

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, May 31, 1955.

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

QUESTIONS.

AERIAL MINERAL SURVEY.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—Last year the Mines Department undertook an aerial survey to try to locate various mineral deposits. Is the survey still continuing, and if so with what result?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—It is correct that the department has been conducting aerial surveys and is continuing on various projects. It takes some time to correlate the information as it becomes available and to translate the results into geological reports. As the information becomes available it is published and made available to interested parties through reports published either in the *Mining Bulletin* or *Mining Review* from time to time. Advance information is given as it becomes available because there is a certain delay in publishing the *Mining Review*.

MANSFIELD PARK SCHOOL.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—Has the Attorney-General the information I sought last week regarding the paving of the Mansfield Park School assembly yard?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—A request for additional tar paving and for the repair of existing tar paving at the Mansfield Park Primary School has been received and approved and the Architect-in-Chief has been asked to have the work carried out. He has already issued an order to his Works Superintendent for this work at a cost of about £243. The work will be done as soon as possible, but as the available tar paving gang is at present carrying out work at other schools it may be some little time before the work at this school is done.

LINCOLN-WHYALLA ROAD.

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS (on notice)—

1. What length of the Lincoln-Whyalla highway construction has been completed during this financial year?

2. What length of the highway has been sealed?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—The replies are:—

1. Two and a half miles of Lincoln Highway has been completed during the current year with a bituminous seal, and in addition 18 miles of base construction has been com-

pleted in readiness for a bituminous seal, which will be undertaken as weather permits.

2. A total length of 54 miles of Lincoln Highway between Whyalla and Port Lincoln has been sealed.

ROAD GRADING UNITS.

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS (on notice)—

What number of road grading units is operating outside district council areas and in what localities are the units based?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—The information desired is as follows:—

Northern District.

(a) Port Augusta-Pimba area. There are three units operating in this area.

(b) Tarcoola. One unit.

(c) Quorn. Two units operate in this area on the road between Quorn and Copley.

(d) Blinman. One unit operating on the Hawker-Blinman-Parachilna Road.

(e) Olary. One unit.

(f) Oodnadatta. One unit.

(g) Burra. One unit.

(h) Marree. One unit.

(i) Copley. One unit. This is a newly established roadmaking gang and, although work has commenced, the large grader to complete the unit has not yet been delivered.

Western District.

(a) Fowlers Bay. Two units operating in this area.

(b) Iron Knob. Two units operate in this area.

Southern District.

(a) Coonalpyn. One unit.

(b) Renmark. A construction branch unit has operated on the Renmark-Wentworth Road from time to time.

NEW TOWN NORTH OF SALISBURY.

The PRESIDENT laid on the Table reports of the Public Works Committee on new primary schools on areas Nos. 1 and 5 in the new town north of Salisbury, together with minutes of evidence.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

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

(Continued from May 26. Page 77.)

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS (Northern)—I join with other honourable members who have preceded me in this debate in extending congratulations to Mr. Story upon his election to this Chamber and for his very interesting

address when moving the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. His speech was all the more commendable because of the very sorrowful circumstances under which he entered the Council, for which he has all the sympathy of members. The Lieutenant-Governor's speech followed very much the usual pattern in that the major portion referred to governmental and semi-governmental activities that have arisen out of legislative acts. I propose to direct my remarks to some of the initial items, and to leave to some later occasion those that refer to legislation that may be introduced.

His Excellency referred to the continued prosperity and economic stability of this State, with which we can all agree. He pointed out that there is full employment, and I have been told that there is a shortage of operatives in many of our major industries. The general overall picture is that the prosperity of the people has never been at a higher level. I know that anxiety is sometimes expressed because many goods are obtained under hire-purchase agreements but I think that so long as people who purchase in this way have due regard to their responsibilities when their commitments become due, it is quite a safe system of financing the people, particularly those on fixed wages, to procure the things necessary to give them the enjoyment of the good things of this life. As has been put rather aptly by one commentator whose remarks I read recently, time payment is really the wage earner's overdraft.

The stability of this State, which is largely a primary producing State, is very much wrapped up in the prosperity of those engaged in primary industries, and I cannot recall when the prospects in those industries were better. Our State from one end to the other has been blessed with most bountiful rains that extended right through the pastoral areas. Reports received indicate that lambing will be entirely satisfactory, that the cereal growing areas have benefited and that in many of the early districts seeding has been completed under most favourable conditions. From this it can be seen that we can look forward to the coming season with much optimism. I know that many things can happen from now until the crops are harvested, but almost every area has received a good soaking and should be in a position to withstand any adverse climatic conditions later in the season.

One of the best yardsticks by which prosperity can be measured is the savings of the

people. I was very interested to read in a recent publication of the Commonwealth Bureau of Statistics that deposits standing to the credit of depositors in the two savings banks in this State are £128,000,000, representing £160 for every man, woman and child. This is the highest figure in the Commonwealth, and as an aside I might mention that South Australia is the only State not conducting a lottery. I recently had an opportunity to go through a large area of our north-western pastoral country, and it was most gratifying to see the excellent conditions in evidence there. People who had been in those areas for many years and had experienced the ups and downs of the past said that they doubted whether conditions were ever more favourable. Taking an overall picture, it seems to me that there was every justification for the statement made by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor about the prosperity of the country, and it was not only justified in referring to present conditions, but will apply to the future.

Another pleasing feature of the Speech was the reference to the progress made in settlement of returned soldiers. Figures quoted indicated that nearly 1,000 allotments had been or are being made. Although there have been many problems, they have been overcome, and the development of our grazing areas has been extremely satisfactory. Unfortunately, the picture is not quite so bright in the irrigation areas. As one who has had an active association with soldier settlement after two world wars it is interesting for me to make a comparison between what was attempted and accomplished after World War I and the position as we know it today. On the termination of World War I the State had extensive areas of Crown lands much of which had not even been surveyed, and much of it held on short tenure, and it was to these areas—plus some estates in the inside country that were purchased—that our attention was directed for the settlement of returned soldiers. The lands were mostly in the Murray mallee and central and far west Eyre Peninsula, and in the main consisted of virgin scrub. Apart from some pretty limited financial assistance, a rather meagre sustenance allowance for a few years and the provision of a nucleus of stock and plant the returned soldiers of the 1914-1918 war were left pretty much to their own resources. Despite the disabilities I have mentioned it is pleasing to know that many of them made good. Unfortunately many did not, and after

spending a considerable part of their lives in battling to make a home and carve out a destiny for themselves and their families they had to walk off their properties. How different is the picture today. This time we set out on a programme of virtually allotting improved properties; the scrub was cleared, the land cultivated, seeded and fertilized; a comfortable house, good outbuildings and fences were erected, and for all practical purposes the soldier allottee today walks on to a property which is at least in the first stages of full development. Admittedly that costs a lot of money, but the settler is not expected to accept the whole of the financial responsibility for there is to be a final valuation based upon potential production, and it is on that basis that his financial liability will be determined.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—Are those terms about the best in the Commonwealth?

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS—Frankly, I am not in a position to make comparisons, but in the opinion of those in a position to know South Australia is well in the forefront in its acceptance of the obligation we have solemnly undertaken. Although there have been and still are difficulties to overcome I think we can feel satisfied that we have measured up to our responsibilities.

Here I would like to refer to some people who have done a great deal in bringing about this satisfactory state of affairs but whose efforts are usually not known and therefore not appreciated. I refer to those men who have given of their technical and scientific knowledge—the agriculturists and the agronomists. They have done an excellent job in assisting in the satisfactory development of productive units for returned soldiers, particularly on Kangaroo Island and in the upper South-East, where the land in its virgin state was hardly worth considering. By investigation and experiment these men have completely changed the picture; they are the back-room boys of repatriation. They have, by intensive experiment, ascertained the soil deficiencies and the type of fodder crop best suited to localities and rainfalls, and in other ways almost too numerous to mention these people have been of the greatest assistance. Indeed, not until I became associated with the Parliamentary Land Settlement Committee did I have a clear conception of how much was being done on the scientific side of land settlement.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—That is really Government work, isn't it?

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS—Yes. They are all officers of Government departments

and C.S. & I.R.O. We must understand that repatriation is the combined responsibility of the Commonwealth and State Governments.

The Hon. J. L. S. Bice—Which, of course, was not the case after World War I.

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS—No. It was then a State responsibility, and the Commonwealth Government did not come into the scheme to any great extent. A soil survey is most essential and that is one of the first things that is done after an area is referred to the Land Settlement Committee as having pasture development potential. These men go into the field and make most minute investigations of soil types and soil deficiencies, and from that they are able to say how the deficiencies can be remedied. The sum total is to be seen in those areas which have advanced to a fair stage of development. Many honourable members have seen some of the work done on Kangaroo Island and in the Upper South-East, and it must have been a revelation to compare the developed areas with the virgin scrub.

The story of our grazing lands can be applied also to what has been done in the irrigation areas where the virgin country is covered with stunted mallee and bush. Here the investigations of our scientists and horticulturists have advanced to the stage where it can be determined within pretty safe limits what crops should be grown on certain areas and even what varieties of those crops are best suited—whether stone fruits, vines or citrus fruits. They can even determine within a fair limit what lands might be subject to frost damage—not only over large areas, but on individual holdings. The value of this work can be appreciated when we recall some of our experiences concerning the promise of good harvests being dashed by adverse climatic conditions. We can be gratified with the advance of our soldier settlements. There are still problems associated with irrigation areas, the greatest of which appears to be the finding of markets for some of the surplus fruits and wines. Here again it is a problem which must be tackled, and I feel sure it will be resolved if we have the co-operation of all the parties vitally concerned.

From time to time we hear much about the necessity to decentralize. Honourable members realize the advantages. It is not a good thing to have a big population only in the industrial areas, as in the final analysis the prosperity and well-being of the State depend on our primary production; and we cannot expect to maintain our standard and volume of primary

production if we have a continued drift from the country. We talk a lot about it, but I doubt whether we are doing as much as we should. In mentioning many of the things which are being done to take amenities to the country, the Lieutenant-Governor referred to the operations of the Housing Trust. Another paragraph set out what is being achieved in providing electricity to these areas. We must not lose sight of the fact that we must step up the tempo of the provision of these amenities to the highest degree possible if we are to put any meaning at all on our desire for decentralization. We must have adequate water supplies and also sewers in country towns. Many of these amenities are sadly missing. An adequate water supply results in the provision of home gardens and supporting amenities which mean so much to country people. Therefore, we must do everything possible to speed up water supply and electricity and all those things which go with them.

Another important aspect of decentralization is the provision of roads. The Lieutenant-Governor mentioned that £6,000,000 was to be spent on roads this financial year. I am not so much concerned with the amount as with mileage. I sometimes wonder whether we could not step up the tempo of our construction. I think we are paying too much attention to the dotting of our i's and the crossing of our t's in our road construction policy—reducing a curve here, taking out a bend there, and bulldozing an obstruction and dumping the spoil to improve the grade. All these things may be very desirable, but can we afford them at present with such an extensive length of roadways to be undertaken or to be improved in various parts of the State? It is interesting to read the experiences of some of the European countries and America where they have roads with multiple traffic lanes and where about the only speed limit is the minimum. We have not reached that stage yet and I do not know that we ever will, but if we keep in mind our own requirements and make our objective the greatest length of mileage with the money available, we will achieve what is most desirable for our people. In this regard I noticed an interesting statement in the *Advertiser* on May 25 under the heading "Straight Roads Most Deadly." It included the following:—

A bend or curve with an open view has caused more accidents than a blind turn or blind curve. In the September quarter of 1954 there were 23,603 accidents reported, of which 11,787, or nearly half, occurred on straight roads.

There were 1,875 accidents on clear view bends, and only 463 on blind turns. Bridges

and culverts caused 317 accidents while 239 were on steep hills and 110 on hill tops, mostly caused by overtaking without a clear view ahead. Figures show that after the long, straight road the most dangerous traffic point is an uncontrolled intersection.

There were 8,255 accidents at uncontrolled intersections, compared with 277 at light-controlled intersections, and 85 at police controlled intersections. The total death roll of 475 for the quarter included 242 killed on straight roads, 128 at uncontrolled intersections, 69 on open curves, and 15 on blind curves.

If that can be taken as a guide, there is not all the virtue some people claim for taking out bends and reducing curves and making a straight speedway so that people can travel along at almost any speed.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—What about spoon drains?

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS—They go back about 35 years.

The Hon. E. Anthony—You go to Unley.

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS—I am surprised if people living in that district allow such things to continue. If they exist in the metropolitan area, the people there are a long way behind the times. In the item of £6,000,000 to be spent this financial year a certain amount is set aside for assistance to district councils to purchase road-making machinery. Although such machinery is necessary, I believe we are not getting the fullest use out of the money being expended on road construction units, the cost of which runs into thousands of pounds. I read recently where one council took delivery of a grading unit which cost £5,000. With the expenditure of these vast sums, we cannot afford to have the machines idle, and they must be used to the fullest extent within the time available. In this connection I feel that the pseudo 40-hour week has much to answer for. Actually it works out to about 35 effective hours. One can drive around and see these road making units standing idle for hours when they should be working. Mr. Wilson made a good suggestion that as far as possible road works should be undertaken by contract. From the evidence available we get more work done under contract than under day labour.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—Would the honourable member have the courage to go into his district and say that?

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS—I know that honourable members opposite hate to hear anything like this, but my statement can be verified by anyone sufficiently interested. Although there are other matters to which I

could refer, I have devoted my time to one or two things that I felt were most important, matters dealing with getting people to the country and keeping them there. The establishment of secondary industries has been a great thing to this State but let us keep our feet on the ground and not think that they are all that count. In the past, when seasonal conditions have not been too good and primary production prices have fallen, we have appreciated what is the goose that lays the golden egg, and we should not strain that goose.

There is a need to extend our harbour facilities, but that is a matter which is wrapped up with the bulk handling question and will be dealt with later. I hope that my remarks have had some constructive merit. I shall give my support during the session to things that I feel are in the interests of the people concerned, and to any projects that will mean a little more progress. I support the motion.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY (Central No. 2)—I desire, with other members, to add my tribute to the mover and seconder of this motion, both of whose addresses were very worthy ones. I congratulate Mr. Story very heartily on his election to this House and his maiden speech. I was rather alarmed to hear him say that the dried fruit industry on the Murray is in such a parlous condition.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—But you knew that, didn't you?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—I read the newspaper statements, and without doing any injustice to the honourable member I think some of his statements were wild. This industry is a very important one and we would all be very sorry if anything happened to it. However, it would not be the first time that we have seen people buying land at high prices, causing financial difficulties later. I know a little about this industry, and I would say that before very long it will be all right again. It has to be remembered that, unlike other countries enjoying heavy Government subsidies, this State's dried fruit industry has none and must export 80 per cent of its products, whereas the other countries consume most of their products. I suggest that a great deal of the products of this industry might be consumed in Australia. Dried fruit is not displayed very nicely here, it does not look very attractive in many instances, and if the industry were to spend some money on publicity there would be a good deal of fillip to sales if the goods were sold at reasonable

prices. Dried fruits are beyond the reach of many people and as a result the industry has to rely on large export sales. I read that there were thousands of tons of dried fruits in bonded stores in London, but most of this fruit was sold. I also read that a new batch, in excellent condition, has arrived and that there will be no difficulty in selling it. I am sorry that the industry has made such a noise about the situation. If it had a little more patience and better organization the difficulties would be overcome.

The Hon. C. R. Story—You get very hungry being patient.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—Yes, but a good deal of the trouble stems from people buying land at a high price. There was a bad season, rain damaged the crops, and bulk buying has been scrapped in England. All this caused bad conditions, but for some years the export industries have had a very good time.

The Hon. C. R. Story—There has never been a boom period for the dried fruits industry.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—That might be so, and some stabilization scheme should be established to safeguard it in the future. However, taken by and large, the industry cannot have done too badly over the last few years.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—Don't you think it is in a desperate position at the moment?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—It may be, but most people have been through bad times and have found their way through them.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—But don't you think this industry is a national project?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—Of course it is, and I would not like to see it come to any harm. Mr. Densley made an excellent speech, and I was pleased to hear him refer to the sale of the Theatre Royal. It is a great pity that this theatre, which is almost as old as the State, has been disposed of. It is an indictment of this State that it cannot support one theatre.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—Why doesn't your Government do something about it?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—It is not a matter for the Government; the people should do something to keep the theatre. I now refer to the death of two of our very beloved colleagues, one of whom was the Honourable Reginald Rudall, with whom many of us have served for years and for whom we have all had very great respect. Mr. Rudall had a

distinguished career both inside and outside this House and one of his memorials in his Parliamentary life is the good work he did in regard to marginal lands. He administered this scheme with great success. I knew Mr. Stephen Dunks for many years, as I served most of my Parliamentary career with him, and no more loyal colleague would be possible. The sympathy of all members goes out to the relatives of these two men. I congratulate Mr. Rowe on attaining Ministerial office. The office of Attorney-General, which has a high tradition in this State, will not suffer in his hands.

As other members have said, the Lieutenant-Governor's speech was full of interesting matters. It was an account of splendid achievements on the part of the Government in many directions, one of which was the great Murray water scheme. Without any question this is the greatest water transportation scheme in Australia.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan—It was an absolute necessity, wasn't it?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—It was, and if the water had not arrived when it did I think it would have been necessary to evacuate the city. The Government can take considerable credit for having pushed on with this work and so saving the situation. Honourable members have spoken about the prosperity of this State. Our economy seems to be very sound and the future seems assured, but there are perhaps certain matters which make one wonder whether the prosperity is soundly based. Considerable doubt has arisen in the minds of certain financial authorities on where Australia and South Australia are going.

Reference has already been made to the tremendous amount of money being called for by the various finance companies in order to finance hire purchase agreements. I understand that agreements totalling £166,000,000 are in existence. This has stirred up certain publicists sufficiently to bring them into the press, and I refer to an article which appeared in the *Advertiser* only this week on this question. It stated that last year the value of hire purchase agreements in Australia increased by one-third. That is an extraordinary jump and there are no indications that the movement is losing its velocity. Indeed, it is so widespread as to stir the Commonwealth Treasurer to remark that "The Commonwealth and States loan raising programme may also be affected in the coming year. In any case it may be wise on general grounds to have a close study made

of the rapid growth of hire purchase." I agree that it is a good thing to see people enjoying comforts in their homes, but in other days they asked themselves whether they could afford these things. Nowadays I am afraid that spending, both Government and private, is encouraging a great deal of wantonness on the part of the public and neglect of the future.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—Who is the authority that controls this?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—I think even the banks have gone into hire purchase now, as well as guarantee companies, but I do not know that there is any Governmental control.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—There is not, but who should control it?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—It is difficult to say what a man shall do with his money. Nevertheless we have witnessed considerable hardships resulting from lavish expenditure on what may be termed luxury lines and therefore some measure of control may be a good thing. I believe that the United Kingdom Government has deemed it necessary to take some steps to try to stem this growing tide of hire purchase because of the effect it is having on the nation's economy.

Although we have always boasted that we are a primary producing country, when we stop to think of the razor edge on which our economy is balanced it will be seen just how precarious it is. Our national wool cheque is down to the tune of £60,000,000 this year. Dried fruit prices have fallen, even when we can find a market for them, and there is no assurance about the price of wheat. Were it not for the guaranteed price I dare say there would be a good deal more unrest on the part of the growers. On the other hand, it is pleasing to know that some of our manufacturers are finding their way into overseas markets. Today we are exporting machinery to New Zealand and other countries, and this is a very good sign. We should look for more of it, but that can only be done if we keep our prices on competitive levels, for we have to compete with countries whose people are working for small wages compared with those paid in this country.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—Are not those wages determined by a tribunal?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—By various tribunals. I have always been a great advocate of arbitration as a sound way of settling disputes between employer and employee, and I still believe in the principle, but I think its frills and furbelows are getting us into

trouble—all this tinkering with it by conciliation commissioners and courts. An article in the *Advertiser* this morning almost confirms what I am saying. It appears under the caption "Court ignores future," and I think that is true. It goes on:—

The Commonwealth Arbitration Court took little or no regard to the future in considering wages, hours and margins the New South Wales Metal Trades Employers' Association president (Mr. R. B. Hipsley) said today. I have said time and time again in this place that no set of men, however good they are, can sit in their ivory towers and tell others how to manage their businesses.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—That is an indictment of the judiciary.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—I do not care what it is. These men are undoubtedly very able in their own way, but they know mighty little about industry. They fix rates and conditions which are in many cases the cause of the trouble. The article goes on to outline a seven point plan for lowering manufacturing costs, and it seems to me that one way of meeting competition is to reduce our production costs. This does not mean only that the worker should work harder; it may mean that the manufacturer should put more up-to-date equipment into his factory. The seven point plan referred to in the article was:—

Eliminate payroll tax;

Management to introduce better tools and techniques;

Maximum support for Australian-made products to give market stability;

Introduction by the Government of an investment allowance to get greater plant efficiency;

More co-operation by workers to the introduction of new production techniques;

Continued immigration, retention of men past the retiring age, increasing the flow of apprentices, and systematic training of other personnel; and

Reducing the cost to industry of electrical power and other Local Government services, shipping and interstate transport.

On the question of apprentices I feel that with the many highly paid unskilled jobs available today it is almost impossible to get young fellows to spend four or five long years in studying under an apprenticeship indenture to fit themselves for a tradesman's job, and I commend to members the excellent report on the Commonwealth and State apprenticeship system which was presented as recently as 1954. Although highly commendatory of the apprenticeship system in this country it points out many of its weaknesses. While these unskilled jobs are available to youths I think

it will be very difficult to get them to take up apprenticeships, and that is what the commission finds.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—There are more apprentices now than ever there were.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—There is still a shortage.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—That may be, but the numbers are high.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—The commission, after a long inquiry and the examination of more than 100 witnesses, came to the conclusion that in 1956 we might be on an even keel in respect of apprentices, but would not forecast beyond that date. They point out that there is a great shortage in most industries, particularly in the unattractive trades which, of course, one would expect. The report refers only to the absorption of these people in peace-time, and as to what would happen should we become involved in another war the commission would not venture to predict. I think we will have to do more through our educational establishments to make senior students aware of just what avenues are open to them in industry, and try to shape their training accordingly.

I saw a statement in the press this week by the Premier in regard to the shortage of houses. I think there are 15,000 people still on the books of the Housing Trust despite the excellent job it has done. Most of this work has been left to the Government. Hitherto, private enterprise built houses for letting and sale, but today there is no inducement for a person to invest in houses for letting. Rent controls still apply and high prices rule for labour and materials, and it is therefore hard to induce people to put their money into house properties.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin—Do you say the Government builds most of the houses?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—I would say 50 per cent of them. It is unfortunate that the State Bank's operations in this direction are limited. There should be provision for a decrease in deposits on these houses so that more people can invest in a home. Millions of pounds are being spent on hire-purchase, thus utilizing money which would otherwise be available for home construction. At the next Premiers' Conference I hope the question of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement will be pushed and that the Commonwealth will renew for another period its assistance to the States. The main objective of the Government should be to keep the

people happy by housing them. I congratulate the Minister of Health on the progress made in housing the aged. He has done all that was possible and I congratulate him on the new move to house the old people.

With the recent wonderful rains and consequent promise of a good season, and if satisfactory prices for our exports are maintained, there is no reason why the State should not progress. I will quote a few points from an article I read in the *Monthly Summary of Australian Conditions* which relate to margins and productivity. It included the following:—

For better or for worse, the Commonwealth court's margin judgment of November 5 and the events which have flowed from it have set the principle of increased monetary rewards for skill and training and the economy will have to be adjusted to the new conditions. There has been no dearth of complaints and grim forebodings; the unskilled worker claims he has been by-passed, the industrialist sees no alternative to increasing costs and prices, and other critics have predicted inflation, more severe competition from imports, further export difficulties and even higher taxation.

We often hear America quoted as being a country of high wages and cheap commodities. It does not follow that because a country is a high wage country that it is a dear country to live in. The reason is that its factories are better equipped and the turnout per man is greater. The writer urges us to meet the challenge by better equipment in our factories, and adds:—

Higher output per man will be brought about not by propagandism but by a realization by all concerned of the basic factors which influence the efficiency of the nation's economic activity, and by a willingness to improve them. Of the physical necessities, over a wide area of industry and business the most important is a high volume of capital equipment per worker. The more expensive labour becomes the greater the urgency to utilize the labour force more economically by ensuring that there is a sufficient amount of plant to enable each worker to achieve maximum output. One of the main factors accounting for the capacity of the U.S.A. economy to couple very high employee remuneration with productive efficiency is the high ratio of horsepower to manpower and, in this matter progressive improvement in Australia is much to be desired. However machinery lying idle is expensive so that anything like full efficiency in production requires full use to be made of all equipment by working shifts whenever possible.

The writer advocates that machinery should work around the clock. If this were done no doubt there would be much trouble with the trade unions.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan—It would not be long before we over-produced.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—It would be all right provided we could get rid of our production. The article further states:—

A second main requirement is efficient organization and control. It is a prime responsibility of management to plan and to co-ordinate all activities in advance, and to see that operations run smoothly and without bottle-necks. A constant watch is required for new ideas which may lead to greater efficiency in any process, no matter how trivial. Alertness, initiative, adaptability and a willingness to learn are among the qualities now most necessary for those in control of production. Finally, companies, particularly the larger ones, should be prepared to spend larger sums of money on research of all kinds. Organized scientific research into new products and new processes is one of the best methods of ensuring that output is of the highest quality and at the lowest cost. This, after all, is what the public wants and what the wise producer will see that they obtain.

To help industry breathe freely again and put money into reserve to provide better equipment, taxation should be reduced. By this means the writer suggests that we might meet the challenge, which many people today are afraid of. The Lieutenant-Governor's speech recorded the excellent work done by the Government and also related to future activities. I support the motion, and later hope to devote myself to the various questions as they arise.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE (Central No. 2) —The opening of Parliament this year was not quite as glamorous as last year when we had our beloved Queen here. This year we missed our Governor, Sir Robert George. We all wish him and Lady George a very good holiday in England. We and the Government should thank Providence that they got through their terrible trial at Marble Hill and came out alive. It was a shocking disaster. I am sure they will be all the better for their holiday, and we all look forward to welcoming them on their return.

I sincerely join in the tribute paid by the mover of the motion, Mr. Story, to Sir Mellis Napier, the Lieutenant-Governor. I doubt whether many people realize the amount of work he does for the State, and how fortunate we are to have a man of his capacity. He is the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, a very onerous responsibility. Also as Chancellor of the University he presides at all University council meetings. The University plays a very important part in the life of the community. In the absence of the Governor, Sir Mellis is also the Lieutenant-Governor and has to attend all kinds of functions, both serious and gay. He receives debutantes and among

other things puts ribbons on horses. We are highly indebted to Sir Mellis and his wife for giving so much of their time to the State. We talk about overtime. They both work much overtime in the service of the State. Therefore, I was glad to hear the mover of the motion pay a tribute to their work. I join in congratulating my honourable and learned friend, the Attorney-General, on his elevation to that office. I am sure he will carry out his duties very well. I have already paid a tribute in this place to his predecessor, the late Hon. R. J. Rudall. It is a good thing for the State and everyone that we should have young people like Mr. Rowe in positions of importance in the affairs of the State.

In the New Year honours Her Majesty the Queen was pleased to honour two people in whom members of the Council are particularly interested by creating them Knights of the Realm. One is Sir Frank Perry, a member of this Chamber, who has richly earned the honour conferred upon him. In addition to the work he has done in the House of Assembly and this Council, he has also done much in local government activities. He was chairman of the whole munitions organization in South Australia during the second world war, and is still in a big way an adviser to the Commonwealth Government on munitions. He has done magnificent work for the State and I congratulate him, and I am sure that all members are pleased he was honoured. The other recipient was Sir Edgar Bean, the Parliamentary Draftsman, who is known affectionately to every one of us. He also has been an adviser to the State Government on many delicate matters. I doubt whether for many years there has been a more trusted adviser at interstate conferences on many delicate negotiations by the State Government. He and I are both Oxonians and perhaps I feel a little more his way than some other people on that account, but I do know that there is not a member in this place or anywhere else in Parliament who has not gone to him with the greatest confidence at any time when he has wanted advice on an amendment, or on whether he should try to get a Bill amended in another way, without receiving the greatest courtesy and assistance possible. I feel that we should also congratulate him on the great honour conferred on him.

The adoption of this Address in Reply was moved by our new member, the Hon. C. R. Story, whom we all welcome. I join with other members in congratulating him on his well

measured, temperately delivered, excellent speech, and I am sure he will be a great acquisition to the debating strength of this Chamber. I was naturally interested in his reference to Mildura in the early days and to how Mildura, Renmark and other places were carved out of the scrub, because at the time that was being done I was going up and down the river to school. Mr. George Chaffey used to come and stay with my father over the week-ends when the whole scheme was being planned. I am very pleased to welcome to this House a representative of the population now spread up and down the Murray.

We have had an interesting and rather typical debate. The Hon. Mr. Condon, who I am sorry is not here today, gave us quite an interesting speech on the usual topics; water-side workers, workmen's compensation, wharves—in which he took us back 42 years in his reference to non-payment of rates—and the old competition between margarine and butter. Sir Wallace Sandford spoke quite interestingly about the development of secondary industries. There has been quite an emphasis in the press and in statements by the Government on the development of motor car and other factories in this State. While Sir Wallace was speaking I was reminded of a most excellent speech made in this Chamber on the Address in Reply debate in 1949 by the Attorney-General, who reminded us that it was not right for anybody in this State to be complacent in believing that because we were having such development of secondary industry all was well. He pointed out that in 1939 there were 522,000 people in Australia engaged in rural occupations and that in 1947 this number had fallen to 464,000. He also said that in 1947 when 464,000 were engaged in rural occupations, 823,000 were engaged in factory employment and 589,000 were employed by the Government. The latest figures I have been able to obtain are those for the year ended June, 1953. At that time 504,000 were engaged in rural occupations, considerably more than in 1947, but nothing like the 1939 figure. In factory occupations the number had increased to 933,261, and in Government employment I am glad to say the number had been reduced to 566,700, for which I congratulate the Liberal and Country Federal Government. I have quoted these figures to show that it is not a good thing for us to be talking too much about how well we are getting on because we are developing secondary industries. In the *Advertiser* a few days ago appeared an article headed "Forecast of Rural

Output Drop," in which the following appeared:—

The Bureau of Agricultural Economics estimates that the year's production will total £1,102,000,000, compared with £1,168,000,000 in 1953-54. Declines in the price of wool and the production of wheat are stated as the main causes of the decline.

I will not weary honourable members by reading the whole of the article, but the thing that struck me was this statement:—

Areas under all major crops except sugar have this season been less than in the previous season and production has also been less.

This Government can claim great credit for keeping its eyes all the time on making it more attractive for people to go into rural occupations as against the policy of paying very high wages to people engaged in occupations in the metropolitan area. I think it is very important that we keep this in our minds.

The Hon. Mr. Edmonds today made a very good speech about land settlement and compared the position after the first war with the position after this war in the treatment of those who want to go on the land. I was very taken with the way he used the word "repatriated" because in many cases it is not a question of repatriation but of people who have been to the war coming back and deciding they would like to go on the land. They then have some study or experience, put their names down and are allotted a block. I think I have mentioned in this Chamber before, but it is worth mentioning again, that as a member of the State Board of the R.S.L. after the first war I visited the river settlements when the arguments about development were going on and people were thrown into channels and so on. I had some experience on the Land Settlement Committee after the second war and I always felt that not enough people realized that the ordinary fellow who goes away to the war and may be injured or gassed or contract malaria comes back and goes back to his own job without claiming anything. If he is entitled to a pension for wounds, he gets it, but otherwise he comes back and gets on with his job. What about the fellow who wants to go on the land? He has at least £10,000 spent on him. I have seen the settlement on Kangaroo Island where the settlers start off with stainless steel sinks and hot water laid on, things for which other people have to work for years.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—But aren't they returned soldiers?

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE—They are, and I will speak about them without any assistance

from the honourable member. It is the duty of everyone involved to keep things in their proper perspective. It has been said that this is a way to develop the country, and so it is; it will increase production, which will be a very good thing. However, I wish to speak up for the returned soldier who comes back and gets on with his job; he is the man who has my sympathy. When we talk about the great amount that is being done for returned soldiers after this war in comparison with the period after the first war I think we must bear in mind always the position of the men who have gone away, fought, come back and gone into their old jobs. It is just possible that we can spoil certain people when they would be all the better and would come out all the better if they realized how much was being done for them.

I was also interested in Mr. Story's remarks about the fruit industry on the river and the subsequent comment of Mr. Anthony that everything is quite all right. I do not think it is quite as bad as it was painted in the one way or quite as good as was suggested in the other way. Mr. Story said:—

The industry has had to shoulder additional burdens this season in finding markets for the increased tonnages of lemons, brought about firstly by increased plantings on war service land settlement areas.

I want to make it quite clear that the Land Settlement Committee was well aware of the position when it was first appointed and when it made its first reports. The Loveday area, was particularly referred to by Mr. Story. There are whole paragraphs in the Committee's report on the Loveday and Loxton areas, on the marketing possibilities and on how dependent the whole of the river is on Empire preference. Evidence relating to the Mediterranean countries, where people were paid 1s. 6d. a day for 12 hours' work, was considered by the Committee, and also what it would be like competing with them without Empire preference. We tried to get some statement from the Commonwealth Government as to how the markets would be stabilized if we recommended further planting, and this is very pertinent to the honourable member's speech. We said:—

It is not possible to obtain from the Commonwealth Government or any other authority a definite policy as to stabilization of prices for various types of fruit in the post-war years, and the committee therefore wishes to make it quite clear that, in recommending additional plantings at Loxton, it does so with no feeling of certainty as to future markets.

We tried as far as we could to see what guarantees we could get or give to the people who were to be placed on those blocks, and we put paragraphs like that in all our earlier reports in connection with river settlements because we felt that some day those settlers would say "Why did you put us here?" There was no guarantee in the recommendations that were made; in fact we felt rather nervous about the situation. Surely it does not take much imagination to visualize the position. In those days people in the Mediterranean countries were being paid 1s. 6d. a day for 12 hours' work. At the time we were taking evidence, in 1945, the basic wage here was £4 17s. for 44 hours work, and today it is £11 11s. for 40 hours, and it is a bit different when the settler has to pay those wages to get his crop in. The cost of pumping water at that time was £3s 10s. an acre-foot and now it averages £7 10s., so that the expenses of producing this fruit have gone up very much indeed. The product has to be of the very highest quality to compete in the general markets of the world, and it can do so even then only by virtue of Empire preferences. To that extent, I sympathize with Mr. Story whom I think will be very valuable in acquainting us with the real position in these matters from time to time.

I was glad to note the reference in His Excellency's speech to the hire-purchase system, for I believe it to be a very good thing that from time to time those in responsible positions should call attention to

dangers that arise. We had a bad bout of inflation in 1951-52 and we managed to halt it. Now, with increases in margins and wages, we are again in danger and it seems to me that our people are simply mortgaging the future with the purchase of all sorts of household goods and machinery on hire-purchase. It is a very dangerous state of affairs and I am very sorry to see that three very large banks have gone into the business. I am not much distressed about what they actually do with their money, but I am as to the effect it will have. It lends respectability to the whole thing in the eyes of the community, whereas, in my opinion, it is simply greasing the slippery pole, for it induces people to spend more than they can afford and to commit themselves to responsibilities that may be hard to meet, and I can only trust that the result will not be as bad as I fear.

Numerous other matters were referred to in His Excellency's speech—price control, landlord and tenant legislation and other old familiar subjects that will be again coming before us, when we will be able to express our opinions upon them. Again, I would like to congratulate the mover and the seconder and have pleasure in supporting the motion.

Sir FRANK PERRY secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.52 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, June 1, at 2 p.m.