

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, August 20, 1957.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir Walter Duncan) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.**INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC**

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Because of the widespread prevalence of influenza is it the Government's intention, in view of the approaching September holidays, to close schools earlier than usual? If not, will it consider doing so?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—Immediately it was known that there might be an influenza epidemic the Government arranged for key personnel, such as airport officials, nurses and others, to receive injections against influenza, and that was done as quickly as the vaccine became available, so that everything possible from a preventative point of view was done at the earliest possible moment. I understand that the Minister of Education is keeping the matter of closing schools under review from day to day, but he has not yet decided that it is necessary to do so.

ROYAL SHOW ADJOURNMENT.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE—Has the Government decided when Parliament will rise for the Royal Show adjournment? If so, can the Attorney-General advise members so that they may be able to make the necessary arrangements.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—It is intended that Parliament shall rise on Wednesday, September 4, and adjourn for the remainder of that week and the following week.

SUPPLY BILL (No. 2).

Received from the House of Assembly and read a first time.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Attorney-General)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.
Clause 1 is the short title. Clause 2 authorizes the issue and application of a further supply of £7,000,000 to carry on the public services of the State. No. 1 Supply Act authorized £7,000,000 which will be exhausted by the 23rd August. Total supply of £14,000,000 will enable the Government to carry on until the middle of October by which time the Appropriation Bill will be before the House.

Clause 3 limits the payments to be made from Supply to amounts provided on last year's Estimates for similar establishments or services, except in cases of salary and wage increases authorized by wage fixing tribunals.

I am indebted to the Council for permitting discussion of this Bill to be proceeded with. It was passed in another place the week before last, but because that House was not sitting last week it could not be sent to us then, which has created the necessity for it to be passed today.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Leader of the Opposition)—On June 26 we passed Supply Bill (No. 1) for the purpose of meeting the commitments of the Treasurer up to June 30, 1957. This is the second Supply Bill for a similar amount, making a total of £14,000,000 in a very short period. I well remember the time when, if we handled that sum in the whole session, it was considered we were doing a good job. This simply goes to show what increased costs have meant to the State in recent years. The money is for the purpose of meeting the commitments of the Public Service and I cannot see any benefit to be derived from delaying the passage of the Bill. I therefore support the second reading.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE (Central No. 2)—This Bill is in exactly the same form as the second Supply Bill last year and I see no possible reason for not putting it through speedily as requested by the Government. I was interested in Mr. Condon's remark that it just shows how public expenditure is increasing. As all of this money is for the payment of salaries and wages I was rather surprised to hear him calling attention to the fact that they are increasing so fast. I support the Bill.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.

A message was received from the House of Assembly notifying that Mr. L. C. Harding had been appointed to fill the place on the Printing Committee rendered vacant by the death of Mr. L. R. Heath.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON CONSOLIDATION BILLS.

A message was received from the House of Assembly requesting the concurrence of the Legislative Council in the appointment of a Joint Committee on Consolidation Bills.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Attorney-General) moved—

That the Assembly's request be agreed to and that the members of the Legislative Council to be members of the Joint Committee be the Chief Secretary, the Hon. C. R. Cudmore, and the Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph, of whom two shall form the quorum of the Council members necessary to be present at all sittings of the committee.

Motion carried.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from August 13. Page 324.)

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL (Central No. 2)—In supporting the motion, first I wish to associate myself with the eulogistic references to His Excellency and Lady George. Her Ladyship has brought to South Australia a generous measure of that fragrance and charm for which our Mother Country is noted. The way in which His Excellency has carried out his important duties makes me want to echo the famous battlecry of the Scots Greys on the field of Waterloo, "Scotland for ever."

I congratulate the mover and seconder of the motion on their excellent speeches, also the other members who have made interesting contributions. Mr. Condon gave an interesting speech although I do not agree with everything he said. Last week we had the opportunity to hear him make a further speech, which might have been directed to the Address in Reply. As a comparatively new member, I should like to congratulate our Ministers, not only those in this House, but those in another place, because my experience shows that they are extremely sympathetic and helpful whether one wants assistance, information or a quick answer to a question. They always do their best to make these things available, and to me it has been most impressive. I feel sure that members of the Labor Party in this House will agree that their devotion to their duties is notable.

I have noticed, no doubt in common with other honourable members, a considerable improvement in the last year or two in the standard of driving. Of course, there was much room for that improvement, and thus it is easier to get improvement in those circumstances. I attribute the improvement to two things. The first is the courtesy of the police force, and the second that the considerably increased traffic has made better driving essen-

tial, because it is a matter of self-preservation. One often hears on important public occasions, such as Royal visits, reference to our excellent police force, but it is not so customary to refer to it on ordinary occasions, such as this is. The courtesy of our force has improved immensely in recent years, and is a credit not only to the force, but also to the State. We all know that a strong police force is an absolute essential in any community, and I believe that with our force we have nothing to fear in that regard. They have duties to carry out which are not always popular with the individual concerned, and therefore when one finds them doing it with courtesy, which is difficult for them at times, one feels that it can only be to the advantage of the force and to the State as a whole.

We are living in a changing world, and we have had a number of changes in the Road Traffic Act recently, but those changes will of necessity need further changes, because in the trail of change comes other requirements. I refer particularly to hand signals by motorists. At present we have official signals under the regulations of the Act, but there are only two. One is the raised hand and the other the outstretched arm. As I understand it, the outstretched hand means a right turn, the raised hand means slowing down and/or stopping and, although I do not think it is the official interpretation, it is a natural corollary that it is also given for a left hand turn. With the alteration to the law that requires a right turn to be made in most cases from the centre of the road rather than from the left-hand side, I have noticed that the stop signal has become confusing and can cause danger, and I think the powers that be in this regard will have to make a reassessment of these traffic signals. What one sees on many occasions is that if a man desires to turn right he goes into the centre of the road and, in nine cases out of ten, makes the stop or slow signal, and the motorist following does not know what he is going to do. He gets the impression that the other vehicle might be turning right, in which case he is obliged by law to pass on the left, but the other motorist is not making the sign that he is turning right; rather, his sign may well be interpreted as indicating that he is turning left. I know that these signs have been cut to a minimum to make things as simple as possible, but one can overdo simplicity, and I think it might well be considered that we could have a return to the slow, stop, right and left hand turn signals. We are all familiar with

them because they are given in other places, and most have been in vogue here from time to time. It is no more difficult for a motorist to make one of these four signals than one of the two now in force. They are simple, self-explanatory in the main, and I think it would make for safer driving if we got back to them.

Another matter with which I have been concerned is the standardization of colouring of warning signals. Apparently the Standards Association has adopted yellow and black signs as a standard for road signals, but the trouble is that those standard signs have become so familiar to motorists that they are apt not to notice them because, not only do they exist for sudden warnings such as schools, cross roads or things for which the motorist should exercise immediate caution, but they exist in volume for bus and tram stops, street names, parking signs and signals of various types, for pole numbers for trams and buses, advertisements and other things. The black and yellow signals have become so voluminous on our roads that they no longer act as a sufficient warning sign, and I think we should get back to the old red colour, which would immediately draw attention to such things as schools and cross roads. All motorists want to observe signs, but when every few yards there is a black and yellow signal they cannot be expected to observe sufficiently well the signals indicating immediate danger. My remedy would be either to get back to the red colouring or to restrict the use of black and yellow signs to things that really need warning, such as cross roads and so on, and to forbid their use for such things as street names and parking signs, which have no urgency or immediacy of appeal.

I congratulate the Government on the traffic lights that have been erected recently, one set at the intersection of South Road and Anzac Highway and another at the Emerson crossing. Having been to a number of countries and having observed traffic lights there fairly considerably, I believe that the Anzac Highway-South Road traffic lights are quite easily the best I have ever seen. The way they handle traffic has to be seen to be believed. They are vehicular controlled lights, and the immediate way they re-act to traffic is by far the best of any I have had anything to do with. The Emerson set of lights is good, but not as good as the other, and I suggest that there is room for two straight through channels of traffic rather than the one that exists at the moment. There is a left turn channel, one straight

ahead and one for traffic turning right. The volume of the straight through traffic is at least double and probably many times greater than that turning left or right, yet only one channel is provided, and this has the effect of restricting traffic. I have had a close look at it and I am sure that by squeezing the right and left channels it would be possible to make two straight ahead channels. I make no apology for mentioning this matter in this debate, although it may seem trivial, because this road carries an immense volume of traffic which, with the great development taking place in this area, will keep increasing.

I agree with the Minister of Roads in the cautious attitude he has adopted in relation to the zebra crossings. He has been criticized in certain circles for being careful and for the fact that we have no zebra crossings yet, but I have seen the terrible dangers that they can create so I think he is wise in waiting and in seeing that everything is in order before they are introduced, and that they will only be introduced in the proper places. This type of crossing was never intended for roads carrying heavy traffic.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan—Don't they work rather successfully in Melbourne?

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—I have not observed them there sufficiently to comment, but I have seen them working in London where there are infinitely more of them, and I have seen many hair-raising incidents caused by them. Another topic to which I wish to refer is driving tests. I think the most important thing relating to this matter would be an intelligence test for drivers, because I have noticed whenever there is a near accident that the chap who has done the silly thing very often has a vacant look. I think that before people are allowed to drive these dangerous weapons, as they are called from time to time, they should at least have the intelligence to be able to handle them with a sense of responsibility. That might be a revolutionary idea. I do not think it would exclude many from obtaining licences but it could well exclude those who are a danger on the roads.

I was extremely disappointed to hear in His Excellency's Speech that it is proposed once again to introduce a Bill to continue price control. This legislation was brought in as a war-time measure, but it has been with the State ever since. From my observations, every time it has been extended it has been said that it is a temporary measure. In the debate

on last year's extension of the Act I mentioned that it had a nasty air of permanency creeping into it. Since then I have read in *Hansard* a statement by the Premier in the House of Assembly last session, and I propose to read it because I think it has a very ominous sound of permanency. He said:—

When I hear the cheap politics of the honourable member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) on price control, I remind him that it was deliberately dumped and sabotaged by the Labor Government of New South Wales. The other day, when we had a chance to get back uniform price control in Australia, when the States were fairly unanimous and it was hoped to induce the Legislative Councils of Western Australia and Tasmania to come back into the field again, before Victoria had dealt with the issue the New South Wales Government said it would not do so. Where are my friends with their politics now? The New South Wales Government deliberately sabotaged the attempt to get back to something that would be uniform and somewhat effective, because it flatly declined to do so. There was no question of having difficulty with the Legislative Council there.

Unless members have changed their views considerably I am afraid we may again find that there is no difficulty with the Legislative Council here either.

The Governor's Speech referred to the deeds of our Government in keeping down the C series index. Since that reference was made it is noteworthy that on the last assessment of the standards of the C series index South Australia registered the highest increase of any State, despite the fact that price control remains only here and in Queensland. We hear much about the effectiveness of price control, and yet for the last quarter the rise in one of the two States retaining price control was the highest of any State. We also hear that a reason for the continuation of price control is that there is not sufficient competition and that goods are not in sufficient supply. I would have thought that is thoroughly outmoded, and, indeed, I hear people from the other States remark that Rundle Street is the most competitive street in Australia, and I believe that is so. However, only a few weeks ago we saw the Rundle Street traders being hounded by the Prices Commissioner. Even in that most competitive street the Commissioner sought to impose the dead hand of Socialism.

I have received several communications which I regard as confidential, although I may be given permission to disclose the source later if necessary. An extract from one of the

letters puts the matter very clearly from the point of view of industry. One letter will interest Mr. Condon because it deals with the milling industry, and part of it reads:—

It is quite obvious that price control is recognized as profit control (a) they always ask for balance-sheets; (b) if business shows an overall profit then no increase will be recognized to losing departments; (c) they will not recognize interest on capital outlay on plant, machinery and stock. The result is that many lines are not being manufactured but are required by the public. The wholesale elimination of all small businesses, the proprietors of these being the salt of the earth as far as the nation is concerned.

That is one of the tragedies that I drew attention to in the last debate on prices. The writer continues:—

There is the continued bogey of the Prices Commissioner in regard to associations. The main functions of these are protection against Government interference. The key role of earnings is often forgotten. They supply both the incentive and means by which our industries are encouraged and enabled to go forward in providing the tools for our growing labour force and in turning out the steadily increasing quantity and variety of goods and services the Australian people desire. Good earnings are essential whether for generating new capital from within the corporation or for attracting it from without.

Those are very weighty words and very down to earth practical comments.

I have had quite a number of other communications. One of these is from the electrical industry, and is as follows:—

The small electrical contractor is finding it most difficult to make both ends meet, and therefore a number are being put through the bankruptcy court which in turn is affecting the electrical trade in general.

That is a direct result of price control, yet we heard the Chief Secretary, in a debate not long ago, say that price control had done no harm to anybody. There is a direct statement that it is causing bankruptcy.

A retailer in his letter states that price control is depriving us of the benefits of competitive trading. The most weighty remark was made by a participant in the meat industry who said:—

It would certainly seem that the department is only too ready to act on its own initiative in decreasing prices, but will make no effort of its own to promulgate any increase warranted by market trends.

That point should not be overlooked, but I think we may have been inclined to overlook it. When the market shows a downward trend the Prices Commissioner is ready to hop into that trade immediately and knock prices down, but when prices show an upward trend, due

to the variation in the price of raw products, for instance, he does not bother to look at it but waits until an application for an increase is made and then, after a tardy investigation that often takes a long time, fixes a new price, when the person in the particular trade or industry has been suffering from too low a price for quite a long time. If that is fair I would like anyone to explain just why. If we are to have price control, when the Prices Commissioner initiates drops in prices, surely in fairness he should also initiate rises in prices, but that is not done.

We had a recent example in the tea trade. During the last debate tea was referred to at length by speakers in this Council. When the bottom fell out of the market the Prices Commissioner dropped tea control like a hot coal, although we were told only a few months ago of the wonderful virtues of control of tea prices and what it was doing for the individual throughout the State and indeed throughout Australia. It was also said that price control was so wonderful here that it was benefiting not only our own citizens but people all over Australia. The Labor Party tends rather blindly to support price control because it is one of those little planks of its policy, but I do not think it has recognized what it will mean to the Party in the long run. Its members seem to fail to see that good profits by commerce and industry are in their own interests. On the contrary we continually hear them criticizing profits. They do not seem to go one step further and realize that if profits are not made by industry they cannot get the wages and conditions they want because there has to be the wherewithal to pay them; if profits are down it necessarily restricts the ability of industry to pay. I would like to quote from a Victorian publication a very simple fact very well expressed in answer to the question "What are ploughed back profits?"

The Prices Commissioner does not approve of the principle of companies making sufficient profits to be able to, what is called, "plough them back into industry." His attitude is that you should have enough to pay as small a dividend as possible and to cover your outgoings, and if you are making any more it is to be knocked off by way of profit control. This is the answer to the question, and I would ask Labor members particularly to take note of it:—

That part of profits retained by companies, after paying taxation and shareholders' dividends, used for the purchase of buildings and

plant in order to extend output, reduce costs and strengthen productive efficiency. Ploughed back profits play a vital part in company growth and in providing more jobs.

Never was anything truer or more succinctly expressed. We hear as a reason why price control should be continued that we in this State, that is away from the centres of the big markets, must keep our costs of production down so that we can compete successfully in Melbourne and Sydney. I have been at some pains to ascertain the attitude of industrialists and commercial companies on this matter, and I have been told by both the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Manufactures that practically all their members are against price control, yet apparently the Legislature knows better than they do how to protect their businesses. Surely these people who are competing in the eastern States want to continue to compete and do it on the best possible basis, but they do not want price control. They say they can compete without it, so why thrust it on them?

I believe there has not been sufficient inquiry into the overall effect of price control. While the Prices Commissioner has been taking care of the pence—and it is only a matter of pence that he takes care of, but it is the few pence on turnover that make the difference between a good profit and a loss—I am afraid that the pounds have been taking care of themselves somewhere else and that South Australian trade has been by-passed on account of price control. I suggest that there should be an inquiry into the overall effect of price control; not on the question of a penny off this and a halfpenny off that, but as to what it is really doing to South Australia in the overall sense. I am afraid that if we could really get to the bottom of it we would find that price control is causing mounting and permanent injury to this State.

Finally, I would like to say a little with reference to the Prices Commissioner himself. I do not want this to be taken as personal criticism of him, for I have no doubt that he is doing his best within his ability. Indeed, I have no doubt that he is doing his best to keep his job, but the fact remains that the Prices Commissioner today is virtually the master of all business in South Australia, and I should like to know what sort of person is the man capable of doing that from an office desk in a Government department. I would like to know whether this is a man or a superman because he has a task that I feel is beyond mortal man, and I have given cogent reasons

why this is so. In face of the fact that this appears to be gaining further permanency I propose to ask later in the session a few pertinent questions as to what the qualifications, academic and practical, are whereby, not the present Prices Commissioner so much as any person can properly fulfil the duties that he is called upon to carry out under this piece of bad legislation.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—Is he not doing just what he is told by the Minister?

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—I do not know what is going on behind the walls, but I do know that he has a task that it is impossible for anyone to perform. I propose to make a few short references to banking because, going around the streets of Adelaide I find—and I think it applies even within the walls of this Chamber—that a lot of people do not quite understand the role of the various financial institutions. It is particularly important that members of Parliament should do so. We hear a good deal of criticism of various aspects of banking from time to time, and it seems generally to stem from a conception of banking not in accordance with facts. The fundamental principle of all financial institutions is that they lend a little longer than they borrow. Trading banks do most of their borrowing, in effect, on moneys deposited with them on current account, which can be drawn out at any time. Thus they have to be in a position to repay immediately they are called upon to do so and therefore it should be quite obvious to anyone that in those circumstances there is not a tremendous amount of banks' funds that can be made available for other than short term loans because they must have those moneys invested in investments that can readily become available in cash. One hears a good deal said as to why our trading banks are not doing more in housing loans. I would answer by saying that trading banks do all they can to assist in housing, but only a proportion of their funds can be tied up in that type of long term loan. It is for other institutions to bear the financing of most of the housing, and those institutions are available for that purpose, namely, life insurance companies, trustee companies, savings banks and the credit foncier departments of the State Bank and the Commonwealth Bank. The point is that we should not expect institutions to lend money for purposes for which they were not set up. Although it is not in my electorate, a month or two ago I visited Enfield Heights to look

at houses which had been giving trouble. I went for humanitarian reasons, because, having had some experience with a cracked house myself, I had a fellow feeling for those unfortunate people. It is tragic to see what is happening in certain instances. I do not think that any particular blame is placeable on anybody. The houses were erected by the Housing Trust, and no-one seems to know quite why they have not been successful but most people seem to think, and probably rightly, that the soil is at fault. However, the fact remains that some of these unfortunate people, who have invested what one might term their all in these houses, are in the position of literally seeing their houses crack away to the extent where they can easily fall down. I am not exaggerating when I say that.

It is one of the principles of Liberalism to encourage home ownership. I am not for one moment saying that the Government is responsible in this matter; but Governments can be benevolent, and I sincerely hope that something will be done for these people. It would have to be an act of grace, because there is no legal liability. Would it not be a very generous gesture if the trust took over these houses, of course at the voluntary option of the owners, for letting purposes and gave the people who have invested their money a new house in exchange? That suggestion might well be considered, and I think it would be practicable.

I mentioned Liberal principles. Now I want to refer to the Labor Party, because I am one who always thought that the Labor Party in this State was inclined to be perhaps more moderate than those elsewhere in Australia, but recent manifestations suggest to me that those of us who held this view may have to reassess it. One sees a certain section of the Party bowing its head to Socialism and to a dictatorial type of resolution which was passed, I think, by the Party's central executive. Certain members of this House are being dictated to to the extent that they are to be compelled to cast their vote a certain way whether they feel like it or not. In other words, even the Labor Party here is becoming subject to interferences from outside bodies. It is a definite example of dictation to Parliament by an outside body. It seems that Bukowskyism is starting to creep into South Australia, but I hope it will not be carried any further.

A number of members have made suggestions during the debate, including some by myself, which I hope have been constructive, but

whether they are practicable or not is another matter. Do the suggestions go any further? Does anyone take notice of them? Is anyone charged with thinking out what honourable members have said in this debate and other general debates, or are we wasting our words on the desert air? All Ministers of necessity cannot be present in this House all the time; and indeed, only a proportion of the Ministers are members of this House, consequently a number of suggestions made would be in respect of Ministers who, although they are represented in this House, cannot be directly here. If there is no-one who analyses members' speeches on general topics such as this is, then I suggest there should be someone who could look over the various suggestions, because I have no doubt that good could come from them from time to time.

I mentioned to one member of the Council that I proposed to make some suggestions in respect of the Road Traffic Act, and asked whether they would go any further. It appears that the Act is everyone's and no-one's baby, Ministerially. Several Ministers are involved. I do not criticize them, because it is one of those things which happens with certain Acts; but when there is no-one in particular in charge of an Act it becomes more difficult to have one's suggestions noted. This member said to me that I should go before the State Traffic Committee and give evidence, as he did. My answer is that I am a member of this honourable House, to which the Traffic Committee is subordinate, and if I make suggestions here they should be drawn to the attention of the committee rather than that I should have to go to this subordinate committee and ask to be heard. Those matters which we discuss here in debate on general subjects should be analysed by some officer and forwarded to the Ministers concerned.

I congratulate the Government on its general programme. As I have said before, it has done a wonderful job for South Australia, and I support nine-tenths of its programme. I have been critical about one or two things. That is my job; and if I do not express my opinions according to my principles and beliefs, then I would not wish to retain membership of this honourable House, because that is what I am here for—to express my opinions and not merely to echo the Government's programme. However, I would not like it to be thought that, because I criticize the Government on one or two aspects with which I do not agree, I am not a fulsome supporter of it, because I am. I have the highest admiration for our

Premier, whom I believe to be a man in ten million. As I have said, I am a great admirer of the Government's work, although I wish to heaven it would get rid of those Socialistic principles of price control which butt right up against Liberal principles; but when that happens I have to stand on principle, and to my regret have to oppose the Government, for which I have such an admiration. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland)—I join with other speakers in congratulating the mover and seconder of this motion. Their addresses were very interesting and, I think, very beneficial. I would also like to mention the extension of His Excellency's term of office, about which I am sure most people will be pleased. The speech with which he opened Parliament gave us a very clear understanding of the Government's intentions for this year. The economic, developmental and legislative programmes are all set out very clearly, and it is encouraging for us to have a peep into the future of Government policy and see where we are going. It is a good thing to have a Government that is on its two feet and knows where it is going. I sincerely believe it has done a remarkable job over the last few years. When a State is developing as quickly as ours it is only natural that some members do not notice the things in the Governor's Speech they would like to see, but I am sure patience will reward them, because this Government will take care of every section of the community in its turn, as it has always done. State schools and hospitals have made great inroads into our funds in the last few years, but this is only to be expected in view of the large and ever-increasing population brought about both by migration and natural increase. I take this opportunity to say a few words about the Education Department because I, like other members, was fortunate in having the opportunity to see it at work during Education Week.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—What did Education Week actually achieve?

The Hon. C. R. STORY—Some do not need any teaching, of course, as they know everything, but those who took the opportunity to learn a lesson from it gained much knowledge. For instance, I learned about the great opportunities that school children now have—visual aid, and improved methods of imparting knowledge to them. These things have been made possible in the short space of 25 years

by a realistic approach to education by our educationalists. Probably the present Director of Education has had a lot to do with this, but there has also been a steady improvement in the department over the years. I pay a compliment to the teaching profession generally. Teachers mould our youth, and if they were out of step with moral or religious conditions they could do great harm to our democratic way of life, but we are very fortunate in having attracted such a fine group of people to the profession. I was particularly impressed at a cavalcade of physical education conducted in the Upper Murray area to see tiny tots of five and children up to 15 all playing their part in this great Education Week. As this was the culmination of six months of intensive work on the part of teachers, students and, in many cases, parents, I am encouraged to think that we have entrusted the education of our youth to the right people.

At this stage I would like to say a word about the work done by the Parents and Friends Associations in our schools. The parents of students in the smallest country schools to the largest city schools, private and public, do a great job in raising funds, which are subsidized on a pound for pound basis, to buy visual aid equipment and public address systems, and to erect tuckshops and bicycle sheds.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—Don't you think the subsidy should be extended to all schools?

The Hon. C. R. STORY—That is a matter of Government policy, and not being a member of the Government, I cannot venture an opinion. It is 12 months since the peak of the Murray flood reached Renmark, and I think it is opportune to spend a few minutes today to take stock of what has happened since then. Many things have been said about this flood, but I think the position today is a very much happier one than it was 12 months ago. For instance, the Government made available a terrific amount of equipment, and people came along and gave a lot of assistance voluntarily. We are extremely fortunate in getting out of it as lightly as we have. Had it not been for the assistance given from all quarters we would have been in a much more unhappy position. It is interesting to note that councils, which carried out most of the flood protection work, have been completely reimbursed by State and Federal grants. The cleaning up of various towns along the river

is well under way; banks have been re-sited and the towns, parks, gardens and ovals are being cleaned up in the same spirit as was evident during the flood fighting.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—Did the Government do it, or did Parliament do it?

The Hon. C. R. STORY—I was always under the impression that Parliament made the laws and the Government administered them, and I think the Government, having had the money voted, used it in the best way. The removal of dead trees and vines, and the re-building of houses, has been undertaken mainly from the money provided by the Lord Mayor's Relief Fund, administered by Judge Paine's committee. Most of these things have been accomplished, but there is a sad side to this picture. On the one hand the councils have been reimbursed, and on the other hand the Lord Mayor's Relief Fund has helped with the cleaning up to a certain extent. Private banks have done a certain amount where there has been an opportunity to do it, but there are unfortunate people whose credit is no longer any security for the banks. As a result, those who had encumbered properties before the floods and who lost all their proceeds for five years have been left with only an empty shell, and we must find a way to finance them. The only way to do so is by means of long term loans from the Government. These would be purely developmental loans, administered through the State Bank, of money made available by the Government. I cannot see that there is any other solution for these people than to walk off, which is a harsh thing for people who have spent so many years in useful production. The matter has been raised with the Government on many occasions, and it has gone as far as making money available from the State Bank at the ordinary rate of interest. Each case has been dealt with on its merits, but the State Bank is a banking organization in the same way as any other bank, and I do not think it should be asked to take any business risks that private banks would not be asked to take, so I say that this should be treated as a Government loan rather than a bank loan.

Mr. Cowan and Mr. Wilson both pointed out that in many cases land inundated by flood waters is very much better now than it was before. That is so, but on the low flat country the problem of seepage is still with us, and many acres of ground will not be ready for planting for the next four or five years. I suggest that Government-owned settlements should be relieved of water rates

until they come back into production. I quote briefly from *The 1956 Flood Diary*, a very interesting publication printed by the *Murray Pioneer*, which circulates in the river areas. It is a most comprehensive account of the flood, and I think it is appropriate that the figures should be included in *Hansard*. They are as follows:—

6,154 acres of orchards and vineyards were flooded or damaged by seepage.	
20,000 acres of irrigated pastures were flooded.	
562 homes were flooded and evacuated.	
700 homes, it was estimated, were affected by seepage.	
204 holiday shacks were flooded.	
77 public buildings, business premises, factories, and public utilities were flooded.	
17,000 fruit trees were killed by flood or seepage.	
227 miles of public roads were flooded.	
14 ferries were put out of action.	
3 important bridges were either damaged or collapsed.	
40 miles of earthworks and levees were built to hold back the rising flood waters.	
1,000,000 sand bags were donated and distributed for levee protection.	

The State Government underwrote all the cost of flood protection work and reimbursed local governing bodies in full. The army gave its services free. The Commonwealth Government subsidized State expenditure on a pound for pound basis. Costs either paid or provided for are:—

	£
Flood protection	693,562
Roads and bridges	500,506
Reclaimed areas	474,576
Resiting levees, etc.	99,954
Contribution Lord Mayor's Relief Fund	100,000
Loan Renmark Irrigation Trust	12,700
General expenditure	10,862

£1,892,160

Public subscriptions were £366,000, and the amount contributed by the State and Commonwealth was £100,000, making a total of £466,000 in the Lord Mayor's Relief Fund. The owners' estimate of private flood damage is £2,000,000, and a thousand applications have been received for assistance. These figures set the total flood damage in this State at about £4,000,000, which is a lot of money in anybody's language.

The Hon. A. J. Shard—Do those figures cover all the river areas?

The Hon. C. R. STORY—Yes. A great deal of development has taken place on the high land adjacent to the river, above the flood level and between 60 and 120ft. above the

ordinary pool level of the river. This has been done entirely by individual settlers with single unit pumps. A very small percentage of the good land suitable for fruit and pasture production in South Australia is on the river. The remainder is located on billabongs and backwaters which in high rivers run quite freely. Those have water in them for perhaps three or four months of the year but the rest of the time they are very saline and unfit for use in the production of fruit or pastures. It seems ridiculous that these large tracts of country are available for subdivision and planting, yet all this water is running past out into the sea and cannot be pumped on to their land.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—Why can't it be made available?

The Hon. C. R. STORY—At present it is far too big a job for individuals to open up these creeks. I suggest the Government take steps, either as a form of national development or as a Murray River Commission project, to have these creeks banked in certain places and the entrances widened. A certain amount of snagging and logging would be necessary to clear the entrances to allow the free passage of water through these billabongs and creeks. This would enable very much more planting to take place. The Government is not being asked to do very much in this matter; the only thing being asked of them is to make the water available. I think that is a very simple thing for it to do.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—You don't expect this Government to move in that regard do you?

The Hon. C. R. STORY—I hope it will, and I am making that suggestion. I know from my past experience that the Attorney-General is paying great attention to my remarks. I wholeheartedly suggest to the Government that it is very little use spending huge sums of money on holding pools such as Lake Victoria or the Burringuck Dam to hold the water back seeing that, when it is let out, it runs straight to the sea. It would be far better if, in conjunction with these schemes, some of these back waters could be cleaned out to enable the free flow of water and so get a lot more country into production. I have in mind particularly one scheme now under way which will not cost the Government a penny, and that is the development of 1,000 acres of land adjacent to Murtho in the Paringa district by a group of individuals who will get no monetary gain out of the scheme

but are simply keen to see their areas developed. This land is cut into 40-acre blocks for horticultural purposes, and there are 25 settlers who will draw water through a communal pump. The whole scheme will be run under very much the same system as that which operates on the swamps on the River Murray. It will be necessary for the Government to bring in an amendment to the Irrigation on Private Property Act in the near future to enable this scheme to go through, and I will have more to say about it then. It is a most necessary adjunct to the ever-growing need for food. I am behind anything which does not involve the Government in huge sums of money, and I believe that if people are prepared to do things like this they should be given every encouragement.

I have constantly advocated the establishment of a co-operative cannery for the river areas. In conjunction with the member for Chaffey, members of the South Australian Canning Fruitgrowers' Association and representatives of a large interstate cannery, I met the Premier on the subject recently and as a result of the meeting a committee of inquiry was set up. That committee comprises representatives of the Treasury, the Department of Lands, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Industry and the Auditor-General's Department. It has taken evidence in South Australia and Victoria and should bring in a report before very long. I am not prepared at present to disclose any more details of this scheme, but I have always been convinced that the co-operative movement must be fostered. Grower-organized, grower-run and grower-owned organizations, such as wineries and packing sheds, have given us stability in the river areas. Had they not been in existence I very much doubt whether many people would be producing fruit and wines today. With the assistance of the State Bank, the co-operative movement has been the only thing that has got the dried fruit grower and the wine grower through very troublous times during the last 60 years.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—If you are not careful they will brand you a Socialist.

The Hon. C. R. STORY—If that is what a Socialist is I do not mind being one. From my hard personal experience I say that the co-operative movements in South Australia can only function if there is open competition with private enterprise. That has been proved to me beyond a shadow of doubt.

The Hon. L. H. Densley—You mean that they cannot function without private enterprise?

The Hon. C. R. STORY—They cannot function without competition from private enterprise. Like a lot of other Socialistic things they tend to become lax when there is a monopoly. I have seen them work with and without competition, and I say that the co-operative movement has put private enterprise on its toes and *vice versa*. Mr. Condon referred in his speech to the inquiries of the Public Works Standing Committee into a bridge over the River Murray. It seemed to me that he doubted whether it was right that people should suggest seven, eight or nine sites for a bridge over the river, but I thought the whole purpose of the committee was that it should hear people interested give their views. It should not be regarded by the committee as any sign of weakness that people have different ideas. There is not the slightest doubt that a bridge over the river is a necessity, and I am sure that the people who have given their evidence think so, but it is a question of where it should be. Their evidence will help the committee to make up its mind as to the location of the bridge, having taken into account the cost and various other factors. It is most important that the bridge should be constructed as soon as possible. When the long awaited report of the committee comes before this Chamber I am quite sure it will be eagerly sought and studied by everyone.

I was privileged recently, in company with Mr. Bevan, to attend a civil defence school in Victoria. It was a most interesting and educational experience. This Government should study this matter and if possible send one or two Cabinet Ministers to that school in order that they may be well versed in civil defence. It is a most important subject and I am quite sure that the Commonwealth Government must make more money available to the States so that they can get civil defence organizations under way. It is not just a question of whether we have an atomic bomb dropped on us; this is something that could well have been used during the last flood crisis, or in the case of bush fires or other national catastrophies. When we realize that only about one in every 160 people has a very meagre knowledge of first-aid it is very frightening. We know that an atomic bomb dropped in this city would virtually wipe it out, with all its public utilities, and yet only one in every 160 could render even the mildest form of first aid.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—There would be no necessity for it if everyone were wiped out.

The Hon. C. R. STORY—There would be, perhaps, a small fringe around about Gawler who would want first aid. The State Government should take the matter of civil defence most seriously, and at a later stage in the session I shall address my remarks more fully to this subject. I support the motion.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY (Southern)—I add my congratulations to the mover and seconder and other members who have taken part in this debate. Particularly would I like to express appreciation of the thoughtful and valuable speech just given to us by Sir Arthur Rymill. I was very interested in the question he raised as to whether matters introduced in the debate on the Address in Reply received consideration that is desirable by the Ministers in charge of the respective departments. I think he can be safely assured that this is the case. I understand that it is the general practice for the secretaries of the several Ministers to take out the relevant parts of speeches and to place them before their Ministers, and I am sure that the Address in Reply debate would lose much of its value if this were not done.

I am very pleased to know that His Excellency, Sir Robert George, has had his term extended for I appreciate very much the work he and Lady George have done for the community; the tremendous amount of travel they have undertaken to get first-hand knowledge of the affairs of the State and to provide for the people an intimate connection with the affairs of Government and the national development of the country. We have been particularly blessed with the calibre of the Governors appointed to look after the interests of the Crown in this State.

I should like to refer briefly to the late Sir George Jenkins, for his record as a member of Parliament, and particularly as a Minister, was most impressive. Sir George had a dynamic personality. He had ideas that were his own entirely and the work that he did for agriculture and primary industries was indeed remarkable. We know that when he became Minister of Agriculture he brought about quite a number of changes. He introduced into the department young men trained in agricultural science, animal husbandry and particularly in weed control and relevant subjects and he sent them out into the country to give farmers an understanding of the tremendous advances that had been made in scientific research work over the years. In the 50 years that I have been associated with agriculture I feel that nobody has made such a tremendous impact on primary

producers in general as Sir George. When he travelled into a district to attend a show or some other ceremony he never left that district until he had talked to the farmers and given them valuable information, and after he had gone they always said what a good Minister of Agriculture he was. I am pleased to extend to his family the congratulations of this Council and the community of farmers in general on the wonderful work he did. It will be a long time before we have another Minister of Agriculture with his years of experience and the ability to transmit his knowledge to his fellow agriculturalists. He raised the outlook and sentiments of the agriculturalist to a very high level, and we see today a great demand among the people to go on the land, whereas a few years ago perhaps agriculture was somewhat in the doldrums. We know that prices have made a great impact, but we know also that costs have chased after prices very rapidly. Sir George was an enthusiast with regard to the storing of fodder, to not being over-stocked, to running good quality stock and to an understanding of the scientific research that had taken place.

In the last few years the work of the Government in regard to soldier settlement has been outstanding. We have seen much partly developed and under-developed land brought into production and allotted to return soldiers and I think we can say that almost generally the soldiers are doing well on their blocks. The results of that development are now very evident in the increased produce that is going forth for sale—the lambs and the wool produced as a result of this development. Private interests also have done valuable work. The A.M.P. scheme is a good instance of it, and as a consequence we see a big extension of the number owning their own farms. We know that we cannot spend unlimited money on development. We have to keep one eye on the balance sheet and make sure that we get sufficient return to justify the expenditure and the interest on capital outlay.

The fact that there are still many people who are land hungry is evident from the fact that when a few blocks east of Coonalpyn were offered by the Government a few months ago about 170 applications were lodged, and there would have been a great many more had not the price of land been so high. So I say there is a demand for more land settlement. Whether the cost involved in land development will justify its continuation is a matter for great thought. Ever since about 1943 it has been the policy of the Government partly to develop

land before offering it and I think we can all agree that that has proved to be a good policy. However, it appears to me that in view of the high costs today, and particularly after a period when farmers throughout the country have had a series of good seasons and have consequently been able to build up pretty substantial plants and the necessary equipment for developing land, they should be given an opportunity to do so. Many farmers have sons growing up who would like to go on the land so I feel there is now an opportunity again to return to the policy of allocating some land to farmers who are prepared to develop it for their own children or their employees and who can do it with their own plant at much less cost than it would be possible for the Government or any other large organization to do it.

There is still a great deal of land on Coonalpyn Downs, along the Victorian border and in the South-East suitable for development. Some of the land which the Commonwealth Government is not prepared to accept for soldier settlement is nevertheless quite suitable and is surrounded by keen, eager people who would be very pleased if they could take up a block and develop it in their own time. As we are faced with such high developmental costs where the work is done by the Government or some other organization like the A.M.P. it is desirable to give some private individuals who have the capacity and ability to develop these lands more cheaply an opportunity to take up some blocks, and I hope that the Government will consider that when it is considering offering further land for allotment.

We have also an immense area in the South-East which will become productive as the result of drainage. I would not suggest for one moment that the policy I suggest is one that could be applied to these very wet areas for which a scheme of drainage must be envisaged and carried out for the effective settlement. However, the Government would be in a position to assist very materially on some of the land in the Coonalpyn area which has not a reasonable water supply. Mr. Story was keen to see more of the Murray River water used. I do not know what the financial position would be but there is in this area a need for a better water supply. Towns along the Melbourne railway line—Coonalpyn, Tintinara, Culburra and right down to Keith—are without permanent supplies and most rely on roof catchments. If it were financially possible to take Murray water down there it would be a great blessing, and it could be extended to some of the drier areas on Coonalpyn Downs where

there is no underground water. I ask the Government to give that very serious consideration. Wherever this land has been developed it is growing very good pastures and good wool and lambs—lambs possibly as good as any sent to the abattoirs in what we call the off season—the autumn.

Another matter that I would like to touch on is the use being made of the State Bank as regards advances to settlers. There was a time when primary producers could obtain from the State Bank money equivalent to the percentage of any improvements they had made. Under the new agreement the Government develops the land, and the Advances to Settlers Board has more or less gone out of existence. It would be a good idea if the Government paid a little more attention to the provision of finance under the Act so that people who did not have sufficient money could obtain an advance from time to time as they made improvements on their land, and thus enable them to get into a satisfactory position in building up a good agricultural property. If the Government adopted that attitude in combination with the allocation of unimproved land to private people, we might get on much more quickly with the development and production of these areas.

I was rather astounded to hear Mr. Bevan's criticism of roads. I travel on many of our roads and it has been a matter of great pleasure to see the immense progress made in the building of roads, and not only in country areas. A few years ago there were only a few roads in the South-East, but today the country has been more or less provided with roads, including two or three bitumen roads. I travel frequently on roads in the metropolitan area and often see work being done. The bitumen on the Port Road has been widened and kerbing provided. One would have thought that this kerbing would have been built many years ago. Last year excavation work was done on the Findon Road, but this has been consolidated and bitumen spread from edge to edge.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan—You should have a look at the Grange Road.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY—A trench almost 8ft. deep was dug almost on the edge of the bitumen. The Government would have to be almost superhuman if it was expected to carry out this work and at the same time maintain the road in good condition. I like to give credit where credit is due, and I think the Government has done particularly good work in this regard. It has also provided finance

to councils to make roads. Funds from car registration fees and driving licences, and money received from the Federal Government under the petrol tax are returned to the roads. Although we should all like to see much more undertaken, we must appreciate the very good job which is being done. Houses are being built in many areas and immediately this is done roads must be provided. The Government has permitted the Housing Trust to become a road-making authority and it has been forced to build roads in its areas. South Australia is not blessed with large areas of

good land, having only a limited area in good rainfall country, but over the past 20 years the Government has taken advantage of every facility and has developed South Australia to a degree which is unapproached by the other States. It gives me much pleasure to support the motion.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.07 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, August 21, at 2.15 p.m.