

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

FIRST SESSION OF THE THIRTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT (1956)

The Thirty-fourth Parliament of South Australia having been prorogued until February 29, 1956, and the life of the House of Assembly having expired on that date, general elections were held on March 3. By proclamation dated April 12 the new Parliament was summoned to meet on May 8, and the First Session began on that date.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, May 8, 1956.

The Council assembled at 11 a.m. The Clerk (Mr. I. J. Ball) read the proclamation by His Excellency the Governor (Air Vice-Marshal Sir Robert George) summoning the first session of the Thirty-Fifth Parliament.

GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION.

The Commissioners appointed by the Governor to do all things necessary to prepare for the opening of the session, the Hon. Sir Mellis Napier (Chief Justice) and the Hon. Sir Geoffrey Reed (a Judge of the Supreme Court), were announced by Black Rod (Mr. A. D. Drummond) and conducted to chairs on the dais.

A message was sent to the House of Assembly requesting members of that House to attend to hear the Governor's commission for the opening of Parliament. The members of the House of Assembly having arrived, the Clerk read the commission.

The Senior Commissioner (the Hon. Sir Mellis Napier) announced that His Excellency the Governor would, in person, declare the reason for his calling the Parliament together as soon as the new members of the Legislative Council and the members of the House of Assembly had been sworn and the House of Assembly had notified its election of Speaker.

The members of the House of Assembly and the second Commissioner withdrew.

SWEARING IN NEW MEMBERS.

The Senior Commissioner produced a commission from the Governor authorizing him to be a Commissioner to administer to newly-elected members the Oath of Allegiance or receive an affirmation in lieu thereof, also writs and returns for the election of 10 members.

The Oath of Allegiance was then administered to and subscribed by nine of the new members (the Hon. F. J. Condon being absent through illness), who signed the members' roll for their respective districts.

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Chief Secretary)—I have to remind the Council that the time has arrived for the election of its President. I have the honour to move that the Hon. Sir Walter Duncan be elected.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH (Acting Leader of the Opposition)—I have much pleasure in seconding the motion.

The Hon. Sir WALTER DUNCAN (Midland)—I humbly submit myself to the will of the Council.

There being no other nomination the Hon. Sir Walter Duncan was elected and was escorted to the President's chair by the mover and seconder of the motion.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—On behalf of honourable members of this Council, I congratulate you Sir, upon your re-election to the office of President. You

have for the past 12 years presided over the deliberations of this Council, and during that time you have earned by your impartiality the respect and confidence of every member of this place. Moreover, you have maintained and preserved that high standard of dignity and decorum which has always marked the deliberations of this Council and become characteristic of its proceedings. Your long experience and distinguished service have earned the unanimous request that you received today to consent to your appointment as President of this Council, and I express the wish that you may enjoy a happy term of office, and that good health, coupled with your long experience, will enable you to preside over our deliberations for the advancement and progress of our State.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH (Acting Leader of the Opposition)—On behalf of the Opposition I sincerely endorse the remarks expressed by the Chief Secretary with regard to your election as President. It is true, as the Chief Secretary said, that your impartiality in conducting the affairs of this Chamber and in safeguarding the interests of members has become renowned. I recall that when I entered this Parliament you did not hold your present exalted position but were a member on the floor of the House, and this is the third occasion that I have had the honour to witness your election to the highest position that the Legislative Council can confer on any member. I think it well to record today that you have served this State as a member and President of this Council for a period of 38 years continuously. Not only have you served the State in the political sphere, but you and your family have served the State in the economic sphere in playing a prominent part in the development of South Australia.

Parliament is a very noble institution, and it is well that I should briefly refer to its growth in South Australia. In 1836 this House was a wholly nominated Chamber, nominated by the Crown, over which the Governor presided. Then from 1851 to 1857 it was a partly nominated and partly elected Chamber, first under the President, John Morphet, from 1851 to 1855 and then James Hurtle Fisher from 1855 to 1857. Then in 1857 it became a wholly elected Chamber on restricted franchise, and, Sir, you have the honour of being, in the period of 120 years since we have had representative Government, the eleventh President. The good wishes and sentiments expressed by the Chief Secretary are reaffirmed by the Opposition.

We wish you long occupancy of the Chair and good health, and as we open our business in this Chamber may Divine Providence protect you.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE (Central No. 2)—Speaking for myself and on behalf of the members of the Liberal and Country Party in this Chamber I desire also to associate myself with the congratulatory remarks of the Chief Secretary and Mr. Bardolph. As Mr. Bardolph has said, you have given 38 years devoted service to this Council and to the State, and in addition you have, over the past 12 years, presided over this Council in a way which has added to its reputation for dignity and for the dispatch of business in a proper manner. A great deal of the credit for the high opinion in which this Council is held outside and even in other States is due to the manner in which you have conducted proceedings. I am sure that we all have the very greatest confidence in you, in your impartiality and in the way you conduct the business, and we do congratulate you and wish you a long and happy term as President of this Council.

The Hon. Sir WALTER DUNCAN (President)—A person would not be human who did not appreciate the eulogistic and kind remarks of members this morning. The Chief Secretary and others have exaggerated what I can do, but I realize that they have appointed me after a 12 years' trial for another term, which in itself I must appreciate. The re-appointment and the renewal of confidence are naturally things which anyone would appreciate. However, it is with the goodwill of my fellow members, more than any merits of my own, that the Council has maintained its reputation for its thorough and effective work. Without that goodwill, any efforts of mine would be futile, but with your willing and generous co-operation I am confident that the Council can and will maintain the reputation it has built up. Impartiality has been referred to, and I can assure honourable members that the practices of the past will be continued. I look upon impartiality as being one of the sheet anchors of the success of any Parliament. Next year, as Mr. Bardolph has pointed out, will be the hundredth year since South Australia first elected a Legislative Council. He may not quite agree with my remark that I feel confident its services will be as useful to the State in the future as they have been in the past, and with your help, gentlemen, its traditions will be fully maintained. I can only assure you again that I will endeavour to help this being done at all times to the best of my ability.

At 11.37 a.m. the sitting was suspended to enable the Council to proceed to Government House to present the President to His Excellency the Governor.

On resuming at 12.10 p.m.

The PRESIDENT—I have to report that, accompanied by members of the Council, I proceeded to Government House and there presented myself as President to His Excellency the Governor, and claimed for the Council the right of free access to and communication with His Excellency, and that the most favourable construction might be placed on all its proceedings. To that His Excellency was pleased to reply:—

I congratulate honourable members of the Legislative Council on their choice of President. I readily assure you of my confirmation of all constitutional rights and privileges enjoyed by the Council over which you preside, and you may rest content that the proceedings of the Council will always receive my most favourable consideration.

At 12.12 p.m. the sitting was suspended until 2.15 p.m.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

At 2.15 p.m. His Excellency the Governor, having been announced by Black Rod, was received by the President at the Bar of the Council Chamber and by him conducted to the Chair. The Speaker and the members of the House of Assembly having entered the Chamber in obedience to the summons of the Governor, His Excellency read his Opening Speech as follows:—

Honourable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly.

1. I have called you together for the dispatch of business.

2. My Ministers and I deeply regret the recent deaths of the Hon. A. W. Christian and Mr. H. D. Michael, who had for many years been esteemed members of this Parliament. Each of them had rendered valuable services to the State, both in war and peace, and held important public offices. By reason of their sound abilities, high principles, and kindly dispositions they were held in affection and respect by all sections of the community. You will, I am sure, join me in extending our sympathy to the members of their families.

3. During the present financial year the economic position of South Australia has remained sound, and we have been less affected by the inflation of recent times than Australia as a whole. Since August, 1953, the rise in

the cost of living in this State, as indicated by the "C" series index, has been about 16 per cent less than the general rise throughout Australia. Primary production is well maintained, and secondary industry is still expanding. In December last there were nearly 100 factory buildings, costing over £4,200,000, in course of construction. A year earlier the number was 62 buildings worth £3,000,000, and at the end of 1953, 47 buildings worth about the same amount. From these figures it appears that the rate of expansion is increasing. To the extent that the output from the new factories replaces imports, they are making a worthwhile contribution to the solution of Australia's trade problems. During the last five years the population of the State has increased by over 100,000, and the additional wage earners have been absorbed into industry without difficulty. Another index of our sound position is that Savings Bank deposits in this State, according to the latest figures, are £161 per head, which is 40 per cent above the Australian average of £119.

4. Notwithstanding the prosperity enjoyed by our citizens, my Government is faced with heavy financial commitments, for which money is not readily available. In some respects the cost and scope of social services in South Australia are rapidly increasing. In addition, there are difficulties in connection with our loan programme. Although interest rates have been increased, the loan market is not producing enough money for Governmental loan works throughout Australia, and a considerable portion of the money required for this purpose is being provided by the Commonwealth from sources other than public loans. In these circumstances it would be unrealistic to expect that this State will be able to budget in the coming financial year for any increase in the annual amount of its loan programme. On the other hand, my Government is faced with an urgent need for additional capital expenditure. For example, increased expenditure on school buildings is unavoidable because of the rapid growth in the school population. Owing to the delay in securing agreement on the new freight rates for Leigh Creek coal, it is necessary, if rationing of electricity is to be avoided, that three years' expenditure on the new power station at Port Augusta shall be compressed into two years. We are also committed to a substantial increase of urgent expenditure on hospitals, and must face a new avenue of expenditure to provide facilities necessary in connection with bulk handling. The formulation of a loan programme which will make

allowance for these factors is a difficult task which is receiving the earnest consideration of my Ministers.

5. The season of 1955-1956 has been, on the whole, a good one both for agriculture and the pastoral industries. Although some wheatlands were water-logged by heavy winter rains, the wheat harvest amounted to the satisfactory figure of 30,000,000 bushels, with an average yield of 18 bushels per acre. There was also a large barley harvest, amounting to 25,000,000 bushels from approximately 1,000,000 acres, while a bountiful crop of oats yielded 7,500,000 bushels from 450,000 acres. For pastoral production the season was one of the best in the history of the State. A record sheep population of 13,000,000 head was carried, and over 150,000,000 lb. of wool were produced. Lower prices, however, reduced the income from wool by about £3,000,000. The output of fat lambs was well maintained and beef cattle were produced in greater quantities and better quality than in recent years. Milk production also was maintained at the high level of the previous season and it is expected that last year's output of butter will be exceeded. Seasonal conditions were not favourable for orchards and vineyards, but it is expected that exports of apples will reach 200,000 cases; and as a result of an increase in the South Australian quota, there was a record export of South Australian citrus fruits to New Zealand.

6. The Government has continued with its active measures for improving conditions in the primary industries. Among the matters now receiving special attention are the control and eradication of foot rot and pleuro-pneumonia, the improvement of commercial egg-producing poultry, the improvement of the quality and yield of barley, research in agronomy, the control of noxious weeds and soil conservation. Recent researches in agronomy on southern Yorke Peninsula have shown that with the aid of adequate quantities of fertilizer much land in this area is capable of growing good crops and pastures.

7. Negotiations are in progress between the Commonwealth Government and the dried fruits industry for the establishment of a stabilization plan to assist the industry with its marketing problems and ensure a profitable return to growers. Proposals made by the Commonwealth Government are now being considered by the industry. If they are approved by the growers, they will have the support of my Government, and any State legislation which may be necessary will be introduced during the coming session.

8. During the current year a large programme of work has been carried out for improving the State's water supply; and at the same time plans and preparation for further works have been actively proceeding. The labour available for construction has increased but there is still an excessive turnover. In the Mannum-Adelaide scheme the Government is now engaged in constructing the section of the main operated by gravity—a work which will still further improve the water supply of the metropolitan area. Progress in building the South Para Reservoir has been good and the reservoir will be ready to store water in the winter of 1957. The completion of this reservoir is essential for the water supply of the town of Elizabeth. The designs and specifications of the proposed Myponga Reservoir have been completed and tenders for the construction of the dam will be invited shortly. The execution of works for the Yorke Peninsula water supply is progressing, and by the end of the next financial year they will be completed as far as Maitland. Concurrently with these major projects, operations are in progress for providing or improving water supplies at a number of places throughout the State, including County Buxton, Onkaparinga Valley, Loxton, Wood's Point, Warooka and Swan Reach. Further schemes contemplated for next financial year include water supplies for Birdwood, Mount Pleasant, St. Kilda, Coonalpyn, Kingston and the Hundred of Finniss. It is also proposed to improve the water supply at Peterborough by a pipe line bringing River Murray water to that town from Jamestown. Investigations are continuing on a number of important works which will become necessary as population and industries increase. Among these are reservoirs at Clarendon, Kangaroo Creek, and Smith Creek on Kangaroo Island; improvements of the Victor Harbour supply; and the duplication of part of the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline.

9. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Electricity Trust. Since its inception, intense effort has built the trust into an extremely sound organization having both the resources and the ability to meet the phenomenal growth in the demand for power. At the same time, as a result of careful management, the rises in the price of electricity have been the lowest in Australia. Since the creation of the trust the amount of current supplied has increased three-fold; and a particularly gratifying feature is the great increase in the number of country consumers, of whom

there are now 44,000. Last year alone no less than 4,000 additional country consumers were connected to the trust's mains. To meet the expanding demand, additional generating plant has been installed in the Port Augusta power station. This station is now producing more than one-third of the total electricity supplied by the trust and burns 8,000 tons of Leigh Creek coal a week. Negotiations with the Commonwealth concerning the rate to be charged for the transport of Leigh Creek coal over the new railway route to Port Augusta have been successfully concluded, and a rate of 11s. 6d. a ton, which is satisfactory to my Ministers, has been agreed upon. Now that this matter is settled, the trust is actively proceeding with the establishment of a second power station at Port Augusta which, when completed, will have a capacity of 180,000 kilowatts. The trust proposes to transmit electricity from this station to the metropolitan area at 275,000 volts, which is the highest voltage ever used in this State. It is expected that the cost of the station and transmission system will be £30,000,000.

The Trust has extended its activities in the South-East by acquiring the electricity undertaking of Mount Gambier City Council. In this area, a new power station, designed to burn waste wood from sawmills, or oil if necessary, is being built and will be in operation within a few months. At Port Lincoln a new power station is being constructed and this also will shortly be completed. The trust is giving careful attention to the development and use of atomic energy and intends to send additional engineers overseas to work with United Kingdom authorities on nuclear power projects.

10. The Leigh Creek coalfield continues to operate as a self-supporting business enterprise and is producing half a million tons of coal a year. More Leigh Creek coal is used for the production of electricity in South Australia than any other fuel. The water supply of the coalfield has been secured by the completion of the Aroona Dam which already holds sufficient water to supply the needs of the field for the next eighteen months. Honourable members of both Houses of Parliament will be invited to inspect this field probably during the first week in August.

11. During the year the earnings and business of the railways have been maintained, and much work done for the betterment of the undertaking. Although there are shortages of some classes of employees, more men have been available for maintenance than in recent

years—a fact which has made it possible to overtake arrears. Diesel power is being brought into use as rapidly as possible wherever circumstances render it advantageous to do so. The contract let last year for six large diesel-electric locomotives has been extended so as to cover four additional engines. These locomotives are already in course of delivery and ten smaller locomotives will also be delivered next year. In addition, the Railways Department has constructed 17 diesel railcars and several air-conditioned cars for metropolitan and country services. More diesel cars will be manufactured during the coming year. The use of diesel power has been of considerable financial benefit to the railways, enabling them to absorb increased costs and make economies. During the coming year preliminary work will be undertaken on the railway line from Woodlands Park to Tonsley, and the widening of the gauge between Naracoorte and Kingston will be continued.

12. The Government is giving careful attention to the problem of extending closer settlement on Crown lands and other areas which are at present not fully productive. Extensive investigations are being made and already 17,000 acres on southern Yorke Peninsula have been offered for application and 15,000 acres on Eyre Peninsula. Much larger areas in the Upper South-East will be offered when the investigations are complete. Good progress is being made in constructing the drains in the western division of the South-East and the main channels will be finished before the end of next year. This drainage scheme has already produced a marked improvement in substantial areas of land; and as the works are completed there will be progressively greater benefits both from the main drains, and from private drains constructed by landholders to connect with them. The existing scheme will benefit about 260,000 acres; and, in addition, the area of 140,000 acres north of drains K and L has been recently referred to the Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement for investigation of its drainage possibilities. The Government is also negotiating with the Victorian Government for the drainage of the Dismal Swamp area into the Glenelg River. These schemes may ultimately add greatly to the agricultural production of the South-East. The War Service Land Settlement Scheme continues to progress as a highly successful undertaking. It has now provided holdings for about 900 settlers and a substantial number of additional blocks are being developed for allotment.

13. The Government's policy of improving harbour facilities throughout the State is being successfully carried out. At Port Adelaide the rebuilding of wharves and the improvement of shipping accommodation, port facilities, and navigation aids are making good progress. The extensions of the accommodation at Kingscote are almost completed. Preparations are being made for other important works, including harbour improvements and bulk handling installations at Port Lincoln, improved shipping facilities and deepening at Port Pirie, a conveyor plant for loading gypsum and grain in bulk at Thevenard, and the installation of bulk handling equipment at Wallaroo. It is the intention of the Government to give high priority to the work at Wallaroo and Port Lincoln.

14. The great increase in the number, weight and size of motor vehicles, and particularly motor trucks, necessitates constant attention to maintenance and improvement of existing roads. The Government's road programme, in addition to providing for these matters, also includes a vigorous policy of extending bituminous surfaces and the reconstruction of numerous bridges. This latter work is estimated to cost £4,000,000. Secondary roads, and feeder roads giving access to newly-developed areas and to timber resources, will receive special attention. The existing arrangements for road finance will be maintained, under which the whole of the receipts from motor taxes and the petrol tax are allocated for road work. The expenditure last year was approximately £6,145,000. This year it will be £6,750,000 and the estimate for next year is over £7,000,000, which includes an additional £400,000 to be received by South Australia from the recent increase in the petrol tax.

15. The State forestry undertakings have had another year of good progress. Plantings for 1956-1957 will bring the area of forests to 130,000 acres, while production of log timber is steadily increasing. The capital invested in the forests has now been repaid and the earnings are already making contributions to general revenue. The construction of the new sawmill at Mount Gambier has proceeded rapidly and production will commence during the coming financial year. Adjacent to this mill, a plant for the manufacture of softwood railway sleepers will shortly be erected. A programme of housing for employees in the mills is also being prepared.

16. The Government has given special attention to the possibilities of the fisheries in South Australian waters. The experts recently brought to this State from the United States have demonstrated methods of catching tuna which appear to be most effective, and it is highly probable that by adopting them, profitable tuna fisheries can be developed. Although full information is not yet available on the habits of these fish in South Australian waters, the Government has received from the experts favourable reports indicating possibilities of greatly extending this industry. Further surveys and experimental work in connection with tuna will be carried out, with the aid of a well-equipped vessel which the Government has purchased for such purposes. The Government intends also to make investigations with respect to the sardines and pilchards which appear to abound in South Australian waters. The establishment of pilchard fisheries might be of considerable assistance to the poultry and stock industries which need large quantities of protein. It is the policy of the Government to give further assistance to the fishing industry by arranging additional expert technical advice, and by providing improved shore facilities. For these latter, the Harbors Board will act as the constructing authority.

17. The Government has continued to assist citizens to purchase and build their own homes. Under the Homes Act no fewer than 7,850 families have obtained houses, and the loans guaranteed amount to over £10,000,000. The State Bank has also made a substantial contribution to housing. Loans which are now in course of repayment to the bank exceed £8,000,000, and advances made during the current financial year will reach a total of £1,300,000. The financial results have been highly satisfactory and the losses negligible.

18. The South Australian Housing Trust expects to complete about 3,200 houses during 1955-1956, bringing the total of the houses built by the trust to over 27,000. The trust will build about 3,000 houses during next financial year. Any reduction in the houses built for letting will be offset by building more houses for sale. The scheme recently announced, under which the trust will build houses on land owned by applicants is being widely availed of and preparations for building the houses have been completed. Rapid progress is being made in the building programme of the new town of Elizabeth. Six hundred and fifty houses have been completed and 1,350 are under construction. The population is

already 2,600 and it is expected that it will reach 42,000 within ten years. A favourable omen for the industrial future of the town is the fact that General Motors-Holdens has agreed to purchase about 230 acres as a site for industrial buildings. Discussions are proceeding with the Salisbury District Council for the erection at Elizabeth of a large community hospital to serve the Salisbury-Elizabeth area.

19. My Ministers regard the conclusion of a satisfactory housing agreement as a matter of vital importance in order to prevent grave recession in the building trades at a time when thousands of our citizens are still requiring homes. They regret that an extension of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement has not yet been concluded. At the most recent conference several States rejected the new Commonwealth proposals. My Ministers, however, were prepared to accept most of the Commonwealth's conditions, but were anxious to ensure that ample funds should be made available for housing at the lowest possible rate of interest. Every effort will be made to bring this matter to a satisfactory conclusion.

20. The public health services have been kept at a high level of efficiency, and the Government is making some desirable expansions of them. Arrangements are well advanced for a preventive campaign against poliomyelitis by the use of vaccine. A plan has also been put into operation for enrolling dental students who will, on graduation, work for some years in the school dental services. The Deaf Guidance Clinic is being equipped, and will be in full operation in the near future.

21. Progress during this year in carrying out the Government's hospital programme has been highly satisfactory, and my Ministers expect that even a greater amount of work will be done next year. The expenditure for 1955-1956 will be approximately £1,800,000. Next year, the building of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital will be accelerated and the total expenditure will probably amount to £3,200,000. The Government's programme includes improvements and extensions for the Adelaide Hospital and the mental hospitals in the metropolitan area, as well as the country Government hospitals at Port Pirie, Mount Gambier and Port Augusta. During last year the Soldier's Memorial Hospital at Kingston and the Penola District Memorial Hospital were placed on the list of Government subsidized hospitals, which brings the total number of such hospitals to forty-seven. Subsidies paid this year will amount to £219,000, an increase of £35,000

over last years payments. The policy of assisting country district hospitals by grants towards approved capital expenditure is being continued, and a similar policy has been inaugurated for non-profit hospitals in the metropolitan area. The sum of £231,000 has been provided for this expenditure in the current year. Assistance on a generous scale has also been granted to other public institutions such as the Adelaide Children's Hospital, the Queen Victoria Maternity Home, Home for Incurables, Northcote Home and Kalyra Sanatorium. Expenditure on this account during the year 1955-1956 was £702,000—£257,000 greater than that of the previous year.

21. The Education Department is further expanding its organization to deal with the very great growth in the number of pupils. Last year, primary school pupils increased by about 6,200, and secondary school pupils by 2,500. Similar or even greater increases in future years must be prepared for. The campaign for recruitment of trainee teachers conducted at the end of last year was successful. At present 1,360 students are enrolled for the teaching service, of whom about 750 are in the Teachers College. The Government's large programme of school building is progressing well. Since last June seven new primary schools have been opened, and two existing schools have been housed in new buildings. In addition, the building of 32 large schools or major extensions to existing schools is in progress, and it is expected that 12 more will be begun in the coming financial year. The Government is extending the facilities for adult education, and is bringing into operation a scheme involving the use of country technical schools as centres for this purpose.

22. During the present financial year several notable developments have contributed to a substantial increase in mineral production, and the value of the minerals produced will be the highest in the history of the State. The most important development was the commencement of uranium oxide production at Port Pirie in August of last year. The plant at Port Pirie is operating efficiently, and sales of its products are already approaching £2,000,000, a large proportion of which is paid in dollars. Other developments of prime importance were the commencement of production at the Nairne pyrites mine, and the establishment, by the Broken Hill Associated Smelters, of plant at Port Pirie for the production of sulphuric acid from waste gases. This acid is used in the Government's uranium plant as well as by the fertilizer industry. The Government has carried

out a great amount of exploratory drilling and investigation in the iron-bearing zones of the Middleback Ranges, with the object of finding additional iron ore for the establishment of a steel industry. These operations are being continued. The recent discovery of an oil-bearing formation at Wilkatana, 40 miles north of Port Augusta, is an encouraging sign of the possible existence of oil in South Australia. The Government is giving substantial technical help to the oil exploration companies which are testing widespread areas throughout the State.

23. My Ministers expect that the expenditure of the State from revenue for the current financial year will exceed the estimate by over £500,000. The excess expenditure is spread over a number of items, and is partly due to additional employees having become available for some departments, enabling them to operate with more adequate staff. As a result of a number of relatively small decreases, the revenue for the year will fall short of the estimate by approximately £500,000. In consequence, the deficit for the year will probably be of the order of £1,800,000. The gross loan expenditure is expected to reach £29,000,000, which is slightly above the amount provided in last year's Loan Bill. Credits to the Loan Fund will be approximately £4,750,000, resulting in a net loan expenditure of £24,250,000.

Gentlemen of the House of Assembly:

24. Supplementary Estimates for current expenditure not provided for in last year's Appropriations, and Estimates of Expenditure for the coming financial year will be laid before you.

Honourable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly:

25. You will be asked to pass a Supply Bill for £7,000,000 to meet expenditure during the early part of the coming financial year.

26. My Ministers are of opinion that it is in the public interest to retain the legislation for the control of rents and prices and will seek your sanction to Bills for this purpose.

27. The Bill raising the age for marriage will again be introduced.

28. The Government is preparing a number of legislative proposals for your consideration. Among them are suggested amendments of the laws relating to habitual criminals and the criminal law, companies, justices, limitation of actions, elections, administration and probate, friendly societies, pharmacy, registration of nurses, Crown lands, local government, Renmark

Irrigation Trust, charitable trusts, and other matters.

29. I now declare this session open and trust that your deliberations may be guided by Divine Providence to the advancement of the welfare of the State.

The Governor retired from the Chamber and the Speaker and the members of the House of Assembly withdrew.

The PRESIDENT again took the Chair and read prayers.

DEATHS OF HON. A. W. CHRISTIAN AND MR. H. D. MICHAEL.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Chief Secretary)—I move—

That the Legislative Council expresses its deep regret at the death of the Hon. A. W. Christian, formerly Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Forests and member for Eyre in the House of Assembly, and places on record its appreciation of his public services and that, as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased Minister, the sitting of the Council be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

With this motion I also desire to associate Mr. H. D. Michael, a late member of the House of Assembly, who gave a long period of service to the public life of this State and who had resigned on account of ill-health long before anyone would have expected. Mr. Michael passed away within the last week or so. Usually each House makes its recognition of the services of its own members, but I think on this occasion we could discard any problems of precedent because the late Arthur Christian was at the time of his death a serving Minister of the Crown, and, if I may say so, would still have been but for his unfortunate and untimely death. I ask the Council to bear with me while I relate something of our late and respected colleague and Minister, who entered Parliament as a member for Flinders in 1933. In 1938 this became the district of Eyre. Mr. Christian had had a period of service totalling 23 years. He was Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Forests from May 28, 1954, to January 7, 1956, the date of his death. He came to us as a practical farmer who had developed virgin country at Yaninee on Eyre Peninsula during that very difficult period which we all recognize as the depression years of the early 1930's. Later, having succeeded against the great problems of development at that time, he took up land on the River Murray. Arthur Christian always took a great interest in all local and district activities. He was a great

advocate for the district he represented and where he had been occupied in land development after overseas service in World War I. Arthur Christian was capable and conscientious in everything he did. When I first knew him we had many opposing views, but the longer my associations with him grew the better I appreciated his sterling qualities, and we learned to have respect for one another's opinions.

He performed excellent services, first as a member of the Public Works Standing Committee from 1938 to 1955, and as chairman from 1944 to 1955. During that time, with the growing problems confronting the State and the financial provisions of the Act which necessitated reference to the Committee of so many public works, he was chairman during a very busy period of its deliberations. He succeeded Sir George Jenkins the previous chairman who became Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Christian followed the same course, vacating the chairmanship of the Committee to become Minister of Agriculture. He very quickly showed his capacity as a capable administrator, and I am sure that everything he did increased the prestige and the value of the Department of Agriculture. It was somewhat of a tragedy that, in view of the enthusiasm he had shown in his administration of bush fires legislation, he should have hastened his death by his personal activity in fighting a fire in his own area on the day which took him from us.

I also couple with this resolution a reference to Mr. H. D. Michael who, I think, came into Parliament in 1938 and had always been recognized as one who spoke with authority on matters on which he was particularly well qualified to address Parliament, namely, land development, in respect of which he had proved his competence in a private capacity. He followed our respected colleague, Mr. Cudmore, who was the first Chairman of the Parliamentary Land Settlement Committee. When he resigned Mr. Michael took over that position and he filled it with credit to himself and the Committee and to the great advantage of Parliament. He resigned only just prior to the last elections because of failing health. However, I do not think that he or anyone closely associated with him expected his untimely death; indeed, I believe he was beginning to question whether his decision to retire was the right one, but within a matter of hours from the expression of such an opinion he was suddenly removed from the midst of his loved ones. So, because of the qualities which

these two gentlemen possessed and which earned for them the confidence and respect of every member of our Legislature, I feel it only fitting that we should join in this tribute of respect.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH (Central No. 1)—On behalf of my colleagues of the Opposition I join with the Chief Secretary in the sentiments he has expressed and the sympathy he has conveyed to the relatives of the late members. I do not need to add more because the honourable gentleman expressed the feelings of every member, other than to say that public life takes its toll of those who offer their services to the community. Since I have been in this House quite a number of members have been taken from us because of the work that they had done on behalf of the community, and that appears to be the toll attaching to those who apply themselves assiduously to public life. We on this side heartily agree with the fine sentiments expressed by Sir Lyell McEwin.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE (Central No. 2)—I am glad that the Chief Secretary drew attention to the question as to whether the procedure we are following is the customary one, as neither of the gentlemen were members of this Council, but as far as they personally are concerned I support the motion most heartily. They were both returned soldiers of the First World War. Both of them gave everything they had to their work in the political world and it obviously took toll of them. Mr. Michael was with me from the beginning of the Parliamentary Land Settlement Committee and it was a big job for a person who had spent most of his life on the land to assume control of the conduct of public inquiries. It was quite definitely a strain upon him, but he stood up to it and did his job to the utmost of his ability.

Mr. Christian came into Parliament when I did; if I may say so, 1933 was rather a vintage year. Like the Chief Secretary on many occasions I did not agree with Mr. Christian, but he was so sincere and so clear in his ideas of what was right that we had to respect those ideas in later years when we got to know him better. Both gentlemen were a great credit to Parliament and they did their utmost for the State. Therefore, I heartily support the motion that we should adjourn as a mark of respect to their memory.

Members stood in their places in support of the motion.

[*Sitting suspended from 3.35 to 3.48 p.m.*]

QUESTION.**HILTON BRIDGE.**

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I ask leave to make a statement with a view to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—The Hilton Bridge at Mile End, which is on the continuation of Grote Street, has been in a dilapidated condition for some years and the Railways Department has been spending quite an amount in casual repairs, such as reinstating broken fences. This bridge is on one of the main thoroughfares from Adelaide to the Mile End railway yards. Can the Minister of Railways say what has been the cost of repairs to the bridge over the past five years, and whether any plans have been formulated for the erection of a new substantial bridge; and if so, the estimated cost?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—In view of the specific question regarding costs, I ask the honourable member to place the question on the Notice Paper.

REPORTS OF PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE.

The PRESIDENT laid on the table reports by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works on the West Terrace trunk main, Royal Adelaide Hospital—McEwin Building additions (final), Royal Adelaide Hospital radiotherapy treatment block (final), and Croydon Park and Elizabeth (Area 2) primary schools, together with minutes of evidence.

REPORTS OF LAND SETTLEMENT COMMITTEE.

The PRESIDENT laid on the table reports by the Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement on land development in the Hundreds of Monbulla and Macgillivray.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

The PRESIDENT having laid on the table a copy of the Governor's Speech, the Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin (Chief Secretary) moved:—

That a committee consisting of the Hons. K. E. J. Bardolph, C. R. Cudmore, E. H. Edmonds, Sir Arthur Rymill, and the Chief Secretary be appointed to prepare a draft Address in Reply to the Speech delivered this day by His Excellency the Governor, and to report on next day of sitting.

Motion carried.

SESSIONAL COMMITTEES.

Sessional Committees were appointed as follows:—

Standing Orders.—The President, the Chief Secretary, and the Hons. F. J. Condon, C. R. Cudmore, and A. J. Melrose.

Library.—The President and the Hons. K. E. J. Bardolph, J. L. S. Bice, and Sir Arthur Rymill.

Printing.—The Hons. S. C. Bevan, J. L. Cowan, A. J. Shard, C. R. Story, and R. R. Wilson.

COURT OF DISPUTED RETURNS.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN moved:—

That, in accordance with the provisions of the Electoral Act, 1929-55, four members be elected by ballot to be members of a Court of Disputed Returns.

A ballot having been taken, the Chief Secretary and the Hons. S. C. Bevan, L. H. Densley, and A. J. Shard were declared duly elected.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT ACT (ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES).

The PRESIDENT—I draw attention to a proclamation in the *Government Gazette*, dated December 8, 1955, notifying Her Majesty's assent to the Act which had been reserved for the signification of Her Majesty's pleasure thereon.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.15 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, May 15, at 2 p.m.