

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, February 4, 1969

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the following Bills:

Aboriginal Lands Trust Act Amendment,
Aged and Infirm Persons' Property Act
Amendment,

Boilers and Pressure Vessels,
Building Societies Act Amendment,
Bush Fires Act Amendment,
Companies Act Amendment,
Crown Lands Act Amendment,
Evidence Act Amendment,
Explosives Act Amendment,

Fruit and Plant Protection,
Gift Duty,

Harbors Act Amendment,
Health Act Amendment,

Licensing Act Amendment,
Licensing Act Amendment (No. 3),

Marine Act Amendment,
Nurses Registration Act Amendment,

Parkin Congregational Mission of South
Australia Incorporated,

Pastoral Act Amendment,
Petroleum Act Amendment,

Police Pensions Act Amendment,
Public Examinations Board,

Public Service Act Amendment,
Public Service Arbitration,

Registration of Dogs Act Amendment,
Stamp Duties Act Amendment (No. 3),

Stock Diseases Act Amendment,
Swine Compensation Act Amendment,

Textile Products Description Act Amend-
ment,

Veterinary Surgeons Act Amendment,
Weights and Measures Act Amendment.

WHYALLA HOSPITAL VESTING BILL

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended to the House of Assembly the appropriation of such amounts of money as might be required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

STANDING ORDERS

His Excellency the Governor, by memorandum, returned to the House of Assembly a copy of amendments to the Standing Orders of the House of Assembly, adopted by the House on November 27, 1968, and approved by His Excellency in Executive Council, on December 12, 1968.

PETITIONS: TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Mr. BROOMHILL presented a petition signed by 136 electors of the West Torrens District. It stated that the adoption of the recommendations of the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study concerning the projected extension of Marion Road to the north of Henley Beach Road should be rejected on the ground that its building would, by the acquisition of properties, be an unwarranted intrusion into the peaceful living of citizens and requested that the Government immediately cause investigations to be made into more suitable alternatives, one being the widening of Henley Beach Road between Marion and Holbrook Roads and another being a diversion of Marion Road to the south of Henley Beach Road.

Received and read.

Mrs. BYRNE presented a petition signed by 157 electors of the Barossa District. It stated that the adoption of the recommendations of the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study concerning the Modbury Freeway between the Torrens River at Dernancourt and Grand Junction Road at Holden Hill should be rejected and that the proposed freeway route should be in accordance with the 1962 Adelaide Development Plan, in order to avoid unnecessary acquisition of property and demolition of houses, and to decrease the total cost of the project.

Received and read.

CHOWILLA DAM

The Hon. R. S. HALL (Premier): I ask leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I thank the House for its permission to make this statement concerning Chowilla. The River Murray Commission will meet next Thursday, February 6. It will discuss the future of water storage on the Murray River and must consider the reports of its technical committee in relation to findings on Chowilla and Dartmouth as alternatives for dam sites. If the commission does not come to a decision favourable to South Australia's requirements, this Government will request a conference with the Premiers of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, and the Prime Minister.

The technical committee's report is now available for study and indicates that Dartmouth will provide a greater yield to the river system than Chowilla. This Government has consistently said that any alternative

must provide greater benefits to South Australia than Chowilla would provide. Because of Dartmouth's ability to provide about 860,000 acre feet of additional water above that which Chowilla can provide in terms of average annual supply, the South Australian Government maintains that South Australia's entitlement must be increased to share in this additional available supply. It has, therefore, informed the other members of the commission that it cannot contemplate the construction of Dartmouth unless there is an increase in South Australia's water entitlement from 1,250,000 to 1,500,000 acre feet, and in addition it would be necessary to spend a substantial sum (between \$4,000,000 and \$7,000,000), as indicated by the report, to renovate Lake Victoria and increase its capacity for taking in and passing out water to facilitate the short-term management of the river in South Australia.

The Government is optimistic that the other States will show their confidence in the technical committee's report by agreeing to share the additional water supplies from the Dartmouth scheme. In short, the South Australian Government has substantially increased its demands in relation to the overall water supply from the Murray River system above that required by the previous Government when an endeavour was made to have other State Premiers guarantee from any alternative that which Chowilla would provide. Chowilla remains the official proposal of the South Australian Government until an agreement is reached that will provide a more advantageous alternative.

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

That Standing Orders be so far suspended as to enable me to move the following motion:

That in view of the Government's repudiation of the unanimous resolutions of the House that South Australia has a fundamental and legal right to the construction of the Chowilla dam without delay, and in view of the public acceptance by the Premier of the construction of a dam at Dartmouth instead, this House has no confidence in the Government.

The SPEAKER: Is the motion seconded?

Mr. CORCORAN: Yes.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The Government has no objection whatsoever to having this matter fully discussed in the House. In fact, it will provide a service to the public to have the whole of the Chowilla question ventilated

in this way. The Government is fully confident that, at the end of this debate, its stand will have been vindicated.

Motion carried.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I move:

That in view of the Government's repudiation of the unanimous resolutions of the House that South Australia has a fundamental and legal right to the construction of the Chowilla dam without delay, and in view of the public acceptance by the Premier of the construction of a dam at Dartmouth instead, this House has no confidence in the Government.

It ought not to be necessary for me to remind members of what has been said by members on both sides of this Chamber about Chowilla previously.

Mr. Clark: And of what has been said this afternoon!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I will come to that in a moment. What has been the unanimous stand taken by this Government previously? It has been that South Australia had a fundamental and legal right to the construction of the Chowilla dam without delay; that no other proposition could conceivably give us the same advantages or the same guarantees to this State as Chowilla could give; and that we were certain therefore that, by insisting on our fundamental and legal rights to that dam, we would be protecting South Australia. That attitude has been expressed by members on my side of the House and on the other side of the House, and it has been expressed by both sides while they were in Government and had the full information available to them from our representative on the commission. In addition to that, the people of South Australia were given an unequivocal assurance by the Premier before he took office that he would not go for any alternative. He said, "We will build the Chowilla dam." There was no qualification about that whatever.

When we were in office we were given information by our Commissioner concerning what he was certain would come out of the technical reports to the commission. First, he said that it would be clear that there would be a cost advantage in the case of Chowilla. An alternative dam to give satisfactory yields and to give South Australia what Chowilla would provide would cost more than Chowilla would cost. Secondly, he was satisfied that, as to salinity, Chowilla would be shown to have real advantages and would give South Australia both a quantity and a quality control. Those were the two matters

that were being investigated. Those were the two matters that led to the commission's not letting a contract for Chowilla when the tenders had come in.

The cost situation to other States and to the Commonwealth demanded a re-assessment of what advantage would come to all parties given the increased cost. Secondly, new factors affecting salinity in the Murray River had become evident, so that it was essential to have a salinity investigation. Doubts have been raised as to the effects of salinity on South Australia. The investigations on both these scores went on, and the next thing that came out of the technical committee's report for anyone to read was that Chowilla had been vindicated on both scores. What is the position concerning costs? We know that the modified Chowilla, the design of which has been completed, would cost \$62,000,000, which is a pretty firm figure; \$6,000,000 has already been spent on it. What of the Dartmouth proposal? The full Dartmouth proposal, according to the technical committee's report, will cost \$57,000,000. In addition, there will be required to be, as the Premier has told the House, work on the Lake Victoria storage that could cost as much as \$7,000,000.

Mr. Virgo: They're only estimated costs, not actual.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Of course. We know that when estimates of this kind have been made there has been an inevitable escalation. The authority that reported on Dartmouth underestimated the total cost of the proposal very greatly indeed. In the circumstances, what is the advantage in cost between Chowilla and the alternative proposal? It is negligible, if we are to accept what is at the moment only an estimate of the cost of a dam that has not even been designed. Therefore, any objection made by the other States on the score of cost to the building of Chowilla goes by the board.

What is the position regarding salinity? Undoubtedly, for South Australia the position regarding salinity if Chowilla were built would be markedly better than if the alternative proposal were undertaken. True, the report says that if Chowilla is built the average reduction of salinity in our section of the Murray River will be 20 parts per million, but that is not the reduction that occurs in the peak periods of irrigation, where the reduction as a result of having Chowilla would be about 100 p.p.m.

In the circumstances, it is clear that for South Australia quality as well as quantity of control would derive from the building of the Chowilla dam. The technical committee's report is obviously slanted. It is clear that the committee was told to come up with a report in a certain way. The report is extraordinarily cryptic, and the assumptions made constantly throughout it are not detailed. When one comes to question these assumptions, as speakers will do during this debate, one sees just how far South Australia's interests have been looked after! It cannot be gainsaid that the same benefits will derive to South Australia from Chowilla as were originally designed to flow from its construction: indeed possibly there would be enhanced benefits regarding quality of control. Then what is the basis for the demand for a change? The whole of the technical committee's report concerns itself with the added yields to the up-river States: the yield to South Australia is not referred to. The report refers to added yield to the up-river States and to South Australia's entitlement. Of course, in fact, if it is alleged that this alternative proposal will benefit all States that are party to this agreement, then it must be shown that South Australia will get enhanced provisions, and this does not come out of the technical committee's report at all.

What is the position then relating to Chowilla? Chowilla would give the State a guarantee not achievable in any other way. It would give an assured quantity of water at the head of our section of the Murray River, and it would assure a quality control that is clearly not available from the alternative proposal. That is what South Australia is entitled to from the agreement and that is the benefit to us. With Chowilla, we would have a large body of assured water at the head of our section of the river and we would know that we had quality control. It is not a question of getting an entitlement of a reduced flow in the Murray: we know the water is there. What is the Premier trading these advantages for, because these are the advantages about which we have a legal agreement? He is trading them for a dam on the Mitta Mitta River which is not yet designed and the cost estimate of which is vague. He is trading it for a flow of water to South Australia the quality of which depends on how far the up-river States control salinity in their areas. Given the way in which they have allowed their plantings to go and given their irrigation practices, no-one in South Australia could be very happy about that. Also, the Premier is

asking for an extra entitlement of water so that South Australia will get added water during years of restriction.

Mr. Jennings: We had that before.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Yes, we have that in the agreement now, but the agreement states:

(6) (a) (i) During a declared period of restriction prior to the Chowilla reservoir having been declared to have become effective for the purposes of this agreement, the available water shall be divided between the State contracting Governments in the following proportions:

New South Wales, 1,000,000,
Victoria, 1,000,000,
South Australia, 603,000.

(ii) During a declared period of restriction after the Chowilla reservoir has been declared to have become effective for the purposes of this agreement, the available water shall be divided between the State contracting Governments in equal proportions.

Therefore, once the Chowilla dam was built we were to get an added water entitlement. What extra is the Premier getting for South Australia by saying that he wants an added water entitlement when the Dartmouth dam is built?

Mr. Corcoran: It's a completely sham fight.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Yes. The Commissioner told us that we could have an agreement to an added entitlement when Dartmouth dam or any other dam was built, but the Premier has made a trade at this stage of proceedings in order to get us an extra assurance. However, what is the use of an extra assurance if the water is not there? We know what this is all about. Having given way on the solemn and unequivocal assurances he gave to the people of the State, the Premier has sought a way out. He wants to appear to be a gladiator for South Australia when he has already given the fight away. He now says he will insist on something from the Commonwealth that we could have had all the time, and this means nothing effective to us unless there is the water there to provide it.

What is the position that South Australia faces now? If the up-river States are to demand that the criterion of their honouring their solemn obligations to this State is the provision of additional water to them for their existing irrigation requirements, and if they are prepared to ignore the facts that this State relies on the water not only for irrigation requirements but for the whole of its industrial and rural complex of water supply, then why do we not take them to arbitration? Let us

see what would stand in the way of that. Is it the cost? It is certain that the agreement provided for a cost originally estimated at over \$28,000,000 (I think the allowable amount that could be spent was the equivalent of \$32,000,000). However, it is not the cost that is in issue here, as the difference in cost between the two alternatives is negligible. It will not mean a hindrance, because the other States are not binding us (and this would be shown in arbitration) to the original sum, as the cost at which they were prepared to let tenders was \$43,000,000, which is well above the original figure provided in the agreement.

Then there is salinity. At present, the other States are apparently demanding a flow of water past Mildura that was not originally contemplated. Why are they doing this? Why are we required to provide a flow of water past Mildura that would apparently (and this does not fully appear from the technical committee's report) provide them with better water than we have? Why should that be their entitlement when we have this agreement, and what does the agreement say? Chowilla is written in throughout the agreement. The Governments are required to carry out the works, and the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria are required to deal with us in carrying them out and maintaining them. In the event of a difference, the agreement states:

58. If a difference of opinion arises among the commissioners on any question not being a question of law or prescribed as formal business, that question—

and this is not a question of law or of formal business but of what shall be done by the commission and what decision shall be taken about this dam, which is written into the agreement—

unless the commissioners concur within two months after submission by a commissioner of a resolution thereon, shall, as provided in this clause, be referred for decision to an arbitrator who shall be appointed by the contracting Governments. A contracting Government may give to the other contracting Governments written notice to concur in the appointment of an arbitrator and to refer that question to that arbitrator for decision. If the appointment be not made within two months after the giving of that notice the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Tasmania or other the person for the time being discharging the duties of that office may, at the request of that contracting Government, appoint an arbitrator, who shall have the like powers to act in the reference to decide the question as if he had been appointed by the contracting Governments. The decision

of an arbitrator appointed to decide the question shall be binding on the commission and the contracting Governments and shall be deemed to be the opinion of the commission.

Therefore, a decision could be obtained from an arbitrator. Why are we not seeking to protect South Australia's rights in this matter? The Premier is going for this report of the technical committee, through which one could shoot a whole series of holes. However, I am not calling in question the work of the officers concerned, but I am calling in question what they were asked to do. I am concerned about the terms of reference that were given to the committee and the way in which its members have been required to make assumptions. Although the assumptions are not stated in the technical report, their nature comes out immediately one starts reading it. What assumptions did the committee make that led it to decide on a flow of 900 cusecs past Mildura? What assumptions did it make that led it to conclude that the dam at Dartmouth would provide the flow that was suggested, because I am informed that there is no adequate information on the flow in the Mitta Mitta River at this point? Indeed, there is no adequate information at all about the flow in the Mitta Mitta. In these circumstances, why has the South Australian Government given up the stand that this House has previously taken unanimously? Why should it have given up what it knew it would be supported in, if it thought about it, because no-one in South Australia would take a crack at a Government that fought for Chowilla? How can members opposite give away what they know is an assured supply for South Australia, if all they will get in return is as little as has come out of this report?

One can only speculate, but I wonder whether the promise made to the people of this State by the Prime Minister just before the last State election has not worked in the opposite direction. The Prime Minister said that if the people elected a Liberal Government South Australia would get a better deal because the people of this State would be in the family. All I can say is that the Prime Minister seems to be the father of that family, the Minister for National Development the governess, and the present Government of South Australia the children doing as they are told.

Since the Minister for National Development made his statements against Chowilla, the Premier has gone quietly. The Minister, on

two of his visits to South Australia, has conferred with the Premier and after those visits the Premier's attitude has been marked by polite silence. The Minister has laid down what the Commonwealth Government will do and he has gone far beyond any resolutions of the commission. He has made clear that he is going all the way for a dam at Dartmouth and that he is going to knock Chowilla as much as he can. I wonder whether the fact that the Dartmouth dam site adjoins the Minister's electoral district has anything to do with his attitude. Obviously, that Minister is concerned about New South Wales and Victoria, because he has seen to it that this technical report is concerned with additional yields for irrigation in those States.

Indeed, no part of that report deals with yields for South Australia to help our growing industry in this State, even though South Australia depends far more than does any other State upon Murray River water for development. I tell the Premier that his statements last Thursday night have produced in this State the most widespread dismay and horror and that the reaction of people throughout the State has been one of anger at the assurance so clearly given previously being so supinely dishonoured. I do not believe that in these circumstances the Government has the right to occupy the Government benches, and I am certain that, if Government members went to an election tomorrow, very few of them would remain in the House. The Government has not the confidence of this State, and should not have the confidence of this House.

Mr. CORCORAN (Millicent): It gives me much pleasure to second the motion moved so ably by the Leader of the Opposition. I thought that the Premier might have seen fit to reply immediately, as he has said that he is willing to have this matter debated fully in the House so that the merits or demerits of Chowilla may be fully aired and so that the people of this State may be made fully aware of the position. I suppose that, in the past 10 years, no other matter has been canvassed more consistently than has the matter of the building of Chowilla dam. I consider that the people of this State should be able now to know the things that concern them about the completion of Chowilla.

The Leader has referred to the repudiation of the resolution which was adopted unanimously in this House and which provided that we should proceed without delay to

complete the construction of Chowilla. I have interested myself in some of the statements made then in support of the motion. One such statement is extremely pertinent to the Premier's concluding remarks today in which he said that Chowilla remained the official proposal of the South Australian Government until an agreement was reached that would provide a better and more advantageous alternative. I do not know who will decide such an alternative but I assume that it would be the South Australian Commissioner and that, as he would be instructed by the Government, members opposite would make that decision. In my opinion, they have not placed themselves in a very good position. I have arrived at this conclusion because of this statement by the present Treasurer in 1967, during the debate on the motion to which I have referred:

One does not get anywhere in this tough life by indicating that one is prepared to compromise before commencing negotiations.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether this is not the position in which the Premier has placed himself. Our neighbouring Premier (that old bushranger, Sir Henry Bolte) knows what we intend to do, because we have told him. However, Sir Henry has not told us anything other than that he will call a conference and that he will proceed with the Dartmouth proposal. We should be counteracting this sort of thing, not playing into Sir Henry's hands. The Premier said, when speaking to the same motion:

We must impress on experienced negotiators in Victoria and New South Wales, such as Mr. Askin and Sir Henry Bolte, that we mean business and that the most favourable solution to South Australia must be found.

The present Premier also said:

To rely on storages built in other States is not to do justice to ourselves. We want this water impounded not in Victoria or New South Wales but in South Australia.

They are the verbatim quotations from *Hansard* of the present Premier's statements in 1967 during the debate on the motion to which I have referred. I agree with those statements: indeed, the House unanimously agreed with the motion, which stated that Chowilla must be proceeded with without delay. Of course, the Leader of the Opposition at that time was ably supported by some of his colleagues. I remember Sir Thomas Playford (and I suppose he could rightly be termed the champion of Chowilla) supporting his Leader on that occasion. Sir Thomas, in reply to an interjection that there was no mention of an alternative, said:

No. The works in the original agreement are set out in clause 20, which in 1963 was amended by paragraph 8 to include the provision of a storage in the agreement referred to as the Chowilla reservoir on the Murray River between Renmark and Wentworth, with a capacity of about 4,750,000 acre feet of water and with a roadway along the top of the containing dam, referred to in the agreement as the Chowilla dam, and with provision for vessels drawing 4ft. 6in. of water to pass. The commission is completely out of line when it talks about looking for substitutes, because it has no right to do that.

The member for Angas interjected and said, "That is *ultra vires*." I assume that what was *ultra vires* then is *ultra vires* today, and I see no difference in the situation in that regard. For some years Sir Thomas Playford has consistently advocated the construction of Chowilla dam and the cry of the Premier at the time of the last election was as follows: "Our Party conceived and planned this, and we will build it." This was utterly deceiving the electors of South Australia, yet it won votes for the Government, and that cannot be denied. I was criticized during the general election because my Party had not stated specifically that it would complete Chowilla.

Mr. McAnaney: You had already given it away.

Mr. CORCORAN: We had not, and the honourable member knows that that statement is untrue. I could continue with these quotations. The Minister of Works spoke at some length at that time, as did almost every other member, and yet today we see an almost complete about-turn. I contend that the Government in examining this question has considered the needs of New South Wales and Victoria more than those of this State, because the Premier, in his statement, said that Dartmouth would be able to provide for New South Wales and Victoria 860,000 acre feet more water than Chowilla could provide in terms of the average annual supply. He seems to be considering the needs of Victoria and New South Wales rather than the needs of South Australia. The technical committee's report states specifically what the increased yield for New South Wales and Victoria will be if Dartmouth is built. It does not refer to any increased yield for South Australia: it refers only to entitlement. As far as I am aware, no study was made over a period to give a comparison of the increased yield to South Australia, if Chowilla were built, with that of Dartmouth.

Mr. Hudson: It was apparently irrelevant.

Mr. CORCORAN: Of course, but the Leader said the assumption was made. We can only get out of a computer what we feed into it, and it seems that the needs of New South Wales and Victoria were considered and not those of South Australia, although the agreement was ratified in 1963 in the Parliaments of the Commonwealth, New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia. From my assessment of the situation the increased yield to South Australia was not considered. The reason for the making of the agreement can be traced much further back. The Treasurer, who, I believe, played a great part in the negotiations when the Tumut River was diverted, knows the background and knows about the assurances given us then. He also knows that we have a legal and, indeed, a moral right to see those assurances and the agreement honoured, but it seems that these things will be denied us.

Mr. Lawn: They are repudiating the agreement.

Mr. CORCORAN: Sir Thomas Playford said that the agreement should be honoured. The Leader of the Opposition said that the cost factor was the first factor that caused the building of the Chowilla dam to be first examined and then deferred, but we know, as the Leader said, that the technical committee's report has completely validated the feasibility of Chowilla, both financially and from a salinity point of view. We had a firm cost of \$68,000,000 for Chowilla: we have an estimated cost of \$57,000,000 for Dartmouth. We know that when Chowilla went to tender the cost estimated by the engineers was \$43,000,000, but the lowest tender received was \$68,000,000. Who is to say that the same thing will not happen with Dartmouth? This is an imponderable. In addition to that, we must consider the \$6,000,000 that has already been spent. If Chowilla is not to proceed I suppose it will cost another \$1,000,000 to take it out, and this seems to have been forgotten in the battle of whether or not we get the storage in South Australia.

The technical committee's report assumes a 900 cusec flow past Mildura, but no-one knows what the average salinity readings were for the critical period of irrigation at Mildura. How do these readings compare with those at Loxton and Waikerie? Perhaps they would be much lower, yet there seems to be a need to create a flow of 900 cusecs past Mildura. This point seems to be the crux of the matter in order to get this figure for Dartmouth.

Salinity was aggravated in 1967, because there was a saline slug let out of Barr Creek. From what I know of the Victorian Government I would not be surprised if this action was by design so that the Victorian Government would have something to hang its hat on. The salinity problem at Mildura is not insoluble, and many of the problems in irrigation areas of Victoria have been caused by lack of control of salinity. Last year the Victorian Government received a loan from the Commonwealth to commence works to contend with salinity. It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that it is a problem at Mildura, but it is not a problem that requires a constant minimum flow of 900 cusecs.

We do not know what has been the minimum flow past Mildura during the past 10 years: the report does not state it, but for all we know it may have been 900 cusecs. We must have this information before this report can be fully evaluated. The suggested increased yields for New South Wales and Victoria are purely to meet an existing problem, but a problem that those States have allowed to develop because of lack of control. We know that there are areas in those States that cannot be serviced with water now, because the authorities have not exercised the proper control. We did that in this State, because we saw the need for control and because we were reaching a critical stage, but because these Governments have neglected their duty they are now saying, "Give away what you are really entitled to under the law so that we can rectify a situation that we created." This request is not reasonable and it is not a good enough reason to refuse to proceed with Chowilla, a project that the people of South Australia have considered for so long.

Indeed, in New South Wales and Victoria they speak of taking water from the Murray River for irrigation purposes only, whereas in this State we need the water not only to irrigate but also to serve the major industrial complexes. It has been said that Australia is the driest continent in the world, and it is true that this is the driest State and that water is our most valuable possession. It should be stored here, not in New South Wales or Victoria, so that we can use it when we want it. A map of South Australia will show the vast network of water mains constructed throughout the State. One factor that concerns me is that, if we do not have the Chowilla dam built, we will be looking to this State to supply some of its needs and that may mean using

water from the South-East. I want that water, of course, to remain and be used in the South-East. This Government has failed to take the necessary steps and to do the things that it should do in relation to this matter. I draw attention to a statement made by you, Mr. Speaker, and I should be interested to hear you back it up on the floor of the House if you were able to do so. An article appeared in the *Loxton News* on February 29, 1968, stating:

The No. 1 priority in this election is the completion of the construction of the Chowilla dam. Mr. Stott said that he would advocate that the Chowilla dam be completed in its original concept.

Obviously, it will not be possible to do this, Mr. Speaker, if you continue to support the present Government as you have in the past. During the election campaign in Murray River areas, which are, of course, vital to his retaining Government, the Premier said:

We believe that this is essential because of the need to safeguard the quality and the quantity of the water in the river, and we stress the fact, which is often forgotten, that when the dam is complete South Australia's allocation of water in a year of restriction will be increased from three-thirteenths to one-third, a factor which was negotiated by Sir Thomas Playford and other States when the Chowilla project was first set up.

The Premier assured the electors they could trust him and his Party to complete the dam as soon as possible. I wonder what the people concerned think now. Is it any wonder that the Leader and members of the Opposition believe it right and proper that we should move a motion at this stage indicating our lack of confidence in the handling of this matter? We believe we speak for the majority of the people in this State and, if we are given an opportunity to prove that in relation to this issue alone, I am sure our judgment will be vindicated.

Mr. HUDSON (Glenelg): I should have thought that some member of the Government would bother to rise to his feet to answer the Leader and the Deputy Leader. Is their case so weak and are they so guilt-ridden by their actions in this matter that Government members are just going to sit out the debate as best they can? It has been said before by members in this House and by others that the Murray River is the lifeline for South Australia: not just the lifeline for those who use Murray River water to irrigate their properties, not just the lifeline for those who live in the towns along the Murray River who obtain

water from the Murray River, but the lifeline for the people of the metropolitan area and for all those who live in the Warren water district or around Spencer Gulf. The Murray River will also become a lifeline for the near South-East when the Taillem Bend to Keith main is completed, and so on.

In fact, 90 per cent of this State relies on Murray River water, and when one talks about the Murray River, as far as South Australia is concerned, one is talking about the interests of South Australia as a whole. However, when one talks about the Murray River as far as Victoria and New South Wales are concerned, one is talking about the interests of people in those States who live along the river and who rely on the water from the river for irrigation, stock use or town use. When we talk about the issue of Chowilla and Dartmouth we talk about the interests of those who live along the Murray River in New South Wales and Victoria as against the interests of the whole of South Australia, and it is beyond me to work out by what right the Minister for National Development can proceed, not just since the report of the technical committee has appeared but for some considerable period of months, to ignore the basic interests of South Australia in favour of the interests of a much smaller group of people living along the Murray River in New South Wales and Victoria and, in particular, those living in his own district.

The Minister for National Development prejudged the whole question: he continued to make statements against Chowilla and in favour of Dartmouth while the investigations of the technical committee and of the salinity consultants were proceeding. The Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Chairman of the Chowilla Dam Promotion Committee (Mr. Dridan) wrote to the Minister for National Development and to the Prime Minister protesting at this prejudgment of the whole issue. Here we have this situation, however, that when the report of the technical committee, which I will deal with in detail in a moment, appears and is commented on selectively in the press by the Minister for National Development, instead of the Premier representing the best interests of the people of South Australia by protesting at the basic approach of the technical committee, he and his Government do nothing other than accept the report holus-bolus. The conclusions of the report have been accepted uncritically by South Australia, that is, by the Premier and the Minister of Works, and that acceptance alone is a sell-out. There has been no attempt at

all by anyone associated with this Government to undertake a proper analysis of the report of the technical committee.

The Premier, in his statement this afternoon, said, "Because of Dartmouth's ability to provide about 860,000 acre feet of additional water above that which Chowilla dam provision can provide in terms of average annual supply . . .". The Premier accepts the conclusion of the report, and there is no attempt to criticize it. The report deals only with the average annual supply going to New South Wales and Victoria; it does not deal with the average annual supply coming to South Australia, and it talks only about South Australia's entitlement. The technical committee (and this is the most extraordinary thing) was asked to work out what proposals would maximize the annual average supply to New South Wales and Victoria while providing South Australia with its entitlement. The question was not what would maximize the average annual supply of the whole system, so how can the Premier of this State, supposed to be representing the State's basic interests, and how can the Minister of Works, supposed also to be representing South Australia's basic interests, get up and accept the conclusions of the technical committee when they do not even set out to ask the right questions from the point of view of this State? This is a sell-out. Surely, some member of the Government is sufficiently competent to give the Premier and the Minister of Works a proper analysis of this report.

Mr. Virgo: You're asking too much, I think.

Mr. HUDSON: It looks as though I am. Nowhere in the report is there an indication of what system or what arrangement of storages could give the maximum average annual supply to South Australia. Nowhere is that question even asked. Apparently the Premier and the Minister of Works have not even bothered to ask it but are prepared to accept the conclusions of the report, which is designed to provide a maximum average annual supply to New South Wales and Victoria. That is incompetent of them, and I charge the Government in the handling of this whole issue with complete and utter incompetence. Table 3 of the report, which gives an indication of the true situation, shows the effect on the yield of the whole system through increasing South Australia's entitlement. If South Australia's entitlement is increased from 1,254,000 acre feet to 1,500,000 acre feet a

year, according to the table the yield of the whole system would be increased from 4,381,000 acre feet to 4,552,000 acre feet a year. It is explained that the total yield of the system increases with increasing South Australia's entitlement, largely because of the more effective use of tributary inflow.

Obviously, South Australia can make a much more effective use of tributary inflow into the Murray River than can any other State. That is some indication of the nature of the report, because it arrives at its conclusions only by ignoring the question of what will give the maximum average annual supply to South Australia. Having ignored that question, and having run a whole series of computer studies on the basis of what would give South Australia its entitlement and what would maximize the yield to New South Wales and Victoria, the committee concludes that Dartmouth is preferable to Chowilla. I do not accept the technical committee's conclusions. If the committee were asked to run a series of computer studies on what would maximize the total yield of the system, giving a certain weight to increased yield from South Australia, then it is an open question as to what arrangement of storages would provide the maximum yield, because that question was never studied by the technical committee. You, Mr. Speaker, and other members know that very little information is available about the flow of the Mitta Mitta River and only limited knowledge even of the flow of the Mitta Mitta River at Dartmouth. One would think that on an important matter like this the technical committee's report would spell out what information it used about the flow of the Mitta Mitta River at Dartmouth to assess the total yield of the system, but there is no mention in the report of what assumptions were made on the flow of the river.

Mr. Clark: Was that fed into the computer?

Mr. HUDSON: It must have been. We understand that the computer gave runs over periods of 65 years, but no-one says in the report (and no-one who has commented on it—the Premier, the Minister of Works, the Minister for National Development, or anyone else—has told us) what assumptions were made about the Mitta Mitta River. What were they? Has the Premier or the Minister of Works asked what they were? Surely we cannot place our reliance, as the Premier has done, on a report without querying that factor. What variation does one get in the answers

from the report if one varies the assumptions about the flow of the Mitta Mitta River? Surely the Premier and the Minister of Works, as the representatives of South Australia, should be asking that question and demanding an answer to it. Everyone knows that information about the flow of the Mitta Mitta River is available for only eight or 10 years. There was one period in the 1920's when readings were taken, and readings have been taken over a few years lately, but what guide is that to estimates of the flow of the Mitta Mitta River over a period of 65 years, which is the period of time the computer studies have covered? It is only a guess, whatever estimate one makes. Surely the technical committee's report should provide us with information about the effects of making various guesses about the flow of the Mitta Mitta River, yet the Premier's statement this afternoon indicates that he accepts the report and its conclusions as they stand. Further, his statements to the press since the report has come out indicate that he accepts it.

Regarding the flow of the river at Mildura, no-one has yet bothered publicly to analyse the relative merits, even on the assumptions of the technical committee, of Dartmouth and Chowilla. After all, the original concept of Chowilla implied the pooling of the river at Lock 10 in a dry year and the prevention of the leak at Lock 10 which currently allows as much as 450 cusecs to go through. So the original concept of Chowilla was for a zero flow past Mildura and, if the zero flow past Mildura is assumed, the yield to New South Wales and Victoria of Chowilla increases dramatically because 900 cusecs past Mildura represents 648,000 acre feet a year. This assumption of the minimum flow at Mildura is an absolutely vital assumption that affects the conclusions of the technical committee substantially, yet the Premier does not question it but accepts the technical committee's conclusions.

On that ground, too, he and the Minister of Works have been incompetent and have not represented the best interests of South Australia. Even the technical committee's report points out (although not directly, but it can be deduced from the graphs it provides) that the effect of reducing the minimum flow required at Mildura from 900 cusecs to 600 cusecs raises the yield obtained from Dartmouth by 70,000 acre feet a year, whereas it raises the yield to New South Wales and Victoria of Chowilla by as much as 190,000 acre feet

a year. That is the result of a reduction in the minimum flow required for Mildura from 900 cusecs to 600 cusecs. Instead of the excess (and I quote what the Premier said in favour of Dartmouth) for Victoria and New South Wales of 860,000 acre feet, at 600 cusecs the excess is reduced to 750,000 acre feet. At 300 cusecs that excess is reduced to 630,000 acre feet, and at a zero flow past Mildura, with pooling at Lock 10, the excess in favour of Dartmouth in terms of additional yield for New South Wales and Victoria is reduced to 510,000 acre feet. I have derived those conclusions from looking at the diagrams provided in the technical committee's report (the conclusions are not stated in the report but have to be derived from it). If the minimum flow requirement at Mildura were 300 cusecs (if that were all it had to be), then Chowilla would secure for New South Wales and Victoria, quite apart from what it would secure for South Australia, 2,640,000 acre feet a year on average. The existing requirement, which apparently we must achieve for New South Wales and Victoria, is 2,700,000 acre feet. Therefore, if one alters one assumption of the technical committee's report (that the minimum flow requirement from Mildura is 300 cusecs and not 900 cusecs), one finds that Chowilla will secure almost effectively the existing requirements of New South Wales and Victoria, quite apart from any extra benefits it will give to South Australia.

What is it about the irrigators of the Mildura and Sunraysia districts that they can get a minimum flow at all times of 900 cusecs? Can we imagine the irrigators of Waikerie, Loxton, Berri or anywhere else along the Murray River in this State forming a deputation to the River Murray Commission and saying, "Dear Mr. Fairbairn, we want a minimum flow of 900 cusecs past our front door; the salinity conditions in this State are worse than those at Mildura; if Mildura can get it, so can we"? Is it because these people who live in the Mildura district are constituents of that great man in Victoria, Sir Henry Bolte? Is that the special quality they have? Why is it that 900 cusecs is the appropriate assumption for Mildura when it is not the appropriate assumption for anywhere in South Australia, where the salinity problem is likely, in the long run, to be much more difficult than at Mildura? Why is that the case and why does the Premier in public statements accept by implication that assumption of 900 cusecs minimum flow for Mildura? Does he regard himself as representing the best interests of South Australia when

he does that? He is not doing so and, if he thinks he is, he does not understand what he is talking about.

Let me put another consideration. Let us accept for a moment the assumptions of the technical committee and accept its guesses about the flow of the Mitta Mitta River; whatever that flow is, the committee has not bothered to tell us. Let us accept the minimum flow of 900 cusecs past Mildura. If there were to be a minimum flow of 900 cusecs past Mildura and the Chowilla dam were built, the job that Chowilla would do for South Australia would be so much the better. A moment's consideration by any members of this Government would convince them of that. A minimum flow past Mildura of 900 cusecs means 648,000 acre feet a year more going into Chowilla than would have been the case in the original concept of Chowilla, which implied a zero flow past Mildura. If Chowilla is built, this minimum flow assumption past Mildura implies that the average storage in Chowilla will be significantly greater, and therefore the average yield to South Australia (the average annual supply from Chowilla) will be significantly greater. Although this minimum flow means that Chowilla does not do as good a job for New South Wales and Victoria, it does a better job for South Australia. However, the technical committee was not allowed to look into that, because it was asked to work out what would maximize yields to New South Wales and Victoria and give South Australia its entitlement.

We are not allowed to maximize our yield. It is not proper for South Australia's interests to be looked after by the River Murray Commission in terms of a storage proposal that maximizes the yield for South Australia and gives New South Wales and Victoria only their entitlement! What is so peculiar about South Australia that we are not allowed to have an assumption in the technical committee's report that South Australia's yield should be maximized? The only peculiarity about South Australia is that virtually the whole welfare, growth and development of the State depend on water from the Murray River, and without that water the growth and development of this State will stagnate. The growth and development of Victoria and New South Wales will not stagnate if the full requirement of irrigators along the Murray River in New South Wales and Victoria are not met every year, but, if the requirements of South Australia are not met, the whole State will stagnate. What right do the

Minister for National Development, Sir Henry Bolte and Mr. Askin and their various representatives on the River Murray Commission have to condemn South Australia in this way? What right have the Premier and any Ministers of this Government to accept uncritically their condemnations? If the Premier and his Ministers cannot do a proper assessment of what has been going before the River Murray Commission, then it is about time they got out of office, and the sooner the better as far as the people of South Australia are concerned.

One would have expected in the technical committee's report some plus or minus figure (from experience they are mainly plus figures) on the estimates of costs for Dartmouth. When the tenders came in for Chowilla they were 50 per cent greater than expected. What if the figure for Dartmouth is 50 per cent greater than expected? What if a figure of \$85,000,000 is given for Dartmouth? If such a figure were put into the technical committee's report, it would be interesting to see the cost an acre foot of Chowilla against that cost for Dartmouth. Again, this is loaded, because the figure for the cost of Chowilla is firm and that for Dartmouth is not. I do not know, and I do not think any member of the House or any engineer of the Engineering and Water Supply Department or of any other State Department knows, of any dam built in Australia since the Second World War for which the actual cost has been below or equal to the estimated cost. In every case, the actual cost has been well above the estimate. Because tenders for Chowilla have been received, we have an actual cost for that dam, but we have not a cost for the Dartmouth dam. What allowance was made for this? The technical committee does not tell us.

What will the Premier do about the slap-happy methods of New South Wales and Victoria regarding the development of irrigation along the Murray River? What demands will he make on Sir Henry Bolte about that, because after all this whole situation has developed as it has partly because of the unregulated development of irrigation along the Murray River in New South Wales and Victoria?

The present average annual supply to the up-river States that can be secured with existing storages is 2,080,000 acre feet a year, yet the technical committee says that the existing requirement for New South Wales and Victoria is 2,700,000 acre feet. In other words, the New South Wales and Victorian Governments have allowed to occur along the Murray River

irrigation development that has placed an excess demand on Murray River water in New South Wales and Victoria of 620,000 acre feet a year. One assumes that that is why the Minister for National Development and the Governments of Victoria and New South Wales want the technical committee to work out the storage that will give the best availability for New South Wales and Victoria, but surely the consequence of this is to tell the riparian States that their best method of getting more water for themselves and getting within their own State the dam that they want is to allow unregulated development and excess demand for water. Then, the River Murray Commission will be forced to work out the best solution to cope with their problem.

That has happened in this case. South Australia has played the game by restricting irrigation development and the granting of new water rights along the Murray River. The existing requirements along the river in South Australia can be supplied but the requirements of New South Wales and Victoria cannot be supplied, because the Governments of those States have been incompetent in allowing unregulated irrigation there. What demands will the Premier make on Sir Henry Bolte and Mr. Askin about controls over irrigation in New South Wales and Victoria? Surely some condition must be attached there as well, but we have not heard about it.

Will the Premier say that he will agree to Dartmouth in circumstances in which New South Wales and Victoria, with extra water assured, will continue with unregulated development along the Murray River, so that in 10 years, 15 years or 20 years the requirement for water in New South Wales and Victoria along the river is in excess of what can be supplied and the site of the next dam to be built will be worked out on the basis of what will give the maximum yield to those States? Perhaps the dam will be built at Jingellic? What demand will the Premier make on New South Wales and Victoria in respect of the development of irrigation and the conditions? We have not been told anything about this and I suspect that that is because no member of Cabinet has thought about it. However, this is basic to the whole situation that has condemned Chowilla. South Australia has played the game regarding the use of Murray River water and the prevention of excess development. However, New South Wales and Victoria have not done that and, because

those States have excess demand, the technical committee has told the Premier that the dam to be provided must meet the excess demands of New South Wales and Victoria, which demands cannot be met now, and at the same time give South Australia its entitlement, because those dear, sweet South Australians can be relied on to play the game: they want only their requirement, whatever it is, and they can be talked around over a cup of tea.

On this point I am reminded of a cartoon that appeared in the *Advertiser*, showing Sir Henry Bolte standing in the Dartmouth dam, with the water only up to his knees, and telling everybody that the dam was much deeper than it appeared, because he was standing on Steele Hall. Not only is Sir Henry Bolte standing on Steele Hall and on the people of South Australia: Mr. Askin and, above all, the Commonwealth Minister for National Development, as well as some South Australian members of the Commonwealth Government, are also doing that by blindly accepting the conclusions of the technical committee without questioning the basic assumptions that led to those conclusions.

I think that the people of South Australia have been sold out. I was interested in a report in the *News* of May 6, 1968, (almost nine months ago) headed, "Premier to sell Chowilla." He is selling it all right! He says that he will sell it for an increase of 250,000 acre feet in our requirement. He gave us notice nine months ago that he was going to sell it, so the *News* probably had some moment of inspiration (rather rare, unfortunately) and produced an appropriate headline.

I will now refer briefly to what happened during the recent election campaign, because the events at that time, as has been mentioned by the Leader and the Deputy Leader, are part of the reason for the moving of this motion. Before the election the Premier wilfully and deliberately misled the people of South Australia. He made a promise that he and his Cabinet knew was fraudulent. They knew that they alone could not build Chowilla. About 80 per cent of the land that would be inundated if Chowilla were built is over the border. Also, the provisions of the River Murray Waters Agreement bind us to the decisions of the River Murray Commission. Anyone who knew anything about the Murray River or the River Murray Commission would know that a promise made during an election

campaign to go ahead, alone if necessary, with the building of Chowilla dam was a fraudulent promise. Now that promise is coming home to roost, and I hope it comes right home, because that kind of fraudulent promise lowers the standard of politics.

I remember that just before the previous Labor Government went out of office we gave written instructions to our Commissioner to create a dispute on the River Murray Commission so that the whole matter of Chowilla could go to arbitration, thus taking advantage of the provisions of the agreement. At least the matter should be tested. At a meeting at Berri on this subject held last June I challenged the Premier to explain why no dispute was to be created and why we were to give in on Chowilla without testing the possibilities of arbitration. At that meeting I asked the chairman to allow the Premier time to reply to my criticism, and he did so. In reply, it was stated that a dispute would not be created, because the Premier was concerned to obtain Chowilla for South Australia by political means and by political pressure brought to bear on his colleagues in Canberra. He claimed that, by avoiding arbitration, he would save Chowilla. That is what he told the 700 people at that meeting at Berri, and he received a round of applause. I would bet that he is not game to go back to Berri and say that now, because I am sure he would not receive a round of applause.

I believe that Chowilla is so important for South Australia's future, and I believe, as I have shown, that the technical committee's report is not properly competent. The committee has made certain wrong assumptions from our point of view. As I believe that Chowilla will do a much better job for South Australia than will any other proposal and that it will permit a much higher and regular annual supply of water for South Australia than will any other proposition, the arbitration provisions should be tested. Arbitration would involve considering certain things that occurred when the River Murray Commission decided not to accept tenders. At that time the reasons given were supposed to be the excessive cost (more than the \$43,000,000 that was expected) and the salinity problem, yet, when the report on salinity is favourable and the cost of Dartmouth is greater (allowing for the cost of work that has to be undertaken at Lake Victoria), we are told, presumably by implication by this Government, that arbitration will serve no purpose. Surely the arbitrator, the

Chief Justice of Tasmania, must consider the terms of the River Murray Waters Agreement. He must also consider the circumstances in which tenders for Chowilla were not accepted.

Surely it would be possible before any arbitration occurs before the Chief Justice of Tasmania, for the South Australian Government to employ a lawyer (the Leader of the Opposition if necessary) who is capable of analysing and tearing apart the technical report of the River Murray Commission and of being able to point out to the arbitrator that the assumptions of the report are designed to maximize the relative advantage superficially shown for Dartmouth as against Chowilla. Can any Minister say definitely in circumstances where substantial criticisms of the technical committee's report are possible, as I have demonstrated, that arbitration would not succeed? Does the Minister of Works, the Attorney-General, or the Premier accept Sir Henry Bolte's opinion that the Chowilla dam is puny and not worth worrying about?

The preliminary report of the salinity consultants purports to investigate, as a result of computer studies, conditions that would apply for the year 2000 of salinity at Lock 6 on the Murray River in one situation where Dartmouth is built and in another where Chowilla is built. Why did the consultants assume a minimum flow at Mildura of 600 cusecs? Can the Minister of Works answer that question? Why are the consultants allowed to assume a flow of only 600 cusecs when the technical committee assumed 900? If it was good enough for the salinity consultants why was it not good enough for the technical committee? If the technical committee assumed 600 cusecs the relative yield of Dartmouth compared with that of Chowilla for New South Wales and Victoria is reduced by 120,000 acre feet a year. The consultants in their wisdom have assumed a minimum flow of 600 cusecs at Mildura. They have allowed for the ground water movement and, although this is difficult to assess because the movement of underground water in this area as a result of the construction of Chowilla dam is an unknown factor, they consider they have made reasonable assumptions about the quantity of ground water that will come back into the river and the effect of increasing salinity that this ground water will have should Chowilla be built.

No-one can say that the problem of underground water moving back into the river as a result of the water pressure created by the

Chowilla dam has not been considered by the salinity consultants, because it has. It forms part of their basic assumption. Evaporation has been considered and they point out that evaporation will raise the salinity at Chowilla relatively much more than at Dartmouth. Alleging that the evaporation at Dartmouth is so small as to be negligible, they do not consider 15,000 to 18,000 acre feet of evaporation at Dartmouth. On all these assumptions allowing for the increased evaporation, they conclude that Chowilla dam will lead to an average salinity of the Murray River at Lock 6 about 20 p.p.m. lower than the salinity if Dartmouth and not Chowilla were built. A graph, appearing at the end of the consultant's report and extending literally over about 55 in. and, figuratively over 55 years, shows the considerable smoothing effect that Chowilla has on salinity. It shows that each year much greater fluctuation in salinity occurs from the Dartmouth proposition than from that at Chowilla. In fact, under Dartmouth, the peak of salinity can rise by up to 130, 140 or even 150 p.p.m. greater than applies with Chowilla. This is based on assumptions that do not make any special feature of allowing for the management of Chowilla partly to even out fluctuations in salinity. The report just assumes the management of Chowilla in an ordinary way for water conservation purposes and not particularly for minimizing salinity. On that basis the peak salinity will, on average, be about 80 p.p.m. lower than would apply in the case of Dartmouth, and in some years that have been studied the figure for the peak period of the year is 150 p.p.m. lower for Chowilla than in the case of Dartmouth. Presumably, Chowilla could produce better salinity results than that if it were managed particularly with that aim in mind.

I think it can be clearly demonstrated that the technical committee's report is open to the most serious objections and that the basic assumptions are wrong, particularly in respect of South Australia's being cared for only in terms of entitlement and not in terms of maximizing yield. What would happen on a computer study if the computer were told to maximize the yield for South Australia but to ensure an entitlement of, say, 1,300,000 acre feet each for New South Wales and Victoria? I wonder whether Dartmouth or Chowilla would give the better result in that case. If the Premier and Minister of Works do not know the answer to that question, what

right have they to accept blindly the conclusions of the technical committee's report? But surely, if they do know, they are acting against the best interests of South Australia and, if they are acting against the best interests of the State, not only do they not have the confidence of the people of South Australia (and they have certainly never had the confidence of members on this side) but they do not deserve the confidence of this House. I hope that you, Mr. Speaker, will see to it that they do not any more after today have the confidence of this House.

The Hon. R. S. HALL (Premier): In some ways I am disappointed this afternoon for, although I have heard at least several good debates previously from the Opposition and good propositions advanced on its behalf, I have not heard them today. Indeed, I have never heard such a half-hearted debate as I have heard today, with members opposite arguing against a technical report which they themselves know in their innermost heart is a factual one prepared by experts in South Australia as well as experts in other States.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I listened in silence to members opposite charging the Government with not answering their proposition, but I am now answering the proposition. Stating certain facts and weaving the web that he often weaves in debate, the member for Glenelg has charged the Government with incompetence, making misleading statements and doing anything else one cares to mention. However, in doing so, he has used a number of statements of his own which he would have us assume were based on fact. The honourable member says there is little measurement of the flow of the Mitta, pointing out that there were some measurements in the 1920's and a few in recent times. However, I have sighted measurements of the Mitta at Gibbo Junction from 1930 to 1966. Am I to assume that that is the only part of the member's argument that is crook? The member for Glenelg also said that no-one in South Australia was available to the South Australian Government who was competent to examine the report. What utter rubbish! He said the Government had not examined the report and had not questioned it. Why does he not ask the Engineer-in-Chief (our representative on the River Murray Commission) about how much grilling he has been subjected to in the last several weeks and about how he has sat day after day under a

barrage of Cabinet questions, testing every aspect that nine people were able to think of?

The honourable member says that this report has been accepted without testing, and he is saying that we had no representative in South Australia or that there was no servant of the Government able to assess the report. Does he maintain that argument? If he does, he is saying that the head and officers of the department concerned (this, of course, includes our River Murray Commissioner) are entirely wrong. However, the Leader of the Opposition is not as brash as his follower, because the Leader says he is not calling into question the work of the officers concerned. Is there any significance in the fact that the Engineer-in-Chief in South Australia has obtained from the River Murray Commission \$14,000 to run cross-checks on the technical report? In fact, the officers concerned with the checking by computer have reached an advanced stage, and the answer to every question that we have put to the Engineer-in-Chief has backed up the technical committee. The transcript of many of the details is on my desk, and not once has the Engineer-in-Chief failed to back the technical committee and the findings in its report. The member for Glenelg, as a layman, is apparently able to call everything into question, sweeping aside arguments in which he is not interested. The Leader has said that Chowilla is vindicated on two scores, one relating to costs. Does his comparison between Chowilla and Dartmouth relate to the same purposes? Is he aware that, comparing the accomplishments of Chowilla with those of Dartmouth, a difference of \$30,000,000 is involved? In fact, the Leader said there was no cost difference. Despite the doubts he has cast and the castigations he has made of people who have drawn up the technical report, and despite the fact that he accepts some of the material supplied by the commission, the member for Glenelg is willing to accept the salinity report, because it favours his argument, but he does not accept the technical committee's report on yield or guarantee, etc. He accepts what he wants to accept, and that is the basis on which he has advanced his argument. Why did the former Premier (now the Leader of the Opposition) and his members wait for the technical committee to report? Why did he continue to refer to it as being necessary and, when it came along, why did he disagree with it? What is the point about the report being cooked. Mr. Kinnear, who is from the department and who is a mem-

ber of the technical committee, helped cook the report, according to the tone of the Opposition's argument. Do members opposite know what the technical committee's report is? It does not sound as though they do. It is an aggregation by computer of about 230 studies—

Mr. Casey: You feed into a computer what you want to get out of it.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: —which have been carefully composed to compare Chowilla and Dartmouth, which have taken the two dams in a 60-year period from 1905 to 1965, and which have applied inflow conditions to the watersheds and tributaries of the river, and the outputs, evaporation and every factor that impinges on yield to the system. Only a computer could do that in the time available. This study was previously done manually but it can now be done in much more detail by the computer. This is the type of study that has been going on—not some mysterious behind-the-scenes study of facts put into the computer to benefit New South Wales and Victoria. It is a 'most comprehensive study that could be done in such aggregate numbers only by a computer. The result of the study is to be found in the report. If honourable members question the validity of the report, they call into question the technical excellence and reputation not only of South Australians but of dedicated servants of the River Murray Commission. After our representatives were questioned for many days on every aspect that nine Cabinet members could think of, we found that there was no flaw in the technical report to which we could refer. After such a hard search for facts and after such a deliberate study, the Government had no alternative but to accept the technical committee's finding as proper.

Mr. Casey: You sold us down the drain.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Why is there this talk of selling down the drain? Where does the previous Government stand on this issue? Why has there been an attack on the technical report? The previous Government waited for some time for the technical committee's report, and there were several references by the then Premier, who is now the Leader of the Opposition, to this matter. When answering one of the numerous questions asked on Chowilla at that time, he spoke of the needed flow in the river at Mildura, and quoted from the River Murray Commission's report as follows:

The studies covering quantity of supply and developmental works to give maximum benefits are estimated in Mr. Fairbairn's statement to require a further six months. This arose from the request of each of the three States to have a wide range of possible storage projects considered.

I ask the member for Glenelg and the Leader of the Opposition: if three States were asking for these studies, could there be anything else than the assumption that South Australia was one of them? The then Premier quoted that from this seat. He continued:

The South Australian commissioner has joined into this by stressing the need to explore fully the maximum benefit to South Australia arising from each series of studies.

Why the turn-about now, and why the waiting? There was acceptance, with the approval of the previous Government and through the River Murray Commission, of the need to carry out the studies. The studies arrive, and there has been some change. What is it? The change has been the change of Government. That is the difference in the situation for members opposite: their opinions have changed with their change of position in this place. There are many more references to the technical committee—

Mr. Hudson: We will not ask you to read the policy speech.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: —that members opposite may like to hear. The present Leader of the Opposition went on to say:

True, we must be adequately reinforced with the technical studies before the specific amendments to the River Murray Waters Agreement are made. I consider that the technical studies will show the needs of South Australia in this area, and I am certain from the report made to the Government by the commissioner that the needs of this State are appreciated by the other commissioners, and that those commissioners are concerned to see, in the interests of their own States as well as South Australia, that salinity in the Murray River is properly coped with and that all States are supplied with that quantity of good water to which they are entitled under the agreement.

The Leader of the Opposition (the then Premier) was waiting for the reports. He had agreed that they should be made, and they are now before us. As regards salinity, they favour the Leader's argument but in respect of yield they demolish it. In effect he says, "It is all right for salinity—we will accept that bit—but for yield we will not."

Much has been said today about responsibility for Chowilla and the fact that it is growing more and more difficult to support Chowilla in negotiations. The matter has

again arisen of what the then Premier said in this House on August 15, when he moved a motion in this House, the terms of which were sent to the South Australian members of the Commonwealth Parliament declaring our unanimous support for Chowilla. It is well-known that the then Opposition, of which I was a member, fought to have that resolution strengthened, as we were concerned at the weakening position regarding Chowilla. We all recall how the Premier read a letter that he had sent to the then Prime Minister (Rt. Hon. Harold Holt). I should like to read that again, if we are to examine the responsibility, on a vote of no confidence in this House, for the first break occurring in South Australia's position on Chowilla. The letter states:

Dear Mr. Holt,

I refer to the decision of the River Murray Commission to defer the Chowilla dam project pending further investigations. Widespread alarm has been voiced throughout South Australia following this decision because of its possible effects upon development not only in the Murray River areas, but upon industrial development generally in the State which will rely on adequate water supplies in dry years.

I therefore request you to convene a meeting of the State Ministers responsible, together with yourself and myself, in order to seek an assurance that the deferment of this major project is made with the intention of assuring to South Australia by some means, that the State will obtain its normal flow of Murray River waters during dry years.

Mr. Hurst: What is wrong with that?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The phrase is "by some means". This was the first break in the negotiations on Chowilla and the first real weakness shown by the South Australian Government. The then Premier indicated the attitude he adopted in referring to the studies which were to take place, which are now before us, and which members opposite now in part repudiate. What is the situation? Let us face the Government's political situation and my situation as Leader of the Government. The easiest political thing I could do would be to go to a dispute. I could come back and not worry about the flag that the Leader talks about hauling down; I could come back with it flying high. Would it not be wonderful in every way, except that it would not be in South Australia's interests? I wonder whether the Leader has really read this report. Does he really understand the basis of the River Murray Waters Agreement? Anyone would think that all the States had an allocation, but only South Australia has an allocation of or entitlement to water. The other two

States share the available water until there comes a year of restriction, when the water is shared under the formula 5:5:3. Great play has been made of the mention in the technical committee's report of the advantages to the other States. Is this not what the Government is now negotiating? No-one has come to the Government and said, "This is Chowilla; you can have Dartmouth on this basis." We have had to set our own sights on Dartmouth as being a satisfactory alternative to Chowilla.

Mr. McKee: Rubbish!

The Hon. R. S. HALL: We have said, "We will have nothing but Chowilla except something better." It is up to us to define that which is better, and the definition has caused my officers to be concerned lest we have asked for too much in relation to what we can get. I believe we can get what we ask for. Further studies over the last week have indicated that our allocation of 1,500,000 acre feet is more reasonable than we at first thought, and more reasonable than our opponents thought at the beginning. We are not satisfied to ask only for that for which the Leader, the then Premier, asked in 1967. When he went to the other States with a so-called letter of intent to get a guarantee of 1,250,000 acre feet, there was no alternative to Chowilla. I have not seen that letter; I understand it is not at the moment available. I could not find it in the Premier's office. I should be interested to read that letter, which was published in the newspapers of the day. The plain fact of the matter is that the results of this decision will flow on and be far more important than any decision taken in this Chamber today, or any decision that is of momentary political importance. This is a matter of assuring South Australia's future industrial and agricultural growth. I ask this House to confirm the obvious, that any Government of any political creed will plan more effectively for South Australia with a guaranteed water supply of 1,500,000 acre feet in dry years than with a guaranteed supply of 1,250,000 acre feet.

Do members opposite understand the importance of this? Do they understand that the dilution quantity of our entitlement is nearly 600,000 acre feet a year, leaving at the moment just under 700,000 acre feet divertible component? Do they understand that the increase of 250,000 acre feet represents an increase of nearly one-third in divertible water? Do members opposite not understand the significance of this? Are they saying that this

additional 860,000 acre feet that Dartmouth can yield is not wanted? If we can get a share of this, do they not want it? Do they turn their backs on this? Do they think that by some silly little cartoon in the morning newspaper and that by some silly little joke about Sir Henry Bolte standing on me (a joke made by some person who probably did not read the report and, if he did, did not understand it) I will be deterred? Let us face the facts: either one believes the technical report or one does not.

Mr. Virgo: We certainly don't believe you.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: If one does not believe the report, one is saying that the River Murray Commission is crooked, that the highest advisers on water supply in South Australia are incompetent, and that the answers that we have had for days to our continuous questioning are wrong. If one does not go as far as that and if one admits that the technical committee has done a fair job, one must admit that Dartmouth will supply to the system another 860,000 acre feet annual yield.

Mr. Broomhill: You're still talking about the system and not about South Australia.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Apparently the honourable member cannot understand the term "system". The very basis of South Australia's allocation is that it is a part of the available resources to the system. If our resources are a part of this system, does the honourable member not believe that the whole is therefore important to us? Is that not a simple deduction that could be made by a third-grade student?

Mr. Broomhill: It is pretty obvious where you have been making your errors.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: So much hangs on this report of the technical committee. As I have said, the Government has accepted the technical report. To do otherwise would be to brand competent people as nincompoops, and we will not do that. Having accepted the report, we recognize that an additional 860,000 acre feet will be available in the system beyond what would be available if Chowilla were built.

We are saying to the other States that we want guaranteed our share of this water. Surely this is looking at the long-term development of South Australia. We do not expect, and I do not think anyone expects, that this is the last storage that will be built on the

Murray River or its tributaries. I believe that it is the first of a number of storages that must be built by the River Murray Commission to maintain the allocations and the availability of water in the system as the development of the tributaries takes place in future years. This is a responsibility to which South Australia will face up, as will other States. People in the other States must have a say in this matter as, in fact, they provide three-quarters of the representation on the River Murray Commission. To ask South Australians to forgo an increase of 30 per cent in their divertible water availability because of the politics of the position is sheer nonsense. I repeat that I recognize clearly that the easiest political step for the Government to take would be to have a dispute and to fight and go down. I put it to honourable members that at present South Australia is in a strong bargaining position.

Mr. Virgo: You have sold us out.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: We are able to have a dispute on Chowilla if we do not get a better alternative. We have the ability to not agree to Dartmouth. What will we have if we go to arbitration and lose? We would have what would be given to us. One member opposite has already said that the arbitrator's decision would be final, and yet it has been said that we should take the course of going to the arbitrator. When one remembers the time the then Premier (the present Leader of the Opposition) came back from Victoria with less than he had when he went and with Victoria having more potential oil wells, one realizes that he should not say much about negotiating ability. The clear choice is that one can believe this report or not believe it, and the Government believes it. We will insist that we share the additional resources. The Government will never give way unless the State receives its proper share of the additional resources that will be created by this facility. Therefore, we confidently face the House, knowing that the Opposition's challenge is half-hearted and made by people who know themselves how futile it is to cast a slur on the people who have prepared this report and on those who have advised the Government.

Mr. VIRGO (Edwardstown): In commencing his speech, the Premier said he was disappointed at the debate; I am afraid he did not add anything to improve it. The first thing that struck everyone about what he was saying was that he had obviously

been sold lock, stock and barrel by the Commonwealth Minister for National Development, during the trips the Minister made to Adelaide, and by "Baron" Victoria (Sir Henry Bolte), aided and abetted by Mr. Askin. In fact, as someone said, he is nothing more than the assistant Premier of Victoria.

Mr. Lawn: Playford wouldn't let Bolte get away with anything.

Mr. VIRGO: Of course, he would not; Playford had ability. He knew the rights of this State and was prepared to stand up and fight for them. We did not see from him anything like the weak-kneed attempt put up by the Premier on this occasion. In fact, the Premier is the Judas Iscariot of the State.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. VIRGO: He has betrayed the people who put their trust in him. All members opposite, including you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, have to decide whether they will go along with the corkscrew or live decently with themselves.

Mr. McAnaney: Rubbish!

Mr. VIRGO: I hope we will hear the member for Stirling justifying himself. He has electors along the river, and some of those electors voted for him because he and his Party said, "We will build Chowilla!" but what have they done about it? The Premier has silenced members opposite today. The Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader and the member for Glenelg had to speak before even one of the mutes opposite would get up to speak, and members opposite know that. I am not sure even now whether the Premier will allow his back-benchers to speak on this matter. Will he allow the member for Stirling to express the views of the people of Stirling? What about back-benchers like the member for Chaffey, the seat warmers as they have been called? Will they be allowed to express their views? Will the member for Murray be allowed to say what the people of Murray think about Chowilla? If members of the Government Party are so sure in their own minds that they have the public support, then let them accept the Leader's motion and go to the people.

Mr. Lawn: Hear, hear!

Mr. VIRGO: You, Mr. Deputy Speaker, know, as do all of your colleagues, that if you went to the people on the sell-out of Chowilla by this Judas Iscariot you would be annihilated. What a joke it is to read the comment of the Chairman of the Upper Murray Local Government Association that

Chowilla is not yet lost. What a joke that is after the Premier's statement at the commencement of today's session and after his contribution today. He has made it perfectly clear that he is not prepared even to promote Chowilla. He is going along with the dictates of the Commonwealth Minister and of the Victorian and New South Wales Premiers because (and I quote his own words from the press) the dam at Dartmouth will provide greater advantage to Victoria and New South Wales than will Chowilla. That is his statement, yet he is supposed to be the Premier of South Australia.

Mr. Lawn: He has sold us out, on his own statement.

Mr. VIRGO: Yes, completely, and I want to hear the views of such people as the member for Chaffey, who has stood up in this House and said that the people of Chaffey want Chowilla. He has told us that the fruit-growing organizations and the citrus organizations, at their annual meetings, have regularly called for the building of Chowilla. I will refer to some of the honourable member's statements later on.

The member for Chaffey must either vote for the Government to save his own hide or vote with the Opposition to save Chowilla. He cannot win: if he votes for the Government he will be annihilated at the next election, because I think all of us know the feelings of the people in the State Assembly District of Chaffey. However, if he votes with the Opposition he will also be annihilated by his own Party. He will be expelled from it.

Members interjecting:

Mr. VIRGO: The member for Stirling can laugh, but let him try it out. Indeed, I challenge him to vote against the Government on this issue. Let him see then whether he is still a member tomorrow. He would be expelled before the cock crowed three times. Just as Judas Iscariot betrayed his Master, the Premier has betrayed the people of South Australia.

Mr. Lawn: Didn't Judas hang himself?

Mr. VIRGO: He did, and we are waiting for someone to provide the Premier with a rope so that he can do the same.

Mr. Lawn: But Judas provided his own rope. He didn't wait for anyone to do it for him: he did it himself.

Mr. VIRGO: What a ludicrous position the Premier has created by his statement in the House this afternoon, both at the commencement of today's sitting and during his recent contribution. About a month or so before this

Parliament rose for the Christmas vacation, it unanimously passed a resolution which was originally moved by the member for Glenelg (Mr. Hudson) and then amended by the Minister of Works and further amended by the Attorney-General. The resolution states:

This House . . . considers that the State of South Australia has a fundamental and legal right to the construction of the Chowilla dam without delay, and calls on all South Australian members in both Houses of the Parliament of the Commonwealth to support South Australia's case to the utmost.

How can we ask members of the Commonwealth Parliament to support South Australia when our own Premier has given it away? What sort of idiots are we trying to make of the South Australian members of the Commonwealth Parliament? Two such members have played a significant role in seeking to protect South Australia's rights; one is Senator Reg Bishop, who has played an outstanding part in urging and demanding that our rights be protected. I realize that he is in the gallery at present, but I am not playing up to him; indeed, I am sorry if I am embarrassing him. He has played an outstanding part not only in the Senate but as a member of the Chowilla Dam Promotion Committee. What sort of a fool is this Government making of people such as this who have been instructed by this House to support the building of the Chowilla dam?

The Attorney-General has said—and far be it from me to question his legal knowledge—that we have a legal right to the dam, yet we have the Premier going on with a lot of guff. He has said, "What if we did not win the case when it was taken to arbitration?" What a defeatist attitude! Is it any wonder that Sir Henry Bolte and Mr. Fairbairn have stood over him? He is defeated before he starts. Mr. McLeay is probably the only rat amongst the Liberal members in the Commonwealth Parliament, because almost all the others would support and abide by a unanimous decision of this House. Certainly, some of them have already indicated that they would do this. The situation that has now been created provides still more proof that the people of South Australia cannot trust the Hall Government, which has ratted on them in respect of the Chowilla dam, electoral reform and taxation. I do not think members of the Hall Government can lie straight in bed. To use an old phrase, I think the Premier and the Minister of Works (because I think he, too, supports the Premier) could probably walk under a snake with top hats on without knocking them off.

Mr. Edwards: Could you?

Mr. VIRGO: I am pleased that the member for Eyre has woken up.

Mr. Lawn: That was just his snore that you heard.

Mr. VIRGO: I thought he had woken up. I think he ought to take an active interest in this issue, because he faced the last election on the policy of the Liberal and Country League. He, like you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was elected on the policy printed in the *Advertiser* on February 14, 1968. In that policy, the then Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Hall, said:

My Party started the Chowilla dam plan and obtained the approvals of the Parliaments of the Commonwealth, Victoria and New South Wales for it in 1963.

He continued with a little bit of padding, which I am not omitting for any reason other than that of brevity. He then continued:

This is what we shall do—
not “might do” or “might look into”—

Get on with the Chowilla plan.

How do we reconcile statements of that nature with the Ministerial statement the Premier made today and with his contribution to this debate? I have been fortunate enough to obtain a typed copy of the Premier's statement, but apparently at the end of it he “ad libbed”. He used words to the effect that he was quite sure that at the conclusion of this debate the House would vindicate the stand that the Government had taken. What does this mean? Does it mean that Government members like the member for Chaffey (Mr. Arnold), the member for Murray (Mr. Wardle), and others affected directly and indirectly—and there is no member on either side of the House who is not affected in some way—have seen the Premier crack the whip and have heard him say that Cabinet has decided to accept Dartmouth and give away Chowilla and that they must blindly accept this decision?

Does it mean that the member for Ridley (Hon. T. C. Stott), who is also the Speaker and who has a very strong interest in this issue, is also going to give away Chowilla, despite his numerous promises? Unless he is prepared to back the Dartmouth project, the Government cannot proceed. This is a fairly big decision. The member for Ridley must decide whether he thinks the future of this State is more important than the future of the Hall Government. If the Hall Government survives this vote of no confidence, there will be no Chowilla dam and there will be no industrial

development in South Australia in a few years' time. These are not my words: in 1963, when Sir Thomas Playford announced the Chowilla dam project, he said that the dam would be an absolute necessity by 1970 and that, if it was not built, we would run the risk of serious water shortages.

What is the decision to be? We readily acknowledge that Sir Thomas Playford originally envisaged this project and was prepared to stand up and fight the Commonwealth Government to the extent of going to the court in the late 1950's or early 1960's instead of taking a weak-kneed line such as our current Premier delights in taking. For myself, I would accept the view expressed by Sir Thomas Playford long before I would accept the word of the present Premier, who we know cannot be trusted. On April 10, 1968, Sir Thomas Playford summarized the reasons why we just had to have the Chowilla dam. I shall not read the whole report, but his final statement was as follows:

The question obviously is not “Can we afford Chowilla?”: rather, “Can we live without it?”

As everyone knows, the plain fact is that we cannot live without it, regardless of the airy-fairy promise of the Premier. It is no good having a promise without having the goods to supply and, if the water is not there, what is the use of an undertaking that we must get an additional 20 per cent? I hope that the Minister of Works speaks in this debate, because I remind him of his statement of October 2 last, as reported at page 1582 of *Hansard*:

I say emphatically that, if it is necessary to have a disagreement with the Commonwealth Minister to get Chowilla dam, I will certainly disagree as hard as I can. Make no mistake about that. I am prepared at any time to have a dispute to get Chowilla dam.

Now is the time for the Minister to have that dispute. Will he still do so, or has he gone cold? Have his feet frozen, like those of the Premier? I think this is the chance of a lifetime for all Government members to place the interests of the State above those of their Party. I also remind the Minister of something else he has said, and I hope that the Premier, who has now graced us with his presence, also casts his mind back to the statement. The present Minister of Works said:

The Dartmouth proposal is upstream of the Hume dam. What is the point of putting much money into a dam that is upstream of a reservoir that does not fill every year?

Although those are the present Minister's words, not mine, we agree with them. He made that statement on October 2 last and I hope his

memory is not so dull that he does not recall it. His concluding statement was as follows:

We want the dam downstream of these rivers—

he was referring to the various tributaries—not upstream of a reservoir that fills only once in a while.

We should also consider the pamphlet that the Minister of Works issued, with the concurrence of the Premier, rather hurriedly, I understand, because the concluding statement in it is that it is only a brief summary of the facts and that anyone who wishes to know more should write to the Premier.

Mr. Clark: Is that the pamphlet that the Minister for National Development didn't like?

Mr. VIRGO: Yes. It seemed then that the members of the present Government were prepared to fight the Commonwealth Minister. I shall not refer to all the points in the pamphlet, but point No. 4 states:

Is it practicable? Yes. Investigations carried out over seven years support its feasibility. Has the position changed suddenly? If it has, we have not been told why. We have heard much guff from the Premier about his interpretation of the report of the technical committee. I wondered, when he started to speak, whether he had got his degree of Bachelor of Engineering. However, I realized from some of his stupid remarks that he did not have any idea of what he was talking about. Is it any wonder that the South Australian representative on the River Murray Commission was able to blindfold and bamboozle Cabinet? The members of Cabinet did not have any idea what they were asking him, so how could they get replies? The next point in the pamphlet, referring to who regards Chowilla as being practicable, states:

Who says so? The Snowy Mountains Authority says so. Soil Mechanics Ltd. of London says so. The United States Army Corps of Engineers says so. The Engineering and Water Supply Department of South Australia says so.

Here we have a pamphlet issued in September or October of last year and stating that the Snowy Mountains Authority agrees with Chowilla, but now we suddenly get a convenient report that the technical committee, after consultation with the Snowy Mountains Authority, regards the Dartmouth site as being better. How quickly things can change! As the member for Glenelg (Mr. Hudson) has said, we get an answer from a computer according to the way we feed in the material, and I do not accept that it is pure coincidence

that this dam will be built near the Commonwealth electoral district represented by the Minister for National Development. I think it is a matter of pressure. How could those engineers engaged in the Snowy Mountains Authority, which is under the control of the Minister for National Development, bring out a report contrary to the pre-judged and published views of the Minister? The engineers would not have lasted for long if they did that. Point No. 8 in the pamphlet states:

Why is Chowilla the best site? Because it is downstream from all the Murray River tributaries.

The pamphlet sets out those tributaries, and goes on:

The alternative site of Dartmouth is some 1,200 river miles from the metropolitan pipelines and some 1,000 river miles from South Australian irrigation settlements. The water would take some six weeks to reach South Australia.

Why has the Government suddenly reversed its opinion on this? Who has got at the Government? One wonders whether there is not some bribery and corruption going on. Someone has got at Government members to cause them to change their minds completely on this. This Parliament and the people of this State demand to know why the Government has changed its opinion, and we are not satisfied with the silence with which we were greeted until the Premier spoke on the matter. The member for Glenelg (Mr. Hudson) has dealt fairly adequately with the technicalities involved in the Dartmouth site and I shall refer only to the matter of cost, to which the Leader of the Opposition also referred, because the cost factor caused the dispute about the Chowilla dam project originally. The estimated cost of the dam went from \$28,000,000 to \$43,000,000, then to \$68,000,000, and came back to \$62,000,000 and it was the cost factor that caused the dispute. Then we had all this guff about salinity. The committee has straightened that out but what is important is that those people who support the report of the technical committee are being grossly misled on one matter. I repeat the Leader of the Opposition's statement that the cost stated in the report on Dartmouth is only an estimated cost. The cost of the Chowilla dam was a tender price, and there is a vast difference. With respect, I suggest to those people who obviously did much work preparing this report that there has been much more guessing than is shown. The cost of Dartmouth has been

stated as \$57,000,000 but everyone has conveniently forgotten that, if Dartmouth proceeds, extensive improvements must be made to Lake Victoria. The estimate of their cost is from \$4,700,000 to \$7,200,000, and that allows much latitude. It seems that the estimate of \$57,000,000 for Dartmouth must be taken with a grain of salt, and it would have been better to maintain the same ratio used for Lake Victoria and say that the cost would be between \$57,000,000 and \$90,000,000. We have to assume that the Premier and his Cabinet have considered this point, but I should be delighted to hear members of the Cabinet express their disgust at the way the Premier has sold South Australia down the drain.

It is not only a matter of water for irrigation, important as that is to fruitgrowing and other rural development: water in South Australia means industrial development throughout practically the whole State. If one considers the mains from Morgan and Mannum and that being built from Taillem Bend to Keith, one realizes how reliant South Australia is on water. Obviously, it is not sufficient to store water on the other side of the Hume dam, because members agree that this does not fill as often as we would like. I realize that the member for Chaffey is in a difficult position: he must decide whether he will represent the people who elected him, or the interests of the Party that was gracious enough to hang an L.C.L. label around his neck. On October 2 he said:

I am certain that, when the findings of the Dartmouth investigation are released at the end of this year or early in January next year, Chowilla must proceed because it is impossible logically for South Australia to derive the same benefits from Dartmouth as it would from Chowilla. Further, there is insufficient water in the catchment of the Hume River to fill even the Hume dam. I do not know how we would benefit from having a dam at Dartmouth, and I have every confidence that next year will see the recommencement of the Chowilla project.

The member for Chaffey has an opportunity of doing that. If he votes for this motion there will be a recommencement of work at Chowilla but, if he votes for his Government and puts his Government's interest before those of the electors of Chaffey and of the people of this State, he will see Dartmouth built with all its disabilities.

The Hon. J. W. H. CUMBE (Minister of Works): The Government is faced with a no-confidence motion that received publicity in the newspapers today, when it was announced that the Leader would take action to

suspend Standing Orders in order to move this motion. The Government agreed to this so that the matter could be debated immediately. With all this build-up we expected an important debate, but I think it has been a damp squib up to now. What Opposition members have lacked in ability they have made up for with considerable noise, especially the honourable member who has just sat down and who did not discuss the report of the technical committee. He criticized this Government for many things, but I shall not be unfair and suggest that he could not understand the report even if he considered it. We have listened to the so-called big guns of the Opposition banging away and criticizing everyone and everything—this Government, the Commonwealth Minister for National Development, Mr. Askin, Sir Henry Bolte in particular, the people at Mildura and other people living on the river. I expected the Opposition to study seriously, dispassionately and intelligently the technical committee's report. Let us consider the Labor Party's criticisms and the reasons for this motion. First, the Leader criticized the Government for considering an alternative to Chowilla, but he conveniently forgot to say that a year or so ago he was prepared, on behalf of his Government, to consider an alternative proposal. On August 15, 1967, he was reported in *Hansard* as saying that he was prepared to consider any alternative proposal, but today the basis of this so-called no-confidence motion is that the Government has the cheek and the hide to consider another proposal. At that time the now Leader of the Opposition, who was Premier, and I suppose speaking authoritatively on behalf of the Government, moved that in the opinion of this House assurances should be given by the Governments who were party to the River Murray Waters Agreement that, whatever action was taken by the River Murray Commission concerning the Chowilla dam or any other alternative proposal, South Australia would be provided with water in dry years to the extent intended to have been assured by the Chowilla dam project. This shows that the Leader (or the Premier as he then was) was prepared to accept, agree to, or negotiate for, an alternative proposal to Chowilla. Today, he is basing his argument on the fact that this Government is prepared to consider another proposal, which could give to South Australia benefits greater than would be derived from Chowilla.

Mr. Broomhill: Would you agree that you have changed your mind in the last four months?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: The member for West Torrens was involved in this matter and I thank him for his encouragement. What the then Premier said was not acceptable to the House, and the present Premier (then Leader of the Opposition) spoke on this matter, as did other members of the then Opposition. Amendments were moved, because the Opposition put up such a fight that the then Premier was forced to amend the motion. It was the subsequent amendment moved by the member for West Torrens, as Whip of his Party, that was carried by the House, because at that time the House was not prepared to accept the original motion moved by the then Premier. Having got that one off his chest, the Leader then proceeded to query the authenticity of the report made available to all members of the House last week. Indeed, subsequent speakers (with the exception of the member for Edwardstown, who said nothing) have proceeded to query the correctness of the findings of that report. Throughout members' speeches we have evidenced the non-acceptance of the findings of the report, particularly the technical committee's report. However, I believe the Leader has made certain assumptions to suit his own purpose in this debate. He seemed to me to be strangely quiet and restrained, almost as though he realized some of his assumptions were too gross, although I admit that the Deputy Leader, who followed him, made up for this, in that he was certainly much louder.

The technical committee is made up of senior technical engineering officers from the States and the Commonwealth, Mr. Beaney, the present South Australian Commissioner, being a member of that committee at the time that much of the original design negotiations and agreements and the planning took place in relation to Chowilla. Mr. Beaney, who succeeded Mr. Dridan nearly two years ago as Engineer-in-Chief, is our Commissioner, and Mr. Kinnear is the present member of the technical committee. Both men are of the highest repute, and I know that my predecessor (the member for Hindmarsh) would agree that they are both highly regarded technical officers. Before accepting the recommendations made in the technical committee's report, the Government itself had a check made. Members will recall my saying last year that the Government was not prepared to

accept the first salinity report which was strongly against Chowilla. Mr. Beaney recommended that further studies be made and, largely on the studies that he and his departmental officers undertook, the salinity report now before members has been modified. However, the Engineering and Water Supply Department has checked by computer the results that have come out of the technical committee's report. Although at least two members have said that they think wrong assumptions have been made in the report, I assure the House that the report has been checked and that, on the the advice the Government has received, the findings are technically correct.

Mr. Hudson: Who checks the assumption of a minimum flow of 900 cusecs at Mildura?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I will touch on that in a moment. Members who have queried the report, which I have assured the House is technically correct, surely are not realistic in this regard. Surely, certain statements have been made this afternoon to suit a particular argument. It was said in the report that the dam at Dartmouth was likely to cost \$57,500,000, and one or two members have said that this might go up to anything. Because Chowilla, which was originally estimated at \$28,000,000 and then at \$44,000,000, had finished up at \$68,000,000, it was said that the estimate in the report was not a reliable one. The Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electricity Commission, which was the organization requested by the River Murray Commission to investigate the matter, reported that the Dartmouth site was feasible and submitted prices and preliminary designs of certain sizes of dam. Having taken the trouble to check in relation to dams recently constructed by the Snowy Mountains Authority, I have the figures here which indicate that the Talbingo dam, for instance, in respect of which tenders went in during December, 1967, was estimated to cost \$44,700,000, but that the tender was \$41,600,000. There was an estimate of \$5,600,000 concerning the Jounama dam, and the tender (May, 1966) was \$4,100,000; the Blowering dam was estimated to cost \$24,000,000, but the tender (May, 1965) was \$21,600,000; and the tender in February, 1965, for the Jindabyne dam, which was estimated to cost \$5,600,000, was \$5,100,000.

Since 1960, contracts estimated at \$220,000,000 in total have been accepted at an average of 8 per cent below estimate. I quote these figures to show honourable members that the Snowy Mountains Authority is

realistic in its estimate of \$57,500,000 as the likely cost of a dam at Dartmouth. At the time that advice was made available to the Leader's Government, on the available information data in their possession, I believe Mr. Beaney and his predecessor correctly recommended to the Leader that Chowilla offered the most benefit to South Australia. However, concerning the latest reports that have been made available to the Government, including the one made available to all members of the House, Mr. Beaney has told the Government that to hold out for Chowilla is technically indefensible. I point this out merely because the Leader referred to it.

Mr. Hudson: You will agree that the technical committee's report does not prove that Dartmouth would give a higher average in relation to supply for South Australia than Chowilla would give?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I am aware that the report gives to South Australia an opportunity to obtain more water, and the thing I am concerned about is obtaining more water and an assured supply.

Mr. Hudson: Which gives the best result for South Australia?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: The best result that can be got for South Australia is simple, as the honourable member would realize if he got away from his theoretical thinking and understood the basic facts of hydrology. We are concerned here with getting as much water as we can, and it is obvious from this report that we can get more water from Dartmouth than we can from Chowilla.

Mr. Hudson: That is not the case; there is nothing in the report about that.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I will deal with that. Members opposite must consider all the aspects.

Mr. Hudson: So must you.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: Paragraphs 10 (v) and 10 (vi) state:

A storage of 3,000,000 acre feet at Dartmouth would provide an increased benefit to the system, when measured in terms of additional average annual supply to the Upper States, of 860,000 acre feet per annum above that which it is now anticipated could be provided by a storage of between 3,500,000 and 5,060,000 acre feet at Chowilla.

If it is decided to construct Dartmouth to its approximate economic limit of about 3,000,000 acre feet, consideration could be given to allocating parts of the additional 860,000 acre feet per annum to an increase in the South Australian entitlement.

That is the point I am making.

Mr. Hudson: But it is not the point we were making.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: That does not mean that the point I am making is not correct.

Mr. Hudson: Where in this report is it demonstrated that Chowilla would give a lower yield to South Australia than would Dartmouth? The answer is that it is not demonstrated at all.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: But it is demonstrated in this report that here is an opportunity for South Australia to get more water, and that is what we want. We can get about 20 per cent more water, and we can get it on a similar basis. It is important that the honourable member should realize this. This is the basis on which we as a Government are fighting. What is the purpose of building any dam on the river? It is to hold water and give a more assured supply to a State that requires it—in this case, South Australia. The purpose of any dam is to hold back and conserve water, and Dartmouth will give us about 20 per cent more water than would be obtained, as we understand it, from Chowilla.

Mr. Hudson: That is not proved by the technical committee's report.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Glenelg has made his speech.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: The honourable member misunderstands this question. I am sure that the then Minister of Works (Hon. C. D. Hutchens) will appreciate this point, which is of great importance. The member for Glenelg spoke about minimum flows, and I suggested he might look at some aspects of hydrology. Surely he appreciates that hydrology is an involved science. He posed this question: why was this investigation ever made into the minimum flow past Mildura? I remind him that the Government of which he was a member approved of this work going on, the date being contained in the River Murray Commission's minute of October 10, 1967.

Mr. Hudson: So what!

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: He made a hullabaloo and went on and on and on about why this work should be done at all. At that time he said, at considerable length, that under the Chowilla agreement there was to be no flow at Mildura. He asked, "Why ever did this investigation go on?" It was when his Government was in office that this work was approved and went on.

Mr. Hudson: You have accepted it.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUNBE: It is recognized now by all leading engineers in this field that the assumption of no flow at Mildura, which was a part of the original Chowilla agreement, was not understood in 1961, that this was a false basic assumption. This assumption was made in 1961 and it was part of the basic thinking on Chowilla. As the honourable member knows, there has been much talk, debate and argument on this (he has mentioned this several times), but all leading engineers in this field now recognize that this was a false assumption made at that time and that, as far as a minimum flow past Mildura is concerned, the people on that part of the river will not accept a condition of "no flow". All the members of the commission and the technical committee can see that to have a river shut off into two separate compartments is not a good thing; we must be prepared to relate it to the whole position and accept that there must be some flow at Mildura. Where there is some feeling between Victoria, on the one hand, and New South Wales on the other hand, is on the degree of flow that should be permitted. For instance, Victoria was talking about 900 cusecs; New South Wales, I believe, would prefer less than that.

Mr. Hudson: What would we accept?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUNBE: I emphasize that it is now recognized that the River Murray cannot be operated as a whole without some flow through Mildura. I think the honourable member would agree with that.

Mr. Hudson: But you would agree also that, if you made the minimum flow 300 cusecs, this would make a substantial difference to the relative assessments of Chowilla and Dartmouth.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member has made his speech. Once is enough.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUNBE: I agree that the size of Dartmouth has a direct bearing on the minimum flow past Mildura. A small dam could be erected at Dartmouth to give equivalent benefits to people on the upper stages of the river to what they would receive with "no flow" conditions from Chowilla. To build a dam of 3,000,000 acre feet there means that South Australia has an opportunity now to gain an increased flow. That is an important matter, which I do not think honourable members opposite have grasped. We are trying to increase the amount of water available to South Australia; that is the whole basis on which we are fighting this matter. The member for Whyalla (Hon. R. R. Loveday) knows

that he gets much water from the Murray River, as other members do. We are over-committed today (let us make no mistake about it) in the amount of water we wish to take out of the river for irrigation or diversion purposes. We must get more and more water, even as regards Chowilla. We are now grasping at opportunities to gain more water. If any honourable member wishes to say in this place, "We should not get more water for South Australia", he is the biggest fool in the State. The next point raised by the Leader was the matter of legal assurances. This is one of the matters upon which he based his argument.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J. W. H. COUNBE: It was on legal rights that the Leader based his no-confidence motion. We all realize, of course, that the financial clauses in the agreement have been affected. The Leader realizes this. He referred to the matter when speaking in an earlier debate, pointing out the real difficulties his Government faced in this connection. Following the halting of work on Chowilla, a motion was moved on August 15, 1967, but the Leader did not refer in it to any legal rights or to insistence on them. The first part of the motion stated, "In the opinion of this House, assurances should be given by the Governments, the parties to the River Murray Waters Agreement . . .". All the Leader asked on that occasion was that we should receive assurance from other Governments. He realized that he had real problems and that his legal rights were doubtful. He amplified this later in speaking to the motion, when he went into some detail emphasizing that, as the cost of the project had risen above a certain sum, the legal aspects were voided. If the legal rights still existed, why did the work stop in the first place?

Members opposite, especially those who were Ministers at the time, will recall that the cost involved amounted to more than the original sum allowed. Of course, it was on that basis that the Commissioners reported and the work stopped. At that time, the Leader did not stand up for any legal rights but merely requested assurances, and that position still obtains. Provision is still made in the agreement for arbitration. What has changed is the financial aspect to which I have just referred, and the Leader pointed out in 1967 the difficulties that faced him in this regard. The matter of arbitration was dealt with last year (I touched on it) and, as provision is still made for it, we can take advantage of it.

If the matter went to an arbitrator, what would he decide and what alternatives would he choose between? As I see it, he could decide simply on whether Chowilla could or could not be built: I cannot see that he could look at any alternative. If the agreement were voided in some way, especially on financial grounds, we might be forced into the position that the arbitrator might find definitely against us. We regard the arbitration clauses in the agreement as being available to this State as a final course of action.

We have been criticized because we are presently trying to obtain more water for South Australian people and industries. Would any Government be foolish and negligent enough to ignore this opportunity to get more water for the State? However, members opposite suggest that we should ignore the opportunity. If we were so negligent, the Opposition's strictures would be justified, but we are not overlooking the opportunity to get this water. As we have an opportunity to get extra water, we will try to get it and to increase the benefits to be derived for South Australia.

Mr. Ryan: That is only an excuse.

The Hon. J. W. H. COURCE: The member for Port Adelaide is always yapping. Having listened to a great deal of rubbish for an hour or so, I now want to reply. This question must be posed: should we as a Government, and should this State, pass up this opportunity to get extra water? Should we negotiate for improved benefits for the State? The simple choice is whether we should grasp this opportunity or pass it up. The South Australian Government intends to fight to get extra water and extra benefits for South Australia.

Mr. Virgo: Go to the people and let them decide.

The Hon. J. W. H. COURCE: We regard this as the only basis on which any alternative to Chowilla can be considered: let there be no mistake about that.

Mr. Virgo: Go to the people about it.

The Hon. J. W. H. COURCE: The member for Edwardstown made no contribution to the debate and he is now having a field day as he yaps away about nothing, and to do that he is well qualified.

Mr. Virgo: The people will have their day.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J. W. H. COURCE: We contend that we cannot contemplate Dartmouth

at all unless we can get an increased entitlement for South Australia. I emphasize that we want more than the previous Government was prepared to negotiate for.

Mr. Virgo: You told us previously—

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections. Honourable members having had an opportunity to speak in the debate, I suggest that they hear the Minister's reply in silence.

Mr. Virgo: Tell him to talk sense.

The Hon. J. W. H. COURCE: I will put the matter as calmly and dispassionately as I can. The previous Government was prepared to negotiate for any alternative that would provide 1,250,000 acre feet. We are not prepared to accept that figure: we will go after more, and we will not be satisfied until we get more. We regarded what the previous Government was after as not good enough. What the Opposition would do is hold us back in our development, and we want to get on with that development. The previous Government sought only 1,250,000 acre feet. As that is not good enough for South Australia or for us, we will fight to get more. We want more and more water for South Australia, and that is the whole matter in a nutshell. We have an opportunity to get more water, and we would be an irresponsible Government if we did not take it.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY (Whyalla): The Minister has told us that the Government is concerned only with getting additional water. It is significant that Government speakers this afternoon have left out one feature of this matter which was, in the mind of Sir Thomas Playford, the outstanding feature in regard to Chowilla: the position of the storage at the head of the river in South Australia. This matter has not been referred to this afternoon by members opposite and it would be interesting to know why, seeing that Sir Thomas Playford regarded it as one of the major aspects, if not the major aspect, of this matter. It is worth while going back to the history of Chowilla. It came about as a result of Sir Thomas Playford's insistence on the need for an adequate water supply in this State, the driest State in the driest continent. He viewed Chowilla as a *quid pro quo* for the rights we relinquished in respect of the Snowy River scheme. In other words, this was a deal, and the agreement came out of that deal. Now, we are presented with something totally different. The fact that we gave something

away in order to obtain agreement to the Chowilla project has been completely forgotten in this debate. It has been claimed this afternoon that the Government is putting up a great fight to get an additional 250,000 acre feet through its so-called negotiations. However, it is perfectly obvious when one reads the documents and studies the history of this matter that the Government would be certain of getting the 250,000 acre feet anyway.

The Hon. C. D. Hutchens: We would have got it if we were in Government.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: Exactly. This is a completely sham fight, and merely a front to excuse the Government's complete surrender. I will not go back over all that was said during the 1967 debate, because the Government could argue that at that time the reports we now have were not available. However, it is interesting to see that it was emphasized that the storage had to be in South Australia at the head of our section of the river. It was said that in no circumstances should the storage be outside South Australia. However, this point seems to be completely forgotten now. In that connection, it is worth quoting the following report, in the *Advertiser* of October 31, 1968, of what Sir Thomas Playford said:

The big factor in Chowilla's favour from a South Australian point of view was that the water would be stored in South Australia and that no-one else would get it. Both Victoria and New South Wales were operating large diversion schemes which could only get larger. He considered that the much-vaunted salinity problem of Chowilla was "not a worry".

I will leave the question of salinity for a while because I want to emphasize the point concerning the position of the storage. In the *Advertiser* of November 29, 1968, Sir Thomas Playford was reported as saying:

Why Chowilla is necessary to us, and why it is so important to us, is that it is in a unique position to take in water that falls in any part of the River Murray catchment area.

He emphasizes this all the time, and surely no-one studied this matter more than he did over the years. The article continued:

The Dartmouth site was upstream from the Hume dam, which had filled only three times in the past 10 years. "Assuming that you did get some water in it, it would probably only be at the expense of a storage basin already established," he said. Sir Thomas Playford described suggestions of alternatives to Chowilla as "silly delusions". So, that is what he thinks of Government members' thinking at present—silly delusions.

The Hon. C. D. Hutchens: He is right.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: There has been much argument about this report, and I am not impugning the efficiency of the officers concerned, but officers can come up with quite different conclusions, depending on their terms of reference and what they were asked to produce in a report. For example, the same technical committee as that which reported on the Dartmouth scheme issued a very different report in 1961. I suppose it could be said that the committee did not then have a computer, but during its investigations the commission issued a document entitled "Statement on Proposals for Further Storage on the River Murray". The document states:

The technical committee examined the effect of additional storages of various capacities above Hume Reservoir, in order to determine if benefits greater than those from Chowilla could be obtained for a comparable expenditure from an Upper Murray storage. This 1961 investigation—

and, after all, it was only seven years ago—showed that on the basis then adopted Chowilla, as a River Murray Commission storage, would for an equal expenditure provide greater overall benefits than storage above Hume Reservoir.

Now, we have the committee's report on the Chowilla dam and on the Dartmouth scheme. In its conclusions it says:

Considering only yield and cost aspects, and based on the conditions outlined in section 3 above, it is concluded—

And it goes on with its conclusions, one or two of which have been quoted this afternoon. That report deals only with yield and cost aspects. Furthermore, as the member for Glenelg has pointed out, this report does not deal with what will happen if there is a continuous flow of 900 cusecs past Mildura and if the Chowilla dam is constructed. Obviously, if there is to be a flow of 900 cusecs past Mildura, the average volume of water that would be in the Chowilla dam, if it were constructed, must be much greater than it would be otherwise, and there would be a much better flow in the river in South Australia than there would otherwise be. Assuming that this was so, the yield would be very great indeed and possibly far greater than the yield that the Premier has talked about today, with the extra 250,000 acre feet that he will fight for. This report does not deal with that aspect of the question.

The position of this storage is vitally important to South Australia. It is amazing, in view of the history of this matter, that it

has not been mentioned by Government speakers. They know that even before this report was submitted Sir Henry Bolte repudiated the solemn agreement entered into a few years ago. Even supposing that the Dartmouth dam is constructed and that there is an agreement about it, what guarantee have we (when we are dealing with people like Sir Henry Bolte) that the agreement will be carried out properly? What guarantee have we that something will not take place in the stretch of river between Dartmouth and this State that will make any agreement in regard to the Dartmouth scheme completely or partially invalid and of little use to this State? What security have we in this matter, when we find this parochial attitude as between States, so violent and long-sustained?

In the River Murray Commission's report is a map showing the works for water conservation and regulation and State water distribution systems. One has only to look at it to see the great vested interest that Victoria has in irrigated areas. It makes the South Australian irrigated areas look pitifully small by comparison. The use that Victoria makes of Murray River water is gigantic compared with the use that South Australia makes of it for irrigation. Victoria has a better rainfall, whilst we depend entirely on this water for our industrial development and our irrigation. We depend on Murray River water almost entirely for irrigation and stock purposes. There is no comparison between the two situations. Ours is a position of dire need. Theirs is merely a position of expansion. In fact, the careless way in which they have handled their irrigation systems, allowing salt problems to develop, shows that they have not even the irrigation problems that we have. Those problems have not worried Victoria as they have worried us. In South Australia 90 per cent of the people depend on the water for their household, garden and industrial use. We just cannot live without it: our whole progress depends on it. In other words, from a political point of view and considering all these points, it is absolutely essential, as has been said in the past, that this storage be in South Australia.

All the debate on the Government side has taken place as though Dartmouth and Chowilla would be the last water storages built on the Murray, but that attitude is ridiculous and short sighted. If Australia is to expand as we are told almost every day it will, and if Australia has the future that we are told it has, many more storages on the Murray will be required. Every aspect of water storage on the river will have to be examined in the

same way as the Snowy Mountains Authority has examined every inch of the mountain area and every little trickle of water to ensure that hardly a drop is lost to the storages. If there is a Chowilla, there will be a Dartmouth later. However, I am willing to guarantee that, if there is a Dartmouth now, there will not be a Chowilla later, because Victoria and New South Wales will ensure that. That is obvious, because those States are repudiating Chowilla now, so what will happen later when there is greater expansion in this country?

The whole of the Government's argument is short sighted and ignores the advice and strong point made by the man that members opposite have held up as the greatest political leader in Australia. The political issue in this matter is more important than any engineering report, and the report by the engineers does not deal with the particular aspect of flow past Mildura and its effect on the Chowilla dam if such a dam were constructed. I do not blame the engineers. They were asked to report on a particular term of reference, and they have done that. However, the fact remains, as has been admitted in the debate today, that there is virtually no difference in cost when the alterations that will have to be made to Lake Victoria if Dartmouth is built are considered. When work on Chowilla was stopped the argument against building the dam was based on cost, not on anything else. After that the other elements were introduced.

What happened shows how an argument on a question can be twisted in a short time to suit the people pulling the wires behind the scenes, because no-one can convince me that much work has not been done by people in Victoria to twist the whole of this argument in favour of Dartmouth as against Chowilla. Cost was almost forgotten and the matter proceeded on other lines. Now the Government says that it is fighting a great fight for South Australia and that it will get an extra 250,000 acre feet, but it will get that water anyway if Chowilla is built.

Mr. Corcoran: That is part of the deal.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: The Government knows that that is part of the deal. The fight is just a sham. There is nothing in the cost argument and there is nothing in the salinity argument. If anything, the salinity argument favours Chowilla, and it could favour Chowilla more if we knew all the details about salinity at the peak periods when good water was required for irrigation. It is not much good discussing the average salinity over

12 months, because we must know the quality of the water when it is most needed: that is the important point. On the question of salinity, Chowilla has the advantage; the cost argument does not come into it, either, so that it seems to be a question of getting an extra 250,000 acre feet of water for which we are going to sell our advantage of having the storage in this State and of having command of that quantity of water for the mess of potage at present offered, if the Government has its way. The Government does not believe in arbitration and has said how that would be of no benefit, because if the matter went to arbitration we would just have Chowilla and not the extra quantity of water. The Government is not serious about arbitration although it states it is still in the game.

If ever a Government deserved condemnation it is this one; but all this is on a par with what every Liberal Government does—its word cannot be trusted. This Government proved that it could not be trusted by the incident before Christmas which the Premier said was the outstanding feature of his period in Parliament, that is, satisfactory electoral reform. He went back on his solemn word then, so why should we trust the present Government on this issue? Its word is not to be trusted at all. The Opposition is not condemning the Government merely because it is considering an alternative, but we are condemning it for its complete capitulation despite the outstanding advantages of Chowilla. The report does not invalidate Chowilla: in fact, it strengthens its position if one gives due weight to the political considerations and what must happen if Australia expands and more water is needed by Victoria and New South Wales and if Dartmouth is built, because no-one in his right mind imagines that, if Dartmouth is built, we will get Chowilla, despite the talk about it and the statements that we might get it later. We know that will not happen. What will happen will be that further storages further up-river will be built so that the other two States can control the water, as it will have to pass through their territory before it reaches this State.

Mr. Casey: They seem to be more interested in irrigation than in supplying towns with water.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: The Treasurer told us in 1967, when speaking on this question, that we must be realistic and that this is a tough world in which to negotiate, that we must not be soft and must show that we are

prepared to compromise. We have heard the story today that illustrates that this is not even a compromise but that we are giving the game away and that all we want is this little extra water. The report states that South Australia will have it and the engineers seem happy about it. No doubt the Commonwealth Minister who came over here is happy about it, too. The Government stands absolutely condemned and deserves no confidence from the people of this State.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON (Treasurer): I speak for two reasons: first, because I think this is a matter of some political opportunism and, secondly and more importantly, because I am somewhat involved, and have been for some years. As Minister of Works when this project was first mooted I have a personal interest in Chowilla and I think I have been one of its strongest protagonists since it was suggested. Some honourable members have quoted what I have said in debates: I agree that I said these things and at the time I said them I believed them. Also, for me there are some emotional aspects of my involvement in this project. One cannot participate in planning and developing such a project without having a personal interest, and I admit to that. For that reason I intend to make my attitude perfectly clear: I do not participate in the debate merely because it is a motion of no confidence but I take the opportunity to put the facts about Chowilla before the House. I shall not discuss the technical matters because they have been completely canvassed, particularly by the Minister of Works, who told the House of the facts that have led the Government to its present thinking.

I thought that the Leader, when he opened the debate, was not at his best. Perhaps his heart was not in his work, and his comments seemed more emotional than factual. For example, he said that we should have Chowilla because the L.C.L. promised it, and I agree. He said that the commission and the South Australian Commissioner were influenced by pressures from powerful sources in the Eastern States, and that the technical committee was given certain instructions about the kind of report it was expected to produce and which it should produce. He said that the computer, in effect, was cooked and that the data fed into it was biased data. This was a natural corollary of his statement that the technical committee was instructed to produce a certain kind of report. I am sure the Leader would agree that the inference from his remarks was that the computer was fed incomplete or

incorrect data. Therefore, on that process of developing his argument the report of the committee was not true. He also said that, if storage is not at Chowilla but upstream, the management of the river will be arranged in such a way that South Australia's interest will be detrimentally affected.

Perhaps his most important statement was that the technical committee was given certain instructions and that the data fed to the computer was not complete or correct. Every member of this House knows that this State's representative on the commission is a man of integrity, with a great ability in the field of research and planning. This has been Mr. Beaney's forte over the years: before he was Engineer-in-Chief he was in charge of developmental projects, and this was his particular role. He is probably the most able man in this State to look after the interests of South Australia in this matter, and I believe that he has looked after them. I reject the suggestion that as a member of the commission he has been a party to an exercise fed into the computer which is not a complete and proper exercise. I do not know that any member would seriously contest that confidence which I have in the Engineer-in-Chief and, if honourable members do not contest it, why do they raise these arguments about the result of the committee's report? After all, the Leader of the Opposition is a man of intelligence and academic training who is not likely to take the view about modern methods of calculation and the use of computers, and so on, which perhaps some layman might be expected to take. Indeed, the Leader would not, I presume, be a sceptic about the operations of the computer and, if he does not charge the people who operate the computer with malpractice or bias in some respect, he has no reason to doubt the result the computer has produced.

Although the member for Whyalla (Hon. R. R. Loveday) did not refer specifically to the management of the river, from his reference to the location of the river and his emphasis on Chowilla as being more advantageous in so far as it affected the management of the river, he obviously assumed that, unless the dam were placed at Chowilla and the water stored therein, the river would be mismanaged to South Australia's detriment. I think that my friend the member for Hindmarsh (Hon. C. D. Hutchens), who has had three years' experience in the River Murray Commission's handling of the river, will agree with me that there has

never been any reason to doubt the integrity of the commission in its management of the river. I worked with Mr. Dridan, the former Commissioner, for seven years and, although he agreed that Commissioners for their part were protagonists in their arguments for the well-being of their particular States, he never laid a charge or even implied to me that, in the management of the river in times of stress, the River Murray Commission did not manage the river in an unbiased and proper fashion in order to secure the best possible result for all participants concerned.

I therefore reject the suggestion that the River Murray Commission will mismanage the river to South Australia's detriment. I agree that at the political level (and having said it I do not retract it at this stage) the Chairman of the commission (the Minister for National Development) was at fault in many of the statements he made which gave South Australians every reason to believe that he was somewhat biased in his views. The Chairman himself would reject this and, indeed, does reject it but at least that was the assumption to be drawn (and I think understandably drawn) from his remarks. I therefore believe the Leader is not on sound ground when he suggests that, if the dam is not located in South Australian territory, the river will be mismanaged by the commission to the detriment of South Australia's rights. Some members said we had no reliable data available in several vital respects in order that the technical committee could produce its report. I think it was the member for Glenelg (Mr. Hudson) who said that we had no measurement of the flow in the Mitta Mitta River on which the report could be based. If his assertion were correct, then he had some basis to his argument, but the assertion was not true.

I personally have seen the figures of the flow of the Mitta Mitta River for, I think it is, 36 continuous years. I must admit that when I looked at the figures my first reaction was that this was a rather meagre flow, but the fact that the flow is constant and regular and that every year the flow is substantial, and the fact that it is in a kind climate where evaporation is virtually nil, are the matters which produce the result disclosed in the technical committee's report. I think we in this State find it difficult to appreciate that there can be a place in Australia where evaporation is not a major factor in surface water supply. We have grown up

in an area where this is a real factor, and the evaporation which takes place over the Murray River system as a whole is enormous. In the present allocation of water to South Australia, 600,000-odd acre feet of that water is evaporated every year from the surface of the river itself above Goolwa, and particularly from the two major lakes. Investigations have been conducted from time to time into the feasibility of closing off Lake Albert in order to reduce the area of evaporation. However, be that as it may, we are all accustomed to taking evaporation into account as a real factor in considering our surface supply.

But here is a location high up in the Australian Alps where evaporation is virtually nil, and the figures of the flow of the Mitta Mitta River are constant and consistent, and they are known. Therefore, the technical committee was not without information on this vital matter when it compiled its report. Certain honourable members, particularly the member for Whyalla, had much to say about the flow past Mildura; if I heard him correctly, the honourable member said that if a flow of 900 cusecs past Mildura were to be maintained this would make Chowilla significantly better than it otherwise would be. The honourable member may have some grounds for this argument, but what is the use of talking about a flow past Mildura if there is not some water up the river to flow past? That is the cogent point. Therefore, in times of stress, when the Hume dam is virtually empty (and it was empty within the last 12 months, if my memory is correct), there is no water to flow past Mildura, and Chowilla could not get any benefit from that flow.

I think this takes the bottom out of most of the honourable member's argument (and I think it is a vital factor in his argument). Admittedly, my colleague the Minister of Works said that the flow past Mildura was not a thing that the 1962 situation had envisaged.

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

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: It was expected when we considered the 1962 studies and the 1963 legislation that Chowilla would result in certain advantages to the Eastern States. Under the terms of the River Murray Waters Act, it has been necessary to maintain in the river a stated amount of flow during each month of the year and more particularly during the irrigation season. It was expected that, instead of having to make available in each and every month the amount of the quota during years of shortage, the River Murray

Commission would be able to store in Chowilla the water that was due to South Australia for the ensuing several months or possibly for the whole of the irrigation year, and this would mean that any flows that existed in the river over and above that amount would be available to irrigators above Chowilla. This was the big advantage that was expected, particularly for Victoria, from the Chowilla dam scheme. Of course, that concept vanished when it was realized that the situation of zero flow through Mildura was no longer tolerable because of salinity, and that is where I think the doubts about the usefulness of Chowilla to the Eastern States really began to generate some steam. I think we have come to the situation that, in addition to the problem I have just recited, the Chowilla dam does not do for South Australia quite the job that we thought it would do, and in fact it could not do for South Australia the job it was expected that it could do.

Mr. McKee: You have changed your mind.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: For example, it could not do, and it is not claimed that it could do, any better than the 1,250,000 acre feet of water as the guaranteed flow to South Australia. Of that quantity of 1,250,000 acre feet, about 650,000 acre feet is required for evaporation and for river flushing, so the net result to South Australia could be about 700,000 acre feet of usable divertible water for irrigation and for pumping to the metropolitan area. No-one has established that Chowilla can do better than this. Indeed, it has been established during the period under study (about 50 years) that, if Chowilla had been called upon to supply 1,250,000 acre feet a year to South Australia right through, it would have been dry for three specific periods.

Mr. Broomhill: Where does that come from?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I do not know whether or not it is in the report, but it is a fact.

Mr. Broomhill: Where did you get your facts from?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: In fact, I have had access to the information that has been supplied by the Engineer-in-Chief. In addition, I was present at the discussions between the Premier and the Minister for National Development. Indeed, I have been a party to all the discussions that have taken place on this matter. If the member for West Torrens doubts it, let him ask the Engineer-in-Chief whether or not that is so.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: When was it first found out?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: It was first discovered during the technical studies. Until the sophisticated computers that we now have were available for studies of the Murray River, we had not previously in our history been able to make such studies. The Murray River is the most complex problem that an engineer has ever been called upon to solve, in that the variables are almost innumerable and nobody making a calculation, whether he be the best mathematician in the world or not, can cope with the variables and the problems that the flow of the Murray River produces with anything like the efficiency that the modern computer can. Until now, we have not had an opportunity exhaustively to examine the Murray River's variables and characteristics. We know something of its variables but it is virtually a mathematical impossibility to make a calculation with pencil and paper to know what the result will be, with the multifarious variations in the characteristics of the river.

So it is not surprising to me that, at this point of time and with the techniques now available and the improvements in these techniques since 1962, we have now discovered many things about the Murray that previously we did not know. That is a fact revealed in the report now before us. At present South Australia is committed to a usage of water and diversions from the river that fully take up the 1,250,000 acre feet that Chowilla would provide. Indeed, we are probably over-committed, even on this figure. Incidentally, it is of interest to note that during the administration of the previous Government some major diversions from the river were licensed, even when that Government must have known from its own reports that we were in effect almost, if not fully, committed. But, be that as it may, the facts are that the full output of Chowilla, if it was built, is already committed to South Australia, and we have little, if any, scope for improving our diversions from the river on that basis.

This involves us immediately in two problems. The first concerns some people on the Murray River with small holdings. Some of them are part-time holdings they are trying to develop by increased plantings so that in due course they may give up their part-time outside work and get a full living from their blocks. They probably hold the water rights but cannot at present get the water. Many

of these people talk to me at various times when I am up the river. Is the Opposition prepared to say that these people can never look forward to an opportunity to increase their holdings and activities?

Mr. Virgo: We've never said anything of the sort.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: If the Opposition were able to peg us to Chowilla when a better alternative was offering, that is what it would be saying to these people.

Mr. Virgo: What did you say in 1967?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: In 1967, I said what I believed at that time to be right. Is there any virtue in being consistent when one knows one is wrong?

Mr. Virgo: Who changed your mind—Fairbairn?

The SPEAKER: Order! Will the Treasurer kindly address the Chair and ignore interjections?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will do my best to do as you request, Sir. The Opposition's present proposal would restrict in the future the activities of people on the river. In those areas, we are fully committed now and, if we do not take advantage of a better alternative, we are not doing the right and proper thing by the people on the river who want to expand their holdings and activities, slight though that expansion may be. Let the Leader and other Opposition members tell the people on the river that they intend to force the hand of the Government (indeed they intend this very day to turn us out of office, if the House will so vote, so that they can take over the administration of this and all other matters in the State) and have the State go for Chowilla, disregarding the advantages of the other scheme.

Mr. Virgo: Go to the people on it.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: All I am saying to members opposite is that, if they believe their proposal to be the proper thing to be done in the light of present circumstances, they should go to the Murray River settlements and tell the people there what they intend.

Mr. Virgo: We will; don't worry about that.

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The other problem which immediately arises and which is of no less importance to the State is the

fact that, if the diversions from the river are already fully committed, what are we to do in respect of development of the metropolitan area? As other members have already said today and as most people in South Australia know, for long periods in each year about 80 per cent of the total population of South Australia depends on the Murray River for its domestic and stock water supplies. The position is that, unless we take advantage of a better alternative, not only will our irrigation activities be proscribed but also the development of our metropolitan area will take place only with great difficulty, possibly at the cost of desalination or the re-use of water (which I admit are possibilities but costly), and therefore we face that prospect in the development of industries, in providing for a larger population and in improving the amenities of people in the metropolitan area and country areas served by the Murray River. If there is anything better than Chowilla then by all means let us have it and, in my view, there is something better. Therefore, I say we are not doing our proper job unless we consider what appears to be a better proposition.

I fully understand and appreciate the attachment that citizens of South Australia have for the Chowilla project. As I said earlier today, I was the Minister in charge of the department when the Chowilla project was first mooted, so I had an intimate association with its early development. I therefore suppose I have just as much attachment to the Chowilla project, as a project, as has anyone else.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: If members will pay me the courtesy that I paid them this afternoon and will hold their tongues while I am making my point, it will be appreciated not only by me but by everyone else in the House.

Mr. Virgo: How would you be!

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes, how would I be!

Mr. Virgo: You're only making a noise because your argument is so weak.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I do not try to shout everyone down in this House, as does the honourable member. It is discourteous, and it is an example of street corner tactics rather than an example of what should be the proper procedure in this House. I was trying to say that I think I understand the sentimental attachment to the Chowilla project of South Australians and of those people who were involved in its early development and in putting forward

the project. I have a layman's scepticism of approaches and investigations that are based on highly technical procedures. I said earlier that I did not expect that the Leader of the Opposition would have such scepticism because he has had academic training and therefore understands these things better than I. However, I appreciate the layman's viewpoint, because in these matters I myself am a layman. I have argued in this House and outside it that I, as a layman, could not see how a dam in the upper reaches of the river could possibly give South Australia the results that Chowilla could give. I have said this.

Mr. McKee: Very recently.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I do not deny that. However, when I am confronted with the sort of evidence that is now available to us, I would not only be a fool to myself but I would be a traitor to South Australia if I disregarded it.

Mr. Broomhill: You are.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I have stated my view, and I do not change my mind easily on any matters.

Mr. Virgo: Only when Sir Henry Bolte gets into you.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Don't be so stupid. Sir Henry Bolte has insulted me far more often than he has insulted the member for Edwardstown. I have argued the matter of Chowilla from the geographical viewpoint. I said, "How could a dam upstream possibly do what Chowilla could do, because it would not impound any water from the tributaries of the Murray River north of the Great Dividing Range and below Albury, and it does not impound any of the water that goes down the Darling, which is important to the people in the Upper Murray region of South Australia? It disregards these vital factors, and the water that would be stored in the Dartmouth dam would be stored in the Hume dam anyway until the Hume dam ran over." I said these things, and with conviction.

Mr. Clark: You were dead right.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I think I was at the time. Members say, when it suits them, that it is improper for a person, in the light of the evidence produced, to change his mind. I am sure that they do not really believe this, but they are using it at present as a political weapon against the Government. The Leader of the Opposition knows that the technical committee's report provides a strong case. He knows that the South Australian member of

the commission is honest, is an expert in the field of investigation, and is the academic equal of any other member of the commission, and ex-members of his Cabinet, who worked in conjunction with Mr. Beaney, also know that. The Leader also knows that computer techniques are reliable because he has used a computer for a certain purpose. He also knows that the techniques available to us now were not available in 1962 to undertake the work that has now been done by the technical committee.

Also, the Leader knows that Chowilla would give us only what we are actually using now (or close to that), whereas Dartmouth has the capacity to give South Australia far more water than can Chowilla. If he does not know it, his colleague the member for Whyalla knows it, because he said it twice today, although he was using that fact as a different weapon when he said that the Premier was putting up a sham fight, and would continue to do so, for 1,500,000 acre feet of water from Dartmouth when he knew that he could get it anyway. If he and other Opposition members know that we can get 1,500,000 acre feet out of Dartmouth, why do they hold out for 1,250,000 acre feet from Chowilla? This, Sir, even though the technical committee reports that an additional 200,000 or 250,000 acre feet is available out of Dartmouth and even though this is a net gain in usable divertable water. No more evaporation takes place because of the additional flow of water; therefore, this is a net gain. When it is considered that this is a net gain of up to 250,000 acre feet you will see, Mr. Speaker, that whatever we can get out of the Dartmouth site, based on the present usability of 700,000 acre feet, is a real advantage to South Australia.

Yet, although the Leader, the member for Glenelg, and the Deputy Leader know all these things, as do all other Opposition members, today they are using this forum to gain what they think is a temporary political advantage and, Mr. Speaker, in order to do that and to discredit the Government they are prepared to deny the growers of fruit on the Murray River the advantages available to them from the extra water, and are prepared to deny the metropolitan area the right to the development that it must have for this State to progress. As the Minister of Works said earlier, the whole purpose of building a dam on the river was to get additional water for this State. If there is an alternative (and there seems to be one) that can give us not

only what Chowilla can give us but more (indeed, an extra 250,000 acre feet in addition to the net water gain for divertible purposes), then why should we not take advantage of this situation? It was said that the Premier had sold South Australia down the drain.

Mr. Virgo: Has he ever!

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Why should he? What interest has the Premier in selling South Australia down the drain? For what reason?

Mr. Virgo: He hasn't the strength to stand up to the other Premiers.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Of course the Premier does not want to sell South Australia down the drain and, of course, he is not selling it down the drain. First, the Premier is a South Australian and has no interests anywhere else. Secondly, his political life in South Australia depends on doing the right thing for this State and on nothing else. Why should he want to sell the State down the drain? The question answers itself. The postulation is ridiculous and stupid and cannot stand up even under a close examination. On the contrary, the Premier has shown today that he is prepared to face the political consequences in order to secure advantages of extra water to South Australia. It may take a little time for the facts of this case to percolate out to the public at large. Members of the public may take a little convincing; indeed, I took some time to absorb the facts and to be convinced. The Premier said today that the Engineer-in-Chief was present at two long night Cabinet sittings at which he was closely questioned by Cabinet on this matter. Indeed, we were not kindly disposed at the outset, because we were of the same mind about Chowilla as that of the Opposition and of many people of the State. But the facts will get through to the people of South Australia, and when they do the political tide that the Opposition is trying to ride today will turn and will drown Opposition members in the process.

Mr. McANANEY (Stirling): I do not intend to go back over what people have said about this matter during the last year or two: what we have to deal with this evening are the facts that have been presented to us more recently. We know the Leader of the Opposition, when he was Premier, went to another State and said that he would be prepared to concede Chowilla provided that a certain quantity of water was obtained.

Mr. Corcoran: That statement is wrong.

Mr. McANANEY: We know about the letter which was written to the Commonwealth Government and which was produced today. We must analyse the facts. I have lived for most of my life in the Murray River area and have seen what has happened there over the years. Our problem is concerned not with the years when there is plenty of water about and when Chowilla would be filled but with the years such as 1967, when Lake Alexandrina dropped by from 2ft. 6in. to 3ft. and when irrigation there had to be stopped. We must base our calculations on what is available in a dry year, and we must assess what licences we can issue for pumping water out of the Murray and what water we can transfer to Adelaide in a dry year. In a wet year we will always have plenty of water. Figures have been produced to show that at Dartmouth, where the water will be deep, we can store water for some time with very little evaporation.

Immense evaporation would take place at Chowilla. In Lake Alexandrina the evaporation in January in a hot summer is as much as 9in. to 1ft. We have to base all our calculations on how South Australia can cope in a dry year. The River Murray Waters Agreement deals only with the quota for South Australia: it does not guarantee a percentage of the total amount of water coming down. We have a quota in a dry year, and if that amount is not available we do not get that quota. If it can be proved that water can be stored at Dartmouth with little evaporation so that we can get this increased guarantee of water (and it is an increased guarantee) over and above what we could get out of Chowilla in a dry year, then I say it is in the interests of this State that we change our minds on this matter, in the light of the statistics that have been put before us.

There are two ways in which we can be reformers and so-called modern people. It is all very well to introduce increased social services, but at the same time we have to be up to date with our thinking on developmental matters. This is where I think the Liberals come out better than do the Labor People.

Mr. Virgo: You are one of those people who could crawl under a snake.

Mr. McANANEY: You, Mr. Speaker, will rule interjections out of order. However, if the Opposition comes up with something reasonably intelligent or something that answers any point that I am making, then I will consider

replying. I emphasize that up to two or three days ago I thought that Chowilla was the only answer.

Mr. Virgo: They got your arm right up your back.

Mr. McANANEY: Before I had read the report on this matter and realized all the implications, I had already started speaking in my district in the same way as I am speaking now. The present proposal is to the advantage of the people of South Australia. If we can get this guaranteed extra quota in a dry year, that is what is most important.

Mrs. Byrne: What is the use of it if there is no water in the dam?

Mr. McANANEY: The member for Barossa has come in at the right time, as usual. If we had had Chowilla and a period of dry years such as occurred between 1937 and 1945, it would have been empty as a result of the small amount of water flowing into it and the excess evaporation. We know the statistics regarding the flow of the river and the state of the river during those years. Those figures were bad. In the last 10 years we have had dry spells during which Chowilla would probably have been of little use to us.

Mr. Virgo: What about the position at Goolwa?

Mr. McANANEY: Members opposite are at it again in respect of the flow over the Goolwa barrages in a dry year. Last year, a dry year, no flow went over those barrages other than those caused by the north wind. In a wet year, if Chowilla was full, water would still be going to waste at Goolwa.

The problem that even the Victorians have to face is that we cannot increase our irrigation areas to match the volume of water available in an average or above-average year. We cannot rely on that quantity of water every year. However, perhaps Chowilla will be built later to catch this excess water. We are trying to put forward a case for a dry year, in which South Australia must have sufficient water. Nobody can increase his industrial production beyond what can be served by water available in the driest year; otherwise, he will be in trouble, as they were in Tasmania this year when they had to ration power because they did not have sufficient water available as it was a dry year. I am still a Chowilla man but should like to see both Chowilla and Dartmouth built. However, we must be realistic and approach the problem from the point of view of how much water is available in a dry year and which dam will give us more water. When he was Premier, the

Leader of the Opposition referred the problems of evaporation rates and the availability of water to the experts. Now those experts say there is more water available in a dry year at Dartmouth, and the Leader says, "I do not believe these experts because somebody has told them to bring up a report like this." I have said in this House that with either the 1,250,000 acre feet at Chowilla or the 1,500,000 acre feet at Dartmouth we shall reach the stage when we shall have to overcome the evaporation loss of 600,000 acre feet in the lakes. Possibly, Lake Albert will have to be drained just to stop evaporation, because water will be so precious. As the demand for produce develops in Adelaide, parts of Lake Alexandrina will have to be drained (I have said this for the last five years) with this limited amount of water.

Mr. Corcoran: You have changed your mind on this.

Mr. McANANEY: No. At Wellington they are draining the swamps to provide water for that area; and there will be some to spare. We have to cope with the problem in a dry year, and Dartmouth will give us this additional guarantee of water in a dry year. Although I still believe in Chowilla, which must be built, I should like to see both dams built simultaneously. Why not? I have been in Tasmania during the last fortnight, and saw the new Strathgordon dam that 330,000 Tasmanians are building. It will be $6\frac{1}{2}$ times the size of Sydney Harbour and will cost \$217,000,000. The Commonwealth Government has given Tasmania \$5,000,000 to build a road into that almost inaccessible country, and it will also give \$40,000,000 as bridging finance to build this dam. Just imagine the courage of 330,000 people who would enter into a commitment such as this. It would be quite within the financial capacity of the three most prosperous States in the Commonwealth (at least South Australia used to be one of the three most prosperous States until it had a Labor Government for three years) to spend \$130,000,000 to have both the Chowilla and the Dartmouth dams; that could be done and I believe it should be done. However, at present we must be statesmen. Perhaps the Premier realizes that what he proposes will not be politically popular in the short term, but members of his Party, with him, look to the future and have the welfare of South Australia uppermost in their minds.

I believe we have enough evidence before us to show clearly that in a dry year we must

have the guarantee that we can get with Dartmouth. However, according to statistics over the last 50 years; we would not get sufficient water from Chowilla in a dry period. Members opposite should grow up, accept the advice of the experts and not merely advocate something that may be popular. I still believe in Chowilla but I think, to protect South Australia in dry years, I must accept the policy adopted by our young, statesmanlike Premier. I am proud to stand behind him and to support him wholeheartedly, believing that he will make South Australia once again the State with the highest level of employment growth and with the least unemployment, and that he will return it to the position in which it was during my first three years of Parliament from 1962 to 1965. I support the Premier.

Mr. ARNOLD (Chaffey): Some members opposite seem to be losing sight of just what was the original purpose of Chowilla. The member for Edwardstown (Mr. Virgo) said that at all their meetings the growers of the Murray areas had re-endorsed their support for Chowilla, seeing the vital need for it in the guarantee it would give them of the water they needed.

Mr. Broomhill: On their doorstep.

Mr. ARNOLD: Another important fact that makes Chowilla appealing to people in the Upper Murray is the boost it would give to the tourist industry in places such as Renmark, Berri, and Loxton. However, when considering irrigation, we must look at which scheme will supply the most water. Either we accept the technical committee's report or we brush it off as a fabrication. The only ground on which an alternative to Chowilla such as Dartmouth could possibly be accepted is that it would provide greater benefits than Chowilla. The benefits to be obtained will enable South Australia to expand. On present information before us, it appears that Chowilla will guarantee us our present water entitlement. Through negotiations, this entitlement could possibly be increased to 1,500,000 acre feet, an increase of 250,000 acre feet. As an example of what 250,000 acre feet of usable water represents, it would mean that another five Renmark Irrigation Trust schemes could be carried out. If the total increase were put into one project, that is the equivalent of what it would amount to for South Australia. However, if the Chowilla dam is built and we do not increase the quantity of usable water in South Australia what would be the position? We know that we will be faced with a continuing increase in industrial activity in the metropolitan area and in the rest of the State.

Mr. Casey: We must provide water for that.

Mr. ARNOLD: I agree with that 100 per cent, but irrigation will be the first thing to be curtailed: it will not be industrial development or the growth of the metropolitan area. The growers along the Murray River will be the first to be hit by any restriction in the quantity of water. It is vital that an increased quantity of water be made available to the growers along the Murray River. If it can be assured beyond any shadow of doubt that an additional 250,000 acre feet of usable water will be available to South Australia under this alternative scheme, the Government would be irresponsible if it turned it down.

Mr. Virgo: That is not what you said on October 2.

Mr. ARNOLD: This report was not available then: it is dated January, 1969. I have always been, and still am, an ardent supporter of the Chowilla project, and I truly agree with the member for Stirling (Mr. McAnaney) that the ultimate would be to see both projects being built simultaneously.

Mr. Virgo: You want it both ways.

Mr. ARNOLD: The honourable member probably does not realize the importance of water to South Australia. I myself divert about 200 acre feet of water a year, which is probably considerably more than the quantity the honourable member diverts. I realize what a reduction in the quantity of water would mean to my property and to other properties along the river. If we do not get an increased allocation of water, the divertees will be the first to experience restrictions: it will not be people in the metropolitan area. Last year about 79 per cent of the water supplied to the metropolitan area came from the Murray River, and the future requirements of the metropolitan area, Whyalla and other industrial centres will undoubtedly be met. If there is industrial expansion in another place, water will undoubtedly be supplied to it at the expense of irrigators.

South Australia is undoubtedly the State that is most mindful of the need for water conservation; this has been borne out by the water conservation that has been carried out in the Adelaide Hills. Hardly a drop of water that falls on our ranges goes to waste. It is our responsibility to see that the maximum quantity of usable water is made available to South Australia. I live in the area where the Chowilla dam is to be built and, if it is not built, it will be a considerable loss to that district. I have looked forward to the building of this dam for a long time. Because I live

in the area it is probably more important to me than it is to many other members here. As the member for Stirling said, there is an alternative, and that is that they be built at the same time.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Leader of the Opposition): We have listened to a most extraordinary debate. Every member who has spoken, and there have been few who have not, has always previously accepted the advice given to this Government and to the previous Government and the Government before that, that Chowilla was our best guarantee of water, particularly in a dry year. We knew that the normal flow of the Murray River in South Australia had been committed and we were faced with the fact that in dry years we could have restrictions that would endanger permanent plantings and could endanger industrial expansion. There was one satisfactory means of guaranteeing the situation and that was to have an enormous fresh-water storage at the head of our section of the river. Then, in order to maintain the flow and quality of water in our area it was a simple matter for the River Murray Commission to release the necessary water to us. That was the agreement we obtained.

The assumption was made that the up-river States, Chowilla having filled during flood years, would be able to use the water that otherwise they would have put down to us, and that assumption was accepted and is basically part of the agreement with all the other States involved. That agreement was passed unanimously by all Parliaments. Every member of this Parliament committed himself to that proposition and Government members did so in no uncertain terms. They made it clear to the people of this State that that was what they stood by, and that there was no conceivable alternative that could give us the same guarantees. They jeered at any suggestion that South Australia could be given equivalent guarantees to the benefits of Chowilla by some storage many water weeks away from this State, a storage above the Hume that rarely fills. In the last few weeks we have seen an extraordinary *volte face* by this Government. From all the things it had said previously under its former and present leadership they have resiled, and they now seek to tell us that the basis of their doing so is that they can assure South Australia, because of the technical report, of more water in the way they intend to proceed than

if we had proceeded with the Chowilla dam and had a fresh-water storage on our section of the river.

When the assumptions that this Government made after reading the technical committee's report were questioned here, what did we get from the Premier and his Ministers? The Premier could do nothing to reply to the question that we asked about the basis on which the technical report had been delivered and the assumptions that the committee had made. He made allegations that South Australia would get a better yield from the alternative proposal but could point to no section of the report which would justify that statement. There is nothing in the technical report which shows that South Australia receives water out of the Dartmouth storage beyond what it would receive from Chowilla. There is nothing in the published reports showing that there has been any comparison of the total yield to South Australia with that of alternative propositions. When honourable members opposite have been asked to show where the technical report suggests that we will get an added yield they cannot show it. They are not able to point to a sentence in the report that will justify a statement of that kind.

We questioned the Premier about the assumption which is now being made in the studies that the technical committee undertook concerning the necessity of a flow of 900 cusecs at Mildura. The Minister of Works said, "Well, it's true that these studies were undertaken in the time of the Labor Government." We could not prevent the River Murray Commission from examining the whole flow of the river, including the possibility of flow at Mildura, but that did not mean to say that at any stage of the proceedings we accepted the necessity of going back on the original arrangement concerning the quality of water at Mildura. What is the justification for the demand of a continued flow of 900 cusecs at Mildura? It is completely contrary to the existing provisions of the agreement. Where is it justified in the technical committee's report? What is the quality of water demanded at Mildura which can require this flow? There is nothing in the report to justify it, and we are not told, despite our continued questioning, why the Government does not know these things. What is the quality of water demanded at Mildura? When we have pointed out that people are not entitled to that flow at Mildura under the existing agreement, the Treasurer says, "The reason that we had to put in for

900 cusecs there was that the people of Mildura wouldn't submit to a lesser flow."

What right have they to make any such demand? The agreement states that they are not entitled to any flow, and that agreement is signed by their own Parliament. Why are they entitled to a flow and we are not? Then, we want to know where it is shown in these reports what the yield is to South Australia, but it is not shown. There is no study to maximize the yield to South Australia. The whole tenor of the report has been to maximize the yield to Victoria and New South Wales for irrigation commitments which those States have not controlled, whereas we have controlled ours. How can the Government in these circumstances submit to demands of the up-river States which are not contained in the agreement, when we have an agreement that provides guarantees to us? The Ministers say, "Well, we are accepting the present position of the technical committee's report on the conclusions we draw from it which are not shown in the report. We draw these conclusions, and we will act on them in order to get more water for South Australia." More water when?

What clear guarantee does the report give us of adequate water in a dry year? The storage is at least six weeks away from South Australia in water terms. Indeed, according to engineers experienced in the workings of the Murray River to whom I have spoken, it could well be much longer than that in a dry year. What protection does South Australia get in those circumstances from a mere provision in the agreement that we have a larger water entitlement than previously? The water is not there on our doorstep to provide the guarantee to South Australia of both quantity and quality. There can be not the slightest doubt that Chowilla provides that protection to us. There is no other way of providing that benefit to South Australia and we have that in the agreement.

The Government says, "Oh, well, we cannot enforce the agreement because of the increased cost". But, Sir, as I have pointed out previously, the question of cost has now been disposed of. The alternative to the construction of Chowilla is the recommended storage at Dartmouth which, at the economic level recommended by the committee, will require an expenditure of \$57,000,000.

Mr. Virgo: And that is only an estimate.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Yes. In addition \$7,000,000 is required for the Lake Victoria alterations, thus taking the cost up to

\$64,000,000. The sum required to complete Chowilla, in the modified version, is \$62,000,000.

Mr. Hudson: Actually, it is \$56,000,000.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: We have already spent the \$6,000,000; I am talking about the tender that we got previously and the proposed reduction as a result of the removal of the lock. In these circumstances the difference in the cost is not something that is going to be held against us in an arbitration. The question is whether this thing should go forward. There was no question that the other States were prepared to look to an escalation of the cost of Chowilla at \$43,000,000 when the tenders were called, and how in those circumstances can it be said that they can hold the cost against us if they are prepared to spend \$57,000,000 plus \$7,000,000 at Dartmouth? Dartmouth is not mentioned in this agreement. If, then, there is no hindrance to them in the enforcement of the agreement before an arbitrator, what are the other things that they held up against us? It was the question of salinity arising from Chowilla. The Government has been forced to admit that the technical committee's report shows that in regard to salinity there are advantages in the building of Chowilla. How the member for Chaffey can get up and support the building of Dartmouth, given the graphs of the increasing salinity from Dartmouth as compared with Chowilla in our section of the river, beggars the imagination. Will he really tell his constituents that he is prepared to go for a proposition which will run into over 100 p.p.m. extra in salinity in his section of the river at the peak irrigation period? That is what he is voting for.

The Government has made assumptions itself from this technical committee's report which are not justified. When we have questioned these assumptions, we have had from the Treasurer certain statements that other things are known to them that are not contained in the technical committee's report and that we ought to take cognizance of that. Well, we are not prepared to do that. We are not prepared to rely on some hearsay which is related at a late stage of a debate in this House by a Minister.

Mr. Virgo: You can't trust them.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: They have gone back on their word so much recently that it is difficult to place any reliance on what they say. In these circumstances, South Australia is entitled to demand this dam. No-one

on this side denies for a moment that there would be more water in the Murray system as a result of building the Dartmouth dam than there otherwise would be. If the irrigators up river in Victoria and New South Wales want the benefits of a dam of that kind, I see no reason why we, as a party to the River Murray Waters Agreement, should not contend that Chowilla be a future storage on the Murray River as a sensible proposition. Why in those circumstances should we give up our guarantee to provide the extra for them when our guarantee is already in the agreement as a protection given to this State so that we could be certain of getting a normal flow in the Murray River in any year?

Mr. Hudson: What is any agreement worth if this one is repudiated?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Exactly. What reliance can we place upon enforcement of the River Murray Waters Agreement if we are to submit to the kind of thing that Sir Henry Bolte has been saying recently, in spite of his signature to this? What sort of guarantee have we about the way Victoria will deal with the River Murray Commission when that commission has no control over the river's tributaries? We know the sort of thing that has been going on in respect of salinity in the Victorian irrigation areas. What protection have the people of this State except the smoothing influence of the Chowilla dam to protect us from the depredations of the irrigation areas of Victoria? What happened previously when, without Chowilla, we were forced to submit to slugs of saline water coming down the river and, after we had protested to Sir Henry Bolte, he said, "Terribly sorry"? What sort of protection was that for the planters on the Murray River?

The Hon. C. D. Hutchens: There was good reason to believe it was deliberate.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: It was said not only from this side of the House: the Treasurer himself said it. I cannot conceive why the Government in present circumstances, taking into full account the technical committee's report that has been placed before us, should submit to the demands of the Minister for National Development as supinely as it has done and give away the guarantees and protections that come from Chowilla which are nowhere matched in relation to the Dartmouth proposals.

Mr. Hudson: I think the Ministers did it over a couple of cups of tea.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I do not know what consultations they had. I only

know what I saw on television afterwards, which was not very impressive. The people of South Australia were given guarantees on these matters by all Parties in South Australia. This matter of protection for the South Australian people should not be a political football. If the Government was prepared to fight for this thing, as it undertook to, and made no bones about it, and if it rattled the sabre and said, "We will fight to get Chowilla", it would have the unanimous support of members on this side. But it has taken out its sword and handed the hilt over to the Minister for National Development: it is now in his hands. South Australia has no protection; there is no fight. This demanding of extra water for South Australia is only something cooked up for the public because the Government knew it could get an undertaking before it made the announcement. This does not amount to anything by way of guaranteed protection for South Australia from having the water there at the head of our section of the river. It is most unfortunate that the Government has done what it has done. South Australia will bitterly rue the day that the Government made this decision. I think South Australians will also, as many are now doing, rue the day that this Government was elected to power and will look forward to an opportunity to replace it at the earliest possible moment.

There being a disturbance in the gallery:

The SPEAKER: Order! I draw the attention of the gallery to the fact that there must be no interruption or applause during a debate in this House.

The House divided on the motion:

Ayes (19).—Messrs. Broomhill and Burdon, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Casey, Clark, Corcoran, Dunstan (teller), Hudson, Hughes, Hurst, Hutchens, Jennings, Langley, Lawn, Loveday, McKee, Riches, Ryan, and Virgo.

Noes (19).—Messrs. Allen, Arnold, Brookman, Coumbe, Edwards, Evans, Ferguson, Freebairn, Giles, Hall (teller), McAnaney, Millhouse, Nankivell, Pearson, and Rodda, Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Teusner, Venning, and Wardle.

The SPEAKER: There are 19 Ayes and 19 Noes. There being an equality of votes and therefore a necessity for me to give a casting vote, I cast my vote for the Noes and the motion passes in the negative.

Motion thus negatived.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORTS

The SPEAKER laid on the table the following reports by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence:

Beaumont, Springfield and Glen Osmond Areas High Level Trunk Water Main, Murray Bridge Sewerage System.

Ordered that reports be printed.

MENTAL HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. R. S. HALL (Premier): I move: *That this Bill be now read a second time.*

When introducing the Revenue Budget for 1968-69 the Government indicated that it proposed to bring into effect charges for treatment and services rendered in mental hospitals. Accordingly, this Bill is being introduced. Its purpose is to amend the Mental Health Act to confer a regulation-making power for the fixation of charges for accommodation and maintenance provided or for treatment or services rendered at institutions. Fees had been charged on account of patients in mental hospitals prior to 1949. In that year the Commonwealth Government introduced a scheme of maintenance grants which provided for the payment to the States of small sums for each patient a day on condition that the States did not levy charges on patients. The grant to South Australia was 10d. for each patient a day. In 1955 the Commonwealth replaced that scheme with another which provided instead for assistance towards capital projects in mental hospitals on the basis of \$1 for each \$2 found by the State. That scheme will remain in effect under present legislation until June, 1970.

The Australian community is generally of the view that there should now be no distinction between mental and physical illness, and that therefore the normal Commonwealth provision of pensions and support of hospital insurance should be available to patients in mental institutions as well as to patients in general hospitals and nursing homes. The Government holds this view strongly and I believe that all other State Governments feel equally strongly about it. By direct approach from Premiers to the Prime Minister, and through annual meetings of Ministers of Health, the case has been put to the Commonwealth many times that full social services and hospital and medical benefits should be available to patients of the mental health services, and that it

would be practicable to achieve this aim by a succession of steps designed to spread the impact on the Commonwealth Budget.

I am pleased to be able to say that the Commonwealth has recently adopted a more liberal approach in the payment of age and invalid pensions to certain patients in mental institutions. However, on the matter of hospital benefits, the Commonwealth has remained unresponsive up to date. I think that there is an unanswerable case for the gradual introduction of a scheme of hospital benefits for patients in mental institutions and it may be expected that all States will continue to press the Commonwealth to take a modern and realistic approach to the problem. The Government believes that, despite the absence of hospital benefits, a procedure of moderate hospital charges should be introduced and that payment should be made by or on account of those mental hospital patients who are able to afford the whole or part of such charges.

It is intended that the maximum fee for inpatients should be \$3.50 a day (or \$24.50 a week). This would be about half of the average daily cost of accommodating and treating a patient at Glenside, the least costly of our mental hospitals. Whereas the average daily cost at Glenside this year is estimated to be about \$7.00, it will be about \$8.00 at Hillcrest and probably about \$15.00 at Enfield. I stress that the proposed charge of \$3.50 a day will be the maximum. The Government has had regard to the facts that hospital benefits are not available and that the average length of stay in a mental hospital is greater than in a general hospital.

It is realized that many patients will not be able to afford the maximum charge and that some will not be able to afford anything. I assure the House that the scheme will be administered with discretion and sympathy; that the reasonable needs of the patient and his or her dependants will be considered; and that a charge will not be made if it would cause

hardship. It is intended that each case be considered individually; that a careful assessment be made of the amount which it would be reasonable to charge in each case; and that this be the amount actually billed. This approach would be more convenient for the patient himself and also from the point of view of administration, rather than making the full charge initially with subsequent remissions being necessary.

Clause 2 amends section 4 of the principal Act by bringing the definition of "institution" up to date in the light of the development and the modern extended range of services being rendered by the mental health services. Clause 3 repeals section 166 of the principal Act which contains out-of-date provisions relating to the fixing and recovery of fees for the maintenance and treatment of patients, and in its place enacts a new section which confers on the Governor power to make regulations prescribing fixed or periodic amounts to be paid for accommodation and maintenance provided or for treatment or services rendered at any institution.

The regulations may confer on the Director or a person authorized by him power, from time to time to reduce, or remit any part of any amount so prescribed, or vary any reduction or remission, in the light of the financial position or of any change in the financial position of the person by whom the amount is payable, and may provide for the recovery of funeral and other expenses incurred by the Crown in respect of any person who dies in an institution. Subsection (2) of new section 166 provides that any amount charged to any person and calculated in accordance with the regulations shall be a debt due to the Crown and recoverable accordingly.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8.55 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, February 5, at 2 p.m.