

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday, October 3, 1967

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

QUESTIONS

PLANNING AREAS

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I ask leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Local Government.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: An article in the *Border Watch* of Tuesday, September 26, under the heading "Planning moves in South-East districts", stated:

The State Planning Authority has resolved to declare the whole of the South-East a "planning area" under the Planning and Development Act, which came into force on July 1. Areas included will be those of the City Council of Mount Gambier, Corporation of Naracoorte, and the District Councils of Beachport, Lacedpede, Lucindale, Millicent, Mount Gambier, Naracoorte, Penola, Port MacDonnell, Robe and Tantanoola.

In view of the resolution of the State Planning Authority to declare all the district council areas of the lower South-East a planning area, can the Minister say whether these councils were approached to ascertain whether they desired to place their districts in a planning area?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Representations had been made by some of the councils referred to by the Leader to declare their areas planning areas. It is desirable to have a planning area that takes in several council areas rather than an area that takes in perhaps one or two council areas. The Mount Gambier council made representations to have that city declared a planning area, and representations were also received from some of the other councils named by the Leader. After negotiations it was decided that the whole area should be declared a planning area.

ELECTRICITY

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: Has the Minister of Labour and Industry obtained from the Minister of Works a reply to my question concerning the accident at the Torrens Island power station and the reasons for the damage to the machinery there?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: The Minister of Works has received a report from Sir Fred Drew, the Chairman of the Electricity Trust. Although the report refers to interim reports received earlier by the Minister of Works, the situation is fully covered in it. I

am sure that the honourable member will find that his questions are answered in the report, which states:

This report deals with the accident to No. 1 turbo-generator, Torrens Island power station, which occurred on August 16, 1967. It supplements the interim reports we forwarded on August 21 and 29, 1967. The turbo-generator has a capacity of 120,000 kilowatts and operates at 1,500 lb. to the square inch steam pressure and 1,000 degrees fahrenheit steam temperature. It is the first reheat turbine in use in the trust's power stations. This means that the steam, after passing through the high pressure turbine, is returned to the boiler, reheated to 1,000 degrees F. and passed to the intermediate pressure turbine. From there it flows to the low pressure turbine and thence to the condenser. The boiler and turbine act as one unit and are controlled from a single control room, this being the first trust power station operating in this way. While the plant was under construction the trust sent nine of its engineers overseas to obtain experience in various aspects of the operation of this type of plant.

On the early morning shift of August 16, the plant was being operated by trust staff comprising a shift superintendent, two unit controllers and three assistant unit controllers. The boiler had not been taken over from the contractor and an employee of the boiler contractor was present as an observer. The boiler and turbine were being brought back into service after a shut-down period of two hours to attend to a minor fault. The programme therefore called for a "hot start"; that is, the turbine was still hot from the previous operation two hours earlier. This situation calls for more care in turbine loading than a "cold" start. At 3.58 a.m. the generator was connected to the electrical power grid and the machine started to deliver power. At this stage the boiler was operating with only one of three sets of oil burners in operation. When the load on the generator had risen to 30,000 kilowatts, action was taken to light a second set of burners. At this point the oil supply was unexpectedly shut off by the flame failure protection device and all fire was lost.

With the fire lost it was necessary to blow air through the furnace for a few minutes before relighting. This was done and during this period the steam pressure dropped and the load on the turbo-generator fell away. Meanwhile, as the water level in the boiler was low, an operator increased the rate of flow of the feed pump supplying water to the boiler. This flow continued until the high water alarm operated. The operator reduced the rate of flow, but not sufficiently to prevent the water level from becoming quite high, when he stopped the pump completely. However, the water level continued to rise because the fire had been relit and steam bubbles were being formed in the water causing it to increase in volume. With the water level still rising the operator then opened blow-down valves to release water from the boiler. As the water level was so high, the turbine should have been disconnected from the boiler but this was not done.

Despite the release of water from the boiler the level continued to rise and water was carried over with the steam into the high-pressure cylinder of the turbine. This led to rapid cooling of the casing and the shaft, which resulted in distortion of the metal. Because of the extremely fine clearances between the fixed and rotating blades in the high-pressure cylinder which are required in order to obtain high efficiency of generation, this distortion was sufficient to cause contact between the fixed and moving blades. At this stage the machine was disconnected but it was impossible to bring the rotating parts weighing many tons to rest immediately and the blades suffered considerable damage. The damage can be repaired only at the maker's works and the high-pressure inner casing and rotor have therefore been shipped to England for repair. They left Adelaide on September 16.

Until they arrive in England and are dismantled and examined by the maker's technical staff, it is not possible to say what the cost of the repair will be. It appears that some blades can be re-used but the number will not be known until they are dismantled. The maker will also have to determine the extent of any distortion in the shaft and the casing and correct them. The turbo-generator was insured by the trust for damage in excess of \$100,000. It was also insured under a policy taken out by the manufacturer which protected both the manufacturer and the trust. The respective rights and liabilities of the insurance companies, the manufacturers and the trust have not at this stage been resolved. The high-pressure casing and rotor from No. 2 turbo-generator under construction at Torrens Island are being transferred to No. 1 machine. The machine should be in use again within the next week or two. The same parts intended for No. 3 machine will be used on No. 2 and when the damaged parts from No. 1 are repaired they will be used in No. 3. In this way there will be little interruption to the construction programme and No. 2 and No. 3 machines will be commissioned in 1968 and 1969 as planned.

Some specific questions have been asked about this accident as follows:

1. What is the cost of the repair? This is unknown. It cannot be determined until the damaged parts are dismantled and examined at the manufacturer's works in England.

2. What additional cost will the trust incur as a result of extra generation being needed from the older power stations which have a lower operating efficiency? The extra cost is about \$15,000 a week.

3. What steps are being taken to prevent a recurrence? An automatic device will be installed to close the valves between the boiler and the turbine if the water level in the boiler reaches a predetermined high level.

MILLICENT NORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Has the Minister of Labour and Industry yet received from the Minister of Education a reply to my recent

question regarding the Millicent North Primary School?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: My colleague reports:

As the Millicent North Primary School is one of a series of standard schools, it is considered that no alterations should be made at present. The results of a questionnaire recently circulated to headmasters and inspectors who have had experience of this type of school indicate that the design generally is satisfactory. As the design is developed, modifications will be made, but alterations for individual schools as suggested by the Millicent North committee cannot be considered if a degree of mass production and pre-planning is to be achieved.

PESTICIDES

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: I seek leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Minister representing the Minister of Agriculture.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: On September 13 I asked a question regarding the effect on food of pesticides and weedicides. As I heard this morning on the radio news a message which indicated that information along these lines must now be available, I ask the Minister whether it will be much longer before I obtain a reply to my question.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I will again refer the honourable member's question to the Minister of Agriculture and get a reply as soon as possible.

DAZZLE BOARDS

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: Will the Minister of Roads personally look into the necessity for the temporary dazzle boards that I think we can say bedizen the new road through Crafers and Stirling? It seems that there are many more of these than are necessary, and they are obstructing traffic.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Yes.

MURRAY RIVER SALINITY

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking a question of the Minister representing the Minister of Irrigation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: My question refers to the relatively high salinity present in the waters of the Murray River, particularly in the irrigation areas. This is dangerous to citrus trees, particularly in view of the present amount of overhead spray irrigation. It is the considered opinion of those people in the business that a flush-through of dilution water is needed. Is the Minister of Irrigation taking

any steps to combat the problem of increasing salinity in the Murray River? Can the Minister representing the Minister of Irrigation ascertain whether a release of dilution water is possible to enable a flow-through to reduce salinity from its present level, which is particularly dangerous to citrus? Not only is it dangerous now but, if there is no flush-through, the danger can increase.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I shall refer the honourable member's question to the Minister of Irrigation and obtain a reply.

DOMESTIC TAPS

The Hon. L. R. HART: As the repairing of leaking domestic taps, once regarded as a simple chore, now seems to require some degree of acquired skill, will the Minister of Labour and Industry take up with the Minister of Education the question whether this repair work could be taught in primary schools or, if not there, at secondary school level?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I will refer the honourable member's question to my colleague and get a reply.

WATER RESTRICTIONS

The Hon. L. R. HART: Has the Minister of Labour and Industry, representing the Minister of Works, a reply to my question of September 12 about water restrictions in respect of the Barossa reservoir?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: The Minister of Works has informed me that the supply position from Barossa and South Para reservoirs is not good and the situation, together with that of the metropolitan area, has been closely watched. At the present time supply from the Barossa and South Para reservoirs will not be subject to any formal restriction pattern, and the same degree of care as recommended for metropolitan users is being sought. Should the campaign for some reduction of demand in the metropolitan Adelaide district not be effective, thought will have to be given to the application of restrictions, and this would possibly apply to consumers on the Barossa and South Para reservoir system.

PRIMARY PRODUCERS EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE BILL

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

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Minister of Local Government): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.
While its main purpose is to provide the appropriation and machinery to enable the

Government to make financial assistance available to primary producers who are in necessitous circumstances because of the present drought conditions that have prevailed in parts of the State, the Bill also provides for continuing appropriation and machinery to deal with such similar assistance as may be necessary as a result of other natural causes such as flood, fire, animal or plant disease, insect pests and the like as may occur from time to time. Even before the present drought conditions occurred it has been part of the Government's plans that it should be in a position to give immediate and effective aid to primary producers whose financial situation has been affected through no fault of their own but who, notwithstanding that they meet certain criteria as to their ability to carry on and eventually rehabilitate their position, are unable to obtain the necessary finance from what may be regarded as normal sources.

This Bill therefore is directed towards providing such assistance and will be invoked immediately to the extent required to meet the present drought situation. Honourable members have been informed that an approach has been made to the Commonwealth in the present instance requesting financial assistance along the same lines as that given to the States of New South Wales and Queensland. Some members have asked whether assistance to primary producers in their present problems is contingent upon the Commonwealth's agreeing to assist in this fashion or whether the State is proposing to act independently in the matter. Acceptance by Parliament of this Bill will enable the Government to proceed to deal with applications for assistance as they are submitted without waiting for a final determination by the Commonwealth, and then, if the Commonwealth agrees to assist, to continue with assistance in accordance with the terms and conditions of such assistance.

The Government proposes to draw on two funds at the Treasury to provide the finance necessary to make assistance available to primary producers who are in necessitous circumstances as a result of the factors mentioned in this Bill. In the first instance, an amount of over \$200,000 is standing to the credit of the Farmers Assistance Fund at the Treasury. This balance is made up of unexpected Loan moneys and of repayments of advances, including interest, made under various Farmers Assistance and Drought Relief Acts of earlier years. Under present legislation the purposes for which such funds may be used

are mainly debt adjustment and drought relief (with some restrictions on the persons qualified to be assisted).

In the second place, an amount of nearly \$300,000 is held in the Marginal Lands Improvements Account at the Treasury. This balance derives in the first instance from grants made by the Commonwealth in the early 1940's for the purpose of assisting economic settlement in marginal wheatgrowing areas. The grants were used for purchasing holdings that did not constitute living areas. These holdings were then aggregated into larger holdings and re-allotted under marginal lands perpetual leases. The State has accounted fully to the Commonwealth for the amount of the grants then made. In fixing rentals under those marginal lands perpetual leases rentals were determined separately in respect of unimproved values and improvements. Rentals in respect of unimproved value were paid to general revenue, and those in respect of the value of improvements were paid to the Marginal Lands Improvements Fund. I point out that there was no requirement in the arrangements with the Commonwealth that rentals in respect of improvements should be credited to a special fund. These rentals could equally have been credited to revenue along with the rental applicable to unimproved value.

These moneys have, in the past, been used from time to time for assistance to producers in marginal areas, such assistance being in the nature of payments towards pasture development to arrest sand drift, materials for fencing and water supply, etc., and have been given to settlers needing such assistance to give them a reasonable chance of reaching a stage where they could carry on. No payments have been made from this account since 1961. It is therefore proposed in this Bill to appropriate \$150,000 of these moneys to the Farmers Assistance Fund for expenditure on the purposes set out in this Bill. Action will be taken at a later time to seek appropriation of the balance of these moneys for such purposes as combating soil erosion on Crown lands, control and eradication of vermin by the introduction of rabbit control schemes and possibly by the introduction of some limited subsidies to district councils, particularly those in the former marginal areas whose rate revenue is limited, for vermin control work.

This Bill, therefore, in clause 3, provides for payment into the Farmers Assistance Fund of any moneys received from the Common-

wealth for the purposes of giving assistance to primary producers in the circumstances contemplated in this Bill, amounts up to \$150,000 from the Marginal Lands Improvements Fund, moneys provided by Parliament for these purposes, and all amounts, including interest, received as repayments of advances made. Clause 4 authorizes payment from the Farmers Assistance Fund of the additional assistance to be authorized by this Bill and the expenses of administration of schemes of assistance.

Clause 5 enables assistance to be given to primary producers in the various named circumstances that give rise to the necessity for assistance. It authorizes the Minister of Lands, to whom administration of the Primary Producers Assistance Act is committed, to make advances to primary producers who are in necessitous circumstances as a result of the contingencies set out to enable them to continue in the business of primary production. This section also authorizes the Minister to make certain payments towards the cost of fodder or water for starving stock or for any other purpose deemed necessary by the Minister.

Any advances or payments will be made after consideration of reports by departmental officers or, where it is considered desirable, by a committee appointed to deal with applications made by primary producers. In this present instance the Government, having had the advice of a committee which was set up to consider the necessity for and nature of governmental action, proposes to constitute substantially the same committee to report on applications for assistance.

Clause 5 (2) sets out the conditions under which advances may be made. I propose not to recite these conditions but merely to make the observation that it is not intended in the present situation, or in any comparable one which may arise in the future, that advances from the Government should be in substitution for normal avenues of farm finance. These normal avenues should be utilized to the full extent available, thus restricting advances under this Act to the additional amount necessary to finance the rehabilitation needed to enable the applicant to get back into successful primary production.

I think I should emphasize that the application of the scheme envisaged by this Bill is limited to those persons whose financial need is mainly brought about by causes listed in the Bill. It is not for general application to persons whose failure is due to other causes.

Further, such persons must have a reasonable chance of recovery, and regard will be had to such chances in the determination of possible remissions of interest or principal for which provision is made in paragraph (d) of clause 5 (2).

At this stage I think it proper to say that I believe that in present circumstances, and in any future circumstances contemplated in the Bill, the banks and stock firms will do their part in supporting the primary producers who meet their criteria for advances. Indeed, I know that they are at present viewing applications that meet these criteria with the utmost fairness. Clause 5 (3) deals with payments made in accordance with any arrangements made with the Commonwealth under which moneys are made available by the Commonwealth for the purpose of assisting primary producers in the circumstances contemplated in the Bill. Subclause (4) provides for recovery by the Minister upon demand of any payments in whole or in part made by the Minister under paragraph (b) of subclause (1).

Clause 6 protects recipients of any payments from claims that may be made by prior creditors so that advances may be used by the recipients for the purposes for which they are made. Clause 7 exempts from stamp duty or registration fee any documents executed for applicants in accordance with the requirements of the Minister of Lands. Clause 8 provides that it shall be an offence to make a false statement in connection with any application for assistance and that any moneys advanced to an applicant as a result of a false statement shall be immediately recoverable. Clause 9 makes the necessary financial provision.

I commend this Bill to honourable members and ask for its speedy passage in order that assistance may be made available to those persons who are now in need of it as a result of the drought conditions which have obtained in certain areas of the State. Clause 10 provides for the making of any necessary regulations.

The Hon. H. K. KEMP secured the adjournment of the debate.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2)

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 28. Page 2268.)

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): The total appropriation proposed in this Bill is almost \$207,000,000, making a total proposed payment from Consolidated

Revenue Account for the year ending June 30, 1968, of almost \$278,000,000. Since the expected total receipts are \$274,000,000, a deficit of \$4,000,000 is expected on the year's operations. The Budget for 1967-68 could have been predicted; indeed, it has been predicted, because it follows a pattern similar to that set by the 1965-66 Budget, the first Budget prepared by the Labor Government after it took office. During Budget debates on two previous occasions honourable members have drawn the Government's attention to the inevitable results of the changing priorities of Government expenditure:

The Government has been warned of the results of reducing developmental expenditure and of substantially increasing non-developmental expenditure. I do not think this is a point on which the Government would say I am wrong; it is a point not under debate. I think the Government accepts this, because this has been the pattern of two previous Budgets: the developmental expenditure of the State has been decreased, whereas the non-developmental expenditure has been increased. This is borne out by the Auditor-General, who at page 13 of his report for the year ended June 30 states:

Details of the cost to the taxpayer of the main functions of Government (inclusive of debt charges) were as follows, the cost per head of mean population being shown in parenthesis:—

Social Services—	\$101,838,000 (\$92.59),
an increase of	\$5,226,000
Development of State Resources—	\$15,310,000 (\$13.92), a decrease of
	\$704,000

So, the Auditor-General also agrees that this has been the pattern of Government expenditure. Also, one can point to the fact that the little accumulated fat that the Treasury had has been dissipated at a time when we are faced with an adverse season or possibly something more drastic than an adverse season: we may be at the point of drought conditions as serious as the State has ever experienced. Yet, in this set of circumstances I cannot see that the Government, through the Budget, has attempted to assist this position or to recognize the fact that South Australia is facing extremely difficult conditions.

One would have thought that the Budget would have reflected this position or that some assistance would have been given in an attempt to face these particular conditions. As one looks at the Budgets of other States, in particular New South Wales and Victoria, one will see that in such circumstances budgetary

assistance is given. We all appreciate the fact that Commonwealth Government assistance is not given to the State for drought assistance unless the budgetary position of the State is adversely affected and some budgetary assistance is given to those who are suffering from the drought. All honourable members know that a very long letter has been sent by the Premier and Treasurer to the Prime Minister seeking some financial assistance for the State for drought relief. I do not propose to quote from the letter fully, but it deals with the State's climate, crop prospects, the areas affected by drought conditions, the consequences of the drought conditions, and the fact that drought is a national problem. I quote from page 2 of the letter, which states:

To meet the situation, the State Government has constituted a Drought Relief Committee which, amongst other things, has made approaches to the banks and stock firms seeking support for farmers to enable them to carry on, and in addition has made arrangements with the Australian Wheat Board and the Australian Barley Board to hold for sale to farmers in the drought areas grain held in storage in areas contiguous to the points of requirement. The Government is sure that the banks and stock firms will assist to the extent possible within the limits of their lending policies and available funds, and it believes that in many cases these institutions will step beyond normal limits, but the Government is fearful that even the most generous support of the banks and stock firms will fall short of requirements in many cases.

The letter goes on to deal with three categories of farmers who could be in grave difficulties: the first category comprising sharefarmers whose prime security is their plant; the second comprising those farmers who have recently acquired farming land; and the third the farmers who have experienced several droughts in a relatively short period. The letter goes on to detail an application for assistance. It states:

I therefore make formal application to you, Mr. Prime Minister, for assistance to my State similar to that given to New South Wales and Queensland by the State Grants (Drought Assistance) Act, 1966. The assistance is needed for the following purposes . . .

The letter then sets out the purposes of the assistance: first, to enable loans to be made to farmers; secondly, to meet the cost of freight on transport of fodder; thirdly, to make grants to local councils to provide for special work for employment of farmers; and fourthly, to subsidize grain prices from the various boards. The letter further states:

I believe, Mr. Prime Minister, that you will be seized with the necessity for these funds and the urgency of this availability. At this

stage I cannot place any definite quantum on the amount involved.

The letter concludes:

Pending the accumulation of the further detail necessary to establish even an approximation of requirements, I would be glad if you would consider making advances to my State.

In reply to the letter from the Premier, the Prime Minister stated:

The Commonwealth's general policy towards natural disaster relief is that, if State Governments—which of course have the primary responsibility for natural disaster relief—do not have sufficient financial resources to provide the assistance required in the case of any particular natural disaster, the Commonwealth is normally prepared to assist in meeting the cost of such relief measures. . . . Where, however, the disaster is on a large scale and requires relatively large relief expenditures, as in the case of the drought in New South Wales and Queensland and the bushfires in Tasmania, we are prepared to assist State Governments in financing such expenditures.

It is not clear from the information provided in your letter of August 3 whether, having regard to the Commonwealth's general policy in these matters, the situation would be one that would justify the provision of Commonwealth assistance to your State. However, I can assure you that when you are in a position to provide further information as to the current drought situation in this area and the possible cost of the various measures you have in mind your request will be given sympathetic and speedy consideration.

Those, briefly, are the facts of the application made for Commonwealth Government assistance. I think every honourable member appreciates that until this State takes action on the proposals in relation to drought assistance, the Commonwealth Government cannot assist the State in attempting to overcome the problems of primary producers who are adversely affected. One would consider it perfectly reasonable that some reference to this matter would be found in the Budget, but I cannot find any reference in the Budget that the State is facing some degree of difficulty on the question of a very adverse season.

I say quite frankly that I have a great deal of sympathy for the Government because of the conditions with which it is faced in this State. As I have said before, this year has all the appearances of being one of the most critical for many years. I have some sympathy with the Government in its decision to curtail the pumping of water to the metropolitan area. I think that in the months of April, May and June it pumped at a rate of less than 50 per cent of capacity. Also, I have some sympathy with the Government for the gamble it took at this stage. We had the situation of

the finances of the State being in a precarious position and the Government being faced with a very costly programme of pumping water to the metropolitan area.

Any Government faced with the financial problems facing this Government may well have taken a similar course and gambled on getting a reasonable winter rainfall. However, I am afraid I have very little sympathy for a Government that has purposely chosen a financial path that has depleted the reserves of the State, that has dissipated the little bit of financial fat we had accumulated over the years, that has so changed its priorities over two years, that has chased what I term emotional expenditure and emotional legislation, and that has indeed in many cases been guilty of some extravagance in its expenditure. Also, it has left no insurance to cover this State for a dry year and, indeed, what may yet prove to be more than just a dry year. I have no doubt that this Budget for the coming financial year anticipated increased expenditure for such things as equal pay, an extra week's leave for Government employees, and probably increased long service leave provisions. The Treasurer, in his Financial Statement, said:

In June last, in giving members information about the Government's proposals to grant an extra week's leave to Government employees other than teachers and police officers, for whom special leave entitlements already apply, I estimated the maximum cost of the proposals at about \$1,750,000 in a full year. This figure was calculated on the assumption that a sufficiently enlarged work force would be required to provide the same aggregate of days actually on duty as were being secured annually from the existing total Government work force. I expressed my confidence that in practice the costs would prove to be significantly less. No separate or specific calculation department by department has been made of additional costs for leave during the second half of this year, but each department has compiled its estimates having in mind the work loads expected for all purposes. The staffing allocations have been laid down by the Ministers responsible after examination of departmental submissions and in the light of policy and funds available. All departments will be required to make every reasonable effort to operate within the provisions now proposed.

I have no doubt that the departments have taken into account this question of an extra week's leave and the increased long service leave that the Government proposes. However, at the same time we see no budgetary provisions made and no budgetary reference to the fact that this State is facing critical conditions, particularly in the rural areas. There is a strong probability that even a greater number of farmers in this State will be facing this critical

period. I wonder whether this Government will face reality or whether it will follow its charted course of increased social benefits (benefits extending beyond those applying in any other State of Australia) at a time when primary industry is undergoing serious tribulations. As I have said, I can find nothing in this Budget to show that the Government is prepared to face reality. I wonder whether the Government will still proceed with what I call its emotional legislation, in the face of the difficulties the State faces at present. Early in his second reading explanation the Chief Secretary said:

Included in the actual receipts for 1966-67 was a contribution of \$2,624,000 from Loan Account to meet the cost of building grants for non-government hospitals which had been made from Revenue Account during the course of the year.

In a previous debate, I think on the Loan Estimates, I referred to the question of the Governor's Warrant. I am still not quite clear (the Chief Secretary has not answered my query) how expenditure made on a Governor's Warrant can be transferred virtually at the stroke of a pen to the Loan Account. I should like the Chief Secretary to make a few inquiries for me on this matter and tell me exactly how this can be done. I draw the attention of honourable members to what the Auditor-General, at page 2 of his report, said under the heading of "Public Debt":

The debt charges not recovered by undertakings financed from the Loan Fund were \$21,460,000 (36 per cent) and were \$510,000 more than last year. These have to be met by various forms of taxation. As I have done in previous years, I again report that very few of the capital works approved in recent years returned sufficient revenue to meet working expenses and debt charges. Although charges are increased from time to time, the mounting capital expenditure makes it difficult for charges to keep pace with added costs.

One sees similar statements in the Auditor-General's Reports going back over a number of years. The Government was very anxious indeed to show the public of South Australia a balanced Budget last year. As various members have said when speaking on other matters, the Government has loaded the Loan Account with items previously met from the Budget Account. This further adds to the weight of the public debt in South Australia and, as pointed out by the Auditor-General, adds to the expenditure on which there is no return whatsoever. It only adds a greater burden to this State when we see matters that have been catered for within the Budget accounts for years and years

and that in no way return any revenue to the State being dealt with from the Loan Account. I refer to page 14 of the Auditor-General's Report, which states:

Amounts due and unpaid at June 30, 1967, on Consolidated Revenue were \$7,533,000, an increase of \$1,317,000 compared with the previous year.

Those matters should be included when we consider last year's balanced Budget. The speeches in this Council show clearly that even in the Loan Estimates development expenditure from the Loan accounts this year has been reduced. Once again, this is because of the emphasis being placed on things other than development. We see a similar down-turn in development expenditure in the Budget Account.

I have already referred to page 13 of the Auditor-General's Report in that regard. I know that we have been over this ground previously. This is the third Budget of the Labor Government. It had been predicted that these changing priorities of Government expenditure would lead to a loss of drive in the State's development. There is nothing in this Budget to arrest the drift that has taken place in that regard. I remember that two or three years ago when I was talking to Sir Thomas Playford about this he said he was never more proud of South Australia than he was in 1959 when, after a very dry and difficult season, we came through with a limited deficit, without any change in our priority of expenditure in the development of the State, without any transfer of items from the Budget Account to the Loan Account and bearing in mind the fact that over the years our economy had been diversified and we had been able to accumulate some reserve to protect us against difficult years. I fear for the position this year in our present financial administration.

I turn now to a matter that may well interest the Chief Secretary. In his second reading explanation, he said:

This financial year the Hospitals Fund, which derives its revenues from the profits of the State lotteries and the commission from pools conducted by the Totalizator Agency Board, will for the first time play a major role in providing additional finance for the maintenance and operation of hospitals. It is estimated that about \$3,150,000 will be available in the Hospitals Fund for distribution to hospitals in 1967-68. There has been an understanding that the moneys available out of the Hospitals Fund shall not be used to reduce the provision from Consolidated Revenue either for public hospitals or for grants to subsidized hospitals, and accordingly the provision made from Revenue Account this year in respect of the

running and maintenance of hospitals is greater than the amounts provided for those purposes from revenue in 1966-67.

At first sight that seems a reasonable statement; yet I have some doubts about it all. If we look at page 108 of Parliamentary Paper No. 9 we see that the net provision for Government hospitals out of Consolidated Revenue for 1966-67 was \$24,680,441, and for 1967-68 the estimate is \$24,683,044. That represents an increase this year of about \$3,000 in the allocation from Consolidated Revenue. Comparing this with previous Hospitals Department votes, we see that actual expenditure for 1966-67 amounted to \$20,508,122, and the estimate for 1967-68 is \$22,150,233, which includes \$2,085,000 from the Hospitals Fund. Looking at this closely, we observe that the vote for the Hospitals Department is about \$500,000 less than it was last year.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: That is not quite correct. There is a certain amount in the Loan Account this year for subsidized hospitals, buildings, etc., that was in the Revenue Account last year. However, I shall explain it later.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Thank you very much.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: The full amount from the Hospitals Fund is in addition to the total amount provided last year overall for hospitals. I give the honourable member that firm undertaking. It may be difficult to read.

The Hon. C. D. Rowe: A sum was charged to the Loan Account?

The Hon. A. J. Shard: Yes.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: In looking at these figures, I note that the net figure for Government hospitals out of Consolidated Revenue has risen this year from a total of \$24,680,441 by \$3,000 to \$24,683,044.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: Yes; that would be about right.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Yet, checking back, we see that the vote for the Hospitals Department has been reduced by \$500,000.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: That does not work out correctly.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: As far as I can see, the transfers from Loan Account have nothing to do with this.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: I shall give the honourable member the whole position later.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I should like to analyse the whole position now to save you doing it.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: You analyse it from your point of view: I want a factual analysis.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: No. I will do it from a factual point of view and leave it to the Chief Secretary to do it in his way.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: I know the answer, because I was definite on that.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Perhaps we can look at it this way. Every year for the last seven or eight years there has been an increase in the allocation to the Hospitals Department and every year there has been an increase in the total amount of money that the Government has had to spend in the overall Estimates. We find that in 1963-64 the amount voted to the Hospitals Department increased by 10 per cent; in 1964-65 by 13 per cent; in 1965-66 by 9 per cent; and in 1966-67 by 14 per cent. For those years, without any allocation from the Hospitals Fund, there has been an average annual increase in the vote to the Hospitals Department of 11.6 per cent. This year, there will be an allocation of \$3,150,000 from the Hospitals Fund. The total increase this year, including the money transferred from the Hospitals Fund, is 10.5 per cent. In other words, despite this magnificent sum from the Hospitals Fund the increased allocation to hospitals this year is smaller than the average increase over the last five years. That alone makes me suspicious, as I believe that the vote for the Hospitals Department from Consolidated Revenue has decreased this year by 2½ per cent. I understand that the Chief Secretary will check me on that figure later, but even a \$3,150,000 increase this year is less than the average increase over the last five years. I do not think that calculation can be queried.

The Hon. G. J. Gilfillan: Lotteries are only taking care of increased costs.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Lotteries do not even take care of the annual percentage increase over the last five years. It could be said that the lottery money was going straight into Consolidated Revenue. I turn now to subsidies granted to Government subsidized hospitals. It is difficult to make a comparison here because some of the burden originally borne by the Budget Account (or it has been so borne for many years) is now carried by Loan Account. Some of the figures here are interesting: for example, in 1962-63 subsidies amounted to \$5,136,000 while this year \$3,562,000 is provided. The Chief Secretary has said that some of this is dealt with in the Loan Account but, even with the \$1,065,000 from the Hospitals Fund going to subsidized hospitals, the total allocation from Consolidated Revenue to those hospitals is still less than it was in

1962-63. The allocation to hospitals generally makes interesting reading when considering an increase of over \$3,000,000 in the provision from the Hospitals Fund to the Hospitals Department.

I warned the Minister of Mines that I might deal with one of his departments in this speech. Again, a turn-down in developmental expenditure is seen. Over the last two years (1965-66 and 1966-67) the total increase in the Estimates was 14.7 per cent, of which the Mines Department received an increase of 9.9 per cent. In other words, growth of expenditure in the developmental Mines Department has not kept pace with the total increase in the Estimates. This year the Mines Department allocation has risen by less than 1 per cent whereas the overall increase in the Budget is about 8 per cent. Over the three-year period during which this Government has held office the increase from the first year to this year is 24 per cent compared with an increase of only about 10 per cent in Mines Department expenditure.

I am sorry for the Minister of Mines; he is directly associated with the developmental Mines and Highways Departments but he seems to have been in trouble with the Government for the whole three years. We know it is his policy in this Council to fight for a cause, and it is evident that at Cabinet level he is fighting a rearguard action with the two developmental departments I have mentioned. I have no doubt that other members will express views concerning expenditure on roads, so I will not deal with that subject.

South Australia has two fields that should be subjects for future expansion: the development of mineral resources and the greater exploitation of fishing resources. Most people appreciate that South Australia is an extremely dry State with little possibility of any large-scale increase in agricultural output, but mineral resources offer an opportunity to continue the rapid development that has been enjoyed in that sphere over the last 20 years.

Last week I asked some questions of the Minister of Mines about the development of Mount Gunson, in the North of the State. From the answers received it appears that this field could be developed as a commercial possibility. I believe feasibility studies have been undertaken, and the Treasurer has said that large deposits of copper have been proved to exist there. I think he also said that it would be a commercial proposition but that in the development of that proposition certain amenities such as water, power, housing, and

transport must be provided. A Director of Industrial Development has been appointed in this State and an industries promotion section has been established. Surely it would be logical for that section to undertake feasibility studies for an industry such as that at Mount Gunson, yet the Minister fell back on the popular sport of blaming the Commonwealth Government in this matter. At present we seem to have three popular sports in this State: blaming the Commonwealth, blaming the Legislative Council and blaming Playford.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: It seems as though it is becoming a common sport in the Commonwealth sphere, because for the first time in history a State Government has been attacked by the Commonwealth Government.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: One could hardly blame the Commonwealth Government for hitting back at attacks launched against it, and most unreasonably so, as I hope to point out in the case of Mount Gunson. We know that the Treasurer has said that there are large deposits of copper capable of development there.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: The fact remains that it is necessary to obtain water and power, and they can be obtained from only one source.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: That may be so, but feasibility studies of this project could have been carried out by the industries promotion section appointed by this Government. It was the job of this section to do this work, but instead an application for assistance was made to the Commonwealth for water and power, and the Commonwealth asked that \$10,000 be provided for a feasibility study. That is Commonwealth policy applying throughout Australia; development of the Hamersley iron ore deposit in Western Australia was made a charge on the company. Surely it is up to the State, not the Commonwealth, to provide the money for feasibility studies. Here is a large deposit of copper at Mount Gunson, and the Treasurer has said, in effect, that it is capable of commercial development; yet it is held up because \$10,000 is required for a feasibility study. It is completely ridiculous to blame the Commonwealth because a feasibility study cannot be done unless \$10,000 is found, when the department is there for the very purpose of doing the job.

The Commonwealth Government supplied the capital to build the main to Woomera, and also the power lines. The main is now being used to its full capacity and the Commonwealth Government has always been co-

operative in respect of it; it supplies stock water to a number of station people along the main. At present the main is completely loaded; indeed, one report suggests that, if an extra booster were put on, the main would blow up. The Minister knows this as well as I do, yet the Commonwealth is blamed because it wants \$10,000 to do a feasibility study concerning a water supply and electricity for Mount Gunson, a requirement that it makes in respect of any company for which a feasibility study is necessary. This policy of blaming the Commonwealth for everything has become ridiculous.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: It is a fact, though. The Leader cannot laugh it off.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I am not doing that. If this State is to press ahead with development, for goodness sake let us get on with it, not find scapegoats all the time. If one looks at the facts, the position does not ring true. We need a vigorous and progressive policy in the Mines Department, because its activities are vital to South Australia's future development. There is much untapped wealth in respect of our fisheries and mineral resources. The amount spent on geological and geophysical surveys this year will increase by \$40,000. How can the Government justify a cut in development expenditure in the Mines Department?

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: Easily. This will be answered more effectively here than it was answered in the other place.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: This State is proud of the *Ocean Digger*, which is operating 12 miles off the South-East coast. Every honourable member hopes that it will have success, because such success would provide a magnificent boost to South Australia. Victoria's success in offshore drilling gives us reasonable hope of success.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: Sir Henry Bolte found a little more room in which to work.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Yes; he had a little more success than his success in finding a large deposit of oil; he also found ways of finding a little more room in which to work. I am sorry Parliament was not consulted concerning the twisting of the boundary in the South-East. I well remember that previous Premiers sat pat on what might have been a full hand, and Sir Henry Bolte could have been left to do the looking. We seem to have compromised. If the Premier had consulted Parliament, a little more backbone might have been put into his dealings with Sir Henry Bolte.

I am certain that this stiffening would have assisted South Australia with its offshore problem, as it did in respect of the resolution on the Chowilla dam.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: I seem to have read these comments before. It could have been in the *War Cry*, or one of those publications.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I am dealing with the same Budget that has been dealt with elsewhere. A resolution was passed in another place in respect of the Chowilla dam; when the motion was first moved it was not very strong, but the Premier took his problem to Parliament, which put a little more backbone into it before it was finally passed. If he had taken this course in relation to offshore boundaries the same might have happened, in order to preserve what I consider to be South Australia's just dues.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: From the way the Leader is lamenting it is a wonder that the State is still on the map.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Not at all. I am certain that all honourable members recognize that it is urgent that the Chowilla dam be constructed: it cannot wait for five or 10 years, as has been suggested by some other people. Everybody seems to be blaming somebody else. Let us face the facts. First, South Australia as a member of the River Murray Commission agreed to the deferment of the Chowilla dam. All sorts of red herrings can be dragged across the trail about what we agreed in relation to its development, but Parliament passed a resolution that sought to ensure South Australia's future in this respect. Parliament armed the Premier with a slightly sterner resolution than that which he required.

There are now two courses open: first, to await the commission's report which is the course advocated by the Prime Minister; or, secondly, to take legal action to preserve South Australia's rights, in accordance with the Acts passed by the Parliaments of the States comprising the commission. At the present time we hear much blaming of the Commonwealth Government or the blaming of somebody else, but the Premier is in the position of having to either front up to or accept the decision of the commission. There are no other ways out of it, and I grant that the decision that the commission has taken with South Australia's approval makes a legal action difficult at this stage. South Australia has agreed to the deferment of the Chowilla dam, but I consider that those two courses are the only courses left open. The Premier must take either one of those two courses and

not continue to blame everyone along the line for the difficulties in connection with the Chowilla dam.

I hope that in the few remaining weeks of this session the Government will face up to the realities of the situation confronting the State. We are at present in a very difficult year. Before the end of the year it could become more than a difficult year: it could be a critical one for the State. If the Government pursues further emotional legislation and legislation to a purely political end, then the difficulties could be much greater unless it takes a more responsible attitude towards the difficulties confronting the State.

The Hon. C. M. HILL (Central No. 2): The sad story of the financial mismanagement of the State by the Government can be seen from Appendix 6 of the Treasurer's Financial Statement which sets out a "Statement of receipts and payments on Consolidated Revenue Account for last 20 years showing surpluses and deficiencies". One can see, too, the contrast between the management of the former Government and that of the present Government on this question, though one does not have to go back as far as 20 years. In the year 1960-61 (which followed the dry year referred to by the Hon. Mr. DeGaris) a surplus of \$2,376,426 was achieved.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Was that the year we had so much unemployment?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I shall deal later with the question of unemployment. I shall give the 1961 figures for unemployment when I am ready to give them. In that year, after absorbing the deficit of \$622,208 from 1959-60, the Government was in a position to transfer from Consolidated Revenue the balance of this surplus into the Loan Fund. In other words, in that bad year the State made sufficient profit that it was in a position to transfer this profit for use on capital works.

Then in the following year, which was a much better year than the one before from the economic viewpoint but nevertheless one during which the State and the whole of Australia was pulling out of an unfortunate recession that had occurred in 1960-61, there was a surplus of \$1,013,472.

In that year the Government saw fit to contribute \$1,000,000 for what amounted to capital works. In effect, it gave that amount to the Electricity Trust for the extension of power lines in country areas. Those two examples were typical of the manner in which, when the State was managed well irrespective of the general economic climate, surpluses were

made and capital works were able to be further supported. Then there were two more years of surpluses, as Appendix 6 shows, and then came 1964-65, when there was a deficit of \$2,621,670.

This deficit was met from previous surpluses that had accrued and it left the credit balance of \$1,222,526, of which we have heard so much over the last two and a half years. That was the surplus with which this Government was blessed by the previous Government when it rearranged its financial affairs at the end of June, 1965.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Was that after it budgeted for a \$4,000,000 deficit?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I am talking about hard cash.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: I am talking about what was budgeted.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: This was the hard cash that this Government had when it began its first full year in office. Then the down-turn occurred, and in the year 1965-66 the record-breaking deficit of \$6,834,136 was incurred, which was treated in such a way that \$5,611,610 had to be carried forward as a deficit. Then in the year 1966-67 there was a surplus of \$106,345, and after allowing for that surplus the deficit of \$5,505,265 was carried forward. So, in this Budget these record-breaking deficits are being carried forward.

The position would have been worse still had the practice not been adopted this year of taking expenditure of \$2,624,000 and funding it across to the Loan Account for non-government hospital costs. Had that amount been left in this account, then we would have been carrying forward from the year 1966-67 not a running deficit of \$5,505,265 but a deficit of \$8,129,610. This question of transferring this money has been dealt with by the Auditor-General at page 1 of his report. Amongst other things, he says this:

For the year under review there was a change of policy by the Treasurer in that certain grants for university and advanced education buildings and for non-government hospital buildings were made from Loan Account rather than Consolidated Revenue. Such a practice is not contrary to any legislation. Because Loan payments require payments of interest and sinking funds for a period of up to 53 years, it is desirable, wherever finances permit, to meet costs of non-revenue-producing assets from Consolidated Revenue.

Further down on the same page he says:

On the Consolidated Revenue Account at the commencement of the year under review, there was a deficit of \$5,611,610. Receipts for the year on this account were \$258,823,373 and

payments \$258,717,028, leaving a surplus for the year of \$106,345 and a net deficit at June 30, 1967, of \$5,505,265. As shown in detail under Part I, the original Budget estimate was for a deficit of \$2,316,000. A major contributing factor to the surplus which eventuated was the recoup of \$2,624,000 grants to non-government hospital buildings from the Loan Account.

In addition to this running deficit which is carried forward, we then have the picture explained in detail on page 2 regarding the position of the Loan Account:

The Loan Fund Account commenced the year with a deficit of \$2,465,462. New cash loans raised were \$67,912,383 and repayments \$11,155,862 (\$944,138 less than estimate). Loan payments were \$77,808,633 (\$349,633 more than estimated), leaving a deficit at June 30, 1967, of \$1,205,850.

The combined result of those two deficits is that the Consolidated Revenue Account and the Loan Fund Account had a deficit at the end of June 30, 1967, of \$6,711,115. Then we see how this balance has been made up. Once again the practice previously adopted by the present Government of using trust and deposit funds for this method of balancing was adopted this year. On this point, the Auditor-General says:

The shortage of funds has been temporarily met from funds in the hands of the Treasurer representing trust and deposit accounts held for particular purposes at the Treasury. The total of these accounts at June 30 was \$28,171,113, of which \$21,459,998 was held in bank accounts and \$6,711,115 advanced to Loan and Revenue Accounts as set out above. This compares with a total of \$27,322,604 at June 30, 1966, of which \$19,245,532 was held in bank accounts and \$8,077,072 advanced to the Loan and Revenue Accounts.

So, on this general question of financial management we see the same story of record-breaking deficits being carried forward from year to year. We see that practice continuing and we see also the story of trust and deposit money being used to balance the State's accounts. It means, of course, that there is nothing in reserve or in credit.

The Hon. C. D. Rowe: Do you know whether the Government has any proposal to repay these moneys it has borrowed from the trust and deposit accounts?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I do not know. I think it is just hoping that some other Government will do it, or possibly that a good season or two might help matters. It seems that there is no future planning regarding this particular repayment. At the present time this State Government badly needs some money in reserve.

I listened with a great deal of interest to the Hon. Mr. DeGaris when he was discussing the Chowilla dam. Although I know that cost was not the only factor in the deferment of the Chowilla dam, nevertheless cost did play its part. I submit that this State was not in any position to negotiate or treat from financial strength when that decision had to be made and when that debate concerning the deferment of Chowilla was taking place.

Let us examine the drought question with which we are dealing at present and which is one of the tragedies now facing the State, particularly the people in the country. If we had some money in reserve as a result of the former two complete years' financial dealings, we would be in a far happier position to satisfy those people than we are, when we see the need for the Government to find money for drought relief, yet the Treasury is facing these heavy deficits. One can only hope that by astute management and careful financial control the Government that controls the Treasury in the future in South Australia will steadfastly hold to strict and orthodox financial principles and thereby bring stability back to the financial affairs of South Australia.

I now wish to touch in very general terms on the development of the State's mineral resources. Again on this point I listened with great interest to the comments of the Hon. Mr. DeGaris, who I think made his points extremely well. The honourable member highlighted the need for this State to spend more money on mineral research and development.

We see examples set by other States whose populations are comparable with ours. Those States are making great progress at present, and in most instances we can trace that progress back to mineral research and mineral finds, followed by the development of those mineral resources. In this respect, I instance what has taken place in Western Australia and Queensland. In my view, this present Government in South Australia has been lacking in foresight on this question.

I wish to refer now to the appendix on page 12 of the Treasurer's Financial Statement. Under the heading "Development and maintenance of State resources" there is a line dealing with mining administration and experimental and survey work.

In that line the amounts expended for the past two years and the amount estimated to be expended in the current year, 1967-68, are shown. For those items of mining administration and experimental and survey work, in

1965-66 (the first full year of the Labor Government) \$1,786,159 was expended; in the following year, 1966-67, \$1,825,653 was expended; and it is estimated that in this current year, 1967-68, \$1,754,966 will be expended.

This indicates that the amount to be spent this year will be the smallest in those three years. This is not surprising, because the Government has never placed great emphasis on mineral research and development; it has concentrated upon social issues and reforms and on a huge volume of legislation. Whilst it has been rejoicing at those achievements, our sister States have been benefiting by drawing immense wealth from their mineral finds and resources. It is absolutely essential for the future benefit of South Australia that the next Government give high priority to mineral research and development.

I refer again to Parliamentary Paper No. 18, Appendix 5. This page deals with the principal payments from Consolidated Revenue Account for the financial years 1957-58 to 1966-67. The line that interests me is "Subsidies towards provision of homes for aged persons". I would not have been as interested in this line as I am had not the problems of aged people been brought to my notice in particular by an elector in my district.

A few days ago I asked a question of the Chief Secretary to see whether I could obtain information on this matter of help for the aged, particularly as regards infirmaries, and I did not receive a very satisfactory reply. I hope another will be forthcoming in the relatively near future. Unfortunately, the Chief Secretary misunderstood either what I said or the spirit in which the question was asked and he claimed that politics was being introduced. However, from my point of view that was not so: I was seeking information and I would like him to answer my question so that I can send back the information to the person who brought the matter to my notice.

I shall also have to send back the information I find in this line to which I have just referred. This is the surprising information, that this Government, giving some assistance to subsidies towards the provision of homes for aged people, has been decreasing considerably its contributions. The line indicates that the overall figures are not large. I point that out specifically. Nevertheless, I see no reason why they could not be maintained at about the same level this year.

In 1964-65 the sum of \$59,982 was paid out of Consolidated Revenue Account for these aged persons. That was the highest amount in the whole period, going back 10 years, and that amount was allocated by the Playford Government. In the following year, 1965-66, the amount dropped to \$35,582; and last year, 1966-67, it dropped still further to \$17,476. Those reductions are large for a three-year period, the last amount being about three and a half times smaller than the first. If in its spending in this current year the Government can see its way clear to spend further moneys to restore that expenditure to about what it was three years ago, the gesture will be appreciated by those who will benefit from it.

I now turn to Appendix I of the same Parliamentary Paper. This deals with Commonwealth general purpose grants. I deal only with the totals of these grants, whether they be additional financial assistance grants, special grants, tax reimbursement grants or contributions pursuant to the Financial Agreement. We hear the Commonwealth Government criticized for not helping this State enough, but a check on the position over the last three years reveals that the amount we shall be receiving in 1967-68 (I know it is only an estimate; it can vary slightly and we may be able to secure an additional financial assistance grant as well) will be \$8,354,144 greater than the total grants we received for 1966-67. In 1966-67 we received \$7,878,521 more than in 1965-66, in which year we received \$8,312,091 more than we did in 1964-65. So we are getting a greater increase in assistance from the Commonwealth this year than in any of the last three years.

However, I agree with those who say it is unfortunate that the Commonwealth Government has not been able so far to spend more money on Commonwealth development in this State. One Commonwealth project that I think is desirable and would benefit South Australia is the construction of a Commonwealth Public Service building. I hope it will not be long before the Commonwealth can see its way clear to undertake such a project. I understand that it owns a site in the city of Adelaide reserved for that specific purpose. Such a building would greatly assist the local building industry, as it would mean the erection of another multi-storey block. It would be far more economical and efficient as well as providing far more satisfactory accommodation for the large number of Commonwealth public servants in Adelaide, who could then be situated in the one location.

I now turn to the general question of the need for development and industrial promotion. I know that this has been stressed each year; it has been stressed not on an annual basis but continually in this Chamber and by many people who have been concerned with the general down-turn in the economic conditions of this State.

People have been particularly concerned because this has occurred while the rest of Australia, generally speaking, has not suffered in the same way but has been surging ahead on the tide of economic prosperity. However, the progress and development enjoyed by South Australia until about 1965 did not continue; it is a great pity from the point of view of this State that such a change occurred, because such a change is reflected in the employment position. I now reach the point made by the Hon. Mr. Banfield earlier.

Employment must be dealt with when considering industrial expansion (or the lack of it), because it is in the factories in the metropolitan area where the large work forces exist, and variations in economic trends affect the whole subject of employment. I have read with some interest the confident note sounded by the Treasurer in this financial statement, when he used sentences that rang with confidence, such as the following:

The economy generally, despite a late and relatively poor opening of the rural season, is already showing quite clear evidence of a significant upswing in activity. It is against this background that the 1967-68 financial proposals have been prepared, recognizing the necessity to encourage the upswing and give strength in extension of industry, commerce and employment, and to avoid any governmental action which might inhibit increased activity in the economy.

Despite that, we still have the unemployment statistics based on people registered for employment as related to the estimated work force in this State. The last figures available are those of August this year, and on percentage our position is the worst of any State in Australia. The South Australian percentage was 1.8, as against an Australian average of 1.3 per cent; with Victoria 1.1 per cent, New South Wales 1.2 per cent, Queensland 1.3 per cent, Western Australia 1.0 per cent, and Tasmania 1.5 per cent.

Similarly, South Australia had the worst percentage in July, and for January to June inclusive it had the second worst percentage. Even in 1961, if the statistics are used as a basis, South Australia had only one month (September) when the average was greater than the Australia average.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: We had a higher percentage for one month than at the present time.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: In September, 1961, we had 3.1 per cent as against an Australian average of 2.6 per cent.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: It was 3.1 per cent, compared with 1.8 per cent.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: In August this year the Australian average was 1.3 per cent. In September, 1961, the Australian average was 2.6 per cent, which by comparison was double that of the Australian average in August of this year. Also by comparison, if we were as bad as September, 1961, our average should be double, which would be 3.6 per cent.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: You are not doing a very good job.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I do not think the Minister can follow me.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: Don't worry about that; get on to something you know.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: By comparison, between August of this year and September, 1961, and on the basis to which I referred, we are worse off—

The Hon. A. J. Shard: Yes, but you are making the percentages suit your purposes.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I am not doing that at all.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The statistics are those of the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, so they cannot be doubted.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: The comparison is between 3.1 per cent in 1961 and 1.8 per cent in August.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: It was worse in 1961 than it is now.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. H. K. Kemp: Does it take into account the number of people who have left the State?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: No, nor does it take into account the number of people who do not register.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Did it do so in 1961?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Let me examine the methods used by this Government to attempt to remedy the situation. I deal with Parliamentary Paper No. 9 at page 46, under the line "Premier's Department". The figures are interesting, and as are some of the lines. Provision is made for the salary of the Director of Industrial Development. I am pleased that such an appointment has been made and I look forward to results from it in the future.

I was pleased to see that the appointment was made after it had been sought by the Leader of the Opposition in another place.

At the same time, however, an advisory committee was also suggested in order that it could be of some assistance to the Director. That committee was to consist of leading commercial and industrial men in this State, people with an intimate knowledge of local conditions and a vast experience in commercial and industrial fields. The latter proposal was not accepted by the Government, and that was purely a matter for the Government to decide.

However, it appears that as an alternative considerable staff is being built up. For 1967-68 the sum of \$67,966 is provided for the services of "Consulting Engineer (also Member, Forestry Board \$600 per annum), Industries Promotion and Research Officer, Engineers, Technical, Research and Clerical Staff." The Director of Industrial Development is not in the group to which I have just referred: his salary is paid under a different line.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating, but I have considerable doubt in respect of the method being adopted by the Government (I can only say "by the Government" because the Government must approve this, even though it may be a recommendation of the Director of Industrial Development). I doubt whether building up this staff and this planning represent a better idea than that of forming a local committee of top men and starting the planning from that level.

In the Estimates of Expenditure for the year ended June 30, 1967, there was a line "Publicity and information, documentary films, etc., for industrial promotion, \$100,000." This was an increase of \$100,000 over the previous year's amount, because this was apparently a new plan and money had not been spent for this purpose during 1965-66. In the Estimates now before us, we find that the words "documentary films, etc." have been deleted and that, whereas Parliament had appropriated \$100,000, only \$102 has been spent.

Publicity on industrial promotion is one of the vital items that this Government should have been concerned about over the past 12 months, but there has been none. It seems that the films have been forgotten; except for \$102, the money has not been spent, and I wonder why.

The Government is not lacking in respect of publicity: it has spent much time and money on a certain kind of radio and television publicity, but the publicity needed to help this State's development—publicity that was approved by

this Parliament 12 months ago—has not been forthcoming. I should like the Chief Secretary to indicate the reason for this saving and for the Government's failure to use the planned method of promotion.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: That is easy to answer.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: If one is not very concerned about the State's development, one can cut down on things like this, but I do not think the Government is neglectful to that degree. There must be some reason why the Government did not carry out its plans for this publicity.

I turn now to the possibility of water restrictions in South Australia. In his Financial Statement the Treasurer said:

For the Engineering Department, the favourable spring and cool summer enabled the costs of pumping water from the Murray River to be held \$724,000 below the original appropriation. I do not feel as kindly disposed to this question as the Hon. Mr. DeGaris did. I believe the Government was lacking in responsibility when, for instance, in June of this year it worked the pumps on the Mannum main to only 47 per cent of their capacity (this figure was given in answer to a question in this Council on August 30). In April the pumps were worked to 47 per cent of their capacity; in May, 52 per cent; and in June, 47 per cent. I do not blame the Government for the present weather conditions but I do blame it in that, when it was faced with the possibility of a dry year and with the choice of either saving money or making sure that the metropolitan area would get adequate water—

The Hon. A. J. Shard: Of course, the honourable member would have known in June what would happen in September!

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The Minister is admitting it was a gamble in June.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: No.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: If the Government had not looked upon it as a gamble in June it would have brought the reservoirs up to a certain level by utilizing the pumps to more than 47 per cent of their capacity. The Government took a gamble on it and it did not have the people's concern at heart when it did so.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: That is just ridiculous. The honourable member is not being fair to the departmental officers; the Government took their advice.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The Government should not have taken their advice—it should have made its own decision.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: The Government did exactly the same as previous Governments had done.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon. R. C. DeGaris): Order!

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The Playford Government never allowed the water level to get below a certain point. Regardless of whether or not it was pouring with rain at the time, if the draw-off from the reservoirs reached a certain volume the pumps were started.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: It was carried out this year according to the programme. You have been told that a dozen times.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: We were also told that we would see a graph tabled in the Council but we have not seen it yet.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: There was none to produce.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: We have never seen it.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: No, because there is no such thing.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Because of the condition of the reservoirs in June, the pumps should have been worked to a greater extent than the 47 per cent of capacity that they were worked. Regarding housing, I have previously stressed the great need to assist the building industry in the State and to introduce further liquidity into it. On several occasions I have suggested that the Government might consider appropriating more Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money into the sector of mortgage finance. However, no great alteration has occurred. That is simply a matter I accept as being a decision of the Government.

Unfortunately (and I am not claiming that my remedy would have proved the best one), the plain hard fact of the matter is that the building industry in South Australia is still in a very bad plight, and the Housing Trust is in the same gloomy state. The conditions of the Housing Trust and the building industry in this State will always run parallel, because the trust is a great building operation within the building industry.

On page 4 of the Auditor-General's Report it will be seen that at June 30 the trust had 737 houses sold and occupied, pending finance from outside sources. This is the same problem as that which besets a vast number of builders, especially smaller builders, but it is magnified because of the size of the trust's operations. This stresses the point I have been making: that the liquidity position in the building industry is very bad indeed.

Page 5 of the Auditor-General's Report shows that at June 30 the trust had 635 houses completed awaiting sale and 67 repossessed houses awaiting resale, making a total of 702 houses, valued at \$6,463,000. The report shows that the Housing Trust had financed many of its own sales and had money owing to it by both mortgage and agreement totalling \$39,914,000.

At June 30, the trust had 2,062 houses in the course of construction. The activities of the trust are dealt with in considerable detail by the Auditor-General at page 261 of his report, which shows that at June 30 the total funds employed in this vast State operation amounted to \$216,874,000.

I draw honourable members' attention to the fact that capital investment in rental houses alone is \$134,851,000. If one looks more closely at this figure and sees what kind of surplus this investment is bringing to the trust, one sees on page 262 of the report the amazing figure of only \$133,594. The trust has an income from rental houses of \$9,275,542, against which it writes off an expenditure of \$9,141,948, thus leaving a surplus of \$133,594. Something will have to be done at some time to rectify that position, which is part of the gloomy picture relevant to the building trade.

I do not believe that any further Government instruction to the trust will alter policy to any great degree in the remainder of this Government's term, but I suggest that the trust might consider some policy changes simply to become more liquid in its operations. If it did become more liquid, it would not need so much money annually from Government sources and from its own semi-government borrowing.

For example, it might consider selling some of the rental houses to the tenants occupying them. Many of the houses are attached and in pairs, but this problem of their sale could be overcome by legislation. If many of the occupiers could simply pay an amount approximating the amount of rent they pay now and if this were to continue over a 20-year period, there would be an opportunity for the trust in that time to get back about \$100,000,000 in hard cash, because the total investment exceeds \$134,000,000.

The other suggestion I make is that the trust might consider specializing. At present, as we see from the report in front of us, it is now a developer and a builder, a financier in very

large proportions, and a rental investor. In addition, of course, it operates its own selling organization. It might pay the trust to consider specializing in only building and developing.

However, the position in which the trust now finds itself is not, in my opinion, the fault of its officers. I have the highest respect for the trust's executive and staff and also for the members of its board. I maintain that it is caught up in the economic conditions in which the State finds itself, and that it is a case of the higher the horse the greater the fall.

When it is dealing with vast sums of money and vast investments, as it is, then when percentage variations occur great sums come under consideration. I put forward my suggestion as constructive criticism. I think it might be possible to help rejuvenate the whole building industry in South Australia if the trust could change some of its policies and become more liquid itself. I think this would have an effect that would permeate through the whole building industry.

I notice the line before us dealing with the Legislature and the very slight increase in the costs of the Legislative Council. From my experience, I think that no-one will object to this, because I consider that everyone gets value for money from this Chamber. I think every honourable member here would say that the expenditure on this line provides very good value.

I hope that a report I saw in yesterday's *Advertiser* heralds a change in attitude of even the Premier and Treasurer towards the Legislative Council. It is not very often that we hear appreciation from the Premier of work done by all honourable members—

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: He will probably say he was misreported!

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I do not think that will be claimed in this Chamber, at any rate. This newspaper report, dealing with the liquor legislation, states:

The Premier said the Bill had taken seven months to go through Parliament—

Then comes the fitting paragraph—

He was very thankful to everyone who had helped get this most difficult legislation through.

Mr. President, I support the Bill.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE secured the adjournment of the debate.

CONTROL OF WATERS ACT

Adjourned debate on the resolution of the House of Assembly.

(For wording of resolution, see page 2041.)

(Continued from September 28. Page 2273.)

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE (Southern): Over many years I have rarely listened to the opening of a debate where two speakers have shown themselves so knowledgeable on their subject that they have been able to supply all honourable members, as well as the Ministers in this Chamber, with an almost unparalleled amount of data, coupled with both critical and constructive suggestions. I wish to make the point here that I am becoming heartily tired of hearing the reiteration in almost every debate that something is or is not "political". I excuse the references made from time to time to Party politics. Some honourable member is always interjecting, "You are getting political." What does the word "political" mean, according to the Oxford Dictionary? It means:

Of the State or its government; of public affairs; of politics; (of person) engaged in civil administration, etc.

What are we here for but to debate and discuss the affairs of State; in other words, politics? Time and again I have heard exception taken, on both sides, to any criticism of any department or public servant, yet praise is permitted, approved, and accepted.

Let me state categorically that any Minister should be quite competent to defend his department or an officer if he feels justified in doing so. However, I hope no honourable member here will accept that no member can criticize departmental activities if he so wishes. Only this last week one of the Ministers of the Crown (I understand from the press) criticized one of his officers. I consider that a Minister is quite entitled to do that if he is justified in doing it. It would be a sorry day if a defending barrister could not suggest that a public officer was giving, shall we say, poor evidence, and if he could not offer criticism of that nature.

Thus, I find myself in very strong support for the Hon. Mr. Story's suggestion that the Government is trying to turn the spotlight on to departmental administration instead of accepting responsibility itself regarding the water problems of this State today. I suppose that when the inevitable water restrictions come it will be as a result of a suggestion not by the Government but by the department. Mr. Story's very pertinent remarks separating

the Chowilla dam tragedy from water licensing should receive (and I hope they will) far greater publicity. The honourable member gave this Council the facts clearly and succinctly, and those facts certainly will call for a defence from the Minister, if there is a defence.

Every honourable member here knows that the time factors and the sudden lack of autumn rains entirely dissociated the two problems of the Chowilla dam and the water licensing in the Upper Murray between Mannum and Renmark. However, I heard the Minister interject that the Hon. Mr. Story was out of order in bringing the Chowilla dam into the discussion. I would suggest that the Minister forgets that licensing the lower river water is directly tied to river pumping from both Morgan and Mannum. I shall have more to say on that matter anon.

As I am not an expert in the water problems of the Upper Murray (as is our immediate representative, the Hon. Mr. Story), I should like the Minister to inform the Council in due course whether the Government has had any report from its officers regarding possible usage or abuses of the various Murray River agreements and controls that have been set up in relation to the higher reaches of the river in the other States, for example, at Echuca. Have correct levels been maintained over the various weirs during the last 12 months? I assure the Government that if facts of this nature have been deliberately or carelessly withheld from the people along the river, it will certainly be told about it before this summer is out. I could add that local gossip up in those areas could well bear investigation, in the public interest.

I should now like to comment, as the Hon. Mr. Story and the Hon. Mr. Kemp did, on what might be called this extraordinary 10-year statement. How naive can one be? We are all right for a time without the dam but, if it is not started within 10 years, we may be in trouble later!

I do not know whether any member of the Government really thinks that the people in the country are satisfied by that type of statement. I can assure the Government they are not—and even less so when the position is explained to them in detail. Are we not to expect droughts anywhere in Australia apart from this State? I remind honourable members that Victoria has had water restrictions for a month or two and they are now increasing in severity—and that is one of the wet parts of Australia, around Melbourne. Today's

Financial Times states that Tasmania, the wettest State, has now reached its crisis month for water.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: And power.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: The water for power; yet what are we doing about our position here? We are still talking about it; that is all we are doing instead of getting on with the job, apart from renewing a few tap washers. Coming to the more technical question of salinity in the Murray River, I wonder whether the Minister listened with the care that was warranted to both the Hon. Mr. Story and the Hon. Mr. Kemp on these matters; they both made knowledgeable speeches. I do not expect the Minister in charge of the Bill, as a city man, to be an expert on salinity in two years, but at least he should insist on full information from his colleagues and departmental officers. However, I shall leave the problem of salinity in the hands of people more conversant with it than I.

I turn now to finance in connection with the Chowilla dam. Not nearly enough publicity has been given to the diverting to other purposes of the funds that were to be supplied for the Chowilla dam. It has been fortuitous, I suppose, for the Government, in view of all the fuss that had to be made by the residents of that area about the cessation of work on the Keith main, that it should be able to make a further financial contribution to it in the immediate future. But with the public statements we have heard recently about the Chowilla dam "being proceeded with, or else!" or that "there may be alternatives", and so on, does it mean that we are only going to make provision for pumping more water out of the river or are we to make money available for the conservation of water? It seems this matter of the Chowilla dam finance deserves careful public analysis and a Ministerial explanation— or do we just play it by ear?

The Hon. Mr. Story mentioned the appointment of a Select Committee. Like him, I feel that we cannot very well waste much time on that idea now. I do not say it is undesirable—in fact, as the debate proceeds I shall give it further considerable thought—but it seems to me that the time for the appointment of a Select Committee was the beginning of this session; and that it should have been not just a committee of three or four experts, each in his own departmental pigeon-hole, to advise the Minister concerned, but a committee comprising certainly some of those officers but also men with knowledge of the river, who use it—who

do not talk about it and merely turn taps on and off but use it for important production.

Another hard-hitting statement was made by the Hon. Mr. Kemp, who gave relevant figures and an excellent exposition of riparian rights, which may sound a little up in the air to some of our city members. He discussed the problem of evaporation and the difficulties facing the lower swamps and lakes in previous dry years, not merely this dry year. He gave the fantastic, but accurate, figure of some 770,000 acre feet of water evaporating.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Was that caused by hot air?

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: I do not know but I can tell the honourable member that I do not for a moment intend to evaporate, even if it is hot air. Sometimes I wish he would. Nobody seems to be taking into consideration, in this matter of salinity, the evaporation of the lakes. As the Hon. Mr. Kemp said (and honourable members will certainly remember it later this year) he is more concerned with the quality than the quantity of the water. It is no good having water that is unusable, that cannot sustain plant life in many cases and that stock will not even drink. Some honourable members have not as much experience of that as I have had. We have been discussing water licences in connection with this proclamation. I suggest that some honourable members should start to think about secondhand water licences plus contamination compensation. As regards the tightening of regulations governing the use of water in the lakes, I know of a man who has just reclaimed some 900 acres of Lake Alexandrina and has put in suitable plant to deal with it but, because of insufficient capital, he has not been able to complete the project.

This has not been done with Government assistance; it is a result of his hard labours and the work done by his father, throughout the lifetime of the family as first-class farmers in that district. Are they to be penalized because of the work they have done? Honourable members have only to fly to the South-East and cast their eyes down from the near side of the aircraft to see the ramp that this man has constructed on Lake Alexandrina. He will suffer from water restrictions because he gets his lucerne growing one year when he can use water that would otherwise go over the barrages, but the next year he cannot use any water at all. Yet, in the same breath, a man in Adelaide can go ahead and water

his garden, even though he is asked to save 50 gallons a day. Is there any justice in that? I remind the Minister of Mines about the displacement of vegetable growers in the Virginia district who, for the sake of economy, have moved to the Murray River district in order to have a better supply of water.

If licensing is a necessity or a fair approach to the matter, as it may well be, surely it must imply some responsibility on the Government to provide the amount of water approved, and naturally of sufficient quality. I worry in this respect that, before we know where we are, we shall approve of this proclamation and have an army of inspectors, new water meters and such like, not to mention queries about whether partial irrigation is being done or whether it is merely an overflow from a dam filled by a pump. It is only within the last two years that electricity has been supplied to the lakes area. It has been part of the commendable growth of the Electricity Trust over the whole State. Over the last two or three years many people have spent much money on plant and equipment, which previously they had been unable to use through lack of electric power. It may be all right for a company or a person with strong financial means to provide this equipment in a short time in order to get taxation deductions, but I put it to the Government that it is rather upsetting for these smaller people to find that they are to be alongside 300 square miles of water—and they cannot use it without controls.

I ask the Minister: is there any truth in the suggestion that certain privileges were offered publicly and privately to certain people in the lakes area and that these privileges might now be withdrawn? Many people may have planned, but not completed, their installations. How do licences or quotas deal fairly with this position? Or, will only the financial tycoon be allowed full flow, whilst the small dairy farmer languishes and dies? Licensing is not dealing with the problem satisfactorily in the Upper Murray, let alone the Lower Murray, which has far greater problems of salinity. I point out that much of the water flowing past Wellington is secondhand water. Added to these problems are those of evaporation and algae; sheep can be lost by the hundreds, and cattle may not drink the water. Consequently, it can be seen that people will strongly object to this proclamation.

One problem that will occur, but I sincerely hope that it does not become too difficult, is that of getting water out of the lake next

January. It is common now for people to take their pipes 200 or 300 yards into the lake, but this cannot be done for nothing. Surely the Government must provide the water if this resolution is passed! Nobody else is to be restricted—only the person who is producing food for the good of the State.

Only the other day I read that the day's take-off of water in the metropolitan area was equal to the pumping from the Murray, and I accept that statement. How much of that water was absolutely essential, and how much was used wastefully?

The Hon. A. J. Shard: According to some of the honourable member's colleagues, the pumping should have been doubled a long time ago.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: No.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: One of your colleagues said so.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: My colleague does not need defending, but I point out that he said that the Government gambled. The Chief Secretary should admit it; he is a gambling man himself.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: As an ex-Minister, the honourable member should know that the Government did not gamble.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: The Chief Secretary can call it what he likes; the fact is that he lost. I read the other day that the amount pumped to the city from the Murray equalled the day's take-off. Shortly, when the hot weather arrives, the amount will equal only one-quarter of the day's take-off. What will be the effect of the Government's present pleas, which are commendable, that the people should save water? Many people will save some water daily, but realists know that when a person pays for an allocation he believes he is entitled to use it. Many practical suggestions have been made since quarterly accounts were introduced. It has been suggested that there should be more consideration of the principle of payment for the amount of water used.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: The honourable member knows the answer to that suggestion.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: The question I wish to put is this: who is looking for a suitable solution? This is the kind of thing we should be looking at. Every day 101 problems are overcome, sometimes by Government officers and sometimes by private individuals.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: If that suggestion were adopted the ordinary man would be paying more than he is paying now.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: Some people might be paying more and some people might be paying less. Is that what the system is based on?

The Hon. A. J. Shard: The honourable member ought to know what it is based on, because he was a Minister for long enough.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: While I was Minister we did not run into the problem: we kept away from restrictions. The present Government is running away from the problem.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: The honourable member, when he was Minister, never experienced as bad a season as the present season.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Sir Norman Jude.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: The lowest rainfall in this State was in 1959. Is it right for the Minister to say that this is the driest year we have ever had, when only nine months of the year have passed?

The Hon. A. J. Shard: The run-off this year has been the worst for 81 years.

The PRESIDENT: The Chief Secretary must cease interrupting.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: I know that the Chief Secretary will avoid the issue if he can possibly do so.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: I have never run away from an issue yet; I stick to the facts.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: Many worthwhile suggestions have been made regarding the water problem. Honourable members are not paying enough heed to this crisis. All these suggestions should have been carefully investigated. The people are demanding a fair go, not a lot of pious pleas. Properly laid down restrictions are inevitable, and I believe the people of this State are sensible enough to accept them. If the quality of the water deteriorates, it may well be too late then to bring in restrictions. Never mind lawns and gardens: what about public health, and fruit and vegetables? I say to the Government: do something and do it now; stop talking and show that you have enough guts to say, before it is too late, that it is unavoidable. I support the resolution.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS secured the adjournment of the debate.

MENTAL HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 28. Page 2275.)

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT (Southern): It is of some note and interest that this week is Mental Health Week in South Australia and that it comes at a time when this Bill is being discussed. In a recent press report the Professor of Medicine at the University of Adelaide stated that one in three of the people attending hospital outpatient sections is a mentally-ill or depressed person. Not so many years ago I was told that 40 per cent of the hospital beds in the United Kingdom were occupied by people needing mental health treatment. That figure has changed, because more and more people are being treated in outpatient sections nowadays. This Bill will benefit the community as a whole, and will benefit particularly the people it is intended to help.

If one looks back on the history of mental illness one finds that it was sometimes considered to be due to many tragic circumstances. At one time it was thought to be a visitation from the gods and at another time a visitation from the devil. People have been called lunatics, maniacs and madmen. All these terms have come in their day and gone again, and now we call such people the mentally ill. How much more humane and how much more just that people should be regarded as ill because their nerves are troubled, just as they are regarded as ill when their lungs or appendix is at fault. Because these conditions have only comparatively recently come under real medical survey and control, the treatment of people in the past has gone through many phases. Such people have been punished for their illness and isolated in strict security. They have been placed under various forms of restraint. Some honourable members may have seen the exhibition in a certain city store in connection with mental health. It illustrates some of the methods of restraint used in the past. Over many years the treatment has gradually evolved to the present system, which encourages the use of open hospitals, day hospitals and workshops specially provided for the patients.

The emphasis in the Bill is on the provision of half-way houses as a means of helping to rehabilitate the patients in full society again. Half-way houses have been found to be invaluable in various parts of the world where they have been used. For some years I served in my professional capacity on the visiting staff of one of the larger mental institutions on the other side of the world. One of the things we

cried out for and needed desperately at that time was a half-way house. The patients lived shut away in large institutions; now they live in large institutions but they are not shut away by high walls from normal society. One of the patient's problems is that he cannot face normal society. When the day comes for his release, if there is no half-way house he leaves the security of the institution and goes out into the world to be bewildered by traffic and the hurly-burly of rushing people. He may not be able to stand this and, before he knows where he is, he is back in the hospital again. That is one of his biggest problems, and the half-way house helps to solve this problem.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: The mental health visitors are doing a good job in that direction, too.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Yes, they fill a need which a few years ago was not being filled. In those days people went from a large institution, where they were cared for as gently as possible, and were thrown out into what was to them a harsh world. Everything seems bigger and a little frightening to a mentally-ill patient who has been discharged from a hospital surrounded by four walls. Honourable members who have been patients at general hospitals would know this feeling, and it is much worse for the mentally ill.

The Bill provides for certain physical needs to be met. It refers to diet, the number of patients, the standard of accommodation, the quality and qualifications of the staff, and the number of staff. These are important points, but overriding every one of them are the atmosphere of the place and importance of the right type of person (not just technically qualified or numerically adequate). In mental health more than in physical health the right type of person is required to serve.

These persons have to serve varying needs, and I think this point might evolve out of the Bill. People who have been in hospital a long time will need a different type of half-way house from persons whose stay in institutions has been short but whose stay in the half-way house might have to be longer. There is a need for different types of half-way houses or hospitals. It has been suggested by some honourable members (and ideally it would be true) that the best place for a person to be rehabilitated would be in his own home, but sometimes that would be the worst place to be rehabilitated, as that may be the reason he went into hospital in the first place. That could be the worst thing that could happen to him. As a

second alternative a friend's house could be used, but I can think of some friends' houses that would be better missed by a mile, rather than that a patient who is mentally troubled should be expected to live in such surroundings. There are friends and friends.

The Hon. R. A. Geddes: Probably the friends themselves ought to be in a mental hospital.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Probably they have been. Some of these institutions, whatever their size and occupancy, will be run for profit. Some will be charitable institutions and perhaps will come under the aegis and handiwork of voluntary charitable organizations, although they would be in a minority. The size of the institution is most important. It should not be too large, and it should not be so small that it is uneconomic. It should not be too large, because if it is the patients would be coming from one institution and entering another of a similar nature. If it is a small, homely place the patients have a chance to readjust to the outside world. Honourable members have asked where the institutions should be placed and what rights the local authorities should have. These people are coming out from an institution to rehabilitate themselves in normal society, and I think it is important that they should not be cast away from the ordinary area of residence of people.

I can understand the difficulties of some local authorities in certain areas, but how can a person who has been away in hospital for some time and who is not fit to go to his home be expected even to feel normal when he knows that he has to live in a hostel that is put away from society? How can such a person start to take his place in normal society again? If any control is to be given by local authorities (and I can see that there is justification for that up to a point), I think it should be made quite clear that they cannot use the term "mental hostel" or some such term that is synonymous with being cast away from the ordinary residential area of society. Such people may not be able fully to take their place in the residential area immediately, but they are certainly not industrial. In other words, if we are to have a residential area and an industrial area, where are we going to put them? Are we going to put them in one area or the other, or have them right outside the camp, like lepers?

One of the things of which South Australia can be proud is its record in society's acceptance of and service towards mentally ill

people, for in this respect we are well ahead of many other parts of the world. However, even in this State there are just as many prejudices in some quarters as there are in other parts of the world: prejudices based on fear, and fear based on the fact that so many people have an aunt or uncle who was once like that. That is the fundamental issue that causes this fear. These mental conditions strike home very closely to most of us.

One of the things that worries people when they hear that there is to be a hostel in their area for people who have come out of mental hospitals is: "Will they escape?" I said earlier that I had worked in a mental hospital. That place was also a criminal institution, and when a person escaped from it, as occasionally someone did, there was a tremendous hue and cry. However, generally speaking there was no need for that hue and cry. Although it made a wonderful headline, it did nothing more than that to the general public, whereas it did a great deal of harm to people who were still experiencing this mental condition and who knew that they were amongst those people linked with an escapee.

If we are to rehabilitate mental patients, we must give them the chance to return to normal society as soon as possible, and with that end in view I suggest that it might well be worth while considering (and perhaps this is in the minds of those concerned with the

day to day administration of this matter) that in the organizing of the details of the hostels we give the type of people concerned a chance to plan for themselves. In other words, let there be some ex-patients of the appropriate type on planning boards because, in the same way as when a person has been through a certain experience himself he is better able to understand the other person's point of view, those people, after having been in these hospitals (and many of them are very competent people: they are not all nitwits), are able to offer something concrete and valuable in the planning of these half-way houses. I support the Bill.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD secured the adjournment of the debate.

TRAVELLING STOCK RESERVE: YONGALA

The House of Assembly transmitted the following resolution in which it requested the concurrence of the Legislative Council:

That the travelling stock reserve immediately west of the town of Yongala, as shown in the plan laid before Parliament on September 19, 1967, be resumed in terms of section 136 of the Pastoral Act, 1936-1966, for the purpose of being dealt with as Crown lands.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.26 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, October 4, at 2.15 p.m.