

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, October 22, 1952.

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

QUESTION.**COUNTRY OLD FOLKS HOMES.**

Mr. DAVIS—Yesterday in replying to my question as to whether the Government had considered subsidizing country homes for the aged the Premier stated, "Yes, but reports received by the Government up to the present do not recommend subsidizing such homes." Can the Premier say whether the reports referred to were received before the establishment of the Old Folks Home in Port Pirie, and if not, will he consider assisting that home?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There are a number of dockets—ten or a dozen—dealing with this matter, but I do not know whether the Old Folks Home at Port Pirie was included in any report which has been considered. I will examine the matter and let the honourable member have a reply in the near future on both points raised in his question.

EARLY CLOSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 8. Page 842.)

Mr. JOHN CLARK (Gawler)—Before speaking on this Bill I must admit, to forestall other members, that I am not a particularly good subject for the hairdresser. I could not help noticing that the honourable member for Onkaparinga in introducing the Bill showed no particular enthusiasm for it. Since then I have gone to a great deal of trouble and research and I can now understand that lack of enthusiasm. I oppose the Bill, as I believe that the high standard of the present Act has been acquired over a long period only through a good deal of effort, and no argument has been adduced to prove that it should be amended. In speaking on the motion Mr. O'Halloran mentioned a letter he had received from the secretary of the Australian Hairdressers, Wigmakers and Hairworkers Employees Federation (Mr. G. H. Barney) who stated that numerous country hairdressers had protested against the proposed extension of hours. I can understand that, for I find that country people generally are opposed to the Bill. Much valuable time and money have been spent in

securing reasonable hours for hairdressers, and now this Bill seeks to abolish the results of years of experience and effort, which would be a grave mistake.

Hairdressers are skilled operators. Some customers have a very large head of hair; others, like some of us in this Chamber, not so much, and it requires a good deal of the skill on the part of the tonsorial artist to do a really good job. The hairdresser cannot hand over his clippers to some unskilled person and say, "You carry on while I have a smoke." He is, figuratively, tied to his hairdresser's chair. As members know, particularly those representing country districts, many country hairdressing saloons are one-man saloons where it is difficult even under the existing legislation for the hairdresser to snatch a bite to eat at lunch time, and we should not make it harder for him, as the Bill would do. Mr. Barney also mentioned the health of hairdressers, who must be on their feet all day. The hairdresser's occupation is not easy, and one has only to watch him at work for a time to realize that he walks many miles a day. Further, he is liable to disabilities arising out of the nature of his work. I have spoken to several hairdressers and discovered that a common complaint amongst them is an ulcerated stomach, which they put down to the fact that for most of the day they are forced to breathe air impregnated with perfume and scent. They also complain that very often, because of the strength of some of these liquids, they are liable to dermatitis. Therefore, their occupational hazards are great enough under the existing legislation without extending their hours. They need as much time as possible in the open air. I do not think we want to limit this. A ridiculous and unfair situation would be caused, because under the provisions of the Bill any portion of a shopping area may be exempted. We could have one hairdresser exempted while another would be compelled to close according to the times specified in the Act. This could only lead to all hairdressers being exempted, and I maintain that that is the intention of the Bill. The secretary of the employees' organization mentioned in his letter the "pirate" hairdresser. The name "pirate" has a sinister meaning to most of us. Before the existing legislation was passed the pirate hairdresser had a thriving business. He worked in his own district during the day and at night visited another district, possibly not far away, and set up in opposition to the man who had the legitimate right to the business in that district.

Under the present legislation that is impossible, because he cannot trade after hours. However, this Bill would give him an open go, which these buccaneer or pirate hairdressers would be only too pleased to take advantage of. If one hairdresser kept open others would automatically be compelled to do so. Hairdressers' employees are very much opposed to the Bill and I submit that the employers are equally opposed. Only this morning Mr. E. H. Hergstrom, secretary of the Master Hairdressers' Association, said to me, "My association unanimously opposes the Bill." When speaking on the measure, Mr. Shannon used the words, "enabling the provision of a facility which the country hairdresser is only too willing to give." I suggest that that is not so, because these hairdressers are unanimously opposed to it. Recently, at Gawler and other parts of the district, I inquired about the attitude of the public to this matter, and I have also spoken to other honourable members who visited their districts and made similar inquiries, and only this morning the member for Wallaroo told me that at least two hairdressers in his district were strongly opposed to the Bill; also the member for Port Pirie has received a petition in opposition to it. When I visited a hairdresser's shop at Gawler on Friday morning the proprietor said, "I was just going to ring you up to get you to protest against the Bill." I also visited three or four other hairdressers in the town and all were of the same opinion. I rang three others, two in my district and one in an adjacent district, and again they were all opposed to the measure.

The member for Onkaparinga mentioned that in his district some workmen had to leave home before 6 a.m. and arrived home late at night. The same position prevails in my district; if anything it is worse. A large proportion of the population in Gawler leaves very early for work and arrives home late at night. I have got in contact with more than 30 train travellers in the district and everyone said he saw no reason for an alteration in the law, and added that he managed to get his hair cut without trouble now. Therefore, I think I can safely say that employers, employees, and train travellers, who are supposed to be the people who would benefit from the proposed change, are all opposed to it. The member for Rocky River said:—

If the country hairdresser were allowed to operate on Saturday afternoon primary producers could avail themselves of their weekly visit to town to see the local football matches. That is very nice for them, but is the hairdresser to be denied the right to play or watch

sport? In saying that I am not reflecting on the primary producers. I have lived among them for much of my life and have every respect for them, but I see no reason why one section of the community—the hairdressers—should be singled out for the treatment proposed. There is no need to compel hairdressers to work. They are only too anxious to do so, and find that they get ample business as it is, and are able to attend to it in the time provided under the law. Those who have spoken on the Bill are, in my opinion, out of touch with the country districts they claim to know so much about. The Bill would open the door to other country districts, and the amendment would prove to be the thin end of the wedge. Other shops as well would seek the same provision. I contend that if it were agreed to, there would be the likelihood of the sale of non-exempted goods when the barber's saloon was open. I see no reason why we should deliberately offer temptation to men who are not anxious to be tempted. Hairdressers want to know why it was proposed that a start be made with them, and why they should be singled out, because they have not sought the change. I think I have shown that the present law has been tried and thoroughly tested and has proved satisfactory, and therefore should not be altered; secondly, that the hairdresser employees do not want it; thirdly, that the master hairdressers do not want it; and fourthly, that the general public does not want it. I should like to see the Bill defeated, or better still, forgotten.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—I thank members for the attention they have given to this Bill, but I do not apologize for the brief explanation I gave it in moving the second reading. It is a simple Bill and I did not think I should hammer it by giving a lengthy explanation. Most of the opposition to it has consisted in opposition to the extension of hours for people engaged in industry. Some members oppose it because they say they are opposed to the breaking down of early closing legislation. It wish firstly to reassure members on one point: in order to benefit from the Bill—and some people in my district call it a benefit—an application will have to be made to the Minister of Industry, who must agree that there is need for additional services to the public in a particular area before issuing a proclamation. The Premier has given contingent notice that he proposes to move a new clause relating to the discretion of the Minister of Industry to grant a petition. I have no objection to the

proposed amendment, for I am just as keen as members opposite not to do anything that will injure anybody. No pressure will be brought to bear on any hairdresser to make an application for the purpose of enabling him to open at night. The member for Hindmarsh was keen enough to visit my district and said he discovered certain types of people, but I would not call my constituents by opprobrious terms, nor do I think it necessary or warranted. I have here a petition signed by many people last week. I did not think of suggesting to Mr. Linke, the barber at Aldgate, that a petition would be necessary in such a matter as this. I thought I would be dealing with reasonable people here who would agree to the need for an extension of hours in my area. A constituent of mine, or of the Premier's, told me that last Saturday fortnight he waited 2½ hours to get his hair cut. He had to stand for most of that time because there was insufficient seating accommodation. Those waiting were not prepared to go away and come back later for fear that they would not get their hair cut at all.

Mr. Fletcher—How about starting another barber's shop there?

Mr. SHANNON—Another man started in Stirling but went bankrupt because he could not cut hair after hours. Now the whole of the burden of cutting people's hair in the district extending around Crafers, Piccadilly, Stirling East, Longwood and Scotts Creek and through to Mylor rests on Mr. Linke.

Mr. Davis—Have you the opinions of the barbers concerned?

Mr. SHANNON—Yes, those with whom I am concerned.

Mr. Davis—What about the petition of those protesting against the Bill?

Mr. SHANNON—The vested interests are those of the big barber, the employer who makes his living by employing other people to cut hair, but the big men are not concerned in this Bill, for its operation will be confined to country areas. The district represented by the member for Port Pirie has given us a glaring example of what can be done against the interests of the public. The Premier said that a handful of people there had denied the public the services of a chemist on Sundays, so I should not think this legislation would be availed of by barbers at Port Pirie.

Mr. McAlees—You only want to help certain people.

Mr. SHANNON—I want to make a law to help those who want to work and make a living.

I have no doubt that when the member for Wallaroo was a young man he got a crust for himself as best he could.

Mr. McAlees—We cut our own hair then.

Mr. SHANNON—Yes, but now the honourable member wants to deny another man in another area the opportunity to earn a living. He will not contract any skin disease or have his nasal faculties impaired through any of the peculiar fumes in a hairdresser's shop. The man I speak of is robust, of about the same build as the Leader of the Opposition, and he is not suffering much. The petition I have is signed by about 300 people.

Mr. McAlees—They would sign anything for you!

Mr. SHANNON—They trust me, as the member for Wallaroo does. The petition reads:—

We, the undersigned, ask Parliament to pass an amendment to the Early Closing Act to permit hairdressers in country areas to open after 6 p.m.

I did not present the petition to Parliament because it does not comply with Standing Orders in that it does not contain a prayer. I will not read the names of the persons who signed it, but I will mention the occupations of some of them. On the first page there are a blacksmith, a butcher, a bread carter, a pig farmer, a gardener, an orchardist, and another baker. On the next page there is a gardener, a builder, two salesmen, and a fitter and turner. Many of these people have to come to the city to work and they favour Mr. Linke's being able to cut their hair instead of getting it cut in the city. Some members opposite will want to go to the hills later on this matter and I will give them the petition so that they can check up on the signatories. They will find that they are nearly all good Labor men. They live in places such as Crafers, Piccadilly, Stirling East, Scott's Creek, Longwood, Upper Sturt, Mylor, Bridgewater, and in the intervening area to Aldgate.

Mr. Lawn—Does the barber want the amendment?

Mr. SHANNON—The barber was responsible for getting up the petition. I did not take it around. When it was being signed I was in Queensland on business. I want to have something to say about the freedom of the individual to follow any avocation he wants to follow without too much let or hindrance, even by Parliament. The more individual freedom there is in earning a livelihood the better it will be. Under the Bill no employee can be compelled to work after the usual shopping hours.

If members opposite do not already know it, I point out that there is a ban on overtime in certain industries where the court has said overtime shall be worked.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Where?

Mr. SHANNON—At the Abattoirs.

Mr. Fred Walsh—You are out of date.

Mr. SHANNON—I may be out of date at the moment, but I was up to date last week, and I will probably be up to date next week.

Mr. Lawn—Give us another instance.

Mr. SHANNON—The honourable member wants me to fill up half a page of *Hansard* with instances.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—I point out that the honourable member is giving facts, with which some members disagree, but Mr. Shannon must be heard so that other members will know what he has said. I ask members to cease interjecting.

Mr. SHANNON—I am concerned only with the man who wants the facility provided in the Bill. We are entitled to consider the view of the 300 people who signed the petition for Mr. Linke inside a week. It is a fair indication that there is an overwhelming number of his customers who want the facility. It cannot be denied that if one small barber—and he is the only man in the shop—can get 300 people of various callings in life to sign the petition, it must be considered. I was amazed that Mr. Linke got so many signatures.

Mr. Riches—Are they all his customers?

Mr. SHANNON—That suggests that the honourable member has an inquisitive turn of mind. It is something that some people grow up with from childhood. They cannot believe their own eyes. They find some difficulty, after hearing a convincing argument, in believing that there is not a catch somewhere. It is a very amusing approach to the problem. It suggests that Mr. Linke took the document around and got his friends to sign it.

Mr. Davis—What does Mr. Linke do in his spare time?

Mr. SHANNON—It would seem from that interjection that Mr. Linke went around and got signatures to the petition when he really did not want to work. If that is all the Opposition can offer by way of comment on the Bill, I ask them to come into my district in droves when the election is held and propound their theory on what should be done with the Bill. It will do me the world of good and win me many votes. I have no doubt that would be the best campaigning possible on my behalf and I would even pay out of pocket expenses to get it.

Members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order! This is the second time I have had to call members to order. If members will not obey Standing Orders I shall be compelled to name certain of them and I do not want to do that. The honourable member for Onkaparinga shall be heard in silence.

Mr. SHANNON—The Leader of the Opposition said a few things which justify comment by me. He feared that its provisions might eventually have State-wide application and that all country hairdressers would offer their services after 6 p.m.

Mr. O'Halloran—You said that yourself a few minutes ago.

Mr. SHANNON—I said that I did not expect that a petition would be received from Port Pirie, which I gave as an obvious example of my expectations on this matter. There are other places where I would not expect any attempt to operate under this Bill.

Mr. O'Halloran—You said you did not believe in restrictions.

Mr. SHANNON—I said I would not stop any man from going for the lick of his life to get a living for himself, and I adhere to that principle. It is a man's own business if he likes to work during the evening rather than in the day-time when he has no customers. My Bill will enable the hairdresser I have in mind to get a game of golf on a week-day, for customers will know that he will be on the job at 7 p.m. to cut their hair. It will also enable the country hairdresser to get a little of God's sunshine which the member for Gawler said was so necessary for him. It will be a good thing if it is generally known in a country town that the hairdresser will not be available on a certain morning, for an executive man running a full-time business on his own should have some time off for relaxation. If people throughout the country want this provision to become law generally, members should vote for it because what is good for the people is good for us who are sent here by them.

Another point raised by the Leader of the Opposition that would appeal to certain members and certain people outside this Chamber was that under this provision the country hairdresser's shop would tend to become the headquarters of the local S.P. bookmaker, but I remind Mr. O'Halloran that although there are no licensed betting shops in Peterborough several illegal bookmakers operate there, not in the hairdresser's shop, but in the hotel, which is open all Saturday afternoon. Indeed,

most illegal gambling in country towns is done in hotels. Will the country hairdresser start up business as an illegal bookmaker merely because he opens in the evening? I remind members that the only form of sport on which people may bet at night time is trotting, and most country people who follow racing are interested only in the gallopers and want to know from race to race whether they have won or lost. They are not interested in a bookmaker who may operate in a hairdresser's shop during the evening after the races are over; therefore I suggest that the Leader's point in this regard has very little bearing on the Bill.

I will not address members any longer, for in my opinion this is not a very important piece of legislation; in fact, anybody reading my second reading speech might be excused for forming the opinion stated by the member for Semaphore that I was a lukewarm supporter of the Bill. I thought that this was a simple Bill which merely offered a facility to those people desiring it and which did not force this service on them. It might have been expected that the Bill would be passed without much debate, but since it was introduced on August 13 there have been a dozen speeches on it, although it contains only a simple alteration to the Early Closing Act. All members are elected to serve both employer and employee, both of whom will benefit by the passing of this legislation. Representatives of both these sections have signed the document which I invite all members to peruse. I content myself with commending the Bill to the House and trust that it will be amended as has been suggested by the Premier and given a quick passage.

The House divided on the second reading—

Ayes (17).—Messrs. Brookman, Christian, Geoffrey Clarke, Dunnage, Goldney, Hawker, Heaslip, Hincks, Jeffries, Hon. Sir George Jenkins, Messrs. McIntosh, Michael, Moir, Pattinson, Pearson, Playford, and Shannon (teller).

Noes (17).—Messrs. John Clark, Davis, Fletcher, Hutchens, Lawn, Macgillivray, McAlees, McLachlan, O'Halloran (teller), Quirke, Riches, Stephens, Stott, Tapping, Frank Walsh, Fred Walsh, and Whittle.

Pair.—Aye—Mr. Teusner. No—Mr. McKenzie.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—There are 17 Ayes and 17 Noes. I give my casting vote in favour of the Ayes so that the Bill can have further discussion in Committee and also on the third reading.

Mr. LAWN—Can you tell me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the precedent for the Speaker to vote with the Ayes in this House when the voting is equal? Should not your vote have been in the negative?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—There are several things the Speaker is enabled to do in the circumstances—he may give his vote so as to allow further discussion; he may vote against the expenditure of money; or he may express his own opinion if he feels so disposed. In this instance I have not expressed my own opinion, but have taken the first course mentioned and allowed the Bill to remain alive for further consideration in Committee and also on the third reading.

Mr. STOTT—On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is it not a fact when there is a tie in the voting the ancient precedent of the British House of Commons that the Speaker give his vote in favour of the negative in order to maintain the *status quo* has always been accepted?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—That is not so. Bill read a second time.

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

That it be an instruction to the Committee of the whole House on the Bill that it has power to consider a new clause relating to the discretion of the Minister to grant a petition.

Motion carried.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 passed.

New clause 4—"Discretion of Minister."

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I move to insert the following new clause:—

4. The following section is enacted and inserted in the principal Act after section 73 thereof:—

73a. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, if the Minister is of opinion that it would not be in the best interests of the public to grant a petition presented under section 57 or 67 of this Act, he shall not be obliged to grant such petition, and may refrain from making any declaration pursuant to such petition.

The second schedule to the Act contains a list of goods that Parliament has held shall be exempted from the provisions of the Early Closing Act because they are necessities of the public, particularly the travelling public. The third schedule contains a list of exempted shops, which Parliament believed should remain open after normal closing hours for the convenience of the public. They are chemists' and druggists' shops; restaurants and eating houses; shops selling cooked meats other than

tinned meats; bakers' smallgoods and bread; fish and oyster shops; confectionary shops; non-alcoholic drink shops; fruit shops; flower shops; vegetable shops; book shops; news vendors' shops and bookstalls; undertakers' shops or places of business; public houses and licensed wine shops; and milk shops. I think that hairdressers' shops were deleted from the list in 1945. When the public petition for the establishment of a shopping district they do not vote on the question of adding to or deleting any of the shops I have quoted. Those shops have been exempted by Parliament. Shopping districts are proclaimed after the lodging of a petition or counter-petition.

Mr. Stephens—And some people sign both.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, but there is provision in the Act to deal with people who sign both. Members can see by Division IV. of the Act how a class of shop may cease to be exempted. If a majority of those engaged in carrying on in a particular class of shop present a petition to the Minister he has no option but to grant the request. The public have no say in whether or not they desire the service to be continued. A shopping district had been proclaimed to cover a certain country town, but five chemists and four of their employees petitioned for the early closing of their shops and the petition had to be granted, irrespective of the requirements of the public. I had the strongest views that the interests of the public would not be protected, but I was advised by the Crown Law Office that I had to accede to the request and thereby make the chemists' shops in that town non-exempted shops and subject to the provisions of the Early Closing Act.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Who determines the opening and closing times of chemists' shops?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Chemists usually fix hours that they think are suitable to the needs of the public, and make provision to meet urgent requirements. Not long ago I had occasion to obtain drugs on a Sunday morning, and soon found a chemist to satisfy my needs.

Mr. Stephens—You could not get that service in Port Adelaide.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not know the position there. Perhaps chemists at Port Adelaide close on Sundays, or they may have presented a petition under the division I have referred to. We have given the public the right to petition for the establishment of a shopping district, but no right in regard to exempted shops. It is wrong to give the Minister no option but to agree to the closing of

chemists shops at times when people may require lifesaving drugs. Some years ago Parliament debated at great length the merits of company pharmacies.

Mr. Shannon—We limited the maximum number of shops that could be run by any firm to four.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, and in future to one. The point was that chemists should be on the spot to meet on emergency.

Mr. Macgillivray—Chemists have done that, broadly speaking.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. In a small town only a handful would have to sign the petition for a shopping district. The industry then becomes subject to the rigid control exercised under the Act. I think that is undesirable. Section 57 states:—

A petition may be presented to the Minister by a majority of the aggregate number of shopkeepers of, and shop assistants employed in or about or engaged in connection with, any class of exempted shop specified in the petition . . . In some country towns there would be only one or two in, say, a chemist shop, so any petition presented would be small. My proposal is not an attempt to break down the provision in the Act.

Mr. Macgillivray—Why was it put in?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not know. This matter came under my notice some time ago, and when this Bill was introduced I thought it a good time to bring forward my amendment. If the Committee thinks that my proposal should relate only to chemist shops I will not be upset. I believe the travelling public should be able to get refreshments, but that is not so urgent as being able to get goods from chemist shops.

New clause 4 inserted.

Title passed. Committee's report adopted.

On the motion for the third reading.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I ask the House to oppose the third reading. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I feel confident that, in view of your statement on a previous vote, you will, if the voting is equal, vote again for further consideration to be given to this Bill. That is a precedent which has been established in British Parliaments for many years. If the Speaker is required to give a casting vote it has always been for further consideration to be given to the matter under review. In view of the closeness of the division on the second reading I suggest to members who were opposed to the second reading that they now have the opportunity to defeat the Bill on the third reading.

Mr. STOTT—The amendment moved by the Premier improves the position only slightly. I suggest that if there happens to be a dead heat in the voting for the third reading, as seems likely, there must be a casting vote by the Deputy Speaker, and I quote—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—I remind the honourable member that he cannot anticipate the vote of the Deputy Speaker. He must not debate that matter.

Mr. STOTT—I am not anticipating, but only referring to the vote of a few minutes ago.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—The honourable member must not reflect on the vote of a few minutes ago, and he cannot anticipate how I shall vote.

Mr. STOTT—I am not reflecting. I mentioned what happened a few minutes ago. It is well known that the third reading stage in this House is the final stage before the Bill leaves for another place, and we cannot anticipate what will happen there. It has been laid down for many years that when there is a dead heat—

Mr. SHANNON—On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this statement is a reflection upon the ruling you gave when the second reading vote was taken. I appeal to you to put the honourable member in his place.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—I think the honourable member for Onkaparinga has raised a point of order, and it is whether Mr. Stott is in order in continuing to speak about the vote on the second reading. I think I have already told the honourable member definitely that he is out of order. I now ask him to observe order and make no reference at all to the decision already made by the House. I suggest that it would be in good taste if he does not try to anticipate what will happen on the third reading.

Mr. STOTT—I was not anticipating anything and I am not reflecting in any way on the decision of the House, but I think I am entitled to quote what has happened previously in connection with the third reading of a Bill.

Mr. PATTINSON—On a point of order, I ask you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, whether the honourable member is entitled to instruct you in advance as to what decision you shall give?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—I think Mr. Stott is beginning to see what the position is under Standing Orders and that he only wants to quote something that has happened in the past because he is anticipating what will happen in the future. That may be all right, so long as he does not anticipate what the Chair will do.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—On a point of order, is the Government Whip in order in interrupting Mr. Stott and saying that Mr. Stott is instructing the Deputy Speaker as to his duty?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—The honourable member for Glenelg is in order in asking the Chair whether the procedure is in order. If it is not in order, members will be told.

Mr. STOTT—I am trying to say that I am not reflecting on the decision of the House on the second reading. I am not concerned with that. As I have tried to explain, when the third reading stage is reached here it will be the last opportunity this House has of saying whether or not the Bill shall become law.

The Hon. T. Playford—That applies in connection with the third reading of any Bill.

Mr. STOTT—Yes. Some years ago a book was published by Sir Gilbert Campion on procedure in the House of Commons. Referring to the casting vote of the Speaker he said, "The Speaker has no vote as a member—"

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what are the limits of the debate on the third reading of a Bill? Are we confined to the provisions of the Bill, or are we allowed to debate the rules of procedure of some time ago, which have no relation to any clauses in the Bill?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—The point of order is whether the honourable member is now in order in quoting rulings given in the House of Commons. At this juncture I say he is out of order. If, when the third reading takes place, the Deputy Speaker gives a decision which in the opinion of the honourable member for Ridley or any other member is not according to Standing Orders he has a perfect right to quote all the authorities that he cares to to prove that the decision is out of order. I ask the honourable member not to pursue that line of thought now.

Mr. STOTT—I am illustrating the argument that if the third reading is carried this Bill will become law, and no-one can deny me the right to demonstrate that. In the third reading debate I am entitled to point out what has happened years ago and what will become law in this instance.

The Hon. T. Playford—The honourable member must discuss the Bill.

Mr. STOTT—I am discussing the Bill, which will become law unless Parliament votes against it. I am in order in saying that it should not become law, and I am demonstrating my point by referring to what has happened on the third reading of other Bills years ago. In that respect I am entitled to say what

other Speakers have done and what they have ruled without reflecting on what has been done in this House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—I rule the honourable member out of order on that.

Mr. STOTT—You, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are sitting in the place of the Speaker, and it is your right and prerogative to determine points of order, but I am asking the House to maintain the *status quo* and not to alter the law in this matter. The Bill is intended to apply to hairdressers in the district of Onkaparinga, and I have had no request from my constituents for an alteration of the law; indeed they are anxious that the *status quo* should remain. I am sorry that I may not proceed with this argument. I submit, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that you cannot deny me the right to demonstrate that the *status quo* should be retained by your vote.

The Hon. T. Playford—The honourable member is debating an academic point.

Mr. STOTT—No, I am stating what will become law if the Bill is passed. I ask the House to vote against the third reading.

The House divided on the third reading—

Ayes (17).—Messrs. Brookman, Christian, Geoffrey Clarke, Dunnage, Goldney, Hawker, Heaslip, Hincks, and Jeffries, Sir George Jenkins, Messrs. McIntosh, Michael, Moir, Pattinson, Pearson, Playford, and Shannon (teller).

Noes (15).—Messrs. John Clark, Davis, Fletcher, Hutchens, Lawn, Macgillivray, O'Halloran (teller), Quirke, Riches, Stephens, Stott, Tapping, Frank Walsh, Fred Walsh, and Whittle.

Pair.—Aye—Mr. Teusner. No.—Mr. McKenzie.

Majority of 2 for the Ayes.

Third reading thus carried.

Question—That the Bill do now pass—declared carried.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Divide.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker: a division on the passing of a Bill is something that has not happened in this House for a number of years and indeed has not to my knowledge happened before. A division on the third reading has always been regarded as the last division on a Bill. I ask you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, under what Standing Order is this division being taken?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—The Treasurer has raised a point of order. In 1933 I had the

opportunity as a private member of dividing the House on the third reading of the Lottery and Gaming Bill, legalizing betting shops. I missed my opportunity on the third reading and called for a division on the question "That the Bill do now pass" and a division was taken. Standing Order 327, which covers the position, states:—

So soon as any Bill has been read a third time the Speaker shall, except as provided by Standing Order No. 294, without permitting discussion, amendment, or adjournment, put a question "that this Bill do now pass and the title be—": provided that if the title does not conform to the contents of the Bill the same may be first amended.

I cannot read into that that a division cannot be called for, and, remembering that the Speaker allowed a division on the Lottery and Gaming Bill in 1933, I now allow a division in this case.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—On a further point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is not the division on the title of the Bill?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—No, it is on the question "That this Bill do now pass and the title be 'an Act to amend the Early Closing Act (1926-1945)'."

The House divided on that question—

Ayes (17).—Messrs. Brookman, Christian, Geoffrey Clarke, Dunnage, Goldney, Hawker, Heaslip, Hincks, and Jeffries, Sir George Jenkins, Messrs. McIntosh, Michael, Moir, Pattinson, Pearson, Playford, and Shannon (teller).

Noes (16).—Messrs. John Clark, Davis, Fletcher, Hutchens, Lawn, Macgillivray, McAlees, O'Halloran (teller), Quirke, Riches, Stephens, Stott, Tapping, Frank Walsh, Fred Walsh, and Whittle.

Pair.—Aye—Mr. Teusner. No.—Mr. McKenzie.

Majority of 1 for the Ayes.

Question thus resolved in the affirmative and Bill passed.

DECENTRALIZATION OF INDUSTRY.

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr. O'Halloran.

(For motion, see page 643.)

(Continued from October 1. Page 727.)

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I support the motion. I have listened to the debate with much interest and believe that, with one exception, all speakers have agreed that its motive is the development of the State and the decentralization of industry to make the

State more effective in defence and to increase our rural production. The motion asks for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into and report to the House whether industries should and could be established in the country, and if so, where and how, and also what provision should be made to establish those industries. The Premier said, "I believe that every political party and organization of any standing in Australia would support the motive of the Leader of the Opposition in moving the motion." I express appreciation of the Premier's kindness. It is a little disturbing that after the Premier had acknowledged that the motion was a commendable one, one of his supporters, Mr. Shannon, said "The motion has all the appearance of electioneering propaganda and I see no reason for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into any of these matters." There is no justification for such an argument, and I agree with the Premier that the motive is one worthy of praise and support. I again express appreciation to the Premier for the unbounded generosity of one of his opening remarks, "The Leader of the Opposition is one of the best debaters in this House." I can reciprocate that, because I listened to both the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition and agree that both are excellent debaters. I have often tried to determine which is the better, but have had some difficulty in coming to a decision, for I have never heard the Leader of the Opposition trying to argue a weak case.

Mr. O'Halloran spoke for about three-quarters of an hour, and his speech covered about five pages of *Hansard*. He must have submitted a very good case because in endeavouring to break down the arguments and facts put forward the Premier, on August 20, spoke for more than one hour and his speech covered six pages of *Hansard*. He then sought leave to continue his remarks and returned to the attack again on September 24, when he spoke for about three-quarters of an hour, his speech covering four pages of *Hansard*, and again he sought leave to continue. I believe he did this because he felt he had not made out a case, so on October 1 he resumed his efforts to break down Mr. O'Halloran's case and spoke for 20 minutes, his speech covering $2\frac{1}{2}$ pages of *Hansard*. In all he spoke for 2 hours 5 minutes and his speech occupied $12\frac{1}{2}$ pages. I feel that we would be failing in our duty if we did not express our appreciation of the great credit he gave the Leader of the Opposi-

tion. It was a real tribute, and it is treatment we are not accustomed to, because on many occasions I have heard a motion submitted by this side dealt with only briefly by Government supporters and the Premier himself. The Premier quoted at length from reports issued by the Rural Reconstruction Commission, which was set up in 1943. He made special reference to the quality of its members, Mr. F. J. S. Wise, Mr. J. F. Murphy, Mr. C. R. Lambert and Professor S. M. Wadham, and said, "It will be seen that the report was based on the widest possible national scope without respect to expenditure and compiled by the most competent people that one of our greatest statesmen was able to select."

Mr. John Clark—He said that more than once.

Mr. HUTCHENS—That is so. This is a new-found respect for the gentlemen mentioned, and I will give reasons to show why it is a doubtful respect. As members were invited by the Premier to study the reports of the commission, I did so. Anyone who studies them fully can see that when these wise men were making their inquiries into a matter of great national importance they visited every State in the Commonwealth, but when they came to South Australia only very few officers from State Government departments gave evidence, and not one member of the Government appeared before it. Such a charge cannot be levelled against any other State. Might I suggest that the belated respect shown by the Premier to the members of this body should be accepted as valueless. It would appear that South Australian State representatives had something to hide and that it was considered unwise for them to appear before the commission. The Premier made much play upon an interjection of the Leader of the Opposition, "This worship of the idol of pure economics left me cold many years ago and leaves me colder with the passing of time." In trying to build up his case the Premier quoted the commission's report time and time again to make a kite out of the words used by the Leader, but he failed to raise the kite to the level of the grass, and his arguments were as barren as the Gobi desert. It is appropriate to use the word "desert." His remarks were as barren as a capon, producing only meat for those who support the motion, for any intelligent school child would know that the application of the ideal of pure economics to war would leave us all cold, and have resulted in our not proceeding with the recent war.

The Premier drew the attention of the House to the establishment of the Port Lincoln Freezing Works, which, operating under the control of the Government, was showing a loss. However, he admitted that the Government looked upon these works as being a necessary service. In replying to a question by Mr. Christian on October 14 the Minister of Agriculture made one or two statements which made it doubtful whether the Port Lincoln works were being run at a loss. He said:—

The number of stock treated at Port Lincoln works during 1951-52 were:—Lambs, 17,741; sheep, 50,148; pigs, 3,558 and cattle, 1,759.

That makes a total of 73,206 head of stock. With the killing of 257,000 fewer sheep, lambs and pigs than the plant was designed for there was a loss. If the Premier's argument is to be carried to its logical conclusion and pure economics applied as the determining factor whether the industry is to continue or not, the Government must take steps to close down the Port Lincoln works. These works may not have actually paid its way, but their establishment has meant much to the development of the export trade from Eyre Peninsula. This has led to an increase in the revenue of that part of the State and an increase in taxation collected from employees in other secondary industries. I think, therefore, that the meat works have paid the Treasury handsomely. On the same day that the Minister of Agriculture gave the figures I quoted he said that the Port Lincoln abattoirs was built with a capacity for killing 300,000 head of cattle. When the works were operating at full capacity in 1944-45 they paid their way. Any remarks by members opposite about losses sustained by the works should be ignored in considering this motion, which asks that the establishment of certain specific industries should be investigated.

I wish to speak briefly on the question of establishing works for the treatment of hides and skins, for I have had much experience in this industry. Pelts from Eyre Peninsula have been well cared for in the drying sheds at the Port Lincoln meat works. They arrive in Adelaide equal to the best and are in great demand. Many people on Eyre Peninsula slaughter sheep but, because they are far from treatment works, the pelts deteriorate and have little value for manufacture into basil, which is in great demand for the motor industry. Pelts must be treated quickly or they lose value. They contain small fibres that are not visible but are a binding agency. They are

preserved by natural oils within the pelt, and if they are exposed to the weather they cease to have any binding quality. Because of poor transport services in some parts of the country, the farmers make little effort to preserve skins in good condition and thereby lose much money. Many skins drop in value from 20d. to 12d. a pound through being exposed to the weather. Not one per cent of skins coming in from the country are sound. The revenue of the country would be greatly increased if the skins could be treated by plants established in rural areas, and the same applies to hides. Many hides that would fetch 4½d. a pound if properly cared for are manufactured into glue. The farmers would be lucky to get a farthing a pound for them, but if treatment works were established in their district they would get a good return. The member for Onkaparinga, in effect, gave much support to the motion. He said:—

I have in my own electorate an establishment for treating by-products, such as hides and skins. It has been taken over by another company but is still known as Paltridge's, although the Paltridges no longer have any interest in it. During the war the factory was reconstituted and by virtue of assistance, both monetary and directive, it gradually got on its feet. But for the activities of the Hide and Skin Board in directing certain hides to certain tanneries the factory would have been squeezed out.

The honourable member also said that there were a number of treatment plants in the Hindmarsh district. Before the war there were two big establishments in South Australia—John Reid and David Reid—that were equal to Paltridge's, but they were forced to sell out or become insolvent. The best hides were purchased by firms in other States and the local manufacturers were left with the lowest grade materials. They were Faint's, Peacock's, Avenues Tannery, Cameron's, Leonard's, Hill's, Welsby's, and Paltridge's. I know that these small concerns were struggling for existence, because they had such poor material to work on. Not one of the principals, to my knowledge, owned a motor car and some could not afford a conveyance to pick up raw material. Three firms went out of existence. When war came the Federal Government desired this industry to develop so as to obtain materials to prosecute the war, and established a leather industries board, which determined that the local establishments should have good material to produce a good quality harness and belting for primary producers and good leather for war purposes. The local firms, although once almost insolvent, are

now well established. If they can achieve this, the motion should be adopted so that the hundred of hides and sheep pelts going to waste could be treated to the advantage of the primary producer and for the benefit of the State. The Federal Labor Government that established the leather industries board desired to assist decentralization as much as possible and as the State Governments have seen fit to continue the operations of the board it must have done much good. This is a lead to this Government to see that decentralization is carried out within its own boundaries. It is obvious that many industries could be successfully established in country areas. The findings of a Royal Commission appointed to inquire into decentralization and the establishment of industries in rural centres would be of much value to Parliament.

If we are to set up industries in the country we must be certain that they are established in the right localities. Further, they must be supplied with necessary services, such as transport, water, sewers, and electric power. They may also need some Government assistance at the start. We have been told that we can look forward with confidence to the future, but we cannot carry on haphazardly and establish industries without any definite plan. It is vitally necessary to transfer industries from the metropolitan area for defence reasons. The recent explosion of an atomic bomb at the Monte Bello Islands proves that no mighty city is safe from attack. One bomb could wipe out a capital city like Adelaide and cripple its industries. We would then be in a hopeless position in attempting to oppose the enemy. Recently, when speaking on another matter, I said that Australia had a challenge to supply food to the millions of people to the north of our country. We are able to supply that food and if we do not it will become a matter of democracy or communism. The Current Affairs Bulletin of December 17, 1951, under the heading of "Australia must expand Food Production," stated:—

Seldom in Australia's history has the opportunity for selling more rural products been more favourable than it is now. The world demands that 80,000,000 people just north of Australia waiting for food should be supplied. Is not food our weapon against communism? The expansion of food production in Australia is a national economic and defence necessity. The article said that to be effective in feeding the people to the north, Australia would have to increase its beef and veal production by 40 per cent, fat lambs 23 per cent, milk 37 per cent, mutton 58 per cent, pig meats 78 per

cent, eggs 31 per cent, citrus fruits 61 per cent, dried grapes 15 per cent, wheat for human consumption 7 per cent and wool 5 to 10 per cent. We must not lose sight of the fact that South Australia is part of the Commonwealth, and there is a need for us to improve our primary production. There has been some agricultural development in recent years, but real progress has been retarded by a shortage of labour and materials. If we can believe the Premier, there is no shortage of materials. In July last, during the Address in Reply debate, he said that between 1938-39 and 1950-51 there was an increase of over 10,000 in the number of tractors used in the State, 4,590 milking machines, 8,000 stationary engines, and about 8,000 shearing machines. This information was given by the Premier to the tune of "Anything you can do I can do better," but he lost sight of the fact that this equipment is useless to the country unless labour is available. The motion seeks the employment of men in primary and secondary industries in the country.

Recently I was accused of doing something outside my jurisdiction and was told to attend to the affairs of my electorate and to get my constituents to play their part. It was implied that the workers were not doing their job, but that the farmers were doing theirs.

Mr. Pattinson—Who said it?

Mr. HUTCHENS—The member for Victoria. I believe that in South Australia we have farmers second to none. The Premier has agreed that our workers are second to none, because he said that our production increase was due to the efficiency and stability of the South Australian workmen, and that a part of that stability has been brought about by the fact that our industrial unions have been much more wisely led than the majority in other States. Often we hear from members on the other side that the workers are not doing their share, and that because of the lack of country labour there has been a decline in rural production. I propose to give figures which I have given previously, because I follow the lead of members opposite that a good story is worth repeating. In the last 14 years the decline in cereal production has been 13 bushels per head of population, in butter production 18 lb., in cheese 10 lb., in milk 60 gallons, and in wool 34 lb. Yesterday I was criticized for saying that the number of sheep and fat lambs slaughtered for export in 1940 was 770,190 and in 1951 only 145,621. I am sorry

that Mr. McLachlan is not here. It is a funny thing that although a member criticizes other people for not doing their job he often finds it convenient to be absent from his place in this House. Next year we may have members who will remain in the House all the time. The honourable member tried to show that the workers were not prepared to do their job, and that it was the reason for the small number of sheep and fat lambs slaughtered. I remind members that at the end of the war, when our vigorous and fittest men were in the forces, the Port Lincoln abattoirs killed a record number of sheep for export. That gives the lie direct to the statement that the workers are not doing their job. If that record could be established in those days when our fittest men were not available, similar figures could be produced today if management were more efficient.

The answer to our problem today is to get more labour to the country, but the difficulty is when, where and how. The position can be decided only after a full investigation. Labour must be placed in the country to enable primary producers to make the best use of it. In the off season of primary production the labour could be used in secondary industry. The Premier said that those members who carefully studied the reports of a Royal Commission which investigated the matter of rural production would come to the same conclusion as he had and oppose the motion. He tried to rebut the arguments of the Leader of the Opposition, but evidently he had not studied the reports as carefully as he led members to believe. Having been invited to study them, I did so carefully. On page 79 of the seventh report there is the following reference to decentralization of industry:—

It has been pointed out in paragraph 1641 that secondary industries are but slightly developed in towns in farming areas; therefore, the young men and women from farms normally seek employment in cities and larger towns, rather than remain dependent and often not fully occupied on the home farm. The building up of secondary industries in country centres would undoubtedly alleviate this position, and would add considerably to the effectiveness of the towns concerned. While such decentralization is a matter for consideration by those who have special knowledge of those industries, this Commission takes the opportunity of recording certain aspects of the subject presented to it in evidence. It does so because it is well aware of the pressure which will be exerted on responsible persons by local bodies or prominent individuals to obtain preference for schemes which would give them advantage, irrespective of the ultimate fate of the projects. Pandering

to such proposals can have disastrous effects. When once the artificial support which originated it ceases, the factory or works often finds normal competition too severe and the project fails; those who put their money into the venture lose it and, worse, the extra prosperity which the centre enjoyed during the period of activity and which encouraged all sorts of developments disappears, leaving the town more dishevelled and less useful than it was before the episode began. On the other hand, where satisfactory conditions for both industry and those who work in it can be established in a country centre, the advantages to both industry and the district are considerable; further, the increased establishment of industries in country districts would diminish the rate at which city problems such as human transport, distribution of goods, traffic, and water supply assume menacing proportions.

The report of the Commission contains arguments in support of the motion and, although making it clear that it did not have as its purpose an investigation into the decentralization of industry, it unanimously recommended that such an investigation be made.

Mr. Whittle—The Commission made such an investigation.

Mr. HUTCHENS—The report says it did not but recommended an investigation. In speaking over the Australian Broadcasting Commission national network from Geelong on April 13, 1949, Professor Wadham said:—

I want to make it perfectly clear that I do agree that decentralization is very necessary in certain respects. I would be a humbug if I didn't, because I am a signatory to reports which are of an official character and in which a certain amount of decentralization has been advocated.

In an endeavour to justify the reduction in the number of landholders throughout the State the Premier claimed that we must provide for the economic use of land by the use of modern plant and machinery. Indeed, I gained the impression that he was arguing in favour of collective farming, but it has been proved that collective farming is not desirable in South Australia. If we are to have the King William Street and North Terrace farmers operating on a collective basis with employees we shall reach the position which, according to reports, obtains in Russia today. In the *Observer* (a London newspaper) of Sunday, May 11, 1952, under the heading "Russia admits Wide-spread Corruption," Edward Crankshaw states:—

Corruption in the Soviet Union is one of the things not talked about in public; and the Kremlin's success in concealing the extent of graft and racketeering from the outside world has been remarkable. But sometimes reality breaks through the sedulous pretence that under Stalin the Russians are not as Russians were

and that in the land which has abolished the conditions which foster crime—*i.e.*, the capitalist system—everyone is united in a devoted effort to serve the community with no thoughts of self. A recent article in *Pravda*, with all the force of the Communist Party behind it, denounces the persistence of widespread embezzlement, theft, and corruption on collective farms in many parts of the Union. The offenders are not simply the anti-social fringe which has no stake in the regime. The Communist Party itself is involved in various kinds of highly organized racketeering.

The article goes on to show the evils of collective farming.

Mr. Whittle—Who is advocating collective farming?

Mr. HUTCHENS—I said that I believed the Premier was advocating it, and I made those deductions from his remarks on the motion. At the Premiers' Conference held in 1945, it was agreed that the Commonwealth and State Governments had a joint responsibility to see that a policy of decentralization of secondary industries was implemented, and the report of that Conference states:—

Activities in the States.—The Governments of all States have adopted policies of decentralization both on their own account and in co-operation with the Commonwealth. Naturally, the lines of policy and the achievements vary from State to State, largely depending on the resources and the existing development in each case. In the following summary, the results achieved must be interpreted as arising from State activities and from Commonwealth co-operation with the States.

New South Wales.—The N.S.W. Government has a Ministerial State Development Committee, concerned with co-ordinating all government activities in the development of industry and resources. There is a Secondary Industries Division of the Department of Labour and Industry which gives general information, advice and assistance to firms contemplating the establishment of new industries, or the expansion of existing industries, in N.S.W. This Division also fosters decentralization of industry in accordance with "definite principles and a well-considered plan, aiming at building up country industrial centres on an economically sound basis." For example, it collaborates with the Housing Commission to secure co-ordination of future housing schemes with the development of new factory areas; it has collaborated with the town-planning authority for Sydney in plans for "short-distance" decentralization into industrial zones established on the outskirts of the Sydney area; special attention is given to establishing new factories in the coalfield areas of the Hunter District and the South coast, with the object of diversifying and balancing their industrial structure. More than 200 new factories have been established at country centres in N.S.W. over the last five or six years, covering a wide range of industries, but with textile and clothing factories predominating. Both types are large employers of female

labour, more of which is available in country towns than in the city. Apart from advice, several forms of assistance and inducement have been given to the new decentralized factories. The chief assistance is a railway freight concession, the cost being shared between the Treasury and the Railways Department. In some cases concessional rates for power and water supplies have been offered. There is no estimate available of the cost of these concessions, or of the administrative costs of decentralization policy, but it is to be noted that so far the movement has been a movement outwards—of industry to people. If and when it becomes a question of moving both industry and people ("real" decentralization) there is no doubt that difficulties and costs will greatly increase.

Victoria.—The position is somewhat similar in Victoria. The Government has an active decentralization policy, administered through the Decentralization Division of the Department of Labour. To date it has sponsored the establishment of some 164 secondary industries in decentralized locations, and assisted about a hundred others. Statistical, economic and technical information of many kinds is made available to industrialists. Decentralized industries cover a wide range, but again textiles predominate. Those decentralized by State co-operation employ about 3,000 males and 4,650 females, whilst the capital involved is about £3,500,000. Inducements and concessions to decentralized industry take a number of forms, including: provision of Crown Land at approved locations, subsidies for power and water supply charges (where these exceed the industrial tariff of the State Electricity Commission or the Melbourne water rates), 50 per cent railway freight concessions, free transport of plant and machinery, assistance towards the cost of transferring employees' households, and efforts through the Housing Commission to cater for housing needs. The subsidies are subject to review in most cases after a period of two years.

Queensland.—There is already a greater degree of decentralization of population and industry in Queensland than in most other States, because of the sugar and mining industries, and considerable decentralization of governmental machinery. Government policy, however, aims at developing all regions of the State, not only in primary and secondary industries, but in service industries as well. The Secondary Industries Division of the Department of Labour and Industry gives all information required by industrialists seeking locations, and stresses the advantage of settling in cities other than Brisbane. Inducements are offered in the form of more generous financial assistance, building permits, and sometimes railway freight concessions. A number of large concerns have commenced operations in provincial cities recently, but no figures are available to show the growth of decentralization over the last few years. The pace should increase in future years when plans become effective for opening up Central Queensland coal deposits and for building the proposed dam on the Burdekin River.

South Australia.—South Australia, one of the "less-developed" States, has shown a remarkable degree of industrial development as compared with pre-war years. The number of factories has increased by 40 per cent, number of factory workers by 70 per cent, and the value of industrial output by 200 per cent. Largely the result of State and Federal Government policy, this development indicates a considerable degree of movement from the developed to the less developed States. Within the State, actual decentralization policy has not been very actively pursued. The Industries Advisory Committee provides information and advice in matters of location, and suggests country locations which seem to be in the best long-run interests of the industry. No special inducements are offered to industry to decentralize, though the existing railway freight rates have the effect of reducing the costs of country industries. The main development has been at Whyalla, where B.H.P. has established blast furnaces and a ship-building yard. In addition, a number of city firms have set up country clothing factories, and the wartime munitions annexe at Murray Bridge is used for engineering and electrical industries.

I feel that the more that is studied in conjunction with the agreement of the Premiers' Conference in 1945 the more it behoves this Parliament to support the motion so that the fullest investigation possible may be made into the decentralization of industry and the development of the country to enable it to supply war requirements, and farmers with the necessary labour so that primary industries can operate under the most economical methods. I feel that the only way for members to honour the promise to decentralize for the defence of the nation is to have an inquiry as proposed by the motion.

Mr. HAWKER (Burra)—The motion deals solely with the decentralization of industry. Ever since I have been a member of the House I have emphasized that South Australia is a primary producing State. The drift from the land to the urban areas is very serious. I particularly use the term "urban areas" in the same sense as it was used by Sir Stanton Hicks, because it does not matter whether a man leaves a primary industry to go to a secondary industry either in the metropolitan area or the country, he is lost to primary industry. In moving his motion the Leader of the Opposition mentioned the alarming drift to the metropolitan area, and went on to say the promotion of secondary industries in country areas should aim at providing employment for those members of rural families who were unable to be permanently employed on the land. In 1947 the Leader of the Opposition, in an electioneering campaign, said that Labor

would, wherever possible, establish at the point of primary production such secondary industries as are subsidiary or allied to the primary industry, thereby employing the members of families of the primary producer in the secondary industries. That emphasizes the necessity of supplying secondary industries in the country so that the surplus country population can more easily be absorbed in secondary industry. Then we get the other side of the picture. Not long ago the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Hindmarsh pointed out how the people employed in primary industries had drifted to secondary industries. Mr. Hutchens decried the lack of labour in primary industries, but then proceeded to advocate the employment of surplus country population in secondary industries established in the country. Not long ago the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said, "We now have a tendency to forget that in the final analysis we are dependent on our land for our very existence." He decried the fact that we had got out of balance and said that, whereas a few years ago we lacked secondary industries, we now have too many; yet he wants an inquiry into the establishment of secondary industries in the country. I do not know how it is proposed that the position shall be met—whether by establishing more secondary industries in country areas or by moving metropolitan secondary industries to the country.

Mr. O'Halloran—If you read the motion you might get some enlightenment.

Mr. HAWKER—I have read it several times and the more I read it the more muddled I get.

Mr. O'Halloran—That is not the fault of the motion.

Mr. HAWKER—But it may be the fault of the person who prepared it. The member for Gawler made a commendable contribution to the debate. He reviewed the history of Gawler and mentioned the firm of Martin's being taken over by the Perry Engineering Co. and the works being removed to Mile End, where they have prospered considerably to the benefit of the State. He also mentioned May Bros. At one time there was a move for that firm to go into partnership with Bagshaw's, but it came to nothing and May Bros. went into liquidation. Mr. John Clark said that there were seven secondary industries operating in Gawler and that there was the promise of another. That is not a bad effort. He emphasized that Gawler had certain advantages because of its

proximity to the city, and its splendid water supply and added that it was an important agricultural district. He went on to say that he objected to the establishment of a satellite town at Salisbury. When the Premier spoke on this project a couple of years ago he mentioned that it was to be a complete town. He said:—

The satellite town, it should be noted, is intended to be a more or less self-contained unit. It should have its local industries giving employment to its inhabitants.

Why does the member for Gawler object to the establishment of a satellite town at Salisbury when it will have many of the advantages possessed by Gawler, which he says is suitable for the establishment of secondary industries? Judging by what members opposite have said, the motion is founded on a complete contradiction, and if given effect to will only serve to upset primary production in many places. It has been stated that secondary industries help primary industries. To a certain extent that was true years ago. When I was in the Broken Hill district labour was available from the Broken Hill mines for primary industries at certain times of the year. The opposite is now the case, and it is very difficult to get labour in rural districts where secondary industries are established. For the reasons mentioned I intend to oppose the motion.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I am grateful to the House for the consideration it has given the motion, and have some confidence that it will be carried. In order to remove some doubt that apparently exists in the minds of certain honourable members, particularly the member for Burra, I propose to read the motion again. It is as follows:—

That in view of the alarming concentration of population in the metropolitan area of South Australia, an address be presented to the Lieutenant-Governor praying His Excellency to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and report upon—

- (a) whether industries ancillary to primary production, such as meat works, establishments for treating hides, skins, etc., and other works for the processing of primary products should be established in country districts; and
- (b) what other secondary industries could appropriately be transferred from the metropolitan area to the country; and
- (c) what new industries could be established in country districts; and
- (d) whether more railway construction and maintenance work could be done at country railway depots; and

(e) what housing provision should be made to assist a programme of decentralization.

Like other members, the Premier viewed this motion as one of great importance; he even obtained leave on two occasions to continue his remarks. As the member for Hindmarsh pointed out this afternoon, the Premier searched far and wide to find excuses—and I use the word advisedly—for defeating the motion, but he did not provide one sound reason why the motion should not be carried. Parliament should decide every question on its merits without seeking excuses to defeat it. The Premier started by saying that the appointment of a Royal Commission was unnecessary because the matter had already been investigated by the Federal Commission on Rural Reconstruction. Then he said it was also unnecessary because I knew all the answers. I believe I know some of the answers, but do not profess to know all, and that is why I suggested that this vital matter should be the subject of a proper and competent inquiry. He went on to suggest that the Federal Commission appointed by the Chifley Government submitted recommendations adverse to the suggestions in the motion. A perusal of the reports of the Commission would elicit the fact that in the course of its lengthy inquiry it supported wholeheartedly those things that I have suggested. Then the Premier said that the cost of a Royal Commission was not inconsiderable. No matter what the cost—and it would not be a large item in a Budget of \$50,000,000—the money would be well spent if a solution of this serious problem was found. Then the Premier said that the proper body to determine policy is Parliament. I agree so far as the final determination of policy is concerned, but Parliament's determination in this respect could be assisted by a proper inquiry.

The Premier quoted the remarks of the Premier of Tasmania, Mr. Cosgrove, on the assumed successes of the A.M.P. scheme as an appreciation of what is being done in South Australia. Of course, there is much assumption about the success of that scheme, for I do not think any settler has yet been placed on the land being developed by the society. I do not know whether one settler will be placed on the land for another year or more, and then it will be some time before we shall know whether or not the scheme will be successful. I hope it is, and I supported the proposal when it was before Parliament. However, it will not solve the problem of decentralization

of population and industry; it will only make a very small contribution. The Premier said:—

There has been more decentralization in South Australia during the last few years than in the previous history of the State.

He mentioned development at Whyalla, Leigh Creek, and Nairne.

Mr. McAlees—Nothing has been done for Wallaroo.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The honourable member is concerned that nothing has been done down the years in his electorate to replace the opportunities for employment that were lost when the mines closed and the smelting works were dismantled. The Premier said that from one point of view the motion would have the support of every member. He said:—

Every country in the world is seeking a solution of this problem. Anything that can be done to achieve decentralization is desirable.

I agree, and hoped that the Premier would give my suggestion a trial. He admits that decentralization is a pressing problem, not only in South Australia, but in every country. He quoted extensively from the reports of the Federal Royal Commission, but the Liberal Party in this State took no interest in the activities of that Commission. It came to South Australia for the purpose of taking evidence from all persons and organizations interested in the problem. The Labor Party here tendered evidence, which I quoted when I moved the motion, as it was cognizant of the seriousness of the problem and made some suggestions for its solution, but the Liberal Party made no effort to tender evidence. Many of the Commission's conclusions were based on different circumstances from those existing at present. As a result of the war there has been a re-appraisal of values of primary production, so large areas are not now required to provide a home maintenance farm as was the case when the Commission conducted its inquiries. Conditions have changed entirely, yet the Premier asks the House to reject the motion on out-of-date evidence contained in the Commission's report. He went on to speak of the efficiency in certain types of primary production, but all the arguments in favour of productive efficiency will fail if no steps are taken to ensure that production is maintained. As I showed yesterday when speaking on another subject, primary production is falling while population is increasing, and steps should be taken to correct this unfortunate position. The

Premier quoted from the findings of the Royal Commission on Rural Reconstruction, as follows:—

New land should be opened for settlement in order to meet increased agricultural requirements when those requirements cannot be economically met by a more intensive use of already settled areas.

The settled areas in this State could have much greater use made of them than is the case at present. There was a time when we had within the good rainfall areas estates so vast that they cried to high heaven for the avenging of the land-hungry people who were responsible for electing in the early days of this century a Parliament which took the first steps towards the subdivision of those large estates and the inauguration of a closer settlement policy. However, since then we have had re-aggregation, and today we have a worse evil than before. Now we have many farms of more than a living area, a fact which is not so obvious as to cause a public outcry, but which at the same time seriously restricts opportunities for those who desire to become producers from the land. I have never said, nor have any of my colleagues, that any injustice should be done to those who have acquired land under the conditions permitted by the laws of the State. On the contrary we have suggested that they should be reasonably compensated, but we have also stated, and with merit, that no individual should be allowed to stand in the road of a policy in the best interests of the future of the nation. The Premier made a point of the legislation passed to compulsorily acquire underdeveloped land. That legislation is good as far as it goes, but steps should be taken to acquire surplus land, that is, land surplus to what is a reasonable home maintenance area. It is our desire that the maximum number of people should be settled on the land in order to get the maximum production from the land. The Premier also pointed out that I said we should provide assistance to place industries in the country, irrespective of whether they were economically sound. I did say that, but not in the sense implied by the Premier. I said that pure economics leave me cold, and they still leave me cold, because under pure economics not one acre of land would be developed and not one public utility built. The history of South Australia is strewn with the record of what Parliament has done to assist industries that were uneconomic in their early stages. In his Budget Speech the Premier referred in commendatory terms to the steps

taken to assist various industries. If they were sound economic industries it would not have been necessary for the State to assist them financially. Everybody knows that industries must develop and it is during that developmental stage that State assistance is necessary. The principle could be extended to encourage the establishment of new industries in country districts and the migration of some metropolitan industries to the country. The Premier also said that certain industries that had been placed in the country, with their economics not right, were in trouble, and he instanced the woollen mills in the South-East. That industry was in trouble. I do not know the present position, but the last time I was in Mount Gambier the industry was flourishing. I believe it received a minor set-back as a result of the policy of the present incapable Commonwealth Government, but I am confident that the industry will recover from the set-back, particularly when there is a change of Commonwealth Government.

There is no point whatever in Mr. Hawker's argument that the establishment of secondary industries in the country would be detrimental to primary industries. The reverse would be the position, because there would be a labour force to assist primary industries in busy periods. There would be the opportunity to hold people in the country because of the availability of employment. Today, because of the absence of employment, country people migrate to the city. Another point taken in opposition to the motion was that many parts of the State are not suitable for the establishment of large communities. We were told that there is an absence of water, but there was no water at Whyalla until it came by pipeline from Morgan.

Mr. Shannon—That pipeline was designed to supply water to towns in northern areas.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—One third of the capacity of the pipeline was for Whyalla and two thirds for other areas in the north. What was done for Whyalla could be done for other country towns, so long as there are plenty of water and a sewerage system. The Premier said there has been failure at the meat works at Port Lincoln. There is no suggestion that they will be closed down. I hope they will not be closed. Although there may be some losses on working expenses, the development of the stock-raising industry on Eyre Peninsula has been assisted by the presence of the meat works. If they close much of the stock-raising

area will go back to scrub. It is said that much decentralization has taken place in South Australia in recent years. In answer to a question in this place the Premier told me that in 1939 about 36,000 persons were employed in factories in the metropolitan area and 7,000 in factories in Whyalla, Port Pirie and the rest of the State. According to those figures, about 43,000 people were employed in factories at that time, but I doubt their accuracy. I do not think the compilation of figures in 1939 was as accurate as it is today. In 1951 there were 72,051 persons employed in metropolitan factories, and in the country there were 2,340 at Port Pirie, 1,409 at Whyalla and 7,369 in the rest of the State—a total of 83,169. While the number of factory workers in the metropolitan area increased by 36,000, the increase in the country was small. Clearly it is not the policy of the Liberal and Country League Party to do anything about decentralization of population or industry. It does not want to disturb the *status quo* nor to upset the position in the pocket boroughs which up to the present have provided the Government with a comfortable majority in this place. However, bigger issues are at stake, including the very future of our land, and unless we do something effective about it future generations of South Australians will rue the time when this policy was followed. Mr. Hutchens quoted population figures and I shall not repeat them, but it is alarming that more than 60 per cent of our total population is in the metropolitan area. Only one country town, Port Pirie, has a population of more than 10,000. There are only two towns of any size that are centres for primary areas, Renmark and Mount Gambier. Surely this merits action. Surely we cannot continue indefinitely with this unbalanced state of affairs. The action I suggest would assist in solving the problem. An answer must be found and the sooner we find it the better it will be for the development and well-being of the State.

The House divided on the motion—

Ayes (15).—Messrs. John Clark, Davis, Fletcher, Hutchens, Lawn, Macgillivray, McAlees, O'Halloran (teller), Quirke, Riches, Stephens, Stott, Tapping, Frank Walsh, and Fred Walsh.

Noes (19).—Messrs. Brookman, Christian, Geoffrey Clarke, Dunnage, Goldney, Hawker, Heaslip, Hincks, and Jeffries, Sir George Jenkins, Messrs. McIntosh, McLachlan, Michael, Moir, Pattinson, Pearson, Playford (teller), Shannon, and Whittle.

Pair.—Aye—Mr. McKenzie. No—Mr. Teusner.

Majority of 4 for the Noes.

Motion thus negatived.

IRRIGATION PROJECTS.

Mr. PATTINSON (Glenelg)—I move—

That in view of the continuing and increasing annual deficits incurred in the State Treasurer's funds employed in connection with irrigation on the River Murray, an Address be presented to the Lieutenant-Governor praying His Excellency to appoint a Royal Commission, consisting of a judge, with power to call for all documents and records, to inquire into and report upon:—

- (a) The losses sustained upon irrigation projects in South Australia.
- (b) Whether further charges should be imposed for the supply of water to irrigation areas
- (c) Whether the maintenance and control of irrigation works should be the responsibility of local trusts.

Recent Parliamentary history reminds me that, although it is a simple procedure to introduce a motion into this House, it is a difficult feat to control its fate thereafter. This melancholy reflection gives point to the words of the old limerick—

There was a young lady from Riga
Who went for a ride on a tiger;
They returned from the ride
With the lady inside,
And a smile on the face of the tiger.

In moving this motion I readily admit that I am embarking on a subject upon which I have no practical experience and only that little learning which is a dangerous thing. In fact in this respect I may be likened to the celebrated Mr. Kremlin in Disraeli's *Sybil* who was "distinguished for his ignorance. He had only one idea and that was wrong." But I am hopeful that at least it will provoke a discussion which will be of benefit to Parliament, the Government and the public.

Let me say at the outset that I have no intention of making any criticism of, much less any attack on, those estimable people who are engaged on working irrigation blocks on the River Murray and elsewhere. Most of them compare favourably with the average citizen of this State. Many of them are entitled to our respect and gratitude for the part they played in the defence of the nation in times of peril. My sole purpose is to pose the problem as intelligently as possible, handicapped by my limited knowledge of the subject, of whether or not the State is receiving an adequate return for its huge capital outlay

and its heavy annual expenditure on irrigation projects. I was prompted to do so by reading the Auditor-General's report during the debate in this House on the Municipal Tramways Trust Act Amendment Bill and by listening to vehement criticism in the Glenelg electorate and by numerous residents of the metropolitan area of the attitude adopted to that Bill by several members of this House, particularly by members of the Independent Party, led by their redoubtable chairman, Mr. Macgillivray.

I represent an electorate comprising nearly 27,000 electors. Since the outbreak of war the number of these electors has increased by over 10,000. This increase alone is larger than the total number of electors in any country electorate. Most of these newcomers are young returned servicemen and their wives. I represent more returned servicemen than any member in this House. The Glenelg sub-branch of the Returned Servicemen's League, with over 2,000 members, is the largest sub-branch in the State and there are many other ex-servicemen throughout my electorate. Nearly all of them are wage or salary earners. They work the hours which the Arbitration Court prescribes. They receive the wages which the Arbitration Court or the Industrial Court or a wages board fixes as their remuneration. Their taxation is deducted from their wages. Most of them have purchased or are purchasing homes from the State Housing Trust, War Service Homes Commission or State Bank or have built or are building houses financed by some lending institution. Their capital outlay is extremely heavy during a period of inflated currency. They are paying substantial amounts annually for interest and instalments of principal and also increased council and water rates. They cannot become in arrears with any of their annual commitments without the risk of forfeiture. They cannot anticipate any scheme of financial relief or debt adjustment if they encounter lean times. Most of them are employed in various parts of the metropolitan area in secondary industries which have been sponsored by this Government and Parliament in the interests of a properly balanced economy for the State. They and other residents of the metropolitan area are becoming increasingly incensed at the continued tirade of abuse which is levelled against them by some members of this Parliament, which criticism appeared to reach its crescendo at the hands of the four Independent members in the debate on the Tramways Trust Bill.

I desire therefore, in the first instance, to make a few general observations as a background to the particular arguments which I shall advance in support of the motion. For the last financial year the State railways showed an all time record deficit of £5,194,341. This is a heavy burden on the general taxpayer, representing £7 2s. 4d. a head of the population. The general taxpayers bear this loss in the interests mainly of country residents. For the last five years the total railways deficit is £15,983,869, made up as follows:—1947-1948, £2,026,395, 1948-1949, £2,550,420, 1949-1950, £2,441,145, 1950-1951, £3,881,568, 1951-1952, £5,194,341, total, £15,983,869. The Premier has stated repeatedly that railway losses should not be covered by continual and larger increases in freights and fares, because they are an undertaking whose principal function is to give service to the public and assist in the general development of the State. For these reasons various commodities are transported by the railways to and from the country at freight rates which are below the cost of service standard.

Likewise the country water districts showed a deficit of £818,349 last year, whilst the metropolitan water district showed a surplus of £92,206, leaving a net deficit of £726,053. For the last five years the Adelaide water district has shown a surplus of £552,392, whereas the country water districts have shown a deficit of £3,196,970, leaving a total net deficit of £2,644,578, made up as follows:—

Year.	Surplus, Adelaide. £	Deficit, Country. £	Total Net deficit. £
1947-48 ..	159,727	493,287	333,560
1948-49 ..	149,869	537,524	387,655
1949-50 ..	101,646	608,964	507,318
1950-51 ..	48,854	738,846	689,992
1951-52 ..	92,296	818,349	726,053
Total ..	£552,392	£3,196,970	£2,644,578

Last year substantial increases in the water rates levied in the Adelaide water district yielded an additional £157,000 from the making of a new assessment, but throughout the whole of the country water districts the earnings from rates and excess water charges yielded only an additional £22,500. With the exception of Barossa and Morgan-Whyalla, all country water districts failed to meet working expenses by £394,076, but, perhaps to a lesser degree, the plea advanced by the Premier on behalf of the railways could be adopted in favour of the waterworks, because

they assist in the general development of the State. However, can the same argument be reasonably advanced to justify the continuing and increasing annual deficits incurred in the State Treasurer's funds employed in connection with irrigation on the River Murray? I do not know the exact figures, but I understand that less than 1,500 settlers directly benefit from the irrigation projects in South Australia, yet last year, according to the Auditor-General's report, the State Treasurer's funds employed in connection with irrigation and reclamation of swamp lands on the River Murray amounted to £4,316,498. In addition, £281,912 was expended on the purchase of land for irrigation purposes. For the year ordinary working expenses exceeding the earnings by £126,974, an increase of £24,076 over the previous year. After providing for debt charges the total deficit for the year amounted to £269,881, an increase of £21,723 over the previous year.

Mr. Stott—Have you included Loxton in that figure?

Mr. PATTINSON—No. The Loxton irrigation area is a Commonwealth project and the capital cost of the head works is not included, but only the State's interest, which consists mainly of buildings, etc., for the administrative staff. The results of operations for the last five years on irrigation and reclamation areas disclose that during that period this undertaking has not met ordinary working expenses. The excess working expenses over earnings have been:—1947-48, £54,831; 1948-49, £63,880; 1949-50, £84,505; 1950-51, £102,898; 1951-52, £126,974; total, £433,088. After adding capital debt charges the total deficits have been:—1947-48, £206,196; 1948-49, £213,139; 1949-50, £234,230; 1950-51, £248,158; 1951-52, £269,881; total, £1,171,604. Perhaps a better comparison and a more striking example of the financial drift can be obtained by comparing the year 1939-40 and the year 1951-52. The capital funds invested by the State in irrigation and reclaimed areas at June 30, 1940, were £4,256,385 and at June 30, 1952, £4,557,235 respectively. Details are as follows:—

	£	£
Up-river	2,918,151	3,266,955
Down-river	1,338,234	1,290,280
	£4,256,385	£4,557,235

The total funds provided for capital purposes included land repurchased for irrigation purposes. The capital funds provided have been

used to create the establishment of nine irrigation areas for fruitgrowing and 11 reclaimed swamp areas for dairying purposes. The chief capital assets consist of pumping stations, channels, pipelines, embankments, drainage works, buildings, bridges, and town reticulation services. These figures do not include

the cost of developing land for the settlement of soldiers after World War I. under the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act. The accumulated losses incurred in these irrigation and reclaimed areas which have been financed from the general revenue of the State are as follow:—

	As at June 30, 1940.	As at June 30, 1952.
Working expenses	32,736 (surplus)	664,148 (deficit)
Capital debt charges for interest on loan money	3,081,623 (deficit)	4,981,345 (deficit)
Total	£3,048,887 (deficit)	£5,645,493 (deficit)

Over the period under review the operations on all the irrigation and reclaimed areas show a retrogression of £696,884, that is, the accumulated excess of working expenses over earnings. This total retrogression in the areas' working accounts, during the past 12 years is due mainly to the increases in wages, cost of firewood, crude oil, and other materials which have been in excess of the increases made in the charges for services to the settlers. To quote a few

examples the average cost of firewood in 1939-40 was 10s. 11d. per ton as compared with the cost of £2 10s. per ton for 1951-52. The basic wage in 1939-40 was £3 18s. per week as compared with £10 11s. per week in May, 1952. During the period in question the annual deficits have continued and increased. The following figures give a comparison of the two years 1939-40 and 1951-52:—

	1939-40.	1951-52.
Earnings	£121,031	£237,922
Operating expenses	116,703	364,896
Resulting in a surplus of	£4,328	and a £126,974 deficit
Add interest charges	£172,211	£142,907
Resulting in deficits of	£167,883	and £269,881

The interest charge has reduced because of the reduction of the interest rate by 1 per cent during the period. The details are:—

	1939-40.		1951-52.	
	£	£	£	£
Earnings—				
Up-river	94,873		204,268	
Down-river	26,158		33,654	
		121,031		237,922
Operating expenses—				
Up-river	88,375		299,038	
Down-river	28,328		65,858	
		116,703		364,896
		Resulting in a surplus of		Resulting in a deficit of
		£4,328		£126,974
Interest charges—				
Up-river	115,496		102,050	
Down-river	56,715		40,857	
		172,211		142,907
		£167,883		£269,881

If that period of 12 years constituted a depression period as we experienced in the 1930's this continuous retrogression could perhaps be explained, even if it could not be justified. But by and large it was a period

of unlimited bounty of nature and of unparalleled prosperity. As I understand the position production on irrigation areas is mainly fruit whilst lessees on reclamation areas mostly engage in dairying, that is in the pre-

duction and sale of whole milk. Let us compare the prices obtained for such produce during the relevant years:—

Variety.	1939-40.	1950-51.	Per cent increase in 1951-52 compared Estimated. with 1939-40.	
			1951-52. Estimated.	%
Dried Fruit (per ton)—	£	£	£	%
Sultanas	32	107	104	225
Currants	25	91	92	268
Lexias	35	109	108	208
Apricots	102	282	340	233
Wine grapes (per ton) (Average price of principal varieties)	7 (1940)	20 (1951)	24 (1952-actual)	243
Citrus (per case) (Navel oranges) . . .	3s. (1940)	17s. 3d. (1951)	20s. (1952)	567
Milk (per gallon) testing 4 per cent butterfat)	6.58d.	21.59d.	26.14d. (actual)	297

During the same period the charges made by the Minister of Irrigation to the settlers have not been commensurate with either the increased prices which they have received for their produce or with the increased charges which the Minister has incurred in materials and wages. As I mentioned earlier the cost of firewood increased from 10s. 11d. in 1939-40 to £2 10s. a ton in 1951-52 an increase of about 350.8 per cent. During the same period the basic wage increased from £3 18s. to £10 11s., an increase of about 170.5 per cent. Yet during the same period the Minister's charges for water supply per acre have been increased by less than a hundred per cent. For example, let us take the highlift schemes. In 1939-40 four irrigations cost £3. In 1950-51 they cost £4 10s. In 1951-52 they cost £5 10s. The total percentage increase in 1951-52 compared with 1939-40 was only 83 per cent. In 1939-40 five irrigations cost £3 10s. In 1950-51 they cost £5 5s. In 1951-52 they cost £6 17s. 6d. This shows a percentage increase in 1951-52 over 1939-40 of 96 per cent. But in cases where the quantity of water used on an area basis did not exceed 30in. per annum a rebate of 10s. per acre was allowed in 1939-40. In 1951-52 the Minister allowed an increased rebate of 15s. per acre. I have not the comparative figures for the charges for special irrigations, but they do not appear to be commensurate with either increased prices or increased costs.

On the reclamation areas the water gravitation and pumping maximum charges in 1939-40 were 30s. an acre and in 1951-52 £3, or an increase of 100 per cent. Even with

an increase of 100 per cent this appears to be a very small charge. I ask leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 6 till 7.30 p.m.

BUDGET DEBATE.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from October 22. Page 1008.)

Legislative Council, £8,314.

Mr. DAVIS (Port Pirie)—I have listened with interest to the remarks of honourable members opposite and was rather amused at the manner in which they tried to hide the misdoings of the Government. One member maintained that the Treasurer had been responsible for the happy position of many of our people because they had Savings Bank accounts, and said he was going to tell members all about it, but he evidently forgot. I should like to know how the Treasurer could be held responsible for these people having banking accounts. Some time ago one member opposite held the Treasurer up as a superman, but apparently now he is Mandrake and can take money from the pockets of the people and place it in the Savings Bank in their interests.

I disagree with much that has been said regarding our railways. Some members have criticized railway costs, but I do not intend to criticize the department for its losses, except to say that the position could be improved. I realize that the railways are engaged in a public service, but am not prepared to agree

that people living in the country should pay higher freight rates than those living in the metropolitan area. The railways have the effect of encouraging people to go into the out-back. I agree that there may have been some mismanagement. The Government is responsible for the haulage of wheat in my district, but instead of wheat within 30 or 40 miles of Port Pirie being sent to that port it is being hauled to Port Adelaide and Wallaroo, which is not an economic practice. This deprives wharf workers in my district of their legitimate earnings. Some time ago many Port Pirie citizens desired to visit Adelaide to view an interstate football match, and were particularly interested because the local team was to play in the curtain-raiser. I approached the Minister of Railways and the Railways Commissioner, but they refused to provide a special train, the Commissioner's only excuse being that it would be necessary to bring it back from Port Pirie. Had the request been granted the railways would have earned about £800 as at least 400 people would have travelled on it. Private bus owners had to come to their rescue and convey them to Adelaide. It is wrong to allow private buses to complete with the railways if we want the railways to pay.

The Government is not making full use of our outports. Port Pirie should be the distributing centre of the north, and the greater use of this port would result in the quicker turn-round of ships visiting South Australia. I cannot understand why the Government should permit all the goods coming in by ship to be unloaded at Port Adelaide, necessitating large quantities being railed to other parts of the State. Port Pirie is the logical unloading port for goods to be sent to the north because of its central position. All the necessary facilities for unloading ships are already available there. I sincerely hope that the Government will consider these matters. I express appreciation to the Minister of Marine for the little work he is doing in Port Pirie. Unfortunately, he waited until the wharves were in such a state that he had to do something or they would have collapsed. The Government is likely to find some of the Port Adelaide wharves in such a condition that it will be necessary to make use of Port Pirie for the unloading of ships which otherwise would have gone to Port Adelaide. Some of the Port Pirie wharves are undermined and are not safe for unloading. It is a disgrace to any Government that the wharves should have

been allowed to get into such a state. The Government makes the excuse that it has not enough money, manpower or materials, but I remind it that the war finished some years ago and I am led to believe that the material position has eased. The wharves should be put in reasonable condition so that ships can be unloaded with safety. Wallaroo is another port which should receive more attention, but I do not like that port taking wheat which should go to Port Pirie.

In presenting his Budget the Treasurer said that South Australia was in a good condition. I should like to know how he can support that contention. In travelling around the country one sees many men carrying their swags. Possibly the Government desires that to continue. Perhaps it is afraid of too much employment. I live at the intersection of the roads leading to Crystal Brook and Port Germein and am surprised to see the number of men who are carrying their swags or looking for rides. The Government says it has been compelled to dismiss a number of its employees. Can it say the State is in a good position if men are being dismissed, resulting in the holding up of essential State work? I have met men from the Waterworks Department who have lost their jobs, and that also applies to other Government activities, and yet the Treasurer tries to tell us that the State is in a good position. I hope the position will improve. I should like to know what the Government intends to do to arrest the unemployment position. In the bigger centres employers are dismissing their men and others are being put on short time.

The Treasurer recently told the Leader of the Opposition that there were 2,340 employees in factories at Port Pirie. I should like to know where he got those figures. Actually there are only two small factories there and they would not employ more than about 200 each. About 1,800 men are employed at the smelting works, and if he includes those his figures would be about right. He was unable to give the employment figures for 1939, and apparently it was convenient to lose them. I should say there were more people employed in Port Pirie in 1939 than there are today. This Government has not given any encouragement to industries established in the country. Some members opposite spoke about employment in mines, but surely they do not wish to give the Treasurer credit for establishing those mines, so they cannot give him credit for keeping those people in employment. I

suppose the Treasurer would even claim that he was responsible for the establishment of the smelters at Port Pirie, but they started before he was born.

Mr. Macgillivray—But apparently that is no real reason why his supporters cannot make such a claim.

Mr. DAVIS—They would claim anything.

Mr. Macgillivray—Exactly.

Mr. DAVIS—They would even claim that the Treasurer was responsible for Port Pirie being there. Three years ago the people in my town were promised a new hospital costing £150,000, but it would cost much more to build today. Arrangements have been made to purchase land adjoining the present hospital to build further wards, but I do not know when we shall get them. I am getting anxious because the population of Port Pirie is increasing and the hospital there has to serve people from surrounding districts. Admittedly, there are hospitals at Crystal Brook and Port Augusta, but as Port Pirie has a population of 13,500 the present building is not adequate. The Government should give the same consideration to country people as those in the metropolitan area. The Government claims that it is doing much in educating the children, but I should like the Minister of Education to visit Port Pirie and see the shocking conditions at the schools there. He has not visited them for six years. It is not safe for children to play in the Solomontown school yard because wild beasts can get in amongst them. Only recently a complaint was made that a child has been almost killed by wild bullocks driven around the town. The stockyards at the Solomontown railway station are close to the school, which is not fenced. The pupils there should be afforded some protection. Port Pirie is the largest town outside the metropolitan area.

Mr. Fletcher—It will soon be recognized as a city.

Mr. DAVIS—Yes, and we should have good schools there, with proper amenities for the children. When speaking on another matter recently I said it was necessary for the Government to accept its responsibilities in providing for aged people in the country. A religious body established an old folk's home for the people of Port Pirie and surrounding districts. The people concerned purchased the property when buildings were much cheaper than they are now. It can accommodate 12 to 15 people, and the organization looks after the inmates with support from local residents, many of whom work in the smelters

and pay so much a week for the upkeep of the home. However, this is not really their responsibility. The Government is not even prepared to subsidize the money collected. I said recently that the conditions under which some of our old people are living are a disgrace to any Government. One old man with a broken leg lay in a shack for a week before he was discovered. He was in a state of collapse and was taken to hospital, but died. It is terrible that old people who gave this country yeoman service are not now wanted in the community. I went into the country in 1884, so I can claim to be one of the pioneers of South Australia, and know some of the conditions under which they laboured for the benefit of the State.

The member for Burra referred to statements by the Leader of the Opposition that some of our wheatgrowing areas were going out of production. Mr. Hawker said this was a good thing for the country because it is necessary to rest the land. Anyone with commonsense knows that the land will not grow wheat year after year. I could probably give the member for Burra a few lessons on farming. He said that farmers have gone in more for grazing because there are greater profits in wool. This is not a great thing for South Australia, but for the woolgrower, who is filling his pockets with good, hard cash. If there is a fall in the price of wool he will go back to wheatgrowing, so he gets it both ways. It does not matter at all to the member for Burra; he has the cash and he has the land. I do not know what he will do with his surplus money. How often we find people living in luxury, with large holdings and big incomes, saying that the men earning the wealth for them should work harder. They say everyone should pull his weight. I wonder how much weight the member for Burra ever put into anything? I have never seen him on the end of a pick or shovel, but the poor old wage slaves have to produce for him. They have to pull their weight, and he is behind them with a whip. It is all very well for him to tell us what we have to do—that we have to pull together. If he were in the team I would not like to be his mate: I would be pulling the lot. It annoys members on this side of the House to hear members opposite continually criticizing the wage earners. Year in and year out they tell us that the man working for a wage must do a decent day's work. This afternoon Government members were prepared to take away

some of the working conditions that our forefathers had won after years of fighting. They would not give the hairdresser any spare time. They wanted him to be available whenever people wanted their hair cut.

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member cannot debate a matter that has already been decided by the House.

Mr. DAVIS—I object to members on the Government side trying to take away some of the working conditions. Now in the Arbitration Court representatives of employers are seeking to take away something we were told to go to the court to get. People who do such things are not honest, and are doing something to the detriment of Australia. They are taking the bread and butter from the wives and children of the workers. It would be impossible for any member on the Government side to keep a wife and family on the basic wage, yet callous employers go to the court and say that the standard of living of workers must be reduced. On the other hand they say to the employees, "If you want better working conditions go to the Arbitration Court." What do members opposite want? They are driving the workers back to the days of jungle law. I will always fight to prevent employers from taking from workers conditions that were obtained from the Arbitration Court. I do not think the court will reduce wages or extend working hours, because it knows what the effect will be on the economy of Australia. I have every faith in the Arbitration Court judges in this matter. I have not always agreed with their decisions, but they are honest men and will not take from the workers anything to which they are entitled. I hope the matters I have mentioned will receive the consideration of the Government. The position in South Australia in many respects must be improved, and that covers country districts.

Mr. STEPHENS (Port Adelaide)—In discussing these Estimates I find myself in a peculiar position. Members are not allowed to move for an increase in the proposed expenditure, and if they move for a reduction it is regarded as a vote of no confidence in the Government. Therefore, it hardly seems necessary to debate the Estimates. When the Premier says that something must be done that is the end of it. Parliament does not decide matters. Everything is fixed before it comes to Parliament, and Government members are told how they must vote. Even if they think an item of expenditure should be reduced they are afraid to move that way because it

will be taken as a vote of no confidence in their leader. As it is useless bringing many matters forward I shall not speak for long, but there are several items to which I want to refer. Some members say the Budget is satisfactory, but I hold a different view. We are told that the best way to prevent war is to be prepared for it, and the best way to meet unemployment is to prepare for it. Mr. Davis said that hundreds of men are carrying their swags along country roads. I have not seen that but in Port Adelaide able men are looking for work.

Mr. McLachlan—We could do with them at the Port Adelaide wool stores.

Mr. STEPHENS—The honourable member wants the men to sacrifice their principles and go back to work with employers who broke a promise. Because they will not do so it is regarded as a terrible thing, but it is all right when primary producers say they will let potatoes rot if they cannot get a higher price. We have hundreds of men looking for work. Mr. Shannon said that the Government had caught up the lag in housing, but I interjected that it was not so. I pointed out that it might be so in his district because people had received favours. Some people who applied for Housing Trust houses in 1946 are still on the waiting list. We promised ex-servicemen all sorts of things if they would go and fight for Australia. We promised them preference, yet every week ex-servicemen come to me for help in getting houses, and I have been successful in only a few cases. Today I was told that returned soldiers who applied for Housing Trust Homes in 1948 are still waiting for them. This morning some people called at Parliament House and asked me for help in getting emergency homes. They knew that they would be unable to get trust houses because their applications had been in only for eight months. It makes one feel sad to look opposite and see members smiling as if this matter were a joke. They do not know the conditions under which some little children have to live. They do not see children's beds being made up in sheds, stables and other draughty places. I can produce medical evidence to show that it is unhealthy for children to occupy such places. I think it was stated in the Governor's Speech three years ago that the Federal Government had agreed to bring migrants to South Australia and that the State Government would provide homes and find employment for them. When I asked the Premier where the homes

would be found he said the migrants had not arrived and the position would be met when they did. I have seen the conditions in the wool stores at Port Adelaide occupied by migrants and Government supporters should visit them and see some of the poverty and bad conditions under which these people live. It will not be long before many men are on the dole again.

The Hon. T. Playford—Which State Governments are putting people on the dole?

Mr. STEPHENS—There has been a Liberal Government in power ever since I have been here. I mentioned the matter to the Hon. S. W. Jeffries, who was Minister of Industry and Employment at the time. He admitted the position, as I put it to him, and I say, to his everlasting credit, that he helped me in several cases.

The Hon. T. Playford—Which Governments have put men off and which have kept men on?

Mr. STEPHENS—A Liberal Government was in power when men were lined up to receive their rations. They were allowed 4s. 8d. a week for groceries, an amount less than was required to keep an Alsatian dog. I never want to see those conditions again.

The Hon. T. Playford—Which Governments are putting men off today?

Mr. STEPHENS—I am not talking about Governments putting men off, but I know that the Engineering and Water Supply Department at Port Adelaide recently put off many men. I can give their names, if required. What I am saying is perfectly true.

The Hon. T. Playford—Which State has the biggest percentage of unemployed?

Mr. STEPHENS—I do not know, but it is no credit to whichever State has unemployed. The Premier should accept responsibility in this matter and try to prevent unemployment. The Government should use some of the money to start more industries, preferably in the country. I know what has been done in Port Adelaide and why the Government will not establish industries in the country. It is afraid to do so because it does not favour decentralization. If we had decentralization there would be more workers in the country and some members would lose their seats.

The Hon. T. Playford—But which State has the biggest percentage of unemployed?

Mr. STEPHENS—Members are trying to draw a red herring across the track and make excuses.

The Hon. T. Playford—You are trying to draw a red herring across the track by men-

tioning conditions which existed when a Labor Government was in power here. You want this Government to take the responsibility for those conditions.

Mr. STEPHENS—Mr. Jeffries was Minister of Industry and Employment in a Liberal Government at the time that unemployed were receiving a paltry supply of rations. Many men are looking for homes and many applying for relief because of unemployment. That cannot be challenged. Although men are ready, able and willing to work we are told that the State is in a fine position. I admit that for a few years workers have had better wages and working conditions, with less unemployment, but at the same time others have received bigger dividends. I would like to know, with all this talk of the 40-hour week, of men going slow and high wages, how many firms have become bankrupt since the 40-hour week was introduced. I do not mind business men getting bigger dividends, but I object to members sarcastically referring to high wages and the 40-hour week. No mention is made of high dividends by those who receive them. Some members only like to hear one side of a case and desire to push the lower dog down still further. They should adopt the christian motto of "Do unto others as you would others do unto you." I have heard some members complain about land being heavily taxed. Where did the big landowners get their land from in the first place? God gave the land to the people and some robbed others to get more. Some of them are now living a life of luxury on land which was stolen from others.

Mr. Pearson—Stolen from whom?

Mr. STEPHENS—From the blacks in the first place.

Mr. Pearson—My land was scrub when I got it and I fought for it, too.

Mr. STEPHENS—Mr. Hawker strongly objected to the land tax. He said land should not be so heavily taxed and the income of landowners interfered with, but he does not mind interfering with the income of the workers who produce everything we have. It is the workers who make our clothes, build our roads, manufacture our foodstuffs and the clothes we wear and who build ships, aeroplanes and railway trains for people to travel in. They are entitled to something better, and should be given something before the Arbitration Court orders it. I was a trade union secretary for many years and conducted cases in the Court of Industrial Appeals. I had to fight for a reduction in the working hours from 60

to 58, and the employers in the carrying industry said that if the hours were reduced the industry would go out of business. Mr. Justice Gordon replied that if they were forced out of the business it would not do any harm because someone else would take it up, and it would be better for them to go out of business than that the workers should be penalized. Members have complained about the 40-hour week but no body of employers has ever voluntarily approached a union and offered to reduce the number of hours.

Mr. Pearson—Has any union ever offered to work an additional number of hours?

Mr. STEPHENS—No, but the employers tell the court that they cannot carry on their businesses if the working week is reduced. The carriers referred to complained that they would have to close their businesses, but a week after reduced hours were awarded they worked their employees for 48 hours and reduced the wages. When threatened with a strike they worked the men the full week and paid the full wages. We were told the 40-hour week would ruin industry, but no industry has gone out of existence; in fact, increased dividends have been declared.

Mr. Pearson—And prices have gone up.

Mr. STEPHENS—But the worker has had to pay the increased costs. If some of our wealthy industrialists were asked to do a hard day's work they would starve.

Mr. McLachlan—History would repeat itself and they would soon be rich again.

Mr. STEPHENS—If they were put on an island they would starve, but the working man would make his living.

Mr. Pearson—Do you admit that high wages mean high costs?

Mr. STEPHENS—Yes, but wages only follow costs. To stop the increase in wages prices must be pegged. There is no increase in the cost of living if there is no increase in prices and the quarterly adjustments are based on figures supplied by the Federal Statistician. No one State can control prices, but if the Prices Ministers were prepared to peg prices from a specified date there would be no further increases in the cost of living. Employers, however, want wages pegged while they continue to receive increased prices.

I regret that no provision has been made to cater for our increased unemployment. The people will not again submit to the conditions they were forced to live under some 20 years ago and will not line up for relief. They were told that no money was available to feed them, but ample money was found to

send men overseas to fight, and if it can be found to take human life it should be found to save it. It is no use suggesting that the police force will be able to control the unemployed, because they will be driven to desperate measures and I hope I am not here to witness the results. I trust the Government will endeavour to prevent unemployment by starting more industries in country areas.

Mr. MOIR (Norwood)—It is time we changed the diet and gave the Government credit for the good it has produced. Had the Premier been granted a larger amount from the Grants Commission we would have had a more liberal Budget than this, but as the money was not forthcoming the departments had to work out their sections and the Government did a good job. Mention was made of people carrying swags, particularly between Port Pirie and Port Augusta. In the last nine months I have travelled through that area on four occasions and only once did I see a man carrying his swag, and that was between Crystal Brook and Port Pirie. I gave him a lift and he said that he was only carrying his swag because he was going from one job to another and it was easier for him to carry his parcels by swag. A number of those who are carrying swags are no doubt going from job to job. I am pleased that the Municipal Tramways Trust Act Amendment Bill has been passed because it will afford the councils relief for a few years—and I hope for ever. Had the Premier received more money the Government could have proceeded with important projects like reservoirs and the building of brick and masonry schools instead of the temporary buildings which are being erected and which are costly to dismantle and transfer from place to place. It is to be hoped that in the near future when supplies of brick and cement become available we shall be able to erect permanent schools. Much has been said about the plight of the aged pensioners, whom it is said the Government is doing very little for, but I assure members that a strong committee, including State and Federal members is working very hard on a scheme for the erection of pensioners' cottage homes in my district. So far between £2,000 and £3,000 has been raised, and it is hoped that when the amount reaches £5,000 homes will be built and a satisfactory case submitted for a Government subsidy, which will mean that we can go ahead with the erection of eight of these homes. We have been working on this scheme only a little more

than 12 months, so members can see that the committee is not letting the grass grow under its feet. When a vote was taken on a certain motion in this House last week I was asked by way of interjection, "Aren't there any pensioners in the Norwood district?", and I believe the reason for that question was that I voted against the motion, but I vote as I see fit and not as anyone tells me to.

About 10 years ago land was purchased in Norwood for the erection of a technical school, and recently residents in that area were fortunate enough to have the workshop for that school opened on that site. The school at Norwood is overcrowded like schools in the Port Adelaide district which I have inspected. We have had to wait 10 years to secure this workshop, and the new school has yet to be built. Residents in that area will have to keep their pecker up and await their turn.

Provision has been made for the carrying out of compulsory tests for the detection of tuberculosis, and I have been a great advocate of such tests ever since I became a member of this House. The first time I mentioned it the idea was pooh-poohed, but I believe that whether certain ideas are adopted depends on who introduces them. After two or three years somebody thought this idea was a good one and it was put into effect. Such tests should be compulsory, and every young couple should be subject to an X-ray before marriage.

I wish this Government had some say with regard to the means test for aged pensioners instead of the matter being entirely controlled by the Commonwealth Government. The means test should be lifted to a certain figure so that people of the ordinary class who have worked for years in an effort to secure one or two houses of their own would not be barred from receiving the pension. As action in this direction cannot be taken by this Government the Federal Government should do something about the matter. Had a compulsory insurance scheme for the workers been introduced before the war there would have been no need for this plea for pensioners' homes and other amenities, for when people retired they would have been able to buy their own homes either with their own savings or with a little Government support.

The sum of £500,000 granted to the Tramways Trust will relieve councils of much worry, and if the new trust is appointed immediately I believe it will take every month of 10 years to put the undertaking back on a good footing. We have heard much about

the deficits of the railways and other public utilities. I do not complain about that, for they are public utilities and we must all share in those deficits whether we be city or country people. I am always pleased to support any move for the benefit of South Australia generally and not for any one part in particular. The Budget is a good one and I hope that next year the Government will go ahead and build some more homes for aged pensioners and other needy people. The member for Port Adelaide had a tremor in his voice as he said that he had obtained one or two houses from the Housing Trust to meet urgent cases. I have not got that tremor, but I can assure members that I have approached the trust on behalf of certain of my constituents. In some cases I felt sure that I would get a house, but I came away from the trust with a drooping lip because I did not receive one. In other cases I have gone in doubting whether my request would be acceded to and have been promised a home. The Housing Trust investigates all these cases, and credit must be given to it for the way it does its job. When its officers inspect an applicant's living conditions they naturally take stock of all the conditions in that home and they cannot be blamed for selecting those applicants they consider will look after Government property, for we hear of many complaints from landlords who will not spend money on property while their present tenants retain possession, and under the present Landlord and Tenant Act it is difficult to get them out of those houses. Such landlords cannot be blamed for refusing to spend more money, for in some cases windows have been smashed and roofing and water pipes have been broken by tenants. I have been very satisfied with the activities of the Housing Trust which, if unable to do anything for an applicant, has always been reasonably quick in replying to that effect and saying when an improvement in the situation can be expected. We have a good Budget and I hope it will go through.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

SALE OF GOODS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS (Minister of Agriculture), having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Sale of Goods Act, 1895-1943. Read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 8.56 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, October 23, at 2 p.m.