

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, August 28, 1968.

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

QUESTIONS

LAMB INDUSTRY

Mr. FERGUSON: I think most people are aware of the low prices that primary producers are receiving for lamb in the various markets today and this, coupled with the low prices being received for wool, is not giving pastoralists sufficient return for their work. Will the Minister of Lands ask the Minister of Agriculture to obtain a report on the general condition of the lamb industry and on the reasons for large fluctuations in prices?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I will obtain that report and give it to the honourable member as soon as it is available.

Mr. McANANEY: For the month of August last year, the average yarding at the abattoirs was 18,500 lambs a week and the price for light lambs averaged 29c to 32c a pound. At present, the average yarding of lambs is only 8,000 a week and the average price is about 15c to 17c a pound. I do not think butchers would be making undue profits at present, although possibly they balance the low price of lamb against a high price of beef. Can the Treasurer, as the Minister in charge of the Prices Department, say whether the Prices Commissioner believes that the present retail price of lamb is reasonable?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The Prices Commissioner is regularly in contact with me about many matters, but he has not discussed this matter with me. I am not sure from memory whether he exercises control over meat prices at present—I think not. However, at the honourable member's request I will take up the matter with the Commissioner, because one of his functions is to examine any reference made to him on a specific matter, regardless of whether that matter is still under price control. I will bring the honourable member's question to his notice and ask him for a report.

MOCULTA WATER SUPPLY

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question about supplying the Moculta township and dis-

trict with a reticulated water supply from the Swan Reach to Stockwell main when it is completed?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUNBE: An investigation is being carried out into requests received during the last 12 months for a water supply to the township and district of Moculta from the Swan Reach to Stockwell main. Apart from several farming properties that are at too high an elevation, it would be practicable to give a reticulated supply to the township, and the investigation has reached the stage where two small pipelines have been designed and estimates of the cost and of the revenue that would accrue are being prepared. It is expected that a report will be available by the end of September. However, it would not be possible to lay the main before the winter of 1969, in view of the present state of construction of the Swan Reach to Stockwell main.

DEPARTMENTAL EFFICIENCY

Mr. GILES: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question about the operations of the Engineering and Water Supply Department in the Gumeracha District?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUNBE: I have the following information in regard to the suggestions made by the honourable member in his question:

1. All items of plant are recorded on a plant record card, which is held by the plant control section. When the item of plant is required to be used, it is booked out to the foreman responsible for that item of plant, who is then responsible for the safe keeping of that equipment.
2. All work undertaken in the departmental workshops is carried out under a duly authorized work order, and details of the material and labour used on that job are maintained.
3. Records are maintained for all work performed and time taken.
4. The department employs men suitably qualified for the type of work they are required to undertake and provides special training where such additional training is necessary.
5. All materials issued from departmental stores are issued only on the presentation of a properly written authority signed by a senior person.
6. Consideration is given to any application for the use of land held for future departmental purposes where the proposed use is not inconsistent with departmental requirements.

7. The workshop at Bolivar has records showing that two repairs to the stove elements in the departmental house at Woodside were carried out, the first in February and the second in April. In each case, a total of one man for four hours, including travelling time, was charged to the work.

MAITLAND WEIGHBRIDGE

Mr. FERGUSON: Has the Attorney-General obtained from the Minister of Roads and Transport a reply to my recent question about the weighbridge at Maitland?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: The installation at Maitland is a weighing slab which is used by the department's traffic inspectors in conjunction with a portable loadometer to obtain the axle weight of vehicles in policing the Road Traffic Act. The cost, inclusive of approach roads, was \$4,400, and it has been used regularly by the inspectors during their patrols since completion early in December, 1967.

BUNDALEER COPPER

Mr. ALLEN: Can the Premier, representing the Minister of Mines, say whether drilling for copper at Bundaleer, north of Spalding, was carried out by the Mines Department and, if it was, what results were obtained?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I shall be happy to obtain a report for the honourable member.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT:
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

The SPEAKER: I have received the following letter, dated August 28, 1968, from the Leader of the Opposition:

On the meeting of the House this afternoon I propose to move that the House at its rising do adjourn until 2 o'clock on Friday, August 30, for the purpose of debating a matter of urgency, namely, the repudiation by the Government of the arrangements made for the employment of the Director of Industrial Development and his continuing in that position for a period of five years.

The Director of Industrial Development was induced to relinquish security, pension rights and considerable emoluments in order to take the post in which he was guaranteed continuance of employment for five years as the head of the Branch of Industrial Development. His being removed to another post of a subordinate character to that for which he was employed will gravely endanger the policy of any Government in the future in South Australia to attract from industry senior qualified personnel for important Government positions.

In my view, and in the view of those who support me in this motion, it is urgent that this matter be debated immediately in an endeavour to obviate the situation which could do grave harm to the State.

Is the proposed motion supported?

Several members having risen:

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Leader of the Opposition): I move:

That the House at its rising do adjourn until 2 o'clock on Friday, August 30,

for the purpose of debating a matter of urgency, namely, the repudiation by the Government of the arrangements made for the employment of the Director of Industrial Development and his continuing in that position for a period of five years.

During the term of office of the Labor Government, many proposals were made, both inside and outside this Parliament, by members of Parliament, including members opposite, that an Industrial Development Department headed by a Director of Industrial Development, should be created. When I became Premier of this State, the view that had been expressed by members opposite and by many others on that matter was given accord to, and a Director of Industrial Development was appointed.

In order to obtain the best possible appointee for this position, inquiries were made amongst experienced industrialists in South Australia. I may say that, in obtaining the services of Mr. Currie for this post, considerable difficulty was experienced. Mr. Currie was an extraordinarily well qualified man in this area. Not only was he a successful industrialist in a senior industrial position in one of the largest enterprises in this State but also he had had wide experience and qualifications. He himself was a scientist who had been responsible for the development not only of the works in South Australia but also of the Imperial Chemical Industries of Australia and New Zealand Limited petro-chemical works at Botany Bay, New South Wales. That was a matter of great importance to this State, because we were getting the development of natural gas, and both sides of politics in this State had pointed to the necessity of petro-chemical development as an ancillary to natural gas development.

Mr. Currie had had experience overseas in industrial development and, as it was vitally important to South Australia that we have in a position of this kind a man experienced in the development of industry in Asia, no-one else had the qualifications that Mr. Currie had. He has not only worked for Imperial Chemical Industries of Australia and New Zealand in Japan but he has taken a considerable period during which to study in Japan, the other major industrial nation in this particular region, and he is fluent in the Japanese language. In order to induce Mr. Currie to leave his position

with I.C.I., we had to offer not only considerable emoluments but also some security in office, for he was leaving great provisions for security in private industry. He had in I.C.I., considerable and generous pension rights and other ancillary benefits which would give security to him and his family. The Government's undertaking was that, in leaving his post in private industry to undertake this extremely important work for the development of South Australia, he would be given security of employment as head of the Industrial Development Branch. That is what he has not received from this Government. When we were in Opposition and when we were in Government members opposite persisted in saying that, in the view of the general public and of the probity and reliability of the Government, it was important to the security of this State that contracts made by one Government should not be repudiated by the next.

What has happened, however, in this matter? After his appointment Mr. Currie undertook the organization of the Industrial Development Branch on a basis that was the envy of industrialists in other States, envy which they expressed to me in no uncertain terms. I was enabled to address a large meeting of industrialists and financiers in the major Eastern States and, when the programme laid down by Mr. Currie (and recommended I may say, in addition, by the consultant whom the Government appointed) was outlined to them, they expressed to me very forcibly the view that, if only the programme that was being adopted here was adopted everywhere, Australia could look with confidence to the future, and they expressed great envy that we were adopting a basis for industrial development with a Director with qualifications unequalled in Australia.

I was condemned by the then Leader of the Opposition when, during my period as Premier, a meeting was held in Canberra of oversea industrialists who were addressed by Ministers of Industrial Development from other States. Because of the exigencies of Parliamentary work in this State it was impossible for me as Minister to attend, but I sent Mr. Currie in my place. I do not know what reports the Premier got of that meeting, but I got detailed reports from people other than the Director of Industrial Development. Other Ministers addressed the people concerned without the audience showing the slightest interest, whereas Mr. Currie got a standing ovation for his address because, under his leadership in South Australia, we were able to give detailed

information which people having industrial development capital available required and which they could get nowhere else. From the changes made by the Premier in the Industrial Development Branch and from his statement last evening, one could say that the basis for the changes made was the change of Government.

Mr. Rodda: That's true. What's wrong with that?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I will tell the honourable member what is wrong with it. The basis upon which the Premier is acting in this matter is not so much for the benefit of the State but whether the thing that he proposes to change was something initiated by the Labor Government. He is so small and mean-minded that nothing could be good for the people of South Australia if we initiated it. His action on this occasion is a mixture in motive of incompetence and malice, and nothing else. Why should the change of Government in this State produce this extraordinary action concerning the Industrial Development Branch?

First of all, we saw the removal of the Director of Industrial Development from the chairmanship of the Industrial Development Advisory Council. Why? If the work of this department is to be co-ordinated effectively, the Director should be Chairman of the council advising him. How else can we get effective co-ordination of the work? Yet the Premier immediately proceeded to put in as Director of the council an industrialist in South Australia to whom the whole of the Labor movement in South Australia is bitterly opposed personally. That gentleman was Chairman of the Municipal Tramways Trust in South Australia, but our Government was unable to re-appoint him to that post, not that he had not done some good work in it (he had), but his attitude to the Labor movement in the State was such that if he had been re-appointed we would have had a general strike on our hands. He refused ever to talk to the unions and he refused to concern himself with satisfactory management-labour relations, in which matter Mr. Currie had so good a record in South Australia that the Labor movement in South Australia was concerned to see that the work that he did at I.C.I. was duplicated elsewhere in labour-management relations and understanding.

Then there was appointed as Secretary of the Industrial Development Advisory Council an officer of the Housing Trust who had previously been seconded to the Industrial

Development Branch for a period (with direct access to the Premier, not through the Director of Industrial Development), so that we get two policies now: the policy of the Chairman of the council in place of the Director; and an officer with direct access to the Premier, not through the Director of the department. Now we get this new proposal. The arrangement that was made to attract Mr. Currie from private industry has been thrown overboard. In its place Mr. Currie is apparently to be the Director of Industrial Research; but precisely what work he is to do remains unclear. The Premier in answer to questions in this House and to questions by newsmen has been unable to tell us. Whether it is clear in his mind, no-one knows: it is not clear to those who have questioned him.

Apparently Mr. Currie is to do something in relation to industrial research. The whole programme recommended by the consultants to the Government was that the basis of our industrial promotion programme should be a scientific one—not catch-as-catch-can, not going looking for someone who had whispered that he might be interested in coming to South Australia. The basis of the programme (not the ancillary work) should be a complete investigation of South Australia's industrial development potential and the clear setting forth of where the industrial development potential investment should be made—a series of feasibility studies in depth that would show to the investors in that area that South Australia was able to provide them with the best conceivable deal and that it was economically necessary for them to invest here. This would mean the presentation of a case of a kind that no other State had given to potential investors.

That was the basis on which we were working and, in accordance with the recommendations of the consultants, we appointed qualified staff to carry out a programme of this kind. Mr. Currie is prevented from making a promotional campaign on the basis of the work he is doing in depth and work that was recommended by the consultants. Apparently, he is not to concern himself with this at all. During the period of my Government he was invited by the Indian Government to go to India to consult with it about various types of industrial development there and the potential relation between industry and the development of South Australia. On that trip he also waited on industrialists in Singapore and Djakarta with a view to establishing the

initial relations on which South Australia's industrial potential in the design and fabrication of machinery, which is one of our great abilities in industry, could be built, so that this became the place where they would look for the development of machinery for tooling up the industries in the developing nations of the Asian area. Mr. Currie also, at the request of the industrial management in some concerns in Japan, went to Japan and was able to undertake negotiations there for the development of industry here, with Japanese backing, and he was able to have discussions with important backers of industrial development in Hong Kong, where an enormous amount of industrial development capital is available. We now hear that he is not to go overseas at all.

Mr. Jennings: Who paid his way when he went overseas?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Our Government did, except in the case of his trip to India, when the Indian Government paid it. But now we hear nothing of this. We find that Mr. Barker and Mr. Ramsay are to be the people who trip overseas. Mr. Ramsay is to be employed on this work, being also the General Manager of the Housing Trust, the Chairman of the Municipal Tramways Trust and a member of the Australian Broadcasting Commission. He has resigned from the advisory committee but not from the commission. The Minister apparently was not aware of that.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: No, I was not.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Well, his interjection yesterday was quite incorrect.

Mr. McKee: As usual!

The SPEAKER: All interjections are out of order.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: What pressure was brought by this Government on the Director of Industrial Development concerning this change? How did it induce him to depart from the arrangement which he had made with the Government and on which he had insisted (and rightly so) in order that he should be attracted from private industry? What pressure was brought to bear on him to accept the post of Director of Industrial Research? I ask the Premier to take the House into his confidence concerning the negotiations on this matter. Did Mr. Currie agree with the policy, which now appears, of having a department without a proper Public Service head? I have heard the Premier say

that the head of the department is his Secretary, but the Premier knows that this answer is merely a subterfuge. It is the common practice for the titular head of a number of departments to be the Minister's Secretary. As Attorney-General in the last Government, my Secretary (Mr. Langcake) was titular Public Service head of the Aboriginal Affairs Department, the Social Welfare Department and the Attorney-General's Department, but that did not mean that he was directly in control of the Social Welfare Department or the Aboriginal Affairs Department, and the same principle applies to the position of Mr. White. Who, in effect, is responsible for the direction of this department? Apparently no-one is.

The Hon. B. H. Teusner: Has Mr. Currie been appointed to the Public Service?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: No, he is employed on contract.

Mr. Hurst: The contract has been repudiated.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: He must have agreed to a change in his contract to come to this arrangement. What pressure was brought to bear on him to depart from the provisions of the contract?

Mr. Casey: Blackmail!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I want to know. What alternatives were given to Mr. Currie in the circumstances? Did the Premier require of Mr. Currie that he accept this post or resign? Was that proposition put to Mr. Currie? And if Mr. Currie then objected, did the Premier invoke the prerogative of the Crown—that he might dismiss Mr. Currie? What is the position here? If this was done (and the House is entitled to know whether it was done), then what do we face in South Australia? We will never be able in the future, as a result of this action, to attract from industry any senior executive to a post in Government here, because the executive will not be able to rely on the probity of Government in keeping to its contracts and undertakings. The member for Stirling apparently thinks this is funny and that, when someone is brought in to the Government on certain undertakings, the Government that follows it does not need to honour those obligations at all. As far as he and his colleagues are concerned, the word of a Government means nothing. This is a ghastly position which the State is now facing. The administrative arrangements of this department, as outlined to the House by the Premier yesterday, are so fantastic that they would be laughable if they were not so tragic.

Mr. McKee: What beats me is that they are always cutting crook about Communist tactics.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: It is bad enough for the State as a start, but how in the world can a department, set up in the way the Premier has outlined, begin to work, and what sort of confidence can those with industrial development capital available have in a department administered in this fashion? To whom do those people go? They can go to the Director of Industrial Research, but he is not responsible for what is done by the Director of Industrial Promotion. On the other hand, they can go to the Director of Industrial Promotion but he is not responsible for the actions of the Director of Industrial Research. In addition, there is the direction of the Industrial Development Advisory Council with a separate officer who has direct access to the Premier. What kind of administrative arrangement is this? Further, of course, the Director of Industrial Promotion has many other duties involved in Government. Our Government was grateful to him for some of the duties he undertook but, heavens above, how in the world can this job be done in the present circumstances as outlined? That is bad enough as a start, but the harm that is done to the State through the treatment by this Government of Mr. Currie is such that the State will suffer the consequences for a long time to come unless the position is reversed.

It does not matter who is appointed to public posts in South Australia: the obligations undertaken by the Government should be honoured. When our Government took office there were public officers who had previously been employed by Government in South Australia and with whose individual views on policy we did not agree (indeed, their views were made clear to us), but we honoured the undertakings that had been given and we honoured the appointments that had been made. We worked with those who were there, even though some of them disagreed with us (and disagreed radically, and they made that clear), because that is the only way in which a State can properly proceed.

Mr. Corcoran: We made important appointments without having any regard to politics.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Exactly. We appointed to important boards people who were known to have bitterly opposed our views. The Chairman of the Citrus Organization Committee was the President of the Liberal Party, yet we appointed him. We

appointed people without considering their personal views. Why in the world action should be taken on this score against Mr. Currie (he is certainly not a member of our political Party), I am blessed if I know. It seems to be merely that Mr. Currie's appointment was made by our Government.

Mr. Casey: Is it because he won't join the L.C.L.?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I do not know. I do not know what pressure has been brought to bear on him, but it is obviously considerable pressure. From the lengthy discussions I had with Mr. Currie in order to induce him to come to the department I know that he was not willing to come at first. Indeed, when the offer was first made to him he refused it. Then I was unable to get a satisfactory appointment to the post. It was only after further approaches had been made to him that he was induced to take it.

Mr. Broomhill: In the interests of the State.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Yes, and the appointment was widely acclaimed by every section of industry and by the public of South Australia.

Mr. Jennings: Including members opposite.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Yes. One can only regard the action of the Government in this matter with the utmost horror and dismay. The answers which the Premier saw fit to give in the House yesterday, and to the press when he was questioned afterwards, were typical of his evasiveness on any subject about which he is publicly questioned. This is not good enough: the people of South Australia are entitled to something much better than the Government has given them on this occasion. We are entitled to know the answers and entitled to have in this department, as in other public departments, proper administrative provisions honouring the obligations undertaken by Government, of whatever political complexion, in this State.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY (Whyalla): I rise to speak on this matter because there has been no move from the Government benches to reply to what the Leader has had to say. In the circumstances, it is amazing that the Premier is not prepared to defend his actions strongly in this matter, if he has any sound reasons for the action he has taken. Yesterday, when he was questioned about the matter by the Leader, he was most evasive. Although he refused finally to give any more information, it was impossible, from his answers, to determine precisely what would be the

effect of the changes made. Mr. Currie's appointment was made by Cabinet after we had looked around carefully for someone with the necessary qualifications who could examine the question of industrial development from a scientific viewpoint. As the Leader has said, it is of no avail whatever to have someone who just goes around questioning people as to what they are likely to do in regard to development of industry in South Australia. We realized it was necessary to have a proper examination made of the scientific possibilities of the resources available for development so that a proper case could be made out and so that such cases could then be submitted to those people who might be interested in industrial development in this State. In order to achieve that end, what is obviously needed as a Director of Industrial Development is a person with scientific and business qualifications and, of course, in Mr. Currie we had that very person.

At that time, no-one questioned the desirability of that appointment or the qualifications of Mr. Currie. In fact, we were applauded on every hand at the excellence of the appointment. As the Leader has pointed out this afternoon, Mr. Currie not only has wide experience of Japanese and Asiatic trade, but he speaks Japanese which, in itself, is a rare qualification, particularly valuable in view of the fact that our trade with Japan has been increasing for such a long time and is likely to increase still further. In other words, we had a man who was ideal for the situation. Yet, as soon as the present Government came into office, the first move was made to remove Mr. Currie from the important position which he held and to which he had been appointed by the Labor Government. Then we had the subsequent alteration of which we heard and about which further questions were asked yesterday. We now have the situation where we have a department apparently without an official Director.

Yesterday, the Premier said he was responsible for the direction of this department. What are the qualifications of the Premier for being a Director of Industrial Development? We heard some fairly severe comments by members of the Government, when they were in Opposition, denigrating members of this Party who were Ministers. The present Treasurer said that members on this side had no business experience. I can remember his saying, when we came into office, that we

had a Minister of Agriculture who knew nothing about agriculture. Of course, the Treasurer, as a farmer, has no problems at all in relation to his becoming Treasurer or Minister of Works. He thinks that, because he is a farmer, presumably he can take any position whatever. Yet, at the same time, he criticized members on this side because he said we had no business experience. Now, apparently, we have the Premier's taking the position of Director of this organization. What is his industrial experience?

Mr. Casey: What are his qualifications?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: Absolutely nil. In fact, even his personal background is narrow. He does not have the background of most members on this side, who have had to fight their way through life in all types of occupation and who have gained experience in so doing. The Premier has a very narrow background, yet he poses as the person who can determine this important question of industrial development in this State. Has not the Premier been the very one who has been berating the Opposition about the State's being in the position it is? He says he will lift the State and get industrial development moving. Apparently this is how he intends to do it. He must have shaken confidence all round in the word of a Government. Further, Mr. Currie was appointed for a definite term. We know his qualifications and he had to be persuaded to give up what obviously was an outstanding position in industry in order to work for the State. He was not rushing the job but had to be strongly persuaded to take it.

Now we find that a gentleman has apparently been appointed over him who has other heavy obligations. Surely the job of being General Manager of the Housing Trust in itself is big enough for any one man in this State, especially when we consider all the hullabaloo we have heard from the Government about the need to get the building industry moving. Have we not heard members opposite say that the building industry is the barometer of well-being in the State? Should not the General Manager of the trust be busy at his own last in seeing that the building industry is promoted to the utmost? The Premier has spoken about uplifting the State and about the necessity to develop secondary industry. Members opposite know very little future exists in the expansion of primary industry in South Australia, and that the future development here, particularly with regard to migration and other factors for the benefit of the State, rests with

industrial development. Yet, just when we are about to have some progress in this development, the Government has proceeded to have its officers swap horses and has made a change that makes absolutely no sense administratively. It would be interesting to hear what experts on the question of administration would have to say about these changes. Obviously the left hand will not know what the right hand is doing in this situation.

Mr. Corcoran: The Premier knows nothing at all.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: That is perfectly clear; we know the Premier's lack of background and of experience in industrial development. That he has not any experience is obvious, and he cannot deny that. It is amazing that such a move can be made by a Government that has pinned its faith on the progress of this State in industrial development. Many people are saying, I think with great justification, that much of this, if not all, is entirely due to a desire to denigrate the previous Labor Government, and particularly the Leader of the Opposition. We have had instances of this elsewhere. Every effort has been made to denigrate the Leader of the Opposition, because the Government knows that he is a very capable Leader, and whenever Labor has a capable Leader every effort is made by its political opponents and the press to denigrate him and to assassinate his character, if possible. I have plenty of evidence to support that, if members opposite want it.

This is another instance of a change made purely to denigrate the Labor Party, its actions when in Government, and the present Leader of the Opposition. Let members opposite give some sound evidence to the contrary. How could they produce that evidence? We appointed a man with the very highest qualifications. That cannot be denied. Members of the present Government applauded the appointment. They had absolutely no criticism of that and, goodness knows, they would have criticized Mr. Currie's appointment if they could have done so. They will criticize anything, whether that criticism is fair or otherwise. The Premier talks about believing in the promotion of private enterprise, and Mr. Currie is the very epitome of private enterprise. Now the Premier is appointing the General Manager of a Government department, and that man will have close association with the Premier, while the other man, who came from private enterprise, has been pushed aside.

The Premier tells us that he believes in private enterprise, but let Government members produce evidence that what I have said is not true. Let them point out why this move is good administratively and why the man they are appointing is a better scientist than Mr. Currie. Let them point out why, in a State in which the union members are always held up as extremely good examples of stable workers and to which it is said that people come because the union organizations are more reasonable, Mr. Barker has been appointed to his present position. Let Government members explain that away. They cannot explain away one thing regarding this change and at the same time give a sensible explanation. The Government is to be absolutely damned for making this particular change, so far as the progress of South Australia is concerned.

Mr. CORCORAN (Millicent): Obviously the Premier is not prepared to answer the statements made by the Leader of the Opposition and by the member for Whyalla, because I am certain that if the Premier were confident about his action he would have spoken immediately the Leader of the Opposition resumed his seat. If ever anyone should have been prodded into action the Premier should have been, after hearing what the Leader said. This leaves one no alternative but to believe that the Premier's action has not been very well thought out and, indeed, has been taken because, as the Leader has said, the Labor Government made the appointment. There does not seem to be any other reason for it. Let the Premier tell us whether he has some other reason.

Certain things have been said and challenges have been made, and we are interested to hear the Premier defend his position. Action has been taken to re-arrange the administration of a department that the Premier has said is, in his opinion, one of the most important departments in the State, particularly for our future. Action has been taken to remove from the position of Director of Industrial Development a person who was appointed by a previous Government and whose qualifications were lauded by the present Leader of the Opposition, the member for Whyalla, and members opposite. The administration of the department is being re-arranged, although that officer has held the appointment for only about 12 months, or perhaps a lesser period. No-one could be expected to come into a job of this kind, set up such a department, assess the potential of the State, appreciate all that needed to be done and prove himself in that time.

Mr. Currie has not been given the opportunity to prove his worth.

Mr. Hurst: He proved it with I.C.I.

Mr. CORCORAN: He did, in another field. He came from private industry with obvious industrial experience behind him. The sort of job required of him as Director of Industrial Development must, of necessity, have required some adjustment by him. No-one could have assessed in that short period all that needed to be assessed. One of the Premier's first actions when he took over responsibility for industrial development was to remove Mr. Currie from the important position of Chairman of the Industrial Development Advisory Council.

Mr. Broomhill: And he gave no reason.

Mr. CORCORAN: He gave no reason, and now he has moved to relegate Mr. Currie to the position of Director of Industrial Research. Doubtless, there is work to be done in that field, but the Premier cannot tell us what it is. That surprises me, because surely he must have considered what Mr. Ramsay and Mr. Currie will have to do. Surely he needed to know, before he made any alteration regarding the administration of this department, how the work of these two officers would be co-ordinated. No-one wants to reflect on the ability of Mr. Ramsay. We know that in the past, under Sir Thomas Playford, Mr. Ramsay often was engaged as a promotion officer for industry, and he also did that work during the term of office of the Hon. Frank Walsh.

No-one disputes that, and there is no reason why Mr. Ramsay cannot still be used, while occupying the position of General Manager of the Housing Trust, in the same capacity. There is no need to appoint him Director of Industrial Development and leave him with the huge responsibility that he has had in the past in order to enable him to do what he has done previously. There must be some reason behind this change, and we are most interested in that reason. We also have the situation that Mr. Ramsay now is to be the servant of both the Minister of Housing and the Minister of Industrial Development. I do not think a similar situation has arisen before in the history of the Public Service in South Australia. I certainly do not know anything of such an occurrence. I am certain that people who concern themselves with administration would be interested to know why this action has been taken. Yesterday, the Premier said that he modestly claimed that he was the Minister responsible for this department. I do not know whether

he considers himself to be the Director of the department and whether he thinks that by appointing Mr. Ramsay and retaining Mr. Currie he can divide and rule, because I cannot see how there can be much co-operation between the two important arms of the service that have been created. As vigorously as I can I join with the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Whyalla. I agree with what they have said about this action, and I challenge the Premier to give answers, particularly about what sort of pressure must have been placed on Mr. Currie for him to accept this position.

The Leader of the Opposition said that Mr. Currie at first did not come willingly to take up this position. He had security in the job in which he was working, and it was a great sacrifice for him to accept the new position. I believe that he accepted it because he thought that he could do something for South Australia. However, he now finds that, although he has barely had time to establish the department and to assess what is required, he cannot go farther. He must be a disappointed and disillusioned man. I hope the Premier will consider my remarks, which are sincere and have no purpose other than to express what I believe to be the feeling of Mr. Currie now. I shall be interested to hear what the Premier has to say about what has been said.

The Hon. R. S. HALL (Premier): I should have thought that other members of the Opposition would be behind their Leader, but perhaps—

Mr. Hudson: They will be.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: —they are divided on this issue and can see the wisdom of the Government's action in a matter in which they showed a great lack of experience during their time in office. First, this motion is incorrect. It is important to realize that the dramatic speech of the Leader that was so well rehearsed should have been made on a proper basis, but it was not. What is the basis of this great act? He said that the Director of Industrial Development had been induced to relinquish security pension rights. Who said so? On whose word is this statement given in this House? The Leader's? Who else? The Leader spoke of the loss of considerable emoluments, but who said that was so? What rubbish! Did Mr. Currie say so? Did I say so? Did Mr. Ramsay say so? Who did say so? It was said that Mr. Currie was induced to relinquish generous pension rights and considerable emoluments.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! We cannot have half a dozen speeches at once.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I shall not pursue that aspect, because there are plenty of other facts to be submitted. The Leader had personal motives for initiating this debate. It is not surprising for Labor members to speak in this fashion, because we are diametrically opposed in our political beliefs. Whether it is social or industrial development the Opposition must have a different view from that of a private enterprise Party. Since coming into office we have said that we believe in private enterprise. We know that our opponents do not believe basically in that, as it is opposed to the constitution of their Party. Any statements that we have used personal bias fall to the ground when what we have done is examined. Whom did we appoint to the Forestry Board? It was the previous Labor Premier of South Australia. Does this show political motives?

Mr. Hudson: What about the bloke you appointed with him?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Members of the L.C.L. when in Opposition praised the important appointment by the A.L.P. of the Agent-General in London. Other similar appointments could be instanced, so that any charge made against us that we have adopted a personal bias in this matter is stupid. What the Leader has done is point to much activity. It annoys him that we have been active in this field and perhaps he is annoyed because of his own inactivity in this regard. Although he may not like it, we have gathered together in one group the most able brains on industrial promotion in the State.

I cannot illustrate more the political difference between our Parties than by referring to the Leader's views of Mr. Barker, who is recognized by industry generally here, in England, and in the United States of America, as one of the most able industrialists in Australia. Economists of international reputation will tell you what they think of Mr. Barker. The Leader should ask them for their opinions rather than get the opinions of his political henchmen, because a realistic appraisal should be made. I do not run away from my decision to appoint these people as a team; I welcome them and appreciate their assistance, because I consider that South Australia will be thankful for their activities. It was said that I removed Mr. Currie from chairmanship of the advisory council: nothing is further from the truth. Mr. Currie told me that he recommended this move. I then chose Mr. Barker.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: Ah!

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The Leader can say that, but he said that I removed Mr. Currie. This council is working extremely well.

Mr. Virgo: It is not working, and you know it.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Not only has it been well received but it is working well.

Mr. Virgo: It is meeting three times a year.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: With its subcommittee system it is working well on the problems facing South Australia. I think it would be impossible to get together a better team than these experts in education, industry, and unions. I attended one meeting and discussed with members of the council the appointment of a chairman. I said that I thought an outside chairman was necessary (although I did not say who would be appointed), and not one member dissented from the change that I suggested. I pay a tribute to those people who serve on that council at no cost to the State. I need not refer to Mr. Barker again, because I have found him to be a man with a good international reputation. I say this advisedly, since I found this on my recent international trip. He will spearhead the advisory council further as it approaches questions relating to physical and promotional development in industry in this State. There are many specific problems with which it will deal that concern things that can be as physical as council zoning areas, or it can consider representations this Government might make to the Commonwealth Government about preferential tariffs, and it brings much experience that this Government cannot afford to assemble on a paid basis. I do not make the slightest apology for the committee or the appointments made to it.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: Nearly all of them were made by our Government.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Some of them were announced as members before they had a chance to reply to the Leader's invitation.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: Not one of them.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Some were announced before they had a chance to reply. When I came into office, some industrialists were coming directly to me, some were going directly to the Director of Industrial Development, and some were going to the Housing Trust. They had good reasons for coming to all three. The Housing Trust dealt with land and factories, and had a long history of

development. The Director of Industrial Development was newly appointed and was doing a good job in his field at that time: he was finding his way, but he was not the whole story to all people. I was the new Minister of Industrial Development. These were the facts when I came to office. I intended to co-ordinate these efforts under one group and to bring everyone together so that we could go on and put on a joint effort on promotion. This is exactly what the Government has done. Today, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Currie and Mr. Barker are working harmoniously. Also, we have the Secretary to the advisory council (Mr. Phillips), and the Secretary of the Premier's Department (Mr. White) who, in his dealings through various departments, brings into this field much organizational detail. I am there to add the Premier's position to the developmental team.

This is a team worthy of the job at hand, and it is working harmoniously. Yesterday the member for Glenelg asked who was the Director, and I promised to obtain some information for him. No doubt he will speak at great length later. He was in error when he said that there was no public servant as head of the Industrial Development Department; in fact, there is no Industrial Development Department within the Public Service. Industrial promotion is a responsibility of the Premier's Department, and the Secretary of the Premier's Department is, in terms of the Public Service Act, the permanent head of the department. Within the Premier's Department there is the Industrial Development Branch, which is now headed by the Director of Industrial Promotion (Mr. Ramsay), supported by the Director of Industrial Research (Mr. Currie). Neither of these persons is employed under the Public Service Act but both are directly responsible to me as Premier and Minister of Industrial Development. The Secretary of the Premier's Department will continue to accept the administrative responsibilities as head of the department in terms of the Public Service Act, and for this purpose he will continue to maintain the close liaison that has always existed between him and all branches of the department.

Mr. Hudson: Is Mr. Currie subordinate to Mr. Ramsay?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: There has been a demand for me to tell the House what occurred in my conversations with Mr. Currie. The Leader and other members of his Party may fret, fume and stamp, but I will not tell this

until Mr. Currie requests that it be told. The Leader ought to be big enough to ignore his personal interpretation and accept the viewpoint put forward in today's *News*—a paper noted for its independence of political thought.

Mr. Casey: That's only one man's opinion.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The editorial in today's *News* is headed "A big job indeed" and states:

Mr. A. M. Ramsay could make a further contribution—

I emphasize the words "a further contribution"—

to the growth and stability of South Australia in his new position as Director of Industrial Promotion. It is doubtful whether a more capable man could have been appointed to this all-important task.

No man in South Australia knows a more capable person than Mr. Ramsay.

Mr. Corcoran: We have never doubted his ability.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: No-one in South Australia can equal Mr. Ramsay in promotional activities in industry.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: Is he better than Mr. Currie?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The honourable member heard what I said: that there is no-one in South Australia to equal Mr. Ramsay in promotional activities. The editorial continues:

Mr. Ramsay's credentials speak for themselves.

Do they not speak for themselves? Of course they do, in the field of promotion. The editorial continues:

As General Manager of the South Australian Housing Trust he has proved himself to be competent in the fields of management and economics, and has shown immense foresight in planning. The measuring stick of his ability has been the progress and influence the trust has had on the State's expansion. He will always be remembered for the part he played in the establishment of Elizabeth, for instance. He helped lure industry to the satellite city—an indication of his public relations skill.

Mr. Virgo: We've been told that Sir Thomas Playford did all that.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Apparently members opposite have lost the point of the argument. Perhaps they do not want to hear any more. I suggest that this editorial expresses the widespread feeling of the population of South Australia. I am confident that the majority of people will support the Government in its intense desire to promote employment and industrial development. How can

anyone, apart from the Opposition, say there is anything wrong in having the strongest team the Government can obtain? Before the last election the Government emphasized the teamwork necessary in industry, housing, land, and research. No stronger team can be assembled. For this reason I urge the Opposition to drop its personal feelings and not to assert that there has been political bias. If there is a personal difference, it is as I indicated last night: that a change has taken place on the basis that we, as a free enterprise Government, place more emphasis on development than does the Opposition. For this reason the Leader has been able to point to a great increase in industrial activity.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: I have done nothing of the kind.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: He has pointed to the very great increase in industrial development effort in South Australia. For this reason, I make no apology whatsoever. We know of the facts that arose over the last three years. In the first two years that the Labor Party was in office, industry received one of the lowest priorities, and South Australia's industrial tempo was slipping away. The Opposition cared not one jot for industrial development. It was under our influence as the then Opposition that the A.L.P., in Government, appointed a Director to do something in the last year or so of its term, and the Leader said this today. Indeed, it was a poor effort in relation to the total, and it ignored the basic talents which are available in South Australia and which we have now brought to the fore.

I again urge the Opposition to drop any idea that we are acting out of a personal bias, because we are not. We have demonstrated our good faith by appointing a past A.L.P. Premier to a position. I do not apologize for what has taken place, and I sincerely thank the people who have joined us and who will take part in the drive for industrial development in the future.

Mr. HUDSON (Glenn): I have rarely been more amazed by a reply to a series of damaging criticisms that have been levelled on someone's administration than I have been this afternoon by the Premier's reply. He says he has no political bias, but he earlier told the House that he and the Opposition were diametrically opposed in political belief, and I suppose that is why the Premier in this particular administrative action has down-graded

the man from private enterprise and up-graded the man from the Socialist Housing Trust! The Premier asks us to believe that, just because he has made some decisions, he has therefore been very active, and that what he has done must be applauded and supported. He is rather like the little boy who has had great fun wrecking his home during the afternoon and, when dad comes home at night, the little boy says, "Look, dad; don't be angry with me; I've been very active, and you know activity is a good thing. I've made a mess, but I've been active, so don't be angry with me, dad."

The Premier has to support with logic the action he has taken. He has to make it clear to the House and to the people of South Australia that what he has done in relation to the various re-organizations that have taken place is an improvement, that there is some rationale to it and that it has a basis in logic. It is simply not good enough to get up in this House and, with great beating of the breast, say, "It must be good, because I've been active." This is a juvenile argument that should be put out of court immediately. What does the Premier say to the criticism? He says that, as a result of the decisions that have been taken by him, there is now no longer one person in charge of industrial development.

In addition, he has said in reply to the question I asked yesterday that Mr. White is the head of the department, but he is only the titular head in relation to any industrial development matters. The Premier knows as well as any other member here that to describe Mr. White as the head is absolutely ridiculous. Who is in charge of the work of industrial development? Who is the public servant who is experienced in relation to this particular matter and who is in charge? Is it Mr. Ramsay; is it Mr. Currie; is it Mr. Barker? Or is it Mr. Phillips? We are told Mr. Phillips has direct access to the Premier. Who makes recommendations to the Premier in relation to co-ordinating activities as between promotion and research? The basic job which the Director of any activity within the Public Service must do and with which he must concern himself is to co-ordinate all the activities that are carried on. That is particularly important in the field of industrial development, because it is not a hit-and-miss business. Industrial development and industrial promotion must be based on going after industry in the fields where research throws up the knowledge that we in South Australia have a

competitive advantage relative to other States or other countries. Who will co-ordinate the activities regarding this vital matter? I suppose the Premier will answer that he will, and our answer to that is that he has not the experience to do it.

The Premier, when he was Leader of the Opposition, made great play of criticizing the previous Premier (now the Leader of the Opposition) for being too busy and for having too many jobs; he should not have taken on the Premiership, the Attorney-General's and the Treasurer's jobs. The current Premier and other members of the Government made great play of that criticism and yet, concerning this fundamental matter, Mr. Ramsay, for whom I have the greatest respect, has been put into the difficult position of being greatly overburdened with the volume of work he has to carry out. Regarding the other Government jobs he has, we have not been told what Mr. Ramsay's decision is and whether he will continue with them or not. I am not arguing about any commitment from Mr. Ramsay with respect to any voluntary activity he undertakes outside ordinary working hours: he is not required to answer to the Premier or any other members of this House regarding those matters. But the fact is that he is General Manager of the South Australian Housing Trust, Chairman of the Municipal Tramways Trust, and a member of the Australian Broadcasting Commission (still a member, I understand, and the Attorney-General was wrong yesterday: what Mr. Ramsay resigned from was the chairmanship of the Listeners Advisory Committee of the A.B.C. and he did that when he became a member of the commission).

We have not been told anything about the re-organization of public activities of Mr. Ramsay that is to take place, and the Premier virtually says, "Well, that's Mr. Ramsay's business; it's none of my business, and it's none of yours." Again, this is not satisfactory. If the job of industrial promotion is as important as the Premier claims it is, then he must be assured, and we must be assured, that Mr. Ramsay is in the position to carry out the onerous duties with which he has been charged yet still effectively ensuring that the Housing Trust is run efficiently, that his job as Chairman of the Municipal Tramways Trust does not suffer, and that his position with the A.B.C. can be carried on. The Premier should be required to give assurances on this matter; indeed, he should need those assurances for his own satisfaction.

The Premier failed completely to answer the criticism that had been levelled by the Leader this afternoon and by other members (and by implication yesterday when questions were asked), criticism making it plain that the whole line of responsibility now established within the Industrial Development Branch is hopelessly mixed up. The Premier seems to think that it is good enough merely to recite a series of names and quote the support of the *News* editorial. So long as someone says it is good enough, the Premier thinks that to be a suitable substitute for logic. I do not know who is the officer who has the necessary experience to see to it that all the activities of Messrs. Currie, Ramsay, and Barker are effectively co-ordinated. It is no good the Premier's saying that, as he is the person at the head, he will do it. The point is that a job of co-ordination has to be done by someone who has experience in industrial promotion and research.

By his remarks this afternoon, the Premier suggested that Mr. Ramsay was much better suited to the job in question than was Mr. Currie. Although I do not want to take away one inch from Mr. Ramsay's reputation, this is a suggestion with which I would respectfully disagree. I agree completely that in certain fields Mr. Ramsay has had great experience and is knowledgeable indeed, but Mr. Currie has qualities in other fields which are just as important and which should be taken into account. I do not believe that Mr. Currie has been given a chance. I agree with the Leader's statement that, because of the action taken by this Government in connection with Mr. Currie, it will now be impossible in South Australia for a Government of any political complexion to attract top men from industry to Government jobs. The Premier says he has no political bias, although he claims in another breath that his political beliefs and those of members on this side are diametrically opposed. He seems to be establishing what will look to many people as a system of spoils to the victor. No longer are Public Service positions to be protected and established when there is a change of Government.

One of the most important traditions we have had in this country (which has been handed down to us from England and in relation to which we have departed completely from the kind of tradition that exists in the United States of America) has been the tradition of the impartial role of the Public Service and of public servants. It has been

the tradition that a new Government could expect to work with public servants who served the previous Government, and has been expected to do so. Now this Government has departed from that tradition. Not only did the Premier fail to answer our criticisms about the hopeless mess in responsibility and organization that seems to exist in the Premier's Department at present, where lines of responsibility are hopelessly mixed up (I am sure that no-one will know from one day to the next what should happen, who should see whom, or who is responsible to whom), but we are still not told who is subordinate as between Mr. Currie and Mr. Ramsay. We still have no answer to the fact that Mr. Ramsay is now, as well as being loaded with more tasks than any other person in South Australia, to be responsible to two Ministers—"The Servant of Two Masters".

I do not know whether you, Mr. Speaker, have seen a play by that name, where the leading role is taken by an actor who acts in the *commedia dell'arte* style. It is a side-splitter. If you ever get a chance to see it, Sir, you should do so: it will have you rolling in the aisle to see the kind of mix-up and the confusion that follows from having a servant of two masters. This is the first occasion of which I know (and I am sure no-one else can give other examples) where a public servant has been made responsible to the Minister of Housing in relation to activities within the Housing Trust and housing matters, and to the Premier in relation to industrial promotion matters. When something is on the borderline between industrial promotion and housing, goodness knows what will happen. The first thing that should have happened, if we were to have this kind of set-up, was that the Premier should have taken over the job of Minister of Housing as well.

Mr. Broomhill: And the position of Treasurer.

Mr. HUDSON: I do not know about that. The Premier obviously realizes that the Treasurer's job will make the Treasurer of this State unpopular, and he believes that Mr. Pearson should be the man who becomes really unpopular, not the Premier. We deserve proper and adequate answers to the arguments adduced. It is not right for the Opposition to be fobbed off with a great lot of hogwash, such as, "We believe in private enterprise and you are Socialists." Whenever the Premier is in a corner, that is the kind of answer he produces. This is not good enough. It is not

good enough to fail to answer altogether a whole series of questions raised by Opposition speakers this afternoon. These are absolutely basic matters on which we have had no answers at all. The Premier did not even call for a report, which is his usual procedure when we ask questions in the House.

This matter should be fully explored. The members of this House and the people of the State are entitled to be given a proper explanation of the rationale of administration established by this series of changes. To me it seems a mess with no rationale behind it at all, and it is about time, if the view I hold is incorrect, that it is explained to me why it is incorrect. It is not good enough for the Premier to continually ignore, day after day, challenges from the Opposition. There has been too much duck-shoving, and it is about time it stopped. I hope the Premier will take up this whole matter with his Cabinet. I suggest he call in the Public Service Board and say, "Help me in relation to this department: I have the lines of responsibility hopelessly mixed up. So far, I have made a mess of them and you, as the experts, should come in and help me straighten them out again." He should say that, because his administration badly needs straightening out at this time.

Mr. CLARK (Gawler): My first thought on hearing the Premier's statement this afternoon was, "This has all happened before." Those of us who have been members since the present Premier was first appointed Leader of the Opposition have seen this type of thing happen over and over again. When an important speech has been made and the honourable gentleman has got up to reply, he has not risen to the occasion. In this case, from the start, he has put his foot in it right up to the elbow. He said that what happened was no surprise to him. It was no surprise to us, either, because we did not think for one moment that the Premier would have the answer: he showed us plainly that he did not. I am not sure whether the Premier accidentally or deliberately misread the letter placed before the Chair. If he did it accidentally, that again is no surprise to us, because he made the same mistake before; and, if he did it deliberately, as I suspect—although it is hard to imagine anyone who has risen to be the Premier of this State (even if only a minority Premier) deliberately making the same mistake twice—I cannot understand him sticking to it. This is the important paragraph in the letter which was addressed to you, Mr. Speaker,

but which was placed fully before the House and, I am sure, before the Premier:

The Director of Industrial Development was induced to relinquish security pension rights and considerable emoluments in order to take the post in which he was guaranteed continuance of employment for five years as the head of the Branch of Industrial Development.

That is the position from which he is now being discarded. The letter continues:

His being removed to another post of a subordinate character to that for which he was employed will gravely endanger the policy of any Government in the future in South Australia to attract from industry senior qualified personnel for important Government positions.

That is perfectly plain. I suggest that anyone who has risen to the position of Premier should be able to understand it. The Premier went to some trouble today to quote from the *News*. He told us that the *News* was a good and unbiased paper that did its best to serve the people of South Australia. I agree with him on that. Let me now quote from an article appearing on page 2 of today's *News*. I will not read it all but there are one or two things of importance, because these are the reactions of certain men who are members of the Industrial Advisory Council, which was set up last year to advise Mr. Currie. It comprises about 30 South Australian industrialists and people connected with industry. Let me quote from the article:

Dr. P. A. Young, director of the Australian Mineral Development Laboratories, said today his only comment on the matter would be that "at the moment the council seems without doubt to be working very well."

We think that, too. He went on to say:

This is a very difficult political question, and the less said the better.

The article continues:

Prof. E. A. Rudd, Professor of Economic Geology at the University of Adelaide, said the first he had known about yesterday's administrative change as a member of the council had been in last night's news of the Assembly proceedings. Prof. Rudd said: "We have been working with both these people. I have no other comment."

Prof. P. A. Karmel, vice-chancellor of Flinders University would not comment.

I do not blame them. Mr. W. Wharton, Miscellaneous Workers' Union secretary, was happy to comment. He said:

Nobody asked our advice as a council. Mr. Currie, for the short time he was there, was doing a good job. To bring in Mr. Ramsay is definitely wrong. Mr. Currie is a capable man in all industrial matters.

The article continues:

Mr. K. M. Bennett, former South Australian general manager of Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited, also would not comment.

Mr. R. A. Beaufoy, director of Tubemakers of Australia Limited, said Mr. Currie was "a very able scientist and will do very well as Director of Research".

We are not denying that: we are sure he will. The article continues:

Mr. R. R. Johnson, managing director of Austral Steel Limited, said, "I think it is essentially a Government decision and I would not care to be quoted in connection with any attitude to it."

I would think that these gentlemen were specifically chosen for this job, which we believe they have been doing well. Members know how it is when a committee or council is formed: it takes some time to get the thing really going. I believe this council has been on the way to doing the job for which it was appointed. I doubt whether there was ever a more important body of men appointed to do a more important job than has been the case in this issue.

Mr. Broomhill: It is a pity they feel this is a political matter!

Mr. CLARK: Some of them are industrialists rather than men working in industry; some of them think it is a political appointment. What we have been wanting to know and what we still do not know because the Premier would not tell us (I do not know whether it is that he is not anxious to tell us or whether it is that he himself does not know) is why this change is being made. We do not know why Mr. Currie is being replaced. We have heard nothing detrimental about Mr. Currie.

I am in no way against Mr. Alex Ramsay. I do not suppose any member of this House, apart from Sir Thomas Playford, has had more to do with Mr. Ramsay than I have, because we have been closely associated, meeting naturally at hundreds of functions, on committees, and so on, because of our common interest in Elizabeth. I have the highest possible regard for him. In fact, I may say that, since I have been in Parliament and have been dealing with my constituents, nobody has been more helpful to me than Mr. Ramsay, because I have had much to do with the Housing Trust. Therefore, I am in no way commenting unfavourably upon him. But what we are still asking (and why will the Premier not tell us?) is why the appointment was made at all.

It was suggested by an earlier speaker today (I think it was the member for Whyalla) that it was done through jealousy. We know that the Premier has an inferiority complex as far as the Leader of the Opposition is concerned—and with every justification, I may add. He feels it is impossible for him to meet the Leader of the Opposition at the same level, so for that very reason the odd political thing must be done. I think it was the member for Whyalla again who suggested that anything done by us must be wrong in the eyes of the present Premier.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: You are not going over the whole argument again, are you?

Mr. CLARK: No, I will leave that to the Attorney-General, for I think he is an expert in that field. What intrigues me is that earlier in his remarks the Premier accused the Leader of the Opposition of "putting on an act". How many times has he said that? Yet he rose to his feet and talked for longer than was necessary to sell us the specious nonsense that did not answer our complaints at all.

Mr. Broomhill: He will have to answer these charges eventually.

Mr. CLARK: It was obvious to his colleagues that he needed help. My little tip, for what it is worth, is that no sooner does the Premier in debates sit down than one of his colleagues jumps to his feet to try to undo the damage the Premier has done—and I suggest that that is what happened in this case. I pointed out that the Premier began on the wrong track (either accidentally or deliberately) and never got on to the right track. The Premier is in the habit of making remarks, in his innocence, that are interesting and revealing to everybody. He says, "We are diametrically opposed in our political beliefs." This is not a political matter.

Mr. McAnaney: But you are trying to make it a political matter.

Mr. CLARK: We believe, as I stated earlier, that the idea of bringing increased industrial development to this State is most important. We considered that the Industrial Development Branch was working well.

Mr. Corcoran: What about repudiating an agreement?

Mr. CLARK: It is almost impossible to understand a Government that has repudiated an agreement, as the member for Millicent suggests. I have a good memory, and I recall that soon after I came into this House there was talk of the Labor Party's being anxious to repudiate an agreement with Broken Hill

Proprietary Company Limited. Some members were literally frothing at the mouth about it. However, as we have heard often, when things are different they are not quite the same. If the action that has been taken by this Government is not repudiation of a contract, I do not know what it is.

If the House wants any proof of the truth of my statement that the Premier was talking specious nonsense, we were given as an example of lack of political bias the matter of the appointment of the late Hon. Frank Walsh to the Forestry Board. It was nice for Mr. Walsh, when he retired, to receive an appointment to the Forestry Board, but would anyone in his wildest imagination compare such an appointment with an appointment similar to Mr. Currie's? We were told that Mr. Currie agreed to the appointment of a chairman, and this could well be so. However, although I am not a betting man, I am prepared to wager that Mr. Currie did not agree to the appointment as chairman of the present occupant of the position.

Perhaps the saddest note in the Premier's speech was his reference to how Mr. Currie, Mr. Ramsay, and the other gentleman would be there and, of course, he would add his position as Premier. I suggest, not unkindly, that that is all he is capable of adding. As has been suggested by one of my colleagues, I do not think that the Premier's experience, extensive though it has been, has been in this field. We still want to know why Mr. Currie was stepped down, but I do not think we will ever be told. We have been told that Mr. Currie is an admirable man, and he is. Why was this alteration made?

The Premier, in concluding his speech, suggested that he thought that that was good enough. Well, it was not. The Leader of the Opposition will explain to anyone who wants to know that it was not easy to obtain the services of Mr. Currie for this job in the first place. He had an important position in one of the biggest companies in the world, an international company. I think he came not for the money (because the salary was not an improvement) but because he thought that all his knowledge of these matters could benefit South Australia. He was correct in thinking that. What hope have we of attracting other men to this type of work, having regard to the treatment that has been meted out to Mr. Currie?

The things that we want to know remain unanswered. I hope that the Premier has a change of heart and gives the House and the

people the answers that they seek. Although the present Premier occupies a very honourable place in this House and this State, he should remember that his position, whilst won legally, was not won with the support of a majority of the people. A large majority of the people wants to know the answers, and I ask the Premier to give them at some time.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE (Attorney-General): I was not at all surprised by the Opposition's move this afternoon. One could anticipate that, out of a matter of this kind and whatever the personal feelings of those involved might be, the Opposition would attempt to make political capital. That is exactly what has happened in the last hour and a half or so. I do not think it matters to the Opposition that Mr. Currie and others are being put in an extremely embarrassing situation by the raising of these matters, and the Premier was absolutely right in refusing to reply to questions asked by the Leader of the Opposition and his followers this afternoon without first obtaining Mr. Currie's personal permission to do so. I consider that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition agrees with me in this matter.

Mr. Corcoran: Yes, but we still want the Premier to approach Mr. Currie to get his permission, and tell us what was said.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: Very well. The Opposition, of course, is in a cleft stick this afternoon. It wants to make political capital out of the Government's decisions, and at the same time it is hampered, because anything Opposition members say is a criticism of Alex Ramsay, the General Manager of the Housing Trust. Everyone in South Australia agrees that he is one of the most outstanding men in the State and a man eminently suited for the post that he has been given. No-one can deny that, but the Opposition had to skate gently around that matter in trying to make something of this motion. The Opposition did not like the Premier's quoting the leading article in the *News*. However, I consider that leader reflects the opinion of the people of South Australia.

Mr. Virgo: Does the *News* determine policy for the L.C.L.?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: No, I am not suggesting that, but it is significant that the leading articles in the *News* frequently support the policies of the Opposition Party, whereas on this occasion the *News* is diametrically opposed to the line taken by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Virgo: You haven't read the leader.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I have. This decision has not been taken suddenly by the Premier or the Government. It is a matter which, in the very nature of things (and I hope members opposite will have enough decency to acknowledge this), has been taken over a long period. We now have the Premier as the Minister of Industrial Development, and he is entitled to conduct his department as he sees fit, in the interests of the State. The Government has taken these decisions because we consider them to be the best way to get results and to get industrial development in South Australia. Let us consider the letter that the Leader of the Opposition wrote to the Speaker asking for this debate. In the first paragraph the Leader said:

... namely, the repudiation by the Government of the arrangements made for the employment of the Director of Industrial Development and his continuing in that position for a period of five years.

Much has been made of this this afternoon, and the Leader went on to suggest that in some way (he could not press the point home, because there was no point to press) Mr. Currie had been prejudiced financially because of the arrangements made.

Mr. Corcoran: He didn't say that.

Mr. Hurst: You ought to listen.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: Let me read the sentence if members opposite want to yap about it. It is as follows:

The Director of Industrial Development was induced to relinquish security, pension rights, and considerable emoluments in order to take the post in which he was guaranteed continuance of employment for five years as the head of the branch of Industrial Development.

Mr. Hurst: Is he the head of the branch?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: Pray let me make the point in my own way. His security of office and his financial position have not been changed one jot or one tittle. He still has the same contract and the same salary as he had before.

Mr. Hudson: Rubbish!

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: It is not rubbish. I assure members opposite that this is the position. The only variation in the contract is in the title that Mr. Currie now bears: there is no other variation at all in this document. Let me read out the one relevant paragraph, in which he is referred to

as the Director of Industrial Development, not (as the Leader of the Opposition would have it) as "the head of the branch of Industrial Development". There is no mention of that in the contract, and yet—

Mr. Hudson: It is the same.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: No, it is not. This is where the Leader, in his haste to make a political point, jumped in a little too quickly without checking the accuracy of what he said.

Mr. Virgo: Give us the answer.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: All right. The relevant paragraph states:

The officer shall be employed for a period of five years commencing on the 21st day of August, 1967, as Director of Industrial Development in the Premier's Department in the said State.

This is the key clause in the contract, and the only variation at all to this document is in the title that Mr. Currie will now bear. There is no suggestion that the term of his employment is to be altered—and, of course, this was an agreement between the then Premier, the Hon. Donald Allan Dunstan and Mr. Currie personally. There is no other variation at all in his position, and he is just as financially secure for just as long a period as he ever was. This Government would not and has not repudiated the agreement. The Premier, as Minister of Industrial Development, is primarily responsible for development in this State and is entitled to make all the arrangements he thinks fit in the execution of the duties in his own department, and this is what he has done.

Mr. Hurst: He is not entitled to repudiate an agreement.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: This is nonsense. The Premier is responsible for his department, and he has rearranged it so that he now has the benefit of the help of Mr. Barker, upon whom the Leader of the Opposition made a scurrilous attack in this House this afternoon.

Mr. Virgo: And justly so.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: This attack entirely ignored all that has been done by Mr. Barker for this State both as a leader in private industry and as Chairman of the Municipal Tramways Trust over a long period, a position he has held without pay. He has never taken a cent for the work he has done as Chairman of the Municipal Tramways Trust, and he has saved this State millions of dollars, yet the Leader of the Opposition saw fit to make a personal attack on him. The

Premier now has Mr. Barker's assistance as well as the assistance of Mr. Ramsay, an outstanding man in this State—no member opposite has dared to attack him. The Premier also has the assistance of Mr. Currie as Director of Industrial Research.

In conclusion, let me say that it is the result that counts, and I am confident that, as a result of the Premier's re-organization of the department, South Australia will see an increased tempo in industrial development. The changes that have been made are in the best interests of the State and have been taken by the Premier and by the Government after long consideration, because we believe that these are the things that will serve the interests of this State.

Mr. Hudson: Were you involved in this?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: Of course I was. The whole of Cabinet was involved in it. Surely the member for Glenelg, who has been a Minister, does not think that these decisions were taken by one man alone.

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

The SPEAKER: Call on the business of the day.

WATER RESOURCES

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr. Nankivell:

(For wording of motion, see page 625.)

(Continued from August 21. Page 756.)

Mr. CORCORAN (Millicent): It is not surprising that the member for Albert has moved this motion, because it is true, as he said earlier, that he has displayed much interest in this matter over a number of years, particularly in respect of the South-East. In his capacity as Chairman of the Land Settlement Committee he has often had cause to hear evidence regarding further drainage works in both the Western and Eastern Divisions of the South-Eastern drainage scheme. He saw fit, on the advice of the Minister of Works, to amend his motion to cover the whole of South Australia rather than only the South-East. I believe his amendment was wise, and the Opposition completely agrees with it. I wonder what has prompted the member for Albert to suggest that a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into this matter, which I believe is a technical one. I am surprised that he did not say how many commissioners there should be or who they should be, because it is customary for the mover of a motion like this to give such information, particularly when a technical

problem is involved. Consequently (and because I do not believe, anyway, that a Royal Commission would serve any useful purpose), I intend to move to strike out "a Royal Commission" and insert "consultants". A good reason for my amendment is that I am sure every member agrees that there is a great and urgent need for the type of investigation that can be carried out by consultants.

The member for Albert said that although he had as much experience as anyone in this field, particularly after listening to and collating evidence concerning the South-East of the State, he was not certain of this information or that information, and that further inquiry was needed. I agree with this contention. I have lived in the South-East of South Australia practically all my life and have been interested in the drainage of this area for many years, particularly since being a member of this House. I emphasize that, for many years, there has been much conjecture about whether the South-East has been over-drained and about the result of this drainage. The South-Eastern Drainage Board commenced operating in 1947, but the Mount Muirhead area was drained in 1871 and people then complained about the costs and the effects of this drainage. So many different theories have been advanced by so many people that confusion arises. In his explanation, the member for Albert said:

Consequently, I have made a point of trying to understand the problem as fully as I can. However, the more one tries to understand the problem, the more difficult it becomes to obtain any definite information. Much of what is known about the water situation is based on premise and, more latterly, on research work that has been carried out.

During the Labor Government's term of office we were unfortunate that the State experienced two dry years, one of them possibly the worst recorded. It was certainly the driest year in the South-East in history. The adverse conditions highlighted the drainage problem. I believed it was imperative that we should do as much as we possibly could at that time to observe and record information about underground water in the South-East, and do whatever we could with the facilities available to build up a store of knowledge for future reference. The Mines Department sank several bores adjacent to drains in the hundred of Colebatch, and in a couple of other hundreds, where drainage had been done and was to be done, and set up observation points in order to record this information, and this work is

still continuing. These activities should have commenced many years earlier.

Also, at the outset of the drainage scheme in the South-East perhaps there was not sufficient co-operation between engineering authorities and agriculturists. If an engineer is asked to drain water from an area, to him it is purely an engineering problem and he will effectively dispose of that water. However, had agriculturists been asked to co-operate and liaise with the engineering authorities, the drainage system in the South-East would probably be different from what it is today. We have had much pressure for, and there has been much talk of, some form of control of drainage in the South-East. My answer to the moves and suggestions made about 12 months ago was that unless we could be sure that the measures adopted would be effective, no responsible Government should spend large sums on such schemes. We should not do this without being certain that sufficient benefit will accrue as a result of the drains and of the use of weirs to control the flow of water.

I am not trying to air any knowledge I have of the movement of underground water in the South-East, because my knowledge is no greater than the knowledge of the member for Albert. Probably neither of us has much to support anything that we may say about what we believe to be the movement of underground water, the effect of drainage, and the effectiveness of control. However, I was surprised to hear the member for Gumeracha (Mr. Giles) say yesterday that the sea was encroaching on land at Salt Creek for about three miles. I think this is pure conjecture, because I do not think he can prove this any more than can the person who told him. However, it may be logical, because in the northern Adelaide Plains there was a danger, because of the reduction of water pressure, that sea-water would enter the basin and cause a real problem. However, this situation was investigated, and the Underground Waters Preservation Act was amended in order to provide the necessary control. With this year's rains the basin has been replenished, so the danger that existed has now been somewhat relieved. We hope that the controls imposed will have the desired effect, so that market gardeners in the area will have an adequate future water supply.

Mr. Nankivell: The Little Para interferes with the normal feeding into the basin.

Mr. CORCORAN: This condition applies, to some extent, in the lower part of the South-East. It was considered at one time that so

much underground water would be used that a similar situation would be created there. However, this area was proclaimed, and now controls exist similar to those applying in the northern Adelaide Plains. These controls are desirable in order to ensure that water is not wasted. The real problem with the water resources of this State is to know where we should go in the future. In order to arrive at this knowledge it is necessary for those people who can do so to properly assess it, make an appreciation from that assessment, and recommend to the Government what steps should be taken. It was interesting to see in yesterday's *News* a statement by Mr. T. A. Hunt-Cooke, a member of the Australian Water Research Foundation, who said that desalination must be South Australia's future fresh water source. That statement was made by a person who is obviously equipped to speak on this matter, as he is a member of the foundation to which I referred. We do not know what progress will be made to find an economic means of desalination, and at present we must still rely on the distillation method that is installed and working satisfactorily at Coober Pedy. This system, too, has been used for many years on ships at sea where there is surplus heat.

Although we do not know how far away the use of nuclear power will be, it is possible that this method will solve our water supply problems without our having to worry about what is available now. However, that seems to be a fair way away, and certainly we would have to take interim measures to contain the situation until an economic means of desalination was evolved. I have said before that the previous Government intended to employ consultants of world-wide experience to investigate the water resources (both ground and underground) of the South-East of South Australia, and this investigation was to be carried out in conjunction with a survey to be conducted by the Engineering and Water Supply Department in the Murray River areas, and also in the metropolitan area on surplus sewage effluent. It was also to inquire into desalination. I believe the previous Government called for submissions from 11 different consultants operating in this field and that it received replies not only from those bodies but from other consultants who had not been invited to make submissions. It is quite obvious, therefore, that the sort of people we need to conduct such an investigation are available. Of course, it could be argued that the Government would have to provide a great deal of money for

such an investigation to take place, and that a Royal Commission would serve the same purpose, but I cannot agree with that.

A Royal Commission could not in any way achieve the sort of things that consultants experienced in this field could achieve. It could be argued, too, that we already have the facilities in our departments to carry out the sort of survey and investigation work that such consultants would undertake, but I do not agree with that proposition either. I think the member for Albert said that we do not have sufficient hydrologists in the Mines Department. However, I believe that the ones we do have are qualified and competent. It was said also that we do not have sufficient staff in the E. & W.S. Department to conduct such an inquiry. If we are to get this inquiry off the ground (and I believe it is urgent that we do so), the Government should immediately set about obtaining these consultants, giving them their work, and letting them go. It could be argued that, of necessity, the consultants would have to draw on the information held in both the E. & W.S. Department and the Mines Department. No doubt a Royal Commission would have to do the same, but in my opinion they could not make the same evaluation as could consultants from the information they receive.

It could also be argued that the staff of these departments could be built up in order to carry out this investigation, but that is not practicable because it would take far too long to recruit such staff. In any event, I doubt whether the conditions in the Public Service would be sufficiently attractive to the sort of person that we would want and the person with the sort of qualifications that he would need to have. Then, too, we would have to consider what to do with these people when the investigation was completed. We would be building up a department to carry out a simple inquiry and, when it was finished, we would be embarrassed to find work for its staff. It would seem obvious, therefore, that we should not build up the department but that we should employ consultants who could thoroughly investigate these matters and who would have the know-how to ascertain the additional information not available now to our departments. Finally, these people could make the necessary recommendations to the Government.

I strongly support the idea behind the move of the member for Albert in urging the Government to do something about an investigation into

the water resources of this State. It is necessary that something be done, and the sooner it is done the better. The only disagreement I have with the honourable member is regarding the method of doing it. I do not believe that a Royal Commission would be effective. Indeed, I think it would be a waste of time, effort and, to a certain extent, money, because the sort of people comprising a Royal Commission would not be able to devote the time, effort or energy required, nor would they have the qualifications necessary to sift through and collate the evidence and make an assessment of what was required. If this information was not available they would have to find ways and means of trying to collect it. Therefore, I move:

To strike out "a Royal Commission" and insert "consultants".

The motion would then read as follows:

That in the opinion of this House, consultants should be appointed to inquire into and report upon the water resources of South Australia, the effect of drainage thereon and the possibilities of conservation, and to make recommendations for the effective utilization of such water.

Mr. HUDSON seconded the amendment.

Mr. ARNOLD (Chaffey): I support the motion of the member for Albert and I commend him for putting it forward. Living in a district that is totally dependent on water conservation for its survival and expansion, I support any Commission that can shed light on the future development of this State. As this State is the driest State in the driest continent, conservation and utilization of water should be foremost in our thoughts.

In the last two months about the same amount of water has flowed into South Australia via the Murray River as we are able to divert effectively in a year for irrigation and for industrial and domestic use. In other words, as we are at present the water that flows into South Australia for the next 10 months from the Eastern States is virtually lost to us for all time. Water conservation is the best form of investment in the State. Whether it be on the Murray River, in the South-East, on Eyre Peninsula or in our mountain ranges, there is no better form of investment for the State than water conservation.

Mr. GILES (Gumeracha): I support the motion for a Royal Commission to be appointed to inquire into water conservation, which is one of the most important subjects before us today. I think the importance of this has already been illustrated by previous

speakers. The Commission's terms of reference would have to be extremely wide, because many aspects of water conservation would be involved. First, our rainfall has to be considered. It has been said that 92 per cent of the rainfall that falls on our catchment areas is wasted in a normal year, so that only 8 per cent of it is conserved and used. The total catchment area in South Australia is only very small, and we should effectively use all of the water that falls in this area.

At present a new reservoir is being constructed in the gorge at Kangaroo Creek, and I believe a new reservoir is to be built on the Onkaparinga River. I consider it will be necessary in the future to build many more smaller reservoirs throughout the catchment area. Quite possibly, the cost of water in these reservoirs will be higher than at present in the larger reservoirs, but this is one way to conserve the water effectively in the catchment area. The water in the basins and the underground reserves must be watched carefully. This has already been pointed out by the member for Millicent regarding water in the South-East. One thing that worries me is that many of the artesian and semi-artesian bores that have been put down are wasting water. There are holes in the Adelaide Hills that must release pressure from elsewhere and waste water.

When a bore is placed at a low altitude and it overflows, surely this water must be draining away from higher country. If it were possible to stop this overflowing bore, a certain amount of water would be conserved elsewhere. This matter should be acted on soon. One of the problems in certain areas of the Upper South-East is that underground water reserves can be contaminated by salt water above the fresh water. I have been told that there are bores in this area that have been abandoned because the water has become saline. This has happened because the salt water above the fresh water has rusted through the casing. These bores have been abandoned, and the salt water is going into the fresh water underneath. If this situation is not watched, the fresh water could be contaminated by the unfavourable salt water above it. One of the major problems today is that we do not know how to use water for irrigation effectively. I believe that in Syria a considerable amount of work has been done on the effective use of water for irrigating crops.

At present, a few private people are watching this aspect closely and are experimenting in this field. A water meter that has been made

by a man in the Adelaide Hills will indicate when irrigation is necessary. It is a gypsum block that is placed between 1ft. 6in. and 3ft. in the ground, and the electrical current through the block can be read from a meter. This indicates how much water is in this area of ground, and from this it can be estimated exactly when to irrigate the area and how much water to use. This is one move to irrigate crops with the correct amount of water and not to waste it. The method of irrigating trees in the Adelaide Hills has been investigated, and it has been found that certain types of overhead sprinklers waste water on some trees. If a tree is small, there is no need to put 2in. or 3in. of rainfall over the whole of the area. It is possible to get more benefit from half the amount of water if it is placed in the correct position so that the tree can use it effectively. When a Commission is formed, it must have wide terms of reference so that it can investigate the many possibilities of conserving water—from irrigation right through to the correct use of water from underground reserves and bores.

Mr. BURDON (Mount Gambier): I commend the member for Albert for moving this motion, but I do not believe that the method he has adopted is the best one. I support the amendment moved by the member for Millicent regarding the appointment of consultants to examine the whole water position in the State. Initially, the motion moved by the member for Albert dealt with the question of South-Eastern waters, and I commend him for his interest over the years in the conservation of water in the South-East. The motion has now been enlarged to cover the whole State. It is vital that some action be taken to conserve water in this State (which is the driest State in the driest continent), and it is vital for the State's future that we now make some effort to conserve water.

Previous speakers have referred to the amount of run-off water in the South-East during the winter, the early summer and, in some cases, throughout the whole year. It has been estimated that in the Eight Mile Creek area, mentioned by previous speakers, about 40,000,000 gallons of water a day goes out into the sea at the low point of summer, and that this figure could rise substantially during the flood period in the latter part of winter. This huge quantity of valuable water should be used but, as many of us know, an effective method of ponding the water has not yet been found. It was announced by the

former Premier (Hon. D. A. Dunstan) that consultants would be invited by the former Government to investigate the State's water resources, including underground water supplies, and to make submissions thereon. When the previous Government went out of office, I understand that several such submissions had been made by oversea consultants but that no firm contract had been entered into in this regard. I believe the time has come when much of the drainage that now takes place must cease and when the role of the South-Eastern Drainage Board must be changed to concentrate on conservation.

Mr. McKee: What about desalination?

Mr. BURDON: I will deal with that aspect a little later. A concerted effort must be made by future Governments to conserve water in South Australia for, whether we live in the South-East or in the drier parts of the State, water is vital to our future progress. Draining water away (and we do not know exactly where that water comes from) may be detrimental to the State in the future, and we must conserve as much as is humanly possible. The Mines Department last year had the opportunity, in what was a very dry year, to make certain evaluations of water resources in the South-East and following these surveys we shall benefit by gaining more knowledge of the underground water resources in that area. The ponding of water in the South-East must be fully investigated, otherwise we shall continue to lose what is a most valuable commodity. Officers of the Mines Department have suggested that it may be possible in certain parts of the Western Division in the South-East to return some of the floodwaters to the aquifers. Various depths of water exist in the underground basins, and the deeper it is the better the quality of the water in most cases.

Many people have been concerned over the years about the origin of this water. In or around 1871 certain work was carried out on the Millicent flats, an area which at the time was covered by a sheet of water extending to the Rendlesham and Hatherleigh areas. As a result of this and subsequent work, and as a result of the Commonwealth Government's land settlement policy following the Second World War, drainage was commenced in the area in 1947 and has continued to the present time. It is up to the Government to determine what is to be the future policy in this regard.

Mr. McKee: It won't be there long enough.

Mr. BURDON: If it is not this Government, it will be our Government, and we shall have to do something about it. The method of conserving water must be decided on and much information must be obtained. I agree here with the Leader's suggestion that local consultants should be engaged to investigate this matter and that, if they are unable to decide what is the best policy, oversea consultants should be engaged. I believe that this approach is better than appointing a Royal Commission, because I believe that those people who have been associated with this type of work in the past are better able to undertake the necessary research.

Indeed, we must investigate the whole of the State's water supplies, including the saline waters in the North. It has been suggested that within the next five or 10 years we could use atomic power in competition with other fuels. The Electricity Trust's plant at Torrens Island will provide power probably for the next 25 years, and we must consider in the meantime providing additional sources of power for use when the Torrens Island station has served its purpose. I am sure that the Electricity Trust has considered this matter. In addition, saline water, which cannot be used at present, may well be converted into a valuable asset in the future for irrigating arid areas.

Mr. McKee: Several parts of the world rely entirely on saline water for maintaining their population.

Mr. BURDON: I believe that is so. Such areas exist in the Middle East, where people have worked wonders in using what was saline water for developing pastures, etc. The main purpose of the motion is to focus attention on the need to conserve water in this State and to investigate thoroughly our water resources. I commend the member for Albert for moving the motion; indeed, in the past and particularly in recent years, our ideas on water conservation have coincided. As I said earlier, I should like to see consultants employed in this connection to carry out a complete investigation into water resources in South Australia and their possible uses, and to make recommendations on how future schemes could be implemented. This matter is urgent and we must get on with the job. However, although I support the intention of the member for Albert, I do not fully support the terms of his motion. Therefore I support the amendment moved by the member for Millicent.

Mr. EDWARDS (Eyre): Water is the life blood of this country and, as the member for Chaffey (Mr. Arnold) said, South Australia is the driest State in the Commonwealth. Therefore, the provision of water, especially through conservation, should be one of our first and foremost aims. I wish to commend the member for Albert for moving the motion. As most people know, much water runs to waste in the South-East when the drains overflow into the sea at the end of each winter. If these drains had locks on them and could be controlled towards the end of winter, millions of gallons could be saved in these huge channels which eventually run dry as water runs from them into the sea.

Mr. Hurst: You could use some of that water in your district.

Mr. EDWARDS: We have plenty of water there if people would harness it. The problem in the South-East must be examined urgently because, if these drains could be blocked off and used in the right way, the South-East would not be nearly so dry as it has been in the past. Drains there should be used when necessary, but otherwise blocked off to conserve the water.

I shall now deal with the problems facing Eyre Peninsula in this regard. Most people know of the Polda Basin, which is one of the smaller basins in the area and which has done a magnificent job. However, alongside this basin is another basin which is not as well known. I refer to the Kappawanta Basin which, as far as I can ascertain, is four times bigger than the Polda Basin. At present it has been tapped only for testing. It has a depth of 8ft. to 12ft. in places and 15ft. to 20ft. in others. It contains an untold quantity of water (research on it is not complete as yet). I believe I am right in saying that water flowing into the sea near Sheringa is the overflow from this basin. The Mines Department will examine this problem. If this overflow water is controlled I am sure it will be sufficient to supply the Lock-Kimba-Polda line. Further, vast quantities of water run into a small lake at the northern end of Lake Hamilton, just off the Eyre Highway, between Mount Hope and Elliston (about half-way along that stretch of road). The water runs into the small lake from the western side—it is quite a fast-flowing stream. I saw it at the end of last summer and I was sorry to see such a vast quantity of fresh water there that eventually flows into the salt lake at Lake

Hamilton. On the north-east corner is another fast-flowing stream of beautiful fresh water. I do not believe any of these areas on Eyre Peninsula has been tapped sufficiently to give any idea of the total water there.

Mr. Rodda: They have never been investigated.

Mr. EDWARDS: Not fully, by any means. There is another basin in the Streaky Bay area and investigations are still continuing to ascertain its depth. Investigations are necessary in this area, because Streaky Bay is growing all the time and will need far more water than it has at present. Vast potential also exists in the Uley-Wanilla area. At present this basin is running over as a result, I believe, of the Tod River reservoir overflowing and causing water to flow down through the Uley-Wanilla Basin. I hope much more research will be done in connection with the water basin on Eyre Peninsula, because I think far more water exists there than we at present believe. I am sure sufficient water exists to meet the needs of Eyre Peninsula for many years to come. As I hope that much more research will be done into water supply in all parts of South Australia, I support the motion.

Mr. McANANEY 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 21. Page 765.)

Mr. McANANEY (Stirling): I disagree with the motion. The Engineering and Water Supply Department makes a substantial loss. If people who use the water do not pay for it, who will pay for it? We must realize that the avenues by which a State Government can raise taxation are limited to land tax, motor vehicle registration, stamp duties and so on. No reason exists why taxation should be increased in those directions and why people paying such taxes should have to pay for water used by other people. I know the member for Port Pirie and the Leader of the Opposition would say that the Commonwealth Government should pay for it; that it can take the money from somewhere else. If that is done, however, we must pay more income tax or bear bigger tariffs, which increases the cost of production of the farmer. If we are realists and practical, commonsense people, we must assess the position and not allow these losses to grow bigger. If water charges have to be increased

(and nobody likes that) it is better that it should be done on the basis of the amount of water being used, and preferably it should be paid for by those actually using excess water, particularly as the rate for excess is lower than the rate for rebate water. As has often been said in Parliament and elsewhere, water is becoming increasingly scarce in South Australia and, the sooner we charge for water according to the amount used, the cheaper it will be for South Australia in the long run, because, if that basis of charging for water is adopted, people in Adelaide will not waste so much water when cleaning their teeth by letting the tap run for a considerable time.

I appreciate that because of living in the country, where rainwater tanks are used and water has to be conserved to enable people to survive. When country people send their children to school in Adelaide and those children come home, they use water far more freely than they used to because they have become used to filling their baths to the top and letting the tap run while they clean their teeth. The consumption of water in the metropolitan area is as high as 100 gallons a head each day. In this dry country, we must ultimately charge for water according to the amount consumed. I know that complications are involved, one of them being that people in the centre of Adelaide pay very high water rates. I know that the member for Glenelg does not believe in this, but he was not at the university when there was a lecture on the incidence of taxation. In the city square the water rates are passed on, because goods are dearer to people in the suburbs; so there is a logical, if not a political, reason for making them pay for the water.

Some farmers have a good water supply from their own systems, and then a water scheme is introduced to their area. They do not use much water from it and they do not get an increase in the capital value of their property as a person in a dry area does with land worth \$10 an acre, which, with water, is worth \$20 an acre. The farmer will use more water, and it is better to charge him on what he uses. So there are some difficulties. Water is supplied at a loss in country water schemes. The revenue collected pays only for the cost of the water and does not cover interest on capital; yet, if a water scheme is put into a district, some people have pipes laid to their properties. Then, if more people

want to come into the scheme, they must pay to be able to connect their pipes to that system.

The Labor Party was justified in introducing this motion, but what happened in its three years of office? It increased the cost of water and charges for extensions to water schemes. Under the Playford Government, an 8 per cent return was required before a pipe could be connected to a scheme; the Labor Party increased that charge to 10 per cent, which made it more difficult for people to connect to schemes in the country. I do not think the Opposition can be critical on this matter because during its three years in office as a Government it certainly increased the cost of water and made it more difficult for people to make a connection to a country scheme. Nobody likes increasing service charges but we must be realistic. We cannot expect another group of taxpayers to make up these losses. The Labor Party, when in Government, increased water charges.

Mr. Riches: Can't you speak about anything without introducing Party politics?

Mr. McANANEY: The member for Stuart moved this motion, from which he expected to gain political kudos.

Mr. Riches: I did not move it for that reason at all.

Mr. McANANEY: If the consumer who uses excess water does not pay for it, the rest of the community must do so. Members opposite accuse me of being political, but what about their three years in office? They claim that as the Opposition they have the right to criticize. That may be so, but we on this side have the right to defend ourselves and criticize members opposite for doing something that meant a bigger penalty on the people.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: You are being political now.

Mr. McANANEY: We are two political Parties. As long as we are honest, we are perfectly justified in saying these things. The member for Albert (Mr. Nankivell) has moved a motion regarding water resources. We want to be able to provide water cheaply for the people. However, the mover of this motion expects another section of the community to pay for the water that costs so much to deliver.

Mr. Riches: Can you say where I said that?

Mr. McANANEY: If we are making a loss on our water supply and that loss is increasing and we do not recoup it from the users of the

water, we must get the money from somebody else. An additional \$400,000 will be collected this year, and \$500,000 in a full year. If we do not collect the extra money in this way, we shall have to impose another tax or decrease our expenditure on school buildings or other services. I may be wrong in saying that this was said by the member for Whyalla (Hon. R. R. Loveday), but one member opposite said during the week that one did not have bookkeeping in Government.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: When did I say that?

Mr. McANANEY: I said I thought it was the member for Whyalla. It was said by him or by another member.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: Be specific. I didn't say it.

Mr. McANANEY: If the statement was not made by the member for Whyalla, I withdraw my remark. However, an Opposition member said that during the week. Government is business. The matters of providing social services for the poor and for deserted wives are matters of the heart. However, the conduct of Government is business and the people who use services must be expected to pay for them. The Government determines the fairest way of collecting the charges. Much as I deplore any increase in water charges, I think this increase is justified, because it has been based fairly in regard to those who use excess water.

The member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) said that the increased charge applied mainly to country people, but the Minister of Works has proved by statistics that the increase will be collected throughout the State. If the honourable member had said that, in deploring the increase, he advocated that the amount involved (\$400,000 or \$500,000) be obtained from moneys that would otherwise be used for school or hospital works if we could not get the money elsewhere, I would say that the motion was non-political. However, in its present form, it is extremely political, and we must deal with it on that basis.

Mr. CASEY (Frome): I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. Corcoran: You deplore the way in which the member for Stirling is carrying on, don't you?

Mr. CASEY: I will not refer to that honourable member, because I cannot follow his line of reasoning on this or any other occasion. However, I remind him that his

colleague, the former member for Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip), was a bitter opponent of any form of sectional taxation and often crossed the floor to vote against such taxes being imposed by the Playford Government. Of the 19 Government members, three represent city districts and 16 represent country districts. This motion affects country people, because there is to be a phenomenal increase of 20 per cent for excess water, and I am sure that, if Mr. Heaslip were still a member, he would support the motion in no uncertain fashion. I do not dispute the figures submitted by the member for Stuart or the Minister of Works. Both gentlemen have their sources of information and I have not had the opportunity to go fully into the matter. However, both sets of figures show that the percentage increase, as it affects country people, is greater.

A statement in the *News* of July 4 last, attributed to the Minister of Works, indicated that householders who used excess water would have to pay increased charges as from the Monday before that date. Why was the public informed three days after the increase had taken effect? It was not right that the people were not notified beforehand. Another announcement appeared in the *Advertiser* of July 5. This is the crux of the problem. The Minister of Works has my sympathy as far as water supply in this State is concerned, but I am critical of the way the Government went about imposing this increase.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: You mean you object not to the principle but to the way we went about it?

Mr. CASEY: I did not say that. I said that the Minister had my sympathy regarding the water position in this State.

Mr. Nankivell: What is the position?

Mr. CASEY: We are in an intolerable position, and the member for Albert, who interjected while out of his place, knows that we rely on water for many things and that we have not as much water available as other States and countries have. The announcement to which I have referred was as follows:

The Minister of Works (Mr. Coumbe) announced today that the excess water rates would be increased by 5c a thousand gallons to meet the increased pumping costs.

Later, I interjected when the Minister was speaking in this House and said, "What are your pumping costs going to be this year?" I said that because the reservoirs were then full: they are still full. It was absolutely ridiculous and completely false for the Minister to make that statement.

Mr. Venning: What about reservoirs in the North of the State? Are they full?

Mr. Corcoran: Is there any pumping there?

Mr. CASEY: I am speaking of the statement attributed to the Minister of Works that the increased charge for excess water had been imposed to meet pumping costs. That statement was not true. Therefore, why should he make it and try to create a false impression in the community? The pumping costs were borne by the previous Government, so no increase was necessitated because of pumping. The previous increase was made in 1965, but the pumping costs, caused by one of the most severe droughts that this State had ever known, came later. It was only through the co-operation of the general public that we were able to get through without imposing water restrictions.

Mr. Venning: What did it cost the taxpayer for free water?

Mr. CASEY: We are debating a motion relating to a 20 per cent impost on people in country areas. I hope the member for Rocky River emulates his predecessor and votes against the motion, because it is a sectional tax. Some members of this House live in areas that receive an annual rainfall of as low as 5in. and most of the population in the North live in areas receiving a rainfall between 9in. and 12in. These people must use excess water if they are to have the facilities that exist in other parts of the State. The towns must have grassed ovals, for instance. For years I have had the unpleasant experience of playing football on ovals with 1in. of bull-dust on them, but we did not complain. The member for Albert can laugh about this, because he lives in an area blessed with a high rainfall, and he has never had this trouble.

Mr. Nankivell: Rubbish!

Mr. CASEY: Then why criticize?

Mr. Nankivell: I am not criticizing. I just said that we are fed on bull dust here.

Mr. CASEY: People in the lower rainfall areas should be entitled to reasonable facilities such as exist in other parts of the State that receive a higher rainfall. These increased charges will cost most councils in the lower rainfall belt in the North between \$500 and \$1,000. Indeed, the Peterborough council will pay more than \$500 a year to provide facilities. This will, of course, result in an increase in council rates, and the people will also have to pay excess water rates on their own properties. This is an added burden on country people.

Members opposite say that they are fighting for the country people. Well, let us see if they are fair dinkum now. I do not want to draw politics into this. Members opposite can smile, but they should face facts. I would prefer to have an overall increase on rebate water so that everyone in the community would pay an equitable share. We are all members of the community, whether we live in the country or in the city. Time and time again we hear members opposite (and, occasionally, the member for Victoria) say that we must protect the man living in the country. Members opposite say they represent the country interests. Indeed, in the Electoral Bill that came before us, it was said that we must have less people—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is getting off the track.

Mr. CASEY: It all adds up to one thing: if they protect the country people in one respect, they do not protect them overall. Members opposite cannot have it both ways; it just suits their argument on this occasion. It is unfortunate that the Minister of Works has been put in the most unusual position of having to decide how he will get more revenue for the Engineering and Water Supply Department. As any increase in the cost of excess water will, in the main, affect country areas the Government must examine this matter closely, because the South Australian community should be treated as one. In other words, we should not differentiate between country people and people living in the metropolitan area.

It is unfortunate that we have in this State such low rainfall areas to our North. I do not know exactly what the Government intends to do to try to keep people in country areas. Country people have to pay far more than the price charged in the city for any commodity: foodstuffs, comforts for the home, or luxuries. Therefore, it costs much more, on those items alone, to live in the country than it does to live in the city. Now, of course, country people are to be burdened once more, because they must use excess water. It is not fair that they should have to pay an extra 20 per cent.

The member for Stuart has mentioned that many market gardeners live in the Napierby area. The livelihood of these people is greatly affected. Some of them will have to cut back on the crops they sow, so their incomes will be greatly reduced. Whichever way one looks at it, the economics of the whole situation affect them.

The Hon. J. W. H. Coumbe: Is not supply one of their problems?

Mr. CASEY: I do not know whether there is an over-supply in those areas on certain foodstuffs, but there could be. However, that is only one section. Other people living in country areas use excess water because they are not blessed from the heavens, as are other parts of the State. In fairness to the community as a whole, it is time the Government examined this problem on an overall basis and said, "No matter where you live in the State, we will treat you the same." If we looked at it in this light, instead of increasing the charge for excess water we would increase the charge for rebate water. Then, everyone would have the same opportunity. I am against an increase for excess water, because it is a sectional taxation. I call it "sectional" because it will affect a section of people living in a part of the State much harder than it will affect other people living in the higher rainfall areas.

The Hon. J. W. H. Coumbe: Wouldn't an increase in rebate charges lead to some waste?

Mr. CASEY: If there was a continuation of the campaign held during the last two years, in which the people were encouraged to conserve water at all times, there would be no reason why we could not gain their co-operation and thereby avoid the waste referred to by the Minister. This was proved during the Labor Government's term of office. As the member for Stirling (Mr. McAnaney) said, people who live on country properties and must arrange their own water supply are very conservative in using water. I am one of the people referred to by the honourable member, so I can say that such people are definitely water conscious; they must be. The campaign conducted during the last two years has brought home to the people what a very precious commodity water is and how carefully we should conserve it.

I commend the member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) for raising this matter because these increased charges for excess water will unnecessarily affect many country people. I do not think there is any justification for these increased charges. Country people must pay extra for excess water, and they must pay extra for beer, for bread and for milk. No matter which commodity we think of, country people must pay extra.

Mr. McAnaney: If a farmer milks cows, he does not have to pay extra.

Mr. CASEY: This is where the member for Stirling is wrong. He thinks that people who live on properties are the only people who live in the country. I wonder whether he has worked out what percentage of country people live in country towns. People who live on properties are in the minority. People who live in country towns have no access to cows to supplement their milk supplies. Irrespective of where a person lives in the country, he has to pay extra for every commodity, so there is no justification for increasing excess water charges. In connection with the important industries at Whyalla, if we make excess water charges almost prohibitive for country people, how will we be able to encourage people to stay in the country? They are flocking to the city now. The Government wants a festival hall in Adelaide, and it can pay out another \$1,000,000 without any trouble at all for it, but providing water in country areas at a reasonable price is more beneficial to the State than is a festival hall. Water is absolutely essential. Power supplies are also very important in country areas, particularly to industry and to householders, but concessions are made in respect of electricity charges for country consumers so that country charges are within 10 per cent of metropolitan charges.

Country people are just about fed up with the attitude of politicians who claim that they represent country areas and that they will protect the interests of their electors. Here is an opportunity for country members to voice their opinions very strongly about these increased excess water charges on country people, particularly those in northern areas, which have less rainfall than do other areas. These increases have already been levied; they were first levied on July 1 and announced three days later. The Government must reconsider these increased charges, which are most unfair. I realize that it costs the Engineering and Water Supply Department an enormous sum to supply water to country areas.

Mr. Rodda: Then how do you think it can be paid for?

Mr. CASEY: I cannot tell the Government what to do, because I am not a member of the Government. Apparently, members opposite, particularly the member for Victoria—

Mr. McAnaney: Will you say—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Stirling is distinctly out of order.

Mr. CASEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members opposite do not want country people to have a water supply. A few minutes ago the member for Stirling (Mr. McAnaney) contributed to this debate.

Mr. Clark: Government members are making politics out of it.

Mr. CASEY: Of course they are. It is amazing that members opposite strongly voice their opinions in favour of country areas but when the chips are down they are afraid to speak up on behalf of their districts. The member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Evans), the Liberal and Country League candidate in the Millicent by-election, and others have said in no uncertain fashion that, if a matter did not suit their electors, they would cross the floor and vote against the Government. We shall see whether they do so on this occasion, because these charges affect more people than honourable members opposite realize. I do not know whether they affect the Onkaparinga District, because it is fortunate that it is blessed with a good rainfall. The member for that district should come to my area, because I would be delighted to show how people there value water. I support the motion and sincerely hope that all members will give much thought to it. If we are to keep people in the country areas we must give them, at a reasonable price, the facilities that exist in the metropolitan area. I sincerely hope that country people will never be forced to come to the city because of increased charges such as these.

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 21. Page 770.)

The Hon. R. S. HALL (Premier): I do not intend to address myself to this motion for as long as it took the member for Glenelg to move it. I think he really excelled himself, because I have a copy of his speech, pasted nicely in chronological order, and it goes on and on and on. The details show one inaccuracy after another and I believe, because of the activities of the member for Glenelg, that these details of inaccuracies are deliberate.

Mr. Hudson: You substantiate that, now.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I will do that.

Mr. Hudson: Prove that it is deliberate, or you will withdraw your remark.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Surely—

The SPEAKER: Order! Order! The honourable Premier.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Many statements are hurled by Opposition members at members on this side, but as soon as they are put back a bit they stand on their pride and talk about withdrawal. I shall be pleased to withdraw if the honourable member's pride is hurt. However, his remarks seem to have little support from members on his side, although his speech went on and on. One important objective of the honourable member's speech was to prove, somehow, that it was the new Government that first started to speak of alternatives to the Chowilla scheme. He said that we first started the move for alternatives to be considered, and that we had alienated the support and goodwill of the Commonwealth Minister for National Development. By going through the speech one can pick out references to the fact that we made a bad friend of this Minister.

Mr. Corcoran: Didn't you have tea with him this morning?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: In fact, I had lunch with him. I did not invite the honourable member, and perhaps that was a mistake. Does the honourable member still consider that he could be wrong in his assumption that we have made a bad friend of the Minister for National Development?

Mr. Hudson: Did he say that Mitta Mitta was as suitable as Chowilla?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: That has nothing to do with the case. I am on the best of terms with the Minister, but I suppose the member for Glenelg will say that I should not be. Perhaps the member for Glenelg considers that if I am a good friend of the Minister I am not pushing the case sufficiently. No doubt something will displease the honourable member about my relationship with the Commonwealth Minister. Having read some of the honourable member's speech, I find it contains some amazing statements. The motion, particularly the second paragraph, is based on inaccuracies.

Mr. Hudson: Which one?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: If Opposition members listen for long enough I will prove that. I have proved that the charge that this Government is a bad friend of the Commonwealth Minister is obviously not correct. The

Minister has made a statement, and perhaps Opposition members might like to look at television tonight. It seems that it is not a good thing to be friends with him now, although it might have been when the member for Glenelg made his speech. Apparently, Opposition members are now changing their tune. In his speech the member for Glenelg said:

... the first action they took in Government was to withdraw instructions given by the previous Government to South Australia's commissioner, namely, to vote against any deferment or indefinite postponement of the Chowilla dam.

Instructions were never withdrawn. Before dealing with these instructions, I wish to speak about who first started to talk about alternatives. The minutes of the River Murray Commission meeting prove who it was and when it was that alternatives were suggested. The honourable member, in his diatribe, charged this Government with being the first to do this, but what is recorded in the minutes?

Mr. Broomhill: What does *Hansard* say?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: On August 11, 1967, the 212th meeting of the River Murray Commission was held.

The Hon. B. H. Teusner: Who was in Government?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The Australian Labor Party. Part of the minutes of the meeting state:

At the 211th meeting of the commission on May 10, 1967, the technical committee was directed to carry out an investigation into the effect of Chowilla reservoir on the regulation of the river. These studies were to include variations of the flows at Wentworth, capacity of Chowilla reservoir, and different levels of restrictions in normal annual diversions by the upper States. It was considered that such an investigation would provide an up-to-date evaluation of the benefits due to Chowilla, bearing in mind the changes in data and operating procedures since the submission of the previous report in 1961.

In a further extract of the minutes, Mr. Reddoch said that he considered that the information at present available did not justify an approach to the respective Governments for an increase in the estimated cost of Chowilla to \$68,000,000. These extracts from the minutes are relevant and are in a chronological sequence. They hide nothing and do not give a false impression. They may be examined if a member wants to do so. A further extract states:

The President suggested that a cost benefit analysis was required to persuade Governments that Chowilla was a good proposition. In

view of the increased cost, he suggested that a report go to Governments saying that the interim report cast doubt on the size required for Chowilla but that additional studies were being done.

Another extract states:

Mr. Reddoch suggested—

Mr. Hudson: Who is Reddoch?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Of New South Wales. The extract continues:

Mr. Reddoch suggested that there was no alternative to deferment, but did not care to await a consultant's report which could mean more than 12 months' delay. He did not consider that salinity was the primary issue, it being only one of a number of aspects of the whole problem. The cost was the main thing causing deferment and the commission should advise the South Australian Government that it could not see its way on present information to recommend acceptance of the higher estimated cost by the contracting Governments. The commission then resolved that:

(a) Having regard to the changed relationship between costs and benefit of the Chowilla project since it was previously assessed in 1961, the River Murray Commission recommends to contracting Governments that the project be deferred pending further investigations.

(b) Further, in view of the fact that the South Australian constructing authority is holding tenders for this work, it be asked not to accept any tender currently held and arrange to reduce all expenditure on the Chowilla project to a minimum as rapidly as possible.

Mr. Beaney wished it to be recorded that as he could see no effective action in forwarding Chowilla arising from his dissent he reluctantly concurred with the resolution.

It was decided that telegrams should be sent to the respective Governments. Another extract states:

The commission then decided that the technical committee should determine the pattern of future studies and refer these to the commission for their concurrence before proceeding. These studies should include, *inter alia*, the following:

- (1) Further study of the Chowilla proposal.
- (2) The value of Dartmouth dam on the Mitta River and/or the Murray Gates dam on the Murray River, upstream from Hume reservoir.
- (3) Storage possibilities of Lake Benanee (its use as an *en route* storage only).
- (4) The continued use of Menindee Lakes.
- (5) (i) Equal sharing by the three States in a period of restriction, and
(ii) the possibility of South Australia being unrestricted at all times.

With regard to the letter from Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners it was agreed that in view of the deferment of the Chowilla project no action other than the general acknowledgement of the letter should be taken.

Those decisions were made on August 11, 1967.

Mr. Broomhill: What does all that mean?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: It means, of course, that at that stage the South Australian representative agreed to the alternative studies.

Mr. Hudson: He agreed to further studies on Chowilla.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Cannot the member hear? Is he so full of his own thoughts that he can get nothing else into his head?

Mr. Hudson: Don't be stupid.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I agree: we do not want both of us to be stupid.

Mr. Clark: Didn't Mr. Beaney ask for his dissent to be registered?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The commission decided, and every decision must be unanimous. The minutes of the River Murray Commission meeting of October 10, 1967, are as follows:

The technical committee had submitted a plan for further studies aimed at producing a long-range plan for additional regulation of the waters of the river including the determination of the optimum size of storages in the Upper Murray and Chowilla. This plan consisted of two parts, the first designed to determine the improvement in deliveries to the States by the modification or amendment of the existing conditions governing the distribution of water between the States without the construction of new works. It was considered this could be achieved by 24 studies made up of combinations of the following:

The minutes then refer to studies relating to the Menindee Lakes, sharing during restrictions, and minimum supplies to upper States during worst drought, and so on. Later, the following appears:

Studies in the second part would include, but not necessarily be limited to:

- (a) the use of Euston storage to reduce the operation loss adopted in previous studies by 50 per cent.
- (b) the use of selected capacities of Upper Murray or Mitta River storages at the following sites:
 - (i) Murray Gates
 - (ii) Dartmouth or Gibbo
 - (iii) Murray Gates and Dartmouth or Gibbo.

It is all here. Do members opposite disbelieve the minutes of October 10, 1967?

Mr. Hudson: It's barely possible to understand them, the way you are reading them. You will make these minutes available?

Mr. Langley: He said that.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: There is nothing in them that we wish to hide.

Mr. Hudson: You've certainly been prattling on.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The member's verbosity is in *Hansard* for all to see. He has repeated himself in this House, as is well known of him. He is always duplicating his remarks, and he invariably explains his questions twice. The minutes continue:

The commission agreed with the proposed plan for the studies but indicated that the technical committee should have freedom to modify the plans if necessary. The committee was urged to complete the studies as soon as possible consistent with making a thorough investigation of the long-term regulation of the river employing all physical means such as frequent visits to the computer in Canberra if required. An interim report should be submitted after the completion of the first part of the studies. The commission agreed that the Snowy Mountains Authority should be requested to make sufficient site investigations of the two Mitta storages to supply the commission with a feasibility report and an accurate preliminary estimate of cost. A sum of \$50,000 was placed on the construction estimates for this purpose—

that is a deliberate financial backing regarding those investigations—

The commission also resolved to ask the constructing authority for South Australia to supply a cost—capacity relationship for Chowilla dam with and without a lock.

Those are the minutes of October 10, 1967.

Mr. Hudson: Are you going to make available the minutes of this year's April meeting?

The Hon. J. W. H. Coumbe: I'll give you a copy.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The minutes strengthen my contention that the study of alternatives to Chowilla was definitely agreed to well before the previous Government went out of office, yet members opposite told the people of South Australia repeatedly that we were responsible for suggesting alternatives.

Mr. Ryan: So you were.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Does not the member for Port Adelaide believe the minutes?

The SPEAKER: Order! Order!

The Hon. R. S. HALL: If members opposite desire confirmation of what I have said, we can go back to the famous "give-away" that took place in the House on August 15 last year when the then Premier moved:

That Standing Orders be so far suspended as to enable me to move the following motion without notice forthwith: That, in the opinion of this House, assurances should be given by the Governments, the parties to the River Murray Waters Agreement, that whatever action is taken by the River Murray Commission concerning the Chowilla dam or any alternative proposal, South Australia will be provided with water in dry years to the extent intended to have been assured by the Chowilla dam project.

Members opposite know that at that time that motion was bitterly opposed by members of my Party; it was only after the Government realized that it was in political trouble with the people that it agreed to listen to us, and I moved an amendment which the Government would not accept. Having conferred with Labor members, I agreed verbally to the amendment it then moved, and the Opposition knows that. Members opposite would not have moved that amendment without our agreement, nor could they have moved it, in view of the public's attitude to the matter. It was more our amendment than anyone else's.

Mr. Broomhill: Don't you agree that you supported our proposal?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: It was not an A.L.P. Government proposal.

Mr. Broomhill: I moved it myself.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Under pressure from us, knowing the background of the situation.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R. S. HALL: What did the Labor Government intend to convey? It moved the motion that I have read. At the time, the Hon. C. D. Hutchens said:

I urge the House to support the motion.

The Hon. G. A. Bywaters said:

I support the motion by the Premier.

The Hon. J. W. H. Coumbe: Including an alternative!

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Yes. Mr. Curren said:

I support the motion, and I commend the Premier for bringing this matter before the House.

Mr. Broomhill later moved an amendment, as he knows, at the suggestion of the then Opposition.

Mr. Hudson: Rubbish!

The Hon. R. S. HALL: It is not rubbish. Why should the then Premier move a motion and then suddenly find that he must amend it?

The Hon. J. W. H. Coumbe: Why did the honourable member amend his own Leader's motion on two counts?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Order! There is too much interruption. I must ask honourable members to obey the Chair. They know Standing Orders as well as I. I did not make Standing Orders: they clearly provide that there shall be no interruption when a member is speaking. The Premier is entitled to make his speech whichever way he likes. If it is

not approved of, that is not his fault; but interjections are out of order, and I must ask members to obey the Chair.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The River Murray Commission minutes prove that the previous Government, in 1967, agreed to its representative's voting for the study of an alternative to the Chowilla site.

Mr. Broomhill: You said that the minutes showed dissent from the decision. You quoted that.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: That is a false argument.

Mr. Lawn: You cannot remember what you read.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R. S. HALL: If the member for Glenelg did not treat this House like a side-show, limited his speeches to a proper length and condensed them so that they had some useful content that one could recognize, perhaps he could present a case; but now he is saying that the representative under his Government's direction had agreed to something that he did not agree to and the Government put forward an alternative proposal. This is what the honourable member said in his speech the other week:

All this Government has done is to vote for the investigation of the Dartmouth site as an alternative to the Chowilla dam.

This was done in 1967 but all we have done is this, apparently! That is absolutely false. I will prove to the honourable member that his assertion is false. We have not fallen foul of the Minister for National Development, and he goes on to say, ". . . by promoting the investigation of the Dartmouth site to go ahead." He is saying that we have now done what his Government did: to try to unload the blame in this serious matter, one of the largest single projects in which we have ever been involved, the supply of important national resources required for development in South Australia. The member for Glenelg is deliberately and falsely trying to imply that we deliberately initiated the investigation of an alternative site. He went on to claim that the A.L.P. itself had amended its motion in 1967, although in reality it was amended under our auspices in this House.

Mr. Hudson: What nonsense!

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I ask leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

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

LOAN ESTIMATES

In Committee.

(Continued from August 27. Page 872.)

Grand total, \$91,640,000.

Mr. CASEY (Frome): Last evening, before I asked for progress to be reported, I was saying that the Commonwealth Government knew before the Premiers and Treasurers got to Canberra how the Loan funds to be allocated to the State were to be divided. In other words, the piece of cake had been cut into slices by the Commonwealth Treasurer for handing out to the States in the appropriate manner. I draw members' attention to some of the reports that have appeared in the press on this very subject. The *Advertiser* of Wednesday, June 26 contained a report that the Government planned to boost housing. This in itself reads very well. However, as has been pointed out, housing has not had a boost in this State. In fact, the Housing Trust is \$1,500,000 worse off than it was last year, so how on earth can a statement of this nature be truthful in all its aspects? It is just not true.

Admittedly, the Government has said that it will slightly increase the allocation of money to the building societies. However, even when that is taken into account, the overall allocation to housing in this State has been reduced by about \$1,000,000, and this will have a detrimental effect on the building industry. The Government has decided to increase the maximum State Bank loan from \$7,000 to \$8,000, and as the total grant for housing has been cut back it will mean that fewer people will be able to obtain the maximum loan, which most people requiring finance try to get.

It is interesting to get the opinions of members opposite. For example, the member for Eyre (Mr. Edwards) said last evening that he believed this was a free country (I, too, think it is) and that a newspaper should be able to print what it believes to be best for its readers. I consider that to be completely wrong, because to my way of thinking that is a form of censorship. I do not believe that the newspapers have any right to print what they consider to be best for their readers.

Mr. Clark: Who is the judge of that?

Mr. CASEY: That is the whole point. We had an illustration of that today when the Premier referred to a leading article in the newspaper. As this was merely the opinion of one man, I do not think the article was

fair to the community as a whole. Unfortunately, once something becomes an editorial and goes to all sections of the community it is often taken as gospel. I think this is where the press falls down. In many of the countries that are being suppressed at the moment, the first thing that happens is that the occupying country imposes a press censorship. I consider that by and large the press in this country does a pretty good job. Nevertheless, in its leading articles it does favour statements made by a particular political Party, even though those statements are often not the complete answer or the complete truth.

I am concerned about matters affecting the Engineering and Water Supply Department. This afternoon we discussed a motion, and I am concerned because many organizations, particularly corporations and district councils, have been told that later this year the price of water will be increased. For many years it has been the practice for councils, when constructing roads, to fill their water tanks from the main, at a certain flat rate. I forget the rate of charge, but it is 40c or \$1.40, or something like that. I think that most of these mains will soon be metered and councils will have to pay the amount shown on the meter. This will be an added cost to councils.

The amount of Government grants made this year to councils by the Government, through the Minister of Local Government, is shocking compared with grants made in the last few years. For example, the grant to the corporation of the town in which I live has been reduced from \$12,000 last year to about \$4,000 this year.

The Hon. R. S. Hall: What was it in the year before?

Mr. CASEY: The grant from the Playford Government in 1964-65 was \$3,460. When we came into Government, the amount increased to \$5,221, and in 1966-67 it was about \$12,000. I am speaking of the corporation only: the grant to the district council is much higher.

The Hon. R. S. Hall: There was a special reason for that grant in 1966-67, wasn't there?

Mr. CASEY: No, it was just the normal grant. As the Premier should know, councils make application for grants to carry out works in the ensuing year and if the Minister, through his departmental officers, is satisfied that the work is necessary, the money is granted. Apparently this sort of reduction is occurring all over the State. Is this a great incentive for country districts? It seems that some council employees may lose their jobs. Councils

will have to ask for special grants such as the Labor Government made because of the drought, when farmers could not work their properties and funds were provided so that these men could earn money to maintain themselves and their families.

I do not know what the corporation will do with a grant of only \$4,000. It will have to put its plant back almost as soon as it gets it on to the road. I am critical of the meagre grants to councils and I am concerned about the metering of water mains, particularly in the North because of the dry ground, where, we have to use much water to consolidate the roads. For this purpose we probably use five or 10 times as much water as is used in the metropolitan area.

I wish to raise another matter that shows just how out of touch are some members opposite. Last year the Woods and Forests Department had a surplus of milled timber in the stack worth more than \$2,000,000 and, as has been mentioned by the member for Glenelg (Mr. Hudson), instructions were issued to the Housing Trust that it should include in contracts for building trust houses a condition that softwoods from the Government mill should be used, and quite rightly so. It is high time that the Government started to patronize its own industry. This is one of the best money-spinners that this Government and this State has. The Woods and Forests Department in the South-East has been acclaimed on all sides.

Members new to this House may not realize that in 1933, I think, Sir Thomas Playford wanted to sell the Woods and Forests Department to private enterprise. I recall that the present Premier, in his policy speech prior to the last election, said that Sir Thomas Playford discovered the Leigh Creek coalfield. I can assure the Premier that coal was discovered at Leigh Creek long before Sir Thomas was born, so I do not know what he had to do with finding it. The member for Eyre (Mr. Edwards) said that softwood could not be used in certain areas of the State because white ants would eat it. Of course they will eat it if the timber is taken straight from the stack and used in floors! This timber, however, is treated to combat white ants, and the honourable member should know this.

Mr. Edwards: They still eat it, though.

Mr. CASEY: If the honourable member has a word with the Woods and Forests Department, he will find that it will guarantee the

treated product. Fence posts are also treated to withstand both the weather and termites, with which the member for Eyre is completely out of touch. He accuses me of raising matters connected with his district. I have not yet done this, but I intend to do so because I resent his attitude. All I did on one occasion was ask questions about a political meeting reported in a paper that came from his district. Such questions had nothing to do with district matters.

Mr. Clark: You were only trying to be helpful.

Mr. CASEY: Yes; if a member shows resentment of this sort, he is asking for trouble. Before the Kimba main is completed I hope the Minister of Works will take into consideration that most of the Housing Trust houses at Kimba are above the level of the storage tank. Consequently, they will be unable to take advantage of the existing mains. I am surprised that the member for Eyre does not know about this important problem, but I am sure the Minister of Works will look into it. If he does not do so, it will not be possible for all houses built on land purchased by the Housing Trust in Kimba to be connected to the mains. These and similar matters should be brought to the attention of the Minister so that advantage can be taken of the time between now and when the main to Kimba is completed. The Minister need not notify me of the outcome: if he notifies the member for Eyre I shall be satisfied, because I do not mind doing his job for him. For the benefit of the new members opposite I emphasize that never before in the history of this State was more money spent on hospitals than when the Labor Government was in office. We raised the level of hospital services from the worst in the Commonwealth to the best.

Mr. Hudson: That is particularly true for country subsidized hospitals.

Mr. CASEY: It is. Many of the present allocations in the Estimates resulted from the efforts of the Labor Government, because they were planned and ready to be put into effect when, earlier this year, we were so unceremoniously deprived of our rightful place on the Treasury benches. When we consider the Estimates we realize that what members opposite claim they will do is completely untrue. They will not get this State moving in any circumstances, because, unless money is used to boost the economy of this State, it will not move. A couple of years ago when there was a recession, the Labor Government was charged by Opposition members with

absolutely deflating the situation but they must realize that 90 per cent of all secondary industry production in this State must be sold outside this State. The 1,000,000 people living in South Australia cannot consume all that this State produces, so we rely on markets in other States. There is nothing sinister about that: it is common sense. We cannot expect people to own two washing machines, although perhaps the Premier owns two, as he has plenty of dirty linen! When General Motors-Holden's experienced a falling off in sales some time ago, caused by a recession in the Eastern States, men had to be put off in this State. That organization also experienced a falling off in sales when the Ford organization introduced on to the market the Falcon car, a car which was a good seller but which was not manufactured in this State.

All this put South Australia in a rather depressed situation, and it was not until General Motors-Holden's and Chrysler (Australia) Limited (which introduced the Valiant car) experienced an increase in sales that the State's economy began to recover. This State, particularly in regard to its employment situation, depends mainly on the sale of manufactured goods. The facts and figures contained in the *Commonwealth Year Book* indicate that more people every year are leaving the land, landholders and farm labourers alike. These people must obtain employment elsewhere, the only work available to them being that in industry generally. We rely on markets in other States, and if a recession occurs in other States we feel the brunt of it in South Australia. There is nothing we can do to alter these Estimates—

Mr. Hudson: We can move for a reduction.

Mr. CASEY: The member for Semaphore has indicated that. Although I have no wish to do that, I know that the Treasurer wishes to get these Estimates through as soon as possible. However, I think the propaganda accompanying these Loan Estimates has been most unjustified. There has been a covering up of the whole position. Economists throughout the world today believe that, once an economy starts to decline, more money must be pumped into it to get it on its feet again. We must keep money circulating. I see the member for Stirling, brilliant economist that he is, smiling. He knows that is perfectly true. If the working community of this State or any other State or country do not have money in their pockets that they can circulate (because the working community are the people who

spend their money), they cannot keep in circulation the money that maintains a buoyant economy. However, these Loan Estimates do not provide any incentive, in the true sense of the word. The publicity given has been distorted, because the Government claimed it would boost the building industry. That is not true. How can it do that when \$1,500,000 less is available? I support these Estimates, but I shall have more to say later.

Mr. EVANS (Onkaparinga): I congratulate the Treasurer and his department upon these Loan Estimates, which are a sound document. We all realize that we cannot put South Australia back on the road to prosperity overnight, because it took the Australian Labor Party nine months of Government to drag it down to its present level, and it kept it down for the following 2½ years, so at least that Party must give us nine months in which to start back on the road to prosperity. These Loan Estimates will start us in that direction.

Mr. McKee: Why do you need nine months? Are you going to have a baby?

Mr. EVANS: We have been left a baby that will need much nursing and feeding by the people to get the State back on the road to prosperity. That is because of lack of nutrition, brought about by the A.L.P. The Leader of the Opposition stated that he believed the only chance of doing this, or the main way to achieve it, was to increase taxation.

Mr. Langley: Is that what you are going to do?

Mr. EVANS: Whether or not we shall do that does not matter, but this is the former Treasurer's own statement, and he is the man who left the State in this position. It has been stated by a member opposite that our present Treasurer should be the Premier. In the past one man was the Premier, Treasurer, Minister of Housing, and Attorney-General. We on this side did not have to put all our eggs in one basket. We had several members capable of being Premier but we decided to split the portfolios so that justice could be done to them. We are confident that the present Premier will carry this State back to prosperity.

Just outside my own electoral district there is to be built an addition to the Raywood Training Centre, and it has been estimated that \$112,000 will be used from Loan funds for it. I am disappointed that the Public Buildings Department has decided to use bricks instead of the type of stone used in the original

building. I believe we should have retained the character of the building as it was originally built for Sir Alex Downer as his home in the Adelaide Hills. This could have been done with only a little more expense, and at least some of the natural heritage of that area would have been preserved.

Also, the Murray pipeline is being constructed, and I am pleased that this will bring a little more employment to the Onkaparinga and Gumeracha Districts. It will help particularly the area around Mount Barker, where some people have been out of work during the last two or three years because of the depressed state of the building industry. I imagine that some of these people will be able to obtain labouring work with the Engineering and Water Supply Department to see them over this very difficult period.

One member opposite said that employment figures for the last two quarters had been lower. Members opposite cannot blame us for this. It will take us some time to move along. For at least one and a half of the six months in question, the Labor Party was in Government, and we on this side still have this baby to nurse and to bring back to good health. There is no doubt that we will do that. It has been said that there is an army of unemployed, but I believe that during the next 12 months we will see a big reduction in unemployment.

The member for Frome (Mr. Casey) said that only one-twelfth of the goods manufactured in this State were used in this State because we had one-twelfth of the population, so we must produce the other eleven-twelfths of the manufactured goods needed in Australia. I take this to mean that all the other manufacturers in the rest of Australia produce nothing. That is an incorrect statement that has no basis whatever.

Mr. Hughes: He didn't say that at all, and you know it.

Mr. EVANS: I believe that our Government could be using some of the many Highways Department's machines that have been left idle on the highways in the Mount Lofty hills. These could be used on the Modbury Hospital site. We should at least make a start on the hospital so that we can say work is being done there, as the Labor Party said two days before the State election that it was doing.

Many members have made lengthy speeches. I do not believe this is necessary, because we are dealing only with the first line, and many

more lines have to be dealt with. As we on this side wish these Estimates passed as quickly as possible, I will conclude by congratulating the Treasurer and his officers on the preparation of this document. I wholeheartedly support the adoption of the first line.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY (Whyalla): My colleagues on this side have dealt fairly extensively with many matters, and I do not propose to traverse all the ground they have covered. However, some aspects interest me greatly, particularly the provision for school buildings. Therefore, I intend to deal with this aspect in detail.

I refer, first, to the understandable but obvious lack of knowledge of some of the new members opposite of how the Estimates are compiled in relation to school buildings. Much sheer nonsense has been talked about this subject by people who do not understand how these buildings are provided. Before I deal with those matters, I will speak briefly about the Treasurer's statement that he is doing something reasonable and proper (he calls it making a reasonable and proper provision) in a manner that he and his colleagues condemned in the strongest terms when we were in Government. It is interesting to examine some of the statements that the Opposition at that time made regarding our methods of finance. In the Loan Estimates debate last year the present Treasurer referred to what he called the agility with which the Treasurer mismanaged the affairs of the State and the clever way in which he covered up these irregularities in State finances in order to present a good image to the public. Then we had the statement that juggling around with the Highways and Loan figures amounted to no less than \$760,000. We were accused in Liberal and Country League propaganda of raiding the Treasury.

The members who made those statements knew that they were quite untrue. They knew that, as we have an Under Treasurer of outstanding ability and an Auditor-General, those accusations were ridiculous, because the allegations were quite impossible of accomplishment. These statements were made in order to deceive the public, to achieve political power, and to create a bad image of the Labor Party. One of the things that we object to in this regard is that every possible attempt has been made to damage our characters as members. The attempt was made to more than insinuate that we were not people worthy to be trusted with the State's money.

Members opposite may be interested in the story told me by a lady who lived in Norwood and was a strong Liberal supporter. At a meeting of Red Cross, she was solemnly told that the then Premier was tampering with Red Cross funds. This was nothing but character assassination of the then Premier. It was typical of the remarks made, particularly last year before the election, to create among the public an impression that something was corrupt amongst Labor members. I, as an individual member, strongly resent that and I am sure that my colleagues resent it equally. There is no occasion for making this sort of charge, and much of the nonsense talked last year was a complete refusal to face the facts of the situation, a situation in which every State is short of funds and goes every year to the Commonwealth, making fruitless efforts to get sufficient funds to carry on their business. This is well known to any honourable member who has been in this House for any time.

The present Treasurer has brought down Loan Estimates to the best of his ability and he wishes that he had more funds but, instead of saying plainly that he has a big carry-over from last year and that he is doing the same things as he condemned us for doing last year, he covers up and pretends that he has made a 16 per cent increase in the Loan Estimates. If we take away all the carry-over of under-spending, as has already been explained by my colleagues, we see that he has achieved an increase of slightly more than 1 per cent. I am not blaming him for this but, if he placed the picture in its true light, we would have much more respect for Government members. It is no wonder that young people in this State and elsewhere are beginning to wake up to the double-talk that is uttered in regard to finance. They are beginning to have doubts about the sort of democracy we are supposed to have, and they are absolutely disgusted with the double standards evident in arguments presented in this place in regard to finance. Undoubtedly they are quickly losing their confidence in democratic Government for these reasons. They know that members on this side are not dishonest. We have to put up with snide accusations, and I particularly recall those made prior to the last election. A gigantic confidence trick was played in order that the present Government could achieve political power.

The member for Gumeracha (Mr. Giles) told us that another important feature in the Estimates was that of the provision for schools, which had increased from \$8,000,000

actually spent last year to \$13,700,000 this year. Let us examine the structure of this sentence. The honourable member said, ". . . that of the provision for schools, which has increased from \$8,000,000 actually spent . . ." This, of course, is rather meaningless because the provision for schools in last year's Loan Estimates was \$10,650,000.

Mr. Hudson: Out of our own Loan funds.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: Exactly. In fact, however, there was gross under-spending, and members will remember that, before the debate on the Loan Estimates began, I asked the Treasurer to explain the under-spending of \$1,971,000 for last year. In March of this year, the Under Treasurer reported to Cabinet that the estimated under-spending was about \$300,000. In the explanation given me, the Treasurer said that the inclement weather had delayed building work and that some contractors had not proceeded with their work as fast as had been expected, but I cannot accept this as the full explanation of the under-spending of nearly \$2,000,000. It does not make sense that nearly \$2,000,000 was under-spent out of a provision of \$10,650,000. If members opposite consider this matter maturely they must doubt whether they should accept this as the full explanation.

Of course, it is a very nice position to be in if one is the Treasurer and one knows, a few months before the Loan Estimates have to be presented, that there will be a carry-over of \$2,000,000 in regard to school buildings. This sum can be added to the money that one knows he will receive, the sum of \$10,000,000, because this has been the accepted practice for years. The Treasurer knows he will receive this sum and, if he adds on the \$2,000,000 of under-spending, he can make his figures look so good. This is what has been done. If the Treasurer has been listening to me—

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: I have been listening to you.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: I do not accept what the Treasurer said as the full and complete explanation.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: Are you accusing me of deliberately slowing down school-building projects?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: No.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: What are you saying, then?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: I am entitled to my opinion. In fact, I have a good idea how some of this under-spending occurred.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: Are you accusing me of slowing it down?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: I have a good idea how the under-spending occurred, and it could have occurred in many ways other than the Minister deliberately slowing down works.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: What other ways?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: I do not want to quote them.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: You want to leave a stinking inference around the place.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: The Treasurer should be the last person to speak about inferences. He should look at last year's *Hansard* to see the inferences he left to be drawn concerning this side, so the less he says about inferences the better for him.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: Don't adopt a holier-than-thou attitude.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: I am not. The member for Gumeracha said that \$13,700,000 was to be used on school buildings. We may consider that \$1,700,000 comes from the estimated Commonwealth assistance but, in fact, in March last the Under Treasurer estimated \$2,600,000 as likely to be received from the Commonwealth. This is another reduction of \$900,000, and we know that that \$900,000 is available from the Commonwealth, because the Treasurer has admitted that it is available if it is wanted. But this figure is stated in the Estimates, because it is unlikely that more than \$1,700,000 will be spent.

Mr. Corcoran: Haven't we been accused in the past of not being able to match Commonwealth grants?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: Of course we have, but there is not the slightest doubt that \$2,600,000 of Commonwealth assistance is available if it is wanted, and it could be used. If the Government wished to stimulate building it has \$900,000 it can put its fingers on and get busy with. If we deduct from the \$13,700,000 the sum of \$1,700,000 that leaves \$12,000,000 and, if the carry-over from last year is taken off, the effective new provision for school buildings this year is \$10,028,493. In the Premier's policy speech, when the Premier was Leader of the Opposition before the last election, he said that a L.C.L. Government would reverse what he called the downward trend in school buildings. Let us consider what the downward trend in school buildings is according to him to see how he gets his figures.

It is interesting to go back a year or two and see what the downward trend was under a Labor Government. In 1963-64, the expenditure on (not the provision for) school buildings was \$9,850,000. In 1964-65, it was \$11,217,000, a total of \$21,067,000. In 1965-66, under a Labor Government, it was \$11,768,000, and in 1966-67 it was \$10,757,000, a total of \$22,525,000. However, the then Leader of the Opposition had the gall to call that a downward trend in school buildings. As I have already said, for 1967-68 the provision was \$10,650,000. There has been no downward trend, but there is this year in the effective provision of new money. In its last two years the Playford L.C.L. Government spent \$1,458,000 less on school buildings than the Labor Government spent in the two years ended June 30, 1967. These figures clearly dispose of the charge of lower spending on school buildings by the Labor Government.

The member for Burra (Mr. Allen) had much to say about the Clare High School, and a report concerning that school appears in the *Northern Argus*, headed "L.C.L. Re-introduce Plan Deferred by A.L.P.," and stating:

In March, 1965, the Public Works Standing Committee had recommended that the school be built on land purchased At the time, the department was in the process of calling tenders, when the Liberal Government was defeated, and the incoming Labor Government deferred the proposal.

Of course, that is nonsense, and it is about time that the honourable member got his facts straight because, in fact, when I was Minister, this matter came under my control; no attempt was made at any time to call for tenders for this school, and it was not deferred any more than were a number of other schools throughout the State, in both the metropolitan and country areas, which had been hanging fire for many years.

Mr. Allen: Did I say that? You get your facts straight!

Mr. Corcoran: I heard you say it. You said it in your maiden speech.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: I recall the honourable member saying that he hoped this school would be built before any other school approved by the Labor Government. What a statement to make! He wants his school built before any other school approved by the Labor Government is built. I wonder whether he realizes how schools are approved. The Minister of Education receives advice from his or her officers concerning the priority for school buildings. During my term of office, I

said the same things about money for school buildings as the present Minister of Education is now saying. If members look at *Hansard* they will find statements to the effect that the Loan money available for school buildings has been so short that it has to be spent almost entirely on new buildings in areas where there is an explosion of population and where accommodation has to be provided for children and, consequently, the rebuilding of old schools has had to be delayed for a long time.

It does not matter who is Minister of Education: it is an inexorable fact that has to be faced. To talk about this school being built, before any other school approved by a Labor Government is built, is fantastic. I can take the honourable member to plenty of schools in the metropolitan area whose facilities are just as bad as those of the Clare High School. A school at Gladstone received plans from the Liberal Government in 1938, and the committee's records prove this, but no new school has been forthcoming. The Chairman of this Committee has a couple of schools at Nuriootpa that he would like to see replaced. The member for Burra, if he takes an interest in his district (and I think he probably has taken an interest), must know that when I was Minister of Education I made a special trip to the Clare High School at an inconvenient time at the behest of the then Assembly member for the district and the Legislative Council member for the district. I provided for many improvements to be made in the Clare High School grounds. Shortly after I left, one building was burnt down and we made it a matter of the greatest urgency to get that school building replaced immediately. The suggestion underlying the honourable member's remarks about the Clare High School is that we neglected the matter and deferred action merely because we were a Labor Government. He did give us credit for commencing Matriculation classes (and there are not so many of them in the country, for very good reasons, which the present Minister of Education knows very well).

I can understand the honourable member talking like that, because he has had this stuff about the Labor Government pumped into him by his Liberal friends for many years, as have other new Liberal members: they have had any amount of stuff pumped into them about how a Labor Government never considers the country. Are new members entering this House from the country aware that it was a Labor Government that introduced special

schools in those remote areas on Eyre Peninsula where they could not get secondary education, and that in the three years we were in office we achieved more in agricultural education than had been achieved in the previous decade? These are facts, not propaganda. I shall not go over what we did about education in the country, but it compares favourably with what was done by the Liberal Government in previous years. To support that statement we can give facts and figures to any members whenever they require them, and those facts cannot be denied.

To wind up what I am saying about building schools, I maintain that no Minister of Education under whatever Government it may be will be able, with finances as they are, to get much more than \$10,000,000 of State money for school buildings in any one year, and what is being provided this year in new money is less than it was in any year when we were in office. The member for Stirling shakes his head. Let me tell him that the figures I am giving here this evening were prepared by the Treasurer, but the honourable member, as a financial wizard, rises superior to the office of the Treasurer!

There is one other interesting point about expenditure on school buildings that I hope the new members of the Government will try to accept. They are anxious to get rebuilt in country areas those schools which, in their opinion, have been neglected for so long, but there are just as many schools in the metropolitan area that have been neglected for so long. The reason has been a shortage of money over a long period when Liberal Governments were in office. When we assumed office, we joined wholeheartedly in the campaign for additional Commonwealth money for education. The members of the then Opposition would not lift one finger to assist in that campaign. In fact, as Minister of Education I was criticized for taking part.

Mr. Corcoran: The then Commonwealth Minister (now the Prime Minister) accused you of playing politics in the matter.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: Yes, but it is members opposite who are now playing politics in these matters. Every State wants more money for education, and when the various State Ministers of Education meet each year this is the major and almost the sole topic discussed. The States are all united on this question, and they are all Liberals, except Tasmania. When we were in Government and Tasmania and South Australia were the only

States that did not have Liberal Governments, we found that we could not get support here.

There has been substantial reduction in the amount provided for housing, particularly in the amount made available to the Housing Trust. In the past members opposite have said that the buoyancy of the building trade is an excellent barometer to well-being in the State, and I would not quarrel with that statement. We heard *ad nauseam* from members opposite when they were in Opposition that we were letting the building industry down and that we should stimulate it. They left no stone unturned to bring this matter to the fore and to criticize us severely, but now they are solidly reducing the amount of money available to the trust.

As the member for Whyalla, I am particularly interested in this. I notice that provision is made in the Estimates for an additional 84 houses to be commenced in 1968-69. I notice, too, that 546 were under construction at June 30, 1968, and that 630 are to be commenced in 1968-69. Some time ago I drew the attention of the Minister of Housing to the fact that there were about 640 outstanding applications for trust houses in Whyalla, that the waiting period was about 12 months, and that the caravan park was completely congested to the exclusion of all tourists. It was full of caravans containing people who were working temporarily in the city or who were waiting for Housing Trust houses. About 40 of these are waiting for Housing Trust houses, and throughout the city there are many caravans in backyards and many people (often two or three families) doubling up in houses in order to overcome this accommodation problem.

In Whyalla, Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited wants to employ not just a few but hundreds more men, and its expansion is being held up almost entirely through the shortage of houses. We are told that there will be about another eighty under construction during this coming year. Much has been said about unemployment in the building industry, the need to stimulate it, and the need to get migrants out here. Most of the people now coming to Whyalla are migrants and they have to be provided with houses when they arrive.

Surely, in view of all this, here is the pattern for concentrating on the building of a considerable number of additional houses. I venture to say that the Housing Trust could very well get into this particular spot with a much bigger programme than is suggested in these

Estimates. This would have the effect of reducing unemployment, because obviously there are people in the metropolitan area who are unemployed and if they knew that a house was available at Whyalla they would be going there. Many people are restrained from moving from a point where they happen to be unemployed for the simple reason that they have a family and economically they cannot go and work somewhere else and still maintain their home here; they are not mobile whereas, if a house were available, they would be mobile.

Mr. Edwards: You had a chance to do something about it.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: We did something. If the honourable member looks at the figures, he will see that the number of houses we built went from about 300 a year to more than 500 a year in the last two years. Perhaps that satisfies the honourable member. I am suggesting a means whereby much extra money could be spent with great advantage to the building industry and to help reduce unemployment, as well as to help to enable B.H.P. Company to expand production. All these things would be achieved by concentrating on the provision of more buildings than are provided for in these Estimates. The member for Gumeracha smiles as though he has an answer to that. If he has, he can tell me, but I am giving the facts as I know them. Surely this is where there should be some concentration of effort.

Mr. Giles: The records show that 3,139 houses were built in 1965, 3,271 in 1966, and 2,603 in 1967.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: I was talking about houses built at Whyalla. Obviously, the honourable member was not following what I was saying.

Mr. Giles: I'm following you.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: The honourable member will find that what I have said is perfectly correct.

Mr. McAnaney: Not in regard to school buildings.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: With due respect to the member for Stirling, I do not care what figures he has there. These figures were specially prepared for me by the Treasury.

Mr. McAnaney: There is a difference between those figures and the Auditor-General's figures.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: There may be.

Mr. McAnaney: The record was in 1962-63, when it was 20 per cent of the Loan Fund, and in 1966-67 it was down to—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. McAnaney: —13½ per cent.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Whyalla.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: If the honourable member inquires into any discrepancy between the figures in the Auditor-General's Report and the Treasury figures he may find an explanation in the type of buildings included in a particular figure, but I am giving the Treasury figures of school buildings, not including any Commonwealth money, because I specifically asked for that information and it was prepared for me by the Treasury when I was Minister of Education. The honourable member may inquire further if he wishes to do so. I think that clears up that matter, although one always has doubts with our financial wizard opposite.

The B.H.P. Company is building, at the most optimistic figure, 40 or 50 houses a year. I understand that the scheme is financed by two banks and is somewhat different from the scheme that operated many years ago. These houses are not available to the type of people generally who come from Great Britain or from the metropolitan area. They are usually made available to people who have been in Whyalla for some time, such as special staff men and special skilled tradesmen whom the company wishes to provide with houses. That does not make much impact on the situation I am talking about. Consequently, I view the reduction in the money available to the Housing Trust as serious not only from the viewpoint of the State as a whole but also from the viewpoint of Whyalla, because so much stands to be gained through an expansion of the present housing programme there. One would have thought that housing at Whyalla would receive more special attention than it has received.

I shall not repeat the details so ably dealt with by my colleagues, who have canvassed the whole field of this year's Loan Estimates. It is a great pity that apparently we have not yet reached the stage where Loan Estimates are presented in a factual manner without any attempt to disguise the existing situation, which is plainly that we must receive more money from the Commonwealth Government to carry out the works that are so necessary for this State. It is also a great pity that we cannot get away from the unjustified attempts at character assassination which were so much a

feature of last year's Parliament and which were aimed at obtaining political gain. The present Treasurer has followed precisely the same policy in regard to Loan funds as was followed by the previous Treasurer; in fact, he has done it to a slightly greater extent. The Treasurers of Liberal Governments in other States have for years adopted the same technique. Surely they are not to be charged with some sort of financial corruption. Surely they are men of probity. If they are men of probity, surely Ministers of the Labor Government can claim to be just as good. I support the first line.

Mrs. BYRNE (Barossa): These Loan Estimates are most uninspiring. I will, however, be charitable enough to say that, whatever Government is in power, under the present financial set-up there will be the same results, because we all know that a State Government can work out its Loan programme only in the light of the money allocated at the Loan Council meeting.

Mr. Corcoran: Three months before that meeting the Under Treasurer worked out to within 1c the sum that would be allocated to South Australia.

Mrs. BYRNE: Yes. We all know that all State Premiers speak on behalf of their States at the Loan Council meeting, but they never receive sufficient money to carry out the Loan programme they desire. We all know that this year the South Australian Government received \$97,340,000 and, in addition, \$18,030,000 for semi-government requirements. Members of the Opposition (and we are in Opposition only because of the undemocratic electoral system) can discuss only whether the money is being spent wisely or unwisely, not the amount available. All members regret that more money has not been made available for this State. I will discuss the items that interest me but I will not deal with them necessarily in order of importance. The first item I wish to deal with is the provision for six diesel-electric locomotives and spares for 4ft. 8½in. gauge. I hope that these locomotives will be constructed at the Islington workshops and not let to contract. I understand that this has happened previously, but we should do everything possible, if the work can be done by tradesmen at Islington, to give them the work. On May 8 the Minister of Roads and Transport announced cuts on certain rail services. I will refer to the Adelaide-Angaston-Truro and the Adelaide-Eudunda services, both of which traverse my district. Public meetings to discuss these proposals were held in Tanunda and

Angaston on May 28 and at Nuriootpa on July 3, and as a result of the decisions taken at Nuriootpa a deputation was introduced to the Minister on July 16 by the member for Angas. Another public meeting, which became a protest meeting, was held at Kapunda on July 19.

The member for Light, one of the Legislative Council members for the District of Midlands and I were in the deputation that waited on the Minister of Roads and Transport on August 22. We put to the Minister that people in that area (and I am concerned mainly about the people at Freeling) would like the early workers' train to be retained in the morning. I know that the Government can decide whether this train will be replaced by a co-ordinated road and rail service, but it is important that some transport be provided. The people of this area would also like to retain a later train, which gives a service to white-collar workers and shop assistants working in Adelaide and the metropolitan area, as it arrives in Adelaide just before 9 a.m. They would also like retained the train that leaves Adelaide after 5 p.m. on which they return. I hope the Minister will consider what was put before him at the deputation in support of the retention of these services.

I am most concerned that the Government will allow these bus services to be let by contract to private enterprise. The Minister of Roads and Transport said that no Railways Department employees would be retrenched as a result of the proposals, but I cannot understand how this will not happen. If these bus services were operated by the Railways Department, as I think should be done, employment would be provided for the people displaced. I realize that protest meetings have been held in other parts of the State, but details of these can be given by the members for those districts. The Treasurer said that money would be provided to improve the supply of water to the metropolitan area and that work on the Kangaroo Creek reservoir would continue.

In 1966, I wrote to the then Minister of Works asking him to examine the possibility of constructing a new reservoir on the Little Para River in the Snake Gully area. I see members smile when I refer to Snake Gully, but there is such a gully in the Barossa District. It is a pretty spot on the route from Golden Grove to the Para Wirra National Park. I think it would be a shame if the area were decided on as a reservoir site, as the public would be denied a glimpse of scenic

beauty as they travel through this area. However, if the area is suitable for a reservoir it must naturally be used for that purpose. The Minister replied that no firm decision had been made on the exact site of any dam that might be built on this stream and that the only likely activity within the next two or three years would be where further topographical and geological surveys might take place. As two and a half years has elapsed, I think that something definite should have been decided, and I hope the Minister of Works will be able to give me information on this subject in due course.

Although much has been said in this debate about water storages and the need for water conservation, I think we should be investigating ways of re-using water, for I believe that in some types of factory recirculating water would probably be satisfactory. I was pleased to note that the Government undertook to complete all approved sewerage schemes. I know that the Engineering and Water Supply Department has a deferred payment scheme that applies to people such as widows and pensioners, who are in necessitous circumstances. However, many other people who do not come into this category find the cost of installing sewers beyond their means. At present a sewer connection costs \$75, and the necessary plumbing work is estimated to cost about \$325, bringing the total to nearly \$400. Many people have difficulty in finding this sum. I was telephoned only this morning by someone who asked me whether the Government intended to increase the cost of a sewer connection from \$75 to \$125. I hope this is not correct, because it is hard for most people to find this amount now.

In February, 1968, I wrote to the former Premier asking that consideration be given to the extension of mortgages held by the State Bank to cover the cost of sewerage connections. I received the following reply:

Section 44 of the Advances for Homes Act, 1928-1958, from which it will be noted that, in certain circumstances, the bank is empowered to grant a loan to a purchaser or borrower under that Act for drainage connections.

Of course, the whole of section 44 was quoted. The letter further stated:

There is no provision in the Act for the making of a loan for the purpose above mentioned if, at the time of entering into a contract of sale or the granting of an advance, the relative property was situated within a drainage area. Under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement Home Builders' Fund, the maximum amount the bank may advance to any one applicant is \$7,000. (That is currently \$8,000.) Therefore, unless there is

sufficient margin between any previous loans and the maximum figure stated, an additional loan for drainage purposes cannot be considered.

Although this may be contrary to the Act, I think the Act should be amended to allow this to be done. I understand that people with a war service loan can have their sewerage installation costs added to the loan. This should be done by the State Bank, too.

Provision is made in these Loan Estimates for additional accommodation for the dental hospital, where the means test still applies, but I have been told that if cases are urgent people can be treated almost immediately. Otherwise, however, there is still a waiting time. This is mainly because of the shortage of dentists, but that shortage should be overcome as more dental students take dental courses at the university. I am pleased that the waiting time has been decreased, although it still leaves something to be desired when people sometimes have to wait six months for certain types of treatment. There has been an improvement but there is still room for further improvement. The Loan Estimates provide \$150,000 to commence the construction of the Modbury Hospital.

Mr. Virgo: A mere pittance.

Mrs. BYRNE: That is so. When we consider that the estimated cost of the first stage of that hospital is \$9,600,000, we can see that very little can be done with \$150,000. During the recent election campaign much was said about the Modbury Hospital. In fact, much has been said over the last few years about it, but unfortunately it has not all been correct. The previous Government was attacked because Highways Department equipment was being used on site works. This equipment is still being used but no mention is made of it now. I am not objecting to its being used, for the main thing is that the job be gone on with as quickly as possible. However, with the small amount of \$150,000 allocated for work on this hospital in this financial year, I doubt very much whether the first stage will be completed and in use by 1971, because this completion date was based on this hospital being started in 1968, whereas the site works are still in progress. I hope I am wrong in this respect, because more hospital accommodation is certainly needed in this State. As everyone knows, there is no hospital accommodation in my area. Only last month I received a letter from a woman constituent complaining about

the waiting time for entering a Government hospital. That letter read as follows:

In September of last year I went to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for examination for admission on the recommendation of my specialist. After examination I was told that my case was considered reasonably urgent and that I would be admitted within two or three months for an operation to replace both hip sockets, as my legs are practically useless. I have had considerable correspondence since then with my specialist and with the hospital, only to be told that there are still no beds available and there is no hope given as to when I will be admitted.

This woman has since written me another letter as follows:

After the 11 months' wait and my reaching the stage of desperation, I was actually admitted on 16th August and operated on on the 17th.

Everything possible should be done so that patients requiring treatment can be admitted as soon as possible, if not immediately, to Government hospitals. Some people thought that we on this side of the House plucked out of the hat the idea of having a Government hospital at Modbury. My Party adopted its policy on this matter because this hospital was suggested in the Town Planning Committee's 1962 Report, the relevant part of which states:

The existing number of beds appears to be meeting the needs for the present population, but standards of accommodation could be improved. If the figure of six beds a thousand population is accepted, about 4,500 additional beds will be required by 1991. New hospitals will probably be required to serve the north-eastern suburbs around Modbury . . .

It was upon this report that our Party based its policy to have a Government hospital at Modbury. When completed, this hospital will provide employment prospects for many people living in the area. This is a good thing, because many married women who would be pleased to have the opportunity to engage in work of this nature live in that area.

Money has been provided in these Estimates to commence the construction of a rehabilitation centre at Northfield designed to accommodate 46 women under modern conditions. Early in May, 1966, (just over two years ago) I visited the present womens' prison in Adelaide. What I saw shocked me, and it would also shock other members. The conditions are difficult to describe. In my opinion the place is an absolute disgrace, and it is certainly unhygienic. I do not know how the staff carry on in such conditions. They have to be

dedicated to their work, and they do everything possible to make the prisoners comfortable in the circumstances and to make the place as homely as possible. Money has now been provided, and the long overdue new rehabilitation centre will be constructed.

The allocation for housing is a most serious aspect of the Estimates. There is a reduction of \$1,500,000 (from \$21,000,000 to \$19,500,000) in the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money. The provision for the Housing Trust has been reduced by \$650,000, for \$10,150,000 to \$9,500,000. The amount available to the State Bank has been decreased from \$9,650,000 to \$8,500,000, while provision for co-operative building societies has been increased from \$1,200,000 to \$1,500,000. An amount of \$1,500,000 is provided for other works at the expense of the building industry, about which we have heard so much in the last three years.

The maximum amount of a housing loan is being increased from \$7,000 to \$8,000. This increase is necessary, because the unrealistic maximum of \$7,000 has caused many house purchasers to raise money on second mortgage at high interest rates. Many of these people get into difficulties because of the high repayments in which they are involved, and some have to leave their houses. In cases where houses are sold by auction for less than the purchase price, the original owners are liable for any loss sustained by the mortgagees. The increase in the limit of housing loans on first mortgage should eliminate some instances of this. However, it is stated that the increased limit will not cause a significant lengthening of the waiting time for applicants. This must be the case. No argument can be advanced to show that the waiting time would be the same. Less money will be available to lend, but I agree that those who are able to borrow the larger amount will not be as likely to get into difficulties as borrowers have been in the past.

I wish to refer now to the provision under the Advances for Homes Act. This provision deals mainly with money allocated to the purchase of existing houses. I have found in my electoral district, in particular, that people purchasing houses get into difficulty through being misled by real estate agents. When they purchase a house they are told that it has not previously been occupied. However, after living in it for about six months, they inquire why their bank loan has not been granted and they are told that the house had previously been occupied.

I know of a case where a man lived in three new houses in the area, but had no intention at all in remaining in any of them. Consequently, these houses became technically secondhand, yet a bank loan had never been granted in respect of any of them. Of course, an unsuspecting person who occupies such a house later finds out to his dismay that a bank loan is unavailable under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. I must point out, however, that a loan can be obtained in special cases such as this under the Advances for Homes Act. I do not know what was contemplated when this Act was passed but I think that it was planned in respect of houses that had been built for many years. I point out, however, that the houses I have referred to are only one and a half to three years old, yet a bank loan has never been granted in respect of them. Special consideration should be given to this category.

Some money is still provided for existing houses, but the amount is not as great as we would like and it certainly will not allow many houses to be purchased. It is stated in the Loan Estimates explanation that in the last financial year 35 cottage flats were built. I think this is a very small number and definitely inadequate for the whole of the State. On April 10, I received a reply to a letter, regarding an application for a cottage flat for a single person, that I had sent to the Housing Trust; part of the reply is as follows:

I regret that there is a delay of several years for this type of accommodation.

I repeat the words "of several years". Many elderly people are disappointed because they cannot obtain this type of accommodation and, obviously, more cottage flats should be constructed. The letter further states:

The lady should contact the citizens advice bureau to obtain information regarding the various agencies which may be able to assist her.

People should not have to be referred to a bureau to obtain accommodation and, further, the waiting time for this type of accommodation must be greatly reduced. Government members have often suggested that Opposition members do not consider country areas. However, the Treasurer said that over 51 per cent of the houses under construction at June 30, 1968, were in country areas and that this proportion of country housing was the highest in the trust's history. He also said that the major part of the trust's construction in the country has again been at Whyalla, where rental accommodation has mainly been provided in double-unit housing. The Town Planning

Committee's Report of 1962 stated that the detached single-unit house is the most popular form of housing and is likely to remain so, and I agree with this statement.

In South Australia we should not be erecting double-unit houses. People living in them do not like them. I remember speaking to one woman who came from another country and she told me that it was just as well she spoke a different language as this meant that people in the other side of the unit could not understand what she was saying. Most people take more pride in a single-unit house. I have found that many disputes occur because fences are required to be erected between new houses. At times solicitors give varying opinions about the interpretation of the Fences Act and this Act should be amended so that its meaning is clear. After looking at it, I am not surprised that solicitors cannot agree in their interpretation.

Concern has been expressed to me because some people have built swimming pools on their properties without erecting a fence around the property or around the pool. The parents of young children are worried, because water attracts children who may accidentally tumble into one of these pools. Inquiries made in February last revealed that a situation such as this was not covered by the building section of the Local Government Act. I trust that when that Act is next being considered it will be amended to provide that, in the interests of safety, fences shall be constructed around swimming pools.

Regarding school buildings, major works completed near the Barossa District in 1967-68 included the Para Vista Primary and Infants School which, although it is in the Enfield District, was built to relieve the pressure existing at the Modbury Primary School, and many children from the Barossa District attend the Para Vista school. The Surrey Downs Primary School was still in progress at June 30 last, and a new school will be erected at Ridgehaven in this financial year. In addition, two others are planned, one for Modbury West and one for Valiant Road (it is not clear whether or not the latter will be situated at Holden Hill). The member for Whyalla (Hon. R. R. Loveday) referred this evening to replacement schools. I believe that the Hope Valley Primary School, which is in my area and which consists of about five timber-frame buildings interspersed with shelter sheds, should be replaced.

Although the area of the schoolgrounds is adequate for the number of children at present attending, the school is poorly situated, because it is completely surrounded by roads (including Grand Junction Road and Barracks Road). As land is already available in the area, near the southern end of Payne Street and at the eastern end of Beckman Avenue, for a future school, I hope that the replacement project will soon be considered. Although I regret that the site for the Clovercrest Primary School has been rejected by the Public Works Committee, I have been assured that every effort will be made by the Education Department to obtain a new site as soon as possible. This matter is, of course, urgent.

I note that further money has been allocated this financial year to complete the new office building in Victoria Square. I do not know how many Government departments are accommodated in this building, but the situation in the past has certainly been unsatisfactory: with Government departments situated all over the place, it must be a costly business having to pay rents for the various accommodation. I am interested to know how much money annually is paid in rent by the Government for private accommodation. I turn now to the Natural Gas Pipelines Authority. On page 18 of the Treasurer's explanation of the Loan Estimates we see the following:

The engineering manager has arranged the supply of pipes and has entered into a contract for construction. It is expected that the pipeline will be completed by October, 1969.

Although I have heard that this work is likely to be given to workers from overseas, I hope that is not so, because it is important that this work be available to South Australian workers. The employment position has already been mentioned in this debate and we know that the last figures given for the Commonwealth showed that South Australia had the highest incidence of unemployment for any State—1.6 per cent of its work force. In recent weeks many people have called on me asking whether I can obtain employment for them, including young men even of the age of 21. This is sad.

Mr. Broomhill: Many of them are going to other States.

Mrs. BYRNE: Maybe. One man said that he came from another State at Easter time and he had employment in Melbourne to which he could return. He had been unable to find employment since coming to South Australia and he thought his only hope was to return to Victoria, in case he lost his house,

as he would have had he remained unemployed for much longer. Naturally, as his family is here he wishes to remain in South Australia. I support the first line.

Mr. LANGLEY (Unley): Having listened to speakers from both sides of the Chamber, I think all members have come to one conclusion: that the State has not received enough money from the Commonwealth to finance its Loan works. In two or three cases, especially in the metropolitan area, the Government has not done the right thing for young and old people in the matter of housing. One thing that will boost the building industry, and over a period the State's economy, is the opportunity to build more houses and an assurance that we have the people to occupy them. Further, we must provide the opportunity to build a better type of house. I am principally concerned about the young people wishing to buy established homes and about people requiring accommodation in elderly citizens' and pensioners' homes. These groups would account for many people in my district. I am also concerned about some New Australian friends who have made this their country.

I notice that a line dealing with grants in respect of established homes, which formerly amounted to \$200,000, has been deleted. The building industry will this year lose the boost given by this expenditure last year. When these established homes are taken over by somebody else, usually improvements are made to them because they are an oldish type, though well built, that will serve their purchasers for many years to come. I know of 20 to 25 such homes that benefited from the money provided in this way. Many people would like the opportunity to have a well established home in the metropolitan area. Some such homes are handed down to relatives after deaths have occurred in the family, but the opportunity for these people to obtain money from banks and other institutions is not great. Under the former scheme, people were able to obtain loans from the State Bank to help them purchase these houses. Many young people would be grateful for an opportunity to purchase this type of house if they could get the necessary finance, and I am sure that the improvements they would make would considerably improve the surrounding areas.

Some of the houses built today are not big enough to accommodate a large family, which some people like to have, and as these

older houses are usually of the larger type many people would like to purchase them for this reason. Therefore, I hope the Government will consider allowing money to be utilized for the purchase of this type of house. Often a person is forced into a position of having to sell one of these older houses, so people such as land agents and those with ready cash are often able to acquire these houses cheaply and then later sell them at a large profit.

People such as I have mentioned then contact others that they know are willing to buy an established house. They then make a sale, and they tell the purchasers that finance is easily available and that it will be forthcoming within 12 months. Of course, they never put that in writing: that promise is given verbally to the purchasers, who find that at the end of 12 months they are not able to get finance and they are then left holding the bag. All the money they have put out during this period, as well as the deposit they have given, is lost. The deletion of this provision from the Estimates has given a further opportunity to unscrupulous people to gain undeserved profits. I think we must all admit that this type of house is wanted by people at a reasonable price.

I now wish to say something about Housing Trust houses for pensioners. Under the present scheme, the Commonwealth Government subsidizes homes and home units for elderly citizens. Private organizations and now local government bodies play their part in this scheme. Usually these elderly people pay a certain sum for the occupancy of these units. This sum always seems to be increasing; it started at about \$2,000, plus a payment of so much a week, usually for maintenance of the units, and I think it is now up to about \$2,800 plus the weekly payment. These people are given life tenancies, but when they do not stay in these homes very long (as sometimes happens) the homes are again sold. I consider that the first payment by the Commonwealth Government, with the first payment by the person who goes into the home, easily covers the price of these units and that thereafter they should be rented.

I think this Government should press the Commonwealth Government in order to arrange for the Housing Trust to be given an equal opportunity in this field of housing, and in this case for rental housing only. Many years ago people did not have the opportunities we have today to purchase houses. In fact, the number of houses purchased these days

far exceeds the number rented. This did not happen before the Second World War. We should try to induce the Commonwealth to grant subsidies to the trust for the assistance of the less fortunate people, many of whom were pioneers and suffered many hardships during depression years to raise extremely large families of fine Australians. Young people today do not appreciate the difficulties that these pioneers experienced.

Mr. Ryan: They will know after a couple of years under the present Government.

Mr. LANGLEY: Yes, I do not think there will be any benefit in the next couple of years. The Labor Government did more during its term of office than Liberal Governments had done in 20 years. The member for Rocky River (Mr. Venning) should know that 53 always beats 43. If he gets more than 53 per cent of the votes, he deserves to win, but if he got 43 per cent he should not win.

Mr. Ryan: They couldn't govern without an Independent.

Mr. LANGLEY: That is correct. The Government is in a precarious position.

Mr. Hurst: It's batting on a sticky wicket.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Nankivell): Order! The honourable member for Unley.

Mr. LANGLEY: I agree with the statement by the Independent member that a lot of water has flowed under the bridge. I think I would have been knocked out by now. Since I have been a member, sufficient money has not been allocated for drainage work, and I should like to see progress made on a scheme whereby the Government would subsidize councils on a \$1 for \$1 basis for draining work. I have been in close contact with the Unley council for many years and I have asked questions about drainage in this place. It seems that the scheme I have referred to may eventuate soon. I have been told that the scheme for the metropolitan area will cost \$60,000,000, and I hope that the Unley council and other councils, in co-operation with the Highways Department, will be able to obtain these subsidies soon.

Certain sections of the Unley District badly need attention in regard to drainage. People should not be subjected to having water flowing on their properties from other areas and I hope that some of the \$500,000 will be allocated to the Unley council this year for drainage work. I also hope that the Highways Department will deal speedily with the subsidy scheme.

Mr. Broomhill: Aren't you going to send all this water down the Sturt River to my district?

Mr. LANGLEY: When the honourable member mentioned "Sturt" I was interested, but not when he referred to the river. Work has been carried out on certain sections of the drainage scheme in some parts of the metropolitan area, but much water comes into the District of Unley from other areas, such as St. Georges and Burnside. So, my district is copping its share, too. I am sure that the overall scheme will be helpful. Most of the people I meet say they would like to know what is being done regarding water conservation. Last night I was surprised when the member for Chaffey (Mr. Arnold) was persuaded to speak about Chowilla. I want to mention something that the previous Government did concerning the Chowilla dam.

Mr. Hurst: Do you think the present Government will start the Chowilla dam within six months, as it has promised to do?

Mr. LANGLEY: I know that the present Premier said at one stage that he would dig it himself. I am sure he will have a tough job in the next few years to get it started, but we all hope that it will be started. Yesterday the member for Edwardstown (Mr. Virgo) tried to encourage the member for Chaffey to say something about the Chowilla project, and the member for Chaffey replied:

Members opposite have said much about Chowilla. We would not be faced with this problem if the Labor Government had not deferred building Chowilla dam.

The member for Semaphore interjected as follows:

You promised to start it within six months. The member for Chaffey replied as follows:

We have not been in office for six months, but I am confident that this Government will have this project commenced and on its way. The people of the District of Chaffey are well aware that the Chowilla dam project was sold out from under them during the period of the Labor Government and all the amazing statements made by members opposite will not convince them otherwise.

Mr. Clark: That was a shocking thing to say.

Mr. LANGLEY: Especially when it was said by a member who should be trying to get something for his district, and who then proceeded to shoot it down. I think the member for Chaffey should be confident about it. We need the Chowilla dam and I hope we get it, but it is incorrect to say that the

Labor Government did nothing about it. From the Loan Estimates the amount allocated by the previous L.C.L. Government can be compared with the amount provided by the Labor Government.

The Hon. R. S. Hall: Are you aware that in 1967 the Commissioner voted for a study of an alternative?

Mr. LANGLEY: I am aware that the Labor Government spent more money on Chowilla than did the former Liberal Government. I think it was double the amount, so the Labor Government must have done something about Chowilla.

Mr. Arnold: You deferred it.

Mr. LANGLEY: That is not correct. The present Leader did his utmost to have the project continued. Turning to another topic, I think it is time that the *Advertiser* did something about fair play. I have had several experiences in other spheres, and I consider that the right and proper way is to be fair. Every question has two sides, particularly in this House. I noticed this morning that "A.L.P." appeared alongside the name of the member for Eyre. If he saw it he must have turned over in bed with surprise. I also have been called a member of the L.C.P. These are misprints, but the *Advertiser* should report both sides of all questions for the information of the people of this State. The *Advertiser* places speeches of the Leader of the Opposition on obscure back pages but gives preference on editorial pages to speeches by Liberal members. This is unfair, and I am not speaking with my tongue in my cheek. It is time the *Advertiser* did something about its method of reporting. People in my district have told me that the *Advertiser* does not report much of what I say, but I challenge the *Advertiser* to place the next speech by the Leader of the Opposition in its rightful place in the newspaper.

I now wish to refer to the Electricity Trust. I know that the member for Eyre is keen to have electricity supplied to certain parts of his district, and I am sure that the trust will carry out the necessary work soon. The trust has done a marvellous job, and I pay a tribute to it for the way in which it has supplied electricity to our outback areas. Further, the trust has been able to reduce country tariffs almost to equal the city tariffs (if not to equal them).

Although the Government, when in Opposition, was against the licensing of electricians, I have heard few complaints about the system, and I am sure that it has met with the

approval of the people. Unley District does not seem to have done as well as have other districts in regard to these Estimates, but perhaps the "minor" works referred to in the document relate to my constituency. I support the first line.

Mr. VIRGO (Edwardstown): When the Treasurer introduced the Loan Estimates a few weeks ago, the ego of his colleagues must have been affected considerably, because I am sure they were hoping to receive a document that would justify the wild allegations they made during the election campaign, namely, that a Liberal and Country League Government would "get the State moving again". This document is completely uninspiring and unimaginative, and it is little wonder that this debate has dragged on into a wearying affair.

Mr. Hughes: Do you think they are talking with their tongues in their cheeks over there?

Mr. VIRGO: I am sure that, when one looks at the Estimates and makes comparisons, one sees that that is exactly the position. Having done a little reading on the matter (I do not know whether new members on the other side have), I am sure that if a theatrical company wished to produce "Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" it would have plenty of ready-made actors on the other side from whom to choose.

Mr. Edwards: Plenty on your side, too.

Mr. VIRGO: I suggest that the member for Eyre look at *Hansard* and see the remarks members on his side made during the term of the previous Government. If he does, he will realize that what I am saying is completely true and that the actions they criticized then are now being continued by the present Treasurer. In fact, they are being added to by him. I heard one comment from a Minister that you cannot put the toothpaste back in the tube. I do not know what toothpaste has to do with it. I took the trouble of looking at some of the material available and in particular an advertisement appearing in the papers in South Australia prior to the last election. It was headed as follows:

Eight ways the L.C.L. can get South Australia moving. Steele Hall as Leader of the L.C.L. will help the building industry by making it easier for people to buy houses.

Mr. Ryan: Has that been done?

Mr. VIRGO: I have looked in these Loan Estimates to find anything relating to that, but cannot find it. The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Glenelg (Mr. Hudson)

both analysed these Loan Estimates. I regard them both as being capable of doing that, unlike the member for Stirling, who made a valiant effort but I am sure the Treasurer need not fear ever being deposed as Treasurer by the member for Stirling. This advertisement has a photograph of the Premier, with many black dots on his face and chin. It also has his name. He says that he will help the building industry by making it easier for people to buy houses, but there is nothing in the Loan Estimates about that. In fact, the Leader of the Opposition (who should be Premier, since he received 53 per cent of the votes at the last election) has made it plain that \$1,500,000 less is provided for housing by this Government than was provided by the Labor Government; yet this is the Government that said it would get the building industry moving and make it easier for people to buy houses; also, that it would bring new industries to the State by appointing a Minister of Industrial Development specially for that purpose. We have heard the debate this afternoon on that. This new Minister specially appointed for that purpose is none other than the Premier, who went to England, Europe and America and who, on his return, followed the exact pattern of Sir Thomas Playford: he told us about industries that are too secret to be spoken of, but they are coming! We did not even get a white elephant; all we got was the old story.

Mr. Lawn: Now he has more staff to help him.

Mr. VIRGO: Unfortunately, it is a tragedy that the Premier has sacked the one man who was capable of doing something about industry in South Australia. It is a tragedy that this Government will have to carry for the rest of its days. We can be facetious about various aspects of the political sphere, but I am afraid that this is one aspect about which I cannot be facetious. It should be treated seriously. By this action, the Premier, the Attorney-General and in fact the whole Cabinet have served notice on every person in the State Government's employ that, if he is appointed by a Labor Government, he will be axed if a Liberal Government comes into power. It was Mr. Currie yesterday, and I am just wondering who will be next. I was happy to hear the Premier speak in glowing terms of the Agent-General in London. However, I fear that that officer may be the next to get the axe, because he was appointed by a Labor Government. I am wondering what the Premier has in mind for the members of the

State Industrial Commission and for the Chairman of the Apprenticeship Commission.

Mr. Lawn: What about the nominated Governor?

Mr. Ryan: Yes, that's a beauty.

Mr. Hudson: And what will happen to the Building Industry Advisory Committee.

Mr. VIRGO: We were told clearly yesterday by the Minister of Housing that the Builders Licensing Act would never come into Operation. In other words, this Government that says it will do something about housing has sabotaged legislation designed to protect people who invest their life savings in houses. This is how they get more houses and how they make it easier for people to buy houses!

One could go through the other points, one of which is "Find more minerals". We saw a photograph a long time ago of the Premier and the previous Liberal Premier in a jeep heading up north. The Premier had a beret on and really looked the part. Whether he found anything I do not know. I think not, because we did not hear anything about it. Another point was "Improve transport by building roads and bridges". Well, we had an insight into this in the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study Report, about which I will say something later.

Before leaving this glorious advertisement, I should like to say a few words about point No. 8, which is "Building hospitals and establishing a new medical school". When I listened to some of the bleatings of members opposite I wondered whether it was the Labor Party that had compiled these Loan Estimates.

Mr. Rodda: It was so good.

Mr. VIRGO: Members opposite have said that they have been there only four months and that they could not get things going overnight. However, according to this advertisement the L.C.L. would get things going not in 12 months or two years or 10 years but now. They are now saying, "Well, give us time, we have been here only four months." That is true, but we have not seen very much in those four months. The Premier had a month overseas, and I hope he enjoyed himself. I remind members opposite that these Loan Estimates are for 12 months. These are the papers that will determine Loan expenditure until June 30, 1969, yet they contain no sign of any spectacular action to get anything moving. This will take the present Government's term of office up to about 15 months, so it means that we will not see any

activity in that period. Do not let us be carried away about the time taken to get things moving.

I am sure that the Treasurer, and also the member for Stirling (Mr. McAnaney), who is aspiring to be the economic wizard of the L.C.L., must have been extremely disappointed by the report on page 13 of the *Advertiser* this morning headed "More money in savings bank". That heading suggested that somebody had got things moving, that there was more money in savings banks. However, although members opposite would have been delighted to read the headline, I am sure they would have been dismayed by the complete report, which states:

Savings bank deposits in South Australia were up by \$3,100,000 to \$646,800,000 during July, according to the Federal Statistics Bureau.

If the report had stopped there, members opposite could have preened themselves and said what good fellows they were, that they had got things moving, and that things were on the up and up. However, if they read the figures for the other States, I am sure they would have turned over and read about the bargains at John Martin's, or something of that kind. The increase in deposits in New South Wales was \$17,900,000, in Victoria it was \$9,400,000, in Queensland it was \$9,600,000, and in Western Australia it was \$4,600,000. The only State that we did better than was poor little Tasmania! We could not do better than even Western Australia. Therefore, we are completely stagnant and there is no confidence in South Australia today. The document that we are debating shows clearly that even the Government lacks confidence in this State.

Mr. Edwards: People had to draw money out to keep going while your Party was in Government.

Mr. VIRGO: In all kindness, Mr. Acting Chairman, you might suggest that the member for Eyre go back to sleep. I have considered some of the statements made by members opposite.

Mr. McAnaney: You're learning.

Mr. VIRGO: Some of the stupid statements are illuminating. None was more grossly stupid than one the member for Stirling made last night. A clear indication of the attitude of Government members was emphasized by the Premier this afternoon, when he spoke of the difference in attitude between the A.L.P. and the L.C.L.

Mr. McAnaney: Well, we hope there's a difference.

Mr. VIRGO: I am proud that there is a difference. This afternoon the Premier said that his Government represented private enterprise and that we represented Socialism. He would agree, if he thought about the matter, that it would be far more realistic to describe the difference as being the difference between Capitalism and Socialism. This nice sweet-sounding term "private enterprise" should not be used. Members opposite should say what they are: the representatives of the capitalist system in this State. This is clearly shown by the statement made by the member for Stirling (Mr. McAnaney) when he attacked the workers of this State for getting four weeks' annual leave. He would have them slaving for seven days a week! His statement is in *Hansard* of yesterday. The only way he can get it altered is to slip up to the *Hansard* office as quickly as possible and try to bribe the boys of *Hansard*, but I do not believe he has a hope in the world of doing that. These men are accurate in what they take down; so the member for Stirling can complain and mumble in his beard, but he cannot take away the words that are in *Hansard*.

Mr. McAnaney interjecting:

Mr. VIRGO: The member for Stirling said:

However, the deficit is the result of other factors, including the previous Government's decision to award an additional week's leave to railway employees, something which no other comparable section of the community receives. Money was wasted on frivolous things for which South Australia has no asset at the moment.

Later, the member for Stirling said—

Mr. McAnaney interjecting:

Mr. VIRGO: The member for Stirling can protest as much as he likes, because it will make no difference: the words are here in *Hansard*. The honourable member said:

In addition to the deficit that has been created, fewer goods will now be produced, because an extra week's leave has been granted to certain employees, and that will provide no asset to the State.

This typical statement shows the anti-working-class attitude of members of the Government. I challenge the member for Stirling, who is mumbling and protesting that he did not say it, to go out to the workshops and say it to the people in the Railways Department. I challenge him to go to the Highways Department, to go to the Engineering and Water Supply Department, and to go to the Hospitals Department and to every other department that has benefited by the action of the State Labor

Government. The honourable member should have the courage of his convictions and go and tell these men that they should not have been granted their extra week's annual leave. He should either do this or withdraw his statement. The honourable member knows the statement was made and he knows that he can do nothing whatever to withdraw it.

Mr. Rodda: Are you a disciple of the workers?

Mr. VIRGO: I am proud to be a disciple of the working class, because I am a worker myself. I came from a working family and I will die a worker, not a hypocrite like the member for Victoria (Mr. Rodda).

Most of the items in this rather dreary document have been covered, but there are one or two items to which I should like to refer briefly. I note with great regret, as did the member for Barossa (Mrs. Byrne), that the miserable sum of only \$150,000 has been provided for the Modbury Hospital. It is with even greater regret that I note that not even one cent has been provided for the south-western districts hospital, although the Premier said in the election campaign that his Government would build this hospital and the Modbury Hospital. This hospital must eventually be built (but I fear it will probably have to wait until after the next election when a Labor Government will take action) because, at present, there are about 400,000 to 500,000 people in an area that could be served by this hospital but as yet no hospital has been built. The nearest hospital for people in the Districts of Edwardstown, Glenelg, Unley, and Mitcham, and of the Morphett Vale subdivision of the District of Alexandra is at Woodville. Unfortunately, although we have rapid transport, many people may well be dead before they arrive at that hospital, and the provision for a hospital in this area is extremely urgent.

I am sorry that the member for Light is not here to hear what I have to say about the Electricity Trust, but perhaps someone will tell him or he may be sufficiently interested at least to glance at the report of what I say. However, I hope that some of those Government members who have been trying to ape him will note what I have to say. It is a cheap snide label, this tag of Socialism, but I compliment the Government on supporting to the extent of \$6,000,000 the greatest socialized industry in South Australia—the Electricity Trust. I remind Government members that this organization, which today

provides electricity for most of South Australia, including country areas—

Mr. Hurst: For the man on the land.

Mr. Langley: At a cheap rate.

Mr. VIRGO: Of course. This organization was the result—

Mr. Venning: Of Sir Thomas Playford's work.

Mr. VIRGO: Legislation was introduced by an L.C.L. Government led by Sir Thomas Playford, as the member for Rocky River obviously knows. I hope he also knows that the wise men of the L.C.L. in the Legislative Council blocked the legislation the first time. It had to be re-introduced, because those members opposed Socialism. But Sir Thomas Playford believed in Socialism and he proceeded on the second occasion to socialize the Adelaide Electric Supply Company. Under the \$6,000,000 loan to the Electricity Trust, \$100,000 is set aside for the purchase of the Penola Electricity Undertaking, so that we seem to be socializing things in the South-East. The member for Victoria (Mr. Rodda) must be extremely happy about that.

Mr. Hudson: He lost a couple of votes over it.

Mr. VIRGO: He may have, but he has gained a great benefit regarding the development of the State, and he can now try, if he so desires, to encourage industry to establish in Penola in the true sense of decentralization.

Mr. Clark: What would he want that for?

Mr. VIRGO: That may injure his vote (I am not sure); but I hope that no member would view decentralization purely on the basis of political expediency, least of all the member for Victoria. I wish now to refer to only two other matters.

Mr. Edwards: It's not six o'clock yet, you know.

Mr. VIRGO: Unlike the member for Eyre, I am not concerned with six o'clock closing. Hotel drinking never worries me: I prefer coffee. The dull and uninspiring nature of these Loan Estimates has not really been caused by the State L.C.L. Government and, to that extent, I accept the Estimates. Indeed, I think anyone who examines the situation has no choice but to accept them. The Government can only provide the money in the Loan Estimates that the Commonwealth Government allows to the State. As the member for Frome (Mr. Casey) has already said; the sums allocated by the Commonwealth Government were determined three months before the Loan Council meeting was held. We

therefore cannot really blame the State Government too much for presenting such dull Loan Estimates. We believe the Government could have presented them in a better way, but the real blame (and I think here that the Government ought to be honest and join with us in expressing this attitude) ought to be laid on the Commonwealth Liberal Government. I remind Government members of statements made during the last State election campaign when, two days after the Prime Minister came to South Australia, a column written by the L.C.L. itself appeared in the *Advertiser* (so we are not faced with any difficulty of misreporting). I will now read that column, which states:

Addressing an enthusiastic public meeting in a crowded town hall on Monday evening, the Prime Minister, Mr. Gorton, gave strong support to the L.C.L. campaign. He said the whole of Australia would benefit from an L.C.L. Government in South Australia.

What poppycock! The article continues:

Such a decision on Saturday by South Australian voters would bring this State into the family group—

what a family!—

of all other mainland Governments aligned with the Federal L.C.L. Government. South Australia, Mr. Gorton said, should elect an L.C.L. Government on Saturday so that with Federal assistance it could start again to develop its resources. At present this is the only mainland State without an L.C.L. Government. With a Government led by Steele Hall, South Australia would be part of a family whose approaches could better be heard than those of an outsider. Mr. Gorton said Steele Hall's policy was based soundly to protect electors against the possibility that would hit wage earners very hard in their pockets.

What a biased statement!

Mr. Langley: Gorton is on the skids.

Mr. VIRGO: Yes, of course he is; but fancy coming over here and putting out that sort of rubbish and expecting the electors to believe it!

Mr. Hudson: Have you seen the letter about him from the businessmen?

Mr. VIRGO: I have not only seen the letter but I asked the Premier a question about it two weeks ago, and I suggest that the member for Glenelg read the reply the Premier gave me. This business about the State getting a better "go" from the Commonwealth Government because a Liberal Government would be in the same family is all poppycock. The plain fact is that this Government has had no better "go" than any Government would get. It was just a gimmick.

Mr. Hurst: The former Premier did better than any Liberal Premier could do.

Mr. VIRGO: I am certain the former Treasurer was the only person who ever went to Canberra with the ability to state a case on behalf of South Australia. Even the conservative press of this State has acknowledged that. The conservative press of the Eastern States, which is not as dogmatic as our press here, is always acclaiming the ability of our former Premier and Treasurer.

I turn now to my final point—a line dealing with railways. There is a two-fold position here. First, I refer to the sum of \$95,000 provided for new residences. Although this is associated with house building, it is just a drop in the ocean in relation to what is required. I am amazed that during Question Time our friends on the other side of the Chamber who represent country districts have not, to the best of my knowledge, asked one question about the repair, renovation, rebuilding or replacement of the houses that railway workers are forced to live in.

I suggest to some country members that they should make it their business to look at some of these houses that are owned by the Railways Department in country areas. Quite frankly, many of them are not fit for human habitation. As \$95,000 is provided for this purpose this year, and as a new house would cost about \$10,000 (although the way the Railways Department builds them and the few facilities it puts in them they may be cheaper), one could reasonably assume that the total figure represents about 10 to 12 houses for the year. That is not very impressive at all. The sum of \$914,000 has been allocated for 24 suburban railcars.

Mr. Hudson: It was almost \$1,500,000 last year.

Mr. VIRGO: I am not so concerned about the amount allocated, although certainly the fact that there has been a reduction gives cause for concern. However, that is not the point I am raising now. I have carefully looked through the Estimates and the Treasurer's statement to try to determine what sort of suburban railcars are to be built, but I cannot find any reference to the matter. The only conclusion I can come to is that the department intends to build 24 railcars identical to those built last year and the year before, namely, diesel "red hens". I seriously direct

the attention of the Government and particularly the Treasurer to page 152 of the M.A.T.S. report, where the following appears:

Diesel-powered rail equipment is not suitable for subway operation. The cost of ventilating the subway would be prohibitive. To operate satisfactorily, some type of electric motive power will have to be developed for the subway section. Complete electrification of the rapid transit system was considered but was found to be too expensive. Existing railcars in South Australia are diesel hydraulic with a single torque converter. They are not capable of conversion to electric power without serious reduction of power-weight ratio. It is recommended, therefore, that diesel-electric motive power, capable of conversion to electric power, be specified for all future cars and for all engine replacements.

What does the Government do but go and spend another \$914,000,000 on something which, if this report is adopted, is obsolete before it comes off the line. This is the foresight this Government is displaying!

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: How much did you say? Did you say \$914,000,000?

Mr. VIRGO: The figure is \$914,000. I hope that the Minister of Lands has now got the message loud and clear and that as a result of his interjection he will be the hero who will point out to his Cabinet colleagues the folly of this action. It is ridiculous to go ahead building rolling stock that is completely obsolete. I repeat that this is a very dull document. It is no wonder that Government members have had difficulty in supporting it. I am sure that they are greatly embarrassed at such a dull and stodgy document, suitable for presentation only by a Government lacking inspiration and initiative.

Mr. RYAN (Port Adelaide): A study of the first Loan Estimates brought down by the Liberal Government reveals that some Government members have been praising the last three years of administration by the Labor Government. The ignorance of new members is amazing. After being in this Chamber for only five minutes, they are experts in the political affairs of this State! Politically they are infants, and they are infantile in their approach.

Mr. Venning: How long have you been learning?

Mr. RYAN: I have been a member long enough to give credit where it is due and to try to be decent and honest politically, but some Government members can never attain to such political heights. Most of the work provided for in these Loan Estimates was started by the Labor Government and has been con-

tinued by the present Government, although the present Government has repudiated several projects. Government members have been able to say that they are extremely pleased to see certain works included, but if those members studied the document and did the necessary homework on these important matters, they would find that although they were giving credit to the present Government, the funds were provided originally by the Labor Government.

Mr. Giles: What about the provisions for the natural gas pipeline and the Keith main?

Mr. RYAN: I point out for the benefit of the honourable member that, apparently, major works are more important to this State than is the killing of a few codlin moths. In 1966-67 the Labor Government provided \$1,500,000 for the Chowilla dam project, and last financial year we provided \$2,500,000. What is provided in these Estimates for Chowilla? Nothing whatever, yet members of the present Government have accused the Labor Government of not continuing with what is possibly the major work undertaken in this State in the last decade.

Mr. McAnaney: You moved the gangs to Keith and gave Chowilla away.

Mr. RYAN: I wish we could move the honourable member somewhere else. Every time he opens his mouth he looks like an accident going somewhere to happen.

Mr. Hurst: How can the present Government get the Chowilla dam going within six months when no provision has been made in these Loan Estimates? How will it meet its election promises?

Mr. RYAN: I believe the Premier is now receiving medical attention for the blisters on his hands caused by his digging the Chowilla dam. The Premier said that a South Australian Liberal Government would receive preferential treatment from the Commonwealth Government. My interpretation of "preferential" is different from the interpretation placed on it by members opposite. When the Premier was in Canberra for the Loan Council meeting, he said that this State's problems had become much more serious over past years as the practical limits of revenue raising had been very nearly reached and as the differences between Commonwealth and State standards had continued to widen. He said that, although prospects for the coming season were reasonably good, it would take a considerable time before the depressing influences of the drought were overcome. I think most members of the Government who have spoken have

referred to the decline in the financial position last year, during which we suffered the worst drought ever experienced in the history of the State. It was only natural that South Australia's financial position deteriorated. The Labor Government was the first to admit it was in difficulty because of things over which it had no control. When a Liberal Government is elected it claims credit for the rain that has improved conditions in the State. I have yet to hear someone make a more ridiculous claim. In claiming this, the present Government is admitting that the State's conditions must deteriorate if there is no rain. When the Labor Government was in office it made provision in case such a serious drought recurred.

Much has been said in the press about the present Premier. He holds one portfolio and is incapable of handling it properly: he has made an absolute mess of it. He has two or three advisers, and his own department is split wide open. This is the man elected as Leader of the present Government! If he compares the present Leadership of South Australia with that of 12 months ago, the Premier must really blush with shame. There is no comparison, if ability counts, between the present Premier and the previous Premier. There is no doubt who should be the rightful Premier.

Mr. Hurst: Do you think there is unanimity in his Party regarding the position of Leader of the Government?

Mr. RYAN: The L.C.L. would be the most split-up Party that ever existed. What has happened in the Commonwealth sphere is nothing, compared with what has happened in the L.C.L. in this State. Ridiculous as it may seem, Cabinet Ministers in another place do not mingle with Ministers from this Chamber. What sort of Government can we expect in these circumstances? For many years it has been the accepted practice (and I am not saying whether it is wise or not) for the leader of the State to be called the Premier. Sir Thomas Playford called himself the Premier but that was a misnomer, because there was no such title. I am sure that he resented the late Frank Walsh referring to him by his correct title of Treasurer. The Labor Party created the title of Premier for the first time in the history of this State. Although the present Premier hates everything done by the Labor Government, he has not altered this title, because he realizes its prestige, although he should not be the Premier.

Mr. Hurst: If we had not created this portfolio he would not have a job.

Mr. RYAN: Of course not. Perhaps he would have been *ex-officio* head of State.

Mr. Hudson: Perhaps he could have been the Governor.

Mr. RYAN: It is amazing that no Governor has been appointed, so perhaps members opposite cannot agree on the appointment. If ability is to be one of the conditions of the appointment of a Governor, Mr. Hall will never be Governor of this State. We should be progressive in our appointments, even though we suffer under the present Administration. When we consider the statements made by the present Premier, when Leader of the Opposition, we can understand why he is not the Treasurer. He is not capable of being Treasurer, and I will not retract that statement. Last year, when speaking on the Loan Estimates, the present Premier, then Leader of the Opposition, said:

I come now to one main alteration in the management of our financial affairs—the transfer to the Loan Account of the responsibility previously met by Revenue Account: subsidies for non-government buildings. Members opposite have endeavoured to justify this. It is interesting to look back to the last Loan Estimates of the Walsh Administration and see what the then Treasurer said when he initiated these alterations.

This has been said many times, but we should now consider the complete turn-round in policy of the present Government. The Premier, when he said that, was referring to the first line of the Estimates. When criticizing the Government he said:

It is interesting to note that, in 1965-66, the Government provided for loans to producers \$1,200,000, or 1.6 per cent of the total Loan programme. Last year, \$828,671 (or 1.1 per cent) was provided, and this year \$750,000 (or .9 per cent) is provided. This shows a steady, progressive decline. The variation in advances to settlers is not altogether unfavourable to the Government, as some progress has been made in this regard.

In the first year in office of the present Government, although the Labor Government was accused of never making sufficient provision for loans to producers, this Government has increased the allocation by a paltry \$18,000. This allocation relates to people whom Government members are supposed to represent. We were told the Labor Administration never provided sufficient, and yet the people without whom Government members say this State could not exist and who, they tell us, should

have the majority of say in this Parliament will receive a miserable increase of \$18,000.

Mr. Broomhill: It's disgraceful.

Mr. RYAN: The present Administration is disgraceful. Although I do not like saying things behind a person's back (I prefer to say it to his face), I think it is amazing that the person in charge of this measure is at present absent from the Chamber.

Mr. Nankivell: He's listening.

Mr. RYAN: I hope he is. This afternoon we saw an example of the way in which the present Treasurer refuses to suffer the consequences of criticism. When criticized this afternoon, he said, "Why have a shot at me?" He cannot take criticism. I intend to quote what the present Treasurer said in criticism of the previous Loan Estimates and, although it may take some time, I believe that I am justified in doing so.

Mr. Broomhill: In order to establish whether or not he is a man of his word!

Mr. RYAN: When we read the criticism made by the present Treasurer, I think that he should justify the confidence of the people in this State and resign, for he would be doing the State a service if he did. Criticizing the Loan Estimates introduced last year, he said:

I have done some research on the Loan Estimates and, although I shall be critical of the Government in many respects, I shall try to offer constructive suggestions on matters I consider it ought to have taken into account. I wish the present Treasurer had, in fact, offered constructive criticism on that occasion for, if he had, it would not have rebounded on him on this occasion. He continued:

I make this preamble to my remarks because I do not want members opposite to say (as undoubtedly they would like to say) that the Opposition has been purely destructive in its criticism without offering an alternative. There is no difficulty about offering destructive criticism of this document, because so many things have been left undone that it is easy to provide examples of this lack. This is a colourless, unimaginative and disappointing document. It fails to recognize opportunities and it neglects to correct the down-turn in developmental projects on which future revenue and public confidence are based.

Fancy talking about confidence! He continued:

It has slanted in wrong directions. It has abundant evidence of misplaced emphasis and it reflects the Premier's inexperience and lack of appreciation of essentials and priorities. I believe this is glaringly evident from the Treasurer's explanation last Thursday. I believe it indicates what is obvious, when one thinks about it: the Treasurer is not an administrator of long experience.

Fancy the present Treasurer talking about someone lacking in Treasury experience! He continued:

His professional training does not necessarily fit him to be the Treasurer.

That is the laugh of the century: the present Treasurer, with his terrific capabilities, the greatest statesman this State has ever known, the wizard statesman of King William Street, making a statement about somebody else's capabilities, saying that "his professional training does not necessarily fit him to be the Treasurer"!

Mr. Virgo: Who made that statement?

Mr. RYAN: The member for Flinders, who continued:

He has had no experience in large financial managements and organizations. In addition, he has the misfortune to be a member of a Party that is notorious through all its Administrations for its failure to take into account the larger issues of Government.

Mr. Venning: What happened proved this point.

Mr. RYAN: I have proved the lack of ability of the present Government in handling its financial affairs. The present Treasurer continued:

It is on record over so many Administrations that Labor Governments as a whole are introspective instead of outward-looking: they are so concerned with domestic issues that take up so much of their time and thinking that they give scant recognition to the larger and more far-reaching matters with which Governments inevitably have to deal. Unfortunately, this is the kind of document I would have expected from the Treasurer, knowing his background and the Party to which he at least professedly subscribes.

Mr. Clark: "Professedly"?

Mr. RYAN: That is what was said.

Mr. Virgo: Are you still quoting from the same speech?

Mr. RYAN: It is the laugh of the century. It is amazing that this should have been said. Let me remind new members that whatever they say is recorded in *Hansard* and is there for all time. I am glad the Treasurer is now back in his seat: his ears must have been burning! He criticized the former Treasurer for having no ability but he has not displayed any on this occasion. He could not take criticism this afternoon, the same sort of criticism as he gave out 12 months ago. When things are different they are not the same. A little later the present Treasurer said:

If we do not invest in the State to the absolute limit of funds that we can procure and thereby express our confidence in the

State's future, how can we expect the private sector to invest in industrial and rural development?

Is that not amazing, in view of the statements we have heard recently from the Treasurer that he has had many discussions with people in private industry, hoping that they will invest in the State? This is a criticism levelled at the former Treasurer. The present Treasurer continued:

The Treasurer does not intend to use all available funds for development works. On the contrary he has said—

and he continued with a quotation.

Mr. Nankivell: That is true, too.

Mr. RYAN: If it was true then, it is even more so now. If not all the Loan funds available to this State are being used, that could be a reason why people have no confidence in the Government. How can people show confidence in the State unless they are given a lead by the people in charge of the finances of the State? I say that lead is not evident. I am dumbfounded at the attitude of the Government in this matter; even I, Mr. Chairman, with all my fluency, am dumbfounded and lost for words.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: You are intoxicated with the exuberance of your own verbosity.

Mr. RYAN: I am not intoxicated by a lust for power as are some members opposite: they are prepared to cling to the reins of office despite the wishes of the people. Indeed, it has been proved that members opposite have no respect for the will of the people in this State. Members opposite cannot even govern in their own right, for the Government today is the Stott-Hall Government. The Party opposite cannot govern in its own right because the people did not want it and they did not elect it. I have the privilege of belonging to a Party that was able to govern in its own right. We will continue to make that our aim, and we will not let other people determine what we do. At present, the policy adopted by this Government is being determined by one man who is not a member of the Government Party, yet the Party opposite claims that it is governing in its own right on behalf of South Australia.

Mr. Broomhill: It is only a temporary Government, I think.

Mr. RYAN: Absolutely. Some members opposite who have been here no more than three weeks or so talk about travelling 50,000 miles. It is hard to get any message through

to Liberals. A Liberal-Tory is the most arrogant of all people, and in some respects he is the hardest person to try to convince. The lust for power of members opposite overrides their sense of fair play and reasonableness.

Mr. Hughes: They have no power: they are controlled by one man outside of their Party.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the member for Port Adelaide to come back to the Loan Estimates.

Mr. RYAN: Mr. Chairman, I have not been off the Loan Estimates. I have referred to the statement made by the Treasurer, who is in charge of these Loan Estimates. That is the matter on which I am speaking and on which I will continue to speak.

Mr. Langley: And give advice!

Mr. RYAN: Mr. Chairman, people expect the Treasurer of the State to try to instil in people some confidence in the financial arrangements of the State. In 1967 the present Treasurer, who should have had some knowledge of a department that he had administered for a number of years, referred to the deepening of the Port River, in my district. I do not complain about the provisions made in these Loan Estimates for expenditure in the District of Port Adelaide, because that district probably comes out equal to if not better than any other district in respect of these allocations. I think the sum provided is about \$12,000,000, but most of the works were started by a Government of which I was proud to be a member. Doubtless, I will soon be a member of a Labor Government again. The present Treasurer said (last year):

The deepening of the Port River, the cost of which was \$6,600,000, is an approved project. In fact, it was approved when I was Minister.

I am not disagreeing with that statement: it was correct. A Labor member interjected, "Why did you do it?" and the present Treasurer replied:

Because we could not do everything at once. We started it, but the Labor Government has not started anything.

That is the joke of the year, because 90 per cent of the work for which provision is made in the present Loan Estimates was initiated by the Labor Government. It would not have been economically sound for the present Government to repudiate work already started and being completed. The present Treasurer, in 1967, went on to say:

Labor is now in its third year of office, but it has not started its first new project.

Well, at the commencement of my speech I said that, after a change of Government, the incoming Government is, in the main, carrying on works started by the previous Government, because the new Government has no alternative. Praise given to the present Government should have been given to the previous Government. The present Treasurer also said on that occasion:

I have here a list of the references to the Public Works Committee during the last four years and, although I have not totalled them up, there must be 100. Of that number, five or six are major projects which have been approved by the Public Works Committee but are awaiting commencement by the Marine and Harbors Department.

The present Treasurer had administered that department for some time. He continued:

However, there is nothing on these Estimates for any of them. The honourable member should not break in and ask me what the previous Liberal Government did. He should have a look at what this Government has done. The answer is nothing.

It is amazing that a Government can be in office for three years and do nothing, and it is also amazing that, at an election, 53 per cent of the people support a Government that the L.C.L. says has done nothing! The majority must be wrong! When Labor was in office, urgency motions were moved because, it was alleged, we were not spending enough money, yet in the next breath we were accused of spending money like a drunken sailor. However, the present Treasurer continued:

The deepening of the Port River will cost \$6,600,000, but this year it is only getting \$665,000, or just one-tenth of its cost. That will bring the total expenditure on the project to June 30, 1968, to \$2,700,000. By this time next year the project will still be less than half completed.

I mention that because of the Treasurer's criticism of the Labor Administration.

Mr. McKee: What about the Greater Port Adelaide Plan?

Mr. RYAN: That is one of several major projects that have been repudiated by the present Government.

Mr. Hurst: Do you think we'll get Jervois bridge finished?

Mr. RYAN: This is one of the projects included in this year's Loan Estimates. The present Treasurer, when in Opposition, criticized the Labor Government because it was spending in each financial year only one-tenth of the total cost of a project worth \$6,600,000. It is amazing that, according to these Loan Estimates, he now intends to spend about the

same sum as that spent in each of the last three years by the Labor Government. Apparently, when things are different they are not quite the same. Surely we could expect something different from a man who was in charge of the department concerned for many years and who has now been elevated to the position of Treasurer. He was severe in his criticism when in Opposition, yet now, when he has the opportunity to do something about the matter, he does not improve the position. I must support the Loan Estimates because the work described in them was commenced by the Labor Government. At this stage I support the first line.

The CHAIRMAN: I propose to put the lines *seriatim*.

State Bank, \$1,995,000.

Mr. HUDSON: This line involves a serious matter regarding the position of the State Bank. The provision of Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money for the State Bank represents a reduction of \$1,150,000. The Treasurer said in his explanation:

In 1968-69 the bank is likely to have a total of about \$12,000,000 available for lending.

This should be compared with the figure in the statement on the Loan Estimates of the previous Treasurer (Hon. D. A. Dunstan), which figure was \$13,300,000. So, effectively, in the overall programme for the State Bank there is a reduction of \$1,300,000. The main reason is a reduction in Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money of \$1,150,000. A further important matter is that the Treasurer has reduced the provision in respect of the Advances for Homes Act from the sum of \$700,000 provided last year to \$500,000. He explained this as follows:

The \$700,000 of State Loan funds allocated last year to the bank comprised \$500,000 for such purchases and \$200,000 to assist in the purchase of existing homes. This year the Government proposes that the purchase of existing houses be financed to about three times the former extent from the allocation of housing agreement funds, and \$500,000 is again provided under the Advances for Homes Act for loans to persons purchasing Housing Trust houses.

So, we have a reduction of \$1,150,000 in the provision of Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money, the elimination of the \$200,000 previously provided for the purchase of existing houses, and the statement that about \$600,000 is to be provided from agreement funds to purchase existing houses. The effect on State Bank loans for the purchase of new

houses will therefore be greater than the reduction in the agreement allocation to the State Bank, because of the reduction by \$200,000 of the amount to be made available under the Advances for Homes Act this year. Therefore, the reduction in the amount of finance available to purchase new houses must be greater than the reduction in the agreement allocation. This is serious, particularly when considered in conjunction with the rise of the absolute limit from \$7,000 to \$8,000.

I completely support the need to raise the limit, but we must recognize that even with the same amount of finance available there would be less loans as a result. The rise in the limit is necessary because of problems caused by the deposit gap, but I should think that this increase might well stimulate the demand for loans from the State Bank, because the deposit-gap problems may be, at least partially solved. The need to stimulate new building in circumstances where the limit of the loan has been raised requires not a reduction in the money made available by the State for new houses but an increase. I and other members on this side are seriously disturbed at this action of the Treasurer in circumstances where the building industry needs a stimulus. I have heard the previous L.C.L. Premier, Sir Thomas Playford, say that one never really had to worry about a demand for loans, because there was always a waiting list, to some extent, and that it was possible to stimulate the demand.

I understand that the waiting list at the State Bank has been reduced, but a fairly long one remains, and the need to stimulate the building industry is sufficiently important to require a further increase in activities of the State Bank and, following this, a further reduction in the waiting list. Now is the time to act in order to provide a stimulus to the building industry. The Treasurer indicated that he had large surplus funds available to him. There are other points in the Loan Estimates that give him a margin to cover additional money made available for housing. Will he explain fully why it was necessary to reduce the State Bank allocation to the extent that it has been reduced and to an extent which is greater in respect of loans for new houses than the reduction in the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money allocated to the State Bank?

Concerning the number of new houses financed through the State Bank, the reduction must be about 20 per cent for this financial

year compared with the last financial year because, as has already been pointed out, with the increase in the limit of the loan from \$7,000 to \$8,000, even the same sum would represent at least a 10 per cent reduction in the number of loans granted. The 10 per cent reduction in the sum made available will have a cumulative effect, and the likely reduction in the number of loans made through the State Bank this year will be about 20 per cent or more. I should be pleased if the Treasurer would explain these matters and indicate what further action he would consider necessary to stimulate housing activity regarding finance provided through the State Bank.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON (Treasurer): Although I do not dispute the honourable member's figures, I do not completely accept the assumptions he has derived from them. First, as he himself said, when these Estimates were compiled the waiting time for finance had been considerably reduced and the Government therefore considered that it could take the first step in altering the conditions, namely, increasing the loan limit by \$1,000. As the honourable member correctly says, this was in our opinion (and I am glad to know that he agrees with me) necessary in order to help bridge the deposit gap. This is just another way to stimulate demand, because it enables more people to buy a house. Although it is agreed that \$8,000 divided into a given figure gives a lesser divisor than is given by dividing \$7,000 into the same figure, it does not necessarily work out in precisely those terms when it is applied to the actual position and when we consider that, because of the higher loan made available, more people can contract for a house.

Secondly, the honourable member is assuming that every application will be for the full amount, but he knows from his own administration of the department that this is not so. Although I have not taken out a calculation on this (and the honourable member may not agree with me), from the applications for loans that come before me every day, I should think that a small proportion were for the full amount available to the borrower on the security offered. His assumption that the full amount will be applied for in each case is therefore, on my knowledge of the matter, not correct. I think he would be prepared to agree with that.

Thirdly, he assumes that, because the proposal is virtually to treble the sum made available for the purchase of existing houses,

this prejudices the availability of houses for people wanting to buy them because it reduces the amount directly available from housing agreement funds for buildings and purchasing new houses. People do not want two houses, and the reason for making more funds available for the purchase of existing houses is that there is a demand for loans for this purpose. Indeed the former Government was the first to recognize that this demand existed. I agree that its policy was correct in this matter. I agree to the extent that I believe the allocation should be increased, and that is why we have done it. If a person with a limited income desires to buy a much lower-priced existing house rather than contract for the larger involvement of a new house at a new price, his demand is met and he has a house. The subtraction of the additional \$400,000 from the total to the State Bank for new houses does, in my opinion, mean that more houses will be available to purchasers. The honourable member cannot have it both ways. If he suggests that raising the limit from \$7,000 to \$8,000 will mean fewer houses, surely he will agree that making more money available for existing houses at a lower price a unit will mean that more houses can be bought.

This is a matter of judgment. I do not necessarily say that my judgment was right or infallible: time will prove or disprove that. Nor do I accept that the honourable member's judgment is more likely to be right than mine: either of use can be wrong or either of us can be partly right. I do not object to the honourable member's expressing a contrary view or to his criticisms in this matter. It was a policy decided on judgment at the time and, in my opinion, it will work out satisfactorily. Nobody can look that far ahead but that was my judgment on the matter when these Loan Estimates were prepared.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Leader of the Opposition): I want to raise with the Treasurer the provision for loans in relation to strata titles. The Treasurer will know that when the strata titles legislation passed through this Chamber, the intention was that this would be a means of providing adequate security for mortgage finance for properties that would be capable of issuance of strata titles. Our whole aim was to have available in relation to strata titles the same sort of money as was secured on mortgage otherwise with normal titles. I am informed by applicants to the State Bank and the Savings Bank that they are unable to obtain loans on strata titles

from those banks. It appears that no policy decision has been taken by either bank board to issue mortgage finance on a basis of strata titles. Will the Treasurer urgently take up with the bank boards the necessity of treating strata titles in the same way as other titles—on the basis of the issuance of mortgage finance—so that we may get the advantage of financing strata titles which this place intended to provide for when it passed the strata titles legislation?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will cheerfully take up that matter. I admit I have not done any research into this in the time that I have been Minister of Housing. Probably the Leader knows more about this matter than I do, because the strata titles legislation was in operation for some considerable time while he was in Government. I understand from hearsay that lending institutions generally were unhappy about some aspects of the strata titles legislation. Consequently, there was much reluctance, if not a refusal, by some people over whom we had no control to accommodate people under this legislation, probably because they could use all their available funds on what they thought were more straightforward investments.

I shall be happy to examine the matter with the two institutions the Leader names. If they have any objections which are genuine and which are really embargoes on their lending on this sort of title and they suggest to me what the problems are so that we can put them right, I will support the Leader in examining the legislation to that effect.

Mr. CASEY: I cannot agree with what the Treasurer said about the number of houses that could be purchased this year compared with last year. It is obvious that if the loan maximum is raised from \$7,000 to \$8,000 and the allocation to the State Bank is reduced, fewer applicants will be able to use the maximum mortgage money. The Treasurer said he thought that it would not work that way, but I cannot see how it can work any other way. I cannot agree with the Treasurer's argument. In fact, I do not think that deep down he agrees with it, either.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: I do.

Mr. CASEY: If he examined the position over the last five years, I think he would have to admit that what I am saying is right. I am surprised that a man of his integrity could even make the suggestion he has made.

Mr. HUDSON: I agree completely with the Treasurer that I cannot have it both ways; at least, not with the amount of money that is currently being provided. In suggesting that the number of loans granted by the State Bank this year for new houses would be reduced by 20 per cent over last year, I was assuming only a 10 per cent reduction in the number of loans granted as a result of the increase in the maximum limit. The reduction in the number of loans would be 12½ per cent if all loans granted were for the maximum available, but I suggested conservatively that the reduction would be about 10 per cent, because the maximum would not be lent in all cases.

The overall effect of the reduction by 20 per cent in the number of new loans financed through State Bank lending is a serious policy change by the Government, having regard to the present position in the building industry. The Treasurer has agreed that the approvals for the June quarter were disturbing, but there is no sign of any improved demand for houses and flats. Commonwealth Loan money allocated for housing is not available to private builders if it is not used for the purpose for which it is allocated, and it is not automatically replaced by other sources of finance. The average net assets of borrowers from the State Bank would be less than those of borrowers from private banks and, if we are to stimulate the building industry and the demand for loans, we must do it through the State Bank, to which the person with less than average assets tends to go.

In addition to the \$6,000,000 surplus provided in these Loan Estimates, a further \$2,000,000 of short-term loans to the Natural Gas Pipelines Authority is available, and there is cushioning in many other places. For example, if \$500,000 is spent on the festival hall project this year, I shall be most surprised. Even if the Treasurer has a substantial revenue deficit to cover, he could take the risk and provide this additional money. Under his authority as Treasurer he can increase the provision during the year, and I will want to ensure that he is given that authority in the Public Purposes Loan Bill.

When the document to which I have referred was circulated by the Under Treasurer at the end of March last, the proposal was that about \$19,200,000 of Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money, about \$300,000 less than the final figure, be made available. I protested vigorously at the reduction on the

amount available last year and gained Cabinet approval for \$21,000,000 for the then coming year. That, however, was prior to there being any increase in the limit from \$7,000 to \$8,000. If the Treasurer checks the records he will see that it was only a couple of days prior to the Labor Government's going out of office that the Commonwealth Government announced the increase in its limit. Following this announcement I immediately requested information from the Treasury regarding the possibility of South Australia's following suit in this respect. At the time the objection to any reduction in Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money was taken, the increase of \$1,000 in the limit had not been agreed to. Because of this and because of the very serious position of the building industry, I appeal to the Treasurer to examine this matter again carefully from the viewpoint of providing more money for housing during the year, or even in the next few months. This may become necessary because of the difficulties many primary producers will experience as a result of the drought. The Treasurer will realize that many primary producers experience the effects of a drought in the year the drought breaks, so many farmers will require increased support from banks this year. The State Bank is involved in primary producer accounts in certain country districts, particularly the West Coast and the Clare area, so there may be much additional pressure this year on the State bank as a result of the continuing effects of the drought on the financial position of primary producers.

The bank's ability even to undertake the programme outlined may to some extent be adversely affected by the support it will have to give to its existing customers who are primary producers. For all these reasons, therefore, I ask the Treasurer to take up this matter again with the Under Treasurer and with the State Bank and to watch the situation closely to see whether more money can be made available to further reduce the waiting list. If there is any sign of the waiting list increasing and if the revenue position of the State is buoyant enough, I ask the Treasurer to make additional money available to the State Bank under the housing agreement, so that the building industry can be given a real stimulus from this source.

I point out that, even when the extra money is made available, it will probably be six months or more before any effect is seen. The loans have to be arranged and approvals have

to be obtained. The administrative procedures involved always create a significant lag before there is an up-turn in the building industry. I realize the Treasurer is concerned about the revenue position of the Budget, but that may improve and, if he can see his way clear to provide additional funds in this way, I appeal to him to do so.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I accept in good faith what the honourable member says. There is much merit in his suggestions. I point out that there is no inbuilt cushioning in these Loan Estimates, as he has suggested. The moneys allocated in these Estimates are allocated for the purposes for which they are expected to be used. I have not tucked away anything that is not likely to be required for the festival hall. The honourable member may be correct and I may be wrong. If I had not put some money on the line for a festival hall, there would have been two hours of criticism by members opposite because I had not done so.

In the next three or four months we may be able to gauge the extent to which applications for loans for housing under the new terms are received. This will be a useful guide to determining the allocation of any funds that may be available in other accounts

later in the year. I accept the honourable member's suggestion that I should consider this matter, because if there is a demand for loans to purchase housing that extends beyond a reasonable waiting time it will be a good sign, and we will do our best to accommodate customers who wish to borrow.

Line passed.

Highways and Local Government, \$2,816,000—passed.

Lands, Irrigation and Drainage, \$1,815,000.

Mr. CASEY: Because of the large amount of work done on drains in the South-East last year more money was required than was allocated. The amount provided was \$520,000 but \$547,737 was spent. This year, although hostility has been expressed to further drains being built, I understand that minor extensions will be made to Baker Range drain and Drain C. Can the Treasurer indicate how, in the present circumstances, \$520,000 will be spent on drainage in the South-East this year?

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11.50 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, August 29, at 2 p.m.