minister of Works aware of the committee's visit and, if he is, can he say when it will visit South Australia?

The Hon. J. W. H. CUMBE: I am aware of the committee's visit but I do not have at hand the date. I assure the honourable member that the Government will gladly co-operate in this matter. I understand that the administration of the Clean Air Act in South Australia is under the auspices of the Minister of Health. I shall try to obtain the information required by the honourable member, because I know that the implementation of this Act affects his district greatly.

#### LOAN EXPENDITURE

Mr. ALLEN: The sum of \$5,000 appears in the Loan Estimates for this financial year for work in the Burra District. Can the Minister of Works say what is the nature of the work intended to be carried out?

The Hon. J. W. H. CUMBE: I imagine it would be reticulation work, but I will get the details from my department and try to give them to the honourable member tomorrow or on Tuesday at the latest.

#### HOLDEN HILL INTERSECTION

Mrs. BYRNE: At present, the Highways Department is incorporating a roundabout at the intersection of Main North-East and Grand Junction Roads (Holden Hill) in an attempt to make the intersection safer. Some constituents have asked me whether the roundabout will be too large with insufficient room left for two vehicles to be side by side, particularly when one vehicle turns to the right, thus impeding traffic, causing it to bank up and slow down considerably. As this work is nearing completion, will the Attorney-General ask the Minister of Roads to have the

aspect to which I have referred examined immediately and treated as urgent in case there is any necessity to modify the design before the work is completed?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: Although it sounds as though the honourable member has left it rather late to ask the question, I will certainly take it up with my colleague.

#### CHOWILLA DAM

Mr. ARNOLD: Regarding recent publicity given to the Chowilla dam project by ABS channel 2, I wish to quote from the following letter I have received from the Mayor of Renmark:

I draw attention to the publicity given on a nation-wide basis concerning the Chowilla dam project in a previous "Week End Magazine". This filming unit had indicated its intention to visit Renmark. I had presumed they were seeking a popular opinion of industries and settlers of this region. Although this had been done, a deliberate omission was obvious, and, to cast an erroneous impression throughout the nation, an isolated antagonistic attitude was presented. All industries and certainly the vast majority of growers have expressed their supporting view, but because of the attitude of certain members of the A.B.C. staff, I am of the opinion that this programme was engineered to be prejudicial to the interests of this State in its case for Chowilla. The Minister of Agriculture (Hon. C. R. Story) expressed the overall view of the South Australian Government and the urgency of this vital need splendidly, and it appears as mockery to highlight the unrepresentative view in the same programme. I would ask you, Sir, to make appropriate inquiries as to who is responsible for planning these programmes (that recent one particularly), and who suggested the isolated, non-Renmark opinion. I further suggest that sufficient publicity to other States be made to correct the false impression that would have been gained about the thinking of the residents of this district.

Will the Premier look into this question with a view to having these matters reported in truer perspective?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: As I was otherwise occupied at the time, I did not see the programme referred to, although I was told about it. It is regrettable that, possibly in trying to balance a programme, a viewpoint not representative of the major viewpoint in South Australia should have received so much prominence, because I am sure the vast majority of South Australians support the Chowilla project, especially those who depend for their livelihood on the Murray River. Recently there have been other cases of this type of publicity. For instance, I understand a charge was widely publicized throughout

Australia that discrimination against coloured people had been practised in South Australia, but this charge proved to be completely unfounded. It is regrettable that this type of sensational report should receive so much publicity and that so much interest should be shown in it. I will see what was the basis for the report to which the honourable member referred, and I will let him know the result of my inquiry so that he can pass on the information to his constituents who have written to him and who are naturally worried about the matter. He can give them the background of this television report, which I have been told gave undue prominence to an unrepresentative viewpoint on Chowilla dam.

#### MILLICENT NORTH SCHOOL

Mr. CORCORAN: A constituent recently told me about a water pipe which crosses the main drain near the Millicent North Primary School and which it has become the habit of children to use as a footbridge. Accidentally, a young child of my constituent fell from this pipe into a fairly swiftly flowing and deep stream. Fortunately, as older children were nearby, the child was rescued, but he could have drowned. Can the Minister of Works, as a matter of urgency, see whether his department can take some action to prevent children from crossing this pipe, as I understand this has become a common practice? I believe approaches have been made to the headmaster to have him tell the children not to cross on the pipe, but such action is not always effective. If a barrier of some kind could be erected at the place where the pipe meets the drain, I am sure it would be greatly appreciated by the parents of children attending the school.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I think I know of the locality of the drain to which the honourable member has referred. I am grateful to him for bringing this matter to my attention, and I will take it up to see whether remedial action can be taken.

#### CLEVE AGRICULTURAL ADVISER

Mr. EDWARDS: At the conference of United Farmers and Graziers of South Australia Incorporated at Cowell last Friday, I was asked whether a full-time agricultural adviser could be stationed at Cleve. Will the Minister of Lands ask the Minister of Agriculture to consider appointing such an officer?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I will refer that question to my colleague.

#### PREMIER FROZEN FOODS

Mr. CASEY: During the past week, several people living in Adelaide have telephoned me about an organization known as Premier Frozen Foods. As some of these people live in the Attorney-General's district, I assure him that I have no malice towards him in asking this question (I do not intend to undermine his position in that district). However, as these people decided to telephone me, I believed that their inquiry should be attended to. Apparently the organization to which they referred has been operating within the metropolitan area for some time. They were concerned whether it was a reputable and genuine organization or whether it was merely a fly-by-night concern. Is the Attorney-General aware of the organization and, if he is, can he say whether it is reputable, so that these people will know whether it will be in their interests to buy whatever the organization has to sell?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I am glad the honourable member has asked me this question. He approached me just before the House sat and I suggested he should ask it. I am grateful, of course, for his co-operation in helping constituents of mine.

Mr. Corcoran: He always co-operates, doesn't he?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: Generally, I am pleased to say. The honourable member for Frome and I see eye to eye on many topics. After all, we once belonged to the same political Party. Regarding the question he has asked, I have some information about Premier Frozen Foods, as I told him before the House met. However, I think I should get a little more information and refresh my memory before I comment as he has invited me to do. I will do that as soon as I can.

#### RAILCAR ACCIDENT

Mr. HUGHES: Has the Attorney-General a reply to my recent question about a railcar accident at Two Wells?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: On Friday, August 2, 1968, at 8.25 p.m., railcar No. 255, working as No. 876 Moonta to Adelaide passenger train, collided with locomotive No. 900 attached to No. 841 Mile End to Port Pirie goods train, which was stationary on the main line at the Mallala end of the Two Wells station yard. The rail motor driver of No. 876 passenger train, who had received a train order at Mallala to take the passing siding at Two Wells to cross No. 841 goods train, failed to observe relevant rules which required

him to stop at signals approaching Two Wells and, in consequence, the railcar collided head-on with the stationary locomotive at a speed of about 14 miles an hour. As a result of the collision, five passengers in the railcar received lacerations and bruises, and the rail motor driver concussion, shock and lacerations. The guard of the railcar received lacerations and shock. Following a departmental inquiry, disciplinary action has been taken against the rail motor driver.

#### WARREN RESERVOIR

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: As the Minister of Works knows, the Warren reservoir, which serves, as well as other areas, the Barossa Valley area of my district, is at present filled to capacity, which is 1,401,000,000 gallons. At this time last year the reservoir held about 400,000,000 gallons, which was less than one-third of its capacity, and in August last year I asked in this House whether restrictions were likely to be imposed, because that information would help market gardeners in my district. I was informed then that restrictions would be inevitable, as the reservoir was only about one-third full. It will help these market gardeners to know now whether restrictions are likely to be imposed in the current year, as it will enable them to decide what acreage to sow to vegetables in the next month or two. Can the Minister say at present whether there is any intention to impose restrictions during the current financial year on the use of water from the Warren reservoir in the Barossa Valley area?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I appreciate the honourable member's concern and hope that restrictions will not be imposed in the coming season. However, because of the way in which the honourable member has asked his question and also because of the importance of the reply, I will get a specific reply by Tuesday next at the latest.

#### WHYALLA LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY (Whyalla): I move:

That the petition received by this House on August 20, 1968, from a majority of the ratepayers of the city of Whyalla for an alteration in its system of local government be granted.

I consider it desirable at the outset to outline briefly the early history of how the City of Whyalla Commission came into existence because an understanding of that matter will,

I think, help members to comprehend the reason why most ratepayers are now asking for full local government. Before 1945 all local government operations in Whyalla were handled by Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited, and there was no rating on the residents. The work handled by the company was necessarily somewhat restricted in character, being confined to some road and footpath work, collection of garbage, and some health inspection.

In 1943 many ratepayers considered that there should be some form of local government in which residents would have a voice, and this resulted in the Combined Unions Council of Whyalla requesting officers of the company to confer with the union organization to formulate a scheme of local government. A committee, with two representatives from each of the Combined Unions Council, the company and the Whyalla Traders Association, was formed to investigate this matter.

The town was expanding rapidly, the population having increased from 1,800 residents to 8,000 residents in an extremely short time, and the residents considered that they could not afford to pay the full rates that would have been necessary if full local government were adopted. Finally, a public meeting attended by about 250 residents, and chaired by my colleague Mr. Riches, the then member for the district, discussed the adoption of one of three forms of local government. Mr. Riches had given much help to those who had been engaged in discussions on this proposal. At that meeting the three forms discussed by those present were, first, a single commission such as then existed at Colonel Light Gardens; secondly, full local government; and, thirdly, a commission comprising three members elected (one from each of three wards), three appointees of the company, and a chairman appointed by the South Australian Government.

The meeting discussed all aspects of those schemes and, with a few dissentient voices, a rough draft of a Bill embodying the proposal for a commission was endorsed. I was at that meeting and from memory I think the number of dissenters was no more than 10. The then Superintendent of the company (Mr. R. T. Kleeman) was present and outlined the financial provisions that would be made by the company if the commission were formed. The meeting supported the adoption of land values rating in the event of the commission coming into being and, obviously, the meeting preferred the thought of having low rates

to pay because of the contribution proposed by the company. To give effect to these proposals a Bill was introduced in this House by the Hon. Malcolm McIntosh, then Minister of Local Government, on October 5, 1944. A Select Committee examined the proposals and submitted a favourable report, and arrangements were completed for the commission to function from January 1, 1945. A late start was made as a suitable appointment of a chairman could not be made on time.

The Government took no chances with the appointment of the first trio of elected members. They were to be appointed for a six-month period but, because of the late start of the commission, they served for only three months before another election was held. Mr. C. L. Ryan, appointed by the State Government as Chairman, has held that position since then. Under the Whyalla Town Commission Act the company undertook to pay as rates the sum of \$60,000 in the first five years of the commission's life plus an unspecified sum for roadworks. At that time there had been a great expansion of the number of houses in areas where roads had been left incomplete and with no footpaths made. Consequently, there was a great lag of work in connection with roadworks in these areas, and the company undertook to provide an unspecified sum as its share to overcome this lag.

Those interested in this proposal could see that the financial propositions would enable the commission once it began operating, to fix rates that would be much lower than otherwise would have been the case. The Act dealt mainly with the constitution of the commission and, apart from that and a few minor additional provisions, it provided for the commission to operate under the normal provision of the Local Government Act, and this has been the case since its inception. The Act has been amended slightly since being assented to in December, 1944. In 1961, Whyalla was proclaimed a city and the Act became the City of Whyalla Commission Act. In 1964 the number of wards was increased to four, but no increase was made in the number of company appointees. This change was brought about by the continued rapid expansion of the city and an increasing desire on the part of residents for a more representative body. From that time they had four elected members. The Act passed in 1944 provides the means for ratepayers to move for the alteration of the system of local government embodied in the Act. Section 32 provides:

(1) A majority of the ratepayers of the city of Whyalla may at any time after the expiration of five years from the first day of July, nineteen hundred and forty-five, present a petition to the President of the Legislative Council or to the Speaker of the House of Assembly, praying that Parliament will make legislative provision for dissolving the commission and establishing in Whyalla a local governing body in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act. Any such petition may specify any transitional or incidental provisions which the ratepayers desire to be included in the legislation.

(2) If, upon receipt of such a petition, either House of Parliament carries a resolution that the petition be granted, the Minister of Local Government shall prepare and introduce into Parliament a Bill in accordance with the prayer contained in the petition.

It is interesting to note that there is an alternative in which this matter may be advanced, because section 32 (3) provides that this section shall not be deemed to restrict the right of any person to introduce any Bill into Parliament. It has always been within the ambit of a private member's work, if he so desired, to introduce a Bill for full local government for the city of Whyalla. However, people in Whyalla concerned with this matter considered that to obtain the signatures of a majority of the ratepayers in Whyalla was a better approach, because that would clearly indicate the views of the ratepayers on what to them was an important matter. It is significant that it was provided that a petition could be made after a five-year period from the inception of the commission, as this was the end of the period during which the company had a financial obligation. Evidently it was thought that the ratepayers might consider full local government to be desirable.

The Act also provides for any member to introduce a Bill, but this provision has not been availed of. No provision was made in the Act as to the way a petition should be prepared or who should be responsible for handling it. I think that the problems of complying with the provisions of the Act in a city with a population of 28,000 (which Whyalla has now) were probably not anticipated when the Act was framed. With the rapid expansion of the city more and more residents considered the question of having full local government, and many thought that a more democratic form was desirable because it would be more representative of the ratepayers.

The matter was brought to the Whyalla Sub-branch of the Australian Labor Party with a request that a petition for full local government be arranged. Petition forms, correctly

phrased, were printed at the cost of the sub-branch and, amongst other steps taken, copies of these forms were sent to all other organizations in the city that could be expected to have an interest in such a move. Apart from the trade unions, all other organizations returned the forms, giving various reasons why they could not take part in ascertaining the views of the ratepayers by circulating the petition. However, at that time five years ago, about 800 or 900 signatures were obtained, but since this number did not constitute a majority the matter was dropped. With the continued rapid expansion of the city, and an influx of migrants from Britain, the matter became one of increasing interest and discussion.

At the request of many interested residents another move to ascertain the views of ratepayers was made in 1967. The petition forms, including those originally signed, were handed in to the Speaker who forwarded them to the Chairman of the commission for checking. The total number of signatures on the petition then was 4,777, and these signatures were checked against the latest ratepayers' roll compiled as at July 1, 1967, with 6,545 ratepayers. Although it was first thought that the number of signatures would constitute an ample majority the check revealed that many of those who had signed on the first occasion when petition forms were available had left Whyalla or had died. Other signatures were those of wives who thought they were entitled to sign, not knowing they were not classified as ratepayers unless they were joint owners of a property. Also, there were multiple signatures mostly from those who duplicated their signatures because they were unaware of their inclusion on the first petition forms. About 165 signatures were illegible, and that is not remarkable in view of the number of illegible signatures of prominent persons that one often sees. In fact, it now seems to be the custom, when an official letter is written, to have the name of the author typed underneath the signature so that everyone knows from whom the letter comes.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: I understand a legible signature is much easier to forge than one that is illegible.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: I think that is correct. I think it is also correct to say that illegibility is inevitable when ordinary signatures are being obtained. In this case, such signatures were not accepted, because they could not be understood and could not

be checked properly against the ratepayers' roll. Other signatures rejected were those of ratepayers who qualified as such subsequent to the compilation of the ratepayers' roll, which was made up to July 1, 1967. There were therefore a number of different categories of people whose signatures were not accepted by the commission when it checked the whole number against the ratepayers' roll. The total number of signatories accepted from the commission check was 2,997, representing 46 per cent of the total. Another check revealed an additional 17 signatories, and after further work undertaken by volunteers in their spare time (and in the space of a few days) a further 368 signatures were obtained and accepted as correct. This gave a total of 3,382 accepted signatures of ratepayers, representing 53.5 per cent of the total. The additional 368 signatures were obtained easily, despite adverse comments made about the petition by people who were opposed to the idea. I have no doubt whatsoever that the percentage of ratepayers in Whyalla favouring full local government greatly exceeds the 53.5 per cent obtained.

The petitioners say in the petition that it is desirable to establish in Whyalla a local government body in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act, for certain reasons, the first of which is the greatly increased population and the prospect of further considerable increase. When I went to Whyalla in 1938, the population was between 1,200 and 1,500 and it is now between 28,000 and 28,500. That shows the tremendous increase that has occurred, and many people included in this increased population are migrants who have come from Great Britain and Europe. Most of these newcomers have been used to full local government. Secondly, the petition refers to the elevation of Whyalla to city status. Indeed, people who have seen the city grow from a small town to one of city status believe that Whyalla has now reached the stage at which full local government is the logical and eminently desirable development. Thirdly, the petitioners state that most ratepayers prefer a fully elected representative body.

This has been made plain by the collection of signatures from 53.5 per cent of the ratepayers, as checked against the commission roll. This is obviously not all the ratepayers who favour full local government. The ease with which these signatures have been collected by people working on a voluntary basis after working hours and the fact that signatures have been collected in this way clearly indicate



to my mind that a strong majority in Whyalla is fully in favour now of the change to full local government. The petitioners are not unmindful of the problems concerning the transitional period or of the transitional arrangements necessary in order to have a smooth changeover from the present operations of the commission to those of full local government.

The petitioners go on to pray—(1) that the House will make legislative provision for dissolving the City of Whyalla Commission and establishing in Whyalla a local government body in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act; and (2) that the House will cause to be appointed a committee of inquiry to make recommendations to ensure satisfactory transitional provisions. It must be observed that no suggestion is made by the petitioners of any inefficiency on the part of the commission: it is generally recognized that the commission has done a very good job over the years. However, the city has grown, and the people believe they should now have a body fully representative of rate-payers. As I have said, most of the people coming to Whyalla in recent years have been used to full local government and, on their arrival in the city, they speak with surprise and disappointment at having a body they do not understand; they do not understand its origin, and they do not have full confidence in it, because it is something to which they are not accustomed.

These people are completely in favour of a change being made at this stage. I believe that the creation of full local government in Whyalla will result in a much greater interest being taken by the community in local government affairs, and it will also promote that confidence which normally comes from the democratic management of local government affairs. Indeed, unless Whyalla has full local government, its operations in this regard certainly cannot be described as being fully democratic in the usually understood sense. I think it is of considerable interest that the following report appeared in the *Whyalla News* of July 26, 1968:

The changeover to fully-elected local government in Whyalla is inevitable and the sooner a date for the inauguration of the new council is determined the better it will be for all concerned. City Commission Chairman Mr. C. L. Ryan said this . . . when releasing details of the signatures on the petition for full local government . . .

Those are the words of a man who has been the Chairman of the commission since its inception and with whom I had the privilege

of working on the commission for 20 years. I think the House should carefully note his remarks. I hope that no undue delay will occur in the Government's carrying out the wishes of the petitioners, so that this matter may proceed expeditiously and so that the wishes of the majority of ratepayers in Whyalla will be acceded to.

Mr. CORCORAN seconded the motion.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### MILK PRICES REGULATIONS

Mr. CASEY (Frome): I move:

That the milk prices regulations, 1968, made under the Metropolitan Milk Supply Act, 1946-1967, on June 26, 1968, and laid on the table of this House on July 30, 1968, be disallowed.

I move this motion with much pleasure because, looking at the regulations, I found that the Metropolitan Milk Board, as a judicial body, had overstepped the mark and had decided to tamper with an increase which had been granted to the dairy farmers at a time when the drought was particularly severe in South Australia, and the brunt of which the consumer had been asked to bear. In October, 1967, the South Australian Dairymen's Association submitted to the board an application for an increase of 4c a gallon in the price paid to dairymen for milk. At that time the drought in this State was being severely felt by all sections of the farming community. In December, 1967, it was realized that to maintain an adequate supply of milk in the metropolitan area, dairy farmers would be forced to purchase extra fodder because they did not have any readily available fodder on their properties. They could not say, "Well, we are going to be able to cut a certain amount of hay." There was none to be cut. As a result, they were going to be financially embarrassed, so it was decided that an increase of 4c would tide the dairymen over this period and help them buy fodder in order to maintain milk production for the metropolitan area.

As a result of that decision, the price of milk to the consumer was increased from 9c to 10c a pint and from 18c to 19c for two pints, and those are the prices today. The board has decided that the 4c payable to the producer should be re-allocated as follows: the producer to receive 2.1c, the wholesaler .7c, and the retailer 1.2c a gallon. Why the board wants to re-allocate the 4c increase is beyond my comprehension, because

the consuming public bore the brunt of the increase in the cost of milk to provide dairy farmers with a margin so that they could buy fodder and thus maintain the supply of milk for the metropolitan area. Yesterday, the Minister of Lands said that no further drought relief loans would be available after September 30. Many dairymen have applied for and been granted loans ranging from \$1,500 to \$2,000 to tide them over so, if the board thinks that the 4c is no longer applicable, it should come off the price of milk to the consuming public.

Unfortunately, the consuming public is seldom considered when it should be considered. Prices are increased but they never seem to be reduced, and the consumer has to pay for the increases. This is a case where the consumer not only paid the increase but was responsible for the increase being granted; therefore, if the increase is deleted at some future date, he should benefit by the disallowance of the regulations. It will mean that the 4c will still be paid to the producer, but if in the future the Government decides to remove the 4c on the recommendation of the board, the price of milk should revert to 9c a pint and 18c for two pints. I have facts and figures that show how dairymen have been affected by loans from banks and other lending institutions but, as many members are practical farmers, there is no need to give these facts and figures now and most members are aware of the situation.

Mr. McKEE seconded the motion.

Mr. McANANEY (Stirling): I support the motion, but disagree with the reasons given by the member for Frome. Because I do not think he has a firm grasp on how milk is costed, I disagree with the views he has expressed. The price of milk is fixed on the cost of production to the producer. The following is a press statement concerning the annual report of the Metropolitan Milk Board:

Milk Supply "Efficient"—The claim from uninformed sources that the dairy farmer is inefficient certainly does not apply to producers licensed by the Metropolitan Milk Board, says the board's annual report to Parliament. The chairman (Mr. S. A. Gale) says licensed producers continued to improve productivity, enabling them to keep down the cost a gallon. This occurred despite higher prices and increased allowances for labour. The average production a survey farm rose by 3,356 to 35,909 gallons. Each year cost-survey figures revealed that the dairy farmer, by efficient farm management, increased his yield a cow and production a farm. Milk production last financial year reached 50,979,879 gallons, an

increase of 1,600,000 gallons. The number of milk producers who renewed their licences at June 30 showed a further reduction, but production a farm increased to 24,024 gallons.

The price a farmer gets for his milk is fixed on the cost of production, and if he becomes more efficient the consumer benefits as a result of that efficiency. If it is shown to an arbitration tribunal that there has been increased production, wage earners receive additional wages, and this in turn increases the cost of production. However, it seems that exactly the opposite applies to dairy farmers.

Seeing that the consumer benefits through the dairy farmer's efficiency, surely when there is a drought and the dairy farmer's cost of production is thereby increased he should be entitled to be compensated for that increase. Perhaps this increase could have been avoided if we had had an enterprising Government in office at the time. The Victorian Government provided concessions to farmers. It made money available for the purchase of fodder and really got into this job of providing assistance. Consequently, Victorian farmers were able to reduce their costs of production. However, the then Government in this State did nothing but write letters.

Mr. Hudson: Rubbish!

Mr. McANANEY: Although the then Premier had not contributed one cent to assist with drought relief, he started writing letters to the Commonwealth Government asking for assistance. The previous Government did not give a lead in this matter.

Mr. Hudson: You are talking rubbish. What about the drought assistance legislation that we introduced?

Mr. McANANEY: The garbage man opposite is always talking rubbish. Cost of production here increased because of the drought. The member for Frome (Mr. Casey) said that the Milk Board was not justified in doing what it did. However, on the principle that is involved in fixing the price of milk, I think it was entitled to take that action. The point has been raised that now we have had good rains the price to the farmer should be reduced. However, farmers are still using hay they purchased at a high price, and this will continue until the new hay is cut. In order to increase milk production, the pastures must have supplementary feeding.

When the Milk Board wishes to prepare a case for any increase or decrease, the usual practice is to approach the South Australian Dairymen's Association. It did not do so on

this occasion: it took action arbitrarily, without inquiring into the matter. I think this reduction has been made too soon. There should be a period in which the new cost of production can be worked out, and the returns to dairy farmers should be fixed on that basis.

During the last 12 months there have been increases in costs, wages and everything else. Obviously, the dairymen's costs have also been increased, and I think they are entitled to a certain increase in the price they get. A body, which I assume is impartial, has assessed that wholesalers' costs have increased by .7 per cent and retailers' costs by 1.2 per cent, so obviously the dairymen's costs have increased, too. Therefore, before this adjustment is made there should be a breathing space during which the whole cost structure can be assessed again and the price then determined. I believe the regulations should be disallowed so that time will be available for costs to be assessed. As Parliament has the power to allow or disallow these regulations, the Milk Board should provide members with information about how it determines the cost of production; otherwise, we are working entirely in the dark. In determining the cost of producing milk, I understand that no account is taken of interest on the capital value of properties. I believe that from about 40 cows the assessed return to a dairy farmer is \$2,400. This represents either wages or interest on the capital involved: he does not receive both.

Mr. Nankivell: Who does?

Mr. McANANEY: I realize that no primary-producing industry receives interest and wages. However, all secondary industries protected by the Tariff Board receive wages and interest of about 9 per cent. Therefore, if the costs of production for dairy farmers were assessed in the same way as those of secondary industries are assessed, the price of milk would rise considerably. Also, if the price of milk had risen to the same extent as wages have risen in recent years it would be much higher than it is today.

We, as Parliamentarians, are asked to allow or disallow these regulations, and the Milk Board should therefore produce for us information on how it determines cost of production. We should know whether it determines these costs efficiently and independently, as does an arbitration tribunal, where both sides produce facts and figures and a correct assessment is made. I understand that the assessment of milk production costs

is made by one accountant, who assesses 103 farms and works out the costs on the basis of those farms. I stress that the various factors involved in the cost of production should be made known to us. I support the motion, and trust that in the future some reasonable survey will be made to determine the actual cost of production of the various people in the industry. This cost of production should be assessed on a reasonable and just basis, in the same way as other costs and wages are determined.

Mr. BURDON (Mount Gambier): I support the motion. In this case, I agree with the member for Stirling, which is something I do not always do. I realize that added costs have been imposed on the dairying industry because of the drought conditions last year. Last December an added cost was placed on consumers. When added costs are placed on consumers, they are rarely removed. I agree that producers now face considerable added costs, as evidenced by the fact that last year this State had to provide drought relief. This was necessary because, unfortunately, most parts of South Australia suffered severe effects as a result of the drought, in common with the experiences in other parts of Australia over the last two or three years.

However, as these increased costs were passed on to consumers last December, I believe these regulations should be disallowed so that the Milk Board will be able to examine the situation in October or November of this year. I hope that such an examination is made before long because, only yesterday, the Minister of Lands announced to the House that loans under drought relief provisions were to cease at the end of September. In the meantime, costs of production and prices can possibly be examined. We know that costs of production were higher this year because of the difficulty regarding fodder. Milk production was high in May but, as a result of climatic conditions and the things that usually happen in about the middle of the year when the cold weather occurs, production decreased. I hope that the Milk Board will look into the costs of dairy farmers and how they relate to what consumers pay for milk. If it is fair that consumers should contribute through increased prices towards higher production costs, then I believe they should share, through lower prices, any reduction in costs.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Lands): The Government supports the motion to disallow this regulation. In this case, for a particular reason, I think we will depart from

the usual procedure in the House, which is to await the results of the inquiry by the Subordinate Legislation Committee. Unfortunately, I have not heard all that has been said on this matter, but I agree with most of what I have heard. One of the features of a drought, or of any bad season, is the slowness of recovery. People are inclined to think that when it rains a drought is broken and everything is then all right. That is not so: the tribulation continues long after the animals' bellies are filled with food. I know from my own experience and from reports that recovery from the drought is not by any means yet complete. This applies not only to dairy farmers but also to people in many parts of the State engaged in many different aspects of primary industry, so it seems to me that there is a good case for having a careful look at the position.

Members heard me say yesterday, in reply to a question, that the Premier had approached the Prime Minister to see whether some extension could be granted to the time during which Commonwealth drought assistance would be available. That instanced the general concern felt about the after-effects of the drought. As members know, the Milk Board is constituted under the Metropolitan Milk Supply Act. I had experience with the Milk Board many years ago, over a number of years. It has handled a difficult industrial problem with great distinction and has maintained the industry in a stable and peaceful condition. That is not to say it does not have a problem such as this arising from time to time but it is fair to mention the outstanding service the board has given us. That applies not only to the members of the board but also to the staff of experts employed by it. The board in this case recognized the problem in 1967 and introduced this regulation increasing the price a gallon to the producer: he got an extra 4c and no-one else received any increase. Since then there have been strong representations from other sections of the industry, and the board has brought in this new regulation making the order which would now, as we know, reduce the amount payable to the producer. In fact, it has done so from August 11. That is why in speaking for the Government I support the disallowance of this regulation without waiting for the recommendation of the Subordinate Legislation Committee. To my mind, there is no case for it. If there is a clear case for reviewing the position, there is

no case for maintaining a regulation that is already affecting the financial affairs of producers.

There is no objection to the board reviewing the whole matter—in fact, I think it is bound to—and there would be no objection then to its attempting to get either a regulation or an altered regulation accepted by this Parliament; but, while the board is reviewing the situation and hearing the representations of various sections of the industry (and, no doubt, the consumers' argument, if there is one) at least the *status quo* that has existed during the drought will be maintained. That is why the Government supports this disallowance at present. I have been assured by the Minister of Agriculture that he will ask the board to review this matter urgently and take into account all the representations he has received with a view to making an alteration if any further regulation is brought up. Whilst this is going on, payments to the producers will at least be maintained.

Mr. EVANS (Onkaparinga): I support this motion and believe the price should stay as it is at present, because the Prime Minister is reported in today's *Advertiser* as saying that the need for aid has not ended although the drought appears to be virtually over. The whole crux of the matter before us is that the price increase was given in the first place to the producer to help him through a difficult period caused by drought. In the areas of the State where most of the dairies are situated, because of heavy rainfall any dry fodder available has been virtually lost, and any green fodder available has very little nutriment value. The farmers still have to hand-feed, and the cost of this feed is high.

I am disappointed that in the first place we did not apply to the Commonwealth Government for aid so that the cost would not be passed on to the consumer. This is the fault of the previous Government, and I am pleased that a member of that Government is now moving this motion for disallowance, because the price should never have been passed on to the consumer. If we had applied for Commonwealth aid to help subsidize the producer, we might not have been here today discussing this motion. Victoria has been allotted \$11,000,000 in drought aid for 1968-69, New South Wales \$6,000,000, Queensland \$900,000, and South Australia \$1,400,000. I support this motion with pleasure in the knowledge

that the Minister of Agriculture will be investigating, or will be asking the board to investigate, the whole structure of the milk industry with a view to reviewing the price within a few months.

Mr. CORCORAN (Millicent): I support the motion on the basis that the increase granted at the time was for the sole purpose of assisting the producer. Now it would appear that, the increase having been granted, the Milk Board considers the drought is virtually over because the rains have arrived (though that is not the case) and it should split the cake among the three parties involved. I object to this because, if there is a case for an increase to the retailer or the wholesaler, it should be put separately for consideration. The producer, of course, is still involved in this, and the board is still prepared to recognize his disability to the tune of 2.1c of the 4c involved. I agree with previous speakers that the effect of the drought on producers is far from over. Indeed, until hay can be cut next season, they will still have to feed and to pay for hay that they possibly have not paid for so far. The increase granted will not cover the cost to the average dairy farmer involved in securing the additional fodder necessary because of the drought.

I was interested to hear the remarks of the member for Onkaparinga about the actions of the previous Government as regards drought relief and its neglect (as he called it) in not approaching the Commonwealth Government for direct aid to dairy farmers, as he suggests should have been done. Perhaps he would be interested to know that drought relief in this State was issued on the same basis as it was in every other State, and stringent conditions were laid down by the Commonwealth as to how this money should be handled.

Mr. Casey: The dairy farmers were very pleased.

Mr. CORCORAN: The State Government, whilst grateful to the Commonwealth Government for making up to \$5,000,000 available to the State to be handed out as drought assistance, acted, I think, promptly and properly in introducing into this House a measure of a kind that this House had never seen before: it was of a permanent nature, giving machinery to a Government to provide alleviation for any calamity. This is the sort of legislation that should have been on the Statute Book many years ago. I am sure it will be used effectively by future Governments. I know, too, that the

dairy farmers were pleased with the prompt action taken by the Government when I announced at a place called Wunkar that in order to get cereal hay cut they should immediately order their requirements and send the Bill to the Government, on the basis that they would be required to repay the money involved, but with no interest charges. Unfortunately, not as many people took advantage of this generous offer as I thought would do so.

The strange part about this was that many dairy farmers were so amazed at this announcement that they were afraid to act in case they got into trouble. I clearly recall a dairy farmer approaching me after this meeting and saying that he had about \$450 towards the purchase of hay but that he required \$1,400 worth to carry him through the season. I said, "You buy the hay if it is available and you can get it, send the bill to us, and we will tell you of the terms of repayment. No interest will be charged." He said, "I might get into trouble." I said "You are talking to the Minister." Strange to relate, three weeks later that man contacted the member for his district and asked whether he should do this.

It was this type of thing that led to dairy farmers not taking advantage of what was one of the most practical offers made by a Government, so far as this industry was concerned anyway. I consider that disallowance of this regulation is in order and if any query is to be raised, it should be that if the 4c increase was given and channelled through to the producer only because of hardship caused by drought, when the effect of that drought is over we should see whether that 4c increase should be reduced, because after all it is the consumer that pays in the long term and surely we have a responsibility to protect the interests of the consumers as well as of the producer, the wholesaler and the retailer. However, while the board has the cake, it does not intend to give it back. It wants to split it up in three ways. I am not in favour of that and I am pleased that the Government is supporting the move to disallow this regulation.

Mr. GILES (Gumeracha): I support the disallowance of this regulation as a matter of principle, because this 4c was given as drought relief and it is doubtful whether anyone can say when the effects of this drought will be no longer felt. Although the drought lasted for about six months, the effects financially might last for many years. I consider that, at the rate of 4c a gallon, it will take about two and a half years for the average dairy farmer to

recoup his losses on the purchase of fodder. I am not able to check the figures, but I consider that the effect of the drought will last much longer than the period of the drought, which has been from January until now.

If a grazier got into trouble by not having enough feed in the drought period, he would possibly have to sell his stock. Because many other people would be in the same position, the price of stock would be extremely low. When the season broke in the following year and the grazier went to buy stock, the price would be extremely high and it would take him a considerable time to recoup the difference between his selling price and the purchase price of stock. Therefore, I consider that this is an added effect of the drought. The grazier would be affected by this cost structure for many years to come. The Milk Board stated in its report that the wholesalers were affected by wage increases and penalty rates and that there had been an increase in the prices of petrol, power, motor vehicles, plant, and equipment. I suggest that all these factors also affect the primary producer, who in this case is the dairy farmer. I know that the cost of repairs at garages is much higher now than it was 12 months ago.

I do not think that the board has any grounds for claiming, on the basis of the cost structure, any part of this 4c that was given for drought relief. Again, the retailers use the same argument that wages, etc., have increased and that they work on the basis of 56 hours a week, involving penalty rates, and that, therefore, they should have a part of this 4c. I consider that it gets back to the principle involved. I do not think we can legitimately take for some other purpose this 4c that has been given as drought relief. This money was given solely to get the producer out of trouble during the period of the effect of the drought.

Mr. Casey: At the expense of the consumer.

Mr. GILES: I agree that at this stage it is at the expense of the consumer but I also submit that, if the cost structure has risen in the period between the commencement of the drought and the present time, the Milk Board should again consider the cost structure and, if it deems necessary, increase the retail price of milk so that the producer is adequately paid for his work. I have seen figures showing that the average dairy farmer with 44 cows nets \$2,600 a year. I do not know whether honourable members would be willing or able to manage 44 cows on their own, but if they could (which I doubt) the return of \$2,600

would not be adequate, having regard to the hours worked. I consider that we must disallow this regulation. I suggest that in the period until drought relief ceases (and I understand it ceases in September) the board again consider the cost structure of dairy farmers and, if it considers necessary, add 4c to the price of milk paid to the dairy producer, so as to cover the producer's costs.

It has been stated that the cost of production will decrease. Possibly, this will be when the pastures throughout the State grow so that we do not have to hand feed stock. I understand that at present the pastures north of Adelaide are in good condition and have grown well. However, through the Adelaide Hills and in the District of Gumeracha, and also in the South-East, pastures are not yet in good condition. It will take another month or so of good weather before we get adequate pastures throughout these areas and only then will the cost of production decrease, because farmers will not have to hand feed their stock. Because of the principle involved, I support the disallowance of this regulation and repeat that I consider that between now and September the Milk Board should carefully consider the cost structure of the dairy industry and, if this examination proves the addition of 4c to the wholesale price of milk, to be necessary, that should be done.

Motion carried.

#### WATER RESOURCES

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr. Nankivell:

(For wording of motion, see page 625.)

(Continued from August 14. Page 629.)

Mr. RODDA (Victoria): Last week, when I sought leave to continue my remarks, I was speaking about the insufficient water resources in this State and the fact that valuable water is being allowed to run to waste in some parts of South Australia. The motion before the House concisely draws attention to a very real need in South Australia. This need was referred to by the member for Glenelg (Mr. Hudson) in connection with another matter, but I shall not offend against the Standing Orders by referring to it today.

Mr. Nankivell: You can, however, refer to the Chowilla dam.

Mr. RODDA: Yes, because that comes within the ambit of this motion. It is important to notice that the honourable member has framed his motion in such a way that

information is to be sought in respect of South Australia as a whole. As I said last week, I am particularly interested in the District of Victoria, in the South-East, which has abundant water; at any rate, this is what we were led to believe and what we thought, until last year's drought.

I point out that 400,000 acre feet of water runs to waste annually from drains in the South-East, which drains have helped to bring much valuable agricultural land into production. They have increased agricultural output and this State's prosperity. Like the member for Albert (Mr. Nankivell), I believe that the time has come when we must look scientifically at the hydrology and the underground structure of the South-East. We must not go on allowing much of the water there to run to waste. I do not know whether there are any grand canyons or gorges, apart from the Coorong, in which we can store large quantities of water. I do, however, believe that if we use the services of the experts available and of officers of the Mines Department, the Engineering and Water Supply Department, and the South-Eastern Drainage Board we may find a way of recharging the aquifer and thereby retaining much of the valuable water that is at present running to waste.

I was interested to read in Mines Department Bulletin No. 35, prepared by Mr. O'Driscoll, that the area of the Murray basin is about 28,000 square miles, that it extends for 390 miles from the Southern Ocean and that it is nearly 125 miles wide. In this area is a most important part of South Australia about which we need much more information. I believe the previous Minister of Lands instituted much work along these lines and I believe we are to hear from him after I have finished speaking. He and I think as one on this issue, which is for the benefit of the State. Whilst the drainage projects that have been carried out in the South-East have made a valuable contribution to agricultural output, the charges being levied and the basis of assessing unimproved lands for fixing drainage rating are causing concern to some of my constituents and to those of the member for Millicent (Mr. Corcoran). Some cases are at present *sub judice*. These are side effects of the agricultural expansion of this part of South Australia.

It is important to realize that this motion affects the whole of South Australia. In connection with the District of Eyre, we notice provision in the Loan Estimates for commencing the Kimba main. Eighteen months

ago I, together with some other members of this House, as guests of the then member for Eyre (Mr. Bockelberg), inspected the Kimba area. At that time the people of Kimba were enjoying a bounteous season and we saw excellent wheat crops. In cases where dams were empty, water was being carted from the terminus of the Morgan-Whyalla main in order to keep the thriving town of Kimba going.

A few weeks ago I saw the Poldia Basin for the first time and I thought of the God-given water there that is waiting to be tapped. I understand that experiments and tests have more than fulfilled expectations. My colleague informs me that valuable water runs into the sea near Sheringa. All these matters should be investigated by experts. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion, which will, if carried, result in proper use of the available information, and I hope the Government will fully and earnestly consider it. The motion can do nothing but good for South Australia. This State will continue to prosper and expand only to the extent of the availability of our water resources.

Mr. CORCORAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### WATER CHARGES

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr. Riches:

(For wording of motion, see page 629.)

(Continued from August 14. Page 633.)

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE (Minister of Works): I regret that the member for Stuart (Mr. Riches), the mover of this motion, is not well enough to be here today. In his speech last week he raised important matters, and as they are important I intend to deal with them in some detail, even though the honourable member is not present. In moving the motion he alleged that the recent increase of 5c in the charge for excess water placed an undue burden on the community, but I intend to demonstrate that this is not the case and that the provision of these additional funds will achieve a better spread of costs to the community and some of the objectives touched on by the honourable member.

The member for Stuart said that Port Augusta, Whyalla, Woomera, and other places could not exist today without an adequate water supply, and spoke about the wastage of water by the irresponsible use of it, its importance to various occupations, and the economic cost of water. I agree with him on these points, because they are basic facts.

Undoubtedly, the more remote parts of this State, particularly the northern sections, are completely dependent on a water supply, and would not exist without it. Part of the honourable member's district and, in particular, the District of Whyalla, which has progressed so much recently, would not have been established if a water supply had not been made available. The member for Stuart correctly emphasized the challenge to the Government, to this House, and to the people of South Australia to provide future adequate water supplies, and he said that this service was more urgent and necessary than was any other Government service, as water was more important than roads or communications.

If South Australia is to progress in the future, as we all want it to do, much money must be devoted to research services and development of our water supplies, and the Government has already speeded up this work. I have said before that unless we develop our limited natural water resources there must be a definite limit to our future expansion. The Government has firmly resolved to ensure that every opportunity will be taken to develop further our resources in order to provide for our future needs. The ever-increasing demands of a growing community inevitably mean the harnessing of more and more costly sources of water, the provision of lengthy and costly mains, and more expensive pumping.

I would be the first to admit that this condition is not peculiar to South Australia. In other States and in many other parts of the world, particularly the more arid parts (but also in some of the more populous parts), these conditions apply because the natural water resources have been depleted, and those places have had to meet the impact of the rising costs of supplying water. This aspect is highlighted because of the apparent paucity of our natural and artificial water resources. This challenge, and the awareness of the problem, must be emphasized in South Australia because of our geographical make-up.

We find that the increasing investment necessary to provide suitable water supplies is resulting in ever-increasing interest and operating charges. The total investment by the Engineering and Water Supply Department as at June 30, 1968, was just over \$250,000,000, an increase of \$15,000,000 over last year. From a total revenue of \$14,600,000 received for water rates and charges, nearly \$9,800,000 was incurred in interest charges, a figure that is rapidly increasing. Although most people,

and consequently most ratepayers, live in the metropolitan area, more than half of this investment, or \$134,000,000, has had to be spent to provide country water supplies, because of the factors to which I have referred. This policy follows the thinking of former Governments and of the present Government. At the same time, there has been in post-war years a period of rising costs for wages and materials, resulting in increasing costs and consequent increases in charges. As a result of these factors the cost of providing water supplies in South Australia has increased remarkably. In 1963-64, the cost of providing water supplies was \$14,900,000, whereas this has increased to \$21,700,000 in 1967-68, an increase of \$6,800,000. It is significant to note that, in the same period, revenue from water rates and charges has increased by only \$3,500,000, from \$11,100,000 to \$14,600,000. This increasing deficit has made it necessary to review charges and to increase the price of excess water as a natural consequence.

Mr. Hudson: Is there going to be any special change in the valuation of property?

The Hon. J. W. H. CUMBE: That is not contemplated.

Mr. Hudson: And no change in the price of rebate water?

The Hon. J. W. H. CUMBE: When the announcement was made and when I spoke during the Address in Reply debate I said that there would be no increase in the price of rebate water, and that the only charge to be increased was for excess water, from 25c to 30c.

Mr. Hudson: If there are any adjustments in valuations or overall charges, could I see you about them?

The Hon. J. W. H. CUMBE: The honourable member can see me about that, and anything else, at any time. Despite the factors contributing to rising costs, all members must appreciate the work of the Engineering and Water Supply Department in absorbing some of the increases. The department has adopted various measures to increase its efficiency and, as a result, the impact on ratepayers has been considerably reduced. The actual increase in charges has been cushioned to a significant degree, and I will illustrate this with figures that show the variation in charges made since 1945, compared with the variations in the State living wage. In 1945, the first post-war year, the price of rebate water was 16.7c a thousand gallons and the price of excess water was 10c a thousand gallons.



If we use a figure of 100 as the living wage index then, we can see how it compares with the position today. In 1968 the price of rebate water is 30c, which represents an index figure of 108. The living wage today, on the same basis, would be equivalent to an index of 387. I think, therefore, that the department should take some credit for cushioning the effect of this increase in wages and materials on the ratepayers, for this has been achieved by internal efficiencies and reorganizations.

The higher cost of supplying country areas with water is indeed clear from the large deficit incurred in respect of the country compared with the metropolitan area. For instance, in 1966-67 the deficit for country waterworks was \$4,700,000, compared with a surplus in the metropolitan area that year of \$1,400,000. In 1967-68 the country deficit increased to \$5,900,000, while the metropolitan area recorded a deficit of \$1,200,000. Members will notice that fluctuation. Whereas there had been a large deficit in the country area and a surplus in the metropolitan area, last year there was a larger deficit in the country area and also a deficit in the metropolitan area. The costs of supplying water to various parts of the State will be interesting, especially to country members, and I propose to give them. The figures show the expenditure on supplying water to various parts of the State as opposed to what the Government receives in payment for the water. The figures I propose to give are the latest available and are in respect of 1966-67. In the metropolitan area, the cost of supplying 1,000 gallons of water is 39c; in the Barossa water district it is 78c; in the Beetaloo water district, \$1.17; in the Tod River water district, \$2.22; in the Warren water district, 93c; in Port Augusta, 97c; in Whyalla, \$1.12; in Murray Bridge, 43c; and in Mount Gambier, 52c.

Mr. Hudson: What is the metropolitan figure again?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUNBE: It is 39c a thousand gallons.

Mr. Hudson: Does that include interest charges on capital?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUNBE: That is the whole cost. The metropolitan figure of 39c takes in the whole of the metropolitan water district, which is not just the metropolitan area. Indeed, it includes areas south of Adelaide as far as Sellick Beach, north of Adelaide as far as Gawler River, east of Adelaide up to Onkaparinga, and through to Mannum.

Those areas form the Adelaide Metropolitan Water District. It can be seen, therefore, that if these rural areas were not included the cost of supplying water would be lower, and the disparity would be greater. Despite these high costs and the resultant increasing deficit, the Government has taken action to equalize charges, and this has been going on for a number of years. In furtherance of the policy to subsidize country works, in most districts water is sold at the metropolitan price of 30c for each 1,000 gallons, whereas the cost of supplying water in the metropolitan area is 39c. The district on the list with the highest cost is the Tod River water district, where the cost to the Government for each thousand gallons is \$2.22. Yet we are charging mainly on the basis of 30c a thousand gallons. The Government is pleased to continue this heavy subsidizing of country schemes, and it will be its continuing policy to supplement these schemes in future. I believe the Government has the support of all members for the continuance of this policy.

I give these figures so that it can readily be seen that the cost of supplying water to country areas will rise sharply over the next few years. Indeed, it is rising now, and it will continue to rise even more sharply in the near future. This illustrates the fact that, although we have one of the best systems of pumped water supplies in the world, much more remains to be done in this connection, and the Government is actively pursuing further plans to augment the present facilities. If we are to expand in South Australia, we must have more and more pumped water schemes, and we must have more pipes running over the country. I have mentioned what we are doing now to illustrate to honourable members the mounting costs with which the Government is faced.

The duplication of the Morgan-Whyalla scheme is nearing completion. Some parts of the duplicated line are already in use, although not all of the duplicated system is functioning. Provision is made in the Loan Estimates this year for further work to be done on this line. The Mannum-Adelaide main, which is working, is to be augmented with additional pumping plant. I have let the first tender on the Murray Bridge to Hahndorf scheme, this being for the first section of pipes. These are large and costly pipes. The Swan Reach to Stockwell main is reaching an advanced stage of completion, and the Tailern Bend to Keith main is scheduled for completion in 1970, with lateral lines to follow after that. In addition,

the Government has announced that work will commence this financial year on the Poldo to Kimba main, which will cost over \$3,000,000. This main will supply water to a needy part of Eyre Peninsula.

It can be seen, therefore, that there will be an increasing demand for pumped and piped water, with a resultant increase in costs to the general community. A greater proportion of this will be of direct benefit to country areas. This will mean an increase in the deficit to which I have referred and which is presently being incurred in country water districts. The very things the honourable member for Stuart mentioned are being implemented, and further works necessary for the development of our future water supplies are being carried out. I refer to the investigations into the desalination of brackish or salt water, and the utilization of Murray waters and of underground supplies. I must make this point because the member for Stuart touched on this matter in relation to pumping. I have told the House of the number of pipelines involved in this pumping scheme, quite apart from the reticulation system within the metropolitan area. Pumping is a continuing and ever-increasing cost, and it will continue to increase year after year. If we in South Australia are to continue serving the more remote parts of the State with more and more water (as we wish to do) then the total pumping costs must escalate. What we save this year may well be more than is taken up next year. We have been fortunate in South Australia this year with the reservoir position as it exists at the moment. However, we have found that, although we may rejoice in a year of plenty and of good rainfall, sooner or later (particularly concerning our reservoirs and the Murray River itself) we experience a drought year, as a result of which it costs us a great deal of money to pump water.

If we are to develop as we wish to develop, we must bear in mind the basic fact that pumping costs in this State will be on a continual escalation. Even if we did not build one more mile of pipeline, we must remember that South Australia's population is increasing year by year (in fact, we want it to increase), and this demands that more gallons of water are pumped and that more kilowatts are used in that pumping. These costs will increase to the department year by year; indeed, I hope they increase, if it means that we will serve more and more people and more and more remote parts of South Australia, or if it means that we can provide

greater services generally. However, although I have said that costs must increase, I think the House must take a responsible view and ensure that adequate provision is made to meet these costs. If adequate provision is not made, we will not be able to provide the increased services desired by the department, the Government, and every member of this House.

In order to carry out such a programme, which I believe has the support of the House, it is necessary (in fact, essential) that our deficits in respect of the Engineering and Water Supply Department are kept within control and that funds are provided to meet requirements. In examining this position, and in order to promote the programme to which I have been referring, the Government decided that it was necessary to make a modest increase in the charges being levied for water, so that people could continue to benefit from these extra facilities and so that more and more consumers could be offered better services.

Mr. Wardle: What would the 5c increase be worth to the State?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I will try to work that out for the honourable member. I know that about \$400,000 is involved in this financial year, and, in a full year, \$500,000. The honourable member must realize that the excess charges do not come along until the following year, under the present system of rendering accounts. What the excess will be worth to the State is another matter, and I cannot answer that definitely. Having made the decision and having faced up to this problem, the Government has decided not to increase the basic charge for rebate water, which is the basic charge that every ratepayer pays. However, it has been decided to equalize the cost of excess water and to bring both charges into parity. This will have the effect of encouraging a greater number of consumers to observe water economy, as the charge for excess water, in most cases, will apply only to people who use more than their quota.

Mr. Broomhill: Have excess water charges been a discouragement in the past?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: Whether they have or not, my view is that not increasing the charge for rebate water and tending to increase the charge for excess water will definitely encourage water economy, and I believe that anything we can do in this regard will be advantageous. What I have just said must be taken in context with statements on

this matter that I have made previously. We must remember that the charge for excess water will apply only to those who use more than their quota. Not all people in the metropolitan area or in some parts of the country use all their quota, and this is a matter which I am concerned about and which I am examining at present. It was thought that the proposal would represent a more equitable way of passing on the extra charges. The member for Stuart was a little astray when he alleged that this impost would fall almost entirely on residents in country areas and that it would affect less than 3 per cent of consumers in the city.

The honourable member said that the whole increase would be borne by people living outside the city of Adelaide and that ratepayers in Rundle Street would not be paying any increase at all. The actual figures taken out indicate that, within the city of Adelaide, 14 per cent of all metered services incur excess charges, whereas the figure is 28 per cent in respect of the metropolitan area and 40 per cent for the country area. Therefore, on average 31 per cent of metered services in the whole of South Australia are incurring excess. These are the latest figures available. The charges for excess water do not in any way affect the number of people who will be paying excess, because no difference has occurred in the rebate charge, and there has been no alteration in valuation.

Mr. Broomhill: Aren't the country people at a disadvantage?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUNBE: I was saying that the member for Stuart was a little astray when he referred to about 3 per cent of the people in the city and when he said that the people in Rundle Street would not be paying any more.

Mr. Broomhill: He was correct there, wasn't he?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUNBE: The higher assessment has an effect. The member for Stuart referred to 3 per cent: the actual figure regarding the city of Adelaide is 14 per cent.

Mr. Broomhill: I thought he referred to Rundle Street.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUNBE: No, he said that ratepayers in Rundle Street or elsewhere in the city of Adelaide would not be paying any increase at all. He said that the whole increase would be borne by people outside the city of Adelaide. The principal reason for the higher number of consumers incurring excess charges in the country areas is that ratepayers in the metropolitan area in general are required

to pay much higher rates because of higher property values (and this is the point queried by the member for West Torrens). Members may be interested to know that metropolitan consumers generally pay a higher unit price for water actually used than do country consumers who use excess water. If, however, the Government increased rebate water charges, the impost on the community generally would be higher without affording the encouragement to conserve water, which is the Government's expressed desire and which was the desire also of the previous Government. The impact would certainly have been greater if we had raised the cost of rebate water, and that is why this cost was kept down and the cost of excess water increased.

I think members will agree that our charges are still equitable compared with those in the other States. In Brisbane, the charges are 35c for both excess and rebate water; in Sydney, the charges are 30c for both; in Melbourne, the charge for industrial water is 30c for both rebate and excess and the charge for domestic supplies is 25c. I emphasize that in those States, where the charges are either equal to or higher than ours, in addition to the higher or the equal charges the basic rates themselves are higher, because properties there are valued much higher than in this State. This is an important consideration. Honourable members will appreciate the basis on which the E. & W.S. Department values and the extent to which it charges on the valuation, which is of course a much lower valuation generally than in the other States and, in fact, lower than what it is permitted by the Act to fix.

This has been the policy for a number of years, and the full valuation is not charged. When we compare our figures, we see that they are the same as some of the other States and lower than Queensland's, and we must take into account that people in those States pay more because the valuations are so much higher. In effect, what is happening in the other States is that the consumer is paying more than his counterpart here. The Government is not increasing the price of rebate water, as was done by the previous Government. On July 1, 1965, the previous Government increased the rebate charge from 25c to 30c and the excess water charge from 22.5c to 25c. Therefore, consumers were caught both ways. What this Government has done is to increase the excess charge only. The

impact was much greater in 1965 when both these things were increased and, of course, about that time there was also an increase in valuation. I make this point because this was denied by the Leader of the Opposition a few nights ago when he said that his Government, apart from increasing valuations, had made no increase in the rates. That is in *Hansard*, although I am not supposed to refer to a previous debate. The Leader of the Opposition claimed that his Government had made no increases and that only a minor alteration had been made to the amount of rebate water available under the rating system. He said that no other alteration was made to the rate.

Although the Leader of the Opposition made this statement on July 24, the facts are that my predecessor as the Minister of Works signed the document which came into effect on July 1, 1965, and which increased both rebate and excess water charges at the same time. This was a considerably greater impost on the people of this State than the present 20 per cent increase. What this Government has done (and what it has been realistic about) is to increase the charge on excess water so that only a certain number of people in the State will incur the increased charge. If the Government increased the charges on rebate water it would mean that every man, woman and child in the State by some means or other would pay more and more for water, and the average ratepayer would pay considerably more. The Government decided that this would not be done, but that the increase would be on excess water only. The effect of the previous Government's decision was that it got two bites of the cherry.

The Government is making this modest increase in this way for the reasons I have already listed at some length. It will enable the Government to provide for the years ahead the necessary expansion in the State, the majority of which will go to the country areas. This is the sound policy of this Government, and it is the sound policy of the Government also to get on with the work of providing extra facilities to the country and to subsidize these charges to the country, setting them off against the charges of the metropolitan area. However, if we are to continue this work we must bring these deficits into line, otherwise our interest charges will overtake our revenue charges in this department. This would be a serious matter. What are the

effects of this impost? I mentioned just now that it was estimated that in a full year it would produce about \$500,000 extra in revenue. However, this will not be felt immediately, as portion of the revenue to be collected will not come in until the next financial year because the excess rate notices go out under the quarterly billing and returns come in afterwards.

In a full year the extra charges in the metropolitan area will amount to about \$330,000 and in the country to about \$190,000, based on the 1967-68 consumption. Here again, this illustrates how these charges will be spread. One of the points raised by the member for Stuart when he moved the motion was that this would have a greater effect on the country than on the city. I take issue with him once again because he was a little astray on this matter. He referred to Napperby and Nelshaby in the Flinders Ranges, in which area he has taken a great deal of interest. I have seen some of these districts in the past. The honourable member quoted the findings of a committee that was set up a year or two ago to examine the whole question of water charges and the supply of water to these market gardening areas. I am sure the member for Whyalla is conversant with this project. One important point in that committee's findings is cogent to the whole question of the State's being able to supply further facilities to the country by way of water reticulation. I wish to quote from the findings of this committee (the other findings were quoted in the main by the member for Stuart). The committee drew attention to paragraph 9 (3) of the report, which states:

The time is fast approaching when the limit of the supply of water from natural resources in this State will be reached and, unless alternative sources of supply can be developed (such as desalination of seawater) at an economic cost, the State will be unable to continue its present rate of growth. It therefore appears that it may be necessary to impose some form of control on the use of mains water for various purposes, including irrigation, in order that the water reticulation system of the State may be able to serve the purpose for which it was designed and built (domestic, stock, and industrial purposes).

This indicates that, in that case, the people were concerned not only about the cost of the water (its economy) but also about the fact that they were faced with the possibility of not being able to expand and not being able to carry out their normal avocation in their market gardens. As members know, there was a restriction on the supply. As I say, this illustrates the point I have been submitting:

that we must have more money to provide more facilities. The method adopted by the Government in this connection is one that will not mean a general impost on all rate-payers, as it will affect only those who use excess water. At the same time, it will encourage economy in the use of water. A week or two ago the provision of concessions to market gardeners was raised. However, the committee which was set up to offer advice on this matter recommended against concessions, after visiting the area.

The points I have been making and the points raised by the member for Stuart are most important as they affect the future of the State. I welcome this opportunity to speak (and I have spoken at some length) because of the importance of the matter and because of the interest shown in it by members of the House, particularly country members. I have no doubt that increased charges are necessary as a result of increases in wages and costs of materials generally and also as a result of increased costs in providing water and services over long distances, particularly to country areas. I have not given details of costs of labour and materials. However, I touched on the subject briefly when I compared increases in the charges made for water with increases in the cost of living index. Members know that almost every year increases take place in costs of labour and material that have to be met.

I have shown that the increases in revenue have fallen far behind the costs being incurred by the department, and I have shown that these costs have not been passed on. Even if it were only to meet the increases in wages and material costs in the State, some increase in water rates would be justified. However, the line I have taken this afternoon is that, in order to provide extra facilities in the State (and more especially in country areas), we must have money to pay for those facilities. If we do not have the money some of these projects may be delayed. Having previously spoken from both sides of the House on this matter, I repeat today my firm personal conviction that this State, if it is to progress, must have more and more sources of water and the ability to supply this water to people in various parts, wherever they may be, for use in rural, industrial and commercial undertakings. I say this to emphasize what I believe to be the principal reason for the increase.

Mr. Hudson: Do you regard the election statements of your Party on finance as irresponsible?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I do not think they were irresponsible. However, I think some of the things said by the member for Glenelg have been irresponsible.

Mr. Hudson: What? Be specific.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I heard the honourable member say things in another debate that I thought were irresponsible, but I cannot refer to them now. However, I will tell the honourable member about them outside the House. It is unfortunately true that, when an additional charge is made for supplies from any public utility, some or all sections of the community must feel the impact to a greater or lesser degree.

Mr. Hudson: Why didn't you tell us about this increased charge before the election?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: May I counter that remark by asking why it was that the Leader of the Opposition denied in this House that in 1965 his Government had increased charges for water supplies?

Mr. Hudson: Where is the quote in *Hansard*?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I have already quoted it. However, I refer the honourable member to *Hansard* of July 24, 1968, at page 231. Why did the Leader deny this? He said that his Government had made no increases at all in water rates.

Mr. Hudson: That still does not answer my question.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I also said earlier that on July 1, 1965, my predecessor (Hon. C. D. Hutchens) increased water charges twofold, in regard to both rebate and excess water. I regard this matter as being important.

Mr. Hudson: You still haven't answered my question.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Glenelg may speak later if he so desires.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: Because of its importance I regard this matter as being above Party politics. What I have just said was in reply to an interjection and was designed to illustrate the history of this case. I believe that the importance of water to South Australia should be foremost in the minds of all members. As I said earlier, I hope all members agree with the Government in its desire to provide further facilities for South

Australia. Unfortunately, when an additional charge is made for supplies from any public utility, whatever it may be, some or all sections of the community must feel the impact to a larger or lesser degree. The Government believes its action in this case will minimize the impact and spread the cost most equitably.

Mr. Hudson: Will you give a rebate to people not using their full quota of water?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: If the honourable member had been here earlier he would have heard me say that this matter concerns me, as many people do not use their quota under the system.

Mr. Hudson: Particularly owners of home units.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: Who is making this speech—the honourable member or I?

Mr. Hudson: I am trying to help you along.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: If the honourable member had been here earlier he would have heard me say that I was looking into this matter at present. The obvious result of the motion, if carried, would be that it could lead to a curtailment of necessary extension work in country areas. The Government, as I have said, wants to expand this work and I am sure this House supports that desire. Undue delay could result in some works being deferred if this motion, which seeks to have the position reviewed was carried. I ask the House to reject the motion and, more specifically, I ask all country members on both sides, in their own interests, to avoid increasing charges against Consolidated Revenue (because that is what would happen) which could either reduce the standard of other services to the community or increase the cost, which would have to be met by revenue from other sources. If this motion is carried, it will defeat the very purpose that the member for Stuart was trying to achieve when he said in his speech last week that he wanted to see the furtherance of water supplies in South Australia.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY (Whyalla): I listened with great interest to the Minister developing his argument and am pleased he provided us with much information as regards costs which, to me, was valuable and I am sure will be interesting to people throughout the State. However, I question very much the conclusions he arrived at as a result of his arguments. I should like to analyse them and look into the future a little in so doing, because

some of the things he thinks will follow if this motion is carried will not, in my opinion, follow logically at all.

In summing up, the Minister said that this increase of 20 per cent in the cost of excess water would have the effect of spreading the cost in the most equitable manner. I challenge the validity of that conclusion because, whilst the Minister gave us the figures of how the extra costs would fall on the community, I think he drew illogical conclusions in the statement of his figures. He said that the extra revenue from these increases would be \$330,000 from the metropolitan area and \$190,000 from country areas. This was instanced as showing that the great burden of the extra cost would fall on the metropolitan area. However, using statistics in this way is only part of the story. What we should look at is how the impact of these costs as related to the city and the country falls on the individuals concerned, bearing in mind the conditions under which they are living.

Before I develop that further, I want to take the Minister's mind back to the agreement that I think exists amongst all members of this House (with the possible exception of the member for Light; and I will explain why) that there should be an equalization of the load of water costs throughout the city and country areas: in other words, people should, if possible, have these facilities at something like an equal cost. Of course, the member for Light would not agree with that because it is a Socialist conception, so we will leave him out; but I think all other members will agree on that idea. Let us look at the situation of people in various parts of the State. I think I have just as responsible views on the use of water and its importance to the State as the Minister or any other member has. In the northern areas, which were the areas about which the member for Stuart was most concerned, the people are living with a 9in. to 11in. rainfall. They are roughly on the Goyder's line of rainfall in that area and are endeavouring to develop their gardens, ovals and a few market gardens. They are trying to develop all these things with a 9in. to 11in. rainfall. Here, in the metropolitan area, there is a 21in. rainfall but, when we go further south, we find a 30in. to 35in. rainfall.

To emphasize this point, let me say that, when I was Minister of Education and went down to Mount Gambier and heard people say that they did not think their education facilities were as good as those in the rest

of the State, I was able to tell them that their buildings, oval facilities and school surrounds were at least as good as those elsewhere. I told them they were very lucky indeed because they had virtually no water problems whereas there were people in my area without a blade of grass around them; nor was there ever likely to be. This is the difference. If we are to equalize the load of water costs and the facilities between city and country, those things have to be taken into account. Just saying what this would cost in terms of the metropolitan area and the country areas (\$330,000 extra revenue from the metropolitan area and \$190,000 from the country) does not present a true picture. Naturally, when the Minister was speaking, it was difficult for me to get down all that he said, because he used much valuable statistical material, but for the purposes of my argument I got down as much as I could and, if I say anything that is incorrect, I hope the Minister will correct me. He pointed out that, contrary to what the member for Stuart has said, in the city 14 per cent of all the metered premises would be paying for excess water and in the country it would be 40 per cent. It is obvious from what I have said earlier that most of the 40 per cent in the country who would be paying for excess water would be in the 9in. to 11in. rainfall area, and not down in the South-East, 28 per cent being in a 21in. rainfall area, this once again stressing the enormous differences in the conditions of different people according to their circumstances and where they live.

In view of this, it is obvious that the impact of this excess water charge must fall most inequitably upon the people in the drier areas rather than those in other parts of the State—40 per cent paying excess in the country, most of them being in the 9in. to 11in. rainfall belt and 28 per cent being in a 21in. rainfall area, with 14 per cent in the city paying for excess water. Some time ago I was able to inspect the accounts of some people living in the city and was interested to see that many of them were in a 21in. rainfall area. On the same area of residential block as I have in Whyalla, which is fully planted, they were using two to three times the quantity of water that I was in Whyalla—and I use excess. Surely, if the Minister's argument is sound and he is stressing economy in the use of water as being vital to the State (and I agree with every word he said about the importance of economy), if economy is to be aimed at in addition to cutting down the deficit (in fact, I think this is

most important, more important than the deficit) it should start where people have good rainfall and not where people are living in 9in. to 11in. rainfall areas.

I will enlarge on the results of this policy of applying an inequitable impact in regard to excess water charges to those people who live near Goyder's line of rainfall. Obviously people will continually cast their eyes towards the city and say, "That is where all the good things are. Why should we continue to live in this dry area, if we are to have an increase in the cost of excess water, making it extremely difficult for our children to have grassed ovals at school and for us to have a decent garden?"

Members opposite are always talking about decentralization and the necessity to satisfy the needs of country people. They say that country people should have the facilities to enable them to live as the people in the city do. I point out that the people of Whyalla and Port Augusta are just as much country people as are the people who may be growing wheat, wool, or anything else, out in the country. The Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited has a tremendous labour turnover, much of which results from immigrants, after establishing themselves in Australia, looking towards the bright lights of the city and the additional facilities available there. This matter will in the future be more important than it is today and, therefore, we should consider the development of suitable industries in country areas and the whole question of the number of people who are going to live in the country area as against those in the metropolitan area.

If we are to consider this increase only from what we call the private enterprise point of view (and we hear much about that from the Premier) and from the point of view of eliminating the deficit so that the Government does not have to subsidize or get money elsewhere, the population of the country will decrease even more. I am not blaming the farmer but, in his pursuit of private enterprise methods, he is doing things that reduce the population in the country. If he can do things more cheaply by having a machine rather than a man, he will get the machine. Under our system, who can blame him? He has to do that, but his doing it reduces the country population. This is one of the things that cause people to leave the country so that they can enjoy better facilities in the metropolitan area or in a higher rainfall area. This is not merely a matter of considering statistics

such as were presented by the Minister this afternoon and drawing what I call misleading conclusions from those figures.

I understand the Minister's concern about his deficit, but if the Government and all other members are concerned about a policy on water, we must first decide whether we need to act on the equalization of facilities. If we agree on that, we have to consider every impost that we put on to meet the revenue required to see that it falls equitably, having regard to rainfall and other methods associated with water rating. I give way to no-one in my concern about the lack of water in this State. I think, as the member for Stuart thinks, that anyone who lives in a dry area for many years appreciates the value of water much better than do people who live in a good rainfall area. I have lived most of my life in extremely dry areas in South Australia and I consider that, if the people in the better rainfall areas had a greater appreciation of the value of water, many of the problems facing the Engineering and Water Supply Department would be overcome. If that is agreed, the pressure should be applied in the better rainfall areas.

When the matter of water savings arose and the Education Department considered it during my term as Minister of Education, we clamped down heavily on those people in the better rainfall areas who were using water unnecessarily. This is where the pressure should be applied. The Education Department adopted a sliding scale, allowing for the needs of the schools in the drier areas. Is that not the right approach? It is obvious that, if the Minister considered this matter again and examined his figures having regard to what I have said, he would find that the impact from the increase would be inequitable. I asked the Chairman of the Whyalla City Commission what the increase would mean to the commission and was told that in the year ended June 30, 1967, excess water charges were \$2,960. An increase of 20 per cent in the charge would involve an additional \$592 a year. In the year ended June 30, 1968, excess water charges paid by the commission were \$5,475, almost twice the charge in the previous year. That was caused by the expansion of the city, and on the basis of those figures the increased impost is \$1,095. The commission already has a heavy deficit that it has to try to reduce over a period of several years.

Members who know anything about local government must know that local government in a rapidly expanding city is a major problem because the return from rating is insufficient, as a general rule, to meet the terrific demands of a growing community. Whyalla will have an additional impost of at least \$1,000 a year and the amount will increase as the population increases. Surely these are major considerations. I do not want to make the matter a Party-political affair, because I think it is above that. I consider it important to the future of the State and to the people in the country. We are all concerned about the congregation of people here and the problems that that creates. For example, we have the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study Report and the problem caused by the congregation of people in one small area. Hundreds of millions of dollars are involved in those recommendations, yet the population in country areas is either static or decreasing.

A comparison of the number of electors enrolled at present with the enrolment a few years ago shows that the number of electors in many districts is virtually static. Unless natural resources that will generate new industry are discovered, the populations in those districts must inevitably decrease consequent on increased mechanization and the attraction offered by the facilities in the city. This broad policy should be considered when we are discussing imposts regarding water usage. If the Minister examines his figures again, he will see that they prove what I am saying, having regard to different circumstances in various parts of the State. I hope that the Minister will review what is being done and find some way, if charges must be increased, to make the increase equitable so as to equalize the cost of water throughout the State. That is the only fair approach to the situation.

Mr. RODDA secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### CHOWILLA DAM

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr. Hudson:  
(For wording of motion, see page 633.)  
(Continued from August 14. Page 639.)

Mr. HUDSON (Glenelg): When speaking on this motion last Wednesday I dealt with several questions connected with the Chowilla dam and the Government's actions in relation to it. These questions are important and require answers. I believe, as do all members



of the Opposition, that the Chowilla dam is vital to South Australia's future development. I believe that the Government of the day and its supporters share this view. Our first basic objection, however, is that we disagree with the suitability of the material the Government has put out. We think that the tactics adopted so far have created increased antagonism at the level of the Commonwealth Government.

The State Government has a duty to supply information to members of this House and to people in other States that will adequately answer the criticisms that have been levelled in respect of the Chowilla project, but so far this has not been done. So far, all that has happened has been the production of a very juvenile pamphlet that has called forth the wrath of the Minister for National Development and, as I indicated last week, has caused the Premier to say that he was beginning to wonder about the merits of having the Minister for National Development as Chairman of the River Murray Commission. This indicates to what extent the Premier's political approaches have been successful!

The Premier justified his Government's action in altering the instructions that the previous Government gave to Mr. Beaney by saying that he wanted to make a political approach to the Commonwealth Government. He made a special trip to Canberra for this purpose, but all he seems to have achieved so far is to make a very firm enemy of South Australia in the person of the Minister for National Development, who made certain charges about the pamphlet. He said there was only one non-controversial fact in it, namely, the location of the dam site. He questioned whether the Snowy Mountains Authority, Soil Mechanics Limited of London and the United States Army Corps of Engineers had in fact approved the feasibility of the project as a whole (this is claimed by the pamphlet). We want to know who is correct—the Minister for National Development or the author of the pamphlet? Has the Snowy Mountains Authority approved the overall feasibility of the Chowilla dam, or has it been consulted only on certain features of it and has it dealt only with certain features of it?

Mr. McAnaney: You ought to know: you were there for three years.

Mr. HUDSON: We did not produce the pamphlet, which is the main thing achieved by the present Government.

Mr. McAnaney: You forgot about it.

Mr. HUDSON: The member for Stirling produces such pathetically stupid interjections: it was the previous Government that got to the stage of calling tenders, and it was then that the trouble arose. The honourable member knows this full well, yet he insists on interjecting in the most stupid and inane fashion. Did Soil Mechanics Limited of London state that the Chowilla dam was practicable in all respects, or was it consulted only on certain features? Who is correct—the pamphlet or the Minister for National Development? What about the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers? Did it, as the pamphlet claims, state that the Chowilla dam was practicable, or was it consulted only on certain features? Who is correct—the pamphlet or the Minister for National Development?

Mr. Hughes: The Minister is always correct, I think.

Mr. HUDSON: If he is correct, what was the present Government's purpose in producing a pamphlet that is inaccurate in its details? What purpose on earth could that serve? Surely to goodness if we are to get anywhere on this project we must have detailed answers to the substantial criticisms that have been raised, but we have not been given such answers, nor, as far as I am aware, has the current Government attempted to provide these answers to the people in other States and in Canberra. I recall what I have said previously and what the Premier said last year, that one legitimate argument was raised by New South Wales and Victoria, namely, the question of increasing salinity near Mildura and the consequent necessity in a dry year of maintaining a flow of water past Mildura. This pamphlet contradicts the contention that these States would not receive the expected benefit if the Chowilla dam was constructed. Who would benefit from it, in addition to South Australia? According to the pamphlet, New South Wales and Victoria would gain considerably from the yield benefits of the storage by an estimated amount of 589,000 acre feet a year.

So, the current Government apparently thinks that all the arguments that were produced to the River Murray Commission are of no account. Or, what does the Government think? The Minister for National Development, in the House of Representatives, pointed out that flows of water had to be maintained at Mildura, and that this altered the whole notion of who would benefit from building the Chowilla dam. How on earth can a Government, which says it is responsible and

competent, produce the sort of statement in the pamphlet, when it knows that, unless the salinity problem up river from Chowilla is solved, New South Wales and Victoria cannot benefit from Chowilla?

Mr. Broomhill: I don't think it does know.

Mr. HUDSON: This is a matter of the greatest importance. I have raised it here before and I spoke about it at Berri, but we have not had one word of sense from the Premier or from the Minister of Works about the salinity problem.

Mr. Broomhill: Or from the member for Stirling.

Mr. HUDSON: The Government has had plenty of opportunity to give some information about this matter, but all that has happened is that people who have asked for information by writing to the Premier's Department have got nothing. The Minister for National Development, in the House of Representatives on May 1, 1968 (and I wish the Minister of Works would listen, because I want a reply on this matter) said:

The water supply situation has been aggravated in recent years by increasing salinity in the middle and lower reaches of the river, as a result of which the operation of the storages controlled by the River Murray Commission has had to be modified in order to make available substantial releases to meet requirements for control of water quality over and above quantities required for use by the three States.

That statement makes it absolutely clear.

Mr. Rodda: Who is putting the salt slugs into the river?

Mr. HUDSON: Some have come in by accident, and some have come in as a result of a total failure for many years to control adequately the drainage waters when each new irrigation settlement is established. We, to some extent, have been at fault as much as have people in other States.

Mr. Rodda: A preponderance of them has come from other States?

Mr. HUDSON: Yes, although I suspect that one of the worst places is Waikerie, in this State. However, incidents there affect the river lower down than Waikerie and do not create problems in the Berri area, for example. I have been told that last summer the average salinity of the Murray River at Waikerie tended to double after each irrigation, because of the low flow at that time.

The Hon. J. W. H. Coumbe: One slug got to Waikerie and would not move.

Mr. HUDSON: Yes, but after each irrigation at Waikerie the salinity doubled from 250 to 500 parts per million. This was caused by drainage water coming back to the river from irrigation settlements within a few days.

Mr. Corcoran: Strangely enough, there was a reduction by the time the water reached Murray Bridge.

Mr. HUDSON: I do not know how that worked, and I do not know whether that was always the case.

Mr. Corcoran: It happened.

Mr. McAnaney: It stayed pretty steady at about 560 p.p.m. for about three months or more. There was no doubling during that period.

Mr. HUDSON: After each irrigation at Waikerie, the average salinity doubled. Waikerie is one of the main problem spots in South Australia. The Minister for National Development emphasizes that the whole question of river flow and control and control of storages has had to be modified in order to control river quality. We have to produce to the other States and to Canberra arguments to show that salinity up river from Chowilla dam can be effectively controlled by other measures, so that special releases from up river storages are not required in a dry year just to control quality. In that case New South Wales and Victoria could benefit from Chowilla, but we must answer their arguments about it: as yet, there has been no attempt to do so, and this is part of my complaint.

Surely, the Minister of Works knows that these arguments must be answered. We must be able to show on the River Murray Commission that the problem of salinity outside South Australia can be effectively controlled. If New South Wales and Victoria are not to benefit from Chowilla, then the basis of the River Murray Agreement, or the understanding that led to that agreement by the three Parliaments, has been upset, and I am sure that the Minister of Works will agree with that statement. Chowilla may still go ahead, because of the tremendous benefits to be derived for the whole of South Australia. People in other States think about the Murray River in terms of supplying water to people living in irrigation districts, and do not appreciate that much of the industrial development in South Australia has resulted from the use of Murray River water, which is the lifeblood of industrial development throughout the State. It is important that we realize what troubles people in other States and why they have become

strong opponents of the Chowilla project. It is important that we answer their criticisms one by one, and that we produce the detailed technical arguments that are necessary to do this. It is important that members of this House know the full detailed answers. How can we expect people in other States to understand the basic arguments favouring Chowilla if members, the people who should be more concerned than anyone else with the project, do not have full information?

Mr. Hughes: Members on the other side should have it because they said they were going to build it.

Mr. HUDSON: The Government cannot support this project with the kind of electioneering pamphlet that it produced during the election campaign. It is not that sort of thing. It is not a question that if everyone votes for Chowilla we will get it: it is partly a technical question. We know that underneath the Chowilla site is a huge reservoir of saline water, which at some points rises to within 6ft. of the surface, and that the salinity of this underground water is from half to twice the salinity of seawater. It has been decided to pump this water away and to take special measures to prevent it from contaminating water in the Chowilla dam, when it is built. The member for Riverina in the Commonwealth House of Representatives, like Mr. Turnbull and the Minister for National Development, is subject to local pressures. They represent Murray River districts in the Commonwealth Parliament. On May 9 last, Mr. Armstrong referred to "a large expanse of underground water of high salt content", and said that the water contained in the dam would be "particularly subject to its effect". He also said:

I would like to see . . . the people of South Australia continue to get their fair share—and perhaps an added share, if this is possible—of good quality water from the Murray River. But from all the evidence I have been able to obtain from engineers and other people I think the people of South Australia would be far better served by the building of more storages along the Upper Murray.

Mr. McAnaney: That is not likely at the moment.

Mr. HUDSON: It does not seem likely this year, and the use for South Australia this year of a dam on the Dartmouth site is anyone's guess. What is plain if one carefully reads the statements made by people such as Mr. Turnbull, Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Fairbairn is that they say they can control salinity along the Upper Murray or the middle

reaches of the Murray if they have sufficient storages along the Upper Murray, because releases from those storages will effectively control the salinity problem. One receives the impression that special projects such as have been approved this year for preventing drainage water from seeping back into the Murray River may not be necessary to a great extent concerning the immediate problem in the other States. One can see the basic interest of these people in favour of up-river storages, simply because the problem of their own constituents, depending on irrigation in the Murray River, will be more satisfactorily handled by establishing up-river storages. Again, if salinity along the middle reaches of the Murray River is a real problem, we have to provide the answers as to how it can be effectively tackled. We know that the River Murray Commission has employed salinity consultants; the commission has retained Hunting Technical Services of the United Kingdom and the Australian firm of Guttridge, Haskins and Davey as consultants on this matter. What opinions have those consultants given to the commission? What reports were given by them at the April meeting? Should we not be informed about this? Should not our Commonwealth members be informed? How can any South Australian representative answer Mr. Armstrong or Mr. Fairbairn if he is not provided with the detailed arguments to answer these gentlemen effectively? The pamphlet that has been distributed will not do the job; it does not even tackle the problem of salinity up river from Chowilla. All it says on Chowilla is as follows:

When higher flow rates enter and fill the reservoir this will generally be of a low salinity level.

Quite true! We expect this to be the flood-water in the winter time. The pamphlet continues:

Even under high evaporation conditions the quality of the water will still be satisfactory for domestic and irrigation purposes.

I agree completely with that statement. It continues:

Chowilla dam will provide the security of a regular annual flow at least equal to South Australia's entitlement under the River Murray Waters Agreement. It will also provide flushing water downstream when salinity levels demand it.

Quite right! But what will it do upstream from Chowilla? We do not have to convince ourselves of the benefits of Chowilla. We know that, so long as the flow of water into the Chowilla dam is of low salinity, the effect of the high evaporation rate will not be drastic

on the salinity level of the water in the Chowilla dam itself, and we know this will mean that, concerning water for irrigation downstream from the Chowilla dam, we can effectively flush the river by using water from Chowilla, but that does nothing to solve the problems of people living in New South Wales and Victoria upstream from the Chowilla dam. It is their problems that have operated in the New South Wales and Victorian Parliaments to a minor extent, but in the Commonwealth Parliament to a major extent, to produce the adverse decision of the River Murray Commission, and we must have the answers to their problems.

Members in this House must be told the answers, and the South Australian representatives of the Commonwealth Parliament must also be told. However, we have not been given those answers, and the kind of pamphlet that has been produced does not give them. What changed propositions are we prepared to advance to the Commonwealth for financing the Chowilla dam? If the extent of the benefit from the Chowilla dam is less to New South Wales and Victoria than is expected, what are we prepared to suggest to the Commonwealth about changing the financial provisions? To what extent can we afford to come to the party? To what extent do we need to say to the Commonwealth Government, "You must treat the Chowilla dam now as a national project. Relieve New South Wales and Victoria of any additional obligations and meet those yourself"? To what extent can we say to the Commonwealth, "We will come part of the way with you, if you do that"? Have we been given any information on this sort of question? Again, the answer is "No". What are the reasons for the delay in producing the additional material that we need to have? We are not told, and the whole record of the Government in this matter is completely unsatisfactory.

We believe that the Government deliberately misled the people of South Australia last year and at the time of the election, and that the Government knew that what it was saying was untrue: it knew that its tactics were dishonest tactics. We believe that members of the Government demonstrated this immediately they came into power by, instead of maintaining the instructions the previous Government gave to Mr. Beaney, immediately altering those instructions. I have demonstrated the inconsistency of the former Opposition last year and during the election campaign. We take the strongest objection on behalf of the people who sent us into this Parliament, and of the

people of South Australia as a whole, to the dishonest tactics that the current Government adopted before coming into power. We also object to the tactics the Government is now adopting. The Government claims it is seeking to convince people in Canberra at the political level, but all it has done so far is, presumably, to antagonize the Minister for National Development still further. Perhaps the Minister is incapable of being convinced, but from what the Government has done so far none of the arguments that have been used against the Chowilla dam have been effectively answered by it. No doubt the Opposition will be accused by the Government of not giving full support to Chowilla, and no doubt there will be further attempts at dishonesty through the Government feeling itself in a weak position and under attack and then accusing the Opposition of not giving full support to the scheme. The Opposition gives full support to Chowilla, and wishes that the Government would go ahead and try to carry out its current tactics competently. We do not agree with those tactics, but if the Government undertakes this sort of political manoeuvre it should at least be competent about it. If the Government cannot get what it wants from the Commonwealth L.C.P. Government, the Opposition knows what it can get from a Commonwealth Labor Government.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: It will be a long time before that happens.

Mr. HUDSON: Perhaps, but we may get the Chowilla scheme substituted for the F111 planes when it happens. I hope that the honourable and gallant Minister is aware that if we did without five F111's we could have the Chowilla dam at no additional cost to anybody.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: It will be 20 or more years before your Party is in office.

Mr. HUDSON: I do not know how many years it will be, but I would hate to have to rely on the Attorney-General's predictions about anything. The Opposition fully supports the Chowilla scheme, as it recognizes its basic importance to South Australia and that it is a national project of the greatest importance; it cannot be described as a sectional project. Even if New South Wales and Victoria obtain no benefit from Chowilla and the benefits come only to South Australia, by what right can political leaders in Victoria, New South Wales and Canberra call into question the whole future development of this part of Australia? They have no right to do

that, but that is what they are calling into question: not just the future of irrigation settlements along the Murray River in South Australia but the whole industrial development of South Australia, which is being adversely affected at present. Potential investors in South Australia who are worried about the certainty of future supplies of water may well decide to go to other States.

If we do not get Chowilla, then in the next few years we may face the consequences of the whole source of investment in South Australia gradually drying up. By what moral principles, then, do people in other States or in Canberra think they are guided when their actions help to destroy the expectations of future growth in South Australia? The very action taken by the Commonwealth Government (by the Minister for National Development in particular) is sufficient to delay investment in South Australia and is part of the reason for the current serious setback. The Opposition claims that Chowilla is a national project and that the leaders in other States and in Canberra have no moral, political or any other sort of right to take actions that will call into question the whole future development of South Australia. They are morally wrong in the line they are taking. The Opposition stands four-square in support of the Chowilla project. However, as the motion indicates, the Opposition will do everything it can to alter the kind of tactics the Government is following if the Government will not alter those tactics to improve the quality of performance in the pursuit of the tactics it is adopting. The basis of the Opposition's criticism is contained in that statement.

Mr. BROOMHILL seconded the motion.

The Hon. R. S. HALL secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

Adjourned debate on the motion of the Hon. D. A. Dunstan:

(For wording of motion, see page 509.)

(Continued from August 7. Page 516.)

The Hon. R. S. HALL (Premier): The motion brings into the House the views that the Leader of the Opposition has stated previously. He believes that the site for the festival hall should be that recommended by Theatre Consulting Services, closely adjacent to Government House. I do not agree with this recommendation. On assuming office I had another look at the plans for the siting of a building of the size of a festival hall in this situation,

taking the view that I should not oppose a location simply because my political opponent had brought it forward, and I believe that my objections are well founded. Government House is a good site, and so is the Torrens Parade Ground. Either would make a good venue for a festival hall but it is obvious that to put a festival hall in between them would ruin both sites. There would not be two choice venues: there would be three crowded sites and, in addition, we should use three acres of park lands, by the Leader's own explanation. I do not approve of using three acres of park lands, especially in this particularly valuable area for the public and the users of the city. If most people were to examine the broad outlines of the area now and place the hall in the position where the Leader has verbally placed it by moving this motion, they would find it would virtually ruin three sites, instead of preserving the values of two.

Mr. Hudson: Which three sites do you mean?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Government House, the festival hall and the Torrens Parade Ground. All would be overcrowded, as the member for Glenelg knows, whereas the two sites have the proper surrounds necessary if the area is to be uncluttered. We do not want this area to be developed as a subdivision. The festival hall has been discussed for some time. The Leader dealt with it in his speech. The Government has stated clearly that it does not favour the site to the rear of or alongside Government House, and I reiterate that today.

Mr. Hudson: Is there any truth in the rumour that it will be behind the railway?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The Government does not favour the Government House site. When in London, I took the opportunity (brief though it was, unfortunately) of looking at a series of halls in London, and one thing that impressed me was the waterfront view from the main festival hall. I came back to South Australia intending, if possible, to promote the idea of a waterfront site. I believe there is such a site.

Mr. Hudson: Behind the railway station?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: This is the site now occupied by the Railways Institute and the immigration hostel. This is not a novel idea; I think the Town Planner (as he then was) proposed it. I am sure that many people in the past have considered it but it has not of recent weeks or months been seriously put forward as a proposal. Upon investigation,

it seems to me to provide an excellent site for a festival hall, both as regards area and as regards the selection of a site with a waterfront view, if it can be so designed, from the interior or foyer of the hall.

I have had some investigations made about this site. First, it is not costly. At present it contains the Railways Institute, which I think by modern standards is not a valuable building, and the immigration hostel, which is not up to the standard it should be. It would not cost this Government very much money, but it presents two difficulties. One is that a sewer traverses this area. That could be resited at a cost of about \$50,000. The other is that, in the plan submitted in the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study Report, there is under this site a proposed underground railway. This could be resited under what is now the Government Printing Office and I believe that, such is the future for that area, by the time the railway is built it can be so situated that it will not in any way encroach on this site.

Mr. Hudson: When do you think that will be?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The building of the railway will have no influence on the choice of site for the festival hall. There may be some foundation problems and it may be necessary to use piles to build on this area. I have discussed this privately with some people and have yet to find anyone opposed to this site. We can expect that at some time the City Baths and the Government Printing Office will be demolished, which will leave for development in that area a desirable open space. As I have said, I have examined this in some detail, which we do not have time to discuss this evening. The attractions of this site are, therefore, a waterfront view, easy access to transport, park land surroundings and plenty of space for car parking. I believe it presents the best site available to serve all purposes in Adelaide.

Whilst I do not say that the Hindmarsh Square site is undesirable (it is possible that the one under discussion today is quite good) this site that I have been dealing with has so many added advantages that it will be immediately attractive to all involved in building a festival hall. Soon, I will announce a small committee that will investigate the suitability of this site and report quickly to the Government—I hope within one month. On this committee there will be a proper representation of all interests concerned. I reiterate that I

believe there is no substitute for a site with a waterfront view for a festival hall. This view was confirmed by my observations in London, and I expect this committee, when appointed, to investigate the matter at the earliest opportunity. Consequently, I oppose the motion.

Mr. HUDSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

*[Sitting suspended from 5.59 to 7.30 p.m.]*

#### NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

#### LOAN ESTIMATES

In Committee.

(Continued from August 20. Page 735.)

Grand total, \$91,640,000.

Mr. HUDSON (Glenelg): The way in which the debate on the Loan Estimates last evening is reported in the *Advertiser* this morning is a matter of considerable concern, particularly as the Leader of the Opposition, in his speech, gave great prominence to some serious and damaging criticisms of the Government's policies regarding the building industry. One would have thought that, first, the same prominence would have been given to the Leader's remarks as was given to the original Loan Estimates, which were reported on page 3 of the *Advertiser* of August 9. However, this was not the case and, indeed, there was no mention at all of the criticism that the Leader of the Opposition made regarding the Government's housing policy.

Let me repeat these criticisms. First, as housing approvals for the June quarter of this year were 119 fewer than for the June quarter of 1967 and, therefore, were at their lowest level for some time, house and flat construction is obviously in great need of stimulus. In these circumstances and particularly because the Government increased the maximum limit for a loan from \$7,000 to \$8,000, one would have expected an increased allocation of Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money for housing purposes because, with the increase in the limit of any loan, even the same allocation as before would lead to a reduction in the number of loans granted and, therefore, a reduction in the number of houses and flats built as a result of Government policy.

The Government, in its Loan Estimates, has not even maintained the previous year's allocation of Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money at \$21,000,000. The allocation has been reduced to \$19,500,000, and that reduction is completely and utterly unjustified. Before we went out of office, I objected, as Minister of Housing, to any such reduction and my objections were approved by Cabinet. It was determined at that time that the amount of Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money going to housing would not be reduced. That was before an increase in the maximum limit of a loan was considered.

The second point of criticism is that, even though there has been an overall reduction in the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement allocation, the amount available for building societies has been increased, with the result that the allocation to the Housing Trust and to the State Bank totals \$1,800,000 in all so that a \$300,000 increase in the amount available to building societies can be made. The third criticism relates again to the building societies and the intended action of the Government to make deposits with building societies authorized investments under the Trustee Act. This, we consider, will lead to a substantial switching of deposits from the Savings Bank of South Australia to these building societies. As the Savings Bank in the last year has had only a small increase in deposits, there will be a drastic effect on the amount of mortgage lending that the Savings Bank can undertake. Therefore the consequences of the Government's policy regarding the building societies are a reduced activity through the Housing Trust, the virtual halving of the rental-purchase programme of the trust, reduced lending through the State Bank for new houses (and, therefore, fewer houses built with State Bank finance), and reduced mortgage lending by the Savings Bank of South Australia.

The only offset to this is what may take place through the building societies and, as I pointed out last evening, those societies are not geared to produce a very large increase in lending to offset the reduction in activity in the Housing Trust and the reduction in lending by the State Bank and the Savings Bank. The building societies are not in a position administratively to gear up their activities sufficiently rapidly to go anywhere near offsetting the disastrous consequences of this Government's policy.

These are the criticisms that the Opposition has made. They are valid criticisms and are supported in full by statements by the Government and the Treasurer, yet not even one word of these criticisms was published in today's *Advertiser*: not only that, but the *Advertiser*, in particular, has been following a deliberate policy of giving people the impression that this Government has great plans to boost the housing industry, and this report of the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech opening Parliament appears on page 1 of that newspaper of June 26:

Government plan to boost housing: Government plans for a greater injection of money into house building were announced by the Lieutenant-Governor (Sir Mellis Napier) in his Speech opening Parliament yesterday.

This Government's plans are not for a greater injection of money into house building, but for a reduction in the amount. Even in the report of the Treasurer's statement on the Loan Estimates, even though that statement, at least, is honest to the extent of pointing out that the \$19,500,000 for housing this year represents a reduction on the amount last year by \$1,500,000, no mention is made of the reduction. In the *Advertiser* of August 9, on page 3, the report is as follows:

The \$19,500,000 of new funds nominated for housing was described as "much greater in relation to population than in other States".

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: It always has been.

Mr. HUDSON: Yes, it always has been much greater than it is this year, and the other States do not at present need to give the boost to house and flat building that is needed in this State. As a result of what appears to me and to other members on this side to be a deliberate attempt to hide the facts from the South Australian public, not only by falsifying what the Government's plans are in relation to housing but also by suppressing legitimate criticisms by the Opposition, I have today written to the Editor of the *Advertiser* a letter which I challenge him to print. He may not do so, so I shall now read it in full so that at least it will be on the record somewhere. It is as follows:

Sir,

Your reports of the debates of Parliament and of the Loan Estimates presented to the House of Assembly on August 8 have avoided any mention of the disastrous housing policies of the Liberal and Country League Government. In fact, your accounts have attempted to paint a false picture. On June 26 your paper carried a headline on page 1: "Government plan to boost housing", and on August 9 on page 3 your report of the Treasurer's

statement to Parliament stated "The \$19,500,000 of new funds nominated for housing was described as 'much greater in relation to population than in other States.'" The true facts of the situation are the reverse of the impression that is being created. The allocation of Commonwealth-State housing agreements money has been reduced from \$21,000,000 in 1967-68 to \$19,500,000 for 1968-69. The State Bank's share has been cut by \$1,150,000, the Housing Trust by \$650,000 and an additional \$300,000 has been provided for building societies. At the same time, the limit for any loan has, quite rightly, been raised from \$7,000 to \$8,000, but this increased limit, together with the reduction in housing money, will mean a still greater reduction in the number of loans. The raising of the limit should have been accompanied by greater money for housing, in order to prevent any reduction in the number of loans.

In addition, the L.C.L. Government intends to make deposits with building societies an authorized investment under the Trustee Act. This is likely to produce a substantial switch of deposits away from the Savings Bank of South Australia. In circumstances where the Savings Bank has smaller than usual liquid funds available for mortgage lending, any switch of deposits from the bank must cause a very serious reduction in its mortgage lending. On the other hand, the building societies are not geared to take up the substantial slack that is being forced on the Housing Trust, the State Bank, and the Savings Bank. The result must be a jolt to the building of flats and houses in a situation where there is no sign of any improvement in approvals for new houses and flats. In fact, the latest figures for the June quarter show a drop of 119 in house and flat approvals, compared with the June quarter for 1967.

The Liberal and Country League claimed during the election campaign that it would get South Australia moving again. Yet it has now adopted policies towards the building industry that can only be described as disastrous. Its policies have not been explained and justified by either the Premier or the Treasurer, and your paper has even attempted to hush up the facts. It is time that your readers were given the truth.

Yours faithfully,

I regard the matter so seriously that I have written this letter. You can imagine, Mr. Chairman, what would have happened during the three-year term of the Labor Government if it had announced the kind of policies followed by the current Government! They would have been splashed all over page 1 of the *Advertiser*. The criticisms made by the then Leader of the Opposition during the previous Parliament in the course of important debates were always given the greatest prominence and reported in full.

Mr. Corcoran: And an editorial, to boot!

Mr. HUDSON: Yes, but not so this time. I think this is an absolute disgrace to democracy in South Australia. I think it is a dis-

grace to newspaper standards throughout Australia that we have South Australia's leading paper behaving in this way. The *Advertiser* should have a greater sense of responsibility. Perhaps it thinks it should give moral support to the Liberal and Country League because so few people vote for it. Perhaps it believes it should try to boost the position of the L.C.L. because of its very low public support, but it is about time the *Advertiser* faced up to its basic responsibility arising from its monopoly position as the one morning paper and accurately reported the major debates that take place in this Parliament. It is about time it gave prominence to the criticisms made by the current Opposition instead of playing down those criticisms simply because the current Opposition is the Labor Party, not the L.C.L.

I hope that tomorrow morning we will see some correction in relation to this matter, because after all the phoney talk and publicity we have heard it is very disturbing to discover that the true situation is that the present Government is giving no encouragement at all to the building industry. It is even more disturbing to find that, on page 4 of today's *News*, in response to the Opposition's criticisms of last night, which got no publicity anyway, the Premier, having consulted with the General Manager of the Housing Trust at 9 a.m., makes the following announcement—

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: It was on page 1 in the first edition.

Mr. HUDSON: Well, Mr. Hall went from page 1 to page 4. Certain remarks of Mr. Dunstan were removed entirely from the paper because of the crisis in Czechoslovakia, but Mr. Hall is a protected bird and, in an article headed "375 houses in \$3,000,000 South Australian plan", we are told:

A \$3,000,000 home building programme by the South Australian Housing Trust north and south of Adelaide was announced today by the Premier, Mr. Hall.

This programme, however, was being planned while the Labor Government was still in office and it is part of the normal programme of the trust, which this year has less support from the present Government than it had last year from the Labor Government.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: In fact, these are all rental-purchase houses, although the Government has cut the rental-purchase programme in half.

Mr. HUDSON: Yes. It says this, but I suspect that many of these houses will turn out to be rental houses. It remains



to be seen whether they are all rental-purchase houses. If they are all rental-purchase houses, I shall be interested to know how long it will take to build them. I doubt whether the Premier or the Minister of Housing knows how long this programme will take.

Mr. Corcoran: It's a wonder the Minister of Housing didn't make the announcement.

Mr. HUDSON: Yes; at least he should tell us now how long it will take private builders operating for the trust to build these 375 houses. Will it be a year, 18 months or two years? He does not know! He probably has not inquired, and I am certain the Premier would not know—and would not remember even if he had been told! The \$3,000,000 announcement today is part of the overall trust programme, which last year, at the time of the Loan Estimates, was hoped to be \$27,000,000. It turned out to be a little less than \$25,000,000, largely because of a slower turnover of Housing Trust purchase houses. The total programme for this year is only a little over \$24,000,000. For the newspapers of this State to ignore major and serious criticisms made by the Opposition in Parliament and, in effect, for both of them to give the picture to the people of South Australia that "everything is hunky-dory, all's right with the world, the Government's in office, good old L.C.L., they are making nice little announcements and we can all be happy," may be a satisfactory process until disaster strikes. Members on this side should be supported in their complaint by Government members, because I believe that members opposite should believe also in a full and frank public discussion of major issues, and that kind of discussion cannot be held unless newspapers play the game and report what is going on. I know that the member for Stirling will claim that he believes in full and frank public discussion, and I hope that, later in this debate, he will add his voice to mine in requesting the newspapers of this State to play fair and give the Opposition a fair go on matters raised in Parliament.

Mr. McAnaney: When you were in Government you had more publicity than we have had. It's the normal thing.

Mr. HUDSON: If the member for Stirling claims that statements by the then Leader of the Opposition or by other important L.C.L. speakers did not get full prominence in the *Advertiser* during the last three years, then he is completely and utterly blind. He knows there has been a substantial change. For

example, a \$1,000,000 industrial expansion announced the other day was reported on page 1, whereas a \$1,000,000 expansion announced by the previous Premier went on to a page further over.

Mr. McAnaney: That was on one occasion only.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: It was at the bottom of page 23 and got exactly three inches.

Mr. HUDSON: That is the kind of prominence that was and is now being given, and the member for Stirling knows it.

Mr. McAnaney: I do not.

Mr. HUDSON: I pity the member for Stirling, because he seems to have no notion of what is fair-mindedness or what is fair prominence for both sides. In the present Loan Estimates there are, first, provisions for carrying over the accumulated surplus of \$5,658,000; further, a \$400,000 additional surplus planned for this year; two short-term loans to the Natural Gas Pipelines Authority, \$1,000,000 last year and \$1,000,000 this year, both of which are to be repaid. On those three accounts alone \$8,058,000 of effective surplus is provided in these Estimates against revenue deficits.

Mr. Corcoran: You don't seriously believe they will spend \$500,000 on a festival hall?

Mr. HUDSON: The Premier announced today that the Government was forgetting about Carclew and that the new site was to be behind the railway station. The Premier said he would refer this plan to a committee with instructions to report within 30 days. Everyone knows how long these projects take to plan, so, as no architectural planning has taken place for the new site, nothing other than architect's fees can be paid this year. Therefore, allocating \$500,000 in the Loan Estimates for the festival hall is designed to provide a further surplus against revenue deficits. In addition, I emphasize that last year in the Loan Estimates the former Treasurer turned out to have a little bit of cushion. He estimated that Commonwealth assistance for school and teachers college buildings would be \$1,700,000, whereas it turned out to be \$2,400,000. In March of this year the Under Treasurer estimated that Commonwealth assistance for 1968-69 would be \$2,600,000, but in the Loan Estimates it appears as only \$1,700,000. In reply to a recent question I was told that the change in the estimate was due to a smaller provision for Salisbury Teachers College but, having a suspicious mind, I suspect that the Treasurer has taken more precautions,

and has at least another \$500,000 up his sleeve, because during the coming 12 months he will obtain more assistance from the Commonwealth than he has estimated.

If we add all those items we find the effective surplus in the Loan Estimates is slightly over \$9,000,000 against future and current revenue deficits. This indicates the Government's financial policy. From these Estimates alone it is absolutely clear that the Treasurer will budget for a deficit in the Budget he will introduce prior to the show week adjournment. This Government is not facing its financial responsibilities. After all the outrageous talk that went on, when the L.C.L. was in Opposition, about mismanagement, using up trust funds, improper allocation of items on Loan Account: after all this talk, the Government is to budget for a deficit. It has maintained and expanded transfers from Revenue to Loan Account, and the Treasurer is still trying to adopt a holier-than-thou attitude.

Mr. Lawn: Perhaps Government members wish they had you over there as Treasurer.

Mr. HUDSON: I do not think so. I think they would prefer to be irresponsible in these matters. They were irresponsible during the election campaign. Their Leader told the people of South Australia, "Here I am, fellas. I am going to spend more; I am going to tax less; I am going to take off the winning bets tax; and I am going to balance the Budget." I do not know by what sleight of hand he was going to do that—

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: He didn't, either.

Mr. HUDSON: —and the Treasurer has not found out from him since. I suggest that at this stage the Treasurer might ask the Premier, "Now look here. Before the election you were saying that we could spend more and tax less and still balance the Budget. Have you anything up your sleeve?" Perhaps the Treasurer could demand from the Premier that he make economies in the Premier's Department. After all, if one gets such a good run from the *Advertiser* one does not need publicity officers, and the Premier could save about \$6,000 a year by relying on newspapers to do the job for him. We are told by the Treasurer that he hopes in the long run to get things back into balance again (he is obviously not planning to do it this year). I point out to him (through you, Mr. Chairman, of course) that each year the expenditure commitments will need to rise by a minimum of \$15,000,000 or \$16,000,000 to maintain the

basic services of the State and to provide some measure of annual improvement, and it is simply not possible unless—

Mr. McAnaney: You ought to keep off that subject after the mess you made three years ago in your forecast.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is too much conversation.

Mr. HUDSON: I would not have said it was conversation: I would have described it as idiocy, but I am glad that you, Mr. Chairman, are gentlemanly in your conduct of affairs in this Committee. However, I suggest that if it happens again you might try using remarks that are a little stronger in character. I believe the Government must face up to the basic responsibility that it has to maintain and improve the standard of service in every field of endeavour in which it is involved (including schools, hospitals, roads, water supply, sewerage, agricultural developments, irrigation, and so on). It does not matter with which one of these fields we are concerned today: the attitude of the public is not the attitude of the public of 30, 40 or 50 years ago. These days the public demands from Governments an adequate standard of service, and we cannot provide that service by scrimping or scraping on expenditure provisions, for instance, by cutting down on the expenditure of the Minister of Social Welfare concerning the number of maintenance officers or putting the Minister in the position where staff replacements are so delayed for months to come that his department will have underspent. Each time this is done, the standard of service given to the public is lowered.

The people with whom the Social Welfare Department has to deal have just as much right to expect a decent standard of service and the elimination of undue delays as has any other group of people in the community. In view of this, the Government must face its responsibilities of raising the additional \$15,000,000 or \$16,000,000 (preferably \$18,000,000) each year to meet its revenue commitments alone (and I am not referring to Loan Account here). The Government must face up to the fact that the increase in Commonwealth income tax reimbursements will be only about \$7,000,000 or \$8,000,000 a year and that the additional \$8,000,000 to \$10,000,000 must be found out of the resources of this State. These Loan Estimates clearly indicate that this Government is not facing up to its responsibilities.

Mr. McAnaney: You are talking about raising taxation, whereas your colleagues were asking us to lower water rates.

Mr. HUDSON: I think our colleagues today were pointing out the phoney nature of the Liberal and Country League in Opposition in relation to what it said ought to be done for country people and to what it said about charges in the policy speech and during the election campaign. Our colleagues were pointing out the inconsistency between what happened when Liberal members were in Opposition, together with what was said during the election campaign, and what they have done in Government.

Mr. McAnaney: You're going against what your colleagues said today. You say more money should be raised, yet they say to cut down.

Mr. HUDSON: They did not say that at all. They were saying that the market gardeners in the district of the member for Murray (Mr. Wardle) must be looked after, because "Ivan the Terrible" is not in a position to criticize on this count.

*Members interjecting:*

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That matter is not relevant to this debate, in any case.

Mr. HUDSON: I do not know about that Mr. Chairman: the provisions under "Engineering and Water Supply" imply the need to obtain extra revenue so that the interest commitments that arise from these Estimates can be met. With respect, Sir, I will have to argue that for once the honourable member for Stirling is completely in order.

The CHAIRMAN: Well, his interjection is out of order.

Mr. HUDSON: I agree with that. Concerning its financial measures, this Government has been saddled with the phoney statements it made during the election campaign.

Mr. McAnaney: Plus your big deficit!

Mr. HUDSON: The overall deficit on Loan and revenue at the end of June was \$2,700,000.

Mr. Rodda: Plus the \$5,000,000!

Mr. HUDSON: The actual deficit was \$2,700,000.

Mr. Corcoran: How do you think their finances will look after they start implementing the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study Report?

Mr. HUDSON: Connecting my remarks now with the provisions for the Morphett Street bridge, I believe the handling of the M.A.T.S. Report is an absolute scandal. In my

view, the report should not have been released at this stage. With the way in which this Government is handling its finances, it is a complete joke to suggest that it can finance anything similar to what is envisaged by the M.A.T.S. Report. Concerning what this Government is doing by not spending the money available to it on Loan, it is obviously giving notice that it will have a revenue deficit for this year on its Budget; otherwise, we would not have seen the provision for the large surplus to which I have referred, and we would not have seen other items that will be repaid in a short time, or an item such as the allocation for the festival hall that will not be spent.

Therefore, when he introduces his Budget, the Treasurer will not have faced up to his financial responsibilities as Treasurer of this State, not entirely because of his own fault but because he has been saddled with the phoney electioneering of the Premier and, to some extent, he has to live up to that. I suspect also that a consequence of this will be a complete cheese-paring of activities within departments; indeed, I suspect that is taking place at present and that the Directors of departments are being told that they must cut their estimates of expenditure and that officers they have not replaced must not be replaced.

Mr. Rodda: Do you know this from experience?

Mr. HUDSON: There were half a dozen positions unfilled in the Social Welfare Department, and action was being taken to fill them. However, I understand that this Government has, in effect, given instructions that those positions are not to be filled, and I believe that this sort of cheese-paring will lead only to a reduction in the standard of service given to the public. This sort of thing does not save money: it reduces the standard of service being provided to the community as a whole. I suppose that members of the Government may say that it does not matter much about the people with whom the Social Welfare Department deals. If a few deserted wives are a little late in getting their maintenance payments because there are not enough maintenance or enforcement officers, that does not matter: in 10 years' time there will be no difference! This is an indication of the kind of attitude the Government has.

But what if the cheese-paring goes on in basic things such as education and hospitals? I hope my predictions on this are wrong and that we do not see the Treasurer fund his

revenue deficit and incur the penalties of the financial agreement. I hope we see the Treasurer go out of office after three years as a man of political courage, so that President John Kennedy could have written another chapter to his book *Profiles in Courage* and could have said, "Well, here is a man who, despite the false statements the Premier made during the election campaign, knows what his responsibilities are to the State and has taken the necessary action to secure revenue for the State that is necessary to maintain and expand all the basic activities with which the State is involved." If the Treasurer will do that, he will go down in the record books of South Australia as a Treasurer of the first rank; if he does not do that, he will go out of office with little to be said for him.

Mr. RODDA (Victoria): The Treasurer is all that the member for Glenelg has said he is. It is rather sad to hear the member for Glenelg bemoaning the fact that his Party has not got much publicity and has missed out on what in his opinion was worthwhile copy. I do not think it will do the honourable member much good howling like a dingo on the range. His words of wisdom were uttered about a worthwhile document which will get South Australia moving but which is not in line with the philosophies espoused by members opposite.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: How will it do that?

Mr. RODDA: I know the member for Whyalla is lacking in patience, but if he will be patient he will hear my colleague, who is a financial genius and who is waiting to hear other members speak, tell members how South Australia will be got moving. Last evening the Leader began by saying how shabby was the politicking of the Liberal and Country League in its public statements, the pamphlets it had issued and the attacks it had made on the Labor Government. The Leader proceeded to attack the Treasurer on the Loan proposals and said that by doing this and that—

Mr. Hughes: What do you mean by "this and that"? Be more specific.

Mr. RODDA: Your Leader was quite specific.

Mr. Hughes: That is more than you are.

Mr. RODDA: Last night, the Leader said that we should inflate the 1967-68 figures by \$4,208,413.

Mr. Hudson: That was the amount of under-spending last year.

Mr. RODDA: That was the amount of under-spending on schools and hospitals.

Mr. Hudson: That's right.

Mr. RODDA: The Leader said that if the 1968-69 figures were reduced by the same amount the figures would be brought into their proper context.

Mr. Hudson: That's right.

Mr. RODDA: Then he said we should subtract the amount provided in both years for the Natural Gas Pipeline Authority, and a \$1,500,000 reduction in the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money.

Mr. Hudson: You would agree with that, wouldn't you?

Mr. RODDA: I am agreeing with nothing. He said that we should reduce the 1968-69 document figures by this amount, and that we may as well write off the \$500,000 set aside for the festival hall.

Mr. Hudson: Wouldn't you agree with that?

Mr. RODDA: Honourable members had the answer to that this afternoon.

Mr. Hudson: What odds will you give that even \$100,000 is not spent by the end of June?

Mr. RODDA: Wagering is out of order in this Chamber.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Victoria.

Mr. RODDA: The Leader went on to say that things were going so badly and that his summing up of the appropriation before us showed an effective increase of only about 1 per cent. The member for Glenelg has taken the *Advertiser* to task for not putting this matter on its front page. Where the rub came was when the member for Light (Mr. Freebairn), who is never a savoury article to members opposite when he speaks, followed the Leader. He was followed by the member for Glenelg, who has shaped up as a future leader of the Party opposite. He was making all sorts of prophecies, too. He even went as far as to say that the Treasurer should apologize. The Treasurer has brought to this House a commendable document, which is forward looking and which places an emphasis on development. The Treasurer has given priorities, despite what honourable members opposite have said, and if they give it time they will see that the pattern set down by the Treasurer will get South Australia moving again. I think the Opposition loses sight of the fact that the Treasurer has had a long

experience in this House and has been successful in his own sphere. I have known the Treasurer for many years, and he is a credit to his district and the profession he follows. Cabinet has considered priorities, and if the member for Glenelg studies these he will find that emphasis has been placed on development.

Mr. Hudson: Where?

Mr. RODDA: The honourable member can read, the same as I can.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: We analyse, but the Government does not.

*Members interjecting:*

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. RODDA: I am not greatly concerned about interjections coming from members opposite. The document brought down by the Treasurer emphasizes development.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: Where?

Mr. RODDA: Members opposite want to tear down this document, but members on this side make a constructive analysis of the lines. I deplore the attitude taken by members opposite. They are complaining that the Treasurer has used surpluses to do the very things they did.

Mr. Broomhill: Then why do you try to destroy the case we built up?

Mr. RODDA: If it was not wrong for them to do it, why is it wrong for the honourable gentleman to do it?

*Members interjecting:*

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. RODDA: If the horse bolts, when you catch him you cannot get him straight back on to the truck again. That is the position the Treasurer is in. This is a commendable document; much thought has been put into it. Priorities have been considered, and I have much pleasure in supporting these Estimates.

Mr. CORCORAN (Millicent): After that powerful contribution by the member for Victoria, I feel ill-equipped to speak in the debate.

Mr. Rodda: I am sure you don't. You want to get into the headlines.

Mr. CORCORAN: If I wanted to get into the headlines I would achieve something that the Leader of the Opposition did not achieve by making an excellent speech on this matter. I support the statement of the member for Glenelg (Mr. Hudson) about the attitude of the *Advertiser* to the Leader's speech. The *Advertiser* has a responsibility to the people

of this State. After all, 53 per cent of those people eligible to vote voted for the Labor Party, so that newspaper, as an official record in this State, has a responsibility to present something of what Her Majesty's Opposition has to say about a matter as important as the Loan Estimates. The Leader of the Opposition had something to say that should be taken note of, and all members of this Committee would agree that he attacked the Loan Estimates, first on the score that they did not set out to create the sort of development needed to get the State going and, secondly, because of the statements made at the last election and at the Millicent by-election about the very matters now before us. He pointed out that these statements were not true or fair compared with what had been done in these Estimates. Those were the two features of the Leader's speech in this debate. I think that applies not only to the *Advertiser* but also to the *News*, although I believe that something happened there.

Mr. Rodda: You are not suggesting that no thought has been given to priority in this programme?

Mr. CORCORAN: I have not got to that yet. The leading newspaper in this State, an official record, had nothing to say about it. I express my disappointment and disgust about that and hope that the radio and television stations tonight will give some coverage to what the Leader of the Opposition had to say about this.

The member for Victoria said that the Treasurer was an experienced and honourable man, and I do not argue with that. We are not attacking the Treasurer personally, and I think the Treasurer himself knows this full well. He realizes that the Leader of the Opposition did not attack him for his personal qualities: no-one in this Chamber would do that. I, for one, would be happy to stand up and defend him if that happened. What we are attacking him for, and rightly so, is this document for which he, as Treasurer, is responsible. The member for Victoria said there were other members on this side of the Chamber waiting to speak, waiting to "tear down" (I believe was the expression) this document. It is the duty of Her Majesty's Opposition to analyse carefully any matter coming before Parliament and to put the Opposition's point of view, if there is one. I am sure from what has already been said in this debate, not only by the Leader of the Opposition but also by the member for Glenelg,

who is well-equipped to speak on these matters, that there is an opposite point of view, that there is an alternative method of tackling this matter.

Mr. Broomhill: And a better one, too.

Mr. CORCORAN: And a better one, in our view. Enough has already been said, by both the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Glenelg, about the general terms of these Loan Estimates. I will confine my remarks to more specific matters concerning my district and me but, before I commence those remarks, I say it was astounding to me, as it was to every other member of the Opposition and as it must have been to many people in this State, to hear the remarks not only of the present Treasurer but also of the present Premier and other leading members of the Government about our attitude to the Loan Estimates, about how we were transferring items from Revenue Account to Loan Account, and to hear the trenchant criticisms levelled at us at that time. I think any fair-minded person would expect there to be a transitional period, if the financial policy of the present Government was different from that of the previous Government, wherein the present Government would gradually get things back to where it thought they rightfully belonged; but we did not see any effort on the part of this Government to get one item back to Revenue Account. Indeed, we saw the transfer of additional items from Revenue Account to Loan Account. This is the point I emphasize and on which I attack the Government.

In addition to the items that we had previously transferred, we see in this document that the purchase of national parks has been transferred. I knew this would happen, because I was Minister of Lands at the time the preliminary Loan Estimates were drawn up. I would have no argument with the decision of the Government on this but for its previous statement, because I believe that this is an asset that concerns the future. I will not argue that there is no need for additional areas to be purchased and set aside as national parks. Indeed, I would give more attention to it than possibly has been given. When it was pointed out by the Under Treasurer that there would be difficulty in maintaining the current or past rate of expenditure on this item and that it should be transferred to Loan Account, I was anxious to see this done not only to maintain the current rate of land purchase, and if possible to expand it, but also because I believed that its rightful place was on the Loan

Estimates. That is because it can be paid for over a long term and it will benefit future generations. There is no argument about that action, except for the attitude of the members of the present Government before they were in office. The same applies to land purchased for public parks, again a very desirable matter and one to which the previous Government gave much attention. It increased substantially the amounts made available for this, and this was done from the Revenue Budget. That has been transferred by this Government to the Loan Account, despite the attitude of the present Government when we commenced transferring certain things from the Revenue Budget to the Loan Account.

I want to say something now about the decision of this Government in relation to a direction issued by the previous Government to the Housing Trust to specify in contracts the use of radiata pine from the Woods and Forests Department. I was seriously disturbed by the admission by the Minister of Housing, because I know from experience that there are large stockpiles of radiata pine in Government mills. The Minister said, in reply to the member for Glenelg, that this had happened in the past and that he expected it would happen in the future.

We have a serious problem of overstocking in this department and it seems ludicrous that, when we have a Government department that provides money to the Government for capital expenditure on such items as schools and hospitals, we do not do everything in our power to see that the Government utilities or the semi-government utilities fully utilize this product. Use of the production of that department would help maintain and possibly increase the rate of production, so increasing employment in this State industry. In turn, that could increase the profits of the industry to the benefit of the Government and the State.

I consider that the action taken by the Government in this matter is not taken wisely, despite that the Minister said that he considered that everybody that competed with the Woods and Forests Department should have equal opportunity, if not a little better opportunity, to supply this product, so placing our own utility at a distinct disadvantage. The profit made by the Woods and Forests Department in the past has resulted in about \$2,000,000 a year being contributed to general revenue. As a result of the slump in 1967-68, the lack of demand for this product led to that profit being completely eliminated, and no money was paid to Government revenue in

that slack period. The very action taken by the Minister of Housing regarding the Housing Trust can only lead one to believe that this amount will disappear permanently and that there could be a reduction in the number of people employed in Nangwarry, Mount Burr and Mount Gambier. This should give much concern to the member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Burdon), the member for Victoria (Mr. Rodda), and me, the three members representing that area. However, the member for Victoria did not say anything about this action, and I think I am right in saying that more pine is planted in his district than in any other district in the State.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: You don't think it would mean the disappearance of the public utility in favour of private enterprise, do you?

Mr. CORCORAN: No-one could be blamed for thinking this could happen.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: It happened in Western Australia.

Mr. CORCORAN: The Minister virtually said, in reply to the member for Glenelg, that the Government intended to allow private bodies to deal in this commodity at the expense of a Government authority which operates just as efficiently and effectively as does private enterprise and which even shows the way to private enterprise. A charge of inefficiency cannot be levelled at this department, nor can it be said that it is being propped up because it is inefficient. The department has been giving a lead to industry for many years. In these Estimates, for afforestation and timber milling the amount set aside for this financial year is \$2,250,000, but actual payments on forestry undertakings in 1967-68 were \$2,545,000. The amount spent last year on the purchase of land was \$685,000.

Mr. Hudson: It's down this year, though.

Mr. CORCORAN: Yes, it is down to \$415,000. Two very large industries that rely for their future on radiata pine are based in the South-East and I hope that soon we shall see further expansion, if not in both industries certainly in one, that will lead to greater use of this product. I refer to Apcel Limited and Cellulose Australia Limited, one of which makes cardboard and the other the famous Dawn toilet paper. I speak of these industries because, when I see a reduction in the areas to be acquired, I see a slowing down of a programme that was needed. We had to expand the areas involved in plantings at the rate of about 6,000 to 7,000 acres a year.

I think the total area of pine forests in the South-East is now about 175,000 acres. That area must be expanded, because honourable members will recall that some years ago the then Premier (Sir Thomas Playford) made moves to establish a pulp mill in Mount Gambier and honourable members know now, if they were not aware then, that the only reason why this mill was not established was that there was not sufficient radiata pine in the area to supply that mill and the two additional industries. Had that mill been established, not only would it have been under-supplied but the two existing industries would not have been able to expand. We in the South-East still want this mill established, and this can be done only if there is a rapid expansion of planting in this area. I am disappointed at the reduction of about \$270,000 in the amount set aside for the purchase of land in the South-East. I think this indicates the present Government's attitude to this industry. This, coupled with the statement that the Housing Trust will no longer be required to specify radiata pine from the Woods and Forests Department, certainly does not encourage me to think otherwise.

I notice that in this year's Loan Estimates fishing havens and foreshore improvements are grouped together for the first time. The magnificent sum of \$210,000 is set aside for these purposes, and we read that actual payments from the Loan Account in 1967-68 amounted to only \$92,000. This, of course, would create a very good impression in the mind of anyone who did not read between the lines and analyse this item. Not only has this Government transferred further items from Revenue Account to Loan Account but also it has raided an entirely new source. The Treasurer has now decided that money for fishing havens will come from the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act grant. He has told us that this will be possible under the agreement between the Commonwealth Government and the State Government and that it will be a repayment of part of the petrol tax collected. Under the agreement it will be possible to channel \$225,000 of the amount repaid to aspects of transport other than roads.

We all know that in the past the whole of this amount has been used for road construction throughout the State. The Government, however, did not choose to transfer the whole of the \$225,000; instead, it arrived at the figure of \$93,000. This is an increase of \$1,000 on the actual expenditure last year.

All the works outlined naturally, were virtually commenced or planned during the life of the previous Government, because the present Government has not had sufficient time to plan in its own right. The news has already been circulated in my electoral district that the Government has devoted the magnificent sum of \$210,000 to fishing havens. Someone dropped the foreshore improvements off the end! Of this amount, \$117,000 is to be devoted to the Glenelg jetty. I do not want to say anything about this jetty because I know the member for Glenelg (Mr. Hudson) is very anxious to see it completed.

However, not one cent of Loan money has been devoted to fishing havens, because the \$93,000 that has been set aside will come from the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act grant. The sum of \$117,000 for foreshore improvements has come from Loan Account, but the Glenelg jetty will not be built every year, so this provision will not be repeated. I note also the sale for \$18,000 of the *Investigator*, which was used to do some research in regard to the fishing industry. I wonder where the proceeds of this sale went.

Mr. Broomhill: What did members of the present Government say last year?

Mr. CORCORAN: The Labor Government was harshly criticized because this magnificent vessel had been lying idle! I do not criticize its sale, because it was not serving any real purpose. I want to take members' minds back to the period immediately prior to the Millicent by-election, when there was great activity in the South-East. We had the Premier glad-handing every fisherman from Kingston to Port MacDonnell. In fact, he went off on a side turning and we could not find him. We even had his friend, the Minister of Agriculture (Hon. C. R. Story), travelling down with him. They came like thieves in the night: no-one knew the Premier was there, except the fishermen. Beer parties were arranged—real good shows! The Minister of Works followed closely and they told these fishermen exactly what they would do.

Mr. Broomhill: It sounded good, too.

Mr. CORCORAN: Yes, but it did not fool the fishermen. The Premier thought he had it all sown up.

The Hon. J. W. H. Coumbe: What we said was true.

Mr. CORCORAN: The Minister has not been listening. I have said that not one cent of Loan money has been devoted to fishing

havens. It is interesting to see that fishing havens and foreshore improvements are grouped together. When the Premier and his friends went to the South-East they said, "We will fix things." Three loads of equipment were to arrive in three spots three days before the by-election. I think one of them got there; I am not sure whether the others did, but at any rate the Minister of Works has given me a detailed programme for the commencement of these works and I will be doing my best to see that it is adhered to.

The Hon. J. W. H. Coumbe: It will be to target.

Mr. CORCORAN: There is a difference between the times given in this programme and the times announced prior to the by-election. It was stated then that the works were to be carried out immediately—as a matter of urgency. We see now, however, that the Port MacDonnell project will not be commenced until December, 1968, or March, 1969. I do not think the attention they gave to these ports should wane. I think we should expect to see the Minister and the Premier personally supervising these works. I think I could pick a good time for them to come to the South-East and a good spot for them to visit. It is a funny thing, but the member for Albert (Mr. Nankivell) believes that, although he and his friends can do what they like, I am never supposed to do anything in return. I am not being uncharitable: I am simply making statements of fact. These things were said and I do not think there is anything wrong in drawing the attention of the Premier and members of the Government to them. This all proves that people are not silly: they were not fooled by the way in which they were treated prior to the Millicent by-election. The Minister of Works, the Minister of Agriculture, and the Premier gave me personal attention on this matter, and the people in the fishing ports were so grateful that they thought I was the best man to see that the work was done. I am grateful to the Minister of Works for informing me of the detailed works programme, and I shall be watchful of it.

Mr. Rodda: Is it right that 37 sheep belonging to Martin Cameron were covered with your posters?

Mr. CORCORAN: I had the most efficient campaigners at the by-election and, unbeknown to me, they placed a few posters on my opponent's sheep, and they were effective. Not even one cent of Loan funds has been spent on fishing havens, the \$93,000 being made



available from a new source. This action has been taken by a Government that has continually said that more money is needed for roads. This Government has used Commonwealth Aid Roads Act grants to repair fishing havens. It probably has used the argument that \$1,000,000 more is available this year so that taking \$93,000 will not hurt anyone, but the precedent has been established and the Government will have to answer to country people who will not get the roads they require. When Government members ask questions about roads in their districts they should remember that the Government has used on fishing havens funds that would normally be devoted to roads. The cost of construction of the Glenelg jetty is not involved, because that is part of Loan funds. This project was started, and it is incumbent on the Government to complete it.

The Hon. J. W. H. Coumbe: And we are completing it.

Mr. CORCORAN: That \$117,000 has nothing to do with fishing havens.

Mr. Rodda: It came off fishing havens last year.

Mr. CORCORAN: The sum of \$92,000 was spent last year in spite of what was said by present Government members when they were in Opposition, although only \$80,000 had been allocated in the Estimates. This was an excess of more than \$12,000. I believe that the two Opposition speakers who have preceded me have told the Government enough about our attitude towards this overall programme.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: The allocation for fishing havens years ago was far greater than that made by your Government.

Mr. CORCORAN: True, a previous Government built the Lake Butler boat haven at a substantial cost.

Mr. Hudson: But constituents got good representation about it, too.

Mr. CORCORAN: Of course. My late father made continual representations. I have no complaint about the sum spent in the past, except that it was not enough.

The Hon. R. S. Hall: Why did you reduce it significantly when you became the Government?

Mr. CORCORAN: The Premier cleverly played with figures. Someone said that he was not good at arithmetic, but that was not so in this case.

The Hon. R. S. Hall: You have not answered my question. Why did you reduce it significantly?

Mr. CORCORAN: It was not reduced significantly. In our last year as Government \$92,000 was spent, an amount that was well above the average, apart from the Lake Butler scheme, which was a special project.

The Hon. R. S. Hall: Nonsense; it was a fishing haven.

Mr. CORCORAN: The Premier knows that he is talking nonsense.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Millicent was going well earlier when he addressed the Chair.

Mr. CORCORAN: I am sorry, Sir. I do not intend to prolong your agony. I shall give those members opposite who are breaking their necks to get on their feet the opportunity to reject or support this document. I want them to have this opportunity, because I know they are anxious to continue this debate. I commend the Leader of the Opposition for his constructive speech, and also the member for Glenelg (Mr. Hudson) for his fine contribution to the debate.

Mr. FERGUSON (Yorke Peninsula): I join my colleagues in congratulating the Treasurer for presenting the Loan Estimates. Whatever is wrong with them I shall be surprised if at the end of 12 months they have not benefited South Australia greatly. Opposition members have spoken about these Estimates. First, they said that moneys allocated to the Housing Trust are not the same as they would like them to be. It does not matter how arrangements are made to finance the Housing Trust: the main thing is that the State's economy must be got moving and these Estimates will give the necessary shot in the arm to housing construction so that the building industry will benefit substantially. Opposition members have also abused and discredited the *Advertiser* for not printing something they wanted it to print.

Mr. Langley: It has to be fair, but it is not.

Mr. FERGUSON: I do not take the same line as that taken by other speakers, because I am not as clever at juggling figures as some people are, so I shall comment on the lines. I will comment first on South-Eastern drainage. Members opposite may ask what I do know about drainage, because I come from a northern area that has no drainage problems. However, I have been interested in drainage for

many years, and each time I have travelled to the South-East I have taken particular interest in the drainage of that part of the State. In 1923 the South-Eastern Drainage Board came into existence and drainage of the South-East was commenced. The South-East is not the only part of South Australia that has been considered to be wet in its early stages of development. On Yorke Peninsula and Eyre Peninsula during the early days of development there were areas that were considered to be too wet for agricultural purposes. I think that in any part of South Australia, clearing virgin scrub helps solve drainage problems simply because water is allowed to drain off that land.

Mr. Corcoran: Yes, but it has to drain somewhere.

Mr. FERGUSON: True, but I believe drainage will always occur if there is a natural fall in the land. In addition to the natural drainage occurring, some of the excess water is absorbed by pastures established in the area.

Mr. Corcoran: But you have to put pastures there first; if you rely on natural drainage, the land is covered for most of the year, and that is why additional drainage was required originally.

Mr. FERGUSON: I understand that is so, and I understand also that much water is being absorbed through the development of surrounding land. The Land Settlement Committee, of which I am a member, has recently been investigating proposals for further drainage in the Eastern Division of the South-Eastern drainage scheme, and this has been an interesting exercise for me. The evidence recently given before the committee at Penola proved conclusively that the present attitude towards drainage in the South-East is different from the attitude that existed several years ago. Naturally, in the dry years settlers do not desire a drainage scheme, but that view is changed when a wet year is experienced. I have always believed that too much water is being drained from the South-East.

The plan for Drain M as a whole had to provide for a large drain in order to drain water from the Eastern Division through the Western Division. However, the dimensions of this drain have resulted in removing from the area water that should have been used on local pastures. Indeed, I believe that the Land Settlement Committee in the future will not only have to consider draining water

from the South-East: it will also have to consider retaining some of the water flowing out to sea as part of this drainage system. I believe that we have at this stage only a hazy idea of the correct use of water in South Australia. I believe the last dry season in the South-East proved that much of the water now being drained off the South-East could be used in irrigation schemes, not only in dry years but also in better years. It is recognized that a 25in. rainfall is necessary to grow pastures such as strawberry clover and phalaris. In some of the evidence adduced at the Penola hearing, some of the settlers in the area around Penola said that they could irrigate pastures in that area satisfactorily and had in mind experimenting with the planting, irrigating and processing of vegetables with the aid of South-Eastern water.

Regarding the Highways Department, I repeat what I said the other day when asking a question of the Minister representing the Minister of Local Government concerning a brochure he had produced for members and other people interested in the money to be spent on roads in the State. I believe that the brochure is appreciated by all members, as it gives them a clearer idea of what is happening in respect of roads in their districts. I asked my question because of a council in my district that controls a developing area. Half of its area at present being covered by scrub, this council received in respect of a certain road a rural grant that carried a council contribution of 20 per cent, over and above which the council had to pay for the survey expenses, which amounted to another 5 per cent. The total council contribution was 38 per cent of the rates collected by it. I know that the Highways Department will say, "Well, there is a remedy for that. If you want more money for your roads or by way of grants made by the department, why don't you raise your rates?" I point out, however, that council members, who offer their services voluntarily, are mostly practical men of the land and are aware that costs in relation to income have risen so high that they are loath to increase rates in their area. I hope the Highways Department will consider the matters I have raised when deciding what should be councils' contributions to road grants in the future.

I am pleased to see in the Loan Estimates this year the sum of \$650,000 to be applied to the offshore work proceeding at Giles Point, but I am sure that people in the area are disappointed that this is not the final sum for the completion of the work. I remember when this project was inaugurated that the

Premier of the day said it would be about two years after approval had been given that the work would be completed. Approval for starting those works was given in November, 1964, and the Minister of the day ordered preparations to be made for those works to proceed. Allowing for a start in the 1965-66 financial year, I think we could have expected these works to be ready for the use of primary producers on the southern part of Yorke Peninsula for the 1967-68 harvest.

When I questioned the Minister of Works the other day about the completion of these offshore facilities, I was told they would be completed in August, 1970. The primary producers in the southern part of Yorke Peninsula will lose at least two years' use of the facilities at Giles Point, which will be a great financial loss to them. Some years ago, when referring to costs, I estimated that, with 100,000 tons output from this newly operating offshore facility, the saving in the bags that would have been used in shipping the 100,000 tons would be \$480,000; and, taking a differential of 5c (the average of the differential that would apply in the southern part of Yorke Peninsula), another \$220,000 would be added to that amount. The two added together would come to \$700,000, so two years' loss of use of these facilities at Giles Point would account for \$1,400,000. The total cost of the offshore facilities at Giles Point is estimated at \$2,200,000, so two year's loss of the use of these facilities would mean about two-thirds of the cost of these works. The fact that South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited has recently given permission for the erection of further silo space to take 1,500,000 bushels in the Giles Point area is a fair indication that it has great confidence in the development and production of the southern part of Yorke Peninsula. I think it realizes that in this area of the State there is a potential for an increase in cereal-growing and stock-raising.

I am also pleased to see \$32,000 provided in the Loan Estimates to complete an extension of water reticulation on the southern or central part of Yorke Peninsula. Early this year the *Advertiser* recorded that the main from Swan Reach to Stockwell was making progress and it would give greater water reticulation to parts of Yorke Peninsula. This report caused some speculation amongst the electors in my district: they thought there would be a greater supply of water for Yorke Peninsula. Councils asked me to inquire whether this was so and as a result of my inquiries I received

the same answer as I had received previously when I applied to the Minister for extra water reticulation on the more remote parts of southern Yorke Peninsula.

I remember the time when bringing water to the Yorke Peninsula area was first considered. Mr. Peter Allen and Mr. Tossell represented the dual-member District of Yorke Peninsula, and Mr. Allen called a meeting of primary producers on the northern part of the peninsula. The season had been very dry and the primary producers thought that Mr. Allen would be able to do something about water reticulation. On the day on which the meeting was planned to be held at 2 p.m., 2in. of rain fell in the morning. Mr. Allen arrived without the primary producers, and it was resolved that there was no need for any water reticulation on Yorke Peninsula. Of course, there was the old bogey that they could ever reticulate water over Arthurton Hill, but engineering feats destroyed this argument and it was eventually decided that water, after being pumped to Arthurton Hill, would reticulate over the rest of the peninsula.

It is important that more water be reticulated to some areas on Yorke Peninsula. I consider this necessary from a tourist point of view. Many places on the coastline of the peninsula are tourist attractions and have up to 150 beach houses and shacks there at present. However, the Engineering and Water Supply Department has said many times that these areas cannot have reticulated water. I consider it necessary from a health point of view that these seaside areas have some kind of water reticulation. In addition, other outlying parts of the peninsula would do well if they had reticulated water.

The other day I heard the Minister of Education comment about the replacement of old school buildings. As some parts of Yorke Peninsula were settled very early, naturally some school buildings have been standing for many years, particularly the schools at Yorketown and Minlaton. In recent years the school at Yorketown has become an area school. The school buildings are mostly prefabricated. The original school was a small stone building, and representations have been made to the Education Department requesting that consideration be given to the provision of a new school. The Minlaton Primary School is an old building, situated on about an acre of land on which the school and the headmaster's residence has been built. The balance is all the playing area that the children at this

school have. I hope the Minister of Education will consider priorities for new schools in that area.

I should also like the Minister to consider providing an agriculture course in one of the schools on Yorke Peninsula. It has often been said in this House that the Roseworthy Agricultural College course is far removed from the ordinary agriculture course that secondary school students really need. The area schools and high school on Yorke Peninsula have sought to be able to provide an agriculture course, and I hope the Education Department will arrange for such courses to be given soon.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: What would be the duration of the course?

Mr. FERGUSON: About two years. I congratulate the Treasurer on having performed so well the difficult task of preparing the Loan Estimates.

Mr. BURDON (Mount Gambier): I feel very strongly about a matter referred to earlier this evening. The member for Glenelg (Mr. Hudson) and the member for Millicent (Mr. Corcoran) referred to reporting by the *Advertiser*. I believe that this daily newspaper in South Australia has a duty to South Australians to give them both sides of the story. One-sided reporting is unfair, unreasonable and unjust. An important matter has recently exercised the minds of the people of South Australia and, indeed, of the people of Australia. In connection with this matter every leading newspaper in Australia, except one, has taken a certain line; the leading paper in South Australia has taken another line and has been singularly silent about it. I am sure most people will realize what I am talking about, because only one leading paper in Australia has seen fit not to comment on this matter. I wish to refer to the effect that the Loan Estimates will have on the State and on my district and I will refer to the Housing Trust in this regard. There has been a reduction of \$1,500,000 in the money allocated from the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement for this financial year. The results of this reduction will not be those expected by the Government, that is, to give the building industry a shot in the arm. In fact, it will do the reverse.

If a reduced sum is allocated to a project, the project must slow down. The Treasurer, in his wisdom, has seen fit to do this and, at the same time, increase the grant to co-operative building societies.

Two aspects of the Government's housing policy will, in the long run, be detrimental to the interests of this State. First, the reduction in the allocation to the housing industry and, secondly, an increase from \$7,000 to \$8,000 for housing loans from banks. I do not disagree with the policy to increase bank loans to young people or any people who want a house, but I question whether this may not reduce the availability of money. Recently, the waiting period for a bank loan was about 18 months to two years, and if this waiting time is lengthened young people will not be able to obtain, within a reasonable time, an adequate loan to purchase the house they require. This sort of thing forces people into obtaining mortgages and approaching hire-purchase companies for loans at exorbitant rates of interest and this, of course, places a burden on the people concerned, often for the rest of their lives. I believe that we should increase the number of loans made available without increasing the waiting period. However, there has recently been a decrease in the number of loans, and that will be to the detriment of the State if it forces people into waiting longer for finance.

I have often advocated the provision of rental-purchase and rental houses in Mount Gambier, and I am happy that, of an allocation of 50 houses, 20 will be available in my district for rental. This is a necessary allocation, bearing in mind the number of people coming into Mount Gambier, particularly those who work in industry. We must ensure as short a waiting time as possible for people who require rental accommodation. I believe that the present waiting period of nine months is far too long and I hope that, with the provision of additional houses, that period will be shortened.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

#### ADJOURNMENT

At 9.33 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, August 22, at 2 p.m.