

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, October 31, 1951.

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

EIGHT-MILE CREEK SETTLERS.

Mr. FLETCHER—I have received a letter from the South-East Dairymen's Association a copy of which was sent to the Land Development Executive, in which it inquires whether it is the Government's intention to subdivide what is known as Chomley's Estate, adjacent to Eight-Mile Creek, into dry blocks for the assistance of those settlers who have been selected for allotment in the area?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—This question is being submitted to the Commonwealth Government with a view to giving each of the settlers who has not sufficient dry land an adequate area in his holding.

RAILWAY CEREAL RATES.

Mr. STOTT—Is the Minister of Railways aware that the Victorian railways carry barley, oats, and wheat on what is known as a grain rate which is uniform and simplifies invoicing? In South Australia the railways have a different rate for the carrying of the different cereals, that on oats being 6s. 7d. a ton greater than on wheat and barley over a distance of 100 miles and 12s. 6d. greater over 200 miles. As the Government is considering an alteration in railway freight rates, would it consider adopting the Victorian system? If it were adopted South Australia would get more of these cereals carried from the border towns such as Bordertown.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The honourable member has not given this matter as much consideration as usual. He implied it would not cost any more to cart a ton of wheat than one of oats, which is a more bulky item than wheat. A greater tonnage of wheat can be loaded on a truck than oats. For instance, 100 tons of wheat takes up far less space than a similar quantity of oats. Another reason for the discrepancy in the various rates has been the greater variation in prices in South Australia, and the position therefore arose in many cases that we were carting some freight far below cost, and other freight with a higher selling value had to make that good. Those three cereals, because of their present higher value as stock feed, are coming closer together, and it may be feasible to put them on a flat rate, but I should imagine that

immediately that is done there will be more complaints from people having differential rates.

Mr. Stott—It seems to work in Victoria.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Because they do not have the other system and it is hard to put the clock back. There is a very good market for oats overseas at remunerative prices, and at present prices in relation to wheat it could probably stand the extra charge. The question will be considered when the question of increased freight rates is dealt with.

COUNCIL REVENUE.

Mr. PATTINSON—The Highways Commissioner, in his annual report tabled yesterday, stated that if councils are to continue to function satisfactorily it will be necessary for them to have more revenue in most instances. I am particularly interested in the municipalities of Brighton, Glenelg, Marion, and West Torrens, because the whole of the two former and portions of the two latter are within the Glenelg electorate. From 1938-39 to 1950-51 these four councils increased their collectible rates by an average of 60 per cent, but in the same period costs of labour and materials increased by 180 per cent. In the same time the number of new dwelling houses increased by 6,853 and of this total no fewer than 4,446 new dwellings have been erected in the last five years. This huge influx of new population, brought about mainly by the Government's housing and secondary industries expansion policy in the metropolitan area, has brought increasing demands for new roads, footpaths, and other community services which are beyond the physical and financial resources of the councils to satisfy. Last year the State received nearly £1,500,000 from the Commonwealth under the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act and customs and excise duties on petrol, but 65 per cent of that was expended on main roads and the other 35 per cent on roads other than main roads in rural areas. I do not begrudge the rural areas receiving that large grant from the Commonwealth Government through the medium of the State, but the metropolitan councils do not share in any such benefits and they are bearing the burden of providing roads, footpaths, and other community undertakings as a result of the tremendous housing expansion. Will the Minister take up this matter with Cabinet as a question of policy to see whether some aid can be given councils in the metropolitan area similar to that given to those in rural areas?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—It is rather unique to hear a member suggest that the number of new houses in his district, most of them erected by the Housing Trust, are becoming a burden, for all the occupiers will be ratepayers of the future. Certainly, until such time as the councils get into their stride to meet this demand, there may be some temporary embarrassment, but to meet this, as the honourable member knows, the Government has, through the Housing Trust, subscribed funds towards making roads and footpaths in these newly settled areas. I suggest that in the main no council would agree to be without the benefits which will ultimately accrue because of the activities of the trust. All funds made available by way of petrol tax and registration fees go into the Roads Fund and are expended on the recommendation of the Highways Commissioner. I would not be able to undertake, nor do I think the House would agree, that a greater allocation should go out of the fund for areas which are benefiting by the activities of the Government in building homes. As a matter of fact we have heard the reverse in this House—that the trust is diverting too many homes to the metropolitan area and not enough to the country. Now we are charged with casting a burden on metropolitan people. I remind the honourable member that much of the land referred to in his district was vacant land, and that his area is not benefiting because of the unimproved land value system which it has adopted. As it is a matter of policy I will take the matter to Cabinet.

SOLDIER SETTLEMENT.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I noticed in the press recently that the Minister of Repatriation attended a conference of Repatriation Ministers at Canberra to discuss the question of soldier land settlement. Has he any information to give regarding the conference?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I am having a report prepared regarding the conference held over the week-end at Canberra and early next week I will be happy to supply the House with it.

FISHING HAVEN AT PENNESHAW.

Mr. BROOKMAN—Can the Minister of Marine say whether the Government would be prepared to consider the construction of a fishing haven at Penneshaw? As the Minister is aware, there is no haven for fishing craft on Kangaroo Island east of American River. It could be an important fishing ground around Penneshaw, but no-one there can keep a fishing

boat unless he takes it to American River during rough weather. A cove at Penneshaw has been investigated by the Harbors Board but it has been rejected as a possible site for a fishing haven. In view of that, can the Minister say if the Government will investigate another site for a fishing haven in that locality?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Yes. It has been the policy of the Government through the Harbors Board to improve, wherever possible, the facilities for fishing havens, but first things must come first and obviously attention had to be directed to the larger places where there was a greater concentration of fleets. I shall be glad to have any suggestion from the honourable member, or from any of his constituents, regarding alternative sites, and I will see that they are investigated.

ALTERATIONS TO CITY DWELLING.

Mr. LAWN—Has the Premier any further information in reply to a question I asked recently about the alteration of a double-fronted house in Gilbert Street, Adelaide, into a car showroom?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received a full report, including the evidence (which is available to any member who desires to see it) obtained by the two officers who investigated the matter. The Director of Building Materials reports:—

A permit has not been granted to this company for the demolition of a dwelling. On the contrary, an application for permission to convert the house into a showroom was refused. In June, 1950, it was ascertained that this work had been commenced and the papers were sent to the Crown Solicitor for prosecution if there was sufficient evidence. The report showed that the house had not been occupied as a dwelling for 12 months and that it was not in good order. The Crown Solicitor advised that the evidence available at that time did not establish that the alterations to the house had rendered it uninhabitable as a dwelling house and that, if all the proposed alterations were carried out, an offence probably would be committed, but he did not think it would be regarded very seriously by the court. The flat in Metro flats, now being used as an office by the Kar-Fix Engineering Company, has not been altered so as to render it uninhabitable as a dwelling-house. The only work carried out was painting and cleaning. It is not an offence under the Building Materials Act to use a dwelling-house for some other purpose; an offence is committed only if the dwelling is demolished or alterations are made to it which render it uninhabitable as a dwelling without the necessary permit or order of the local Board of Health. No evidence was secured of a breach of the Building Materials Act, with the possible exception of the

conversion of the dwelling-house, used as a store-room, into a showroom, but as mentioned above, the Crown Solicitor did not think that this matter would be regarded seriously by the court. An officer of the South Australian Housing Trust accompanied my inspector on these inquiries, and I have since been advised by the trust that their investigation did not disclose any offence against the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act.

PROGRAMME FOR ROYAL VISIT.

Mr. DUNNAGE—In the *News* of June 15 appear details of the route that the Royal Progress will follow when the Royal visitors are in Adelaide. It shows the route as being from West Terrace to North Terrace, along North Terrace to East Terrace, down East Terrace to Rundle Street, along Rundle Street to King William Street, thence to Gouger Street and down to Brown Street. I have been asked by a number of residents of the southern suburbs to ascertain if it is possible to have a diversion of the route by having the Royal visitors go straight down King William Street to South Terrace or, preferably, to Park Terrace, and along to Cohen Avenue, or else along South Terrace to Brown Street, returning to continue the route as published. It is suggested that all people from the southern districts, especially those travelling from Glenelg by motor, could congregate in the southern part of the town thereby saving much congestion. I think that everybody is desirous of seeing the Royal couple and the diversion suggested would only take about an extra 10 minutes. It would also give southern residents a considerably longer stretch of roadway on which to congregate and, with the park lands in the area, would allow more room to park cars. Can the Premier say whether the route can be altered somewhat along the lines indicated?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The official programme was approved by the committee only this morning; consequently any speculation, or submission of a previous route which may have been designed for the visit of Their Majesties, could only have been anticipatory as regards the Prince and Princess. As it happens, the route which had been set out in the *News* is in accordance with the route proposed and approved by the committee this morning. The programme will be released as soon as the revisions made this morning can be typed so that it will be available in a complete form. The committee was faced this morning with the most difficult task of trying to meet the very many requests from

all parts of the State. Its feeling was that the programme for Their Royal Highnesses was already overloaded to an undesirable extent, that it would be most exacting, and that it could not possibly be increased to meet the very numerous requests—in some instances for only small alterations such as those suggested by the honourable member, but requests which in the aggregate would mean a great deal in a week's programme. I point out that on the same day as this Royal progress the Royal couple will attend the Morphettville racecourse, traversing the very area in the southern part of the city mentioned by the honourable member. Also on the afternoon of that day they will visit the Adelaide oval to attend a cricket match, and attend receptions at Parliament House and the Town Hall. Surely that programme should give everyone the opportunity to get a really good view and should meet the demand.

Mr. FLETCHER—Have any alterations been made to the Royal visit programme in country districts, and has any consideration been given to including the South-Eastern portion of the State in the itinerary?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It would be advisable to release the itinerary of the tour as a whole rather than piecemeal. It has not been possible to include a visit to Mount Gambier in the South Australian section of the visit, but Their Royal Highnesses propose to visit Portland, which is not far from Mount Gambier, and this will give the people of the South-East an opportunity to see them.

TREATMENT OF POLIOMYELITIS PATIENTS.

Mr. QUIRKE—In the Budget debate I gave information of a practising registered physiotherapist who informed me that he is prepared to give evidence that his after-treatment of poliomyelitis infection will definitely prevent paralysis if given prior to paralysis overtaking the patient as a result of infection by the virus. He is also prepared to demonstrate his methods, instruct others in the necessary manipulation, and to show to any authorities his cures of paralysis of long standing. I know of at least one case in which his results have been astoundingly successful. He has made an offer to the responsible authorities to demonstrate his methods, but without result. He has been ignored. I do not give his name because he does not desire personal advertisement. In view of the importance of this offer, is the Premier prepared to break down the barriers

of orthodox resistance by giving this physio-therapist an opportunity to prove his claims? No possible help should be withheld from people who are likely to suffer the dire consequences of poliomyelitis infection.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—If the honourable member will give me privately the name of the person referred to, I will take up the matter with the Minister of Health who will, no doubt, place it before the Poliomyelitis Committee. The study of this disease is taking place all over the world. Large sums have been spent upon research into its prevention and cure, and I am sure there would be no question of breaking down resistance but a joyful acceptance of any improved methods of treatment. This Government is at present spending large sums trying to find better methods.

Mr. Quirke—It will not cost anything to give this method a trial.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I assure the honourable member that if an investigation disclosed that an improvement could be made in the present treatment there will be a joyful acceptance of something that would be of benefit to mankind. I realize that all new ideas are treated with caution because human beings are naturally conservative, but surely no-one would suggest that conservatism would be carried to the extent of creating resistance to the acceptance of a method if it were demonstrated to be efficacious.

SITE FOR PROOF RANGE.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—In reply to a question yesterday the Premier said the Minister for the Army would probably visit South Australia this week to investigate the question of establishing an artillery range in this State. It was desired to get land not of such high value as that at Tungkillo and another site was proposed south of Port Augusta West. Will the Minister have investigations made of lands adjacent to Renmark and Berri where there is practically an unlimited range of country with a carrying capacity of about one sheep to eight or 10 acres, which is probably as low as any of the pastoral areas of the State? This area has the undoubted advantage of having an unlimited water supply from the Murray and it can be supplied with electricity by the Electricity Trust.

The Hon. S. W. Jeffries—Are there any hills?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Not in the ordinary sense of the word, but there are rises. The Berri council feels that this area has certain advantages with regard to water which makes

it unique. Will the Minister of Lands submit to the Commonwealth Minister for Defence the possibility of this area being used, and get a report from his officers to see what can be done about it?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I give the undertaking that the Land Board will investigate the area suggested but it is very necessary that the country for the range should be undulating and hilly with flats and certain areas of cover so that all types of military training and exercises can be carried out. I will get a report.

ACQUISITION OF LAND, HUNDRED OF BAKER.

The SPEAKER laid on the table the report of the Land Settlement Committee on the acquisition of land in the Hundred of Baker in the County of Russell.

Report ordered to be printed.

COUNTRY HEALTH SERVICES.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—I move:—

That a select committee be appointed to advise the Government on the question of granting assistance in the maintenance of nursing hostels, ambulance, aerial medical, and other health services in districts outside local government areas in South Australia; and what assistance should be given to the Bush Church Aid Flying Doctor Service.

I am asking the House to agree to the appointment of a select committee because I believe every other avenue available to the people in these districts has been canvassed, but unsuccessfully. Approaches have been made by deputations, but the results have not been completely satisfactory. They waited on the Minister of Health and subsequently the Premier, and were given a sympathetic hearing and the members left quite confident that the Government would give some thought to the problems placed before the authorities. They believed that those rendering services by conducting the hostels and doing ambulance work and also attending to the flying doctor service would receive some benefit as a result of the deputations. In the main, the official replies following those deputations have not been satisfactory. No uniform policy appears to be adopted in making grants to nursing hostels in the outback. I am of opinion that if we are to encourage settlement in these areas a complete overhaul of the Government's attitude to these organizations is absolutely necessary. The people in these areas are asked to provide too much for the services rendered to them. Apparently where the population is

aggregated there is not the same difficulty in getting Government assistance. Although the Government takes unto itself the responsibility of providing certain health and medical services in settled areas it is reluctant to assist similar services in areas outside council districts. It has set aside a sum on this year's Estimates to subsidize the operations of motor ambulance services in the metropolitan area, but nothing has been attempted outside that area. I know it has been suggested that in future the service will be extended to the country. This question of South Australian ambulance services has been under consideration for several years, but repeated applications for financial help by honourable members representing districts far removed from the metropolitan area have fallen on deaf ears. At Port Augusta there is an ambulance service with two vehicles purchased by local subscription, and it renders service to an area within a radius of 200 miles. These vehicles are on call 24 hours a day and have been requested by other districts to take patients to Adelaide. Letters to the authorities on the question of co-ordination of or financial assistance to these services have not been acknowledged, and every appeal to the Government for financial help has been refused with the exception that it has agreed to assist in the transport of indigent cases.

Mr. O'Halloran—Does that apply under the new scheme of ambulance co-ordination?

Mr. RICHES—No-one knows what the scheme is so far as the country is concerned. No details have been given, despite the fact that on two occasions this year I have attempted to get information from the Premier. In my opinion the Government has not yet-worked out a policy, but if the country services break down due to the lack of finance and ambulances are called upon to bring to Adelaide patients outside the districts in which they usually operate or Adelaide ambulances are dispatched to the country to get patients, the Government will know all about it. It is to be hoped that that will not occur. It is grossly unfair to country people who are attempting to establish and maintain ambulance services that they are unable to get any information on Government policy. If the Government intends to take over ambulance services it will not be necessary for these people to set aside money for the replacement of existing vehicles. If they are to carry on those services indefinitely provision will have to be made to replace

vehicles now in commission. In view of the lack of sympathy shown by the Department of Public Health in this regard Parliament would be well advised to appoint a Select Committee to make an inquiry and advise whether the services should be extended or whether any of them are unnecessary; I think it naturally follows that if it were found that the services were necessary and valuable the Select Committee could advise as to the amount of financial assistance they could reasonably expect from the Government. The same thing applies to the establishment and maintenance of hostels. Hostels have been erected at Innamincka, Beltana and Oodnadatta and on the East-West railway at Tarcoola, Cook and Rawlinna and the Government seems to adopt a different attitude in assessing financial assistance for each of the separate institutions, as it is impossible to detect any uniformity of policy.

Mr. Dunnage—Are those on the railway State hostels?

Mr. RICHES—No. They are all run by church organizations. Away from the railway there are community hospitals run, in one instance by a nursing association, and in other instances by the community direct, but again there is no uniform Government policy. Members have heard me on numerous occasions urging that the hospital at Cook, which is run by the Bush Church Aid Society, should be granted a subsidy towards the maintenance of the services carried on there. I have argued that it should be subsidized on a similar basis to the hostels at Innamincka, Beltana and Oodnadatta, but until this year the Government has refused to grant one brass farthing, either to the building of a hospital or maintenance of the services. This year it is true, although it is not shown on the Estimates, the Government has agreed to make a grant of £150 to Cook hospital. It has also agreed, following representations by the members of the districts last year, to offer a pound for pound subsidy to the hospitals on the West Coast conducted by the Bush Church Aid Society, but in the case of Cook, which is outside local government areas and where, in consequences, rates cannot be collected the Government insisted that it should be treated in a similar manner and on the same basis as the subsidies granted to hospitals in the more thickly populated areas where contributions can be taken by way of rating. I have always contended that the hospital at Cook should be placed on the same basis as hostels on the Central Australian railway and not the same as hospitals in the more thickly populated area.

Mr. Christian—What is the basis for those on the Central Australian railway?

Mr. RICHES—I do not know; as far as I can determine it is simply a straight-out grant. I have the greatest admiration and respect for the work being carried on by the Australian Inland Mission in hostels at Innamincka, Beltana and Oodnadatta. When I represented that district in this House representations were made to the Government and grants of £100 and £150 were made to those institutions, and have been maintained until this year at those figures. I believe they were straight-out grants in aid and the hostels are worth every penny of it, but I would like to see the amounts still further increased, for £100 does not go far in these days. When the Government finally agreed to acknowledge some responsibility for the Cook hospital it wrote the Bush Church Aid Society and instead of indicating that it would make a straight-out grant on the basis of services rendered—which is the basis that I have always urged should be adopted—asked for a statement of receipts and contributions by people living in the district, and on this basis made a grant of £150 a year. At the same time the grant to Innamincka was increased from £100 to £200, for Beltana from £150 to £250, and from Oodnadatta from £100 to £200. I quote that merely to demonstrate that the grant to Cook is not only inadequate but wrongly based. It is a six-bed hospital and caters for both sexes and maternity cases, and the Government absolves itself from all responsibility by a grant of £150 a year. I know that the organizing secretary is accepting that amount this year; it is better than nothing. He was asked to submit figures showing the contributions received, which come mainly from people in other States.

Mr. Christian—Is it on a pound for pound basis?

Mr. RICHES—Yes, but it has no relation to the service rendered. Most of the people located at Cook are Commonwealth railway employees and members of the Commonwealth Railways Medical Fund, which contributes to the cost of hospital accommodation of those employees. It pays 4s. 6d. a day whilst the patient is in the Cook hospital.

Mr. Christian—Does the Cook hospital come under the Commonwealth hospital contribution scheme?

Mr. RICHES—It gets no other assistance. I do not set myself up as an arbitrator in this matter, but I hope to demonstrate that

there is a case for an inquiry. All promises in the past about an investigation have not resulted satisfactorily for any of the parties concerned. Deputations consisting of Legislative Council members for the district, Mr. Christian and myself, have not had the desired result. Last session the Premier promised that the request would be examined by an advisory committee. Just prior to the close of the last financial year the Premier said in Parliament that the matter had been referred to a committee, and that the report was not to hand. He further said that if the committee recommended a grant he would see that it was made retrospective to last year. The representations in this matter have been going on for over 12 months, and it was desired that financial assistance should be given for the year ended June 30, 1951. When the matter was pressed the Premier said that if the committee made a favourable recommendation he would see that the back lag was made up. What has happened in regard to that back lag, and what is the position of the grant for the financial year ended June 30, 1950? In July last, on a personal explanation, the Premier apologized for giving wrong information on the matter because no committee had been appointed and someone else was continuing with the inquiry. I hope the House will agree to this matter being investigated by a committee of members which can advise on the work being done and the financial assistance which should be given.

At Tarcoola there is a hostel where a sister was permanently in charge for some time. It was run by the Tarcoola Medical Fund Committee and the staff was provided by the District Trained Nursing Society. Some years ago, in order to take advantage of the Flying Doctor Service and to have the benefit of a monthly consultation with a doctor, the Bush Church Aid Society was approached about the hostel coming within the scope of its work. It agreed, and an arrangement was made for a sister to be placed in charge of the hostel with the society being responsible for maintaining the hostel, provided the £250 grant from the State Government was handed to it. That grant was fixed in the depression years. I notice in the Estimates before us that other hostels have had their grant doubled, but the Tarcoola grant is still the same as it was many years ago. The Tarcoola Medical Fund Committee, which is responsible for the building, approached the Government some years ago and it was

promised that another £1,000 would be provided for the completion of a new building. The fund for this purpose is different altogether from the hospital service of the Bush Church Aid Society. It was stated that the £1,000 was a subsidy, directly or indirectly, towards the society's work, but it is nothing of the kind; it is a grant to the people who are responsible for the erection of new hospital buildings. On the last occasion I visited Tarcoola the walls had been topped and materials left lying about long enough to suffer deterioration. The building has remained in that state for more than two years.

I refer now to the Flying Doctor Service, which is based in South Australia and operates wholly within the State. It is a real Flying Doctor Service, as the doctors themselves do the flying. The service does not receive one farthing's assistance from the Government. There is considerable confusion in the minds of some members in this respect. Confusion likewise exists in the minds of many people on the West Coast who are under the impression that the Government is assisting the West Coast Flying Doctor Service. Members who discussed the matter privately with me today doubted my statement that it is not receiving any financial assistance from the Government whatsoever, but it is the truth. It is high time that the Government recognized the service, which is one of the finest services that has been and still is being rendered to this State. It is maintained purely by self-sacrifice of everybody associated with it, a sacrifice which these people should not be called upon to make. Moreover, the work is carried on almost entirely by women. The two doctors, Dr. Freda Gibson and Dr. M. Mueller, and the pharmacist are ladies. The matron and nurses are also women. The womenfolk of South Australia should be proud of the work that their sisters are doing. The pilot is a man, and, in association with the executive officers, is the only man associated with the South Australian Flying Doctor Service. One of the two planes is engaged in full-time service. A retaining fee is paid to the pilot of the other. I ask members to appreciate the scope of the work done.

Regular trips each month are made to various places. On the first Wednesday a plane leaves Ceduna for Cook and return, a distance of 444 miles, taking a lady doctor with it and placing her in the midst of residents. On the first Thursday a visit is made

to Coorabie and Penong, a return journey of 176 miles. Every Thursday a plane leaves for Penong, a return trip of 86 miles, and goes on to Koonibba (46 miles return) if requested. On the third Tuesday a visit is paid to Tarcoola and Mulgathing, a return journey of 290 miles. The average monthly flying time is from 20 to 30 hours, the average flying time for a year being between 250 and 300 hours. The average number of patients attended each year is between 1,100 and 1,200. In addition, in one month recently emergency calls were made from Ceduna to Parafield, 780 miles, with a one-year-old child who was taken to Adelaide Children's Hospital with an internal obstruction; from Ceduna to Penong, 86 miles, with a haemorrhage case; from Penong to Ceduna with a stretcher case (an elderly patient); and from Penong to Ceduna with a stretcher case requiring a major operation. At other times emergency visits have been made to Cook (444 miles), Tarcoola (220), Mulgathing (260), Wudinna (240), and Kyancutta (260).

From time to time representations for assistance for this service have been made to the Government, which has changed its ground. Firstly, it was stated that the Government was not prepared to grant the Bush Church Aid Society assistance because a principle, which would be tantamount to subsidizing denominational work, was involved. I feel that we have satisfied the Government on that score. It is a public health service carried on by a denomination, but it cannot in any sense be called denominational work. The Government must be satisfied because it has agreed to a small grant of £150 to the Cook hospital, as well as grants to Murat Bay and other hospitals. The Premier claimed that grants were made by the Government to the Bush Church Aid Society for specific work in the knowledge that it was the organization that received it. Although not prepared to assist a denominational organization, as such, the Government is prepared to recognize and subsidize its services. All we ask is that this specific service should receive financial assistance lest we lose it. There are plenty of precedents for this action. The Premier recognized the Salvation Army rescue work and Kuitpo Colony by making grants for specific work and not grants to the organizations conducting the work. The Australian Inland Mission, an offshoot of the Presbyterian Church with hospitals at Innamincka and

Beltana is subsidized—a fact which should satisfy the Government from the denominational aspect.

The next objection raised by the Premier was that the Bush Church Aid Flying Doctor Service was not a service normally carried out by the Government; but I remind him that the Flying Doctor Service operating from Broken Hill and Alice Springs has been subsidized to the extent of £1,000 a year for many years. That service is essentially an emergency one and provides no regular monthly visits or consultations in the areas covered. The grant of £1,000 I have mentioned should be increased, because since it was first made costs have risen tremendously and additional bases have been established. This subsidy is a precedent for a grant to the Flying Doctor Service at Ceduna—a service which the Government should be glad to support because of the far-reaching benefits it gives over a tremendous area. The Premier also said that this service does not give an emergency service such as that given by the service operating from Broken Hill and Alice Springs; but I have already given details of one month's emergency flying which should demonstrate the great value of this service. It covers an area of over 96,000 square miles and uses a Fox Moth and a Dragon plane. The Dragon must be maintained and piloted by a man who receives only £400 a year for his services, more than £1 a week less than the basic wage.

Mr. O'Halloran—It sounds like a labour of love.

Mr. RICHES—Yes. All these hospitals are staffed—from the matron down—by women receiving only about £3 a week. Every sister is doubly certificated and is quite happy to work at such a tremendous sacrifice, but is that fair? Two of these women have been offered posts at £14 a week as matron in other hospitals. The second pilot, a garage man, is paid a retainer of £60 a year. At September 30 last Mr. Chadwick had flown 2,934 hours and had visited more than 13,000 patients since 1938; yet no subsidy had been offered by either the State or Federal Government. Under the civil aviation laws these planes must come to Parafield for overhaul once a year. This year the overhaul of the Fox Moth cost over £350, and that of the Dragon £1,300. On October 30, 1950, the Bush Church Aid Society sent the following letter to the Premier:—

This society has been given to understand by the Parliamentary representatives of the districts concerned that you have given assurances that the Government is prepared to consider subsidizing the Flying Doctor Services

operated by this society based on Ceduna and Wudinna and the hospital at Cook on the basis of assistance to the services concerned and not denominations. I therefore respectfully renew this society's request for a grant of £1,000 per annum to the Flying Doctor Service at Ceduna and £1,000 per annum to the Flying Doctor Service at Wudinna and £250 towards nursing facilities at Cook. In support of these requests I crave your permission to make the following points:—

(1) This society is incorporated under the Companies Act, 1936, and is an association not for gain. Therefore, it need not necessarily be denominational.

(2) All the above services are provided to the general public regardless of creed and are not run on denominational basis.

(3) Never before has this society sought Government assistance. It has been proud of the fact that it has supplied all its own finance through the donations of its supporters. The requests which are made now are forced by the prevailing economic conditions and by a desire to avoid closing down any of these services.

(4) These services have been provided and still are provided in a sincere spirit of service for the welfare of the people in those areas. Everyone concerned in their administration and management is living on a meagre salary including the headquarters staff, and is glad to do so. The nurses and domestic workers receive salaries very much below the basic wage.

(5) The sums asked for are definitely not for the general funds of the society but are asked absolutely and only for the purposes specified. The society makes no financial gain from the services provided or, for that matter, any gain of any sort.

Therefore for these and other reasons, one of the most important of which is that this society has served your State for 25 years without seeking or desiring any Government assistance whatsoever, I beg you to give your earnest consideration to our requests so that these services will be maintained as efficiently as they have been in the past. The society will be most reluctant to cease any of these activities, but rising costs threaten the future so much that some curtailment or even complete closure of certain activities may be unavoidable unless some financial assistance is obtained.

That letter was forwarded to the Premier on October 30, 1950, but the society has not yet received any financial aid. In view of the facts I have adduced and the great service rendered the Government should support the society. A Select Committee should be appointed to investigate the claims made and to advise the Government on the assistance it should give and the facilities which should be provided to enable the service to be continued. I could cite many instances of lives being saved and people who have been helped, but I do not want to sponsor the motion on those

premises. Representations have been made by letter and by deputation to the Minister of Health and by deputation to the Premier, as well as by repeated and respectful submissions in this Chamber. Twelve months ago I accepted an assurance that the question would be fully investigated, and expected that something would be done. On the opening day of this session and again later I was led to believe that the matter was still under review and that the Government was prepared to recognize and help this work. I am afraid that without assistance the service will break down. Mr. Chadwick, who is a family man, has spent many hours in the air and it has been suggested to him that he has done more than can be reasonably asked of any man in giving service to his fellow creatures. There may be a possibility of losing his services. I hope this will not happen, for I believe it would be impossible to replace him. The sacrifices and calls asked of him are beyond the normal conception of public duty and constitute an undue burden. I hope the House will give serious consideration to the motion.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS secured the adjournment of the debate.

COURSING RESTRICTION ACT
AMENDMENT BILL.

Committee's report adopted.

On the motion for the third reading.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—I will briefly summarize the points raised both for and against the Bill. There has been much misunderstanding and unfair criticism of the measure, which after all is a very simple one which seeks to do a very simple thing. It seeks to legalize a practice which has been operating in South Australia for the last 10 years without any complaint from any authority. Opponents of the Bill made gambling their major criticism. This Bill is the first attempt to prohibit gambling on any greyhound sport. The existing law permits licensed gambling at both open and plumpton coursing meetings. The 1927 Act which this Bill seeks to amend does not prohibit licensed gambling on greyhound speed racing. Mr. B. B. Hall, secretary of the Adelaide Greyhound Racing Club, told a large deputation that waited upon me that if ever gambling became associated with greyhound racing in this State he would use all his influence to abolish the sport. I have since had many opportunities to discuss this aspect with him and on each occasion he has said, "There is one thing we will not have

in this State, and that is gambling on this sport." The next point raised by opponents to the Bill is, "Can greyhound racing survive without gambling?" The Adelaide Greyhound Racing Club has been operating for more than 10 years. The police have attended all the meetings and there has never been one report made or any action taken in respect of illegal gambling at any one of those fixtures. This also applies to similar clubs operating in country centres such as Peterborough and Murray Bridge.

Mr. O'Halloran—The Peterborough club is very well conducted.

Mr. SHANNON—I understand the clubs at both those centres are. Mr. Hall says that they conduct their business on the same lines and under the same rules as the Adelaide Greyhound Racing Club. If this Bill becomes law clubs at Kadina, Balaklava, Owen, Freeling and Wolseley conducting either open or plumpton meetings with gambling facilities intend to change over to speed racing without gambling facilities. That would mean an immediate reduction in the volume of gambling, with the prospect of other open or plumpton clubs following this example. The next point raised is, "Is this sport popular?" That question is asked by people apparently not familiar with the sport. The Adelaide club during its last year of operation at Payneham had an average attendance of 800, the highest being 1,400. The Leader of the Opposition says that usually 600 or 700 people attend meetings at Peterborough. I consider that some indication of the sport's popularity, but in case it is not sufficient I instance the demonstration at the Royal Adelaide Show in 1950. It was a very popular innovation and I understand from officials of the society that there have been numerous requests for a repetition. The next point raised is, "Is speed coursing cruel?" Since the formation of the Adelaide Greyhound Racing Club in 1940 no case of cruelty has been reported in this State. It is obvious that one of the reasons why there is no gambling associated with this club is the type of people attending its meetings. Although there may be some gambling elements associated with this sport occasionally, it does not attract persons whose moral code is low. All the cases where the courts have inflicted penalties occurred in States where licensed betting was associated with the sport. It is obvious that gambling always introduces undesirable members of society. Under the 1927 Act the use of live game as a quarry or lure is not prevented. This, of course, would be unthinkable

on an enclosed racing track and would indeed be very questionable on an enclosed plump-ton course. I do not think it sporting to keep an animal in captivity and then release it in an enclosed area with a greyhound to chase it and only a small exit as a means of escape. If the Bill becomes law we can say goodbye to all plump-ton coursing in this State and it will be a good day when that can be said. All the speed coursing clubs operating in South Australia prohibit the use of any live animal even in the training of greyhounds, and any member caught offending is expelled for life.

The next query is, "Will greyhounds chase a mechanical quarry?" The demonstration given at the 1950 Royal Adelaide Show dispelled all doubts on this point for thousands of people who had not previously seen greyhound racing. The quarry was the usual stuffed hare skin. A friend of mine from Bridgewater who attended said that he had never had such cheap fun for 2s. He saw the greyhounds not only racing around the track but jumping hurdles after the stuffed hare skin, and said it was too amusing for words. He mentioned that many people to whom he had spoken afterwards had said they would not have thought it possible. If anyone had any doubt, the fact that five clubs operating in South Australia are proposing to drop live hares for dummy hares is some indication of what greyhound breeders know a dog will do. The next point is, "Why was the Bill introduced?" Following on the Royal Show demonstration in 1950 the police laid charges against the officials of the Adelaide Greyhound Racing Club and secured convictions and fines for contravention of the 1927 Act. For 10 years the practice had been to manually operate the artificial lure, and until the 1950 court decision it was thought that this was not a mechanical quarry as defined in the Act. The police who regularly attended these fixtures over the years must also have agreed with that belief. Speed clubs prohibit the use of live quarries under their rules, and are endeavouring to legalize a method which will permit them to conduct their sport as it has already been conducted for 10 years. The Bill does one very desirable thing. It is the first attempt in the State's history to prohibit gambling at a sport. The Bill leaves unamended an important section of the 1927 Act, namely, subsection (5) of section 3, which prohibits all publicity of any nature relating to dogs racing after a mechanical quarry. There is no more effective method

to prevent off-the-course betting. The penalty section of the Act which provides for fines of up to £100 and imprisonment for 12 months with hard labour is also to be retained.

This recital of the salient facts of this unjustly maligned Bill, together with the rebuttal of the major criticisms, discloses a case for its passing into law, if for no other reason than for the prohibition of legalized gambling on this sport. If, despite the facts I have given relating to the conduct of this sport in South Australia for 10 years, members still refuse to pass the Bill, then let them clearly state their attitude, which is tantamount to wiping out greyhound racing. If that is their policy, why did not they amend the Bill to achieve that objective?

The House divided on the third reading—

Ayes (14).—Messrs. Davis, Duncan, Dunn, Dunnage, Fletcher, Heaslip, Hutchens, Lawn, Macgillivray, McAlees, Quirke, Shannon (teller), Stephens, and Frank Walsh.

Noes (12).—Messrs. Christian and Goldney, Hons. C. S. Hincks, S. W. Jeffries (teller), Sir George Jenkins, and M. McIntosh, Messrs. Michael, Pattinson, Pearson, Riches, Teusner, and Whittle.

Pairs.—Ayes—Messrs. McKenzie, Stott, Moir, Fred Walsh, O'Halloran, and Tapping. Noes—Messrs. Hawker, Brookman, Clarke, and Dunks, Hon. T. Playford and Mr. McLachlan.

Majority of 2 for the Ayes.

Bill read a third time and passed.

INDUSTRIAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2.)

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 10. Page 866.)

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—On the adjournment of the debate on October 10, I was replying to remarks by Mr. Christian, and I want to proceed further on those lines. He said that the 40-hour week would be too costly and that consequently the whole principle would break down. I submit that in making such a prophecy he is anticipating the decision of a court, and therefore was going beyond the scope of members of this House. When we go to an Arbitration Court we accept its decision, and no person is able to say what that will be until the case is heard. I therefore ask members to disregard the honourable member's remarks in order to demonstrate that we are of the opinion that the court is a just organization. He went on to comment

about transportation and the difficulties which would be experienced if certain conditions were laid down by the court for rural workers: he said it was ridiculous to suggest that such conditions were practicable, because men working a header or harvester would, on the expiration of the prescribed time, leave their implement or team in the paddock, thus trying to ridicule the operation of the Industrial Code. It is very evident that the honorable member would like to take away from all transport workers the right to be covered by an award, but we know that tramway men and railway employees are covered by industrial awards prescribing certain hours, and that they are nevertheless able to continue to work beyond those hours. On the honourable member's argument a train crew, after working 40 hours in a week, would leave the train between stations if their time expired at that juncture, and of course nothing could be more ridiculous.

The member for Rocky River made some rather astounding remarks. He expressed the fear that the application of an Industrial Court award would be more than the rural industry could bear, but he continued by saying that rural employees were already enjoying excellent conditions. I submit that no court would award conditions better than excellent. It is clear that members opposing the making of an award desire that the right shall remain with certain employers to lower the standard of rural workers' conditions. The honourable member said that the nation could not afford an award for rural workers. That is the argument which has been repeated down through the ages by those opposed to awards for any class of worker, and the member for Adelaide, speaking on the Address in Reply debate, made this point very clearly when he related an incident which happened in the House of Lords one hundred years ago; a proud lord, introducing a private member's Bill reducing the hours of juveniles from 12 hours to 10 hours a day, said that the competition between the United Kingdom and Europe was so keen that a featherweight could turn the scales. The member for Adelaide reminded us that in 1922 the Hon. E. W. (later Sir Edward) Holden, used the very same words in the Arbitration Court, and they are repeated in substance by those opposed to the establishment of a law which would give justice to rural workers. The member for Rocky River also said that if the weather were suitable during the harvest, 12, 14, or 15 hours

a day are worked. I ask members to remember those words, for he also said:—

“Nothing is worse than boredom.”

This, I suggest, rather contradicts his own argument, for what could be more boring than 15 hours a day on a harvester. He said that the measure would be injurious to the nation and have harmful results. To whom? He did not tell us. Possibly some of a greedy and selfish nature might find this measure somewhat distasteful, but the nation has never prospered by the attitude of such people. The member for Flinders put forward the usual arguments advanced by those opposing this type of reform. One would not expect to read some of them outside what was intended to be a humorous article.

Mr. Stephens—Ginger Meggs.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Ginger Meggs is of a somewhat higher standard. He said, “Rural employers and employees play football and cricket together and go to church together.” Why did he not tell us that one of the conditions on which children under the care of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department are made available to rural employers is that they must not go out without a guardian? I am surprised that he did not say that the employer banks the earnings of his employees, which may have been correct, but the money would not be paid into the same bank as the employer's money. They may go to church together. In the metropolitan area employer and employee go to lodge together. Mr. Pearson's argument in this respect was of no value. The Premier said that we should deal with the position as it is at present, but in his second reading speech the Leader of the Opposition showed what the present position was and made it clear how we should view the matter. He pointed out that there had been a tragic decline in the production of primary products and that millions of people to the north of Australia were looking to us for food. He said that they were being taught Communism and that they would accept it if food from us was not forthcoming. Those opposed to this Bill are opposed to Communism, but they do not adopt the proper methods to combat it. One way to prevent Communism is to give our people a higher standard of living. In China the land barons exploited the people so much that the country soon became a fertile bed for Communism. We can prevent the spread of Communism by putting our house in order and practising the true principles of

democracy. We must stop the drift from the country to the city. During the last 14 years about 9,000 people have moved from rural areas. The following is an extract from an article headed "Lack of Food 'Serious'" in the *Mail* of Saturday, October 6:—

Australia's food position was desperate, the Australian Primary Producers Union New South Wales secretary (Mr. Peacock) said today. Mr. Peacock warned that Australia was so short of food it could not feed an army placed here over night to protect the country. He said large numbers of men were leaving the wheat, poultry, and dairying industries for the higher incomes they could earn in secondary industries. "This year Australia has more than 1,000,000 acres less wheatlands than last year," Mr. Peacock said. He also said poultry farmers would have to import wheat next year for their fowls . . . and Australia's population was growing.

The *Statesman's Pocket Year Book* for 1950 shows that in 1948-49 there were 671,561 acres less under wheat production than in 1939-40. In 1948-49 the production of wheat was 14,935,350 bushels less than in 1939-40. In 1949-50 about 12,000,000 bushels less were produced than in 1939-40. Wheat stocks, including stocks of old season's wheat (taking flour as wheat), and excluding stocks on farms, as at November 30, 1949, were 2,291,600 bushels, which was 2,414,400 bushels less than for the previous year. In 1948-49 fewer acres were sown for wheat, oats and field peas than in any year since 1934-35. There was a further decline in 1949-50. In 1948-49 the production of butter, cheese, bacon and ham was considerably less than in 1947-48. In 1949-50 butter production declined by 1,183 lb., cheese by 2,381 lb., and bacon and ham by 1,030 lb. These figures show that the Bill should be passed in order to retain workers in rural areas. There must be a reason for the drift of people to the city. Life in the country is most healthy and interesting, and it is the place where men deal with living things. I left the country to come to the city and get the security of a court award. A man will look for this type of security; if he doesn't he is foolish. Six years ago Great Britain and her allies emerged successful from the greatest war ever known. One of the greatest menaces to civilization was overcome. It grew in strength because of the discontent of certain people. Now we have Communism, another menace, which thrives on hunger, poverty and discontent. Since the publication of the Communist Manifesto in 1848, one-third of the world's population has embraced Communism. In the interests of

justice the Bill should be passed and rural workers given the protection of a court award. We must have people working in rural industries, and they must be given protection in order that democracy may continue.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Frome—Leader of the Opposition)—I thank members on both sides of the House for the attention given to this Bill. On my side I have received splendid support. Members on the Government side have given the Bill extensive consideration. I am pleased at the great interest they have taken in it and although they may vote against the measure on this occasion I trust that the consideration they have given to it will result in a change of heart in the near future. I believe that, even at this late hour, I may be able to convince enough of them to enable the second reading to be carried.

The Premier led the attack on the Bill. He said that the Industrial Code had laid down a constant policy since its inception and the same principle has been the deliberate policy of similar legislation in other States. I suggest that he either deliberately misled the House or was most ill-informed on the subject, for investigations revealed that under the State industrial laws of four of them rural workers have the right to go to the court to have their wages and working conditions determined. They have had that right in New South Wales since 1943 and in Western Australia and Queensland for a long period; in Victoria they have had the right to establish wages boards, with a right of appeal to the Victorian court, since last year. The Premier contended that the existing position in South Australia was the policy of other States. However, it is the reverse, as the right of rural workers to have their wages legally determined is the law in four of the major States and in most instances has been the law of the land for a long time. Only in Tasmania and South Australia, so far as State law is concerned, is no legal protection afforded to workers in rural industries.

The Premier, in effect, said that the workers engaged in rural occupations in South Australia should be denied the right of appeal to the court established by this Parliament and working under principles laid down by it. He airily said that they should organize and go to the Commonwealth court. Members should seriously consider that statement. The Premier has continually resisted the ceding of further powers to the Commonwealth Parliament. He has professed to the world that he believes that State laws made by

this Parliament are better than Federal laws made by the Commonwealth Parliament. Now he says to the workers whom I seek to give the protection of the State court, "No, you cannot have it; you go to the Federal court and get protection there." Further, he said that there was no demand for this legislation and that it was unwise and unworkable. I admit that there is possibly no active demand for it at the moment because of the disorganized state of rural labour in years gone by and because there is no legal standard or protection afforded to workers in these industries. When they got the opportunity, for the first time in the history, during and since the war to obtain employment elsewhere they followed the example of the member for Hindmarsh, who was reared in the country and who stated today that he would prefer to have remained there for the rest of his life, but because there was no stability of conditions and no prospect for the future he migrated to the metropolitan area where some form of stability existed and where he had a legal standard.

Workers, having the opportunity afforded by conditions born of the war, migrated from the country with the result that the few left can demand almost any wages and conditions they like—and employers have to pay. That is good for the workers at the moment, but it is not good for rural industries generally. It is not the type of conditions which should exist; certainly not the conditions I want to see perpetuated. I want conditions established whereby employees will, through orderly marketing and so on, have some form of security and where employees in industry will be assured of a legal standard to enable them to establish homes in country areas and rear a family, thus providing future generations of country workers.

One or two members of the Labor Party dealt extensively with the question of drift from rural industries and the tremendous falling off in rural production as a result. I shall not canvass that extensively, as I noticed only this week that there had been a change in the L.C.L. policy in this State. According to evidence tendered by the Premier to the Grants Commission and evidence of officers of various State departments, a "new" policy is to be implemented in South Australia, with emphasis on rural production and decentralization. There is nothing new about this policy. It is what I and other members of the Labor Party have been urging, in and out of season, for years. Have we not reminded members of the

dangerous position into which South Australia was drifting, with 60 per cent of the total population residing in the metropolitan area and only 40 per cent in the country? Yet Government supporters are prepared to defeat an important measure like this, which must be given effect to if we are to arrest the drift from the country.

I ask members to travel round Adelaide and suburbs, discuss the position with the thousands who have migrated from the country to the metropolitan area during the past 10 years and ask whether it is their intention to return to the country. These people will give a number of reasons, nearly all in the same category, for not doing so—better amenities in the city, better transport facilities and opportunities for amusement, but the fundamental thing on which they place the greatest importance is that there is a legal standard of wages and their conditions are protected by law in every metropolitan secondary industry. They will speak of the bad old days of not so long ago when some had to work for extraordinarily low wages and their keep. One of the first and fundamental things we should do, if a new policy is to be given effect to, is to establish in the country a group of rural workers sufficient to maintain industries there and continue the production that is so necessary, but what do we offer today to young people reared in the country? We offer them temporary or casual employment at a standard of pay and under conditions which are a matter of individual bargaining between themselves and the employer. If, as I pointed out earlier, there is a shortage of rural labour the bargain must go in favour of the worker, but if there becomes a surplus of rural labour obviously the bargain must go in favour of the employer. The very uncertainty which must continue to exist under these conditions will always make the position of rural labour in this State unsatisfactory.

I have been taken to task by a number of estimable gentlemen because I advocated the stabilization of labour conditions. I have been accused of trying to legislate to introduce a 40-hour week on farms, but I have not endeavoured to do any such thing. The question of hours of labour, overtime rates and whether additional and longer hours should be permitted during harvest time are appropriate matters to be determined by the court; and if my Bill is passed they will be determined by it. Only the other day a wages board in Victoria awarded a 40-hour week to employees in the dairying industry. However, on appeal, the

court determined that 40 hours was not an appropriate working week and increased the number to 48; but it increased the margin, because workers in that industry were expected to work eight hours longer than those in most other industries. I have heard no protest from either employer or employee at the court's variation of the award.

This Bill provides, firstly, that standard wages and conditions generally of employment in South Australian rural industries shall be subject to determination by our own State industrial tribunal and, secondly, that the number of employees who may form an organization to be registered with the court shall be reduced from 20 to 10. Those two provisions are totally unrelated. An engineering union brought to my attention a number of typewriter mechanics whom they had tried to organize into a group in order to obtain an award; but because they could not get the necessary 20 members they were unable to be registered with the court. I believe the same thing happened to another group in South Australia. Therefore, I suggest the provision relating to a registered industrial organization be amended to provide that an organization with 10 or more members may be registered with the court. The second reading should be passed so that members may separately consider in Committee the two points on their merits.

We have been told of the chaos which this measure would create in the wheatgrowing industry. The member for Rocky River said that that industry could not be run on an award; but I remind members representing wheatgrowing constituencies that that industry is being run on an award basis today. If it is not, wheatgrowers throughout the Commonwealth are getting money under false pretences, because under the wheat stabilization plan the whole community agrees to guarantee for the average Australian wheat crop a price which will return to the farmer the cost of production, plus a fair margin of profit. In return the farmer agrees to sell that portion of the wheat required for local consumption at a guaranteed price. That plan has been established throughout Australia mainly by the efforts of the Labor Party in spite the opposition of many Liberal members, and I hope it will continue so long as it functions in accordance with the principles for which it was established—to give security to the wheat farmer, continuity to the industry, and decent conditions to those working in it. I believe that the wages paid to rural workers

in other States, particularly New South Wales and Western Australia both of which produce more wheat than South Australia and in which rural workers may go to the court for an award, are those substantially determining the cost of production basis of the wheat stabilization plan for the Commonwealth. If the desire of my Party to give to rural workers the same protection that is enjoyed by every other section except domestic servants is to be continually resisted we will find it extremely difficult to swing behind schemes for the stabilization of primary industries that great bulk of public opinion which we represent. That opinion has always been behind these schemes, because Labor believes in the principle of stability and security for all and not for a few. Therefore, in an effort to have this further small unit of stability and security established in this State I ask members to support the second reading.

The House divided on the second reading—

Ayes (12).—Messrs. Davis, Duncan, Fletcher, Hutchens, Lawn, Macgillivray, McAlees, O'Halloran (teller), Quirke, Riches, Stephens, and Frank Walsh.

Noes (19).—Messrs. Brookman, Christian, Clarke, Dunn, Dunnage, Goldney, Heaslip, Hons. C. S. Hincks, S. W. Jeffries, Sir George Jenkins, and M. McIntosh, Messrs. Michael, Pattinson, and Pearson, Hon. T. Playford (teller), Messrs. Shannon, Stott, Teusner, and Whittle.

Pairs.—Ayes—Messrs. McKenzie, Tapping, and Fred Walsh. Noes—Messrs. Hawker, McLachlan, and Moir.

Majority of 7 for the Noes.

Second reading thus negatived.

HOUSING POLICY.

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr. Frank Walsh—

That in the opinion of this House, in order to co-ordinate all activities for the provision of urgently needed homes not only in the metropolitan area but also in the country, under one administrative head, a department of housing under the control of a Minister with no other departmental responsibilities should be established and that a building advisory panel consisting of representatives of the Institute of Architects, Master Builders, and Building Trades Unions should be appointed to advise the Minister as to the best methods to employ in the mobilization of building resources, the utilization of labour, the control of materials, the expansion of production of essential basic materials, and, if necessary, the importation of materials in short supply.

(Continued from October 3. Page 776.)

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—When speaking last on this motion I drew members' attention to the remarks of the member for Onkaparinga, who had replied on behalf of the Government in this debate because, he said, Ministers were too busy to prepare a reply. Later, in his reply, the Premier did not in any way dissociate his Government from the views expressed by the honourable member. Therefore I submit it is reasonable to conclude that the views expressed by the member for Onkaparinga are those of the Government. They are astounding because Mr. Shannon claimed it was to the credit of the Minister in charge of housing that 6,800 homes were completed in the last financial year. He implied that there was no other person responsible for the completion of so many homes. He referred to the employees in the building industry as being under the direction of Moscow and said they were doing everything possible to sabotage progress in the building trade. He said that bricklayers laid only 300 bricks a day now and that "if a workman speeds up his workmates say 'You are a pacemaker; we cannot work with you'." Those remarks were without justification. He also said that in the past bricklayers laid 1,200 bricks a day, leaving the impression that they averaged that number. I was engaged in the building industry and know that that is incorrect. When I was in my 'teens, being the eldest of a family of seven and having a widowed mother, I was obliged to carry the hod and worked with one of the fastest bricklayers in the north of this State, Mr. Frank Goodenough. At times he laid 1,200 bricks a day, but that was on the old type of house and when on a long straight passage.

Mr. Riches—How many hours were there in the day?

Mr. HUTCHENS—Ten. I remember we had a 60-hour week then because I asked an employer for 1s. an hour and he said he would pay me £3 a week. I took his offer because I would receive pay for public holidays. Homes today are entirely different from those built in the past. Nowadays a run of bricks is completed with, at the most, one quarter of the number of bricks that were required under old methods of construction. Walls have larger openings and there are many more corners requiring much more time in plumbing.

Mr. Riches—Laying bricks on edge would slow the work down.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Yes, because the employee must work on a narrower base and the wall is therefore more inclined to bend if great care

is not taken. It is astounding that members opposite should complain of the number of bricks laid because if the number required to build all houses in red brick were available employees would find themselves out of work in 10 months even if they laid only 200 a day. Supplies would be exhausted. This does not happen because substitute materials are used. Members opposite should not complain of the number of bricks laid until they take appropriate action to see that many more red bricks are produced. South Australia is producing only 48,000,000 a year, just more than half the number produced in 1926 with far less plant. If all the homes completed last year had been built of red brick 122,000,000 bricks would have been needed. The production of this quantity would result in a great saving of cement because for every 100 cement bricks produced a bag of cement is used. The passing of the motion would not only secure the production of necessary building materials, but also be the means of saving cement for other purposes. The member for Onkaparinga credited the Premier with using our softwoods as a bargaining medium, but I have found that the Hill Government was the first to commercialize our forests. The workers in our forests of the South-East work as hard as any in the world. To suggest that they are under the direction of Moscow is quite unfair. I shall quote from letters to show that the housing problem is becoming even more serious. On January 23, 1951, I wrote to the Housing Trust and stated, *inter alia*:—

Until recently Mr. and Mrs. X and their two-year-old daughter were living in one room of a five-roomed house with 11 other persons, making a total of 14. The position became so unbearable that Mrs. X was obliged to take her child with her to live in Sydney. Now the family is divided and whilst Mr. X is still living under over-crowded conditions the owners desire that he leave to make sleeping accommodation available for some of their children who are now obliged to sleep on the floor.

I do not criticize the trust in any way for not being able to provide all the accommodation required; in fact, I could not fairly do so because it is doing a splendid job under great difficulties. The Housing Trust replied:—

Unfortunately, there are several hundreds of such cases waiting to be housed, though there are still many applications still outstanding which must be considered as even more serious and therefore due for prior attention. Moreover, new applications as bad as any received are constantly coming in.

That proves that more vigorous action is needed to overcome our serious housing shortage. I forwarded to the trust a very early application for emergency accommodation. It was No. 53, which proves it was made when emergency homes were first provided. The man concerned served during the war in one of the services and he has a young wife and family, one child being 14 months, another five months, and another is expected early next year. The trust replied:—

Unfortunately, so far as the emergency dwellings are concerned, there are many applications from families who have been long since forced to vacate their homes and have been living separately or in makeshift shelter. Cases of this nature must be given first priority, but as the trust has not been able to build anything like sufficient dwellings to meet even the most urgent demands for them, I regret that I can give no indication as to when it may be possible to make one available to Mr. and Mrs. Z.

In fairness I should say that when I wrote to the trust regarding these applicants they were under order to leave the place where they were living and had nowhere to go. The trust was advised of those conditions.

The Hon. T. Playford—When you say they were under order to leave, were they under a court order?

Mr. HUTCHENS—They were sub-tenants and had to leave because the tenant had sold the business.

The Hon. T. Playford—The Landlord and Tenant legislation protects a tenant from eviction except on an order of the court.

Mr. HUTCHENS—This man was living with his parents-in-law, whose business had been sold.

The Hon. T. Playford—Were the parents-in-law being evicted by an order of the court?

Mr. HUTCHENS—Their business had been sold.

The Hon. T. Playford—They sold the house in which they were living?

Mr. HUTCHENS—No, the business, which was part of the dwelling.

The Hon. T. Playford—The trust cannot make itself responsible for providing emergency accommodation for people who sell the accommodation they already have.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I do not think that was the position here. In the truest sense they were not tenants, but had the use of a room. In the main the people of the State are satisfied with the operations of the trust, but many are convinced that more could be done to house people, who should not be denied the right of decent homes. Desperate people

are inclined to adopt a line of action which we would not appreciate and which might be dangerous to democracy. Those who oppose the motion will be responsible for the insufficient housing of thousands who are in need of homes. I urge members to support the motion so that many of our citizens will not feel they are unwanted in the community.

Mr. PATTINSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

CONSTITUTION AND ELECTORAL ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 19. Page 605.)

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Gumeracha—Premier and Treasurer)—Although this Bill purports to alter only the franchise for the Legislative Council it should be looked at as a first step in a process which is designed to lead, and which would almost certainly lead, to the abolition of that Chamber. If the Bill were passed in its present form the Council would undoubtedly become a replica of the House of Assembly in its political and constitutional ideas; and if the Council were reconstituted under this measure and a Party pledged to abolish it came into power and sent to the Upper House a Bill for its abolition, its members would have no option but to pass it. We should therefore look at this Bill as leading to a one-House Parliament. The question arises—Is such a Parliament desirable, and what arguments are there in favour of the two-House system? Of course, members know that the bi-cameral system was created by the genius of the British people and has been developed by them throughout hundreds of years with the object of ensuring stable and moderate government. When one considers the political history of recent years, for example in Germany, Italy and Russia, one realizes that basically all their troubles have been due to a lack of moderation in political affairs. Their troubles have arisen because their Governments have tried to move too far to the right or too far to the left and have introduced great sweeping changes too suddenly and without regard for the opinions and the well-being of large sections of their people. Therefore, we should be very careful before we interfere with a Constitution whose primary object is to secure stability and moderation.

An important justification for a second Chamber is undoubtedly its work in connection with legislation. Not only is the actual work of a second House valuable, but the mere fact

that legislation has to pass successively through two Chambers has very substantial advantages. Most second Chambers, including, of course, our own, are somewhat smaller than the lower Houses. Many of the matters which arise for discussion and take up much time in the lower House are not dealt with in the Upper House. Party strife in Upper Houses tends to be somewhat less strenuous. These facts give members of the Upper House more leisure and better opportunities to consider the proposals, legislative and otherwise, which are sent up to them. Furthermore, they tend to have a different outlook from that of the other House; and no-one will deny that in important matters of legislation every possible aspect ought to be considered. Many of us can look back over the legislation of the past 20 years or so. If we consider the work of the Legislative Council fairly, with an endeavour to appreciate it, we must give the Council credit for much painstaking work and many valuable suggestions, which have been carried into effect. But, as I have already said, it is not only the actual work of the Council which is of value. It is also a great benefit to have a system which assures that the public will have a proper opportunity of knowing what is being done by Parliament. In the urgency of public business we sometimes find it necessary to pass laws fairly rapidly nowadays. If there were only one House the process might tend to become so rapid that the general public would not have the opportunity of knowing what was being done. Recently in Queensland a far-reaching law dealing with marketing was passed with only one sitting of Parliament and before the people who were to live under it had the slightest opportunity of knowing what would be its effect. Even some of the members of Parliament might have had difficulty in understanding it because they did not have time to study its ramifications. With marketing legislation it is necessary, because of the effects of section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution, to consider all its aspects.

The existence of the Council is a safeguard which ensures that Bills of any size or importance are before Parliament for sufficient period to enable members of the public to learn of them and place their views before members with the object of protecting their rights. In the preparation of Bills the Government does everything it can to ensure that all interests are considered before the measures are introduced, but it is not humanly possible to foresee in every instance all the ramifications or possible results of some legislative scheme. It is only when

members of the public realize the impact of the proposals upon their own lives or businesses that full information is placed before the Government and Parliament. The bi-cameral system of government does ensure that the public has the opportunity to place information before members. Even if we look at the Bill as a mere change of franchise for the Council and not as a proposal for its abolition, I do not think it is a desirable measure. It is said that the Council represents only a minority of the people and that it is undemocratic that a minority should have so much representation. But one of the greatest advantages of the Parliamentary system is that it gives minorities the right to have their views considered when public policy is being framed. The Legislative Council may be elected by a minority, but it is a very large minority and, in addition, the members of that Chamber have always shown themselves willing to consider the views of any minority, whether it happens to include those who exercise the Legislative Council franchise or not. One can hardly imagine that any member of the Legislative Council when approached by a member of the public concerning any business before Parliament would inquire whether he had voted for the Legislative Council or not.

If we are to have a second Chamber we may just as well have one which represents a somewhat different point of view from that of the other House. Generally speaking, the Council electors are somewhat older than the Assembly electors and consequently it is to be presumed that they have had more experience of public affairs and have a more mature outlook. Once we get away from adult suffrage there is no better basis for the franchise than experience, maturity and responsibility and, in effect, this is the basis of the present franchise for the Council, although it is expressed, with some exceptions, in terms of a real property qualification. I do not think South Australia is likely to have any better Government if this Bill is passed. On the other hand, we will be throwing away part of our constitutional system, which has a long and honourable history and has proved itself of great value to the State.

Mr. O'Halloran—It was not so popular a fortnight ago.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Legislative Council has always been popular with me and I think even the honourable member will agree that, on the occasion to which he has referred

somewhat obliquely, the Council gave that Bill, which was of a far-reaching nature, very mature and fair consideration. It could have taken the stand "This Bill does not very directly concern us and we are not going to put it through," but it did not. Only one amendment was moved and I think the Leader of the Opposition must admit that at the conference they met us fairly and squarely and that the best mathematician could not have arranged a more even compromise. When he considers the schedules in that measure I think he will admit that the Legislative Council has agreed to legislation which is in the interests of a section of the community who may not be Legislative Council electors. For the reasons I have outlined I do not believe that this Bill conforms with the first requirements of legislation as defined by the Acts Interpretation Act, which lays down as the first requirement that it shall be deemed to be remedial. This Bill does not remedy any defect; in fact, over a period it would probably create defects, and for that reason I ask the House to reject it.

Mr. FRED WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

MORGAN-BARMERA RAILWAY.

The SPEAKER laid on the table the first progress report of the Public Works Standing Committee on the Morgan-Barmera railway and Morgan-Cobdogla road.

Ordered to be printed.

THE ESTIMATES.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from October 30. Page 1040.)

MINISTER OF IRRIGATION.

Department of Lands (Irrigation and Drainage), £358,336; Miscellaneous, £300—passed.

MINISTER OF MINES.

Mines Department, £820,000—passed.

MINISTER OF MARINE.

Harbors Board, £1,040,071; Miscellaneous, £5,332—passed.

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS.

Railways Department, £12,683,248.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—This is a department to which this Committee should pay attention. It is shown in the Estimates as one of the service departments, but I have come to the conclusion that it is not a utility but a luxury department, and one which the State

cannot afford very much longer at the increased cost which is being shown each year. The Auditor-General's report shows that this one department has cost the people of South Australia nearly £4,000,000 over and above the income it has derived from fares and freights this year. This means that each person in South Australia is debited with £5 17s. 6d. for losses on this one department alone. From time to time we hear criticism of the cost of education, but this costs the taxpayer considerably less than the losses on the railways, for it amounts to only £5 7s. 8d. a head, and we must remember that the Education Department has no source of income, whereas the railways, over and above earnings from freights and fares, show a deficit of £5 7s. 6d. a head; this Committee would be failing in its duty if it did not examine the position.

I noticed with a good deal of pleasure a statement by the Minister of Railways at a conference in Adelaide some little time ago. Speaking from memory, the gist of the Minister's statement was that all forms of transport should be used for the purpose for which they were best suited; that it was not a question of competition between road, sea, air or rail transport, but that all forms should be organized in such a way as to give the best possible service to primary and secondary industries. I wholeheartedly endorse that statement for it is what I have been supporting for years, and even written to the press on. However, on examining the position we find that it is not what the Minister suggests it ought to be, for every other form of transport is made subservient to the railways. As a Parliament we should put the railways back under the control of a Minister. I do not see why, in a so-called democracy, we should take one of our biggest spending departments away from the control of Parliament as represented by the Minister. At present the Minister, whoever he may be, is merely an apologist for the Railways Commissioner. In Parliament the Minister must take all the kicks and submit reasons supplied by the Railways Commissioner for railway action or inactivity. He has no say in deciding railway policy.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—In regard to policy, that is not correct.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I am thinking of the country man who depends upon the railways for transport. Can the Minister say that any particular district should have so many trains a week?

The Hon. M. McIntosh—That is not policy but administration.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—It is policy. The Minister is in an invidious position. Members talk about railway matters, but there is no responsible Minister of Railways here. Our Railways Department is too hungry. It wants all the traffic, irrespective of whether it can do the job properly. During the war my district was anxious to get a direct road service between Renmark and Adelaide. This has always been opposed by the railways, and through the Minister the Commissioner has said that if the traffic from the River districts was lost by the railways it would not be possible to run trains beyond Eudunda. Since that time the passenger service from the Upper Murray districts has been taken away, and now a special train is run to take passengers who wish to go to points beyond Morgan. This is not much of a benefit to the railways.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—The line gets a benefit.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Yes, but at greatly increased cost because two trains a day now do what one train a day did previously. No wonder the railway losses are so great! Railway services are duplicated in order to eliminate competition. Although it opposes competition with its services, it is ruthless in competing against other transport services. At one time the River Murray carried a worthwhile shipping trade, but now it is almost devoid of shipping, for which the railways are largely responsible. The Auditor-General says that our railway debt works out at £5 17s. 6d. a head, but that includes mothers and little children. For the 260,000 wage and salary earners it represents a heavy burden.

Recently a Royal Commission, under the chairmanship of Judge Paine, inquired into transport matters, but I cannot agree with all its conclusions. Some time ago the Premier said he had great respect for the findings of Parliamentary committees and commissions because outside bodies are so far removed from the practical needs of the community that their findings are useless; that is true. A Parliamentary committee should be set up to investigate railway affairs, and it should consist of all shades of political opinion. There should be a change in railway policy. In the Budget last year about £2,000,000 was provided to meet railway losses; this year the amount is about £4,000,000. Next year it will probably be more than £5,000,000, and nothing is being done about

it. Employers and employees cannot continue for long to hand out this money to the railways. There was a time when the railways were run uneconomically in order to compete against road transport. Fresh fruit from the River districts comes to Adelaide for processing, and the processors were prepared to bring the fruit during the evening from the blocks to the factories in their own vehicles, and get the fruit to Adelaide in a fresher condition than could the railways, but it was said at the time that if the processors did this their basic petrol ration would be taken from them. Notwithstanding that they were prepared to provide their own transport to bring fruit to Adelaide the railways persisted in sending steam trains, with coal at a premium, to Barmera to take the fruit. A grower can take his own fruit to Adelaide, together with that of another person provided that no payment is made, but that forces him to use subterfuge. The department would lose less if it did not carry unpayable goods. The Auditor-General's report shows that, notwithstanding all the chasing of business by the railways and the exclusion of road transport, there has been an increase in revenue of only one-third of one per cent.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—It means that charges are deliberately kept down so that primary producers will not be mulcted in high freight rates. We could make the railways pay if we had a monopoly and raised freight rates high enough.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The railways have a monopoly because private enterprise is not allowed to compete. It would be better if the railways discontinued a service on which it is making a loss.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Passenger trains carry goods, too.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The Morgan train is run entirely as a passenger train and not as a mixed one. I admit that the railways play an important part in the economy of South Australia and are eminently suited to carry certain things, but there should be a wise decision in these matters. The railways are no longer a paying proposition, but a social service. They come in the same category as education and hospitals. It is no laughing matter to hear that the department is importing European workers and providing them with houses to the exclusion of Australians. All I plead for is the wisest possible use of our railways. I want them to be used for the purpose for which they are

best suited, leaving private enterprise to cater for other things. What about the £4,000,000 loss which the taxpayers have to pay for? It would be far better to find out if private enterprise could relieve the railways instead of building up these costs. The railways are getting top heavy.

Mr. Quirke—The department refuses freight it does not desire to handle.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—We are heavily subsidizing the railways to carry out certain duties. The Minister contends that the railways cannot choose, but must carry whatever freight is offering. What happened recently? Without any justification the railways refused to handle the produce of one of our oldest and most important primary industries—the wine industry.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—They can always cart their own wine.

Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Before the tea adjournment I referred to the refusal of the Railways Commissioner to carry out his responsibilities as a public carrier. River wineries are mainly run by co-operative concerns and they are losing valuable contracts through the refusal of the Railways Commissioner to transport their products. Why, at a time when the strike was limited to the metropolitan area and country establishments of metropolitan distilleries, did the Railways Commissioner reject freights for Victorian markets which would have been carried via Tailem Bend? The Railways Department is no longer a utility but a luxury department run at the expense of all other forms of transport and financed by taxpayers. The 260,000 South Australian wage earners must pay the £4,000,000 loss on this department. I suggest that this department be placed under the direct control of the Minister, that a Parliamentary committee be appointed to allocate the functions of the various transport facilities throughout the State, and that all forms of transport be co-ordinated so that they may be used in the best possible way in the conduct of the State's economy.

Mr. CLARKE—I have a great deal of sympathy with the Railways Commissioner but wish to deal with some aspects of railway finance. The capital of the Railways Department is about £36,000,000—an increase over the last 12 months of about £3,000,000. The Commissioner has certain obligations and certain financial responsibilities. I appreciate the fact that the railways have carried a substantially

increased tonnage during the past year compared with pre-war years, and I approve of the programme of modernizing rolling stock; but what is the financial position of the railways? Last year its deficit was nearly £4,000,000. Its accumulated losses since 1946 total about £12,500,000. I use the following somewhat novel method of showing the real meaning of these accumulated losses. They would absorb the whole of the tax paid by the 170,000 land taxpayers, the stamp duty on every cheque, bill, promissory note, conveyance, transfer, mortgage, receipt, and every other form of document requiring stamp duty, the whole of the South Australian motor taxation, and the total of every miscellaneous tax which the State is entitled to collect with the exception of succession duties—and it would even touch some of that, for the total of the revenues I have mentioned from 1946 to 1951 is only about £11,500,000. It is time we looked at railway finances from a much more objective point of view than that of mere expediency in assisting the Railways Department to come somewhere near balancing its budget by supplementary grants. I agree that the Railways Department has a real sphere of usefulness in certain respects; but we must make up our minds whether the railways are to be regarded as a social service, like education and the administration of justice, or as a business enterprise. The crucial question is "What is the real place of the railways in our economy?" To what extent should this service be subsidized as a matter of sound economy rather than as a policy of expediency?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH (Minister of Railways)—The member for Chaffey suggested an inquiry into transport facilities, but only recently a Royal Commission submitted its report on this subject. Part of that report states:—

Under existing conditions the Railways Department is capable of transporting efficiently fresh fruit and vegetables from the Upper Murray districts to the factories in the metropolitan area and elsewhere.

Pea growers in the Port Pirie area are satisfied with the facilities given by the department for the transport of their product; and the same facilities are available to growers in the river areas. The member for Chaffey gave evidence before that Commission and it decided that there was no basis for his contention. The member for Burnside referred to the financial position of the railways. I point out that the Royal Commission on State Transport Services stated that the railways, being under

State ownership and control for the development and benefit of the State as a whole, cannot be regarded from a purely commercial point of view, and that they are, and are likely to remain for some time, the chief essential means of land transport and, apart from abnormal factors, freight transport has increased in recent years and should continue to increase. There are many other similar statements in the report that I could quote. Recently we have been asked to increase food production. The railways transport about 250,000 tons of superphosphate a year, without which the production of this State would be much lower. Have members ever seen road transport take one ton of superphosphate more than a few miles? The freight charges of road hauliers would be more than the value of the superphosphate, but the railways take it to the South-East at less than £1 a ton. The general discussion on this matter should have been on the first line.

Mr. Macgillivray—You would have ignored it.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—No. In his last annual report the Railways Commissioner quoted a report by the chairman of the great Westinghouse Electric Corporation of America which has about 106,000 employees and pays a freight bill to the railways of 40,000,000 dollars annually. That report, after pointing out that the country needed adequate and efficient railway services, stated that the railways were being injured by unfair competition, that the large road hauliers did not pay their fair share of the costs, and that the roads were being ruined by trucks which were too large and grossly overloaded.

Mr. Stephens—That is happening here.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Exactly, and every country member knows it. The report of the chairman of the Westinghouse Electric Corporation of America stated:—

There is no need to dwell at length upon the importance to heavy industry of safeguarding the railroads in this situation. One has only to consider what would be the plight of such an industry (Westinghouse Electric Corporation) if it were forced to rely upon the trucking service for all of its raw material and other production hauls as well as for the distribution of manufactured products. The choice lies between a universal, indispensable, all-round rail service and a highly restricted and specialized truck service, which can ruin but never replace rail service.

The position today is that road transport is not contributing anything like its just quota of the cost of providing transport facilities and every ton carted by it costs the community

much money. This question has been referred to the State Traffic Committee for investigation and report. I have seen two bitumen roads in my district ruined within the last two years by road transport.

Mr. Macgillivray—They must have been poor roads.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—No. They were ruined by overloaded trucks being driven too fast. Ninety per cent of hauliers from other States do not contribute one penny in petrol tax towards the maintenance of those roads because they have vehicles fitted with diesel engines. The member for Chaffey said hauliers are being mulcted in heavy charges, but I could give him some startling figures showing how even the minor charges imposed in South Australia are evaded. Every commission and committee that has been appointed in South Australia on transport matters during the last 20 years has come to the conclusion that the existing control in this State should be continued and extended.

Mr. Macgillivray—The members must have been socialistic in outlook.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Was the Reed Commission socialistic? Mr. Justice Reed was chairman, Mr. Murray Fowler was one of the leading industrialists of the State and had pastoral interests. Mr. Keith Angas was another member, and I don't think he could be called a Socialist; neither could Mr. Shillabeer. The only Government representative was Mr. Wainwright. This committee said that control should be continued and extended to include ancillary vehicles. We have not included ancillary vehicles. The honourable member said that people in his district cannot transport their goods, but if anyone purchased goods they could be transported uncontrolled. No State in the Commonwealth, and as far as I know in the world, is under less transport control than South Australia. My whole object in safeguarding the railways is to safeguard the interests of the people of this State. Our railways would lose much more money than they are doing now if they were not protected against indiscriminate competition. If the fly-by-night operator could take the cream of the traffic what would happen to the railways and to the superphosphate, wheat, fruit and wine? The honourable member knows the railways can carry wine, cream and other products at much lower rates than other people and they return the empty vessels free or at concession rate. The only reason that the railways cannot transport wine now is that they could not deliver

the goods at the other end. The honourable member knows that, and that the railway trucks would be used as storage bins. As the Premier said, the railways can neither control nor remedy the position brought about by the wineries' strike. They have therefore refused to accept the goods. I understand evidence was tendered to the Public Works Committee at river centres that the people there cannot rely on empty vessels being returned by road hauliers because they have to be carted free or at a nominal sum. The railways have given a grand service to the community and there is no satisfactory alternative.

Mr. Quirke—What did you say about the return of empty vessels?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Cream cans are returnable free or at a low rate. I understand that casks are returned at a nominal weight rate. All the issues raised have been already decided. The recent Royal Commission on State Transport Services not only exonerated the railways from any charges of unsatisfactory service but made glowing statements about them. Everything possible is being done to modernize them. Diesel-electric engines have been obtained and a good passenger service is provided. Ten diesel-electric engines are being imported and 10 new engines that the Victorian railways purchased have been obtained from them. The department has magnificent workshops and all the railways ask is for good patronage and that road transport will not take the cream of the traffic and leave the railways to transport the unpayable lines. If this happened freights would have to rise and taxation increase. Moreover, roads would suffer more than ever and the final result would be worse than the position of today. The most recent Commission appointed on transport matters established in every way the right of control over transport on the one hand and the proper administration of the railways on the other.

Mr. QUIRKE—There is room for criticism of the Railway Department's attitude towards staff. A railway porter was so desirous of advancement that he studied accountancy and recently passed his final examinations. He asked what were his chances of advancement on the clerical staff and was told to apply for positions as they became vacant. After that rebuff he applied for a transfer to another department of the Public Service, but it was not granted. He is still a porter, but is not prepared to remain one. He asked me what I could suggest he should do, and I told him to

see the Commissioner. I telephoned the Commissioner, who promised he would interview the porter, but he has not done so. The railways are certain to lose the services of this man, along with many others. I listened to the Minister's remarks in reply to the member for Chaffey and I believe he has been misinformed. I understood the strike affected the metropolitan area, but people have been refused the right to load wine that never comes near the metropolitan area but goes to Riverton, thence to Terowie, where it is transhipped and sent to Broken Hill and New South Wales. The Clare winery has been unable to send interstate, except by road, any of its wine since the railways placed an embargo on its transport. Country wineries do not employ women in the winery. There should be nothing to stop wine from being sent by rail to Sydney, *via* Broken Hill. The railways do not carry all the freight offered them, but exercise their right to refuse. My company was compelled to send an empty truck to Adelaide twice to pick up a consignment of 50 new empty 66-gallon casks because the vehicle was not big enough to take it all in one trip. This freight had been twice refused by the railways, although there was no strike at the time. Is there any reasonable explanation of that? There should be co-operation between road and rail transport and not one fighting against the other. The railways try to handle goods within from 50 to 80 miles of Adelaide which could be more expeditiously handled by road. If necessary the Railways Department could run a road transport service as part and parcel of its activities. Too often today fragile freight put on the railways is smashed by the time it reaches its destination owing to faulty stowage on the trucks at Mile End. The claims against the railways for damage must be considerable. So bad is the position in the carriage of certain freight, such as furniture, that there is no difficulty in obtaining the consent of the Transport Control Board to have it transported by road. The railways are not eager to carry that kind of freight because of what happens to it in transport.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Is not that a condemnation of railway employees?

Mr. QUIRKE—The railways Department is responsible for its employees. If goods are delivered to the railways for transport it is the Commissioner's responsibility to deliver them in good order. For road transport two depots should be established, one north of Adelaide and one south, as distributing and loading centres. The object should be to keep the big

vehicles out of Adelaide. If there were co-ordination and not opposition between road and rail transport we would be in a far better position today.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I am not prepared to accept certain statements of the Minister of Railways, although it may be a matter of opinion between us. I know something about the growing of peas and their marketing. The Minister said that Port Pirie peas transported to Melbourne by railway evidently arrived in satisfactory condition, but if he studied market returns he would find that was not so. In competition with peas grown at Mildura, Port Pirie peas are sold at many shillings a bushel less. It is not because, when picked, the Port Pirie peas are of less value, but Mildura has the benefit of a direct road service which leaves in the cool of the evening and arrives in Melbourne early the following morning. I suggest that the Government has not given effect to the findings of the Royal Commission on Transport because they are not practical. The Minister of Railways also referred to the cartage of superphosphate. One would think the reason for the huge loss on the railways is that they carry many thousands of tons of superphosphate at less than actual transport cost, but they could carry all the superphosphate in South Australia free of cost and the loss would be only a drop in the bucket compared with the total loss of £4,000,000. It would be better to eliminate the cheap freight and let farmers pay the full charges, because they are among those who have to make up the £4,000,000 loss.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Then not a ton of superphosphate would be carried to the South-East by our railways.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Victoria would fall all over itself to supply the South-East, because I understand there is very little shortage of superphosphate in that State. It is not that the Government is anxious about the position of farmers in the South-East, but that it desires to keep Victoria out. The Minister went on to say that South Australia has a modern railway system, with diesel engines, and painted a picture of the enhanced business that was being done. I draw the Committee's attention to figures in the Auditor-General's most recent annual report concerning business done by the railways. In 1942 there were 2,600,000 country passenger journeys, whereas in 1951 there were only 1,500,000, which is more than 1,000,000 less,

and this in spite of the picture painted for us about our modern transport appliances.

Mr. Shannon—Did the war years have anything to do with it?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—No doubt they did.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—The emphasis is on freight and we are shifting 38 per cent more than ever before.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—There were 25,800,000 suburban passenger journeys in 1942, but by 1951 this had dropped alarmingly to 15,600,000, so where is all this much-talked of increase? The Minister says it is in freight, so let us examine those figures. The tonnage in 1942 was a little over 3,000,000, and in 1951, despite all this alleged increase of millions, it was only 3,815,000—a mere 800,000 tons increase. The Premier has time and time again expressed his pride in the development of the State, but despite the considerable increase in secondary industries and population it is not reflected in the business done by the railways, notwithstanding the millions of pounds we keep pouring into them year after year. Those who try to analyse the figures do not get much support from the Government benches. I take it their constituents are paying as well as the constituents of other members, and it is their duty to analyse the position. I am not criticizing the Minister, or even the Railways Commissioner, but a system which allows what is, in effect, a monopoly, and which protects that monopoly to the exclusion of private enterprise. If private enterprise makes a loss the taxpayer is not called on to meet it, but so far as I know none is running at a loss.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Because they pick their risks.

Mr. Lawn—They do not serve the outback.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The honourable member has never been past the Beehive Corner, so how would he know? I can at least speak with authority of an area 150 miles away from Adelaide, and I know that a bus proprietor has offered to conduct the service and pay into general revenue 10 per cent of his takings under the Transport Control Act. However, he is not allowed to compete with the railways, which still keep on running a service which, I am sure, shows a loss on every day of running. The sooner we relieve the Railways Commissioner of this responsibility of providing a service, whether it pays or not, and allow someone else to do it—

Mr. Davis—Who is going to service the outback?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Private operators are anxiously awaiting the opportunity. I do not expect my friends of the Labor Party to support my line of argument, but I would expect someone behind the Government benches to have a word for private enterprise now and again.

Mr. Fred Walsh—All the railways of Europe are run by Governments.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—When I lived in Scotland all the railways in the United Kingdom were run by private enterprise. Unfortunately they are not today, and they are losing millions, just as they are in South Australia. I understand that it is the policy of the newly-elected British Government to restore certain socialized services to private enterprise, and I am sure that unless the steel industry is handed back there will be further hundreds of millions of pounds piled on the poor taxpayers of England, for socialism could not run a lolly shop.

Line passed.

Transport Control Board, £13,374.

Mr. SHANNON—A large number of road hauliers are operating services through the Adelaide hills and in a recent press report I noted that 30 or 40 have been apprehended for overloading. As I traverse portion of this route frequently I have seen the damage being done to the roads. The Highways Department has gangs constantly patching the road, but as fast as it is repaired in one place it is broken in another. I offer the suggestion that the first step to correct this ill is not merely to apprehend these people—because no amount collected by way of fines is adequate to repair the damage—but to order the overloaded vehicle to the side of the road and halt it there until the operator either gets another vehicle to take the excess load, or off-loads that portion.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN—I am afraid there is no line on the Estimates relating to that subject.

Mr. SHANNON—I thought it was the officers of the Transport Control Board who policed this matter, but it appears that I am wrong. I have little complaint to make of the Transport Control Board itself, as, in every legitimate case, it has granted permits.

Line passed.

Miscellaneous, £9,362—passed.

MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Highways and Local Government Department, £157,140.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—A complex which has grown up against road hauliers should not be allowed to go unchallenged. As soon as the

railways cannot function for one reason or another the Government encourages everything on wheels to get on to the roads, but when the need for it goes the drivers of road hauliers are regarded as criminals. For instance, at Murray Bridge recently eight interstate drivers were prosecuted and fines and costs amounted to £449 4s.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH (Minister of Local Government)—In a letter dated August 6, 1951, the chairman of the Transport Control Board said that since January of this year no South Australian firm had been refused a permit to transport goods to the eastern States by road. That still applies and more permits are being issued than ever before. The drivers who were fined had not applied for a permit and had attempted to evade the law. One man was fined about £80, but his return for taking goods to New South Wales and coming back empty was £218. The South Australian fee is £1 for each truck-load, but for general goods there is a charge of £5 for each truck. I do not think there is any need for the honourable member to take the matter further.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I thank the Minister for the information, and I shall now refer to another road matter. In some districts major damage is done to roads by heavy hauliers, but without them often we could not carry on because the railways cannot always cope with the traffic offering. When I was in Western Australia recently the press had headlines about two road hauliers having entered Norseman the previous day which would soon arrive in Perth. It seemed that these hauliers were welcome because they brought badly needed material from Newcastle. I have no bias against the railways as such, but the Government and certain other members of this House have a definite bias against road hauliers. The roads are being broken up because we have been caught unprepared and have not made them good enough to carry the heavy loads. It is said that the motoring public does not get a proper return from the petrol tax they pay. Enough money goes into the Commonwealth Treasury to cover losses on all railway systems in Australia and to meet the cost of constructing better roads and bridges. The Commonwealth Government places the money in general revenue. According to the Auditor-General's report, in South Australia the construction and maintenance of roads costs £1 16s. 4d. per head of population, as against £5 17s. 6d. per head in connection with the railway debt. If the two expenditures were

added together, and half went to the railways and the other half to the roads we would be better off than we are today because the roads serve far more places than the railways do. Parliament should see that our roads are good enough to meet modern needs. The breaking up of roads is limited to certain districts. In my district they are not broken up to any extent because the rainfall is light, but roads in the South-East, where the rainfall is heavier, are being badly damaged.

Mr. PATTINSON—I express my admiration of the great ability and wide experience of the Commissioner of Highways, Mr. Richmond. He is also a man of broad human sympathy. This was exemplified in his annual report, which was tabled in Parliament yesterday. He referred with sympathy to the problems of metropolitan councils in regard to their added burdens of public works and increased costs. He said it was difficult to foresee the result of the increases, but it was apparent that if the councils were to function satisfactorily increased revenue was necessary for them. I was disappointed this afternoon at the Minister's reply to my question, because I thought he would be sympathetic to my plea for added grants to metropolitan councils. I wonder whether some members of the Government realize the tremendous increase in the population of the metropolitan area and all the problems it brings in its train. In my electorate there are four municipalities, Brighton, Glenelg, Marion and West Torrens. From 1938-39 to 1950-51 in this area the number of dwellings increased by 6,853. Of this number 2,407 were erected between 1938-39 and 1945-46. In the last five years the increase was 4,446. Between 1938-39 and 1950-51 collectible rates by the four councils increased by 60 per cent, but the cost of labour and materials by 180 per cent. The Federal Aid Roads Act provides for the setting aside for road purposes for five years of an amount equal to 6d. per gallon from the customs duty on imported petrol for civil consumption, and 3½d. a gallon excise on locally produced petrol. Under the Act expenditure on roads is to be 65 per cent for the construction, reconstruction, and repair of roads generally, and 35 per cent on roads other than main roads in rural areas. During 1950-51 South Australia received £1,409,812 from the Commonwealth, an increase of £436,101 on the amount received from the same source during the previous year and nearly £500,000 was allocated last year for grants for roads, not main roads, in rural areas. Suburban councils should receive some special State grants from the Government in

consideration of their shouldering the added burdens and increased costs of constructing roads and footpaths and providing all the other general and special community services which have almost directly resulted from the State Government's housing and secondary industries development in their areas. The whole system of State Government grants-in-aid to councils should be reviewed. This growth in the metropolitan area in post-war years is not a natural, but a forced or artificial one, largely as a result of Government policy. Councils in whose areas these new houses have been erected have had little choice or even consultation in their desires or requirements.

I feel that the House, which is dominated by country members, rarely gives sufficient consideration to the very real and urgent needs of the metropolitan area because of the whole balance of population between country and city having changed in such a tremendously short period. We have proceeded with a most desirable system of mass production of houses in the metropolitan area, but this has placed far too great a burden on councils.

Mr. WHITTLE—Mr. Pattinson mentioned the great increase in housing in the southern and western districts, but there has been a record increase in the number of houses in the Enfield district. The Highways Commissioner has co-operated with the northern councils in this matter, but one highway which comes under the main roads grant—Churchill Road—requires more attention. Work on this road has been promised for so many years that the Prospect and Enfield Councils have almost lost track of the original records. No creek or river runs through Prospect to carry off floodwaters; only drains are provided and it is essential that some provision should be made to cope with floodwaters. The average area of councils in South Australia is about half that in Victoria (625 square miles). In South Australia the average area is 360 square miles, and in Western Australia 7,625. Figures for 1950 show that the overhead expenses of some councils in South Australia are as high as 79 per cent of the rate revenue. Five councils receive less than £1,000, 14 less than £2,000, and 18 less than £3,000. If councils had larger areas grants could be applied more satisfactorily and economically. It would be opportune, particularly in view of rising costs, if the Director of Local Government wrote to councils which have exceedingly high overhead expenses, compared with their rate revenue, and asked them to show cause why they should

not be absorbed by a neighbouring council. One town in South Australia, which boasts a mayor, has a rate revenue of only £960. If the letter I have suggested were sent out to those councils they would have to consider whether it would not be better for them to amalgamate with a neighbouring council so that the grants made to them might be expended more economically. The Local Government Act provides that 75 per cent of the Government grant must be spent in country districts and 25 per cent in the metropolitan area. To carry out the suggestion of the member for Glenelg it would be necessary to amend the Act in order to change those proportions.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The size of local government bodies has not been overlooked as a matter of policy. On every possible occasion I have brought it before the Local Government Association. Any move in this respect must come from an authority outside the Government. Section 300 of the Local Government Act states the manner in which grants shall be divided between country and metropolitan councils. The member for Glenelg made out a very good *prima facie* case for increased grants; but the position is not quite as he stated it, for £23,000 of the grants made to councils in the last financial year remains unexpended. Only two councils spent the whole of their grants. Both the Prospect and the Enfield councils had an unexpended balance, that of the latter being £1,759. The balance in the case of the West Torrens council was £381. The Government authorities have not been unmindful of the rapid growth in certain districts and have assisted in such matters as drainage and by making loans at a very low rate of interest. In many cases roads have been constructed very cheaply by the Housing Trust. The West Torrens and Glenelg councils have not benefited as much as they might have from the increased building activity in their districts because they have adopted the unimproved land values rating system. No complaint has been received by the Government from the councils mentioned that they have been unduly pressed because of the influx to their districts. The Government will sympathetically consider any request for a grant in respect of any particular road, but it is hoped that councils will be able to spend the whole of their grants.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I commend the Highways Department for its very competent administration and its sympathetic outlook on the question of road policy and local government problems. I sympathize with the members for

Glenelg and Prospect in the difficulties arising from the new-found prosperity in their areas due to the recent intensive development and also because country representatives on their side of the House have remained silent in spite of their attacks upon country local government bodies. It seems my lot to have to defend those people who are doing a tremendously useful job in carrying on local government in country areas. I believe there are a few councils which could with advantage be amalgamated, but they are very few. The rate revenue of a council is not a measure which can be used to gauge its value to a community. I have lived all my life in either one of two council districts in very sparsely populated areas where the rate revenue is necessarily low, but in both those councils the area served is extremely large—so large that in at least one of them it has become difficult in recent years to get men to serve on the council because of the distances councillors must travel and the time they lose in attending to their council duties. In addition to supervising the collection of rates, the expenditure of portion of it on district roads and the expenditure of money made available by the Highways Department for main roads and some developmental roads, the administrative officers of those councils have a whole schedule of other tasks which they must fulfil. They are usually appointed inspectors under the Vermin, Noxious Weeds, Weights and Measures, Health, and Registration of Dogs Acts. They are also usually the curators of the local cemeteries.

The Hon. T. Playford—And they help in a hundred ways in general work in the district.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes. They are looked upon as leaders in the community, in any good cause being fostered. We should be fully cognizant of the valuable services rendered by these people and should not do anything to diminish that service by making the area so large that councillors and officers could not attend to their many duties and tasks.

Mr. Whittle—Would 600 acres be too small an area?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—That would depend on the value of the acreage. Some metropolitan municipalities may not be much larger than that, and perhaps they could be amalgamated. There has been a great increase in the efficiency of road construction and maintenance in country areas in recent years, but that has mostly been confined to the major roads. Many ratepayers in country districts contribute substantially to the revenues of the area, but they often have to drive over unmade

roads. I am afraid it will be a long time before roads in the north of the State are bituminized. The damage being done by road hauliers to our bitumen highways will mean that all the bitumen and men we can get to lay it will be required for many years to maintain existing roads. People at Peterborough thought they would have a bitumen road to Adelaide before the war, but it has not been laid yet, and I do not think I will see it. As we cannot give country people the bitumen roads they desire, we should at least bituminize the road running through their town, especially if it is a major highway. This was done in a number of towns before the war, but some of the roads have been badly knocked about and it is beyond the capacity of most councils to maintain them. Perhaps the roads radiating from country towns could be bituminized for some miles so that those who journey into town once or twice a week on business could travel on bitumen for some distance at least. The Peterborough district is not plagued by road hauliers, but they do considerable damage to the light floating surface when travelling over it after a rain. It might be possible to stop them from using the roads until the surface had become consolidated so it would not be completely destroyed. It might also be possible to limit the speed at which road hauliers may travel, and thereby minimize damage.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Was the member for Prospect referring to the amalgamation of councils in the metropolitan area?

The Hon. M. McIntosh—No, country councils.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Civic pride might suffer if some councils went out of existence. The member for Glenelg raised the matter of grants to councils to carry out necessary works. Many new homes are being erected in my district and the roads are badly in need of repair. The question arises whether the Highways Department should not employ some of its up-to-date equipment to assist councils to make roads. Why should ratepayers' money be expended on machinery which cannot be used to its full capacity? The Marion and Mitcham councils could do with the assistance of such machinery. The Highways Department could hire its equipment out to councils. Why has there been a hold-up of the reconstruction of Marion Road? If this work were completed it would help to relieve traffic on South Road.

Line passed.

Miscellaneous, £36,299.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Last year £3,425 was spent under the heading "Grants to councils

pursuant to the Electricity Supplies (Country Areas) Act" and it is proposed to expend £25,000 this year. I take it that this relates to the establishment or extension of country electricity services. Can the Minister of Local Government indicate which districts benefited as a result of last year's expenditure and which districts will benefit this year?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will get the information sought by the honourable member.

Line passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL No. 2.

The Estimates having been adopted by the House, an Appropriation Bill for £23,720,824 was founded in Committee of Ways and Means, introduced by the Hon. T. Playford, and read a first time.

Second reading.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Gumeracha—Premier and Treasurer)—The Appropriation Bill is based on the Estimates with which the House has just dealt. Clause 2 provides for the further issue of £23,720,824 which, together with the amount of £10,500,000 authorized by Supply Acts Nos. 1 and 2, makes the total of the Estimates £34,220,824. Clause 3 (1) sets out the purposes for which the above amount is appropriated. Subsection (2) makes provision for the payment of any increases in salaries or wages which become due and payable during the financial year ending June 30, 1952, and adds the amount necessary to pay these increases to the Governor's Appropriation Fund. Clause 5 makes provision for the use of moneys out of the Loan Fund or other public moneys if the general revenue is insufficient to cover the amount of the expenditure thereby resulting in a deficiency. Clause 6 gives the Treasurer power, out of the money appropriated by this Act, to make payments included in the Estimates in respect of a period prior to the 1st July, 1951, or at a rate in excess of that which may have been fixed under the Public Service Act or any regulation of the Railways Commissioner. Clause 7 provides for the payment of amounts appropriated by this Act in addition to any other amounts which may have been appropriated for the same purpose. Members will see that this is in accordance with the usual provisions of the Appropriation Act, and I move the second reading.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.40 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, November 1, at 2 p.m.