

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, October 18, 1951.

The SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Robert Nicholls) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

### ASSENT TO ACTS.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the following Acts:—Advances for Homes Act Amendment, Imprint, Pharmacy Act Amendment, and Uranium Mining Act Amendment.

### EGG INDUSTRY SUBSIDY.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—My question relates to the decision made at the Canberra Agricultural Council Conference attended by the Minister of Agriculture early this week, relating to the increased price of stock feed. This morning's *Advertiser* contains a statement regarding Commonwealth policy for providing a subsidy of about £4,000,000 a year for the benefit of egg producers. The acting Commonwealth Minister for Commerce and Agriculture is reported as saying that the egg subsidy would be paid through existing State Egg Boards. In this State small backyard poultry keepers with less than 20 fowls are exempt from compliance with Egg Board regulations. It appears to me that under the Federal proposals they will be unable to derive any benefit from the legislation unless they sell their eggs to the board. As in most instances they produce only a few eggs for their own use that course would be impracticable and would involve the board in some administrative difficulties and a good deal of work without much return. Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether, to get the benefit of the subsidy, such persons will have to pass their eggs through the board's hands or whether other provision has been made for their benefit?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I have not yet received a copy of the Commonwealth Bill which I understand from the Commonwealth Minister he intends to introduce. I have asked him for a copy. The question of a subsidy is an entirely Federal, not a State matter. The Commonwealth Minister has asked for the co-operation of State Egg Boards in the distribution of the subsidy which could only be paid to those persons who delivered their eggs to the Egg Board.

### IRON AND STEEL IMPORTS.

Mr. DUNNAGE—This morning's *Advertiser* contained the following report:—

The freight surcharge on iron and steel and similar cargoes from north European ports will

be fixed at 70 per cent from next Monday. The assistant manager in Melbourne of Lep Transport Pty. Ltd. (Mr. N. Watson) said tonight he had received a message from London to this effect. Mr. Watson said the bulk of cargo from these ports was iron and steel. General cargo surcharge was fixed at 25 per cent. . . . . A spokesman for the Overseas Shipping Representatives' Association said tonight he understood the new freight rates quoted by Mr. Watson were correct.

This report is alarming, as such a surcharge will increase tremendously the cost of steel in this State. A well-known business man told me today that steel now costs about £100 a ton, and it seems that its cost will become so high that this country will be unable to import either iron or steel. Can the Premier say what is the true position with this matter?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I read the report referred to. Overseas shipping rates cannot be controlled by any State price-fixing legislation nor by the Commonwealth. I do not know whether the rates quoted are correct, but from conversations I have had with overseas shipping interests I understand that for a considerable time they have been concerned about the losses they are making in sending their ships to Australian ports. Whether this matter is associated with that problem I cannot say. As soon as I get reliable information I will tell the honourable member the effect that such an increase will have on the local price level of continental steel. I agree with him that already the price of steel from European continental ports is prohibitive and that there is no room for additional charges in the form of heavy levies for shipping.

Mr. HEASLIP—Is the Premier aware that certain steel is available in Victoria which, if it could be transported to South Australia, could be available to South Australian industries, but owing to some section in the Victorian Road Transport Act, unless the merchants in South Australia give an assurance that the steel will be used only for maintenance and not for manufacture it cannot be transported to South Australia? It could come by sea, but owing to the shipping shortage South Australia cannot obtain it. Is any way open to enable South Australia to receive that steel which is available in Victoria?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I should be surprised to learn that the steel position in Victoria is much different from what it is here. Victoria is not a steel-producing State, and as far as I know, the only steel we get from Victoria

is that which is sent there for prefabrication or rolling. If the honourable member will give me particulars of the tonnages and where it is available, I will take the matter up with the Shipping Board and try to arrange for ships to be made available to bring it to South Australia.

#### DEMOLITION OF CITY DWELLINGS.

Mr. LAWN—I have been given some information which, if correct, discloses a complete disregard of the provisions of the Building Materials Act and possibly landlord and tenant legislation. The Metro Flats in Gilbert Street, previously known as the Burwood Flats, were purchased by the Kar-Fix Engineering Company, and have been converted into offices. At the rear a factory has been built. The Managing Director of the company is Mr. Felix Scaliery, who alleges the flats are owned by his wife, yet he persists in worrying the women tenants. There are two or three families in these flats. It is intended to convert one flat into a rest-room for the employees of the factory. The tenants have been there for up to 15 or 20 years. While the menfolk are away during the day the women are worried and harassed by the person I mentioned. He is continually sending them letters asking them to leave, so he says, in order that he may convert the flats into offices. He has already pulled down the front door of the flats and has replaced it with a clear glass door so that anyone can look through the entrance. He has advised the tenants that he intends to paint on the door, "Kar-Fix Head Office." There is a wire screen door on the front entrance, but he has advised the tenants that it is to be pulled down.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—Question!

The SPEAKER—The honourable member has had some latitude to explain his question. Objection having been raised he must now ask his question.

Mr. LAWN—It seems from the information given to me that full tenancy rights are not being given to these people in that they are not permitted to use portion of the backyard for washing. Every day, including Sundays, there are motor cars—

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—Question!

The SPEAKER—The honourable member must now ask his question.

Mr. LAWN—Can the Premier advise whether a permit has been obtained in accordance with the Act for the demolition or alteration of the said flats? If not, will he commence proceedings under the Act and can he take any

action to see that in future the tenants are not harassed or worried but will receive full tenancy rights? Will the tenants be interviewed so as to have an opportunity to give information?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member asked three questions. I will be happy to see if permits have been issued, and will let the honourable member have a report later. Secondly, I will obtain a report from the appropriate authorities, who will make an inspection to see whether there has been any violation of the Building Materials Act. Thirdly, if the tenancy rights are not being observed it is a matter for legal representation to the courts in the normal way, unless there has been an infringement of the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act, in which case the Housing Trust will report to me accordingly and steps will be taken.

#### AMENDING LANDLORD AND TENANT LEGISLATION.

Mr. SHANNON—The session is well advanced and after today's sitting the House will adjourn for a week. I understand a Bill to amend the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act will be introduced. Will the Premier consider the desirability of making available to members the report of the committee which inquired into various aspects of this legislation in order that we shall be better informed when we debate the Bill?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—When the Government introduces legislation as a result of reports of committees or commissions it is the usual practice to introduce the legislation at the same time as the report is tabled. That practice will be observed in this case. I assure members that there will be ample opportunity for them to assimilate the contents of the report before they are asked to debate the Bill. It is a report in which private people are greatly interested and if released now it will immediately start a controversy as to which provisions should be incorporated in the legislation and which should not. The Government proposes to introduce a Bill which will give effect to the committee's report. The Bill will be brought down as soon as it is ready and the report will be tabled simultaneously.

#### PORT AUGUSTA-WARRAKIMBO MAIL ROUTE.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Minister of Works obtained a report from his officers on the possibility of having repairs effected to the Port Augusta-Warrakimbo road?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—As I promised, I have obtained a report on whether the road in question is deserving of particular and urgent attention compared with others where plant is already engaged. I point out that to do the work in one direction automatically means depriving someone else of the plant and men engaged. The Engineer-in-Chief's report states:—

The district engineer reports that this plant is now carrying out further work on the mail route from Port Augusta to Yudnapinna and this work should be completed about the end of October. On the completion of the Yudnapinna road the plant will be moved to carry out urgently needed repairs to a road to Deep and Spear creeks and following this, which will be mid-November, it will be placed on the Port Augusta-Warrakimbo road to recondition it.

It seems that under ordinary conditions it will be about a month before work can start on the Port Augusta-Warrakimbo road. The Engineer-in-Chief proceeds:—

I have discussed this programme, which was laid down some time ago, with the district engineer and he is definitely of the opinion that the roads are being reconditioned in the order of priority warranted by their condition. The Port Augusta-Warrakimbo road was last reconditioned in January, February, and March, 1950. The department's ability to carry out the expanded road programme depends on additional plant and men and there will be an improvement when the heavy road machinery now on order is delivered.

It is not the fault of the department or the Government that the plant has not arrived. It has been on order for a long time and we have from time to time been promised delivery.

#### BASIC WAGE ADJUSTMENT.

The Hon. S. W. JEFFRIES—Has the Premier any information to give regarding an alteration in the basic wage?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I understand that the new quarterly adjustment rates will be announced in the press this afternoon and that they fluctuate from 10s. to 14s. a week increase, the adjustment in South Australia being 11s. The average Australian adjustment is 10s. 8d., the highest being 14s. in New South Wales. The adjustment is somewhat higher than was expected, but is not sufficiently out of line with estimates to cause any difficulty with the State's Estimates.

#### WINE INDUSTRY STRIKE.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Has the Premier's attention been called to the following statement appearing in today's *Advertiser*:—

The disputes committee of the Trades and Labor Council, which will meet at 9.45 a.m.

tomorrow, will consider advising the 350 men on strike at 16 metropolitan wineries to obtain other employment. Union officials said yesterday that many of the strikers were already in other employment.

This assumes that the strike will be extended indefinitely. Is the Premier aware that this strike is not supported by members of the union outside the metropolitan area? I have first-hand information that country members are absolutely opposed to it, and a statement to that effect has been made in the press. Is the Premier also aware that this illegal strike is detrimentally affecting the whole economy of the State because wineries are losing shipments to the eastern States and New Zealand, and I understand to India? Does the Premier agree with the statement I have made and will he stop aiding, abetting and giving comfort to the strikers by refusing the right of the railways to transport wine and other primary products, and will he see that the railways are used in the way the people expect them to be used?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Let me first inform the House that neither the Government nor the Railways Department aids or abets any illegal strike. The railways are not in a position to provide indefinite storage for commodities. There are a limited number of trucks available and the carriage of commodities depends on the goods delivered to the railways being promptly loaded and unloaded. This happens not only in connection with the wine industry, but other industries. Where a person is unable to take delivery of commodities coming to the railways, he is informed that the railways are not able to provide storage accommodation indefinitely. That is all the railways are concerned with in this matter. They desire to keep their trucks moving and will not supply trucks for loading goods unless they are promptly loaded and unloaded whether there is a strike or not. As to the second part of the question, I agree that any strike in any important industry must be extremely detrimental to the economics of this country and ultimately must react adversely not only on the firms concerned but on their employees, who are just as fundamentally concerned with the prosperity of the industry as are the owners. Thirdly, I am not in a position to inform the member whether his statement is correct that country members of the union are opposed to the strike. I have no definite information upon that matter, or whether a vote has been taken of country members.

PRICE OF WHEAT FOR STOCK FEED.

Mr. STOTT—Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether the latest proposition from the Commonwealth Government regarding an increase in the price of wheat provides that poultry for sale is outside the “C” series index figure, and whether any increase in the cost of producing poultry can be handed on; and is the pig meat question being handled by the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture who is now in London, and will the dairy industry now be covered? Does he think, in view of the new evidence, the other States will agree to the Commonwealth proposals?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I am afraid I cannot be a prophet. All I know is that the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture has advised me that the Commonwealth is preparing a Bill and is seeking this State’s concurrence. I have asked him to send me a draft copy at the earliest opportunity so that our Parliamentary Draftsman can study it to see if it is necessary to embody it in South Australian legislation.

POTATO PRICE.

Mr. FLETCHER—This morning I received the following letter from the South-Eastern Potato Growers’ Association, dated October 15, 1951, and signed by Mr. H. R. Mason, Chairman:—

This association has been increasingly concerned as to the dangers of disruption in our industry and the impact on South Australian public. Continual approaches have been made to appropriate authorities in this State to enable potatoes to be sold on parity with neighbouring States, with little recognition. The result has been by virtue of section 92 of our Constitution. Potatoes in this area have been sold interstate at enhanced prices outside South Australian Board authority, gravely endangering our orderly marketing system and taking badly needed food from South Australian public which was replaced at greater cost when available. The knowledge that this opportunity exists is being capitalized increasingly by grower and trader alike and without realistic recognition by prices authorities. South Australian shortages appear inevitable. We urge all interested to give this matter their urgent consideration and action. Figures and further supporting particulars are available from this association.

For some considerable time growers in the South-East have been perturbed about the potato price. They would like to send their potatoes to Adelaide, but a number are breaking away from the association and attempting to sell potatoes to other States. The reason

for this is the continual lower price available in South Australia compared with the prices in other States. As can be understood from the letter, the growers would like to have a more uniform price as between States. Can the Premier offer any relief in the matter?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—In the first place the writer has a wrong idea of the position when he says there is no uniformity of prices as between States. The potato price is fixed on an interstate basis at conferences of Prices Ministers. It is usually directly related to a fixed price in Tasmania, which is the main exporting State. That is an f.o.b. price, and alterations to it are made in accordance with the cost of taking potatoes from Tasmania to the place of consumption. As far as I can ascertain, over a considerable period at no time would it have paid to send Mount Gambier potatoes to Victoria or New South Wales in preference to selling on the Adelaide market, except for two circumstances. One is that while the base price in Sydney may be £25 a ton the New South Wales order must provide for on charges for potatoes going westward in the State, and there may be a period when the cost of getting the potatoes from Sydney is so high that the Mount Gambier potatoes may be able to invade the market to a limited extent, and this would apply in certain country districts. That happens in connection with Broken Hill, which is invariably supplied with potatoes from the Adelaide market. Another circumstance is that throughout Australia there has been a grave shortage of potatoes and a big black market has grown up in the eastern States. Supplies have gone from this State to be sold at prices higher than those prescribed by the Prices Minister for either this State or the State where the potatoes are sold.

VISIT TO RADIUM HILL.

Mr. O’HALLORAN—Has the Premier made final arrangements for the visit of members of Parliament to Radium Hill, which was mentioned some time ago?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The arrangements have been almost completed. It is proposed to invite members to visit Radium Hill on Thursday, November 29. The arrangement is for members to leave by train on the previous night, arrive at Olary next morning, visit the field, and return by a train that would enable them to be in Adelaide again on the Friday morning. In a few days members will receive official notification of the visit.

## RAILWAYS OFFICER'S HOME.

Mr. LAWN—Can the Premier say whether it is a fact that the Chief Mechanical Engineer of the South Australian Railways, Mr. Harrison, recently built a house at Springbank costing thousands of pounds, whether a permit was issued by the Building Materials Department, and whether the amount spent on the house was in excess of that allowed under the Act?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A permit was issued for a house somewhat larger than is usually allowed under a permit. That was due to Mr. Harrison's official position and the fact that he must have certain facilities in connection with his work. Because of his position he is obliged to meet and entertain visitors of his own standing from overseas and other States. As far as I know, the building strictly complied with the conditions of the permit.

## HOSPITAL STAFF.

Mr. FRED WALSH—It has been reported on numerous occasions that there is a considerable shortage of staff in various hospitals, particularly nursing and domestic staff, with the result that the existing staff has to work a considerable number of overtime hours. Can the Premier say whether all public hospitals, including mental hospitals, are fully staffed, and, if not, what steps are being taken to recruit persons for this type of work?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—From a report I received this week I believe the domestic staff position is very much better than formerly. I am not sure, however, whether all Government hospitals are at present fully staffed and all wards open. I know that a substantial part of a metropolitan private medical institution is closed because nurses are not available. I will inquire from the Chief Secretary whether any wards in Government hospitals are at present unoccupied.

## UPPER MURRAY ROADS.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—From time to time I have drawn the attention of the Minister of Works to the transport difficulties of settlers on the north side of the River Murray. As the Minister represented this district for a long time I know that he is personally acquainted with the problem. Did he notice a statement in yesterday's press that the bridge on North Lake had been closed? If true this means that traffic has to go around

Lake Bonney because the direct route has been cut off. Will the Minister use every endeavour to see that the Highways Department provide at least one safe outlet to this ever growing and important part of the State? At present the position there is entirely invidious, as those people have no transport route which may be regarded as secure from the rising level of the river. Will the Minister see that the work on the road north of the river which I think has been agreed to in principle by both the Public Works Standing Committee and the Government is proceeded with at an early date?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—As I informed the honourable member yesterday, the road north of the river from Eudunda through Sutherlands to Morgan and thence to Barmera is regarded by the Government as a work of high priority which it is hoped will be proceeded with soon. It is true that certain patches are flooded, but this trouble is only temporary, and does not represent a complete picture of travel conditions in this area, because people may get through by travelling a little to the north or, if the position is really desperate, by crossing the Paringa Bridge, and down the old mallee track. The Government does not desire that, however, and intends to push ahead with the road I have mentioned. A deputation told the Government that the councils in the area would do something towards this work. Plant would have to be diverted from other Government projects to do this work, and if the councils could assist in this direction the Government could give financial assistance; but until we get that assistance from the councils we cannot do much more than has been announced. The Government is awaiting their reply which will be given the most sympathetic consideration.

## NOISE NUISANCE IN FLATS.

Mr. LAWN—I understand that when a tenant of a house or flat becomes a nuisance to other residents action may be taken to secure his eviction. A portion of a certain building is used as offices during the day and another portion as residential flats. On certain evenings the former is used as a meeting place by a sporting car club which creates considerable noise until 11 p.m. or midnight, greatly annoying residents in the flats. Can the Premier say what action can be taken by those residents to stop this noise?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I suggest they see their solicitor.

## WHYALLA SEWERAGE.

Mr. RICHES—On July 31 the Minister of Works promised that the plan for the Whyalla sewerage scheme would be ready within two months for submission to the Whyalla Town Commission. As that period has expired can the Minister say whether those plans are available?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—No, but I assume that the Engineer-in-Chief would see that that promise was kept. I will make inquiries, and, as the House will not be in session next week, advise the honourable member by letter.

## HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

## SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) moved—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Tuesday, October 30, at 2 p.m.

Motion carried.

## BUDGET DEBATE.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from October 17. Page 990.)

Legislative Council, £7,215.

Mr. QUIRKE (Stanley)—Like the member for Chaffey, for many years I have commented on the finances of the State, not so much in regard to the expenditure on particular lines, but forecasting the results that would accrue from a continuation of the present financial policy throughout the world. The position has worsened and the world is now at the crossroads in relation to finance and the supply of goods. Financial policy is not realistic because money is supreme, being even above the necessities of life. We no longer assess essential commodities as items of food, clothing, machinery, or amenities of life, but in terms of money. The result has been that the emphasis on finance has become of paramount importance, so much so that we are breaking down the supply of goods to the people. Commodities will become so costly that it will be impossible for people to buy them. It is likely that the price of wheat for some purposes will be increased. I do not deny the farmer his rights to an increase in the price of his product because, more than all other sections, he has subsidized the living standards of the Australian people. He has been selling wheat on a comparatively low home

consumption cost of production basis to enable the people of Australian to have cheap bread, thereby sacrificing the difference between the home consumption and the overseas world parity prices. We should not allow an injustice to creep in there, but if wheat becomes too costly the people will not be able to purchase sufficient protective foodstuffs, resulting in malnutrition among big sections of our population; in fact, this is already happening. Fruit and vegetables are now too dear to be bought in adequate quantities by many people and I fear the price of goods dependent on wheat products, such as eggs, will have the same dire effect. Assuredly the peoples of the world will starve. We must get back to realities. People live on the food they eat and require clothes to protect them. If we manipulate finance so as to deprive them of the fundamentals of life the consequences will be disastrous.

Poliomyelitis has become endemic in South Australia. I am not satisfied with the care and treatment of patients. There is too much evidence of a lack of uniformity among the authorities responsible for the treatment of patients. Many patients have become so dissatisfied that they have left the institutions to which they were sent. I shall refer to cases brought to my notice by husbands, parents, and patients themselves. In January a woman was admitted to Northfield as a mild case of poliomyelitis. After 10 days she signed a risk form and went home. She had no movement in her muscles from the waist down and had three bed sores. She went to the Royal Adelaide Hospital Outpatients' Department in an ambulance and was told, "Back to Northfield." She was in bed there for three weeks and was placed in plaster and then taken home again. She left Northfield in the first place because her bed linen and pyjamas were not changed during the 10 days, the weather was hot, and there were flies on the water jars and glasses and food. She was not attended by any medical officer during the 10 days, neither was she given any treatment. When she asked for a risk form the house surgeon interviewed her, but did not examine her. He gave her permission to leave after she had signed the form. The patient is prepared to put the facts of her case before any committee of investigation.

Mr. Macgillivray—It sounds like darkest Africa to me.

Mr. QUIRKE—The patient is not allowed to take her own linen. During the second

period in hospital she was under physiotherapy treatment. A barouche was wheeled alongside the bed, but no assistance given to her to get on it, and she was compelled to drag herself on. When the treatment was completed she had to get off it as best she could, although still paralysed. When discharged she was told to remain in a frame in bed and never to leave the frame until advised to do so. So intolerable were the conditions in the frame that sleep was impossible, and actually she never spent one night in it. Her husband propped her up in bed and made her as comfortable as possible, and put her back in the frame in the morning. She had two plunge baths a week, although she was supposed to be sponged. The greatest ease she received was when taken out of the frame, and she slept without trouble in bed. The doctor attending her was in complete ignorance of the fact that she was not sleeping in the frame and was having plunge baths twice a week, and was amazed at her progress. The woman is convinced that if she had remained in the frame night and day, possibly by now she would be dead. Another patient was in the Northfield Hospital for three weeks and during that time never had the pyjamas changed. On one occasion the bottom sheet was changed and used as a top sheet and a clean sheet put underneath. This patient had a lumbar puncture no fewer than six times. This puncture penetrates the spine so that the spinal fluid can be obtained. Never once was this operation successful, and this on the admission of the authorities themselves. She was diagnosed as a positive poliomyelitis case. All the patients I have mentioned exonerate the nursing staff from any blame. They said there was not sufficient staff to handle the patients, but the nurses were prepared to work themselves to a standstill in the interests of the patients. Another patient contracted poliomyelitis last July, and was first diagnosed as having tonsillitis. After three weeks at Northfield she was partly paralyzed on the left side from the waist downwards, the right leg and arm were partly affected and the back was affected to such an extent that she was unable to sit up. The authorities at Northfield estimated that she would be obliged to stay in bed for nine months. This woman comes from a River district. After treatment by someone else this patient, within four weeks of discharge from the hospital, walked into this House to interview me and the only fault noticeable in her gait was in one

leg. I want it to be clearly understood that these people are prepared to personally substantiate the statements I have made. We have a so-called orthodox treatment for poliomyelitis. There is also what is termed an unorthodox treatment, and the persons practising this method are treating with amazing results some of the patients who sign risk forms at Northfield. This statement can be checked. I am not prepared to give the name of the physiotherapist who uses this unorthodox method. He claims, and he has proof of his claims, which he has submitted to the authorities at Northfield, the Royal Adelaide Hospital, and also the Poliomyelitis Board. He received polite acknowledgements from the Northfield and Royal Adelaide Hospitals, but none from the board. He is a registered physiotherapist, and the woman who was condemned to lie in bed for nine months is a patient. This man is prepared to stake his reputation on his statement that if his treatment were given to a poliomyelitis patient immediately following diagnosis, not in one case would paralysis be the result of infection by the disease. He has authorized me to say that he is prepared to prove his case. He is treating with amazing results the wrecks who come from the Northfield Hospital, and says that if the spine is adjusted even after poliomyelitis has been diagnosed, paralysis can be prevented. He is successful even though his treatment is necessarily delayed owing to the patients coming to him after release from Northfield. He said that if he could get them earlier there would never be any fear of paralysis. He has been registered by the Physiotherapists Board and therefore we can conclude he is competent in his practice. His results prove that his statement is correct for the patients he has handled. Whether it is correct or not, this country cannot ignore the challenge contained in his statement. We dare not do it, and we have not the right to do it. When one considers the distorted, tortured, suffering humanity which is the product of poliomyelitis, anything possible to prevent such things should be investigated. This physiotherapist remains unheard. He has not failed to convey to the authorities what he is prepared to do. He is even prepared to demonstrate his methods, but the offer has not been accepted. Every honourable member should see to it that he is given the opportunity to prove what he claims to be an effective treatment. Another case concerns a boy who went to this physiotherapist two days ago with his neck and arms in plaster, paralysed. Immediately after the first treatment the

physiotherapist removed the plaster from his arms because the nerves were being affected, and within two days he was able to handle a book with full movement of his arms.

Mr. Pattinson—Have you investigated any of those cases or are they *ex-parte* statements?

Mr. QUIRKE—I have absolute confidence in the man, who is prepared to produce the patients. I have seen three of them. So true has been the evidence in the cases I have seen that I am prepared to believe what I am told about this boy, whom I have not yet seen. There is the assurance from the physiotherapists that the neck paralysis will be effectively cured inside one month. Even if these claims are proved to be false, we should take steps to investigate the matter. The State is responsible for the well-being of its citizens, and if there is a chance of off-setting the dire results of this poliomyelitis epidemic, nothing should prevent its being done. We are up against the everlasting challenge of that great trades union, the British Medical Association. It is a professional trades union and it will not investigate the work of this physiotherapist. Its members will not lower themselves from the dignity of their medical degree to the level of the lowly physiotherapist. If they will not do it they must be forced to do it.

Mr. Whittle—Scores of medical men work with physiotherapists.

Mr. QUIRKE—Yes, but why don't they investigate this matter? I have given specific cases, and the old apologist for the orthodox is coming in again. I give the honourable member a challenge on this matter, and I would willingly take him to these patients. Of course, he will not come because he is on the side of orthodoxy. Sooner by far that people should be paralyzed and distorted than orthodoxy should receive a blow!

Mr. Whittle—You stated that medical men would have nothing to do with the physiotherapist.

Mr. QUIRKE—I did not say that. I pointed out that to the medical men this man was a mere physiotherapist. I cannot believe that a body of medical men would refuse to investigate evidence produced by a physiotherapist and his patients. If necessary a Select Committee of this House could be appointed to examine the position. I have been preparing this matter for some time. We have had poliomyelitis cases in Clare and adjacent towns, and I have had close contact with some of the patients. In one case an ambulance was not available and I took the patient to the Northfield Hospital. This was

one of the cases I mentioned earlier. He came home after signing a risk form because he could not tolerate the conditions at the hospital. In this Budget about £4,900,000 is to be spent by the Department of Health. It would not cost much to investigate the matter I have mentioned. If there should be the slightest evidence that the effects of poliomyelitis can be offset by the treatment given by this physiotherapist it is our duty to see that it is adopted. The evidence available is far from slight. The work of this physiotherapist prevents paralysis, but when paralysis does occur he can cure it. He does not claim to be able to cure paralysis of long standing. His treatment must be given comparatively early. When the nerves are paralysed the muscles are wasted, and it is impossible to restore the wasted tissues. If it is necessary to start poliomyelitis treatment early the methods of this physiotherapist should be investigated. If members want further evidence, or wish to interview the physiotherapist or patients concerned, I undertake to do what I can in the matter. I hope the position will not remain unchallenged and that the physiotherapist will be given the opportunity to prove that he can do what he claims.

Mr. FLETCHER (Mount Gambier)—When Mr. Clarke was speaking in this debate I was reminded of that old saying, "Bill, if you knows of a better 'ole go to it." He said that if any members had any suggestions to make about Budget expenditure they should be made here. By no stretch of imagination am I a financier, but I always take a keen interest in any matter which I think will be to the benefit of the State. I cannot offer any suggestions to improve the Budget proposals, but something should be done to break down a feeling which prevails throught the world. In these days it does not seem to matter how much things cost, because the cost is passed on from one to another, with each making sure he gets his quota of profit. Until we can halt this our financial position will get worse. In the *Advertiser* of August 18, 1951, the following appeared under the heading "Not much time left to correct food position":—

The post-war policy of official hand-outs has been directed to encouraging manufacturing, building, and general public works expansion. It has passed over the primary industries almost without notice with a rather staggering result.

Yesterday Mr. Lawn paid a deserved tribute to Mr. Norman Makin, who did so much to establish secondary industries in this State.

Undoubtedly his work was of great assistance at the time, and the benefit of it has been felt since. The article continues:—

Measured in tons of weight and not the rather misleading pounds of money, the total volume of Australia's exports is now 8 per cent below pre-war level. It is falling fast . . . Official figures show an extraordinary situation on the food front. The population of 1960 will require in one way and other about 90,000,000bush. of wheat annually. Within the last decade drought has twice reduced the harvest well below this figure—once to 52,000,000bush.

If there is a drought we shall find ourselves importers instead of exporters, and the same applies to meat and other primary products. We have capitalized on the manufacturing side to the sad neglect of primary production. In a fine article Mr. Colin Clarke, a Queensland economist, has pointed out the same thing. Recently a friend told me that this year it would cost him £30 an acre to plant his seed potatoes. A man on contract work was paid £110 for 10 days on this job, and I understand he was never in the paddock before 8 a.m. and was always out of it by 4 p.m. My friend told me he will have no trouble in selling his potatoes at £33 a ton; it is easy to realize why potatoes are so dear today.

At present this State is confronted with the problem of the shortage of hospital accommodation. Much has been said about the proposed Mount Gambier hospital and its very high cost per bed—and those costs are still rising! It is a sad state of affairs that we must provide additional hospital services at a time of ever-increasing costs. The matrons, nurses and staff of our hospitals do a good job. I pay a tribute to members of the Country Women's Association and hospital auxiliaries who raise funds to provide many necessities for these hospitals which would not otherwise be provided. For a number of years the Mount Gambier hospital has had a fine auxiliary, and it has also been assisted by the 3HA Club which originated in Hamilton, Victoria. Those two organizations have supplied many amenities to the hospital, and the Government has always been willing to subsidize their donations on a pound for pound basis.

Victoria has a Town and Country Planning Act which gives district councils and the Government power to acquire land for parks, road widening, hospital building, sewerage, and other purposes. Recently the lack of such legislation in this State was brought

vividly to my attention in my district where one particular site required for public purposes is being utilized and damaged. The Government should consider improving this state of affairs. Mount Gambier is one of the most wealthy, fertile, and progressive districts in the State; but before its natural assets can be utilized to the fullest extent and before it can become an important manufacturing district it will have to be assured of adequate fuel supplies. All members hope that the Premier's uranium mining venture will be successful, and I will be pleased if in the near future he will be able to let the South-East have a billycanful of this mineral so that power may be supplied in my district.

The development of afforestation in the South-East is important; but I am afraid a line of demarcation is beginning to grow between the primary and secondary production sides of this industry. I feel it would be a big mistake if jealousy is caused between the two phases of the industry, which should work together harmoniously. We are passing through strenuous times, and I do not envy any Prime Minister, Premier, or Treasurer his task. Members should sink all Party differences and work together as one consolidated Parliament.

#### THE ESTIMATES.

First line (Legislative Council, £7,215) passed.

House of Assembly, £9,394; Parliamentary Library, £3,507; Joint House Committee, £7,394—passed.

Electoral Department, £11,010.

Mr. PEARSON—I draw attention to my remarks during the Address in Reply debate when I quoted the statement of the Returning Officer at the declaration of the poll at which I was elected. Can the Treasurer say whether the fees payable to officers acting on election days at country polling booths have been increased, and, if not, whether any increase will be possible?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think increases were granted recently, but I will let the honourable member know definitely later.

Mr. TEUSNER—My attention has been drawn by returning officers to small fees paid to assistants. I understand in some areas it has been found difficult to obtain the necessary personnel to handle the business at the polling booths. I urge the Premier to take the necessary steps to provide increases if there have not been any during the past 12 months.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—My surmise that increases have been granted is re-inforced by the fact that an increased expenditure of £1,225 on salaries for clerks is provided on the Estimates. However, I will check this point and let the honourable member have a reply.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Instead of 6 p.m. on the Friday prior to polling day being the closing time for postal votes to be lodged, could it be made 6 p.m. on the Thursday? This would give the returning officers more time to deal with applications, which can be sent to any polling centre. Often the returning officer receives them too late for them to be valid. Electors who are conscientious objectors should be able to report at all polling booths to have their names struck off the roll. Can extra remuneration be granted to returning officers with large numbers on their rolls? The present polling hours of 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. should be reduced to from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Mr. LAWN—The service given by clerks and assistants at the Adelaide Town Hall is excellent, but aged and infirm people find it impossible to climb the stairs to reach the booth, which is on the first floor. Consequently, they have to vote elsewhere. Further, they are unable to be present at the declaration of the poll. Can the department provide facilities on the ground floor to enable these people to vote at the Town Hall? The declaration of the poll might also be held on the ground floor or at some other building.

Line passed.

Government Reporting Department, £20,411; Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, £2,728; Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement, £3,076; Miscellaneous, £24,911—passed.

CHIEF SECRETARY AND MINISTER OF HEALTH.

State Governor's Establishment, £4,023; Chief Secretary's Department, £12,524; Statistical Department, £39,113; Audit Department, £37,904; Printing and Stationery Department, £173,892—passed.

Police Department, £1,050,457.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Premier ascertained whether police officers consider S.P. betting to be prevalent?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This work would come under the supervision of the plain clothes police, but it is difficult to know how much S.P. betting is taking place. I have no evidence whether it has increased recently. I cannot imagine a person breaking the law just because he has to pay a tax of 3d. on a win of 10s. The Government is doing its utmost to control illegal betting.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Last year £140 was voted for the extradition of a prisoner from England, but the amount spent totalled £696. Can the Treasurer say whether it is usual for the Crown to pay the costs of extradition proceedings when a person is apprehended for a criminal offence?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is not the usual practice to pay large sums of money to bring back people long distances to Australia on unimportant cases, but it is done if the matter is important and the Crown Solicitor advises that in the interests of justice people should be brought back. It is also done where there are large defalcations of Government money and there is a chance of getting restitution, and where the Government is involved in any defalcations.

Mr. TEUSNER—I have in mind a case where a man misappropriated money, sought sanctuary in England and was later extradited to Australia. When extradition takes place is there power to recover from the accused person the cost of the extradition, and, if so, have steps been taken to recover costs in the case mentioned?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am not sure whether costs have been recovered in that case. If there is not authority to recover extradition costs we should take steps to obtain it. I will take up the matter with the Attorney-General to see if an amendment of the Act is necessary.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Regarding the line "Accountant, Assistant Accountant . . . . clerks (ten previously nine), temporary assistants £19,821," can the Premier say whether the clerks are ordinary Public Service clerks keeping records previously kept by police officers?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The line relates to Mr. C. F. Jeffery, Mr. W. F. Connelly, and permanent and temporary clerks, also seven clerks for the Inquiry Branch. Whether the latter are Public Service clerks I am not sure. I will get a report.

Mr. LAWN—The sum of £123,444 is to be spent on office expenses, reimbursement of travelling expenses, uniforms, etc. Recently in reply to a question the Premier told me that the material for police uniforms was purchased by the department and the uniforms made available to police officers at cost price. The officers complain about the material because it is possible to see through it. I believe it came from the Commonwealth. Does the Government intend to purchase more of the material, and at what price, or will the

Government abandon this new type of khaki uniform, particularly because of the poor quality of the material and the fact that the police officers prefer blue to khaki?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I cannot give itemized information because the money voted to the department is a grant. How much each officer spends in any one year may depend on such factors as whether or not he purchases an overcoat during that year. From the report received with regard to the material and the repeat orders from tailors making up the uniforms the position is apparently satisfactory. I assure the honourable member that the whole question is being thoroughly examined.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Does the proposed expenditure of £70 as reimbursement of medical expenses incurred by ex-constable Minear indicate that this line is likely to be permanent?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The amount provided is to cover a claim made. I do not know whether any further claims will be made.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Does the provision of £30 per annum allowance in lieu of quarters and reimbursement for uniform apply to probationers?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, the same as to permanent officers.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Does the amount of £28,565 for the purchase of motor vehicles include an amount for sidecar outfits for suburban police stations? If so, will the personnel at stations provided with these outfits be reduced?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The disposition of the police force must be changed from time to time as considered necessary by the Commissioner and his competent superintendents. The Government does not instruct the Police Commissioner on this matter, as he has a duty under the Police Act to maintain law and order. This line provides for nine sedans, five utilities, two ambulances, and 50 motor cycles.

Mr. Frank Walsh—Does it provide for any sidecar attachments?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No.

Mr. RICHES—Provision is made for a Director of Emergency Fire Services. The Government should pay attention to the organization of these services in areas outside local government areas. Because of a bountiful season the fire menace in northern areas is the greatest I have seen for 25 years. Could the director visit these districts to examine the fire

fighting equipment and organization, and in the event of his finding a lack of either could he recommend methods of strengthening these services?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—At the end of the war the Government found itself with much equipment purchased for Air Raid Precaution purposes, such as trailing units and fire pumps. The Government has made these units available where requested and recommended so that local organizations throughout the State might have the necessary equipment. This has been provided where local authorities have been prepared to organize a crew to maintain and service it. Mr. Kerr has been appointed Director and provision has been made for two constables trained in fire fighting to assist him. The honourable member should ascertain whether local authorities in his district are prepared to provide crews to maintain and house the plant. If these are available, Mr. Kerr and his assistants will train the crews and from time to time inspect the plant to see that it is efficiently maintained. If it is not efficiently maintained it is later withdrawn. In some instances valuable plant has been used for all sorts of purposes and little care has been taken of it or the hoses. Fortunately, most local authorities look after the equipment. In providing plant at various places the practice has been to insist that it will be available on call to deal with any fire in nearby areas.

Mr. TAPPING—Is the sum of £700 for “medical officer” for Dr. Welch’s services only? Sometimes people are arrested on a charge of drunken driving and the police then call Dr. Welch to examine them. Two or three hours may elapse before he arrives, and the person may then have recovered from the influence of liquor. Can this line cover medical officers who may be called from the suburbs to examine a person under arrest?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It only covers the salary of Dr. Welch.

Mr. Tapping—If Dr. Welch is not available immediately could another doctor be empowered to act on his behalf?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will refer that question to the Chief Secretary. I point out that doctors are not always unanimous in their findings. We have found that it is much better to use the services of our own doctor, who has had much experience in these cases.

Mr. RICHES—There was a trailer pump at Port Augusta, but the fire officer suggested that it could be used to better advantage at Quorn. Port Augusta released it on the understanding

that it was on loan to Quorn. Now there is no trailer pump in the vicinity of Port Augusta, but all the surrounding areas will be subject to fire hazards in the summer. I ask whether Mr. Kerr or one of his officers could be sent to Port Augusta and other districts similarly situated to examine the position and take whatever steps are necessary to establish an organization to deal with any bush fires. Men are always willing to answer calls to fight bush fires, but they want to know who is calling them and whether the calls are authentic. The grass is drying quickly and something should be done soon.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Obviously, to comply with the conditions necessary for the establishment of a plant it is necessary for a local organization to be formed. The Government has never taken the responsibility of setting up local organizations. Usually the residents form themselves into a committee and request a plant, giving an assurance that it will be safely housed. The procedure adopted in nearly all the settled parts of South Australia could be applied at Port Augusta.

Mr. RICHES—The position at Port Augusta is different from that in most districts. The people there have a fire brigade, for which they are taxed. The brigade attends any fire in the town, but cannot deal with bushfires in the vicinity although the town people have to fight them. There are not sufficient people in the surrounding districts to form an organization. Any equipment provided would have to be housed in the town. I hope that the Treasurer will consider my remarks.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not believe any more difficulty will be experienced at Port Augusta than at other places. A number of our comparatively large towns are surrounded by thinly populated areas, and they have contributed largely to the setting up of organizations to control fires. One of our best emergency firefighting units is located at Norwood. Mount Gambier and Clare also have excellent emergency units. I am sure that if the honourable member contacts the director of Emergency Firefighting Services he will get the information he seeks. The same assistance will be given to the Port Augusta district as has been given to other districts.

Line passed.

Sheriff and Gaols and Prisons Department, £119,247—passed.

Hospitals Department, £2,361,975.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—An amount of £750 is provided for the purchase of livestock for the Bedford Park Hospital compared with £645 spent last year. The hospital is anxious to conduct its farm for the breeding of pedigreed stock on the policy laid down by the late Dr. Morris. The farm manager at the Northfield Hospital, who is responsible for the management of the farm at Bedford Park, forwarded a boar to Bedford Park which was supposed to be a pedigreed animal, but apparently it came from a litter that was never registered. About 18 months ago another boar costing about 20 guineas was purchased. It has taken about 12 months for the farm manager at Northfield to submit the pedigree of the animal. He has a responsibility to properly carry out his duties. If the intended work of the institution is not carried out action should be taken to improve the position. At Bedford Park there is a competent man to do the work.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

#### WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2).

Returned from the Legislative Council with an amendment—

In clause 6, to strike out "twelve" in line 4 of proposed new subsection (2) of section 13 and to insert "ten."

Consideration in Committee.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—The Government is anxious that this Bill should be dealt with as expeditiously as possible, as the House will not be sitting next week. The clause in question deals with the weekly compensation to those incapacitated and the maximum amount agreed to by this House was £12 a week, subject to one or two conditions. The Council has taken the view that £12 a week is too high as it is above the level paid in some of the other States. The Bill covers people who earn up to £24 a week and therefore if the amendment were agreed to the amount received could be less than 50 per cent of the wage. The original Bill passed in 1932 provided that 50 per cent of the wage could be paid. I consider that £10 a week would be unreasonable compensation for a person earning £24 a week and that the amendment is rather restrictive. We are living in times of rapidly changing economic conditions, with numerous alterations to money values. It is not desirable to have

such a Bill before the House every year to meet these changing economic conditions and therefore we should deal with this payment on an average basis. The amounts paid by insurance companies for compensation have fallen considerably in comparison with the premiums received.

Mr. O'Halloran—Do insurance premiums go up when wages rise?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. The premiums are based on the wages paid. Last year £780,000 was collected in South Australia in premiums, and only £350,000 was paid out in compensation. This left about 54 per cent of the money in the hands of the insurance companies. I believe that since then they have slightly reduced their charges, because not so much is paid out in this State in workmen's compensation as in other States. We should ask the Legislative Council to further consider the matter.

Amendment disagreed to.

The following reason for disagreement was adopted:—

Because the amendment reduces the maximum below the 50 per cent now provided in the Bill and with constantly increasing wages will be inadequate.

Later the Legislative Council intimated that it insisted upon its amendment.

A message was sent to the Legislative Council requesting a conference, at which the

House of Assembly would be represented by the Premier and Messrs. Whittle, Pattinson, O'Halloran, and Fred Walsh.

The Legislative Council agreed to a conference, to be held in the Legislative Council Conference Room at 5.20 p.m.

At 5.18 p.m. the managers proceeded to the conference. They returned at 8.53 p.m. The recommendation was:—

That the Council do amend its amendment by inserting the word "eleven" in lieu of the word "ten" and that the House of Assembly do agree to the amendment as so amended.

A message was received from the Legislative Council intimating that it had agreed to the recommendation of the conference.

Consideration in Committee.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—The Bill originally introduced in this House provided for a maximum compensation for disablement of £12 a week. That had been amended by the Council to £10 a week and after a considerable amount of discussion the conference arrived at a compromise of £11 a week. There is no other alteration in the Bill. I move that the recommendation of the conference be agreed to.

Recommendation agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.4 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, October 30, at 2 p.m.