

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, September 25, 1952.

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

QUESTIONS.**MIGRANTS IN RAILWAYS DEPARTMENT.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—It has been reported to me that dissatisfaction exists in the Railways Department owing to the fact that Australians, particularly returned servicemen, have been asked to accept positions subordinate to recently arrived migrants, from whom they naturally resent taking instructions. Some suggestion has been made that a ruling was given that no Australian should be asked to take instructions from recently arrived migrants. Does the Minister of Railways know of any such ruling? If not, will he have inquiries made to see whether such a ruling has been given?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will make inquiries, but I think it is rather apparent that a ruling of that nature could not have been given, for we have encouraged the migration of skilled artisans and technicians to get the benefit of their advice when it was not available through the recruitment of Australians; therefore it would be rather anomalous if, after we had gone to great expense to secure the first class services of a migrant, he were to be asked to take a subordinate position to a man not as skilled as he. Recently, in order to maintain the essential services of the State, especially the railways, the Government sent an officer abroad to get skilled technicians, and it could reasonably happen—indeed, it certainly must happen—that some Australians now find themselves in a subordinate position because they have not attained the same degree of skill as the migrant working with them. Generally the policy of the Government is one of preference for returned soldiers and that policy will be adhered to, but obviously in the ordinary course of events occasions must arise where a migrant possessing skill or knowledge will be placed above an Australian who may be trying to attain it. The Australian will really be getting the advantage of the knowledge of the man he is serving under. For those reasons I think it extremely unlikely that any Australian has been told that he would not be called upon to serve in a position subordinate to a migrant.

MILK SERVICES.

Mr. HUTCHENS—It has come to my notice, and I have received a number of complaints from my constituents, that owing to an arrangement between milk vendors and their association they are not permitted to serve customers other than those agreed upon by the association and that if they do they are subject to the possibility of having their milk quota cancelled. It has also been reported to me that a public servant, who was obliged to work one evening and did not arrive home, owing to transport trouble, until early the next morning, found the milkman coming out of his gate. He asked him to wait a little while so he could bring out the can which had not been put out before because there was money in it. The milkman replied, "If there is no ——— can there will be no ——— milk." Will the Minister of Agriculture take action in an endeavour to see that the association arrangement will not prevent consumers from securing the best possible service?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—There has been considerable dissatisfaction amongst householders on this subject for some time, and also amongst the vendors of milk. I have had several discussions with the Milk Board, which says it has no jurisdiction in the matter, but there has been some difference of opinion about this. The question has been thoroughly investigated and it is hoped that we shall be able to frame a regulation within the law that will have a bearing on the matters complained of.

MIGRANT BUILDING INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Will the Minister of Lands, in the absence of the Premier, ascertain from the Housing Trust whether the men being brought out from England to erect houses by Martin Housing Ltd., were, prior to their leaving, guaranteed housing accommodation on arrival and that they might earn up to £25 a week while engaged under a two years' contract on the erection of imported, timber-frame houses now being built in the Gilles Plains area?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I shall be pleased to get that information for the honourable member as soon as possible.

WINKIE TOWNSHIP.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Yesterday the Minister of Irrigation promised to bring down a report dealing with the subdivision and acquisition of land in the Winkie township. Is that report available?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yes. The cost of providing a water supply has been estimated at £7,020. The Surveyor-General was asked to carry out the necessary survey so that purchase of the land and subdivision could be proceeded with and allotments in the proposed town be available for occupation with as little delay as possible after a water supply has been installed. However, as advised by Mr. Richards, no funds will be available for the installation of this service this financial year unless special provision is made. The survey was completed recently and steps will now be taken to purchase the land and proceed with the subdivision.

OLD LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BUILDING.

Mr. McALEES—Adelaide is noted as one of the beauty spots in Australia, but between two of the finest buildings in the city—the Railway Station and Parliament House—is the old Legislative Council building. Can the Minister of Works employ some new Australians by providing them with whitewash brushes to have the building brushed up and made a little more attractive?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Several years ago it was resolved that the old Legislative Council building should be removed. The front part is, perhaps, the finest example of its type of architecture in South Australia, but the back portion is of nondescript brick construction. It was resolved, as part of a beautification scheme, to remove it and make the spot an entrance to the railway station, with a terraced garden, together with a monument of King George V. as a memorial. The war intervened and it was not feasible to demolish the building. It is now the Government's policy to maintain it in reasonable repair for utilitarian purposes and that policy will continue until we can either restore it to its original state or demolish it and make room for something better. I point out that 50 years elapsed before the completion of this building after the founders of that House resolved it would be of no further use. However, we did not have the same courage as they, and did not complete the building with the same form of beautification. The building is serving a most useful purpose and I do not know whether a whitewash brush will do it much good.

UNSEEMLY BEHAVIOUR AT SEACLIFF.

Mr. PATTINSON—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked yesterday regarding a public nuisance committed at

Seacliff each week by dance patrons who journey there from Adelaide in buses provided by the promoter of the dances?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The position is that, as the honourable member surmised yesterday, there is no law to prohibit what is taking place. The buses used were discarded by the Tramways Trust, not because of their unsafe condition, but because they were not regarded as economically useful for tramway purposes. As the dance promoter does not profess to ply for hire, he does not come within the scope of the activities of the Transport Control Board or the trust. The trust cannot control anyone other than those who ply for hire within the metropolitan area. As regards the conduct of people attending the dances, the Inspector of Places of Public Entertainment has supplied to me, through the Chief Secretary, a report in which he says he saw no conduct whatever which could be considered as improper. It would appear that the conduct of patrons outside the dance premises is for the police to investigate. I therefore obtained a report from the Crown Solicitor, who says:—

There is ample power under the Police Act to deal with the type of conduct referred to. It seems to me that the proper method of dealing with the situation described in the question is for the police to patrol the area and deal with any person who offends against public decency or good order.

That would appear to be the best means of dealing with the matter. I have also received from the general manager, Tramways Trust, a letter in which he says that inquiries were made some time ago as to whether the proprietor of the bus in question was contravening the Tramways Act. It was found that he was carrying passengers free and that the patrons who used the bus paid no more for admission to the dance hall than those who did not. The trust solicitors advised that, in the circumstances, there was no case against the bus owner. The letter further added:—

This is the type of case which appears to slip between existing legislation. I would state that this, too, applies in other cases, as for instance, vehicles used for carrying foodstuffs during the week and for taking people to sports grounds during the week end. Observations show that some of these vehicles are not safe for use in public transport, and are not subject to mechanical examination.

In the interests of public safety and public health, as well as to prevent unreasonable competition with public transport, there appears to be a case for investigation into the question of controlling all vehicles which carry passengers.

That extends beyond the scope envisaged by the complaint. I am sure that now the matter has been ventilated the Chief Secretary will take all steps necessary and that the cause for complaint will disappear. As to whether it is necessary to amend the law in relation to the case referred to by the Tramways Trust which appears to slip between existing legislation, that is a matter of policy, and I will have it referred to the Cabinet to see whether any action should be taken. In the meantime, the matter having been ventilated, we can look for an improvement in the position.

CORNSACK PRICES.

Mr. PEARSON—In view of the uncertainty in the secondhand bag market and the fact that farmers do not know what the new seasons' cornsacks will cost, will the Minister of Agriculture make representations to the Wheat Board with a view to an early announcement of the new season's prices?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—Yes.

POOCHERA SCHOOL RESIDENCE.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Over two years ago a new school residence was approved for Poochera and several attempts have been made to obtain a contractor to erect it, but without avail. I understand that this year the Government imported about 1,000 prefabricated houses which it had some difficulty in placing. In view of the situation regarding this school residence could some of those prefabricated houses be diverted to Poochera and other places where difficulty is being experienced in providing new buildings?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will take up the matter with the Minister of Education.

PORT PIRIE TRAIN SERVICE.

Mr. DAVIS—Replying to my question on Tuesday the Minister of Railways intimated that an extra train would be provided to Port Pirie on Saturday nights. Can he say whether the Commissioner considered the restoration of the normal week-day evening service?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will take up the matter with the Railways Commissioner.

URANIUM MINING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

PORT AUGUSTA SUB-BRANCH R.S.S. & A.I.L.A. (PURCHASE OF LAND) BILL.

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The object of the Bill is to authorize the State to purchase certain land at Port Augusta from the Commonwealth and to re-sell part of it to the Returned Sailors', Soldiers', and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia (Port Augusta Sub-Branch) Incorporated. The land in question lies behind the premises of the sub-branch in Tassie Street, and is wanted by the sub-branch for an extension to its club-rooms and for a memorial garden. In 1948 the Department of Lands, having received a request from the sub-branch to purchase the land, put part up for sale by auction, and it was sold to the sub-branch. The remainder, a small strip, was retained to provide access to neighbouring land. Early in 1950, however, it was discovered that the land had belonged not to the State as had appeared from the Lands Office plan but to the Commonwealth. An error had been made in marking the plan when certain State properties were transferred to the Commonwealth in 1908.

As the Commonwealth is unwilling, for technical reasons, to sell direct to the sub-branch the land which the State had purported to sell to it, the Government has undertaken to purchase the block from the Commonwealth, and to re-sell it to the sub-branch. At the same time the Government wishes to purchase from the Commonwealth the strip of land referred to earlier, as the Commonwealth is willing to sell, and as by doing so, the original scheme would be effected. The Government has been advised that there is no power to purchase and re-sell in this way, and that authority must be given by legislation. Clause 2 accordingly gives the Minister of Lands power to purchase the land from the Commonwealth and clause 3 empowers him to sell to the sub-branch the allotment which it requires. Clause 4 makes the necessary financial provision. In another House the Bill was inquired into by a Select Committee and recommended.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—This Bill was introduced in the Legislative Council and was the subject of inquiry by a Select Committee which favoured its provisions. The Minister has set out the history of events leading to its introduction and as member for the district and mayor of the town I agree with that information. In 1908 a mistake was made in

the Lands Office in marking the plan of the locality. Two areas were involved, on one of which was the Customs House and on the other the Customs residence. By agreement the Commonwealth Government acquired the Customs House and adjacent land but the South Australian Government retained the old property which was used as a residence by the Customs officer. Apparently in the Lands Office the area marked as the Customs House was mistaken for the Customs residence and shown as belonging to the State Government. From that time until about 1950 the land was thought to belong to the Port Augusta corporation and was administered by it. Following on representations by the local sub-branch of the R.S.S. and A.I.L.A. the council asked the Lands Department to offer the land for sale by auction. It was agreed amongst the people of Port Augusta that there would be no opposition to the bidding by the sub-branch, which purchased the land for £100 and went ahead with plans to erect a building that was to be regarded as the district war memorial. It was to take the form of clubrooms for the local returned soldiers. It was not until the sub-branch was ready to commence building operations, the first stages of which are now completed, that the returned soldiers were told that the land did not belong to them and that their title was invalid. It was said also that the State had no right to sell the land in the first place. When the mistake was first discovered I had a conference with representatives of the Lands Department and I was told that the Government and the department recognized that the mistake was theirs and that the local sub-branch would not be penalized in any way. They asked the Commonwealth Government for its price for the land and were told £800. I have looked through my correspondence and have found that I was given an undertaking that the State would make up the difference between the amount paid by the sub-branch in the first place and the final price paid to the Commonwealth. In the meantime there have been other negotiations and I believe the Commonwealth reduced its price to about £350: I am not sure of the exact amount. I do not object to the passage of the Bill, but I ask the Minister of Lands to have the position investigated with a view to the honouring of the undertaking given, I think by the Minister or the Director of Lands, that the sub-branch would not be penalized in any way. In addition to this land, the corporation of Port Augusta is making available

to the returned soldiers a narrow strip of Commercial Road. The local sub-branch block is on the corner of the road, from which point the road widens out. Without the use of that strip of roadway the sub-branch would have no access to Commercial Road. That matter is still in the hands of the corporation, a survey has been made, a transfer is awaiting signature, and when the necessary documents have been completed, the land will be handed over to the sub-branch by the corporation free of charge. The Government has agreed to make available a strip on the other side of the block so that a right-of-way may be maintained. It appears that the Government has no means of correcting the original mistake except by legislation, and this Bill is the result of negotiations. I do not see anything in it to which I can object nor any reason why it should be delayed, but I ask the Minister of Lands to review the price to be paid by the sub-branch. I make this request not because of representations by the sub-branch, but because I think it is a fair request as an undertaking was given to me some time ago that the price paid should be that agreed upon at the auction when it was believed that the land belonged to this Government. I support the Bill.

Mr. PEARSON (Flinders)—I am sure no member desires to delay the passage of the Bill. Members are indebted to the member for Stuart for his resume of the history leading up to its introduction. The honourable member spoke of a disparity between the price which the sub-branch originally agreed to pay for the land at an auction and that at which it has now been passed on to them under arrangement with the Lands Department, and suggested that that amount, about £150, should be made good by the Government. It is quite definite from statements made in another place and also from information I have received that the sub-branch does not expect that amount to be made up, as it is perfectly satisfied with the position as it will be on the passing of this legislation. The member for Stuart admitted that the sub-branch had made no request to him that a refund should be made or that this aspect should be taken any further; therefore I feel it my duty to inform members that the sub-branch is happy with the present arrangement. I support the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Powers of Minister to sell."

Mr. RICHES—Will the Minister look into the matter of refunding to the sub-branch the amount in excess of the price originally tendered, for which the State agreed to sell this land to the sub-branch?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The original land deal between the State and the Commonwealth took place in 1908, and the blame for any mistake made then cannot be placed on any officer in the department today. I have no recollection of any promise to refund any difference in price, although it may have been said that we would do our best with regard to the original price. The honourable member for Stuart, who knows that area, will probably agree that the original price was very low, and therefore the sub-branch was particularly happy with its purchase; it has not approached me on the matter he has raised. However, I will look at the correspondence, and if any promise was made I will see what can be done to have it put into effect.

Clause passed.

New clause 4—"Financial provision."

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I move that the following new clause suggested by the Legislative Council be inserted:—

4. (1) This Act, without further appropriation, shall be sufficient authority for the payment of the purchase price of the said pieces of land out of general revenue of the State.

(2) Money received from the sale of the said piece of land shall be paid into the general revenue of the State.

This is a money clause which could not originate in another place, but is deemed by that Chamber to be essential to the Bill.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I do not object to the new clause, but its introduction shows a most slipshod method of handling Government business in this Parliament. The Bill was introduced in another place and obviously it had to contain financial provisions. Then it was discovered that, because of the Constitution, the financial provisions could not be inserted there, so we get this request to pass a new clause, inserted in erased type. In future House of Assembly Ministers should have more regard to the Constitutional rights of this Chamber. Unfortunately, we have not as many as we should have, but they should have some regard to the few rights we possess and not allow a Bill with financial implications to be introduced in another place. I realize that the local branch of the R.S.L. desire the Bill to pass and I will not object to the new clause

being inserted, but I issue this warning on behalf of the Opposition that this kind of procedure will not be tolerated in the future.

Mr. RICHES—I support the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition and ask the Minister of Lands why the Bill was introduced in another place. It is a hybrid Bill and had to be referred to a Select Committee there, whereas it should have been appointed by this Chamber. Surely the position must have been known to the Government. I have never made a habit of being unduly suspicious about legislation, but we are entitled to draw conclusions in the absence of any explanation why this extraordinary procedure was adopted.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I regret that the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Stuart should see fit to criticize the Government and to single out the Ministers of this Chamber. I assure members opposite that an honest mistake led to the Bill being introduced in another place.

New clause inserted.

Title passed. Bill reported with an amendment.

HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Section 128 of the Health Act provides that a medical practitioner who attends or who is consulted by a person suffering from any form of tuberculosis is to report the case to the Central Board of Health. Section 129 provides that the Central Board is to pay a fee of 2s. to any medical practitioner who makes a report under section 128. Heretofore all that has been required from the medical practitioner has been a mere notification setting out the name and address of the patient and the fact that he is suffering from tuberculosis in one of its forms. The National Tuberculosis Advisory Council has recommended that additional basic information should be included in the notification form. The additional information sought relates to matters such as X-ray reports, bacteriological reports and an expression of medical opinion as to the extent of the disease. This additional information is of value in determining priorities for hospital admission, a guide in assessing what public health measures should be taken, and a most convenient means of supplying initial medical information for the Central Tuberculosis Case

Registry. It is also of great assistance in determining eligibility for tubercular allowances.

As beforementioned, this new notification form constitutes an expression of medical opinion and amounts to a medical assessment and report. It goes much further than the mere notification contemplated by section 128 with the result that the existing fee of 2s. is inadequate for what is required to be done by the medical practitioner giving the notification. The Bill accordingly makes the following amendments to the Health Act. Section 128 is amended by clause 2 to provide that the medical practitioner required to notify a case of tuberculosis is to give the notice in a form prescribed by regulation. It is intended that, if the Bill is passed, a regulation will be made prescribing the new form of notification. In addition, the section is amended to provide that, in the report, the medical practitioner is to supply to the Central Board such of the particulars specified in the form as are known to him. He will thus be under a duty to supply the requisite information. Clause 3 amends section 129 to provide that where a medical practitioner supplies the information required by section 128 he is to be paid by the Central Board a fee of 10s. 6d. A fee, however, is only to be paid where the report is given in the course of private practice and thus a fee will not be paid where a report is made by a medical officer of an institution.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

HOSPITALS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS (Minister of Agriculture)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time. The Hospitals Act Amendment Act, 1951, provided means whereby hospitals could recover from insurers and others under legal liability the costs incurred by the hospitals in the treatment of patients injured in road accidents. For the purpose of the Act, hospitals are divided into two categories. Hospitals in the first category are described in the Act as "Government hospitals" and in this class are included all public hospitals and hospitals to which Part IV. of the Hospitals Act applies, that is, country hospitals of the type usually described as subsidized hospitals. In the second category are included all other hospitals and these hospitals are described in the Act as "private hospitals." Under the scheme of the

Act it is provided that all payments made by insurers and others in respect of the treatment of these patients in Government hospitals are to be made to the Director-General of Medical Services. Payments in respect of hospital treatment at private hospitals are to be made to the hospitals concerned.

The Director-General has suggested that it is undesirable that he should be concerned with the collection of these hospital expenses incurred by subsidized hospitals and has suggested that this class of hospital should, for the purpose of the Act, be regarded as a private hospital and should consequently manage its own affairs in the same way as private hospitals. Accordingly, clause 2 deletes paragraph (c) from the definition of "Government hospital" in section 49 of the Act. This will remove these subsidized hospitals from the definition of "Government hospital" and they will, for the purpose of the Act, then be "private hospitals" and will manage this phase of their business in the same way as do ordinary private hospitals. The clause also makes a minor drafting amendment to section 49 by substituting the word "insurance" for "assurance".

Mr. O'HALLORAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

NORTHERN RAILWAYS COMPENSATION BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 17. Page 575.)

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—I think the House will agree to the passage of the Bill because it deals with a principle which, I believe, is acceptable to all of us. In general terms it expresses the principle contained in the Government's decision to regard the source of an individual's income or the value of his property as creating a liability on its part to compensate him if that income or value is impaired. In so far as it seeks to do that I feel that it will receive the support of the House. I am not happy about one or two aspects of the Bill and shall make some comments on it. In the first place, it appears to have been prematurely introduced. Further consideration should have been given by the Government to the problems associated with railway activity in the north which must arise as the result of the decision to by-pass Quorn in transporting coal from Leigh Creek to Port Augusta and Adelaide. This problem should have been attacked more objectively. Payment of compensation should only be embarked upon

after every effort has been made to bring some other industry or work to Quorn to take place of the industry it is about to lose. The Bill could have followed conversations and negotiations which took place with the Commonwealth Government instead of being introduced in expectation of them.

During the second reading debate the Premier said that he hoped the Federal Government would bear half the cost of compensation payments to people living along the existing route of the North-South railway who could prove that they had suffered loss as the result of the transfer of railway activities. During the Address in Reply debate I referred to the position of railwaymen and said that the Commonwealth Government should come to the assistance of the State and bear the cost of compensation. I think all will agree that, if it is shown that an individual suffers loss as a result of the decision, he should be compensated. The Commonwealth Government, which will benefit chiefly by the construction of the new line, should bear that cost. The Minister of Railways said that the Commonwealth had refused to pay. Following an interjection I stated that the Minister for Transport in the previous Federal Government had promised that the Commonwealth would compensate its railway employees who would suffer financial loss as the result of their being transferred. The Minister of Railways said he could find no trace of any such undertaking and more or less challenged me to prove that statement. I was able to trace it in Federal *Hansard* and supplied it to him.

In his second reading speech the Premier referred to that undertaking, which was given by Mr. Ward. Apparently that is the only undertaking the Federal Government has made as yet. It was stated that the Government had no arrangement whatsoever with the present Commonwealth Government for compensation payments and apparently negotiations have not proceeded beyond that point. The Premier said he had applied to the Commonwealth Government, but so far had not received a reply. I trust that the present Federal Government will honour what I consider was an undertaking given by the previous Government and extend compensation payments not only to its employees but also to people living outside the immediate district of Quorn. Where it can be shown that people in districts along the North-South railway have suffered loss as a result of the transfer of the railway they should be compensated. Negotiations should have been

carried a step further by the Government before the Bill was introduced and members better informed.

A most expensive Royal Commission inquired into the route of the railway. The terms of reference were extremely wide. When the enabling legislation was introduced in this Chamber the Minister of Railways expressed the opinion that they were wide enough to enable the commission to inquire into all phases of railway activity. Certainly they were wide enough to enable it to inquire into the question of compensation, if the decision adversely affected a community like that at Quorn. From newspaper reports of the commission's activities we learned that it expects that 254 houses in Quorn will become vacant as a result of the decision to construct a line on the western side of the range. Frankly, I do not think that situation would arise; but if the Commonwealth elected to provide Quorn with a decent rail service, operating with Budd cars, it would enable residents to travel to Stirling North in little more than half an hour. In that event, quite a number of the people would decide to retain their homes at Quorn and travel to and from their places of employment. Thousands of people travel longer distances than that to their employment in Adelaide and take a longer time in doing so.

I do not think Quorn is going to die or suffer the reverse that some have repeatedly told us it will. However, there will be many who will suffer loss. I believe the position could be safeguarded to a greater degree still if the Government would take an objective approach to the problem rather than content itself by paying compensation to those who can prove they will suffer. I still contend that a case can be made out for the coal sent from Leigh Creek to Adelaide to continue to come down on the existing route. It is being carried economically and efficiently, and there is no reason why it should not come down on the present route rather than this portion of a valuable railway should be scrapped.

Mr. O'Halloran—If I know anything about it, we might get it much cheaper by the old route.

Mr. RICHES—Here again, we are at a disadvantage, because the Royal Commission's report is not available. When I asked the Premier a question on Tuesday I was told that the report would possibly not be available for another four or five months, therefore, we do not know whether the commission had anything to say on the question of compensation. Its terms of reference were wide enough to enable

it to fully examine that question and if it did not make any recommendation it should have. If it did, then the House should know what it is before being asked to pass the legislation.

Mr. O'Halloran—The commission should have been pressed by the State to consider the question.

Mr. RICHES—I do not know whether it was or not. On Tuesday I asked the Premier if the commission had made any recommendation regarding the payment of compensation to residents who will be affected and, if so, what was the recommendation and the illuminating reply I received was "Not directly." Can any honourable member tell me from that whether the commission recommended compensation or not? If it did, we should know whether it was a direct or indirect recommendation. I am inclined to the opinion that the Bill, desirable as it is, is premature, and that a proper study should have been made of the commission's findings and the House should have been told what they were. There should have been a proper study of the position in the north to see whether some industry could be developed at Quorn to save the town and rehabilitate it after the blow it has suffered in prestige and confidence. There should also have been a full investigation into the possibility of retaining the existing route for coal traffic from Leigh Creek to Adelaide. I concede that the Royal Commission did establish that, as regards the increased coal production required for the new regional power station at Port Augusta, the construction of the proposed line is justified. I have read nothing in the press to convince me that the existing line should be scrapped, and I have not yet heard an argument to support the closing of the tippler plant at Terowie, or whether it will be more economical for the State to discard the rolling stock and the railway assets there merely for the purpose of taking coal from Telford to Adelaide on the proposed route.

Unless positive steps are taken the district concerned will suffer many losses, which would not be apparent on a balance-sheet and which it would be most difficult to include on a claim form submitted to the authorities deciding the amount of compensation. I have in mind the loss of certain amenities. At the moment Quorn enjoys the facility of a high school. If there is any substantial withdrawal of population it is almost inevitable that it will be closed, as for several years there has been difficulty in maintaining sufficient numbers to keep it open.

That would impose a disadvantage to those who remain, but they would have no claim for compensation on that score. It is a disadvantage which cannot be over-estimated. In many country centres, such as Leigh Creek and Woomera, the stage is reached where many children desire to undertake secondary education, and the parents are at their wits' end to know what to do. These children are still of the compulsory school going age, but have no facilities for post-primary education. They have to send them away from home at a tender age in order that their education may be completed. Not only are parents separated from their children at the very age when parental influence is most needed, but added expense is incurred and, in some cases, there is the impossibility of giving the children the advantages to which they are entitled. I speak with feeling on this because it has been my own personal experience; I am the son of a settler who was unable to give his family the advantages of secondary education and our tuition finished at the primary school. I have seen children in my district sit for the qualifying certificate for three years in succession, and no-one can over-estimate the disadvantages and cost to people living in the smaller country centres who are faced with these difficulties. I believe that this is one of the greatest factors in bringing men and women accustomed to living in the country into the city. Over the last 10 years I have made it my business to inquire into the reason for every transfer of a family from my district to Adelaide, and in nearly every instance it has been in order to give their children education or an opportunity for employment. That is the greatest compelling factor towards centralization that I know of, and in this community of Quorn the people who remain will suffer that loss if there is any substantial movement of population away from that centre. There are other amenities, such as the hospital built in recent years, which has been carried on by the most generous giving of the local people. If there is a substantial diminution of population that burden must fall on fewer shoulders and conceivably it could become an embarrassment. There are other losses which cannot be set out in the form of claim for compensation, and it is because of what we have seen happen in other centres in the North—it is littered with the ruins of once thriving communities—that we do not want to see it happen again. I believe that there is yet time to take steps to save for Quorn and the other districts concerned, some of the amenities

which have been provided, and that is why I would like to see someone charged with the responsibility of making a full investigation.

Mr. Brookman—What steps are you proposing?

Mr. RICHES—Someone should be charged with the responsibility of examining the possibilities of retaining the coal traffic to Adelaide. It does not seem to be anybody's business; no layman could do it and someone has to be vested with the necessary authority. I think it possible to establish some industry suitable to the district. Quite a number have been suggested, but no one knows whether or not it is feasible until an investigation is made. Someone should be authorized to seek out a new industry to go to Quorn. Yesterday the Premier said that this was the responsibility of every member, but I respectfully submit that it is beyond the capacity of any layman or any back-bencher. Generally, when an industry is about to be established in South Australia the Treasurer or the appropriate Government department is first approached and it is not known to the ordinary member until a decision is reached and the location established. It is understood that industries are coming to South Australia associated with the long range weapons project. We are unable to say whether some of those industries could not be just as satisfactorily established at Quorn, which is 200 miles nearer the range, as at Adelaide, and apparently it is no one's business to find out. The Armstrong-Siddeley people are establishing new industries here next year. Can any member say whether it would be possible for some portion of that work to be transformed to Quorn? If the town needs a better water supply and electricity before it can be done someone should be in a position to say so. The Premier again put the cart before the horse when he said "First you must take electricity and water to the country and then take industry there." I put it to him that you cannot take electricity or water to the country unless there is some reason for taking it there.

Mr. O'Halloran—He is going to cater for the kangaroos with the Morgan-Radium Hill pipeline.

Mr. RICHES—Hoping the water will be used at Radium Hill, but he would not take it there in the mere hope that somebody would establish an industry there in the future. I make the plea that the Government set up some competent authority to inquire into the possibility of taking industries into the country. At present no one is charged with that responsibility, and whether or not this Bill is pro-

ceeded with in its present form I hope the Government will take some heed of what is being said and have this investigation made. The committee which the Government proposes to set up under this Bill will determine on what basis compensation is to be paid, and the whole of the machinery will be determined by regulations promulgated by this committee. However, we are given no indication of its personnel; whether they are to be accountants, or engineers or legal men, yet the success of the whole legislation will be determined by the wisdom of the choice. I do not know whether it would be possible to appoint a committee of three with sufficiently wide experience to enable it to inquire into the possibility of saving some of the existing coal traffic for Quorn or taking a new industry there. That is not envisaged in the Bill. Surely we could appoint a committee which could undertake these investigations and then also determine the question of compensation.

Mr. O'Halloran—That might eliminate the need for compensation.

Mr. RICHES—Yes, but under the terms of the Bill the committee would have no authority to make any of those inquiries but would be concerned only with compensation claims. The Government could have given more consideration to this legislation before introducing it. I do not generally impute motives but we should remind ourselves that there is an election next March and this Bill might be a gesture, although a small one, to enable those people to obtain some compensation. Clause 12 reads:—

(1) The Governor may appoint a legal practitioner to assist the committee in conducting inquiries and making recommendations under this Act.

(2) The person so appointed may call and examine witnesses, and may examine and cross-examine any claimant or other person giving evidence before the committee, and may address the committee.

We have had the experience of the Royal Commission which has just concluded its investigations into the route of the railway. People who came in good faith to assist the commission were subjected to a cross-examination as though they were criminals in the dock. We do not want a repetition of that and I can see no necessity for subclause (2). If due regard is given to the personnel of the committee there will be no need for the appointment of a legal practitioner. If the Government will not concede that point and insists upon a legal practitioner I will object to subclause (2) which gives him the right to cross-examine claimants for compensation. The

claims must be fairly straightforward and will be lodged only by those who have suffered direct loss through the change in railway activities. If the Bill reaches Committee I propose to move for the deletion of subclause (2). I think all members will agree with the principle that the Bill seeks to establish in granting compensation to those who will suffer loss as a result of the Government's decision. I hope the Government, in appointing the committee, will pay due regard to my observations, and with the reservations indicated I support the second reading.

Mr. O'HALLORAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

BARLEY MARKETING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS (Minister of Agriculture) 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 Barley Marketing Act, 1947.

Motion carried.

Resolution agreed to in Committee and adopted by the House.

METROPOLITAN AND EXPORT ABATTOIRS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS (Minister of Agriculture)—I move:—

That this Bill be now read a second time. Its purpose is to make some administrative amendments to the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs Act. Section 67 of the Act provides that the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs Board may pay its funds into a banking account which is to be operated on by cheques signed by the chairman or two other members of the board and countersigned by the secretary. For an organization carrying on business to the extent the board does this method of signing cheques is cumbersome and inconvenient and the board has suggested that the procedure proposed by clause 2 should be followed. Clause 2 provides that cheques of the board are to be signed by the chairman, any member of the board or any officer of the board who is authorized by the board to sign cheques,

and that the cheques are to be countersigned by an officer of the board who is authorized by the board to countersign cheques. The clause gives to the board power to authorize officers to sign or countersign cheques, as the case may be, and to withdraw any such authority.

Clauses 3 and 4 have been suggested by the Royal Zoological Society of South Australia and have been approved by the Abattoirs Board. Section 85 of the Act, among other things, prohibits the slaughter of stock within the metropolitan abattoirs area except at the Metropolitan Abattoirs and the feeding to animals of stock not slaughtered at the abattoirs. A proviso to the section exempts stock killed at the Zoological Gardens for consumption by animals there. However, this proviso does not cover the case of animals which are slaughtered elsewhere than at the abattoirs and the society has asked that this limitation be removed. Clause 3 accordingly redrafts the proviso to section 85. The effect of the clause is that the exemption given to the society with respect to the use of slaughtered stock for the feeding of animals at the Zoological Gardens will apply to stock wherever slaughtered.

Section 86 of the Act provides that where any stock dies or is killed in the metropolitan abattoirs area the owner is either to apply to an inspector for leave to bury the carcass or is to convey the carcass to the abattoirs for disposal. The Zoological Society points out that where an animal such as a horse or cow dies, or is injured so that it must be destroyed, the section now precludes the society from taking the carcass and using it as food for animals in the Zoological Gardens. Clause 4 therefore provides that, in addition to the alternatives now provided in the section, the owner of the stock in question may arrange for the carcass to be conveyed to the Zoological Gardens for consumption by animals there. The existing proviso to the section dealing with the Zoological Gardens is also re-drafted by the clause in conformity with the amendment proposed by clause 3.

Mr. O'HALLORAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.40 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, September 30, at 2 p.m.