

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, September 16, 1952.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Dunks) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

DEATH OF MR. H. C. DUNN.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS (Minister of Lands)—I move:—

That the House of Assembly expresses its deep regret at the death of Mr. H. C. Dunn and requests the Deputy Speaker to send a letter of sympathy to his relatives, and that the sitting of the House be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

The late Mr. Dunn was elected at the 1938 general elections to represent the Stirling district in the House of Assembly, and worthily represented the district continuously ever since. He successfully worked a mixed farming property at Finnis River and spent a lifetime on the land in the district. He did much to help agriculture generally, especially in his own district. He was a life member of the Agricultural Bureau, a committeeman of the Strathalbyn Agricultural Society, and a former chairman of the district council of Strathalbyn, of which he was a member for many years. He was a member of the Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement since January, 1949, and his views were always respected as sound and progressive. He was a popular member of this House and will be missed by members of all Parties. Deep sympathy is expressed to his wife and family in their sad bereavement. Mr. Dunn was loved by all members of this Chamber and we can sincerely refer to him as one of nature's gentlemen. Because of his very kindly disposition and helpful nature to all, I am sure all members support me in expressing great sympathy at his passing.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—In seconding the motion I wish to associate the Opposition with the expressions of sympathy to Mrs. Dunn, the son and daughter, and the other relatives of the deceased member. The late Mr. Dunn had a kindly disposition and it can be claimed that he was a true friend of every member of the House. As the Minister stated, he brought to Parliament a wide practical knowledge of the problems associated with primary production, and in his unostentatious way he promulgated them in this House, and as a member of the Land Settlement Committee and the other committees with which he was associated during the more than 14 years that he served as a member. We have too

many of these occasions, Mr. Deputy Speaker; they remind us of the toll on members of Parliament caused by the strain of their multifarious public duties. Because of that we can the more feelingly join in motions of condolence.

Members carried the motion by standing in their places.

Sitting suspended from 2.8 till 2.30 p.m.

SUPPLY ACT (No. 2).

His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor intimated by message his assent to the Act.

QUESTIONS.**ROAD CARRIAGE OF WOOL.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—It has been reported to me that in recent months considerable quantities of wool have been carted by road from country districts to the metropolitan area. Can the Minister of Railways say whether the Railways Commissioner has made any report to him that abnormal quantities are being carried and, if so, whether rail freights are being detrimentally affected as a result? If the Minister has not received a report, will he inquire whether there is any truth in the reports I have received?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The operations of the ancillary or privately-owned vehicle are not controlled, and quantities of wool are always carried by such vehicles. As it is a valuable product it bears a relatively high rail freight rate compared with such products as superphosphate, and it may pay people having their own motor vehicle and looking at the matter in perhaps a short-sighted way to cart it by road. I have heard of no abnormal movement by road. Some roads are controlled and others are not controlled by the Transport Control Board, and on the latter private owners are free to cart without even applying for a permit. The question having been raised, I will refer the matter to the Railways Commissioner and the Chairman of the Transport Control Board and bring down their replies.

**ALLIGATOR GORGE RESERVE:
ACQUISITION OF LAND.**

Mr. RICHES—Has the Minister of Lands the report promised to me by the Premier on the negotiations that have taken place for the acquisition of the reserve in the Alligator Gorge in the north of the State, and also on the condition of the roads in that area?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Mr. A. J. Baker, Director of the Tourist Bureau, reports:—

When it was first suggested that Alligator Gorge be proclaimed a national pleasure resort, Mr. H. N. Frick, who holds the land under perpetual lease, was approached to see whether he would be prepared to grant at a nominal rental an under-lease to the Honourable the Minister over the area proposed to be dedicated. He intimated his willingness to do this, both verbally and in writing. Mr. H. A. Humphris, who had been similarly approached in respect of an area at the lower end of the Alligator running into Mambray Creek, also agreed to an under-lease, but submitted a claim for compensation for the loss of timber rights, etc. After protracted negotiations an agreement was reached with him, but encouraged apparently by the action taken by Mr. Humphris, Mr. Frick failed to ratify the undertaking given by him and submitted, through his solicitor, a claim for the payment of £750 for general inconvenience, risk, etc. As I considered this claim, apart from being a complete breach of faith, absolutely unwarranted in that the construction of the road giving access to his property far outweighed any possible disadvantage, the question of having the area dedicated as a national pleasure resort has been left in abeyance. It is with some concern, however, that I have learnt that Mr. Frick has denuded much of the area of timber, and that in carting it he has seriously cut up the roadway. I have written to the district council of Wilmington asking whether action can be taken to repair the road, and propose at an early date to call a round-table conference between representatives of the district council, the Highways Department, Mr. Frick, and this bureau, with a view to coming to an amicable understanding over the dedication of the area.

SALARIES OF WOMEN POLICE.

Mr. FLETCHER—It has been brought to my notice that recently South Australian police-women have been given notice that their salaries are to be reduced by 25 per cent. Can the Minister of Lands, in the absence of the Premier, say whether that report is correct?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The question is one for a Minister in another place. I will take up the matter with him and obtain a report.

RENTALS OF HOUSING TRUST FLATS.

Mr. SHANNON—The Housing Trust is erecting flats in various areas, including Morphettville, and I understand that they are intended for the occupation of elderly married couples without families and young people who have no families or only one child. It has been reported that the rentals to be charged are extraordinarily high and hardly in keeping with the circumstances of these tenants. Can the Acting Leader of the Government ascertain the proposed rentals for these flats?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I will secure that information for the honourable member.

MONEYLENDERS' CHARGES.

Mr. LAWN—Has the Acting Leader of the Government the report promised by the Premier in reply to my question of August 6 regarding the Moneylenders' Act?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The Parliamentary Draftsman reports:—

Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, and Tasmania have passed Acts prescribing maximum rates of interest chargeable on loans of money. These rates are:—

Victoria: 48 per cent.

Western Australia: 15 per cent.

Tasmania: 20 per cent on loans of not more than £10 ranging down a scale to 10 per cent on loans of more than £50.

Queensland: 20 per cent (fixed by regulation in 1933; the rate may have been altered since).

In these four States it is made an offence to lend money at a rate greater than the statutory maximum. In addition to fixing maximum rates these States have also empowered the courts to decide that a lower rate of interest than the maximum is excessive and in such a case the borrower could be released from the obligation to pay the full rate. The substantial difference between the rates fixed by the laws of the various States shows the difficulty of determining a fair rate. No State has attempted to provide a scale of rates depending upon the type of security offered or the terms of repayment. Probably it has been thought that a workable scale based on these factors could not be devised and that a standard rate, though rough and ready, would at least have the merits of certainty and simplicity. At this stage I express no opinion as to what a fair maximum would be. If the Government decides to legislate on this topic I would be glad to consider the matter further and make a recommendation.

WOOD FOR PUMPING STATIONS.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—When I was in Berri last Friday I found the town seething with indignation about what was regarded as the callous attitude of the Irrigation Department in refusing, without warning, to take wood from a number of casual suppliers for use in the pumping stations on the river. One supplier explained that he had 10 or 11 timber cutters in the scrub country getting supplies and these men had to be brought back to town. I ask the Minister of Irrigation whether this shows much consideration to those who are probably the hardest worked body of men in the Commonwealth, men who stayed in the scrub country cutting timber under difficult conditions? Could not some warning be given before refusing to take supplies of timber? I understand some men have 60 or 70 tons of

wood cut that they assumed, and were even encouraged to assume, would be needed by the department, because the department went out of its way to get every available man to cut timber to keep the pumps going. Will the Minister reconsider the decision and see whether the department can at least take all the timber already cut? This would give the workers perhaps a fortnight to look for other jobs. A report in today's *Advertiser* states that 25 to 30 cutters are unemployed, but I believe there would be nearer 100 walking the streets.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I anticipated a question of this nature and have had a report prepared. I remind the House that not many months ago we were very short of firewood in that locality and it appeared at one time that we would not have sufficient wood to carry out our irrigation programmes. I stress how lucky we are to have the Leigh Creek coalfield, which came to the rescue in the river areas and supplied fuel to the pumping stations so that irrigations could be carried out. At that period we were not able to get wood cutters at all and the position became desperate, but later a number of cutters became available. I think the following report covers the main points raised by the honourable member:—

It has been the policy of the Department of Lands to accept deliveries of firewood for the River Murray pumping stations from casual suppliers, when sufficient quantities cannot be obtained under contracts. Due to a sudden increase in the number of persons prepared to cut and cart wood in the district, firewood stocks at the Berri pumping station now total 12,300 tons, which is approximately sufficient for 1½ years. Balances due on firm contracts total 12,000 tons and it has therefore been necessary in view of these commitments, to cease purchasing supplies from other sources. It is understood that casual suppliers have about 800 tons of wood cut but not delivered and consideration is being given to the purchase of this quantity, so as to enable these suppliers to meet their financial obligations to the cutters.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I am pleased that the Minister has seen fit to accept the wood already cut and at grass, which will largely solve the problem of the employers in this case, but, as I said earlier, over 100 men have been out in the scrub cutting wood. Some employers had up to 10 or 11, and without their help the Irrigation Department would not have been able to keep the pumps going. Does the Minister think it fair that the men should be thrown on the scrap heap at practically a moment's notice, and, if so, is it in keeping with the policy of the Government that we should do

everything possible to decentralize and keep men employed in the country? So far as I can see the only thing left for the men is to come to the city to try to find employment.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I assure the honourable member that it is the policy of the Government to keep all possible suitable labour in country areas. This is a matter which has happened almost overnight. There is a surplus of labour in the cutting of wood. If there are over 100 cutters, as the honourable member mentions, in view of the amount which one can cut in a day, he will know that there will soon be an accumulation of a few thousand tons of wood. I think I have answered the question fully. The department is taking the matter into consideration. I will examine it and get a further report.

SLAUGHTERING OF EYRE PENINSULA SHEEP.

Mr. HUTCHENS—It has been brought to my notice that there have been sales of sheep recently at low prices at Kimba and Cummins, on the West Coast, because of the over-stocking by graziers. I think that in Kimba ewes were sold at as low as seven shillings a head, and the skins were marketed in Adelaide at 15s. 4d. Wethers were sold at Cummins for 15s. and the skins for about even money on the Adelaide market, showing a margin between the purchase price of stock and the selling price of meat and skins of about £4 10s. The reason put forward for the low price of the sheep was that the Government Produce Department's killing unit at Port Lincoln was unable to handle the stock. Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether that statement is correct and, if so, will he negotiate with other departments for the supply of transport to bring sheep to the metropolitan area in order that the producer may get a higher price and the consumer benefit from the reduction in the price of meat due to over-stocking on the West Coast?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The two members representing the area, Messrs. Christian and Pearson, have been very active in regard to the work of the Government Produce Department and I assure the honourable member that they have not allowed either the Minister in charge of transport or the Minister of Agriculture to sit down on the job. The honourable member's information about the produce depot at Port Lincoln is entirely incorrect. The bookings at Port Lincoln have been very light until quite recently; in fact, not sufficient to warrant a full chain being worked there. Information has been supplied

to the stock agents throughout the area that we are prepared to engage a full chain as soon as bookings warrant it. Half a chain has been working, I think, full time, since yesterday week and as soon as the requisite bookings come in the Government will do all it can to get the number of men needed to work a full chain. The rumour that the Port Lincoln freezers were full and unable to handle the stock offering is entirely incorrect, and I do not know how it got about. I have no information as to the price of stock at the markets, but I know there is a considerable surplus of sheep on Eyre Peninsula. That also applies to this side of the gulf. There will be some difficulty in getting rid of them later in the season, particularly old ewes. The transport matter is handled by the Minister of Railways who, I understand, has received deputations from time to time regarding the operations of the railways.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Part of the question I am about to ask has already been answered following on the question by Mr. Hutcheus, but I draw the Minister's attention to the following statement by Mr. Siggins (manager of Port Lincoln Produce Depot), which appeared in the *Port Lincoln Times* on September 4:—

Unfortunately, there did not appear to be enough labour offering to enable the chain to be kept running at full capacity whereby it would treat from 2,000 to 2,500 carcasses a day.

A neighbour of mine has been trying to book space for his lambs, but cannot obtain it until October 14. Can the Minister say whether the bookings are being accepted on the assumption that only half a chain will be run throughout the season, or will the department make a vigorous effort to obtain the necessary extra labour to keep a full chain running full time? Otherwise I feel certain there will be a surplus of 200,000 sheep on Eyre Peninsula to dispose of—an estimate that is backed up by the stock firm representatives with whom I have discussed this matter.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—There is a wide difference of opinion regarding the number of sheep that will be available for slaughter at Port Lincoln. Replies from the stock firms and those represented on the Operational Committee indicate that the number of sheep and lambs to be treated will be from 40,000 to 50,000. However, the department assessed the needs considerably higher than that and added 10,000 for contingencies. I would not dispute the honourable member's estimate of a surplus of 200,000, but we have not yet been able to get an estimate higher than 50,000 to 60,000. Not sufficient labour was offering

at Port Lincoln to work a full chain, and another 50 men would be required for the purpose. Some weeks ago I urged early bookings so that the department would have advice of the numbers of sheep and lambs likely to be sent in for slaughter. Unfortunately, very little heed was taken of my statement at the time, and now I understand from the honourable member's remarks that a rush of orders is coming in. I can assure him that the department will make every endeavour to get sufficient men for a full chain so that we can use the works to their maximum capacity.

HOUSING TRUST CONTRACTORS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Minister representing the Premier a reply to my question of August 21 whether it is the usual practice for contractors engaged by the Housing Trust to abide by ruling award rates and conditions for their employees?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The Chairman of the Housing Trust has supplied the following report:—

The building contracts made by the South Australian Housing Trust with its builders provide that the builders are to observe the provisions of any relevant industrial awards or determinations. However, the contracts do not prescribe the manner in which builders are to employ their labour and it is not contrary to the term of these contracts (nor to the terms of the ordinary building contracts usually entered into by others than the trust) for a builder to employ sub-contractors or to employ workers on piece work. It is, of course, common practice for certain types of building work, such as plumbing and electrical work, to be given to subcontractors. If, however, work is carried out under piecework conditions, this work must obviously conform with the standards required under the contract and, under these circumstances, it is incumbent on the trust to see that the jobs have the requisite amount of supervision to ensure that the completed work is of the standard provided for by the contract. I understand that the use of piecework on the job in question is the subject of discussions by the unions concerned.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—In view of a threatened stoppage on Housing Trust work in an area just off the O.G. Road in the northern suburbs, which has arisen because of discontent over the non-observance of awards, could the Minister secure a further report from the Housing Trust on the amount involved in the necessary supervision of piecework or petty contract work as compared with that involved in the work being done by contractors who observe day labour and other normal award conditions?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—As the question entails much research I will take up the matter with the Housing Trust and secure a report.

TROTTING AT GAWLER.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—As night trotting begins at Gawler on Tuesday night next, and in view of the narrowness of the Gawler Road, will the Minister responsible arrange for additional and ample police supervision of the great volume of traffic which is expected on Tuesday night and on all trotting meeting nights thereafter, in order to avoid the possibility of accidents?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I shall be happy to take up the matter with the Chief Secretary.

HOUSING TRUST ACTIVITIES AT PORT AUGUSTA.

Mr. RICHES—I understand that because of difficulties in obtaining bricks and workmen to lay them, the Housing Trust, in order to meet the desperate need, has embarked upon the building of timber-frame houses, but instead of their being available for sale, as is generally the case, they are being let on a tenancy basis. The rent has been fixed at £2 7s. 6d. a week. Some of us are at a loss to understand the reason for the seemingly high rent. Compared with the rental of a brick home of about 28s. a week, the occupant of a timber-frame house is at a serious disadvantage. We have been told in this House on many occasions that one of the factors in determining the rent level is amortization. It has occurred to us that the trust may have determined on a short period of life for the timber-frame house. In some cases 20 years is regarded as a reasonable period for amortization. In connection with the trust's emergency homes, I understand the life determined is 10 years, which means a very substantial increase in the rent. Will the Minister call for a report from the Housing Trust on the reason for the high rental being charged for the timber-frame houses, and will he get information about the period of amortization and ask for consideration to be given to a substantial extension in the period, because of the known life of timber-frame houses in the district, with a view to a reduction in the rental?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I will endeavour to get the information required and let the honourable member have it at the earliest opportunity.

GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY OF SOUTH-EAST.

Mr. FLETCHER—Has the Minister of Lands a reply to the question I asked on August 1,

regarding the geophysical survey undertaken in the South-East some time ago?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have obtained the following report from the Director of Mines:—

The gravity survey of the South-East has been completed and the results are shown on the accompanying maps which will be released in a joint report on the oil possibilities of the South-Eastern Province of South Australia and of Western Victoria now being finalized in consultation with the Victorian Mines Department. The results are not adequate on their own to interpret the geological structure with sufficient accuracy to outline any structures that may possibly be favourable for oil, but they do confirm the findings of airborne magnetometer surveys over the same area and have added considerably to our knowledge of the broad geological features. The low negative readings signify areas where bedrock is deepest, such as the zone centred on Krongard and extending in a north-west direction to Conmurra and thence swinging westerly to Robe. This explains the great depth of Jurassic coal-bearing rocks obtained in the Robe bore. The relatively high readings near Mount Gambier extending towards Beachport suggest a zone of comparatively shallow bedrock following a similar north-west trend. In general the results suggest areas where more detailed work could be undertaken probably using seismic methods. This work is being planned at present. In general the work has revealed nothing of outstanding interest at least in so far as justifying any renewed hope of finding oil. The views previously expressed by the department still stand in so far as the oil prospect is concerned.

I ask that, as soon as he has perused them, the honourable member return to me the maps attached to the report.

COMMENTS BY MEMBERS IN ASKING QUESTIONS.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—Standing Order 124 states:—

At the time of giving Notices of Motion, questions may be put to Ministers of the Crown relating to public affairs; and to other members, relating to any Bill, motion, or other public matter connected with the business of the House in which such members may be concerned.

Standing Order 125 states:—

In putting any such question, no argument or opinion shall be offered nor shall any facts be stated, except by leave of the House and so far only as may be necessary to explain such question.

I feel there is a tendency for honourable members, in asking questions, to make comments of such length as to be nearly a second reading speech. Honourable members may make remarks leading up to a question, but they should be relevant to the question and not made for the purpose of giving information generally.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I ask leave to make a personal explanation. I believe that when asking a question a few moments ago I asked for your permission, Sir, and the concurrence of the House, to make a brief preliminary statement, and that you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, concurred in that. I assure you that I will endeavour on all occasions to comply with Standing Orders and your rulings in regard to giving information when asking a question.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—I do not wish the honourable member to think that I was making particular reference to his question. It was just a general statement. I assure him that personalities did not come into the matter at all.

STURT HIGHWAY.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Can the Minister say whether the Highways Department intends to construct a high level road along that portion of the Sturt Highway between Paringa and Renmark?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Deputy Commissioner of Highways reports that to construct a road to a level that would ensure its remaining open to traffic during all probable high rivers, bearing in mind that the present flood is considerably lower than that of 1931, would be extremely expensive, as such a road would entail several large bridges and large quantities of filling for the banks in addition to stone paving of the banks to provide protection against wave action. The Acting Engineer for Highways reports that this portion of Sturt Highway has not been inundated completely since 1931 and that during the 1939, 1951, and the current floods banks have been constructed on either side to keep the road trafficable. Requests from the river districts area have been for a number of roads and it has been generally decided that the most important and urgent work at the moment is the construction of a "north of the river" road between Eudunda and Barmera. One departmental gang is at present engaged on this work. It is proposed that, when widening of the Sturt Highway between Barmera and Berri is completed, this gang will also be transferred to the Morgan-Renmark Road. It is difficult, therefore, to indicate at this stage when it will be possible to raise the level of the Renmark-Paringa section of the Sturt Highway. The department is concentrating on work on the "north of the river" road and has sought and obtained through the member for Light the co-operation of the Eudunda and Morgan district councils. I expect that the

departmental gang with the assistance from gangs from those councils will effect a considerable improvement on that road.

INSPECTION OF STOCK.

Mr. FLETCHER—Some time ago I wrote to the Minister of Agriculture asking if any reciprocal agreement existed between Victoria and South Australia regarding the examination for vermin of stock, particularly stock imported from Victoria. Can he give the information now?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—Following on the letter from the honourable member I have secured a report from the Chief Inspector of Stock, which states:—

Co-operation exists between the States of Victoria and South Australia to the extent that—

1. Each State department keeps the other fully acquainted with the conditions under which stock of any kind can be introduced into its State from the other.

2. Each department carries out the necessary inspections of stock to be moved from its State into the other—in order to provide these stock with the required health certificates.

3. Each department (by unwritten agreement) takes all possible steps to safeguard the interests of the other States in the matter of stock diseases and prevent illegal movement of stock thereto.

4. Each department supplies the other with a monthly notification of outbreaks of scheduled stock diseases in its State.

5. As necessary, views and information are exchanged between the two departments—by letter or telephone—regarding any stock disease problem which may arise in either State and be of concern to the other.

6. The South Australian Stock Inspector at Mount Gambier maintains a liaison with the Victorian Stock Inspector at Hamilton.

A considerable degree of uniformity exists between States in respect of their legislation on stock diseases, but complete uniformity cannot exist since each State must legislate to some extent in accordance with its own particular circumstances. I am unable to supply any information as to what pertains to the sale of lice infested sheep in Victorian markets, but doubtless many such sheep are sold thereat (just as they are in South Australian markets). But under Regulation 42 of the Victorian Stock Diseases Act, it is an offence to expose lice infested sheep for sale in any market.

BLANCHETOWN FERRY CHARGES.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I have been informed by people travelling to and from the river areas that the Blanchetown . . .

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—Is the honourable member asking leave to make a statement?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I ask your permission, Sir, and the concurrence of the House, to direct this question to the Minister of

Local Government. I have been informed by people travelling to and from the river areas that the fares for crossing the river on the Blanchetown ferry have been increased by 100 per cent for week-ends and public holidays. Has authority been given for this increase? I understand that the fee has been increased only on the Blanchetown ferry.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I do not know the extent of the increase, but I accept the honourable member's statement. The increases were unauthorized, and immediately the matter was brought under the notice of the Highways Department the Deputy Commissioner of Highways wrote to the district council of Truro, under whose jurisdiction this ferry comes, asking that it be brought under the notice of the lessee and that he be told of the fees permitted to be charged, and that steps be taken to display a list of the proper charges so that the public would be advised of the correct fares. The district clerk reported that he was unaware of the complaints but he would see that the necessary action was taken to display the charges permitted, and I am sure there will be no grounds for any complaints in the future.

CEMENT PRICES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Minister of Lands a reply to the question I asked some weeks ago relating to the prices of imported and local cement?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The Director of Building Materials reports:—

Inquiries have been made from the Adelaide Cement Co. Ltd., Brighton Cement Co. Ltd., South Australian Railways, Transport Control Board, and South Australian Harbors Board. Representatives of the two local cement companies stated that they have not sent any cement out of this State during the last six months except to Broken Hill. The South Australian Railways, Harbors Board, and Transport Control Board, have no knowledge of interstate consignments of South Australian cement, but the T.C.B. Secretary said road hauliers may possibly have included small quantities of South Australian cement from time to time in general cargo. Several months ago I heard on one or two occasions that small quantities of South Australian cement had been sent interstate by road, but I was not able to obtain evidence supporting the allegations. The distribution of South Australian cement has not been controlled except to the extent that merchants have been legally directed to sell a certain percentage of their supplies to permit house builders and also sell a specified quantity to sponsored concrete roofing tile manufacturers. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the merchants have complied with these directions, which have considerably benefited needy house builders.

QUARRYING OPERATIONS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (on notice)—Is it the intention of the Government to introduce legislation this session to amend the Local Government Act so as to provide that corporations shall have the same powers as district councils under section 670, paragraph (10) of that Act, which regulates and controls quarrying and blasting operations?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—This matter is receiving consideration in conjunction with other proposals to amend the Local Government Act.

NEW OUTER HARBOUR ROAD.

Mr. Davis for Mr. TAPPING (on notice)—Can the Minister of Works indicate what progress has been made in connection with the new Outer Harbour Road, and what is the estimated period to complete it?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The new Outer Harbour Road (the Port Adelaide-Draper main road No. 50.) is to be a two-lane highway. It is proposed to concentrate on the construction, to a width of thirty-two feet, of the eastern lane only, from Rann Street to the old Outer Harbour Road near Draper; and to permit both up and down traffic to use the new pavement, thus giving immediate relief to Fletcher Road. The eastern lane is also to be extended northerly from Draper to Marmora Street to cater for the heavy traffic from the I.C.I. works and the E.T.S.A. power station at Osborne. Formation work in the eastern lane is now completed from Rann Street to Draper, and it is anticipated that the laying of the bituminous surface will be completed by the end of the year. The section north of Draper to Marmora Street should also be completed early in the new year. Work on the western lane will be commenced as soon as possible thereafter.

RAILWAY FUEL OIL CONSUMPTION.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (on notice)—

1. What was the average monthly consumption of fuel oil used in locomotives by the railways during the last six months?

2. What was the consumption of fuel oil used during July, 1952?

3. What is the current cost per ton of this oil to the Railways Department?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Railways Commissioner reports—

1. Average monthly consumption of fuel oil used in locomotives by the South Australian Railways from February, 1952, to July, 1952, 5,950 tons.

2. The consumption of fuel oil for July, 1952, was 5,862 tons.

3. The current cost per ton is £15 11s. 5d.

RADIUM HILL HOUSING.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (on notice)—

1. Who is responsible for allotting houses built at Radium Hill to mine employees?

2. Is any priority observed in allotting these houses?

3. If so, what considerations determine priority?

The Hon. C. S. Hincks for the Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The replies are:—

1. The Minister of Mines.

2. Yes.

3. The main considerations in determining priorities for the limited number of houses at present available are—(a) The importance of the employee in the development programme; (b) Suitability of the employee for a house. It must be stressed that the present operation is one which comprises essentially the establishment and to enable full-scale production to commence at the earliest possible date. The housing at present available has been allocated to technical staff, leading hands and foremen, and building contractors. Two unoccupied houses have been allocated to the Australian Inland Mission—one as a residence for the nurses and one for a hospital and medical treatment centre.

PETERBOROUGH HIGH SCHOOL: HEAD MASTER'S RESIDENCE.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (on notice)—

1. Is the Treasurer aware that several repairs, renovations, and replacements in respect of the residence of the head master of the Peterborough high school have been requested?

2. If so, is it intended to approve of these items and when is it expected that they will be carried out?

The Hon. C. S. Hincks for the Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The replies are:—

1. Yes.

2. Tenders for improvements to this residence were first called in August, 1948, but there was no response. Tenders were again called in October, 1948, and a contract was let, but the inability of the contractor to carry out the work eventually led to the contract being cancelled in January, 1951. Plans and estimates were then brought up to date and fresh tenders were called in June, 1951, but there was no response. Tenders were again called in January, 1952, again with no response. In the

meantime the house was treated for damp walls, and internal renovation was carried out. As it was impossible to interest a contractor in the full scheme, local tradesmen were interviewed and they agreed to do certain works. In July orders were issued for—(1) complete rewiring of the residence and (2) taking away the old tank and replacing with a new one. In August orders were issued for the—(1) removal of the old fence and erection of a complete new chain mesh fence and (2) to put a damp course in the kitchen and bathroom, supplying all materials. It is proposed to carry out the following additional work for which tradesmen are being contacted at present:—(1) Install new kitchen sink and cupboard. (2) Erect new laundry. (3) Install drainage and soakage well for kitchen and laundry.

UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS.

Mr. LAWN (on notice)—

1. How many persons, male and female, were registered as unemployed in South Australia on Friday, September 12, 1952?

2. How many were in receipt of unemployment benefits?

The Hon. C. S. Hincks (for the Hon. T. PLAYFORD)—The replies are:—

1. As at August 29, 1952: 2,115 males, 591 females; total 2,706.

2. As at August 30, 1952: 748 males, 130 females; total 878. Figures are not yet available for September 12, 1952. The Regional Director has pointed out that the 2,706 persons registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service include the 878 in receipt of benefit. Further, the figure of 2,706 does not necessarily indicate the correct number out of work on the date indicated. Some persons may have obtained employment by their own efforts between the date of registering with the Commonwealth Employment Service and the date mentioned, and not had sufficient time to notify the employment service. Others may have neglected to notify jobs secured.

LIQUID FUEL COSTS.

Mr. CHRISTIAN (on notice)—

1. Does the declaration of secrecy made under the Prices Act prevent the Minister controlling the Price Control Department from being informed as to the landed costs, the storage, handling, delivery and overhead costs of the various kinds of liquid fuel?

2. If not, under what provision of the Act is the Minister precluded from so informing Parliament, either officially or by making files available to members on the above matters?

3. In view of the fact that these various costs regarding petrol are all published in the June, 1952, issue of the *Petroleum Gazette*, is it still a breach of secrecy to disclose such and similar information to Parliament?

The Hon. C. S. Hincks for the Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The replies are:—

1. No.

2. Section 7, in particular—

(3) A person shall not, except in course of his duty under this Act, directly or indirectly communicate or divulge any information relating to any matter which comes to his knowledge in consequence of his official position.

3. All information in possession of the department is obtained directly and it would be a breach of secrecy to disclose such information.

KANGAROO ISLAND DEVELOPMENT.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER laid on the table the fourth report of the Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement on Kangaroo Island Development.

Ordered to be printed.

SUPREME COURT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. C. S. Hincks, for the Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer), moved—

That the Deputy Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Supreme Court Act, 1935-1951.

Motion carried.

Resolution agreed to in Committee and adopted by the House. Bill read a first time.

PUBLIC OFFICERS' SALARIES BILL.

The Hon. C. S. Hincks, for the Hon. T. PLAYFORD, moved—

That the Deputy Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to provide for the increase of the salaries of certain public officers and other purposes.

Motion carried.

Resolution agreed to in Committee and adopted by the House. Bill read a first time.

NORTHERN RAILWAYS COMPENSATION BILL.

Having obtained leave, the Hon. C. S. Hincks (for the Hon. T. PLAYFORD) introduced a Bill for an Act to provide for the assessment and payment of compensation for certain losses arising from diversion of railway traffic and other consequences of the construction of a railway on the western side of the Flinders Ranges between Stirling North and Brachina, and for purposes incidental thereto.

Read a first time.

GARDEN SUBURB (REPEAL) BILL.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH (Minister of Local Government)—I move:—

That the time for bringing up the report of the Select Committee on the Garden Suburb (Repeal) Bill be extended to October 7, 1952. Because of the absence of some members and the sickness of others, the Select Committee was not able to complete its inquiries within the time originally fixed.

Motion carried.

LAND SETTLEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONTROL OF RENTS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 21. Page 509.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This Bill continues the operation of the Act for another year and makes a number of minor amendments to it. After considering them I find that the amendments arise through omissions in re-drafting the legislation last year. This re-drafting followed an exhaustive inquiry by a committee and one would have thought that, because of the inquiry and the further attention given to the matter by the Government prior to the introduction of the Bill, the errors would not have crept in. They are obviously desirable amendments and I agree to their acceptance.

As to whether it is desirable for the legislation to continue I do not think there can be any wide difference of opinion. Members are aware that there is still, unfortunately, a great dearth of housing accommodation in South Australia. Therefore, it is necessary to have legislation to protect tenants from eviction and from being rendered homeless. A rent controlling authority is essential. Otherwise a landlord, in order to get a tenant out of this house, could charge an exorbitant rent. Whether the

trust is the proper authority to control rents is a moot point. When the inquiry was proceeding the Opposition strongly expressed the view that a fair rents authority should be created. We felt then, and I feel now, that as the trust is the largest landlord in the State, it is not the appropriate authority to fix rents generally. However, Parliament has decided otherwise, and it is obvious that any endeavour of mine to give effect to our desires would be of no avail. The Bill last year provided for a 22½ per cent increase on the fair rentals existing in 1939. Since the passage of the Bill there have been an enormous number of applications for rent increases, which placed an onerous burden on trust officers who had to determine the matters, and led to considerable delays. I have had complaints about the increase in the rents being made retrospective, but on going into them I found that the applications had been current for some time before the trust could attend to them. If the trust had been able to deal with them immediately the tenants would have been in a worse position than they were in the cases I have mentioned. The trust has now caught up with the lag and can deal with applications as they come in. This is an advantage and will obviate complaints about delays.

Another reason for protesting against some of the rents fixed by the trust is that the permitted increase does not in all cases apply to the rent payable when rents were originally 'pegged.' Under the law a 22½ per cent increase should apply, plus an allowance for the additional cost of repairs, rates and taxes, and other things. In some cases the actual percentage increase has been more than 22½ per cent, which most people thought it would be. Conversely, some landlords, who expected to get the benefit of the full 22½ per cent, found that they were not entitled to it because previously they had been permitted to raise the rent. The provisions of this law will have to be retained for at least another year, probably for a considerably longer period until the supply of houses is adequate to meet the demand and there is normal competition to assist in maintaining reasonable rental values for South Australian homes. Provision has been made whereby under what has been termed special circumstances persons could obtain permission from the trust to let premises without being subject to the Act, and it was felt that this might result in some large houses now occupied by small families being made available for tenancy by larger families, but my information is that this provision has

not been applied very successfully and that surplus accommodation has not been made available to the extent expected.

Clause 4, which deals with the manner in which the trust shall hear and determine appeals against rent fixation, should have been included in last year's legislation. Although the present law provides that the trust may hear objections against the provisional rents which it has fixed and that such objections may be lodged by either party, there is no provision to enable the other party to reply to an objection so raised, and have it considered, and clause 4 overcomes that difficulty. Clause 5 provides for conditions which have been discovered in association with the letting of caravans. Some years ago Parliament provided, as it thought, for the effective control of rents charged for caravans, but people have evaded the Act by charging in addition ground rent, besides making charges for the use of conveniences and other services supplied. Clause 5 provides that where separate charges are made they shall be stated on the receipt so that the opportunity may be taken of checking them and appealing to the trust in the event of their being considered unfair. Clause 8 extends the time during which a prosecution may be made against owners who re-possess their homes under that section of the Act which permits homes to be re-possessed if required for the occupation of owners and subsequently let them without court approval. It is intended to deal with any person who uses the law to obtain possession of a home he does not intend to use, and proceeds to let it to another tenant. The provision was strengthened last year by the increase in the penalty from a fine of £50 to £500, but a weakness has developed because under the Justices Act proceedings must be initiated within six months after the committing of the offence and some offences have not been disclosed until the expiration of that period. Under clause 8 prosecutions may be made at any time within 12 months after.

Clause 9 provides for the issue of exclusion certificates to lessees. At present such certificates may be granted only to owners, and it is felt that this clause will be a desirable amendment. A necessary safeguard has been provided in that the exclusion certificate may be granted to a lessee only with the approval of the owner. Clause 10, which has given me some concern is intended to protect persons on service in Korea and Malaya by providing that the operations in these two theatres are to be deemed to be wars in which Her Majesty has

become engaged. The Act provides that protected persons shall include those who served in wars in which Her Majesty has been engaged on or after September 3, 1939, but before the passing of 1951 amending Act, and I am concerned about the implications of this clause. Is the British Commonwealth at war with North Korea? It is true that we are partners in a United Nations war to enforce the authority of the United Nations in Korea—and very properly so—but whether the Crown is actually at war is a moot point, and Her Majesty might not thank us if we involved her in a war in which she does not wish to be directly concerned. As I understand the position in Malaya, a section of the British Commonwealth is having difficulty with some people within its borders and a form of civil war exists there. The forces of the Crown are seeking to suppress a form of lawlessness and banditry which is inimical to the interests of peace-loving people in this section of the British Commonwealth, and the Australian Government has offered certain assistance. Some of our troops are actually serving there, and, though I do not suggest that that service is not both necessary and meritorious, I question whether the Crown is at war in Malaya. It seems to me that that activity is something in the nature of a civil war, and I ask whether some misguided Australian engaged on the other side would receive protection under this legislation on his return to South Australia. I suggest that the issue would have been better solved by a specific provision that persons who have served in either of these theatres should be entitled to the protection afforded by this legislation rather than that Parliament should amend the particular section dealing with wars in which Her Majesty was engaged.

Mr. Shannon—You have overlooked the provision that to qualify a person must have served under a British commander.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I thank the honourable member for his reminder, but I maintain that it would have been better to specifically provide for these special cases. I support the Bill.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—Though I admit that the Leader of the Opposition has spoken with a good deal of logic, I approach the problem from an angle different from that used by him and his colleagues. Controls are obnoxious to the Party I represent, for none ever serve an ultimately useful purpose.

Mr. O'Halloran—Would you say that traffic controls do not serve a useful purpose?

Mr. SHANNON—I was not referring to laws which protect the lives and limbs of our people, but to the activities of industry and people in their private avocations. Under this legislation the owners of houses, who provide homes for other people not wishing or not able to own homes of their own, must carry a burden for the rest of the community. Such owners have suffered from the limitation of their income from rents which, in some cases, is their sole source of livelihood. I will not bring tears to members' eyes by stressing the unfortunate plight of widows or spinsters who have invested money in property, but many other people have invested their life savings in real estate, it being in their judgment a good way of making provision for their old age. Such people, by virtue of this legislation, have had their incomes pegged since 1939. Last year their incomes were increased by 22½ per cent as a result of an amending Act, but those renting homes have had their incomes increased by about 300 per cent since 1939. The increases they receive quarterly from cost of living adjustments are not enjoyed by the owners of property, although landlords have had high costs to contend with. Further they have to feed and clothe themselves and spend their money on the same things as their tenants do. The cost of rates, taxes and repairs, which property owners have to meet, has increased enormously, but the increase in rents allowed by Parliament would amount to only a few shillings a week on a small home. It was a paltry amelioration, and out of all proportion to what they could do with their capital if they could invest it in other avenues today. I have examined a few cases and found that some landlords were getting only about two per cent net on today's capital value of their homes.

I was interested to hear the member for Stuart say that the Housing Trust was asking £2 7s. 6d. a week for timber-frame houses in Port Augusta. He suggested that the trust must be expecting a 20-year life for these houses to charge such an extortionate rent. I am prepared to allow them a 40-year life, which would still more than justify a rental of £2 7s. 6d. a week. The cost of these houses is about £2,500. Recently the Public Works Committee inspected a site for a new school at Darlington and also houses of the same type as those erected at Port Augusta. It was informed that their sale price was £2,450, after deducting a Commonwealth Government subsidy of £300. If the price of such a

home at Darlington is £2,450, I have no doubt that it would be as least as high at Port Augusta because of transport costs. Firms seeking new capital today must offer up to five per cent interest, even if they can offer the best security. Five per cent per annum on £2,500 is £125, but I will base my computations on only 4½ per cent, which still means over £2 a week for interest alone. In addition, the trust will have to pay rates, taxes, and repair bills. Although new when erected, a timber-frame home would need painting within three years, and perhaps sooner at Port Augusta. Further, depreciation must be taken into account. With an interest bill of over £2 a week the Housing Trust is left with very little margin to meet the other expenses to which I have referred. The private investor has the same costs to contend with as the trust; indeed, he is in a more difficult position because the trust has a Father Christmas at its back. It can always come to the Government, and it may not be long before it will have to fall back on good old mother Government if such a thing as a depression comes again. Many people say it cannot happen again, but if there is a recession in industry resulting from any inability to sell our manufactured goods the trust will be in a serious predicament. Tenants may leave their homes and go to the country to seek work.

Mr. Macgillivray—There is no work in the country.

Mr. SHANNON—I do not know about that, but the average man with a little energy and initiative will not sit on the banks of the Torrens and wait for something to fall into his lap. He will look for a job somewhere. The trust may have thousands of untenanted homes on its hands. People purchased some of the Thousand Homes at Colonel Light Gardens for up to £1,200, but many lost their deposits, and were pleased to lose them, because the equity remaining in their homes during the depression was only half what they owed on them. These people contracted to purchase houses in all good faith because they thought they could meet their commitments. They would have been able to do so if the good times of the late 1920's had continued.

Mr. Hutchens—Are you predicting a recurrence of the depression of the 1930's?

Mr. SHANNON—The ants' nest that we are sitting on is much larger than the one the Labor Government of the early 1930's sat on; in fact this time we are sitting on a volcano.

If the balloon goes up, and it can, many people will leave their Housing Trust homes which they have bought for a trifling deposit of about 10 per cent on today's market price of perhaps £2,500. If I live long enough I shall see the same homes sold for less than £1,000. We have had droughts before and producers have been forced to sell their wool as low as 6d. and 7d. a pound and wheatgrowers have received only 1s. 9d. a bushel for their grain. I am not suggesting that that will happen again tomorrow or the next day, nor predicting any particular time, but we must expect at some time a fall in our primary product prices. The Housing Trust should have been more cautious in spending large sums on expensive homes. When this project was mooted, Mr. Hogben, the then member for Sturt, proposed that we should build cheap homes for the workers. I remember on that occasion there was criticism that the Government should contemplate going so far. We have travelled a long way since then in providing homes for those who find it hard to purchase one. Honourable members opposite may think that thousands of homes are wanted in the metropolitan area, but I have other ideas. My view is that the housing position will cure itself very quickly. All of a sudden a decision will be made by the people and they will not buy houses at £2,500—they are actually only cottages, and they will be classed as cottages in future. If Adelaide continues to build such homes it will become known as the "Cottage Capital." The trust would have been better advised to allow private enterprise to undertake some portion of the responsibility of providing homes for the people. Then much of the present burden being borne by the trust would have been loaded more evenly on the shoulders of those who can carry it: people with money to invest would have invested some of it in housing. To give an idea of the way the wind is blowing I shall refer to Mount Barker, one of the most prosperous towns in my electorate. The Housing Trust was encouraged by me to build homes there for people working in the various local industries. It built homes for 34 families for renting and 10 others near the high school for sale. They were sold and the trust, thinking it had a nice nest egg there, built another 10, but now its representative is in Adelaide hawking them. The trust has threatened that if the Mount Barker people will not buy them, it will sell them to people from the city. If that lack of demand could occur at Mount Barker a similar position could also arise in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Stephens—Hundreds of people in the metropolitan area are still wanting houses.

Mr. SHANNON—I know that pressure was brought to bear on members to have extra homes built for urgent cases. I have referred to what happened from 1929 to 1934 when the axe fell and overnight things closed down, and I am suggesting that when things do get tough again we shall have a sudden surplus of homes. I intend to try to ameliorate the lot of those house owners who find it difficult to get possession of their properties for their own occupation. I am not referring to the type of men mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition who used this feature of the law to get the eviction of one tenant so that they could put another one in. I want to make it possible for a person to be able to occupy his own house on more reasonable conditions. At the moment he must wait 12 months after having purchased it before he can claim possession, or he must have been the owner for five years before he can give notice to his tenant that he intends to ask the court to give him possession. All kinds of hardship clauses come into it, but I think we have reached the time when we can discard them entirely. We have cluttered up this legislation with so many "ifs" and "ands" that it is almost impossible for other than a legally trained mind to say what a person's rights are. We have made this a very involved law. It is one which, with justice to all parties, could be considerably simplified. I would have thought when we relaxed controls on building materials that a person who wanted to build a home could do so, and that the Treasurer would have been prepared to allow a little more latitude, but I find the reverse is the case. In fact, the Bill tightens up the existing law and there is no amelioration for the landlord—not one mite does he get out of it. The tenant is even further protected. It is time we looked on the other side of the ledger to see if we can give some relief to the owner. I can see no great hardship if a person, on buying a home for his own occupation, is allowed to issue an order on the tenant that in six months' time he can be expected to leave as it is wanted by the owner. That would be a reasonable time to allow a tenant either to secure another house for renting, or to buy one. It should not be difficult for a man on present-day wages to find the low deposit of 10 per cent being accepted by various lending institutions. It seems to be a small thing to grant to landlords because for a long time we have

denied them—some of them returned soldiers—the right to regain possession of their homes. There have been cases where a man, sufficiently well versed in the building trade, has built a home for himself at week-ends and on holidays. Then, when it has been ready for occupation, he has been offered £1,000 more than it cost to build. This does not take into account the cost of his labour. It is a strange thing that when a man works for himself he does not look for double time for what he does on holidays and week-ends. Instead of occupying the house himself he sells it and remains a tenant, probably at a rental out of all proportion to what it should be. Because of the amendment to the Building Materials Act we will probably have a number of people building homes for themselves and then selling them. I think that when this sort of house is built it should be a ground for the landlord of the house the builder is occupying to get possession of his house, so that he can occupy it or rent it to someone else. I give only half-hearted support to the Act being carried on for another 12 months. When the new Parliament is elected next year I hope we will get rid of this and the other stupid legislation we have in the attempt to remedy our landlord and tenant ills.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Goodwood)—I support the extension of the operation of the Act for a further 12 months. Mr. Shannon's concluding remarks indicate that during the election campaign next year the Government will announce that under its policy this legislation will go overboard.

Mr. Shannon—I meant that would be the position if I had my way. I cannot speak for the Government.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—If given a reasonable opportunity then, the honourable member will insist that the Government make that its policy?

Mr. Shannon—I cannot insist in that way. On this side there is no such thing as insisting.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Then it is impossible to follow the honourable member's reasoning. First he complained about the trust building houses for sale, because he expects a recession in the near future.

Mr. Shannon—In view of the questions on the Notice Paper today I think other people in this place have the same thought, but I may be wrong.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—It seems that the honourable member is a little out of step with his leader, because the Premier's statements

about a possible recession are different from the honourable member's. Mr. Shannon complained about the trust building homes for sale because of the possibility of a recession in the near future, and he indicated that in Committee he would move an amendment to the Bill to enable a landlord to get possession of his house, as there is an opportunity for the tenant to buy a house by paying 10 per cent of the cost. I agree that the trust is building houses at high cost and accepting a low deposit on cost and not on valuation. In the St. Mary's district there have been over 100 purchases of trust houses at a smaller deposit than is necessary in the purchase of houses under the Advances for Homes Act. I have found it difficult to get any useful information from the trust on this matter. Mr. Shannon said that it cost £1,200 to build some of the Thousand Homes at Colonel Light Gardens, but the greatest cost of a house under that scheme would have been £735. Many of the purchasers of houses there walked out of them because of the inability through unemployment to pay the rent. Others went to the State Bank and pointed out their difficulty, with the result that following on a recapitalization to £820 they were able to liquidate their liability. If some of those who walked out had been a little more patient and acted like the others they would now be in a much happier position. The present cost of building a trust solid construction house is about £2,850. If we have the recession that Mr. Shannon fears will there be any recapitalization, and who will take the responsibility for it? In the event of another depression the story would be vastly different from that of the early 1930's, for it would be necessary to recapitalize a home costing £2,850. Where are we heading with regard to the cost of homes today? Earlier this afternoon the honourable member for Stuart said that £2 7s. 6d. a week rent was being charged on timber-frame homes being erected at Port Augusta, and a similar story may yet be told with regard to the metropolitan area. There is unlikely to be a strong demand for a prefabricated home costing as much as £2,600, for not only the initial cost but the cost of maintenance is too high. The time is coming when the Housing Trust will find that it has houses on its hands in the metropolitan area. Under the Advances for Homes Act the purchaser of such a home must find at least £850, and an ex-serviceman, with the aid of finance from the War Service Homes Division, at least £600 deposit. In assisting

purchasers of these timber-frame homes costing £2,600, is the Housing Trust to be permitted to advance more than 90 per cent of the valuation, or more than 90 per cent of the cost of such homes? The Housing Trust sent Mr. Dallwitz, its principal architect, overseas to investigate prefabricated homes, and he is the chief sponsor of Martin Housing Ltd., which is erecting these homes on the North-East Road.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—The honourable member must link up his remarks with the Landlord and Tenant legislation.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—If people purchasing these homes erected by Martin Housing Ltd. desire to let them, will the Housing Trust fix the rental on the capital cost plus the high maintenance cost necessary to keep them in order? Can the Housing Trust afford to send a man overseas and on his report recommend to the Government the purchase of so many of these homes, only to find that a mistake has been made and that an effort must be made to dispose of 500 of them to New Zealand? Should a recession occur we would be in a serious position, but the Housing Trust would not be relieved of its obligations nor would this Government be relieved of its responsibility for the trust's activities. Members of the Opposition have always contended that the Housing Trust should have kept to the purpose for which it was created. The State Bank has built and is building better homes at a lower cost than the South Australian Housing Trust.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—The honourable member should link up his argument with the Landlord and Tenant legislation, for I feel he is speaking more on the Housing Trust legislation than on the Bill before the House. I do not mind his referring to the Housing Trust, but his remarks should apply to this Bill.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—The State Bank home, which is purchased at a lower cost than the Housing Trust home, contains a better equity than such a home, and in determining its rent the trust must consider the equity in the building and the fittings of the home. The Bill provides for the continuation of the legislation for a further 12 months, and I will continue to support this legislation until sufficient homes exist to house all South Australians. Since the Act was last amended it has been reported that trafficking in caravans has taken place. I sympathize with people who, through force of circumstances, have been issued with eviction orders and have had to resort to living in caravans. Sometimes they are told that the

caravans are only for holiday purposes and that if they exceed their period of tenancy they cannot be any longer accommodated. They are then evicted from a home for which they paid a high rent. Many caravans let today would not be in existence if we had sufficient homes to house our people. The member for Onkaparinga suggested that there might be another depression and referred to the high cost of housing today, but the Government has not acted upon recommendations to erect further milling plants in the South-East. Until the Government acts upon these recommendations we cannot expect any reduction in the price of timber and the cost of erecting houses. I support the second reading.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE secured the adjournment of the debate.

FRUIT FLY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 21. Page 512.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This is another of the hardy annuals which are becoming a peculiar feature of the legislation of this Parliament. It seems that the Government is afraid to commit itself too far ahead or perhaps, owing to the influence of another section of the legislature that I saw referred to as a "House of Review" only last week, it is not permitted to commit itself too far in advance. In any event, we have to re-enact certain sections of the legislation dealing with the eradication of fruit fly and compensation to property owners. I understand there was no outbreak of fruit fly infestation for nearly two years. I think the Minister said that from the late summer of 1950 until last January we had no infestation. There are one or two points associated with the outbreak in Hutt Street that the House might consider. We fondly hoped that we had heard the last of fruit fly in South Australia, but now we have to pass further legislation in regard to it. I should like to know how long the eggs or larvae have to remain dormant before becoming innocuous. One would think that after two years fruit flies would not bother us again. How was it introduced into the Hutt Street area? Great commendation has

been given to the department for the steps taken in destroying the fruit fly. I am prepared to give it credit for the work done in destroying the pest once it has been discovered, but why did it appear in this region after two years' immunity? Perhaps the department can supply the answer. So far, it has cost over £500,000 to control the pest and, under this Bill, we shall have to provide another £100,000. Most of the money has been expended in wages, compensation to householders being small in comparison. Hutt Street is in the east of the city of Adelaide and the region affected is bounded by the east and south parklands, but fruit was destroyed in gardens in the eastern and southern suburbs. One should have thought that the expanse of parklands would be a sufficient buffer against the fly spreading to those suburbs. Is it possible for the fly to travel long distances, or could there be a host plant in the parklands, thereby warranting the steps taken in destroying fruit in eastern and southern suburbs?

The Hon. Sir George Jenkins—The entomologists say that areas a mile from an infested garden can be regarded as reasonably safe.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Then that clears up that point. A pleasing feature is the remarkable co-operation which the department receives from the public. I think the Minister said there were 531 notifications of suspected infestation which, on checking, were fortunately proved to be negative. I hope this is the last time we shall be called upon to pass this type of legislation. I accept it as being necessary. Because there is so much at stake, we must take all practical steps to eradicate this pest from South Australia, and for that reason I support the second reading.

Mr. WHITTLE secured the adjournment of the debate.

THE S.A. GAS COMPANY'S ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. PATTINSON brought up the report of the Select Committee.

Ordered to be printed.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.34 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, September 17, at 2 p.m.