

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Thursday, July 29, 1954.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir Walter Duncan) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.**HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION AND STAFFING.**

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Referring to the question I asked on Tuesday last relative to hospital accommodation and staffing, has the Chief Secretary given further consideration to this matter?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—I have prepared a statement and I ask permission and indulgence of the House to submit it to members.

Leave granted.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—The article referred to by Mr. Condon was what I understand to be a feature article written by Mr. Stewart Cockburn, a press writer recently returned from Canberra. The story as presented is unfortunate in that it was based upon anonymous information of a sectional character without any attempt to present the true nature of the problem. In an early interview granted Mr. Cockburn upon his return to Adelaide, I volunteered an open door to provide him with factual information at any time. Apparently factual information from responsible authorities was not to be the theme of the article which was designed to create a controversy or a sensation. This was to be provided by solicited comment from people who choose to remain anonymous or to speak under a *nom de plume*. Hence we get such statements as "I'd like to see every patient evacuated and an atom exploded in the centre of the place." Could anyone imagine a more irresponsible statement?

Unfortunately the effect of such statements creates additional difficulties for the hospital authorities who have given invaluable service to the community. The article was unfortunate in that it was produced at a time when negotiations were in an advanced stage with private architects using interstate engineers and architects' assistance for the completion of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The criticism offered was not helpful towards bringing those negotiations to a successful conclusion. I repeat that these negotiations were entered into before the publication of the article by Mr. Cockburn.

Furthermore the Royal Adelaide Hospital is a training hospital catering for a medical

school enjoying a high reputation in Empire medical circles. It was an injustice to those who contribute on a very high plane to the teaching of the medical profession which is not restricted to the limits of South Australian students. This State provides a medical school for Western Australian students and to-day 50 students using the Royal Adelaide Hospital are from Western Australia or beyond the boundaries of South Australia. It was not helpful in maintaining public confidence in an institution which still undertakes the treatment of patients without charge. It could be fairly assumed that the Royal Adelaide Hospital, being one of the few, if any, remaining hospitals in Australia not levying charges against the in-patients, would be patronized to the limit of capacity. Consideration was apparently not given to the damaging influence upon the recruitment of trainees to work the hospital.

All hospitals to-day are having extreme difficulty in securing adequate staff but I cannot imagine anything which would be less helpful in securing more staff than this article. Whatever difficulties have been experienced in getting more nurses it is going to be much harder to provide these services in the future. There has never been any denial of the condition of overcrowding in the Royal Adelaide Hospital or any other of our hospitals. Annual reports submitted to Parliament and evidence before the Public Works Committee on the projects submitted for report have emphasised the urgent need existing. I myself have made public pronouncements not only on hospital needs but also on the serious problem of staffing the existing institutions which to-day are short staffed to the extent of approximately 50 trained staff and 200 trainees. This condition prevails at a time when the percentage of girls taking up nursing in relation to the female pool of labour available is higher than ever before. There has not been any let up so far as I as Minister of Health am concerned. Neither has there been lack of planning or lack of funds provided to execute the work. The Architect-in-Chief's Department has been working draftsmen overtime, and additional professional men have been obtained from England in an effort to speed up work, all of which is of an urgent nature.

The facts are that we have been denied so many of the essentials both in manpower and materials to achieve bare necessities. It is easy to look for a scapegoat but I suggest the comments of the President of the S.A. Branch of the B.M.A. were pertinent and relevant and struck the kernel of the whole situation. Dr. I. B. Jose has long been associated with the

work at the Royal Adelaide Hospital as Senior Honorary Surgeon for many years, and is at present Honorary Consultant. He is able to speak with authority. He stated:—

“Unless the whole community works hard you cannot get what you want, and this applies to hospitals. It is obvious that the hospital situation since the war has been inadequate, not only in South Australia, but universally. That is the result of high wages and the unwillingness of people to work long hours. Hospital systems in South Australia want to be implemented in a large way for several reasons, including the large increase in population. The main difficulty to be overcome is the scarcity of material and insufficient money to develop against the high costs. It is not the Government's fault that the Royal Adelaide Hospital is in its present predicament. The position does not mean that we should rest content and leave the hospital situation as it is. It has to be tackled in view of the increased population in the State.”

That is the fundamental truth of the whole situation. We suffered six years of war when all national effort was diverted to winning the war. With this lag already upon us and a rapidly increasing population to provide for, Australia decided on a reduced working week of 40 hours in industry. Time has proved that policy to have been premature and untimely and not in the public interest. With the restricted hours in industry and with many urgent deferred public works associated with housing, schools, sewerage extensions, water conservation and reticulation, hospitals, etc., shortages of materials and manpower were immediately felt.

Necessary architectural and engineering drawings were delayed through lack of professional staff and quantitative surveys. To complete final drawings for the remainder of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is estimated require no less than 18 men for 12 months. In addition to these delays the Government had to provide considerably increased nurses' accommodation at all its institutions to house the increased staff requirements due to the shorter hours. At the Royal Adelaide a building to provide accommodation for 336 nurses had to be built at a cost of one-third of a million pounds. Similarly at Parkside accommodation for 82 nurses has been built. At seven other Government hospitals extra nurses' accommodation had to be provided in a like proportion. In addition to this £1,500,000 has been spent upon the first instalment of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Community hospitals have been assisted by the Government to come into operation where again considerable sums have had to be spent to provide nursing accommodation. The greatest difficulties were experienced in getting steel

supplies and attempts made both in Australia and overseas could not avert serious delays.

With these difficulties associated with the establishment of any major undertaking the Government has never been inactive in using its powers to maintain health services at a high level. It acquired the Northfield Infectious Diseases Hospital and, after converting a number of the blocks to house nursing staff, was able to cater for a long drawn out poliomyelitis epidemic, and make available 130 beds for chronic patients. The Magill wards of the pavilion type were developed to provide for 104 convalescents to relieve the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

I do not propose to delay the Council in any attempt to provide a complete review of things accomplished or contemplated. It is perhaps fitting though that I should correct a statement to the effect that an appointment system should be initiated at the out-patients department of the Royal Adelaide. I have pleasure in advising all those whom it may concern that the appointment system has been in operation during the past two years. In conclusion I wish to express my appreciation to those hundreds of people who have written congratulating me on what I have been able to achieve under difficult circumstances in maintaining South Australia's services on such a high plane.

It is from such encouragement that one feels not only rewarded but inspired in spite of many frustrations to apply one's energies toward the achievement of the best possible hospital service for our State. Towards this end it is hoped that arrangements now concluded with professional services here and interstate will provide the earliest possible contribution to this end. To give the side of the hospitals work which was not mentioned in the article may I quote from just a few of the unsolicited letters (I repeat “unsolicited letters”) of thanks received from grateful patients. These have been selected at random. The first is from a prominent trade union leader, as follows:—

I would like to express to the Board my deep appreciation and thanks for the wonderful services rendered me personally by everybody associated with my recent case at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. To be candid I was a little bit dubious about going to the Royal Adelaide Hospital as I thought that it was expected that such patients should go to a private hospital. My doctor practically insisted upon the Royal Adelaide Hospital treatment, and having complete confidence in your institution I decided to apply for admittance. I conscientiously believe that had I gone anywhere else the position today would have been much more serious than it is.

Dr. — certainly performed an excellent operation. Drs. — are really psychologists as well as medical men. They have a happy knack of instilling confidence in the minds of the patients and that goes a long way towards recovery. I cannot say too much for the attention given by Sisters —. The nursing staff did all that could be humanly expected of anyone. I marvel at the cheerful, efficient services they rendered.

I had an opportunity of getting a patient's viewpoint of the many services rendered by the various sections of your institution. Although I knew that it was good I really did not think that everything could work so smoothly in the interests of the patients. I wish to pay a special compliment to the kitchen staff as the meals were all that could be desired and that is a big factor in helping the patients to get well. In fact, I was greatly impressed with the efficiency of all sections of your institutions. I was surprised to find that there was no charge for the wonderful services rendered. I made enquiries and found that it would not be wise to forward any amount to the Board or to Dr.—. Wishing to demonstrate a practical appreciation for the hospital services, I thought my best method would be to try and make the work of the ward doctors and the nursing staff just a little bit more comfortable. That hard old iron chair that they sit upon to do their clerical work did not appear as comfortable as might be. Therefore I will send along an easy swing-tip padded chair for the use of the doctors and nurses in Leopold ward. It will have a little plate demonstrating that it is just a token of appreciation for very valuable services rendered.

This is rather a difficult letter to write, but I did want the board to know how grateful I am to all those associated with the Royal Adelaide Hospital. I also appreciated the personal visits by members of the Board, the Medical Superintendent, the Lay Superintendent and Matron. It was not only appreciated by myself but was noticed by members of our association. I certainly have not expressed myself in terms that I would like to, but members of the Board will realise just what I am trying to say, and in simple words it is—“Thank you and the members of your staff for the wonderful services rendered to me as a patient in your institution”.

Here is another:—

Having been a patient of the above institution for nearly five months, I wish to express my sincere thanks for the wonderful treatment I received from the doctors (nine mentioned), also other doctors that attended me. The sisters and nurses of Coombe, Victoria, Light and Transfusion Wards, I also wish to express my sincere thanks to. They all certainly saved my life, and I cannot speak highly enough for what they all have done for me. It is wonderful to know that there is such a marvellous institution as the Royal Adelaide Hospital to care for the sick people.

Again:—

At the request of my grandmother, who was a patient in Faith Ward for approximately five

weeks with a fractured thigh, I am writing to thank you and your nursing staff for the wonderful care and attention received by her during that period. Being an old nurse herself she marvelled at the way the sisters and nurses went about their duty and the excellent discipline among them. They were kindness itself, and here sincere thanks to them all. I might add before closing that I was a patient in Flinders Ward last May and June with a coronary occlusion. And thanks again to your treatment I am now back at work (6 months) and feeling very fit. Thanking you once again.

I now turn to a different type of case. This letter reads:—

My husband and I would like to acknowledge our thanks to you and all concerned for the splendid care and attention our son received while a patient in a hospital under your control. He contracted polio a few weeks ago and was cared for with skill and patience in the Northfield Hospital. We would congratulate you on your choice of superintendent, house surgeons, sisters and nurses. Our frequent inquiries were also answered fully and with sympathy by the house doctor or sister and we are deeply grateful. He is now in the convalescent ward and we have confidence that your excellent staff and organization will eventually enable him to be completely cured. We know that any organization takes its character from those who control it and so are grateful that this State has so able a controller.

There are many other such letters in this docket dealing with other hospitals, but I think I have said sufficient to indicate that the work of the hospital has been of a high class. Patients themselves have been prompted by the results of their treatment to send these communications to those in authority. We know full well the high standard of the medical school which that hospital serves. I would wish that the true position could be put before the people rather than it be the subject of such monstrous articles which cannot do any good, neither do they ever give any satisfaction from the sensation they create.

NON-RATABLE GOVERNMENT PROPERTY.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Has the Minister of Local Government a reply to my recent question regarding non-ratable Government property at Port Adelaide?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—I can assure the honourable member that the matter is directly under the consideration of Cabinet, and I will give a further detailed answer next week.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

(Continued from July 28. Page 150.)

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Central No. 1)—In rising to support the motion so ably moved by Mr. Robinson and seconded by Mr. Perry, I might mention that quite recently some very important happenings have occurred in our State, the most memorable being the visit of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh. At present there appears a tendency to Americanize Australia. It may be true that Australia looks to America for assistance and mutual understanding, as the destinies of both countries seem to be linked, but the British Commonwealth of Nations, of which Australia is an important part, must not be disintegrated. The visit of Her Majesty and the Duke of Edinburgh to Australia and to other nations of the British Empire has cemented the British Commonwealth closer together than ever before, as instanced by the expressions of loyalty of the Australian citizens on every occasion possible during the visit. During the Royal visit to South Australia Her Majesty performed the ceremony of opening the South Australian Parliament, this being the very first time in history that this ceremony had been performed by a reigning Monarch. It was an event never to be forgotten by those privileged to be present. I should like to associate myself with the remarks of the previous speakers directed to yourself, Mr. President, the Clerk of Parliaments, Black Rod, and the messengers for the very important part played in the opening of Parliament by Her Majesty.

The third session of the 34th Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor, and I feel sure that we all appreciated his speech. He referred to the Government's policy in improving the State railways by the additional use of diesel electric locomotives and one is led to the belief that these are for use in transporting freight. Consideration should be given by the Government to improving passenger transport as soon as possible. I believe the steam train has now outlived its usefulness for this purpose. Considerable expenditure is involved in the operation of steam trains as high grade coal must be imported from another State at very high cost. The Government should now substitute the diesel electric locomotive for the steam train, similar to those used by the Commonwealth Railways from Port Pirie Junction to Port Augusta.

Such a substitution would result in greater comfort to the passengers, considerably reduce the time of journeys, and also reduce operating costs to a fraction of present-day costs. In the meantime I feel that consideration should be given to the advisability of having express trains run to various destinations rather than have the considerable delays now caused by trains stopping at every station, perhaps where it is unnecessary. For instance, it takes about 35 minutes to travel from Adelaide to Port Adelaide or return. I believe a considerable improvement could be made to the advantage of a large number of travellers on that line if at peak periods in the morning, perhaps once or twice during the day, and again early in the evening an additional express train were run between the timetable now operating. Such a train would be availed of and there would be a considerable saving in travelling time with great benefit to people living in the Port Adelaide area who now catch an ordinary train in getting to or from their homes.

The Hon. N. L. Jude—If we run a through train as suggested, what are we to do with the passengers travelling to intermediate stations—run a special train for them, too?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—I did not suggest that, but indicated the Port Adelaide area as an example to show that it would be a considerable advantage, and would result in encouragement to more people to use the railways rather than other means of transport. I think the cost would be infinitesimal compared with the advantages. It would be folly to suggest the running of express trains to and from each station. I believe my suggestion is worthy of consideration for peak periods. Something similar is done by the tramways. The Tramways Trust has imposed minimum fares to discourage people from travelling to intermediate stopping places on certain trams. I advance this matter for the consideration of the Government, because the proposed electrification of the suburban railway system has evidently been shelved, and the suggestion now is to have diesel locomotion, which I believe would be of considerable advantage to our railway system.

His Excellency mentioned the Government's policy of enlarging and improving hospitals. This afternoon we have had the privilege of hearing a statement by the Chief Secretary in answer to criticisms levelled against hospitalization in this State. It is well known that hospitalization is inadequate for the needs of the growing population, and has been for a considerable time. This position has been

aggravated by the closing of some private hospitals and by staff shortages. Increased subsidies to hospitals of £69,000 in addition to previous grants have been made by the Government in an effort to enlarge buildings and improve equipment. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, when completed, will also give some relief to the present situation. It is an easy matter to criticize, but it is not such an easy matter to be constructive. Had it not been for the devotion to duty of the whole staffs of the hospitals, the position would have been considerably worse, and I cannot express adequately my praise for the doctors, matrons, sisters, nurses and the domestic staffs of hospitals for the wonderful job they have done in the performance of their duties. I feel, as I am sure all members do, that it is not becoming to read the reports in the daily press about the activities of the State Government in relation to hospitalization, because I have nothing but praise for the job it has done. We should all realize the enormity of the job and the period that must elapse before new hospitals and nurses' quarters are completed, and the people who criticize in the press should give fair criticism and set out a fair case for the general public rather than the type of comment that has been made.

The provision of housing is another problem that still remains. It is expected that the Housing Trust will construct 3,550 new homes this financial year, but there are still 7,500 outstanding applications for homes and it will be some time before they are satisfied. A very live controversy is raging at present in regard to the disposal of the cabin homes at Salisbury, and I ask what is going to happen to the occupiers if the proposals are carried out. It is intended that the homes shall be purchased by the local council and demolished, and the land subdivided and sold as building blocks. As we all know there is still an acute shortage of homes.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—How many cabin homes are there at Salisbury?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—I believe approximately 140 or 150.

The Hon. W. W. Robinson—But isn't it intended that they should not be demolished for eight years?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—I understand they will be pulled down within two years. It has been suggested that the rents will be considerably increased, and the council will recoup the whole of the £25,000 it will pay for the purchase of the homes, which is a brilliant speculation on its part.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—Can you tell us the present rentals and the proposed rentals?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—I understand the rents at present are 15s. a week and the suggestion is to raise them to 32s. This is on properties that have a value at the moment of £88. What is going to happen to the occupiers? Will the homes be pulled down around their ears, so to speak, and will they be forced to pitch a tent until they can obtain other accommodation? I urge the Government to purchase these properties on a basis similar to that on which the Gepps Cross Hostel was purchased by the Housing Trust. Negotiations should be entered into between the State and Commonwealth Governments immediately to bring this about, and if the time arrives when they should be demolished, another building project should be entered into and the occupiers of the cabin homes given the opportunity to have properly constructed brick homes.

Last week members of this House had the pleasure of attending the opening of the new power station at Port Augusta, which has considerably increased the activities of the Electricity Trust. This undertaking will be of considerable advantage to the country people, indeed, to the whole of the State, along with such undertakings as Leigh Creek, Radium Hill, afforestation, timber mills, Harbors Board and other Government undertakings. They are all typical examples of nationalization supported by members of the Labor Party. When visiting the north a little time ago I was amazed to see the wonderful progress that has been made at Leigh Creek. It is now a township with housing and everything that could be wished for.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—Including reasonable drinking hours.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—Yes, we can include that too. That is under the control of the State Government and will undoubtedly remain so, and is a credit to the State. It is stated that it is intended to set up a metropolitan transport council to co-ordinate various forms of public transport serving the metropolitan area. This will undoubtedly include our tramways system. Recently, the Tramways Trust announced its intention of spending £6,000,000 over a period of 10 years for the purchase of diesel engine buses to replace electric trams, the proposal being to completely eliminate all trams and to replace them with buses. I view this proposal with some alarm because it will mean the total loss of all present assets of the trust. The normal life of these buses will be about 10 years compared

with about 30 years for a tramcar. Additional expenditure will be incurred in the maintenance of roads, and practically double the number of buses will be required to carry a similar number of passengers. This method of transport has been tried in other States; Melbourne gives an example of what can happen when trams are eliminated and replaced by buses. It was tried in Melbourne and found wanting, and in 1949 the Melbourne Tramways Board submitted a report to the Victorian Government recommending the replacement of buses by a modern electric tramcar fleet.

The Hon. N. L. Jude—Replacing the cable trams?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—The buses replaced the cable trams because the opinion at that time was that the buses were more economical and convenient and capable of handling greater numbers of the travelling public than the trams but in 1949 the Tramways Board recommended the scrapping of the buses and a return to a modern tramcar system.

The Hon. N. L. Jude—Does the honourable member know of any other examples?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—We can go outside the Commonwealth altogether. How many cities of this world are served wholly by buses?

The Hon. N. L. Jude—London.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—London and New York—two only, but even those bus services are within a confined area. Trams have not been eliminated in England and they are far from being discarded in America and have not been superseded in any other country, yet in this State an expenditure of £6,000,000 over a 10-year period is advocated with a view to eliminating trams. The reason for the reversion to trams in Melbourne was that they are more economical than diesel buses. If buses are more economical than tramcars why has not the trust extended the use of trolley buses? All we know is that the whole of the present assets of the trust are to be wiped out, because the only assets we will have in the future will be the diesel buses in operation and they have a comparatively short life.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—Who is going to find the money?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—Undoubtedly the Government will be asked to provide the £6,000,000, but before the trust is allowed to proceed any further with this idea I suggest that a full inquiry should be made into the proposal. I reiterate my previous suggestion that the Government should take over control of the trust per medium of a Ministry of Transport. Undoubtedly we will be asked to vote—

probably on the Estimates—a very considerable sum to the trust to carry out this scheme. The Government's present suggestion is that a sort of advisory body should be set up to co-ordinate the whole of our transport system, but I feel that instead of this the Government should assume the responsibility by establishing a Ministry of Transport. By doing this we would obtain a system superior to that now in operation and we would not have to face the immense and continuous losses which we are now repeatedly called upon to meet.

His Excellency mentioned the continued prosperity of the State, pointing out that 29,000,000 bushels of wheat were produced last year at an average of 18 bushels to the acre. It appears, however, that there may be some difficulty in disposing of our wheat as the chairman of the Australian Wheat Board, Sir John Teasdale, sounded a very cautious note in a statement attributed to him in the *Advertiser* of July 28. In some quarters curtailment of acreage has been suggested, but I cannot subscribe to that policy as I feel it is foolhardy. Mr. Edmonds, too, was rather pessimistic regarding our future prosperity and he advanced the opinion that we should try to dispose of some of our surplus by endeavouring to relieve the acute food shortage in countries where there are millions of starving people. I fully endorse his remarks, as conditions in neighboring Asian countries are such that they are simply breeding grounds for Communism. Consequently, I feel that Mr. Edmonds' suggestion is worthy of very serious attention. The Labor Party, through the Federal Parliament, has previously advocated a similar policy and although, as the honourable member pointed out yesterday, we may not be able to demand world parity prices for our wheat in these markets, it would return far greater dividends than merely holding enormous stocks in our own country.

Despite the abundance of wheat the flour milling industry is in very straitened circumstances, as Mr. Condon has pointed out vividly on several occasions. Production costs in this industry are very low. Mr. Condon yesterday referred to the remarks of a conciliation commissioner who was dealing with this industry, and I think they are worthy of quoting at greater length. He said:—

The gristing cost per ton of flour is very small compared with costs of production in other industries. Selling costs and travelling expenses have been greatly reduced since the control of the industry's production has been vested in the Australian Wheat Board. Depreciation of plant and machinery is low. I

would venture to say that the cost of production in this industry is less than in any other manufacturing industry. For example, mills producing 1 to 1½ tons of flour per hour employ only three men on the afternoon and night shifts; 2 to 2½ tons per hour, four men; 3 to 3½ tons per hour, five men; 4 to 4½ tons per hour, six men; 5 to 6 tons per hour, eight to 10 men.

That commissioner, by virtue of his intimate knowledge of the industry, must have been well qualified to pass judgment. The advent of the 40-hour week cannot be blamed for the loss of our overseas trade in this industry. There must be other causes, and I believe that the main one is that manufactures are still attempting to maintain too high a level of profit. Mr. Edmonds said that no solution of the milling industry's problems had been put forward.

The Hon. E. H. Edmonds—I do not know of anyone who has suggested a remedy.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—The solution has been advanced by Mr. Condon, namely, that a subsidy be given to the industry to enable it to compete with other countries and recapture the trade already lost.

The Hon. E. H. Edmonds—That does not explain why a grant should be necessary.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—I think we have adequate proof that costs of production in this industry are very low, so we must look elsewhere for the cause.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—Why are subsidies given to other industries?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—To enable them to produce their goods on a comparable basis with their competitors. The same is being advanced for our wine industry at present because our overseas markets have been largely lost.

All our ills are laid at the door of the 40-hour week, but if one peruses from day to day the financial pages of the press it will be seen that despite the calamity howl about the 40-hour week and its effects upon industry production has increased and profit margins have advanced. Recently, I was called to Sydney to attend to some industrial matters and while there read the local papers. It is interesting to quote from what appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. One firm in 12 months' trading increased its profit by 172 per cent, and this despite the 40-hour week operating in that industry and the so-called high wages paid to its employees. I refer to the firm of Jantzen (Australia) Ltd. It made a net profit for the year ended March

31 of £55,340 compared with £20,908 for the previous year, an increase of 172 per cent. That is not an isolated case.

The Hon. Sir Wallace Sandford—If not, why not quote some more?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—I could. According to the press statement that profit remained after providing £35,500 (1952-53—£17,500) for tax. Steady 9 per cent ordinary dividend with the 9 per cent and 5 per cent preference dividends absorbed £16,400. Volume of sales rose 18 per cent and sales value rose 9 per cent to a record £1,360,379. However, all we have to do is look at the financial page of the *Advertiser* from day to day and we see this kind of thing reported. I am not fooled by the continual cry that all our ills are due to the 40-hour week and to the enormous amount of wages paid; we have to look at other things. Under the 40-hour week and our wage system production has increased, and I defy contradiction of that because statistics prove it. Profits have increased in most instances. I know that perhaps some firms have lost capital, but some have always lost capital and finally have gone to the wall. That will occur at any time. The most significant point is that the vast majority are still improving their position under present conditions.

There has been a lengthy agitation in the Commonwealth Arbitration Court on the margins question and we know the court refused an increase to tradesmen, despite that it was warranted; but in Queensland the Industrial Tribunal there, after a complete inquiry, increased the margins for skilled tradesmen from the lowest to the highest. Evidence was given to the tribunal that the metal industry, because of its enormous profits, could well afford to carry the increased margins. Yesterday, one honourable member said that the present trouble in the flour milling business was due to labour costs and that this had placed the industry in a precarious position. On the evidence placed before us this afternoon by the conciliation commissioner to whom I referred we cannot blame labour costs. One reason for our present position is that previous importers of Australian flour are now producing some of their own and therefore no longer require supplies from us. Serious consideration should be given to the solution put forward by Mr. Condon whereby this industry could be placed on a sound footing by the use of surplus wheat which would only be wasted if left in the stacks, but could be used in producing a very important food and enable

the industry to again capture world markets. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Midland)—I support the remarks of honourable members who have spoken regarding the great success of the Royal Visit to South Australia and agree with their remarks concerning those responsible for the detailed arrangements. I congratulate Sir Lyell McEwin and Lady McEwin on the honour bestowed upon them. It is pleasing to all of us to know that it has been so happily received everywhere. I am also pleased with the honour conferred upon Mr. Condon, and hope he will be long spared to enjoy it. Mr. Jude is to be complimented upon his selection as a Minister. Early this week I had the pleasure of introducing to him a deputation, the members of which were very pleased with the reception they received and the obvious ability the Minister showed. I also congratulate the two new Ministers appointed to the House of Assembly. I have known Mr. Baden Pattinson for many years and I feel that he will prove a great success in his capacity as Minister of Education. I also feel confident that Mr. Christian will bring a great deal of vigour to the important portfolio of Minister of Agriculture.

Reference was made in the Governor's speech to the very prosperous position of South Australia and of the very satisfactory progress made by many of our Government enterprises. Among them I am pleased to notice that the Minlaton high school building has made greater progress than most of us thought possible a few months ago, so much so that although the Architect-in-Chief at one time estimated that it would not be available for occupation until March or April next year it has now been possible to announce that the official opening will take place on November 12 next, the ceremony to be performed by His Excellency the Governor. I understand that the school will be completed earlier than that and that it may be occupied when the school opens after the second term vacation. That is evidence of the progress made in regard to many of our important activities.

Very good progress has already been made in the water scheme to supply Yorke Peninsula. To June 30, 1954, the expenditure on the Bundaleer-Yorke Peninsula scheme amounted to £645,000 and it is intended that the expenditure for the current financial year will be more than £1,000,000. The manufacturing of the necessary pipes has proceeded at an accelerated rate and during the last two months £100,000 has been paid the contractors for the supply of pipes. The construction work

from Yacka is progressing very well and is up to schedule and already nearly eight miles of pipes have been laid. One section of 4½ miles is already in use, replacing smaller mains. A camp is being constructed at Bute to accommodate about 100 men and this work is almost completed, and a second pipe-laying organization will be operating in that area by the end of October. The section of main from Paskeville towards Clinton will be replaced this year by larger pipes which will mean that those connected with this scheme will not have to face shortage difficulties as previously. I mention these matters because they indicate that we have apparently got over the majority of the difficulties from which we suffered after World War II and that we are now able to obtain money and materials to make some real progress and catch up with some of the lag.

I am able to speak accurately on the position as it relates to those who get their incomes mainly from the growing of wheat and barley. I do not propose to deal with the question of wheat marketing because that has been canvassed during the last couple of days and knowledge on it is fairly complete, but it is obvious that there will be a considerable deduction in farmers' incomes from that source. At the beginning of this year there was a record barley harvest for this State, and I believe that the Barley Board handled for South Australia and Victoria a total of 35,000,000 bushels—a record intake. Early this year the board realized that the market was falling and so set out on what I think was the correct course with the idea of disposing of its stocks as quickly as possible. The Barley Board has sold practically the whole of its exportable stocks, and expects long before the new season's crop is available to have the sidings cleared. All that will be left is the requirements of the local maltsters, who need sufficient to carry them on until February or March, when the new crop is available. The whole crop has been disposed of at a satisfactory price, a first advance of 6s. a bushel having been paid plus 9d. on certain barley of superior quality. No announcement has been made about the payment of a second advance and, although I have no information on that matter, my view is that one will be made in the not too distant future and the second advance as soon as credit funds are available for that purpose. I commend the board for the intelligent way in which it has approached the difficulties before it and has met the market, and also for

the fact that it has held up payment of dividends until credit funds are available, because that is preferable to having an overdraft.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—Who pays the interest when money is borrowed?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—Ultimately it is a charge against the farmers, and it seems unfortunate that so many dividends should have been paid on borrowed money and the amounts allowed to remain at credit in the farmers' accounts. Since Great Britain has stopped buying bulk barley and sales have been made privately, inquiries for bulk barley overseas have increased considerably. This year in a number of instances bags have had to be opened at ships' sides and the grain transported in bulk. It is pleasing to note that the reports obtained by the Barley Board, particularly relating to grain shipped to Japan, indicate that it has arrived in a satisfactory condition. That also applies to barley shipped to the United Kingdom.

A month or two ago I was asked to call a meeting on Yorke Peninsula to look into the question of whether the Broken Hill Pty. installation and the Wheat Board silo at Ardrossan could be used for the shipping of barley in bulk. After the meeting, which was attended by 10 or 12 people, the two growers' representatives on the Barley Board went to Melbourne to interview Mr. Perritt, of the Australian Wheat Board, and put this proposition to him. It is pleasing to note that he was most anxious to co-operate with them and it now seems that it will be possible for us to make a trial shipment of barley through the Wheat Board installation and over the conveyor belt at Ardrossan. It was hoped that such a shipment could be made before the end of this year, but as there is not sufficient barley on the Peninsula to make up a total shipload, this cannot be done until March or April of next year, because we will have to wait until after the wheat is put through the silos. In my opinion the trial shipment will be successful.

Damage to roads on the Peninsula because of cartage of grain has been terrific, particularly during the past few months when the roads have been in a sodden condition, and if a bulk outlet can be provided at Ardrossan, the nearest point to the greatest concentration of barley on the Peninsula, there will be a tremendous saving of our roads. I pay a tribute to the growers' representatives of this State on the Board, Mr. Pearson, M.P., and Mr. S. H. Coleman, for the keenness they have

shown. It is largely due to the efforts of these men and the manager and other members of the board that the industry is in its present fortunate position. The testing time for all these marketing organizations is approaching. In the past it has been simply a matter of selling the goods in bulk; no keen business acumen has been required, because the market has been buoyant. The conditions today are different, and whether or not these orderly marketing schemes will prove the boon that some people think they will has yet to be seen. I sincerely hope the Barley Board will in future be able to operate as successfully as in the past. While it can continue to elect men of the calibre of Messrs. Coleman and Pearson, it has at least a strong guarantee that the interests of growers and others concerned will be served.

I mention these matters because in my view the official records do not yet indicate the falling off of spending power in the hands of farmers who obtain their income mainly from wheat and barley. The amount farmers have to spend on capital equipment for their farms, such as sheds, fences and other necessary requirements, is 50 per cent less this year than last year, and I feel it will be very much harder for machinery firms, particularly motor firms, and others supplying farmers' requirements, to dispose of their goods in the next 12 months. The real repercussion of that has not become quite obvious yet, but following the heavy tax assessments that farmers have received because of the excessive incomes of the 1952-53 year, and the falling off of their incomes by about 40 per cent for the 1953-54 year, many farmers who had several thousands of pounds left over last year find they have just enough cash left to tide them over for the rest of the year, unless they obtain overdrafts to meet additional expenses. People would be well advised to wait until after the coming harvest before entering into commitments of a hire-purchase nature or those that will bind them for the future. That applies to farmers as well as others in the community.

I am somewhat disturbed by advertisements appearing daily in the press in which people are invited to purchase all sorts of goods, some entirely luxuries, and some semi-luxuries, on a no-deposit basis with the payments spread over several months or even years. The effect of that must be that a demand is being brought forward that would probably not exist normally for some months in the future. Whilst I do not deny that there is a sphere in which hire-purchase has its

proper place, possibly for essential household requirements, I think in every case the purchaser would be well advised to pay at least one-third of the total price as a deposit. By so doing he would be able to feel that the article is his property and not belonging to someone else. In the *Mail* of Saturday, June 30, appeared a statement made by Mr. Lawn, M.P. about the rate of interest charged by hire purchase companies, and I mention it only because I believe the statement was not strictly correct. Mr. Lawn said:—

Even where the money is borrowed to buy a new car the interest charged by hire purchase companies is $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent flat rate on the original loan, even although that loan is being gradually decreased by monthly payments. This means the simple interest rate on money actually borrowed is more than 12 per cent.

As far as it goes that statement is practically correct. I believe that the two largest hire purchase companies charge an interest rate of 6 per cent flat, which would work out at about 12 per cent simple interest, although one hire purchase company provides finance for machinery at a flat rate of 5 per cent which works out at an effective rate of 10 per cent. Mr. Lawn went on to say:—

The rate of interest charged by the hire purchase department of the Commonwealth Trading Bank for the hire purchase of a new car is only $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

That is correct; the flat rate charged by the Commonwealth Trading Bank is $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and this works out at an actual rate of $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. My criticism of Mr. Lawn's statement is that the natural conclusion to be derived from it is that the Commonwealth Bank provides money at an effective rate of $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent as against the effective rate of 12 per cent of the hire purchase companies, whereas the true position is that the effective rate of the bank is about 8 per cent. Hire purchase companies finance secondhand and new motor vehicles, washing machines, wirelesses and other commodities, whereas the bank finances only the purchase of new motor cars. I have mentioned this matter because I feel the public should be informed of the correct position regarding the operations of finance companies.

Recently, the Law Society supplied members of this House and the House of Assembly with a comprehensive report on the operations of the legal assistance scheme; I commend it to the careful consideration of all members. It sets out that the scheme was commenced on September 1, 1933, following a suggestion made to the Government by the Law Society that the profession should take over the duties then performed by the Public Solicitor, because the

work involved was becoming too much for him to handle. The society said it would take over his work, and the basis of the offer was, to quote from the report, "that no person would be without proper legal assistance if he were deserving of such assistance and would be unable to obtain it without the help of the society's members". That scheme has been in operation since 1933. The administrative expense is met by the Government, but it is important to note that no part of it is paid to solicitors for the work they do. In 1952-53 the grant to meet administrative expenses was £3,200, and in 1953-54 £3,680. The scheme operates in this way: a small matter is usually handled by the secretary of the society who is always a qualified legal practitioner, but if the matter is likely to lead to litigation or is in any way complicated the applicant has to submit a formal request for assistance. The application is in the form of a declaration in which he sets out the relevant matters, including his own financial position. That application is then placed before the committee which administers the legal assistance scheme. The committee consists of three members of the Council of the Law Society and the secretary—that is, four solicitors. They determine what action shall be taken and the matter is then assigned to a solicitor. It is not compulsory for any solicitor to accept an assignment, but the scheme has been wholeheartedly accepted by the profession, and in practice it is regarded as a breach of courtesy, if not of etiquette, to decline an assignment.

As is clear from the report, a senior member of the profession when asked to handle an important criminal assignment recently said he would regard it as his duty to do so if requested. It is rather important to know that the fact that a client is receiving the assistance of the Law Society is not disclosed to the court, the police or to the litigant on the opposing side, so that the applicant gets the assistance without its being known to the other parties. As to who can and cannot get assistance, responsible officers of the Law Society determine what amount shall be paid by the applicant. Normally, when a case is completed, the solicitor presents his bill to the society, which determines what would be a reasonable figure. It frequently happens, however, that the solicitor has to accept a purely token payment, whereas the applicant may be paying quite substantial amounts on goods which he has purchased under hire-purchase agreement.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—In much the same way as the medical profession gives honorary services to the hospital.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—Great publicity is given—and quite rightly—to the honorary services rendered by members of the medical profession, but I feel that an equal service is given to the needy by the legal profession, and until this report was available little publicity was given to it. Other States have public solicitors to attend to the needs of this class of litigant. In some States there are several public solicitors, but even then the work is not always done as quickly as it is under our arrangement. For instance, a public solicitor usually works and lives in the capital city of his State so if a country applicant wants assistance it almost necessitates his going to the capital city, whereas under our scheme an applicant can apply to the society and the matter is referred, in most instances, to the solicitor nearest his home town.

To give some idea of the scope of this voluntary work by solicitors, in 1952-53 no fewer than 766 cases were assigned; 560 were dealt with by the secretary of the society in his office, six were withdrawn, and 151 rejected, a total of 1,483 for the year. This involved a great amount of work. As to the type of work which comes to the Law Society, 307 were divorce and matrimonial cases, 161 police and criminal court cases, 89 relating to landlord and tenancy matters and 209 to other matters. I commend this report to the very careful consideration of members as it brings to light the voluntary work which is being done by the legal profession very quietly and without publicity, and in most instances to the great satisfaction of those concerned. This leads me, in conclusion, to comment on the general position of the legal profession in South Australia, because I do not think it is widely known that the protection given to it is much less than in some of the other States.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—We have a fair proportion of solicitors in both Houses.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—They come here because they cannot earn a livelihood at law.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—A census taken recently showed that the average income of solicitors practising in South Australia does not exceed £1,500, and as the men at the top of the profession are obviously earning much more than that it follows that many others are earning much less. The position has reached the stage where people will not enter the profession as they feel that its emoluments are not sufficiently attractive. I believe that

the number attending the Law School at the University is between 60 and 70 and there is nearly always a considerable wastage. For example, of the 13 students who got through law when I did in 1934 only three remain in practice today. Some have gone into commercial enterprises, some did the course merely because they felt it would be helpful to them in other business undertakings, some have gone into the diplomatic corps, some went to the war and made their sacrifice, and some were women who in due course got married and did not continue to practice. That demonstrates that not all those who do the course go into the profession later.

Although our population has grown by about 25 per cent in the past few years the number of solicitors has increased by only about 7 per cent. Many country towns do not have a solicitor and this is most unfortunate because my experience is that where there is no competent legal adviser people invariably tend to go to some person who sets himself up as competent to advise and the result is sometimes disastrous. I feel, therefore, that careful consideration will have to be given to the whole set-up of the legal profession and something done to assist it in the way that we have moved to assist various other professions. For instance, in the last few years legislation has been placed on the Statute Book which has helped the dental profession considerably by preserving for that profession work that is rightfully theirs, and I feel that in the interests of the public, apart altogether from the interests of the legal profession, there should be a tightening up to provide that work which is really solicitors' work is reserved to them. If this is done I feel that it will result in a much improved service to the public by encouraging men to come into a profession which has a very important part to play in the British democratic way of life, and it will restore the profession to the position it deserves. I commend to members of this Council and anyone else interested the report I have mentioned and with that I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON (Northern)—As the debate is nearing its end I do not propose to repeat in detail all the congratulatory remarks of previous speakers, but I do take this opportunity to congratulate my colleague, Mr. Robinson, who, as the Leader of the Opposition said yesterday, made his best speech during his eight years as a member. It was well prepared and well delivered and I pay him a sincere compliment. Mr. Perry

too, being a man outstanding in engineering knowledge and in secondary industries, is always well received and respected. When the new year's honours were published, I, like everyone else in South Australia, was thrilled to know that the valuable work performed by Mr. Condon for so many years had been rewarded. We all wish him better health than he has had recently so that he may continue to carry on his heavy and responsible duties. Sir Lyell McEwin had bestowed on him the very high recognition of a knighthood and that too was received everywhere with great pleasure, because he is one of our great statesmen and this high honour was a well merited acknowledgment of long and faithful services.

Last year two new Ministers were appointed. There was much guessing as to who would be Minister of Roads and Railways, and Mr. Jude was duly elected to those very important portfolios. He is one of the youngest and most energetic members of this Council and I am pleased to hear the favourable reports from those who have been in contact with him during his brief term of office. Mr. Pattinson, too, is highly qualified to carry on the office of Minister of Education. Mr. Christian, the newly appointed Minister of Agriculture, has a very heavy task in following in the footsteps of his predecessor, Sir George Jenkins, one of the greatest statesmen South Australia has known, and one who is held in the highest respect, not only by the members of his own Party, but by the Opposition and people everywhere. Over a period of 10 years his advice has been of great value to South Australia. I congratulate you, Mr. President, and your staff on the very able manner in which the various duties were carried out during the Royal Visit, which was something that will be long remembered by any member of Parliament who was privileged to be present on that occasion. I read an article recently giving some astonishing figures regarding the visit. The Royal couple visited 14 countries, covered 50,000 miles and it has been reported that Her Majesty shook hands 150,000 times. The visit was of great value to the Empire and further cemented the ties of loyalty to the throne which have always existed in this State. It was an example to other countries which do not have a Monarch. One could not possibly see such loyalty displayed in countries where they have a president or a dictator. Adelaide received a real face-lift, which was even noticed in this Chamber, where we now have a beautiful floor covering. I consider the visit did much toward the peace of the world.

I support Mr. Robinson in his remarks concerning the visit of His Excellency the Governor and Lady George to northern country districts. This was greatly appreciated. I notice that His Excellency is shortly to visit Quorn. It would appear that this season will also be favourable. Prosperity is displayed in every direction, and there is no unemployment. Last year the wheat average for the State was 18 bushels compared with 22 bushels the previous year, the highest average ever. Prospects are bright for another good season this year. It is in direct contrast to the position in Western Australia, which is in the throes of a semi-drought. Last year South Australia experienced the astounding average of 28 bushels an acre for barley. Over the 30 years I have been growing this cereal it has been the most profitable of them all, and I think its future is very bright. Wool is the most stable of our primary products. The fact that South Australia is carrying 12,000,000 sheep reflects not only the good seasons, but also the result of the introduction of myxomatosis, which has been the means of greatly reducing the rabbit menace. I have seen it recorded that Australia is carrying more than an additional 1,000,000 sheep since this virus was introduced.

The wheat industry has been in a state of chaos for a considerable time and this week we received the news we have been seeking for a long time to the effect that all the States have now agreed to a stabilization scheme, which must be ratified by wheatgrowers throughout the Commonwealth by October 15. I have no doubt whatever of the result of the poll. I strongly favour stabilization, as it will enable wheatgrowers to budget to meet their expenditure. I hope we will never again see the days when wheatgrowers are in the hands of the merchants. I have no faith in the International Wheat Agreement. India, Indonesia and Germany have all been buying supplies elsewhere, and have thereby defaulted in their obligations under the agreement. In 1952-53 Australia had on hand 35,000,000 bushels of wheat and in 1953-54 the harvest brought in another 182,000,000 bushels, making a total of 217,000,000 at the completion of delivery last season. To date this year only 72,000,000 bushels have been sold, and at the end of June 145,000,000 bushels were on hand; so at the end of the year it would appear that about 99,000,000 bushels will still remain unsold.

Britain this year has purchased only 5,000,000 bushels compared with 11,000,000 bushels at this time last year and Germany has bought

only 1,500,000 bushels compared with 2,500,000 last year. India has bought only 2,500,000 compared with 11,000,000 last year. We must face up to this surplus. I believe that the United States of America and Canada are now delivering much wheat to Spain, Japan and other Asiatic countries at a low profit. New Zealand and Ceylon have been the only two countries to honour the International Wheat Agreement in full. The Wheat Board intends to call on the offenders to show cause why they should not adhere to the agreement but there are so many escape loopholes that I do not think it has a hope of bringing them to book. On several previous occasions in this Council I have referred to the quality of the Australian wheat. It is something which has been sadly neglected. Every effort was towards quantity. We still have an excellent market for Australian white wheats to be blended with red and strong wheats of the U.S.A. and Canada. The method of determining the quality of South Australian wheats has been, for as many years as I can remember, for each wheatgrowing district to be called upon in January to supply a few pounds of wheat which, on receipt, are mixed in a heap and from that is determined the f.a.q. standard. The time has arrived when this method must be changed and for good quality wheats to be labelled separately, otherwise we risk the loss of further markets.

This year a very high honour was conferred upon Dr. Callaghan, the Director of Agriculture, who was awarded the Farrar Memorial Medal, which is given in memory of Mr. Farrar, who was one of our greatest wheat breeders. We are very fortunate in South Australia to have a Director of Agriculture with such high qualifications as those of Dr. Callaghan. He was a Rhodes Scholar in New South Wales in 1925 and after studying at Oxford he was engaged in wheat breeding for many years until appointed Principal of the Roseworthy Agricultural College in 1932. At present he is the Federal President of the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science. I am afraid that not many people realize the importance of the work he has done in promoting better quality wheats.

Recently I travelled on the way to Sydney in one of our roomette cars and have also travelled on the East-West Express and contend that railway travellers on these lines have nothing to complain about. Vast progress has been made by the introduction of the diesel electric trains and improved rolling stock. The railways are meeting the increased traffic demands very well.

The question of roads is one of the most contentious of subjects and always will be. Last year a Bill was passed increasing motor registration fees and many people thought that the additional money would be available immediately, but many licences were still current and the full revenue from this source is not yet available. Recently the Minister of Local Government, in company with Mr. Edmonds and Mr. Pearson, the member for Flinders, made a comprehensive visit to Eyre Peninsula. I have read all the reports in local newspapers of this visit, showing that it was greatly appreciated. It was the first time a Minister of the Crown had carried out such an extensive tour on the Peninsula. As the member for that district I am grateful for the visit. It gave many people who thought they were out on a limb the satisfaction of knowing that they will be receiving attention. There are some very bad roads on the Peninsula, and being so far away from the seat of Government they have not received the attention they deserved. The demand today is for sealed roads, which are the only answer to modern traffic. However, they are very expensive. In recent years some roads have cost £20,000 a mile and the money available has not gone very far.

The Governor's speech mentioned that £450,000 would be made available for loans to councils to purchase machinery, which will be of great benefit to them. Transport must meet the needs of production, and because of this the Government is taking a step in the right direction. It is intended to carry out vast improvements to various ports. Loading operations at Port Pirie have been restricted because of a depth of only 16ft. of water over the sand bar. Port Pirie, which has always been an important town, will be even more important with the establishment of new industries. The provision of bulk handling at Port Lincoln is proposed. Facilities at this port have not been very good, and improvements are warranted. Kingscote is another port that will receive attention. Reference has already been made to the Uley-Wanilla water scheme, and it is interesting to hear that 250 miles of steel mains have been laid since the basin came into operation. There is an unlimited supply of water.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—Yesterday in the House of Assembly it was stated that there was not.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON—Then I withdraw that statement.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—It will be a few years before it is known how much water is there.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON—The scheme will be finished next year and it is hoped that we will then have the water reticulated into many schemes. The Public Works Standing Committee has recently taken evidence about all these schemes on Eyre Peninsula.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—The point is whether, under present conditions, water supplies can be extended much further.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON—The War Service Land Settlement Scheme is still making wonderful progress. Recently, I visited other States and New Zealand and I am more than pleased at the progress made in this State by comparison. New Zealand has a scheme that has proved entirely satisfactory, although I do not think it is superior to our own. Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria decided originally that they would not enter into the Commonwealth scheme, but all are anxious to participate because their own are so scattered. The figures up to yesterday show that under the scheme in South Australia 2,802 men were classified and eligible. Some have intimated that they do not intend to take advantage of the scheme. The number who have taken advantage of the Lands Development Executive scheme is 870, and of the Commonwealth scheme 1,238, so that the balance requiring land is 694. I am sure not all are genuine applicants—probably only about 500. It is hard to say what will happen to the balance. The Kangaroo Island settlement scheme is making rapid progress. Land which in 1948 was scrub and carrying practically nothing is now carrying about 32,000 sheep. That is a wonderful achievement in the short space of six years.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—There is still £46,000 to be spent on it.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON—But the revenue alone from the 32,000 sheep this year will be about £100,000, and this should be an encouragement to provide the greatest amenities possible to the settlers. Many teething problems still exist in the settlement but by and large they are being overcome. At Wanilla there was a lot of unrest for a while, but generally there and at Wrattenbully and Eight Mile Creek the settlers are highly satisfied with the scheme in which they are privileged to be able to get a start in primary production.

I was interested to hear Mr. Bevan's remarks about Leigh Creek. Next year when the Aroona

dam is supplying water there, we will see a still further improvement. The importance of that coalfield for supplying coal to the new power station must keep the people who work there satisfied.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—That is provided they get water in the dam.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON—When there I saw gum trees bruised 10 or 12ft. from the ground, indicating that there is a heavy flow of water at times, and I have no doubt that in normal years the dam will supply sufficient water to Leigh Creek. Radium Hill is now receiving the benefit of water from the Uumberumberka reservoir. These fields are of the greatest importance to the future of this State and the Government has met the situation by providing the greatest asset of all—water. Mineral resources in the northern part of this State and in the Northern Territory are great. I visited Tennant Creek recently and found that water for domestic purposes costs £17 10s. a thousand gallons. This proves the value of water in some places. No provision has ever been made except by the construction of bores, and I think the lesson they are receiving now will cause some attempt to be made to conserve water.

It is pleasing to note that the Commonwealth Government has given high priority to the extension of broad gauge from Leigh Creek to Marree. This is essential because I have found, not only in the Northern Territory, but also at Birdsville, the cattle raisers are inclined to go towards Queensland, and if we lose revenue from there it will be a very poor outlook for providing beef to the increasing population. I know it is not economical to lay a railway line from Alice Springs to Darwin. There is talk now of creating abattoirs and freezing works there, and this is the best answer to the situation.

Bulk handling is a very contentious subject throughout all cereal growing districts in the State. I heard the chairman of the Public Works Standing Committee say the other day that a report could be furnished; if that is so, I say "Let us have a look at it." Farmers are most anxious to adopt this scheme. While the Committee may be concerned about the economics of bulk handling, if cereal growers are prepared to meet the high cost I say that we should at least see what can be done. Anyone talking about handling grain in any way except by bulk on Yorke Peninsula would be quickly counted out, because our methods of handling grain elsewhere are obsolete.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—There you have something which they have nowhere else—the assistance of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON—Yes, we appreciate what that company has done at Ardrossan by receiving wheat and conveying it to the ships. However, it is not necessary to have such an elaborate system as exists there. It is most suitable and is highly appreciated, but other installations need not cost anywhere near as much as that did. I was given figures yesterday to show that at the Bute siding last year 160,000 bags of grain were delivered at a cost to the farmers of £32,000, exclusive of such items as bag sowing. They would prefer to see that money put into bulk handling installations because most of the wheat at Bute is now being loaded into road lorries for transporting to Ardrossan. I understand that overseas shipping companies are now demanding that grain be exported in bulk, and if that is the case it may force the issue more quickly than anything else.

In conclusion I compliment the Education Department on its excellent work. When we learn from His Excellency's Speech that during the past five years there has been an increase of 47 per cent in the enrolment of scholars we realize the heavy task placed upon the department. It is therefore pleasing to know that there has been an increase of 25 per cent in the number of trainees at the Teachers' College, as this will help to overcome the shortage that has existed for so long. It was encouraging, too, to learn that school committees raised £130,000 which has been subsidized pound for pound by the Government. No-one can pay too high a tribute to these committees because they always have the interests of the children at heart and are prepared to do anything for them. This is recognized and encouraged by the department. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

The Hon. A. A. HOARE (Central No. 1)—I listened with interest to Mr. Wilson who, among other things, referred to the broadening of the railway gauge to Marree. I think this would be a wise plan because we should do everything possible to foster beef production by assisting our pastoralists. With elimination of the break of gauge cattle would reach the abattoirs in much better condition and consequently realize much higher values. Perhaps it would be wise, also, to establish an export abattoirs at the nearest deep sea port to our northern cattle producing areas, but I am afraid that is looking a long way ahead.

Australia is haunted with breaks of gauge and it is time that the South Australian Government considered laying a third rail between Adelaide and Port Pirie. Engineers claim it can be done without difficulty or danger.

With the opening of the new power station at Port Augusta we can begin to realize more readily what the Leigh Creek coalfield means to South Australia. It is not simply that a power station has been built at Port Augusta but that it must lead to more decentralization. Most of our people are crowded into the city and this should be remedied as far as possible. Admittedly the Government has done a great deal. In the first place Port Adelaide was nationalized, if I may use that term, with very good results. The new power station at Port Augusta will be of vast benefit, not only to the town, but the surrounding country. We have come a long way since the days of the old slush light. It was the Labor movement that gave the present Government the authority to proceed with the Leigh Creek undertaking at a time when many others said it was all nonsense. Those people now are full of praise for it and say we did the right thing. I have much sympathy for the people who live in the outback, as I have lived amongst them and know their difficulties. The Flying Doctor Service is one of the greatest boons that the outback community enjoys and no praise can be too great for the man responsible for bringing it about—the Rev. Flynn—one of the finest men I ever met, and in every way a practical Christian who never spared himself and always went out of his way to meet any call upon him. His wife is worthily endeavouring to carry on his great work. The position of the wheat industry is worrying most of us. The trouble has come upon us unexpectedly. I do not know who is to blame.

The Hon. R. R. Wilson—It was brought about mainly by the good seasons, I think.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—I think you have to blame the Liberal Government.

The Hon. A. A. HOARE—To an extent. I cannot agree that there is too much wheat in the world because there are so many millions who need it. If the Liberal Government was not directly responsible it may be those who support it. If, instead of endeavouring to enrich themselves growers had gone a stride or two the other way it might have been better for everyone. The *Daily Telegraph* recently carried the following report:—

Australian wheat is not being bought in London at present because its price has not

been brought down to a competitive level. Grain importers are able to buy Canadian and American wheat at 30s. a ton less.

The position of the flour milling industry is a disgrace to Australia. Mr. Condon has pointed out time and time again that mills throughout the country are idle and flour mill employees unemployed. It is a mighty knock, even to backyard poultry keepers, of which I am one. Ever since we have been married my wife and I have kept a few fowls. Until a few months ago I could get poultry feed when I wanted it, but recently when I asked my grocer to deliver the usual he sent a bag of wheat, a little pollard tied up in the corner of a sugar bag and some bran in a big paper bag. That gives an idea of how the poultry keeper is being pinched. It would appear that those in charge of wheat do not care anything about the struggling poultry farmers and others. It is a disgrace to those responsible that many of our flour mills are being closed. What is the use of extending wheatgrowing if we cannot find a market for our present production? We should give the industry that freedom it enjoyed in the past. If those in charge of operations are not doing what the farmers want, they should be replaced. It would appear that the wheat business is a Federal matter more than one for the States, but there should be a combined effort. Everything possible should be done to get our flour mills working again if we are to save the poultry industry. At present many of the mill employees are being thrown on the unemployed market. This afternoon the Chief Secretary referred to the position at the Royal Adelaide

Hospital. I have been a patient there, and so also has my wife, and no-one could have been treated more kindly or more attention paid to the patients. I did not tell them that I was a member of Parliament, but the nurses ascertained it somehow. However, that did not mean I received any different treatment, and anyone who speaks against the Royal Adelaide Hospital is not giving it a fair deal. I support the motion.

The Hon. A. L. McEWIN (Chief Secretary)—I join with other members in congratulating the mover and seconder of the motion. The debate this year has been of a very high standard, and has indicated what is customary for this House in these speeches—a realistic approach to present-day conditions and an urge upon the community to consolidate the progress made in good times and so ensure that the very good conditions we are at present enjoying shall not be jeopardized from any lack of foresight in approaching our problems. I agree with Mr. Condon that Mr. Robinson made one of the best speeches we have heard from him, and, as is customary, with a good opening speech, we are assured of an excellent debate to follow. I am sure that the remarks of all speakers will be followed with interest.

Motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply carried.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.42 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, August 17, at 2 p.m.