HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, November 19, 1952.

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

POLICE REGULATION BILL.

The Lieutenant-Governor, by message, recommended to the House the appropriation of such amounts of the general revenue of the State as were required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

QUESTIONS.

NEW NORTHERN PIPELINE.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier any further information following on the question I asked yesterday as to which towns and districts would be served by the proposed new pipeline from Hanson northwards?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Mr. Dridan, the Engineer in Chief, has supplied the following report:—

Since completion of the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline there have been a number of major developments which will add very greatly to the demand for water from this pipeline. These include the Woomera supply, the new power station at Port Augusta and the accompanying expansion of that town and anticipated developments in Port Pirie, which include a plant to treat uranium concentrates. It is apparent from these developments that the time is approaching when duplication of a section of the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline will be necessary to assure an ample supply of water for all purposes—particularly during droughts which occur periodically in our northern areas. Obviously the State would not obtain full value for the money expended if a new pipeline were laid alongside the existing one, but would obtain the maximum benefit from the duplication if the duplicate line followed a new route and brought a water supply to a new and large group of citizens. Detailed surveys have not yet been made, but broadly speaking the proposal is to pump water from the pipeline near Hanson to a service reservoir about 3 miles west of Burra. A branch line would be laid to Burra and the main line would continue through Booboorowie, pass several miles south of Jamestown and through Caltowie and Wirrabarra to the head of the Port Germein Gorge. It would then extend through the Gorge to connect with the existing pipeline about four miles east of Port Germein. In addition to supplying the towns mentioned and rural areas along its route, the new pipeline would bring Murray water within reach of a large area of good country.

EYRE HIGHWAY.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Apart from catering for local traffic, the Eyre Highway is also the route to Western Australia and carries a large volume of heavy interstate traffic. One Federal authority, the Wheat Board, last year carted many hundreds of thousands of bags of wheat over it. During the last 12 months many stretches of this important highway have had nothing done to them by way of maintenance, and consequently today it is in a shocking state; in fact, it is one of the worst roads on which I have travelled in the world, and it is positively dangerous for the carting of stock. The other day I took six hours to travel 90 miles over it, the journey resulting in a broken wheel and, I think, the loss of some stock. Some hundreds of thousands of head of stock have to be moved from Eyre Peninsula to market to help in the food production drive on which we have embarked, but unless this road can be put into better shape large numbers will not be able to be moved because of its condition. Can the Minister of Works say whether more adequate financial help can be provided to the councils which are responsible for their sections of the road, or, alternatively, whether some additional grant from Federal sources can be made available to get this road back into something like decent shape?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—All the money received by way of revenue from motor registration fees, licence fees, and Federal aid grants, plus some loan funds, go into the South Australian road fund, and is not allocated by the Minister as such, but, with the exception of a few detailed items provided for in the Act, it is by Act placed under the control of the Commissioner of Highways. I regret to hear that the condition of Eyre Highway is so bad, but that was brought about by two factors which I hope will not be continuous. The first was the unduly large amount of road transport which was necessitated because of a breakdown in shipping. To a large extent that has been overcome and ships now on interstate services will take care of a great deal of the traffic that formerly went by road. The other factor was the carting of wheat along the highway, which arose to some extent from the lack of co-ordination between the Wheat Board, the Barley Board and the Railways Department; but that has now been overcome too and further plant is available. There remains the problem of how quickly we can reconstruct the road, and I will immediately inquire of the Commissioner of Highways to see to what extent the remedy can be applied as early as possible. It is the desire of the Government to see that every arterial road gets a fair share of the funds allocated by Parliament for expenditure on roads. In that direction I will take an

interest in the matter and advise the honourable member as soon as I have received a report from the Highways Commissioner.

MOORLANDS COALFIELD.

Mr. McKENZIE—I heard this morning over the air that another pocket of coal, about 24,000,000 tons, had been found on the Moorlands field. I have been questioning the Premier for the last 15 years about the development of the field. Now that we are short of foodstuffs we should get the coal, generate electricity and pump millions of gallons of water, now going into the sea, whereby we could feed the city of Adelaide and half the State. What does the Premier intend to do to open up the Moorlands coalfield?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I did not hear the broadcast referred to, but I have no doubt it is related to investigations which were carried out some time ago. I feel that the quantity of 24,000,000 tons was taken from a report by the Director of Mines. It does not represent a new find of coal, but a statement in the Mines Department records. I have already informed members that the matter is before the Electricity Trust, which is at present investigating the possibilities of the field.

SEPTIC TANK SYSTEM AT STRATHALBYN.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—The Strathalbyn Corporation proposes to compulsorily install septic tanks through the town to replace the existing pan system of night soil disposal. On inquiring of the Engineering and Water Supply Department it has been informed that there should be sufficient water for the scheme except in dry years when garden and other restrictions would have to be imposed. In view of the health aspect of the antiquated method of the night soil disposal, it is urgent that the new system be installed and that sufficient water be made available. Can the Minister of Works inform me whether any steps have been taken to construct a further reservoir, enlarge the present one, or make other provision?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have a lengthy report from the Engineer for Water Supply, which is supported by the Engineer-in-Chief. It is a long report and contains a mass of detail in connection with consumption, storage, and services, and as it would not be possible to summarize the information effectively I will let the honourable member have full details by way of letter. It is significant that the following sentence occurs in the report:—

It would be exceedingly difficult, particularly in the present period of restricted Loan funds, to justify expenditure on increasing the storage capacity at Strathalbyn while there are uncompleted schemes for other towns and country lands which have no supply at all, and while there are existing supplies that are in urgent need of improvement.

Any scheme would mean a reference to the Public Works Committee and then the appropriation of funds by Parliament, so there is no likelihood of considerable work being undertaken in the near future.

COMMONWEALTH HOSTELS LIMITED.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Was the Premier advised by the Crown Law office that Commonwealth Hostels Limited was, prior to October 16, 1952, bound by the South Australian Prices Act and the declarations and orders thereunder? Was any request (and if so, what request) made by the Commonwealth Government to the Premier as State Prices Minister specifically to exempt Commonwealth Hostels Limited from the provisions of the Prices Act?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—As Prices Minister, it has always been considered by me that the Commonwealth is not bound by State legislation where the matter comes under Commonwealth constitutional authority. One sovereign authority cannot bind another, and that has been held in Privy Council cases on a number of occasions. We do not regard the Commonwealth as coming within the scope of State prices laws. On occasions when it was raised the Commonwealth replied that it did not consider that it came within the scope of State prices law and consequently the matter was not further considered. Recently there was a suggestion that the Commonwealth is bound by State prices laws. When it was made I made it quite clear that the position we had always regarded as obtaining did in fact obtain.

ANTI-MOSQUITO CAMPAIGN.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Premier anything further to report regarding the efficiency of the anti-mosquito campaign conducted at Mildura, and also the availability of plant for such experiments in South Australia?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I requested the Chief Horticulturist to give me a report on the machine I mentioned in my reply to the honourable member on November 11, and he now reports as follows:—

The spraying machine now being tested by the Department of Agriculture is one designed for automatic application of concentrated insecticidal and fungicidal sprays to orchard trees. A strong blast of air is used to mist spray mixtures four to eight times normal

strength and convey them to the trees. Promising results have been received with this plant, but it is designed for horticultural use and is dissimilar to the fogging plant used at Mildura for mosquito control. The plant which was used at Mildura is thought to be similar to several which are carrying out contract insecticidal fogging of theatres, warehouses, etc., in Adelaide. These plants produce a fog, rather than a mist, and in the open, with favourable atmospheric conditions, the fog will drift for considerable distances. Whether the Mildura trial will result in effective control of mosquitoes remains to be seen, but if fogging is proved to be worth while there are contractors in Adelaide who can provide treatment similar to that recently carried out at Mildura.

SHEEP SKIN PRICES.

Mr. HEASLIP—Earlier in the session I drew the attention of the Premier to the disparity between sheep skin prices in South Australia and Western Australia. My latest information is that the disparity still exists. As late as early in November the disparity was 9½d. a pound. Can the Premier say why this is so?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member must realize that sheep skins are not subject to price control, and in any case the control would deal only with the maximum price. I have received a report from the Prices Commissioner, which I will supply to the honourable member, and also a report from the general manager of the Government Produce Department, Mr. Rice. Mr. Rice's report deals more particularly with the disparity, and I will read it for the honourable member's information:—

The prices of skins as set out by the Prices Commissioner correspond with the analysis of interstate sales made by stock firms and brokers for the period under review. I agree with the Prices Commissioner that it is difficult to obtain a true comparison between States. Variables, such as quality and yield of wool, freedom from burr, textures of pelt, "ribbiness," etc., all play a part in determining values. Moreover public auctions are notoriously hard to follow as regards price, where overseas conditions, particular needs, and prejudices also count. Moreover the cross-section of prices mentioned by Mr. Heaslip relates only to five weeks and to a period immediately preceding the flush of the lamb season. On general economic grounds, the higher prices prevailing in Western Australia could result from the following influences:—

(1) A higher proportion of Merino skins in Western Australia than in South Australia.
(2) Competition among fellmongers.
(3) Western Australia's isolation from eastern markets for sources of supply.

In regard to the proportion of Merino flocks, as at March 31, 1950, the following statement sets out the breeds of the flocks in South Australia and Western Australia:—

	S.A. approx. Percentage.	W.A. approx. Percentage.
Merino	81	88
Other recognized breeds	7	5
Comebacks	2	1
Crossbreds	10	6

This proportion of Merino breed would give the balance of value to W.A. There are four fellmongers in Western Australia actually engaged in the business of fellmongering. There are also four in South Australia, but the bulk of the business is confined to two firms—G. H. Michell & Sons Ltd., and Foster & Sons Ltd., and in a lesser degree, Jowitt & Sons Ltd. Competition may force prices higher in Western Australia, and in any case, fellmongers could afford to pay more in Western Australia, rather than compete in the eastern markets, with the additional costs of carriage of skins back to Western Australia. Generally, the explanations given should be regarded as factors influencing the price in favour of Western Australia, and not as a factual explanation of the differences in price.

It would be very difficult to get a full explanation of the differences in the prices that may exist in two markets of this sort, but Mr. Rice has supplied that explanation as general background information.

SWEETMAN'S ROAD DRAIN.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Minister of Local Government any further information to give in reply to the question I asked recently about the completion of the drain on Sweetman's Road?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have conferred with the Highways Commissioner on the matter. The drain is on a district road and the gang working on it had to be transferred to more urgent work so that other people would not suffer. I understand that the condition of the drain now is such that it is not likely to affect by flooding any of the surrounding areas. The gang that were there are still engaged on the work to which they were shifted, and the Commissioner cannot yet say when he can send them back. However, the matter will not be overlooked and during the recess I will take it up personally with the honourable member to see whether work on the drain can be completed in the near future.

THEBARTON BOYS TECHNICAL SCHOOL.

Mr. FRED WALSH—It has been brought under my notice that the side and rear fences of the Thebarton Boys Technical School are in a bad state of repair and that as a result,

mainly on week-ends, unauthorized persons get into the school yard, use the conveniences and leave obscene writings on the walls. On some occasions windows have been broken. The position has not yet reached the stage that could be termed vandalism. To prevent that state of affairs will the Minister refer to the Architect-in-Chief's Department the matter of repairing the fences at the rear and side of the school?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will do that immediately.

THEVENARD SLIPWAY.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Last June, following on a visit to Thevenard where I conferred with the local fishermen's organization, I came back with a request that they needed a little financial assistance to provide themselves with a boat slipway. Thevenard is the second largest fishing port in South Australia and produces a great volume of fish. Sixty or 70 boats operate there. The Government has proposed the provision of a boat haven there, but the urgent need now is for some facilities for slipping boats. I think this matter has been under investigation by several Government departments and we are naturally anxious for some result. Can the Minister of Marine inform me where the matter stands at the moment and when we may expect some action?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Following on representations made to me personally and to the Chief Engineer of the Harbors Board, the issue was that the lessee of the slipway at Thevenard was open to grant his rights in it for what was regarded as a reasonable sum. By arrangement, after that consultation, an engineer from the department visited Thevenard last week. I have not yet received his report, but I will get it and hope to bring it down tomorrow. We are anxious to finalize this matter and it would be a real help if we could get possession of that slipway and make it efficient, for even as a temporary structure it could carry on for some time.

RADIUM HILL WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Can the Premier say whether the matter of providing a permanent water supply for Radium Hill has developed any further since I asked a question two or three weeks ago?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The requirement position has altered materially since the honourable member asked his question because we have found in practice that certain plant that we considered would be a large user of fresh water can be successfully operated on the semi-brackish water available at the field. Consequently fresh water would be required only for domestic purposes, and that, of course, makes it impracticable to consider the installation of a pipeline several hundreds of miles long for that purpose. The Government has approved of local water reticulation services in the town and also the development of local dams and catchments at a cost of about £220,000, compared with a cost for taking water by a long pipeline of about £1,000,000, and very expensive water at that.

Mr. Christian—What about trying the new de-salting method with the brackish water?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have already said that the brackish water previously thought unsuitable can be used for industrial purposes with a slight additional cost in the treatment of the ore. That enables another project for which finance had not been available to be considered. I refer to the extension of the railway line to Radium Hill. That is a very urgent work for which no provision had been made in the previous negotiations with the Overseas Uranium Development Committee. So the present position is that certain local catchments will be developed (that would have been done in any case, to a large extent, under the other scheme) and we will ask for a diversion of £300,000 to the railway extension.

STOCK KILLING AT ABATTOIRS.

Mr. HEASLIP—Concerning the difficulty of killing stock at the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs, can the Minister of Agriculture say whether all chains are now in operation? If not, would it be possible even at this late stage to employ some of the unemployed, even if unskilled, so that they could be taught how to kill, and thus have more slaughter men available for the future?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The information given to me this morning is that the full chains are not to be worked because of the shortage of men. In order to work the four full chains a certain number of knife men are necessary. For some time the Abattoirs have trained knife men during the off season. That cannot be done during the killing season because the quality of the work deteriorates, but I am informed that the Abattoirs Board is doing everything possible to get sufficient men next year to operate four chains fully.

USE OF NATIONAL CREDIT.

Mr. McKENZIE—Recently I thought I heard the Treasurer say in a broadcast that he favoured the introduction of national credit to develop this country. Is that what he actually meant?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will forward the honourable member a copy of my remarks so that he will be fully informed on the topic.

STIRLING NORTH TO BRACHINA RAILWAY.

Mr. RICHES—Is the Premier now in a position to make available the report of the Royal Commission on the Stirling North-Brachina railway project; also, have negotiations with the Commonwealth over the payment of compensation resulting from the construction of this railway proceeded any further?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I verified the position and find that the earlier statement I gave the honourable member was correct—that the documents sent to the Government were to be regarded as confidential. Therefore, I am not in a position to release them for publication or general use. The Commonwealth has not replied to the other communications.

HOUSING IMPROVEMENT LEGISLATION.

Mr. RICHES—Can the Treasurer inform me whether any money is available for councils or local boards of health under the housing improvement legislation? If not, have any housing improvement schemes been put into effect anywhere in the State, and if so where; and if not, can he say whether there is any likelihood of the Government coming to the aid of local boards of health which desire to take advantage of the provisions of the Act? A rather serious situation has arisen at Port Augusta, where in the older part of the town houses are falling into disrepair and are positively dangerous. Last week a child suffered a fractured skull because of falling timber, and the place is overrun with rats. It is felt that we have been waiting for years for housing improvement schemes as envisaged by the legislation.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—So far as I know, outside the metropolitan area only Port Pirie has made a request to come under the provisions of the Housing Improvement Act. However, I will examine the position and advise the honourable member whether that is correct and what steps should be taken to invoke the Act as regards his area, if he thinks it desirable.

ACIDS FOR SUPERPHOSPHATE.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Although I regard the reply given by the Premier yesterday to my question regarding the manufacture of superphosphate as satisfactory, one point to me is somewhat obscure. The Premier said:—

> Production costs are higher on Eyre Peninsula. This is largely due to high-costing imported brimstone being used exclusively in the manufacture of sulphuric acid in superphosphate on Eyre Peninsula, whereas manufacturers on the mainland use a proportion of the lower-costing acid produced locally.

This results in a higher cost of 4s. a ton to Eyre Peninsula primary producers. Is there any good reason why factories on Eyre Peninsula have to depend exclusively on the high costing imported brimstone, whereas the mainland factories have available to them at lower cost the locally produced acid?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There are three chemical companies manufacturing superphosphate—Wallaroo-Mount Lyell Fertilizers Ltd., Adelaide Chemical and Fertilizer Co. Ltd., and Cresco Fertilizers Ltd. For a number of years the first two companies had been getting their acids substantially from the trapping of the gases from the burning of zinc concentrates at Wallaroo, Port Pirie and Birkenhead. These companies do not operate on Eyre Peninsula. I believe the Cresco Company has operated its plant almost exclusively on imported brimstone. Certainly, that is the position at Port Lincoln and I believe it is the position here.

Mr. Christian—Can't they get the locally made stuff?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I understand that the plants they operate were not designed for that purpose. The contracts for the zinc concentrates are of very long standing. I believe they were first entered into when the value of the sulphur content in the zinc was not fully recognized. They are now terminating without any hope of renewal because of the altered circumstances of the industry in Tasmania. That is one reason why it is so necessary to press ahead with the development of the pyrites field, for that will take the place of the zinc concentrate source of acid which will no longer be available. I understand the companies propose to enable it to be carried on until pyrites is available. In any case the acid plants at Wallaroo, Port Pirie and, I believe, Birkenhead are all now at a stage where it would be necessary, if they were to continue for that purpose, for heavy expenditures to be incurred on them. For some time it has been known that this process

would not be continued and the normal upkeep of the plants has been allowed to go by the board and the plants cannot long continue in operation. I will inquire whether the Cresco Company uses any locally-supplied acid, but I do not think it does.

INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE.

Mr. RICHES—Several small industries in and around Adelaide are threatened with the possibility or having to close down because of the difficulty in their arranging for payment for work done for Victoria and other States. Their closing down would be a loss to South Australia. I also understand that small industries which were recommended in two instances by the Industries Devolpment Committee have not been assisted by the Government up to the present. Can the Treasurer say whether the moneys available for this purpose are exhausted and what is the present policy of the Government with regard to the encouragement of industries.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government does not normally make finance available in connection, with the Industries Development Act, but the industry concerned is able to secure the money through the normal channels with the guarantee that the Government will see that the institution is protected against loss. It is true that on a number of occasions the Industries Development Committee has recommended guarantees and in some instances the Government has not approved of them. In one instance the Committee made a recommendation with two of its five members dissenting, which was not in the Government's opinion sufficient where Government moneys were to be expended. On another occasion where the committee had made a recommendation and the question of a house for the applicant was involved, the applicant desiring to build a substantial house superior to that normally provided through the Housing Trust, the committee made certain recommendations which were not acceptable to the applicant. Although he was offered a grant under certain conditions which were fairly closely in line with those recommended he deferred action in the matter. Broadly speaking, the Government desires to assist industries through this legislation, which has been a valuable means of assisting them in the past.

Mr. Riches—The Government is still open to receive applications?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. I am not quite sure whether funds are available in South Australia to the extent of providing for default in payment by another State Government. That would have far-reaching implications. Our own legitimate trade works might be prejudiced and we would receive many applications on those lines. At present, as far as I know, no applications for assistance are outstanding and any application will receive the same consideration as hitherto.

STAMP DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 13. Page 1347.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This measure is another of the levelling up measures which members are being asked to consider and it is designed to bring our Stamp Duty charges into line with the Australian average. It is interesting to note that the history of this legislation does not square with the statement of the member for Burnside, when speaking on another measure yesterday afternoon that the Liberal Party had been responsible for all great reforms, for the Liberal Party has been responsible in this State for all taxation by means of stamp duty. In 1886 a duty of one penny on each cheque was fixed, and obviously at that stage the Labor Party could not be blamed for it because the Party had not then been organized. In 1927 a Liberal and Country League Government increased stamp duty on cheques to twopence with the proviso that a penny halfpenny should be charged on all cheques under £2. In 1938 the stamp duty on cheques of over £2 was reduced to 1½d. and the Liberal and Country League Party must be given credit for that reduction, for it was in power at that time. Now it is suggested that the rate be increased by a halfpenny all round. This will mean a small addition to the revenue of the State, but unless it is implemented with discretion there might be considerable inconvenience during the transitional period. I understand that in Committee a proposal to overcome the difficulty will be made. The duty is already 2d. in the mainland States; in Tasmania it is 3d. With the knowledge that if we do not subscribe to the Australian standard we will be penalized by the Commonwealth Grants Commission I offer no objection to the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 passed.

Clause 4—"Additional duty on cheques with impressed stamps."

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I move—

To insert after "adhesive" in new section 47a the words "or impressed."

When the Bill was drafted the information I had was that it would be highly inconvenient, if not impossible, to denote the additional halfpenny duty on existing cheque forms by impressed stamps. The Bill therefore provided for adhesive stamps. However, the banks have made proposals to the Government for denoting the duty by impressed stamps and it may be possible to make some arrangements for this purpose. In order to provide for this possibility it is necessary to amend the Bill so that it will permit the additional duty to be denoted by an impressed stamp. A new clause has been drafted to remove some of the inconvenience which may arise as soon as the new rates come into force. Bank customers will be holding a fair number of cheque books containing 1½d. cheque forms and it has been ascertained that the placing of additional halfpenny stamps on these forms will lead to a slowing down of business and considerable work and inconvenience. The banks have asked therefore that the new duty should not apply to cheque forms issued by the banks before the new rates of duty become operative. The Government is satisfied that this request is reasonable and the new clause has been drafted to meet the position. These two amendments will overcome the difficulty of placing adhesive ½d. stamps on cheques, which would be an expensive and tedious job. Under the proposal new cheques will have the additional ½d. stamp impressed on them. I do not think that it will make any difference to the amount of revenue ultimately collected.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The first amendment will overcome much inconvenience and mean a considerable saving of time where a large volume of cheques is used, but I can see a difficulty with the proposed new clause. Some people use only a small number of cheques and a cheque book may last six or more months. What will be the position in regard to these cheques? The suggestion that cheques now in the hands of the public should be accepted without the extra duty being paid is a good one.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—I had the same thought in mind. Could not the position be met better by saying that the Bill will not come into operation until three months hence? It would be possible for a person to get this afternoon six cheque books with a total of 240 cheques and derive an undue advantage.

The CHAIRMAN—I do not think we are in order in debating the proposed new clause now. Members should confine their remarks to the present amendment.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 5—"Licences for duty paid cheques".

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I move—

To delete "cheques" in new subsection (3*a*) and to insert "the cheque".

Amendment carried.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD moved—

To insert "or impressed" after "adhesive" in proposed new subsection (3*a*) of section 48a.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 6 passed.

New clause 7—"Operation of Act."

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD moved to insert the following new clause—

7. The additional duty imposed by this Act shall not be payable on a cheque made out on a form issued by a bank or financial institution to a customer before the commencement of this Act.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—I appreciate the purpose of the amendment, but there may be some practical difficulties. The amendment is equitable in essence, but there will be circulating at the same time cheques with two different rates of duty and there will be nothing to show whether a cheque with the lower duty is properly stamped in compliance with this legislation. I think the Treasurer's purpose would be better achieved if the Act were to operate three months from now. Many large users of cheques have two or three months' supplies of cheque books in hand. Further, it is customary for many large businesses to print their own cheques with their name on them and have them subsequently stamped at the Stamp Duties Office.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Act will come into operation on proclamation. The date will be decided after all the circumstances have been considered. I have a letter from the chairman of the Associated Banks of South Australia, asking for the new clause I have just moved. I think it will meet the position in the best possible way.

Mr. Shannon—Will cheques that have been already issued with a penny-halfpenny stamp on them be accepted at any time in the future?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—All cheques with a penny-halfpenny duty stamp sold by a bank prior to the legislation coming into operation will be accepted without further stamps. The records of the banks show when cheque books have been issued. The new clause is an attempt to obviate the necessity of skilled staff being employed in seeing that a halfpenny duty stamp is attached to all cheques. The small loss to the Government will be offset by the considerable saving to commerce in general.

New clause inserted.

Title passed. Bill read a third time and passed.

HOMES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 13. Page 1347.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Goodwood)—It seems that there is no virtue in fixing the maximum rates of interest when the Commonwealth Government is permitted to increase interest rates indiscriminately. This is borne out by the fact that the Menzies-Fadden Government recently announced a proposal to go on the Loan market for a £20,000,000 loan at 4½ per cent. I do not imply that the Playford Government has no alternative but to legislate for an increase in interest rates, but it left no stone unturned to oust the Chifley Government which not only reduced interest rates but prevented capital costs of home building from getting out of hand as they are doing today and have done since 1949. Strange as it may seem, the Chifley Government made it possible for the War Service Homes Division to provide loans to ex-servicemen at 3¾ per cent for the purchase of homes. That Government financed this out of revenue, but the first Menzies-Fadden Government that followed the Chifley Government resorted to Loan moneys, although when it found itself unable to carry on it quickly resorted to the policy adopted by the Chifley Government. The offer of 4½ per cent will start another upward spiral of inflation, though I do not expect the people to have much confidence in any of the present Federal Government's loans when I consider what happened a few months ago when the Government compelled investors to lose money on their bonds to pay income and provisional taxes. I have always contended that investment in Commonwealth loans was a safe security, provided the Government of the day used commonsense practices, and naturally the rate of interest for the purchase of homes would be little higher, but it has always been a puzzle to me to find variations in the methods of making advances. For instance, the State Bank allows one half per cent less on prompt payment than the Savings Bank which makes a straight out agreement, without any penalty rates. I understand that the Savings Bank is an approved organization to make advances and that it has a provision that loans granted under this Act carry benefits to the borrower for about 15 years, but the major advances made by that bank are for a 10-year period. Although some borrowers agreed, say in 1942, to pay 5 per cent for 10 years, they received the advantage of a reduced rate for a number of years at 3¾ per cent. I have not checked the position in regard to all the sixteen approved societies named in the original Act passed in 1941 to see how many have the half per cent penalty provision that this Bill re-enacts. The Auditor-General had something to say on this matter in his last report:—

Provision is made in the Act for the amount of guarantee to be reduced by one-half of the principal represented. Institutions are required to contribute to the fund, in each quarter, a sum equal to one-quarter of one per cent of such part of the loan or purchase money for which the Treasurer was liable under the guarantee at the end of the previous quarter. The total contributions to the fund at June 30, 1952, amounted to £26,865, and no payments had been made under the guarantees. At June 30, 1952, three institutions had advanced moneys under this Act, and the amount of those advances at that date was £3,296,000 and the liability of the Government under guarantees in respect of that amount was £505,000.

In view of that statement, can the Treasurer say whether only three of the 16 organizations approved to advance money under the Advances for Homes Act have taken advantage of that legislation and why no payments have been made under the guarantees? At page 167 of his report under the heading *South Australian Housing Trust* the Auditor-General states:—

It is evident that the rising costs of houses being built for sale coupled with the present limits imposed by house financing authorities on the amount of finance made available to purchasers will have the effect in the near future of slowing down the volume of sales, unless the trust extends the practice of financing purchasers by agreements for sale or second mortgages or the limits of financing authorities are increased.

The Auditor-General asks whether the policy of granting second mortgages by the Housing Trust is a good one and states that the alternative is the increasing of the limits of financing authorities. Under the heading *Deferred Assets* the Auditor-General states:—

During the year the trust was obliged to sell a further 31 houses under long-term purchase

agreements with a maximum of 35 years, because of the inability of the purchasers to make their own financial arrangements. At June 30 last the trust had 179 houses being purchased under these agreements, involving loans of £261,597 outstanding but not due at June 30, 1952. These included 142 in a group of timber-framed houses built at St. Marys upon which group the trust incurred a loss of £25,000. In addition the trust granted 58 second mortgages for 30 year terms on houses sold during the year, involving loans totalling £17,213.

The Auditor-General there issues a warning, but today legislation is to be introduced giving the Housing Trust authority to float loans. Can the Treasurer say whether that legislation will mean an increase in the interest rates charged by the trust? It is difficult to obtain information on such rates. Under the present housing shortage people are using the second mortgage offered by the trust to purchase their homes. The purchaser of an imported prefabricated home from the trust must deposit £350 and he is advanced by the trust £2,350, the balance of the purchase price, on first and second mortgage, being required to re-pay this amount at a rate of not less than £2 15s. 6d. a week. If the Housing Trust is in a position to lend such a sum, should not the legislation be amended so as to enable it to do so on first mortgage? I am perturbed at the increase in interest rates and remember that when the legislation was first enacted in 1941 we spoke about interest on a loan of hundreds of pounds, but today we speak in terms of thousands. In view of increasing unemployment which is evident in my own district where the employees of three furniture factories are working part time, many of them still paying for their homes, the policy of the Housing Trust in advancing second mortgages, and the warning of the Auditor-General, we are heading for trouble, and I would have been more confident had paragraph (*b*) of section 7 of the Act been amended to provide for interest rates of 3¾ per cent and 4¼ per cent instead of the rates of 5 per cent and 5½ per cent provided for in the Bill. The Government must consider the effect of the possible success of the projected Commonwealth loan of £20,000,000. Does the Treasurer consider there is any merit in my suggestion that the present limit of £1,750 which may be advanced under this legislation should be raised instead of raising the interest rates and allowing second mortgages to be taken out by certain other organizations?

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—"Conditions under which guarantee may be given".

Mr. FRANK WALSH—In view of the announcement by the Commonwealth Government that it proposes to float a £20,000,000 loan at 4½ per cent, has the Treasurer considered whether it is advisable to increase the interest rates as is done by this clause? Will the rate of interest on the new Commonwealth loan affect the general rates of interest charged by lending institutions to South Australian home purchasers?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Homes Act enables the Government to guarantee loans by certain institutions which are made for the purchase of homes, and today this is the main source of financing the private person to build or buy a home. The maximum under the Act is £1,750, and 20 per cent of that amount is guaranteed over and above the amount which would normally be lent by the institution. The institutions lending such moneys are mainly the South Australian Superannuation Fund and the South Australian Savings Bank. We are living in times when interest rates are changing. There would be a strong case for rates of interest to be approved by the Treasurer in accordance with circumstances, but I believe that both the Savings Bank and the Superannuation Fund will continue to lend money in accordance with the law.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—In his report, dealing with the Home Purchase Guarantee Fund, the Auditor-General said:—

At June 30, 1952, three institutions had advanced moneys under this Act, and the amount of those advances at that date was £3,296,000 and the liability of the Government under guarantees in respect of that amount was £505,000.

Did only the three institutions advance money under the Act, and did the remaining institutions cease lending because of using up all their funds?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Only three institutions, the Savings Bank, the Superannuation Fund, and a building society, advanced money under the Act. By far most was advanced by the Savings Bank. In the first three years of the scheme the Savings Bank and the Superannuation Fund financed the building of about three houses each working day. The Savings Bank has advanced more money lately and it is doing a magnificent job in helping people to purchase homes.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—The Housing Trust advances money on second mortgage, and it lost about £25,000 on its housing proposition at St. Mary's. Most of its money is advanced in connection with timber-frame houses. Would it be possible to raise the maximum amount to be advanced instead of lending so much money on second mortgage?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—If the Trust advanced all the money, fewer houses would be built. If it did advance all the money, about half of its activities would have to cease.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—If the present maximum advance were raised from £1,750 would that not help in reducing some of the liabilities of a second mortgage?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It comes back to the amount of money available to be advanced. If an institution advances more to an individual it must mean that fewer people can be assisted.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—The trust is to go on to the market to borrow money. Will that mean the trust charging more on its advances?

The CHAIRMAN—The Bill amends the Homes Act and has nothing to do with the Housing Trust. The honourable member must confine his remarks to the rate of interest to be charged in connection with the matter dealt with by the Bill.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADVANCES TO SETTLERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

POLICE REGULATION BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

BARLEY MARKETING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

SALE OF GOODS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

LAND TAX AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council with suggested amendments.

BUSH FIRES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 13. Page 1336.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This Act is getting to be like the Local Government Act in that it comes up almost annually for amendment.

Mr. Whittle—Surely you do not compare the Local Government Act with the Bush Fires Act?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—There is a similarity between the two. Most of the amendments to the Local Government Act are the result of requests from local authorities, and suggestions for amendments to the Bush Fires Act come from local fire-fighting organizations. I want to disabuse members of any idea they may have that in my opening remarks I intended to be critical of these organizations. The volunteer fire fighting organizations have organized the matter of fire prevention and control in a very efficient manner in the last few years. The only one I have had any close association with is the Northern Fire Fighting Association, which embraces the district in which I live and which has had its headquarters at Gladstone for some years. Great credit must be given to the former president of that association Mr. Hedley Pascoe, to the various secretaries it has had from time to time, and to the other officers who have extended local organizations and have called conferences at various times for the purpose of discussing amendments of the law relating to the control and prevention of bush fires.

This Bill is the result of requests that have been made by various organizations and which have been considered and approved by the Bush Fires Advisory Committee, which is a body representative of those organizations, the Government, the Commissioner of Police, and the Fire Brigade. I have carefully examined the Bill and can find nothing to object to in the various clauses. They provide that it shall now be possible to burn stubble along irrigation channels in irrigation districts during the prohibited periods, providing, of course, that the necessary protection is afforded against the spread of the fire to adjacent areas. There is also power to vary the period in which certain precautions have to be taken. This is subject to variation by the local authorities in accordance with the necessities of the particular district. A proper period in the north of the State may not be proper for the south or south-eastern part of South Australia. There is now provision to vary the period, but no power

to vary the period in which certain precautions must also be taken. It is proposed to bring sections 11 and 13 into line on this matter. One clause of the Bill states that caravans occupied in open spaces shall be equipped with a proper fire extinguisher. This is a desirable provision, not only from the standpoint of preventing bush fires, but to protect the property rights of the owner of the caravan, and it may even result in the saving of life of occupants of caravans. The law is to be tightened up in regard to blasting operations and I have no objection to that provision. The insurance provisions are to be widened to cover all those engaged in the use of fire appliances. I support the second reading.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY (Chaffey)—This is the first time in the 15 years I have been in this House that I have found it necessary to speak on bush fires legislation. For over 30 years irrigationists on the River Murray have been using fire as part of their cultivation methods, for it is impossible to cultivate along the banks adjoining irrigation channels. It is the usual practice before an irrigation to set fire to the grass so as to clear the banks because in the river areas there are many snakes, which are most unpleasant to meet, especially when one is watering at night. Last year some settlers unwittingly contravened the provision of the Bush Fires Act and as a result they were mulcted of £60 or £70. I am afraid the control of bush fires is far too centralized. Precautions necessary in the South-East, the Lower North, or on Eyre Peninsula may not be necessary in the hills district, and the precautions necessary there may not be required in the river districts. The periods allowed for burning off in one district may not be suitable in another. This has been a good year and there is plenty of lush grass in many part of the State. It will be impossible in the river areas to get burning off completed by the time stipulated in the Act. I am glad the Government has seen fit to exempt the irrigation areas from these provisions, provided that certain precautions are taken and that the clerk of the area is advised. The Government should decentralize the control of the Act and leave certain powers in the hands of the local district council so it can say during what times burning off may take place.

Mr. FLETCHER (Mount Gambier)—I support the Bill. The provision making it compulsory for caravans to be fitted with a fire extinguisher is a step in the right direction. I am always fearful of what could happen if a fire got out of control in the forests of the South-East. We cannot be too strict in enforcing the provisions of the Act. I believe fire control officers should have the power to command landholders to clear fire breaks and destroy rubbish if they have not already done so.

Mr. Pearson—It is almost impossible to make fire breaks in inaccessible parts.

Mr. FLETCHER—Yes, but I am now talking about the forest areas of the South-East and of farm areas. I have sometimes been out with a fire control officer when it was impossible to get within 20ft. of a house because of boxthorn hedges and weeds.

Mr. PEARSON (Flinders)—I am pleased that provisions have been placed in the Bill to meet local conditions and local needs. One of the most valuable contributions made in recent years towards preventing and controlling bushfires has been by farmers that have provided themselves with their own fire-fighting equipment. Last year there was a disastrous fire in the Port Lincoln district, but it was proved that the use of a number of small units is a valuable adjunct to the larger and better equipped units manned by volunteer organizations sponsored by local bodies. We should advise farmers and the public generally that the purchase of fire-fighting equipment results in income tax concessions and that there is no better investment for any man on the land, for it serves to protect not only his own property but, in an emergency the property of others. I believe that the Bush Fires Act and various other Acts covering fires and fire appliances have worked reasonably well, but I suggest it may be worth while to examine the Victorian Act to see whether it offers any advantages over our system. In Victoria all activities of country fire-fighting services and personnel are brought under the control of one authority, and the costs are shared by the Government, councils and the Fire Insurance Underwriters' Association, which undoubtedly benefits materially from the operations of the fire-fighting authorities. I do not suggest that this is a matter for immediate consideration, but we might examine that Act to see whether it offers any advantages over the somewhat loose-jointed organization under which this State operates. I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr. QUIRKE (Stanley)—Anything which makes the Act a little less hide-bound and stringent, as it has grown to be, will be appreciated by people in my district. I know

we cannot play around with such legislation, but we can go a little too far and provide for conditions that are too stringent in taking what is the obvious step—that is, burning off. The law provides that a space of 12ft. shall be cleared round the area to be burned off. That provision needs some further consideration. Fire-fighting equipment has been brought to a standard of perfection and it is easy to burn off an area without first clearing around it and without involving any danger. One only has to see the effectiveness of modern equipment in dealing with bush or grass fires even when there is a strong wind prevailing. In places such as Clare grass is still green and it would be impossible to burn it off, and yet the time for burning has passed. Later we will be confronted with the menace of dried material and be unable to handle it.

The Hon. Sir George Jenkins—The people concerned could still get permission from the local council to burn it off.

Mr. QUIRKE—As the permission of the Minister ranks higher than that of a council, without exception a council would look first for permission from the Minister. We must allow the councils to protect the areas under their control without too many restrictions. Clause 6 reads:—

Section 21 of the principal Act is amended by striking out the words "blasting any tree, wood, or timber" in the fourth line thereof and inserting in lieu thereof the words "any blasting operation."

Section 21 of the principal Act provides:—

Any person who, during the period between the thirty-first day of October and the first day of the following May, employs gunpowder, or any other explosive substance, for the purpose of blasting any tree, wood, or timber without having at least four persons present to prevent any fire from arising therefrom, shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a penalty of not less than two pounds nor more than twenty pounds.

I presume that this provision would apply to quarry blasting; therefore, in any such operation four men would have to be present.

Mr. Heaslip—We have had fires from this cause.

Mr. QUIRKE—On a quarry face in a secluded area two men may be operating, but under this Bill it would be necessary for four men to be present at any time a shot was fired. The quarry may not be in an area where any dry material is present. I have worked in a quarry and see no necessity for having four men present. What earthly use would they be, because when the shots are fired they must leave the quarry?

The Hon. Sir George Jenkins—The amendment was suggested because a quarry owned by a council was surrounded by high grass.

Mr. QUIRKE—This may be an instance of bad cases making bad laws. To include this provision just because of one case and at the request of one group of people is going too far. There are quarries where there could be no danger whatever to the surrounding country when the blasting is done by two men—the powder monkey and his assistant who normally fires the shot in the quarry. If my interpretation is correct, the clause is too severe and Parliament should not agree to it.

Bill read a second time.

Mr. PEARSON moved:—

That it be an instruction to the Committee of the whole House that it has power to consider a new clause relating to the burning of scrub.

Motion carried.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 5 passed.

Clause 6—"Blasting during summer months."

Mr. QUIRKE—I realize the difficulty which would arise in country districts if section 21 of the principal Act were applied. Because the provisions of the clause are too wide, I oppose it.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The honourable member's point is worth considering, and after discussing it with the Parliamentary Draftsman I believe it would have the widest application possible, including blasting at quarries. Therefore I ask the Committee to vote against it.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I am pleased the Minister has taken that step, for in blasting out postholes for fences it would be unjust to have to keep four men available where there was no possibility of a fire.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I do not disagree with the Minister's suggestion that the Committee should vote against the clause, but there is some justification for the clause. It was unanimously supported by the Northern Fire Fighting Association about 12 months ago. Probably it goes too far, and I suggest that the Minister and the advisory committee might consider something in the nature of a permissive clause which would permit certain essential blasting operations to be done in the ordinary course but not anything which might cause a greater fire hazard.

Mr. HEASLIP—The clause is too wide in its present form and should be modified to ensure that proper precautions are taken during

blasting operations. Where blasting is being done inflammable materials a hundred yards away could be burned before preventive action could be taken. The Minister and his advisers might see whether the clause could be modified.

Clause negatived.

Clause 7 passed.

New clause 2a—"Burning of scrub with fire rake."

Mr. PEARSON—I move to insert the following new clause:—

2a. The following section is enacted and inserted in the principal Act after section 8a thereof:—

8b. In any case where it is necessary to use a fire rake in order to burn any scrub on any land, the occupier of such land may, with the consent of a fire control officer, burn such scrub during any period to which section 8 applies, and in any such case the provisions of paragraphs I. and V. of section 8 shall not apply to any such burning: Provided that before the fire is lighted there is around the land upon which the fire is to be lighted a space cleared of all inflammable material to width of two chains or a space ploughed to a width of twenty feet.

The object is to enable the relaxation of the provisions relating to the burning of scrub to be applied in cases where a fire rake is essential in order to secure a burning. Section 6 of the Act makes a similar relaxation with regard to the burning of stubble and provides that where a fire rake is to be used the number of men to be in attendance at the fire shall be one. People acquiring new land where the scrub is sparse and there is not sufficient dry matter on it after rolling to carry a fire are faced with the problem of getting four men to attend for days on end to guard a fire which will not run anyway, and it is necessary to use a rake in order to get the burning done. I have been requested by men clearing new land to move for the insertion of this new clause. I am well aware that everybody is nervous about fire and that is wise and necessary to provide safeguards in the case of a relaxation such as I propose, but I have provided an ample safeguard in that the clearing must be much wider than is required for a fire where four men must be in attendance. There a width of 15ft. must be cleared, but I have provided for 132ft., which should prevent any sudden gust of wind from carrying a small fire over the ground cleared. The 1945 amendment struck out the provision regarding the ploughed area, but I am providing 20ft. of ploughing or a clearing of 132ft. The Minister has indicated that he prefers the 132ft. clearing, and if it is decided to eliminate the ploughing and retain the clearing I will be quite happy.

Mr. Quirke—To what extent must the two chains be cleared?

Mr. PEARSON—The amendment clearly states that there shall be a space cleared of all inflammable material to the width of two chains, and that is the usual term used in such legislation. I imagine the following practice will be carried out. Firstly, the owner of the property will go out and commence his fire rake operation applying the ordinary provisions of the Act by having four men in attendance and complying with the necessary provisions, and when the two chains have been cleared the number of men may be reduced. The people requiring this amendment are prepared to follow that practice. In these days when a considerable area of sparsely wooded land is being brought into production by means of clearing and when mallee clearing is going on in many parts of the State, this amendment will benefit landholders, and it contains all necessary safeguards.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I have studied the new clause and consider the safeguards provided are sufficient. However, I consider provision for the clearing of two chains is ample, and, as I have some doubts whether the ploughed area will be effective in the type of country mentioned by the honourable member, I move to amend the amendment by striking out all the words after "chains."

Mr. PEARSON—I accept the Minister's amendment.

Amendment to new clause carried.

Mr. HEASLIP—I am pleased that Mr. Pearson has agreed to the words being deleted. The important point is the width of the space over which the fire has to cross. Live cinders can carry some distance and can easily cover 20ft. If there is a clearance in accordance with the new section there should be proper security. What number of men does Mr. Pearson think should be present in burning of scrub?

Mr. PEARSON—When one is using a fire rake one operates on the leeward side of the paddock and uses the short back method. If one starts off with 132ft. there is a widening at every strip which would give added protection.

Mr. Heaslip—What would be the length?

Mr. PEARSON—It would be in accordance with the size of the area to be burnt. It is usual to clear about 250 acres at a time, and I would say the length would be about 30 to 50 chains.

New clause as amended inserted.

Title passed. Bill read a third time and passed.

VETERINARY SURGEONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 13. Page 1338.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Goodwood)—I support the second reading but in Committee shall move an amendment to clause 7. Clause 2 provides for the words "and includes the chairman" being included in the definition of "member." Clause 3 provides a different set-up for the Veterinary Surgeons Board. It makes no mention of the Chief Veterinary Officer, although he could be a member of the board as it is to comprise five members. A very important change is proposed in relation to the chairman. It can be taken for granted that he will not have the qualifications set out in section 17 of the principal Act. He is to be a special magistrate or a practitioner of the Supreme Court. He will be well qualified in regard to legal matters. Generally speaking, the board can be assured of at least three qualified veterinary surgeons. Clause 4 alters the term of office of members from two to four years. New paragraph III. provides that two of the members shall be appointed for two years, which means that there will be an appointment every two years and some of the members will hold office for four years. Provision should have been made for the Australian Veterinary Surgeons Association (S.A. Division), to select its members for three of the positions. That would be in keeping with the policy of my Party. Clause 5 abolishes the practice of making the Chief Veterinary Officer the chairman of the board. I would like to have the views of the Minister on the likelehood of his being a member. Clause 6 provides for the remuneration of board members. It may have been better to have set out a straight out fee for attendance at meetings. When a board is appointed its members should attend all meetings. Clause 7 is the most important in the Bill. I cannot understand why the Government so readily agreed to permit an influx of veterinary surgeons. Paragraph (*c*) of subsection (1) of new section 17a goes too far. I have received a circular from the Australian Veterinary Surgeons Association which states:—

This division supports the policy that provision be made for the registration of genuine refugee foreign veterinary graduates who are at present in Australia, provided they pass a special examination arranged by the Veterinary Board.

The clause permits persons with foreign qualifications to apply to practise after being here 12 months. In order to get a degree in Australia and Britain a five year course must be undertaken. The Adelaide University has no provision for the subject to be studied. I understand that it is possible to get a scholarship amounting to £300 per annum for the course to be taken at either Brisbane or Sydney. When a foreign veterinary surgeon wants to practise in England he must undergo the final two year course there. We do not know what the position will be here. I understand that a veterinary surgeon, who has been practising in Hutt Street for the past 14 or 15 years, has had to defend a charge of not keeping his premises up to the standard required by the city health authorities. Whether that is a reflection on the standard in other countries I do not know. To say that the Bill will result in more veterinary services in the country is a misuse of words, because the circular from the Australian Veterinary Surgeons Association says:—

Under present legislation the number of graduates practising in Adelaide has risen from three to 11. Whereas until recently there was not one qualified veterinarian practising in the country there are now seven graduates settled, one at Mount Barker, Woodside, Murray Bridge, Gawler, Victor Harbour, Mount Gambier and Naracoorte.

According to the circular there are about 200 persons in training, but that is not an accurate figure because up till last year about 370 persons were endeavouring to qualify. Clause 9 deals with the duties of holders of permits. New subsection (1*a*) says:—

No person who is the holder of a permit shall for reward treat animals for disease or injury in any part of the State outside the area specified in the permit.

Country members may be able to help me in this matter, but when I last spoke on this legislation they were silent. Perhaps they could indicate whether there is any real shortage of veterinary surgeons in country areas. There are now 14 permit holders practising in the country and it is likely that two more will practise in the near future. I believe that one will operate very shortly in the Bordertown area.

Mr. Riches—Are there any on the West Coast?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I am not familiar with the West Coast, but there are members on the other side who know it well. My information is that there would not be an assured living for a veterinary surgeon in Port Lincoln unless he received Government assistance. We have tried to overcome this difficulty by the

appointment of permit holders who can get in touch with a veterinary surgeon if they need assistance. I understand that a number of Government veterinary surgeons tour the country and address agricultural bureau conferences, so there may not be any shortage of practitioners. Have we any guarantee that persons from overseas who pass the examination prescribed will become naturalized British subjects? Will our high standard of efficiency be maintained? I will object to any lowering of that standard. I assume that the examiners to be appointed by the board will be Victorians, so probably Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia will have the same examiners. I hope the examinations will not be unduly difficult. On the other hand, the Government may wish to extend the hand of fellowship to people from overseas and accept them as qualified practitioners. Clause 7 opens the doors for people not yet in this country to practise. However, if there are people from overseas serving their two-year contract and possessing the necessary qualifications we should make it possible for them to pass the examination and practise. I support the second reading.

Mr. BROOKMAN (Alexandra)—Most of the provisions of the Bill are satisfactory, but I have one or two criticisms to make. People from overseas are entitled to be registered as practitioners here if the courses they studied were at least as high as the standard of the course at the Sydney University. Owing to the large influx of New Australians considerable difficulty has occurred in establishing whether the courses they took were equivalent to that of the Sydney University. The Bill has been introduced to overcome that problem. Every person from overseas who possesses certain qualifications specified in clause 7 will be entitled to be registered as a veterinary surgeon. He will have to satisfy the board of his good character, possess certain qualifications regarding his educational standard in veterinary sciences and have a residential qualification as well as passing an examination. I think the Bill has two faults. Firstly, the Bill provides that a person coming here from overseas must have resided in the Commonwealth for not less than one year before applying for registration. Then within three years after the passing of the Act he must pass an examination set by the board. I feel there may be some danger of injustice to our own veterinary surgeons and students at present undergoing a very comprehensive course in Sydney or Brisbane. We may be inundated by applications from veterinary surgeons in European countries who wish to practise here. I do not think there is any chance of a veterinary surgeon qualified by a course in this country being permitted to practise in a country from which such persons would come. A fair and reasonable compromise would be to provide for new Australians already in the country at the time of the passing of this Bill and not leave it open for another two years, for if a person fulfills the qualifications set out in clause 7 he will be entitled to registration.

The other fault which I see in the Bill is that after the expiration of three years no further provision will be made for the registration of veterinary surgeons other than those who have received degrees from courses at least equal to those in Sydney and Brisbane; therefore, at the end of that period the legislation closes down for the class of person we are discussing. In Committee I will move amendments which will clear up my two criticisms of the legislation: firstly, to provide only for persons who are already in Australia, and secondly, not to completely close the legislation to applicants after the expiration of three years. Circumstances may occur under which we may be short of veterinary surgeons. Although the demand for their services has increased considerably, the number of students graduating may soon equal the demand, but in future we may need more qualified persons from overseas and I do not see why we should be prevented by the provisions of this legislation from registering them. A particularly outstanding man, possibly of world fame, may wish to practise in this country, but unless he has these qualifications he will not be able to register after the expiration of three years from the passing of this legislation.

Mr. John Clark—Surely he would not be of world fame unless he had those qualifications.

Mr. BROOKMAN—There are people in practically every scientific field who have achieved fame without being academically qualified. The board should have the power to admit those persons if it wishes. I do not say they should be entitled to be registered, but this properly constituted board would have regard to the position of veterinary surgeons already practising here and would not act contrary to their welfare. I support the second reading.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS (Stirling)—I have discussed this matter with country members and find there are several large areas in which no veterinary surgeon, practitioner, or

permit holder practises; therefore I believe this legislation is essential. Having heard the Minister's second reading speech I feel that the constitution of the board will safeguard the interests of both primary producer and veterinary surgeon. The strict examinations to be passed in order to become registered will ensure that successful applicants will be capable of giving efficient service in the districts to which they may be allocated. It will also narrow the field of applicants and so give a measure of protection to existing and prospective veterinary surgeons. However, I believe the board or the Government should go further and allow only a limited number to qualify each year to meet current requirements. The board should have power to allocate successful candidates to areas not already being served and to delineate boundaries of the districts in which each practitioner shall conduct his business. This would stop practitioners crowding into one area and ensure that the outback would be served. Men working under permit, including some who have done so for many years efficiently fulfilling the needs of the districts, should receive some consideration, as many of them are as good as men who possess degrees and diplomas. If these points are considered by the Minister, I have no fear that injustice will be done

Mr. CHRISTIAN (Eyre)—I support parts of this Bill and oppose others. The legislation regulating veterinary surgeons has been severely restrictive with regard to their operations in country districts; in fact since it operated there has been a serious decline in the number practising until today many country districts are without veterinary assistance. Prior to the passing of the original legislation country districts were served by a type of veterinary practitioner and veterinary lodges flourished in many centres. In my district at least four veterinary practitioners were active, all supported by veterinary lodges. Seven or eight practitioners were engaged in useful work on Eyre Peninsula, but today not one registered veterinary surgeon or practitioner remains. The only person to assist stockowners and producers in this important field is a permit holder, who is to be further restricted by the Bill.

Mr. Stephens—He is a practitioner.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—No, the 1938 Act set up two types of person: the veterinary surgeon, who was academically qualified, and the veterinary practitioner who was not but who was admitted as a practitioner because prior to the passing of that legislation he had been engaged on veterinary work as his major source of livelihood for at least five years. Those were the only qualifications required of that man who had probably served as apprentice to a person engaged on veterinary work and who later had embarked on his own business. Today that type of practitioner has practically died out and the only people active in this sphere are the academically qualified who regard themselves as professional men and require professional status. Most of them wish to lead a gentleman's life and not soil their hands with the practical work involved in their calling. Most prefer to remain in the city where they can earn lucrative fees looking after domestic pets such as cats and dogs, as well as racehorses and blood stock, whose owners can afford to pay the high fees charged. Practically none performs any work in the country except on stud stock and dairy herds. For the outback areas we cannot get veterinary officers. The academically qualified people will not go out there. They do not want to soil their hands on practical work. We should have in our legislation a provision enabling a kind of apprenticeship system to be set up, whereby men can learn the work from practical experience. In saying that I do not decry the academic qualifications, but practical training in the work means a lot, and it is lacking in the academic work. We people in the country, who want practical work done, cannot get veterinary surgeons for love or money. Some years ago a Ceduna stockowner lost nearly all his horses through an obscure disease. He could not get a veterinary officer from Adelaide to make an investigation on the spot. Apparently the department had no officer available and none of the veterinary people was prepared or able to go. These are some of the disabilities from which outback people suffer and it has been brought about by the restrictive legislation that Parliament agreed to some years ago. It may be remembered that at the time I put up a strong plea for an apprenticeship system, but Parliament did not agree. Today we are reaping the fruits of that neglect. It is necessary to have practical men to work in the country. They are needed more than men are needed to treat pet cats and dogs in the metropolitan area.

I now want to deal with the registration of aliens after they have complied with the conditions in the legislation. Mr. Frank Walsh thinks we should impose more restrictions than are proposed in regard to their registration, but we can be too insular in our attitude towards foreigners. We have placed too many restrictions on them in other fields. We had an

agitation some time ago to permit them to be accepted as medical practitioners, but without success. The same attitude in connection with veterinary surgeons could prevent well qualified aliens from helping our stockowners. Our country districts have not got much help from our own veterinary men. They have practised in the metropolitan area where they can get high fees. They have been attracted to the more remunerative fields, and the country districts have been left high and dry. I welcome the proposal to register qualified aliens to practise as veterinary officers. I will oppose any move which will inflict greater restriction on their registration as soon as possible. We need them. In our country districts we are without veterinary officers of any kind, and if these aliens can fill that need let them do so by all means. If they are prepared to work for reasonable fees, which apparently our own qualified men are not, let them help us out of our trouble. I oppose most strongly proposed further restrictions on permit holders. In 1938 we agreed to new section 30a which enabled the permit system to operate. Under it anyone with qualifications satisfactory to the board could apply for a permit to practise in veterinary work. He had to renew the application every year in order to retain his right to the permit. Also, after he had practised continually for five years he automatically had his permit renewed. He had to pay the £1 1s. registration fee each time. Apart from that, he was under certain disabilities. He had to make yearly application. Then his permit was restricted to a defined area, beyond which he could not practise. Then he could not handle certain of the more dangerous drugs. That was a serious disability because in certain stock ailments all kinds of drugs, including dangerous drugs, are necessary. Another disability was that he was prevented from advertising the fact by means of a written advertisement, that he could practise veterinary surgery. Section 30 (*a*) said:—

No person who is the holder of a permit under Part III.A or any renewal thereof shall in any advertisement, or on any nameplate, sign, or by means of any written or printed matter, advertise or hold himself out as a veterinary surgeon or a veterinary practitioner, or as being entitled or qualified to practise veterinary surgery.

Clause 9 amends that section, so that it will read.

No person who is the holder of a permit under Part III.A or any renewal thereof shall either orally or in any advertisement . . . . It means that a permit holder, after five years' continuous practising, must not tell a stockowner that he is entitled to practise veterinary surgery.

Mr. Stephens—What is the object of that?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I do not know. It makes the position completely farcical. We have on Eyre Peninsula only one permit holder and he is wanted all over the place. If there were any restrictions as to area in his original permit they have had to be ignored because there is no other practitioner in that vast territory. He must answer urgent calls from Whyalla, Port Lincoln, Fowlers Bay, Minnipa, Wudinna, and all other parts of the peninsula. He is stationed at Minnipa and is doing satisfactory work, yet to the stockowners, under the new provision he must not say that he is entitled to practise veterinary work. Is there anything more farcical or unjust? He devotes all his time to the work, upon which his livelihood depends. So satisfactory has his service been to stockowners that last June the Agricultural Bureau Conference at Wudinna, which I had the honour to open on behalf of the Minister, requested that he should be subsidized because of his valuable work. That is the answer to the suggestion that he is not worthy of recognition under this legislation. I hope the Minister will reconsider the proposal in the Bill and will not impose further restrictions on people who are rendering such valuable work. Clause 9 imposes still greater restrictions on permit holders. It states:—

No person who is the holder of a permit shall for reward treat animals for disease or injury in any part of the State outside the area specified in the permit.

Only one permit holder is operating on the West Coast. His permit may restrict him to an area of 20 square miles, although he can under the Bill treat animals outside his area if he makes no charge. Will the House be so unfair as to demand that a man already operating under severe restrictions shall carry out skilled work for nothing? Permit holders are doing an honest and efficient job for the stockowners in their area, and clause 9 should not be passed under any circumstances. We should substitute for it a clause giving the permit holder the status he has earned. We should have agreed years ago to an apprenticeship system to train men in the practical field. They would then be available to undertake work in country areas where the academically qualified man will not go. We must do justice to those who have done a good job for many years

in our country districts, otherwise we shall be left high and dry without veterinary services. Those who have practised for many years could train apprentices. Every permit holder who has practised for five years or more should be entitled to the status of a veterinary practitioner, who does not suffer the disabilities I have referred to. This would be a just recognition for their years of valuable service. I know something about the cost of veterinary services given in my district by the permit holder there, and by comparison with the academically qualified man his fees are most moderate. His work is greatly apreciated by the stockowners.

Mr. HAWKER (Burra)—I support the Bill with certain qualifications. There seems some difficulty in ascertaining the number of trained veterinary practitioners coming forward and the number required in this State. The member for Eyre has just referred to the shortage of trained men on the West Coast, but the same applies in many parts of South Australia. Whenever the Stockowners' Association has asked the Minister for a veterinary surgeon or stock inspector to be appointed to a certain district the answer has always been that no man is available, so it seems there is a definite shortage of veterinary surgeons. To overcome the shortage the Government some time ago instituted a bursary for veterinary students and several returned men availed themselves of that facility for training. There is not a school of veterinary science in Adelaide, although it is possible to do the first year of a course here and the final four years at the University of Sydney, but the Government took steps to have veterinary officers trained. According to information that I have obtained from Sydney there are 195 veterinary students at the university there. Sydney and Brisbane are the only two universities in Australia that train veterinary officers. Only one or two men from South Australia take the course each year, but already men from other States are coming here to practise. I do not know whether there are enough studying the course to fill the demand for veterinary services in South Australia.

The main trouble seems to be that the Australian stock breeder—I am not referring to a man with valuable trotters or gallopers or to a woman with a valuable lap dog—is not veterinary-minded. As a rule he does not call in the surgeon until the animal is almost dead, so there is not much encouragement for highly trained veterinary officers to practise in South Australia. Veterinary science is a very difficult study. I think that for the first two years the course is almost the same as that taken by medical students. It is considered almost as difficult as a doctor's training, although it is two years shorter, but the veterinary surgeon's fees are much lower. Several attempts have been made in this State to establish veterinary lodges. Recently one was established at Naracoorte, but the officer there did not get enough support to continue the lodge. I think most stockowners within a reasonable distance of Adelaide make use of the services of the excellent officers of the Stock and Brands Department. They are most capable and I do not agree that they are merely academic, white-collar men. They are prepared to take their coats off and do a job when they are needed.

Mr. Christian—But they are not available for every district.

Mr. HAWKER—That is so. The department always says an officer is not available whenever one is required permanently in a country district. Stockowners must become more veterinary-minded and make it worthwhile for those men, who spend five years on an expensive and difficult course, to practise. They must be prepared to pay fees commensurate with the skill of these men. I agree with the views of the member for Eyre about the restrictions placed upon veterinary practitioners in regard to advertising. One man in my district has practised for many years and I think he previously practised on Eyre Peninsula. He is a most capable man and makes extraordinarily good diagnoses if one telephones and explains what is wrong with an animal. He can often say immediately what should be done. I am afraid these veterinary practitioners are a dying race. Many of them are getting up in years, but I doubt whether we need highly-qualified, academic men. We need men capable of carrying out the veterinary work required in our rural areas. Mr. Christian's suggestion of an apprenticeship system has much merit in it. Until stockowners realize the value of the work of veterinary officers we shall not make the vocation worth following.

The object of the Bill is to allow foreign veterinary officers to practise. Fears have been expressed by the veterinary officers here that the State will be swamped by veterinary practitioners and I have been told there have already been applications through the Italian Consul for veterinary officers to come here in anticipation of the Bill being passed. We should tread warily. I believe it would be reasonable to

register men already residing in Australia, but we should not advertise that we are prepared to take in all and sundry if they can pass certain examinations because we have already encouraged young people to take up veterinary science here. I understand that after they have finished their course, which is subsidized by the Government, they must first offer their services to the South Australian Government, and if they are not wanted they may practise on their own account. We could restrict the Act to those already here, and next session again examine the position, and, if there is still a big shortage of veterinary officers, extend the measure for one or two years. It is provided in the principal Act that a foreigner must have had four years' training outside Australia before being registered as a veterinary surgeon here, whereas the Sydney course covers five years. It would not do any harm to extend the four years to five. I understood the member for Goodwood to say that to be registered in England one had to do the last two years with the Royal College of Surgeons. I have before me *Halsbury's Statutes of England,* published in 1949 and, dealing with the registration of colonial or foreign practitioners with a recognized diploma, it contains the following:—

Where a person shows that he obtained some recognized veterinary diploma granted in a foreign country, and that he is not a British subject, . . . and either continues to hold that diploma or has not been deprived thereof for any cause which disqualifies him for being registered under this Act, he shall, on payment of the registration fee, be entitled without examination in the United Kingdom to be registered as a foreign practitioner in the register of veterinary surgeons and to become, to all intents, a member of the said Royal College . . .

For the purposes of this section a veterinary diploma is any diploma, licence, certificate, or other document granted by any university, college, corporation, or other body in respect of veterinary surgery, and includes a licence or authority to a person to practise veterinary surgery granted by any department or persons acting under the authority of the government of the country or place within or without Her Majesty's dominions wherein the licence or authority is granted. . . . and a recognized veterinary diploma is a veterinary diploma recognized for the time being by the Council of the said Royal College as furnishing a sufficient guaranty of the possession of the requisite knowledge and skill for the efficient practice of veterinary surgery, and as entitling the holder thereof to practise veterinary surgery in the British possession or foreign country wherein the diploma was granted.

There is no mention there of the two years referred to by Mr. Walsh. I believe a good case has been put forward for allowing foreign surgeons to come in under the guarantees of this Bill if they are already resident in the country, but we should limit it to them for the present and examine the position later. Clause 9 relating to the duties of holders of permits seems to be unnecessary.

Mr. JOHN CLARK (Gawler)—I support the second reading with reservations. I listened with a great deal of interest to Mr. Hawker, but had difficulty in following his argument, because he appeared to me to set up an argument and then tear it down. Had he continued to quote from the volume he used, he would certainly have found that in English universities, where provision is made for the veterinary science degree, the final two years must be done in the university. I am strongly opposed to anything the object of which is to lower our professional standards. I do not advocate or support the idea of unqualified men being placed in the important position of a veterinary surgeon, despite the fact that it is claimed that sufficient are not available at the moment. More than 300 men are at present taking the course in Australia. I am not objecting to the rights of migrants to register as veterinary practitioners provided their standard is as high as the Australian standard. One honourable member mentioned Italians. I understand there was some talk of about 19 Italians coming out here as veterinary surgeons. Generally speaking, the standard of foreign veterinarians is by no means as high as ours.

The Australian standard has never been higher than it is today. I have had experience of this in my own district where a young man recently set up in practice as a fully-qualified veterinary surgeon. I have heard nothing but the highest praise of the value of his work. Mr. Christian referred to the shortage of veterinary surgeons in the Eyre Peninsula area. I have been told on very good authority that this is due to varying conditions. Surgeons have found themselves unable to make a living there. I was also informed this afternoon by the member for Thebarton that his son-in-law was at one time practising on Eyre Peninsula, but had to leave because of the long distances he had to travel between calls. Because of the sparseness of the population he could not make a living. As the member for Burra said, once a man has completed his five-year course he should at least be able to make a living. Because of the increased mechanization in

country districts, the demand for veterinary surgeons has become restricted and that is one reason why I do not favour paragraph (*c*) of clause 7. The opportunity for veterinary surgeons to operate is not an unlimited one.

We must realize that veterinary surgeons are fully-qualified men and their course involves a professional training which compares favourably with that of a medical man, also that a person who has the ability to complete the veterinary course could also have completed the medical course. We should applaud these men for their love of animals, as a result of which they have entered a profession which will probably never give them the rewards the medical profession has to offer. I understand that a veterinary course has been introduced at the Brisbane University. In most European countries it is a four-year course. The Australian degree is recognized in the United Kingdom, Australian graduates being allowed to practise there.

Foreign countries have doctorates in veterinary science which are granted after six months' practice, but I understand that in Australia there is only one doctor of veterinary science, and he had to practise for 20 years before he gained this honour. Therefore, we should not assume that the standard of foreign doctors of veterinary science compares with that of the sole Australian holding a doctorate of veterinary science. I do not want to debar genuine foreign veterinary surgeons from operating here, but I approve of the provision in the Bill that a migrant must pass an examination of a standard equivalent to that passed by our veterinary surgeons. If that is not adhered to, we can be certain that the very high standard of veterinary practice in Australia will be lowered.

Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—I will support the Bill if clause 7(c) is amended by inserting a "time of residence" clause. Migrants should be registered if they have the educational requirements to perform the work of a veterinary surgeon. European standards in veterinary science are not as high as ours, and it is much easier for a man to qualify there in four years than here in five. The Australian qualification is accepted in the United Kingdom, where our graduates are fully entitled to practise, whereas diplomas issued in European countries entitle their holders only to enter a British university and are considered as little higher than the matriculation standard requiring the holder to pass the final two years of the British veterinary course before being awarded a final certificate. Earlier I said there was only one doctor of veterinary science in Australia, but I find there are a few more, although the number is considerably less than 10. Doctorates in European countries are granted after a graduate has served as a veterinary surgeon for six months, whereas he must serve many years in this country before being awarded his doctorate; therefore, the difference between the standards of qualification in Australia and Europe are vastly different. I do not advocate the complete prevention of European veterinary surgeons from practising in this country, but they should first be required to pass the course prescribed for Australians. That is only fair to Australian veterinary surgeons and to the prestige that these refugees may hope to build up in this country. This Bill will bring that about. I believe the examination will be thorough, for if it is not the high standard of Australian veterinary science will be broken down.

Only last week I read in a Canadian periodical a reference to veterinary practices throughout the United Kingdom and the British Commonwealth of Nations. The writer paid a tribute to the practice in this country. If the standard of European veterinary scientists who are to be registered in this State is lower than the standard here Australian graduates may suffer from overcrowding in the profession. Australian graduates, many of whom are ex-servicemen, have had to undergo a long course and are surely entitled to the fruits of their labour and study. More than 300 Australian undergraduates are studying to qualify as veterinary surgeons, therefore we cannot anticipate a shortage of qualified men in this country. After all, they have only a limited field despite what has been said in this debate about country areas requiring the services of such men, for the average man is not prepared to practise in a place where he cannot expect to earn a living, nor can he be blamed for that. None of us would be anxious to enter a profession in which we thought we could not make a living, and few country members would go out of their way to work on a farm without expectation of a fair return. In some of the districts which have been cited as requiring the services of a qualified veterinary surgeon, the best veterinary surgeon would possibly be a spanner.

This afternoon much was said in a derogatory way about the care of race horses, trotters, dogs and cats, but although I have no particular

brief for race horses and trotters—indeed, in my young and unregenerate days they possibly did me more harm than good—many people value those animals, not only as a medium of making money but because they love animals. I am fond of dogs and cats, and many children and adults possessing them as pets at times wish to call in a veterinary surgeon to treat some complaint. After all, pets are worthy of attention even though they are non-productive.

Australian graduates know the district in which they intend to practise much better than would the migrant veterinary surgeon, for they are fully acquainted with local conditions and complaints which may be suffered in a particular area. It is vital to safeguard the points I have mentioned. Members of any profession or union are entitled to protection and the best way this can be afforded in this case is to insert a "time of residence" clause providing that the applicant must have resided in this country for not less than one year before the passing of this Bill. A similar provision has been enacted in Victoria and that amendment satisfied all parties because it is completely just to all.

Mr. HEASLIP (Rocky River)—Before the introduction of this Bill I felt, as one who has spent his life in primary production in close contact with sheep, horses, and cattle, that veterinary surgeons were an essential part of country life, but having listened to previous speakers I now wonder how important they really are for there are only seven operating in country districts, the rest being located in the metropolitan area for the sole purpose of caring for dogs, cats and race horses.

Mr. O'Halloran—Are not cows kept in and around the metropolitan area?

Mr. HEASLIP—For every cow treated there would be 100 cats and 100 dogs. I agree that where veterinary surgeons are helping to increase primary production by treating cows they are doing a worthy job, but as far as I can see far too many are employed on the most unimportant job of looking after domestic pets. The Bill will assist us to break down the monopoly exercised by city veterinary surgeons. I do not doubt that many veterinary surgeons coming from Europe are highly qualified, and, by permitting them to practise, competitive conditions will be created in a profession where for many years such conditions have not existed. There is no danger of flooding the profession, for a board with three veterinary surgeons members out of five will have the power to approve or reject applications to register. While the monopoly exists in the city most veterinary surgeons are not prepared to go out to practise in the country. It has been said that they cannot make a living there, but if they are prepared to throw away their white collars and work they will make a success there. Throughout South Australia there is a definite increase in disease amongst stock; last year the Department of Agriculture reported that never before had the incidence of disease, particularly among sheep, been so high. I believe that is because bigger areas are being sown to pasture and the number of stock to the acre is increasing, with a consequent pollution of the soil, creating a breeding ground for stock diseases. In 1949 there were in South Australia 9,365,000 sheep. In March this year we had almost 11,500,000. The cattle population in 1949 was 318,890; in March of this year it was 437,455. This means that more attention is needed for stock. The days have gone when it was far cheaper to let an animal die than call in a veterinary surgeon. Today stock are valuable, but because of restrictions they are not getting the attention they require. We hear much about the need for increased production. The Bill will make more veterinary surgeons available, which will help to increase the production of meat, butter and milk. If the veterinary surgeons are prepared to take off their coats and not charge the exorbitant fees that many do today, they will not starve if they go to the country to work.

Mr. O'Halloran—Provided they can do some rabbiting in their spare time.

Mr. HEASLIP—If they have any spare time. If their services are available at reasonable cost the producers will make use of them. Today many producers have to perform the mules operation, and much skill is needed to perform it satisfactorily. Many producers would willingly hand over to experts the task of mulesing their sheep, but unfortunately the experts are not available.

Mr. O'Halloran—How much a hundred would the producers pay to have their sheep done?

Mr. HEASLIP—If it were as high as 2s. 6d. a sheep it would not be paid.

Mr. Stephens—Why are you always looking for cheap labour?

Mr. HEASLIP—It is not cheap labour. The honourable member cannot accuse the producers of using cheap labour. Labour is not available in the country. If the unemployed from the city were to go to the country they would find plenty of work. It is a matter of whether they are prepared to work. If they are not, country people do not want them.

The giving of injections for entero-toxaemia is another difficult operation. If a veterinary surgeon is available the producer will make use of his services, but if not the producer has to do the job. A man in my district who has never done a university course is a veterinary practitioner because of the time he has been doing the work. He renders a wonderful service. Far from not getting enough work, he has a boy to assist him. He has to work from morning till night.

Mr. McAlees—Doing what?

Mr. HEASLIP—Looking after valuable stock, not cats, dogs and racehorses.

Mr. John Clark—What is wrong with that?

Mr. HEASLIP—By looking after cats dogs and racehorses the important matter of increased production of foodstuffs is neglected.

Mr. John Clark—You would prefer the cats and dogs to be neglected.

Mr. HEASLIP—They should be able to look after themselves. They do not play an important part in production.

Mr. John Clark—You would let a sick dog die?

Mr. HEASLIP—I would shoot him unless he was a useful dog, like a sheep dog.

Mr. John Clark—The other dogs have no feelings?

Mr. HEASLIP—It is often much less cruel to shoot a dog than to have a so-called vet attend to him. Veterinary surgeons in the country have to learn by trial and error, often to the misfortunte of animals. If the Bill will give us more qualified veterinary surgeons which is what we want, I will support it.

Mr. MICHAEL (Light)—I support the second reading, but issue a warning that in South Australia there is a limited field for veterinary surgeons. Men in the Government service render valuable work in advising stock owners on various stock diseases. Apart from the treatment of valuable racehorses, attending to the pets of people who can pay large fees, and some work in connection with stud stock, there is in South Australia a limited field for veterinary surgeons. To a large extent South Australia is disease free. Mr. Heaslip mentioned the coming of diseases as the result of increased pasture production and greater stock carrying capacity. I agree with his remarks, but I cannot agree that it is necessary to have qualified veterinary surgeons to attend to our stock troubles. Any practical man can do mulesing, treat worms, and give injections for entero-toxaemia. In many parts of the State it would be necessary for a veterinary surgeon, if he were to do all the jobs required of him, to travel many miles, and his attendance at a farm would be expensive, more expensive than the value of the stock in many instances. The stock diseases which are prevalent can easily be treated by a practical man. Our Stock and Brands Department advises stock owners on the way to treat diseases, and a practical man can do what is necessary.

We have been told that a number of young men are doing the veterinary course in Brisbane and Sydney and that we will have enough men to fulfil the veterinary requirements of Australia. Before we allow aliens to register for veterinary work we should see that our Australians get first consideration. Mr. Brookman has foreshadowed some amendments, which I support. I would like to see a proviso that if there should be a shortage at any time more qualified veterinary surgeons can be admitted. Permit holders and practitioners are doing valuable work. The can do all the practical work necessary. They can attend to the drenching of sheep, mulesing, milk fever, and calving troubles. I have always felt that there should be a short course of perhaps two years to enable men to qualify to do this work. I will support Mr. Christian's amendment, because those who have been carrying on as practitioners should be permitted to continue to do so. They have done much good work. If we make the position too rigid, and insist that only qualified veterinary surgeons may treat stock, people will be encouraged to break the law because in isolated districts there will not be sufficient work to keep a qualified veterinary surgeon in the district. Some practical man interested in the common ailments of stock will acquire the knowledge necessary to treat them, and if there is not a veterinary surgeon available at a reasonable fee people will seek the services of such a man.

Mr. O'Halloran—That man cannot be prevented from doing the job now provided he does not charge or advertise.

Mr. MICHAEL—I know that, but few stock-owners would allow him to go away without being remunerated. We should not make the rule too rigid, but should allow practitioners to continue to operate if they have proved they are honest and capable men. There is a limited field for qualified veterinary surgeons and we should be wary in admitting men who come from overseas. I believe our men now in training will be able to meet our future requirements.

Mr. STEPHENS (Port Adelaide)—I have listened attentively to the speeches delivered on this Bill, but I was disgusted by the remarks of some members, for they adopted a most selfish attitude. They seemed to be totally opposed to veterinary surgeons in the city being allowed to treat pets, but they do not mind a surgeon treating sheepdogs because sheepdogs are useful to them. One member referred to veterinary surgeons working with their coats and collars on. I have seen these officers at work, and, apart from having to be very skilful, their work at times is very arduous. Some members complained that they cannot obtain the services of veterinary surgeons in the country, but that is largely their own fault. They wish to have their stock treated by a veterinary practitioner so as to save paying a surgeon's fees, but when their animals are very sick they want the services of the highly qualified man. They, therefore, only want to make a convenience of him. They do not wish to extend the same consideration to him as they expect for themselves. I want to see a sufficient number of skilled men available for the need of this State, but we should afford a reasonable protection to our own lads that have paid high fees and undergone a difficult course in order to qualify. If they pass their examinations they should be adequately remunerated. Some members want the State to be flooded with practitioners.

We should not allow a foreigner to land in Australia today and set himself up as a veterinary surgeon tomorrow. No one should be registered until he becomes naturalized as a British subject. If he is to have the benefits of our laws and our protection he should be prepared to become naturalized. I often listened to lectures by one of the best veterinary surgeons we ever had, Dr. Francis Evelyn Place. He often gave lectures on first-aid to injured horses. I believe that this Government, previous Governments, the Agricultural Bureau and the farming community have neglected their duty in this field: they have not established a chair in veterinary science in this State. Such a chair has been established in New South Wales because stock-owners there have not been so selfish. Members opposite should take the blame themselves and admit that they are responsible in a large measure for the present state of affairs. I support the Bill but will not subscribe to foreigners coming here and being registered before they can pass an appropriate test. They should not be given preference over Australian lads studying at our universities. When a Bill dealing with veterinary matters was before the House some years ago the present Minister in charge of the Bill explained how important it was to have not only veterinary surgeons but veterinary practitioners. I think the House agreed with him, but we did not then hear the statements we have heard from some members tonight.

Mr. FLETCHER (Mount Gambier)—I support the Bill and will support the amendment indicated by the member for Eyre. The field for veterinary officers is limited, and it will become more limited in the future because our farms are becoming more mechanized. I agree with the member for Port Adelaide that Australian lads should be given preferential treatment over people coming from overseas. The big question is whether there will be sufficient work in the country for our qualified boys. I agree, too, that the person with a pet cat or dog is as much entitled to the services of a veterinary surgeon as the man on the land with his horses, cattle and sheep. My district is one of the greatest dairying districts in the State and there is a big demand there for a veterinary officer. If only a fully qualified man is allowed to practise there he will not be able to cope with all the work coming his way. That is where a permit holder can be of great value, for he is just as skilful as the fully-qualified man in many respects.

Mr. Stott—He has had the practical experience.

Mr. FLETCHER—Exactly. A veterinary surgeon should be worth at least £1,000 a year considering the fees he has had to pay while doing his course and the knowledge he has gained. The member for Port Adelaide referred to Dr. Place. I remember listening to one of his lectures, and a brochure published by the Department of Agriculture was most informative, for it covered all types of stock ailments. As the doctor said, "The remedies are in your kitchen safe." Two or three practising laymen in my district never missed hearing Dr. Place when he visited Mount Gambier. They were never afraid to ask him for advice. We must have fully qualified officers in the various districts, especially where large numbers of stock are being carried. My sympathy is with many of the foreigners, but they should not be allowed into the calling unless their standards are equal to those of Australian-born young men who have undertaken the course. No one would enter this vocation unless he were a lover of animals.

There are many districts which begrudge paying a fully-qualified man what he should be paid, and if they can get a practitioner they do so, but that is unfair to the more highly qualified men.

Mr. GOLDNEY (Gouger)—I also support the second reading. I know that many difficulties have been faced by mixed farmers in the more remote areas and that it has been difficult to get men even with a permit to work in those scattered areas. They do not expect to make a fortune. In the Lower and Mid North and the Adelaide Plains there are practitioners who operate within a radius of about 20 miles. In these areas in the aggregate there are many head of dairy cattle, sheep and pigs and it is only natural that at some time or other the stock should suffer from ailments. Because of the high prices ruling for stock in recent years, it is not economic for an agriculturist to allow his animals to die without seeking the services of a veterinary officer. Pigs today are bringing as much as £15 to £20 a head, and dairy cattle and sheep prices are also still very high. Veterinary practitioners have been a very great boon in assisting stockmen.

A few months ago one of my cows extensively injured its udder on a barbed wire fence and I held out little hope for her. I rang the local permit holder and described her injuries and he came out, stitched up the udder and inserted a tube in the teat for the time being, and within a week or so she had recovered. That is only one instance of a valuable head of stock being saved by a veterinarian. Mr. Christian has an amendment on the file to give men who have been working under the permit system for at least five years the status of veterinary practitioners. We should do something for these men, who have rendered valuable service. There are not many of them. I approve that portion of the Bill which proposes to allow migrants to practise provided that they fulfil certain conditions and pass certain examinations. It might be a good idea, as suggested by Mr. Brookman, to restrict the provision to men already in the State. If it is found later that there are not sufficient veterinary officers, the position can be reviewed and perhaps the admission conditions made more liberal. Although there have been very few veterinary surgeons admitted to the profession in the last few years, I believe that their numbers will be increased in the near future. No one desires to see these men without a practice. Therefore, we must not be too liberal in admitting migrants who are already here or who may arrive in the next two or three years.

Mr. McLACHLAN (Victoria)—Veterinary practitioners and surgeons have my sympathy, because I come in contact with many of them and appreciate the work they are doing. I consider they are an underpaid section of the community. The member for Port Adelaide referred to the charges of veterinary surgeons, so I will relate an incident bearing on this point. It happened in a Scottish settlement where a grazier rang the local veterinary surgeon and asked if he would come out to attend to one of his sheep, but he first enquired how much it would cost. When he was told it would be £2, the grazier said, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give you £2 if you save the sheep, but if it dies you can have the skin." He agreed, but when he arrived at the farm he found that in the meantime the grazier's son had shorn the sheep. With those few remarks I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Veterinary Surgeons Board."

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Subsection (2) of new section 5 provides:—

> The board shall consist of a chairman and four other members who shall be appointed by the Governor on the nomination of the Minister.

I was wondering whether the Minister of Agriculture would agree to the Australian Veterinary Association submitting the names of three of its members for his approval. I suggest that after "members" we insert "three of whom have been selected by the South Australian division of the Australian Veterinary Association." It would appear that at least three members of the board will be veterinary surgeons.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS (Minister of Agriculture)—I do not see that any good purpose would be served by accepting the suggestion. I take it that all registered veterinary surgeons in South Australia are members of the Association to which the honourable member referred, and he can rest assured we will not go outside South Australia to find veterinary surgeons to place on the board.

Clause passed.

Clause 4 passed.

Clause 5—"Chairman."

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Can the Minister say whether the Chief Veterinary Officer will be appointed chairman of the board?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—It is more than probable that he will be appointed to the board but not as chairman. It has been frequently found that the board lacks legal knowledge and therefore it is proposed to appoint a legal man chairman.

Clause passed.

Clause 6—''Remuneration of board.''

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Can the Minister say what fees will be paid to the chairman and other members of the board?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I assume that the legal man appointed chairman, if he does not already hold an office under the Government, will be paid a higher fee than other members because of his legal knowledge and his duties as chairman, but I do not know what fee will be paid to either the chairman or the other members. In such cases the advice of the Public Service Commissioner is generally sought and he makes a recommendation to the Minister for consideration by Cabinet.

Clause passed.

Clause 7—''Additional qualification for registration of veterinary surgeons.''

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I desire to move to strike out ''section is'' in line 1 of the clause and insert ''sections are'' with a view to adding at the end of the clause a new section 17b.

The CHAIRMAN—I suggest that the honourable member move his amendment later, for, if we alter the words ''section is'' to ''sections are'' and the new sections is not carried, a difficult position will arise; whereas if the new section is carried then the Chairman would have the authority to make the consequential alteration or the Bill could be recommitted. I suggest the honourable member for Alexandra now move his amendment, which appears earlier in the clause than that of the honourable member for Eyre.

Mr. BROOKMAN—I move—

In paragraph (*c*) after ''he'' to insert ''resided within the Commonwealth of Australia at the time of the passing of the Veterinary Surgeons Act Amendment Act, 1952, and.''

The effect of the amendment is to confine the operation of this section to persons already in the country when the Bill is passed. The Bill provides that every qualified person shall be entitled to be registered, and if it is not amended in the way I have indicated many people not yet in this country may apply for registration and be entitled to be registered as veterinary surgeons if they are able to fulfil the conditions stipulated. That state of affairs would not be quite fair to Australian veterinary surgeons, for the Australian course is a long hard one; I doubt whether any other course in the world is harder. In order to encourage Australians to take on this course they should be protected to the extent that they know how many migrants are likely to be entitled to registration under the Bill, and this can only be achieved by limiting such application to persons who reside in Australia at the time of the passing of this Bill.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment on the files which provides for residential qualifications, and I submit that the member for Alexandra should withdraw his amendment to allow mine to be dealt with, for otherwise I would have to vote for the amendment in the hope of being able to move mine. Will you permit my amendment to come before Mr. Brookman's? If his amendment is carried, will I have to move to delete certain words in it?

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member could move to amend it.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—If I support it then I must amend it to get what I desire.

The CHAIRMAN—I rule that I must take Mr. Brookman's amendment first.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I accept Mr. Brookman's amendment.

Amendment carried.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I want to move to delete from paragraph (*c*) of subsection (1) of new section 17a the words ''making application for registration pursuant to this section'' and to insert in lieu thereof ''the passing of the Veterinary Surgeons Act Amendment Act, 1952.'' This would ensure that, to get the benefit of this legislation, persons must have been resident in this country 12 months prior to its passing. It seems that I must move to delete what has already been agreed to in order to get what I desire.

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member cannot do that now. If he did that the position would become ambiguous and there would be a contradiction. On a recommittal of the Bill he can move to amend the clause as he desires. I cannot help the honourable member further at this stage.

Mr. BROOKMAN—I move to insert at the end of subsection (1)—

Provided that where any person complies with all the requirements of this subsection other than paragraph (*c*) the board may, if it sees fit, register such person.

The effect would be to make it possible for overseas veterinary surgeons to be registered at any time the board deemed fit, provided they

fulfilled all the qualifications in new section 17a except the residential qualification. I want the board to have the option of registering overseas veterinary surgeons if it thinks it necessary. If there should be a shortage in the country the board would be able to register suitable men to meet the need.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—There may be a man with exceptional skill available.

Mr. BROOKMAN—Exactly. I cannot see what residence has to do with the registration of a veterinary surgeon. As the Bill stands, the board will not be able to register any person other than those already in the country. I propose to allow foreigners to be registered at any time at the board's discretion. This could not embarrass the veterinary surgeons that we have protected by a previous amendment because our surgeons have representation on the board and they would not allow an injurious policy to be pursued.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I ask the Committee to reject the amendment. The amendment we have already passed limits the time and, to that extent, the number of veterinary surgeons who may be admitted. This amendment contradicts that and allows unlimited time in which the board may, at its discretion, register veterinary surgeons from other countries. The effect is to give the board a power to dispense with the residential requirements of the clause, but this procedure is not desirable. The legislation itself should set out these residential qualifications and it should not be left to the board to decide whether a particular applicant should or should not comply with this requirement.

Amendment negatived.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I move to add the following section:—

17b. Any person who has held a permit under Part III.A of this Act for at least five years and who has been engaged in the treatment of animals for disease and injury as a means of livelihood shall be entitled to be registered as a veterinary practitioner.

This legislation has failed to provide country districts with adequate veterinary services, except by permit holders in certain areas. When the Act was passed we hoped that we would get a number of graduates from the subsidized course at the Sydney university. A few have come back to this State, but they have not gone into country practices and are not likely to, and I do not blame them for that. Undoubtedly they are well qualified but they would require substantial fees for their services, which could not be met by country people.

Mr. Pattinson—Are you so poor in the country that you can't afford to pay the fees?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Country people have not always been affluent. We are passing through an inflationary period and bad seasons and low prices have a habit of recurring. Permit holders under section 30a cannot advertise at all that they are licensed to perform veterinary work, although they render services in respect of animal ailments or injuries, which often means that they have to perform an operation.

Mr. Pattinson—That does not mean that they are forbidden to advertise that they hold a permit.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—By clause 9 a permit holder cannot even tell me by word of mouth that he is entitled to render veterinary services. We should give persons who have held a permit for at least five years and have been engaged in the treatment of animals as a means of livelihood the status of a veterinary practitioner. There is not one veterinary surgeon on Eyre Peninsula, yet the permit holder operating there will be placed even under greater restrictions by this legislation.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The amendment will not create one more permit holder on Eyre Peninsula. If there is only one man operating there now it is obvious that there could not have been requests for more permit holders there. When the relevant amendment was incorporated in the Act in the first place those men who had been practising veterinary work as their sole or main means of livelihood were allowed to be registered as veterinary practitioners, but to become a permit holder a man need not have practised it as his sole or main means of livelihood. He may be a farmer residing in the district and possessing more than a passing knowledge of livestock problems, and because of that and because of the demand in his area for a man to do such work he will be granted a permit to practise in a particular area if he can comply with the conditions of the Act. The areas are limited because, it has been found that both permit holders and practitioners have tended to poach on each other's preserves, and as Minister I have received several such complaints, therefore the permit holder is confined to a particular area. In certain circumstances a permit holder might be permitted to act throughout the whole of Eyre Peninsula if the board saw fit to issue such a permit. In 1938 there were very few veterinary surgeons in this State, but the position has materially improved and many more operate today. Thirty-three are regis-

tered under section 17 (1) as they hold academic qualifications; two are registered under 17 (2), and 18 under section 18. A further 22 persons have been registered but have not paid their annual licence fee and do not now practise; therefore, it appears that a number of people who have the right to practise cannot get sufficient business in their districts to justify their paying the annual licence fee and continuing in the profession. Fourteen persons have been issued with permits under section 28a in respect of the current year. It would ill become me to belittle the work done by permit holders, for as practical men they have served a good purpose in many country districts. This Bill does not limit their activities but clarifies the position with regard to their allocation to districts and ensures that they shall comply with the provisions of the Act, which lays down that they shall not hold themselves out to be academically qualified veterinary surgeons. The Parliamentary Draftsman reports with regard to the amendment:—

The effect of this amendment is to provide that, if a person has held a permit under Part III.A of the Veterinary Surgeons Act for five years and has been engaged in the treatment of animals for disease and injury as a means of livelihood, he is to be entitled to be registered as a veterinary practitioner. Part III.A of the Act was enacted in 1938. It provides that the Veterinary Surgeons Board may issue permits to persons to treat animals for disease and injury for reward in the part of the State specified in the permit. At the time this provision was enacted, there were very few properly qualified veterinary surgeons practising in the State and the intention of Part III.A was, in the absence of properly qualified persons, to enable some status to be given to persons considered competent to give treatment but who lacked proper qualifications. It can be said that the intention of Parliament was to grant permits of this kind for localities where a qualified veterinary surgeon was not available and where a qualified veterinary surgeon could not be expected to make a living. The proposal to enable these permit holders, after a period of five years, to become registered as veterinary practitioners would cut across the basic policy of the Veterinary Surgeons Act. The policy of the Act is that, in future, only persons holding degrees or comparable academic qualifications will be registered as veterinary surgeons.

Section 17 (2) of the Act makes provision for the registration of veterinary practitioners. This subsection provides for the registration as veterinary practitioners of persons who, at the time of the commencement of the Act, had attended animals for at least seven years. However, the section provides that an application for registration as a veterinary practitioner had to be made within six months of the commencement of the Act. The intention of Parliament in this regard was to provide for a class of registration of persons not qualified to be registered as veterinary surgeons but that this type of registration should not continue indefinitely. If a permit holder were entitled to registration as a veterinary practitioner the benefit of registration to the properly qualified person would be largely diminished as he would, so far as registration is concerned, be placed more or less on terms of equality with persons without any academic qualifications of any kind. The effect from the point of view of the public would be equally bad as a permit holder for five years would, on registration as a veterinary practitioner, be able to hold himself out as a registered practitioner and the inference would necessarily be that his qualifications would be comparable with those of the properly qualified veterinary surgeons. It is also pointed out that the Veterinary Surgeons Act does not prohibit unregistered persons from carrying on the business of treating animals. All the Act does is to prohibit an unregistered person from holding himself out as registered or as a veterinary surgeon or as being entitled or qualified to practise veterinary surgery.

The Bill is not necessarily designed to protect veterinary surgeons but to ensure that the public receive the service they pay for. If, as is the case, scholarships are awarded for students to qualify at the Sydney University and less qualified people are allowed to compete with them on equal terms, a great disservice will be done to people owning animals which must be treated.

Mr. STOTT—The amendment contains much merit. The Minister said that a permit holder must operate within a certain area, but I cannot see that there is harm in the amendment in that regard; but a permit holder should not be issued with a full licence merely because he has practised as such for five years. The amendment should provide that a permit holder shall be issued with a licence if in the opinion of the board he is qualified to act as a veterinary surgeon or that he shall be issued with a licence showing that, although he is entitled to act as a veterinary practitioner, he does not hold a university degree. We cannot expect all country areas to be staffed by veterinary surgeons who have graduated from the Sydney University. The Minister said there had been overlapping between practitioners and permit holders, but if that is forbidden by the Act, surely there is legal recourse in such cases. Much difficulty has been experienced in country areas in getting a fully qualified man, and in my district an unqualified man with a good practical knowledge has saved the lives of dozens of horses and cows. To safeguard the interests of the public I suggest that Mr. Christian agree to have placed

on the certificate an intimation that the man does not hold a degree.

Mr. HEASLIP—I support the amendment. Without permit holders and practitioners no veterinary work would be done in the country. I cannot see any harm in repeating what we did in 1935 when we approved of practitioners. Permit holders have done a wonderful job. After doing the work for five years they are entitled to be called practitioners. We have two in my district. One is probably not registered, not because he does not want to do the work, but because he has grown too old. The other man is also getting up in years. We should recognize the sterling work of permit holders.

Mr. HAWKER—We have the veterinary surgeon with the university degree, the practitioner who was registered in 1935 after serving five years in the treatment of animals and who solely or substantially earned his livelihood from the work, and the premit holder who treats animals without the work being his sole means of livelihood. The permit holder can advertise himself as being entitled to treat stock for disease, but he cannot say he is a veterinary practitioner. I can see no need for the amendment because the permit holder can treat stock and charge for the service rendered.

Mr. FLETCHER—Can the Minister say where the 33 fully-qualified veterinary surgeons in South Australia are practising? Has the number of practitioners and permit holders been increased since 1938? In my district a few years ago there was difficulty in getting a permit holder to do the work. If a fully-qualified veterinary surgeon is available in a district, must the practitioner and permit holder cease their activities? If not, they will always be at cross purposes. I can see nothing wrong with the amendment because if a permit holder has practised for five years he should be allowed to continue as a practitioner.

Mr. RICHES—I understand the amendment provides that only the man who has followed the occupation of treating animals for disease for five years and it has been his sole means of livelihood, can apply for registration as a practitioner. If a permit holder has been capable of serving a district for five years he should be allowed to act as a practitioner. The amendment seems just and reasonable and I am inclined to support it. I would rather have that position than register people from overseas. I feel that tonight I have witnessed a completely new procedure in that the Parliamentary Draftsman has presented argument against an amendment by a member.

The Hon. Sir George Jenkins—It is not a new procedure. It is common practice for the Parliamentary Draftsman to provide a report on an amendment.

Mr. RICHES—I always understood that the Parliamentary Draftsman was available to assist members in drafting amendments, and that it was competent for him to report to the Minister concerned on the legal effect of amendments, but I have never heard of his report being quoted by way of argument. I thought there was some degree of impartiality associated with his services, but tonight it seems that the position has gone further, far beyond his giving a strictly legal interpretation of the effect of an amendment. Argument against Mr. Christian's amendment was advanced in a long statement read by the Minister. If that procedure continues I feel that every member will lose confidence in the service he expects to receive from the Parliamentary Draftsman. It is not right that what he says should be advanced as argument against an amendment, and I protest against the procedure.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—In reply to Mr. Fletcher, it is impossible for me to say offhand where all veterinary surgeons are practising in the country. From memory I think there is one at Mount Gambier, Naracoorte, Murray Bridge, Mount Barker, Woodside and Gawler. The number of practitioners is gradually getting less through the effluxion of time.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Have any permit holders that have practised for more than five years had their permits withdrawn? Can we assume that, if permit holders are given the recognition desired by Mr. Christian, veterinary surgeons will not continue to assist them in complicated cases?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I have no knowledge of any permits being cancelled, nor do I know whether any surgeons have refused to give assistance to permit holders.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—The Minister suggested that there have been no restrictions placed on the number of permits issued, but more men have not applied for permits because of the insecure position of permit holders. Licences can only be obtained from year to year and permit holders have to operate under the disabilities I have mentioned. What ambitious young man will embark on a permit holder's career when he knows there is no security in the vocation? Only those with a strong urge to treat stock and go into the country will engage in the work, but they are the people

who would make good practitioners. I am only asking that recognition be given to those who have operated for more than five years. They are entitled to the favourable consideration of the Committee, for there is no encouragement now for men to undertake veterinary work. They would not be a menace to the academically qualified man because there are few qualified veterinary surgeons practising in the country now. My amendment does not give any greater status to the type of man the Minister referred to, namely, the local farmer who treats his neighbours' animals occasionally.

Mr. STOTT—I hope the Committee will accept the amendment. Parliament agreed in 1938 to allow permit holders to operate. The amendment cannot do any harm because to become registered as veterinary practitioners they must have earned their livelihood by this means for at least five years.

The Committee divided on the amendment—

Ayes (11).—Messrs. Christian (teller), Fletcher, Goldney, Heaslip, Macgillivray, McLachlan, Michael, Moir, Quirke, Riches, Stott.

Noes (21).—Messrs. Brookman, John Clark, Geoffrey Clarke, Dunnage, Hawker, Hincks, Hutchens, Jeffries, and Sir George Jenkins (teller), Messrs. McAlees, McIntosh, O'Halloran, Pattinson, Pearson, Playford, Shannon, Stephens, Tapping, Frank Walsh, Fred Walsh, and Whittle.

Pair.—Aye—Mr. Teusner. No—Mr. William Jenkins.

Majority of 10 for the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived; clause as previously amended passed.

Clause 8 passed.

Clause 9—''Duties of holders of permits.''

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I hope the Committee will not perpetrate a further injustice on permit holders by placing on them the additional restrictions included in the clause, namely, that in future they shall not be permitted to advertise orally the fact that they are entitled to practise in veterinary work. Section 30a already places a prohibition on their advertising in writing to this effect. I agree with that part of the section which prohibits their advertising that they are veterinary surgeons or veterinary practitioners, but surely they are doing no wrong if they advertise either orally or by written words that they are entitled to practise veterinary surgery. New subsection (1a) of section 30a provides:—

No person who is the holder of a permit shall, for reward, treat animals for disease or injury in any part of the State outside of the area specified in the permit.

I do not know why that is included, because the Act provides that they can practise only in a defined area as indicated in their permit. Is it the intention to tie these people hand and foot and by these insidious means drive them completely out of their practice?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The honourable member has completely convinced me with his eloquence that the Bill will be no worse without the clause, and I therefore ask the Committee to delete it.

Clause negatived.

Remaining clause (10) and title passed.

Clause 7—'Additional qualification for registration of veterinary surgeons''—reconsidered.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I move—

That the words ''at the time of'' inserted in an amendment already agreed to be deleted and the words ''for one year before'' inserted.

The Committee has already agreed that the clause shall only apply to people living in the Commonwealth at the time of passing of this legislation. I propose to provide that they must have been in the country for at least 12 months before its passing. Migrants were brought to Australia under contract for two years, and if among them are men who were qualified to practise as veterinary surgeons in their own countries and their contract time is almost completed, I am prepared to give them the right to qualify as veterinary surgeons. Victoria has already amended its legislation along these lines.

The Committee divided on the amendment:—

Ayes (13).—Messrs. John Clark, Fletcher, Hutchens, Macgillivray, McAlees, O'Halloran, Quirke, Riches, Stephens, Stott, Tapping, Frank Walsh (Teller), and Fred Walsh.

Noes (20).—Messrs. Brookman, Christian, Geoffrey Clarke, Dunnage, Goldney, Hawker, Heaslip, Hincks, and Jeffries, Sir George Jenkins (Teller), Messrs. McIntosh, McLachlan, Michael, Moir, Pattinson, Pearson, Playford, Shannon, Teusner, and Whittle.

Pair.—Aye—Mr. Lawn. No—Mr. William Jenkins.

Majority of 7 for the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived.

Bill read a third time and passed.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HOUSING TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to amplify the powers of the South Australian Housing Trust to issue debentures as security for loans raised by it. In

the past it has not been found necessary for the trust to raise a public loan by the issue of debentures but it may be found desirable for the trust to follow this course in the future. In such an event, it is desirable that the powers of the trust with regard to the issue of debentures should be clarified. Accordingly, the Bill provides that, with the consent of the Treasurer, the trust may issue debentures as security for money borrowed for the purposes of the South Australian Housing Trust Act or the Housing Improvement Act. It is also provided that, in lieu of issuing debentures, the trust may issue inscribed debenture stock. The provision made in the Bill for this purpose is similar to a clause which was passed during the present session as an amendment of the Electricity Trust of South Australia Act. As was pointed out when this Bill was before Parliament, this form of security is preferred by some investors. The Bill also provides for a Government guarantee of loans secured by debentures of the Housing Trust. A guarantee of this nature may be regarded as essential for loans raised by Government instrumentalities such as the Housing Trust and the provision in question is similar to that enacted in section 20 of the Electricity Trust of South Australia Act relating to loans raised on debentures by the Electricity Trust. The Loan Council has approved of the raising of a semi-governmental loan by the Housing Trust this year, and it will be necessary for the trust to raise at least one loan, probably of £500,000 to complete its building programme for the year.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—This Bill seems to be designed to clarify a situation that most members thought existed. When the Housing Trust was first established it was envisaged that it would be necessary to raise loans and it was suggested that two separate funds be established for the building of two types of houses. The then Premier, the Hon. R. L. (Now Sir Richard) Butler, in introducing the South Australian Housing Trust Bill, said:—

What we particularly desire to do is to place a Bill on the Statute Book and provide for the expenditure of a small amount this year with the idea of establishing the principle, hoping that we will find manufacturers willing to lend money to the trust and that some of our wealthy citizens will either make grants or gifts to the trust in order to help those who earn considerably less than the basic wage . . . perhaps in what we termed "the good old days," when the basic wage was £4 14s., it was possible for men permanently employed, especially skilled artisans, to pay up to 18s. or £1 a week as rent or as instalments of principal and interest; but that is not the position today. The basic wage is only about £3 6s. or £3 7s. a week and it makes it almost impossible for that man to provide the necessities of life for his wife and family if we expect him to pay £1 a week rent. The Government desires to give the scheme a start. I think that ultimately the Commonwealth Government or the Commonwealth Savings Bank will be able to help by financing a project of this kind. I am certain that leading manufacturers will, in the end, make money available at reasonable rates of interest to the trust. No doubt some benevolent-minded person will make a grant in the same way as people have done in the past for providing homes.

History has shown that the benevolent-minded person was not forthcoming and as far as I know the Government has not had to seek loans from manufacturers; but in 1936 it was thought that that would be necessary. Later in his speech Mr. Butler said:—

I do not mind who provides the money so long as it is available at a reasonable rate of interest. It has been worked out that if money can be borrowed at 4 per cent homes can be provided at a weekly rent of 12s. 6d.

In reply to an interjection by Mr. Lacey, who asked whether a body contributing the money would have the right to say where the houses would be built, Mr. Butler said, "No. All they would get would be a debenture." It was generally thought that the Bill introduced in 1936 gave the trust power to raise money by the issue of debentures, and section 20 of the Act gives the trust power to borrow money for the purpose of building homes and also to mortgage, charge, or enter into any other transaction for making any of its property security for any loan. This Bill is apparently designed to clear up the question of whether the provisions of the parent Act completely authorize the trust to borrow by means of debenture and I do not think members will object to it. It goes further than the original Act in authorizing the issue of inscribed debenture stock, and includes the power to borrow money for the purposes of the South Australian Housing Trust Act or the Housing Improvement Act. That is probably the reason for its introduction. We have to acknowledge that it is necessary for the trust to raise money to build more houses, and no one on this side of the House wants to prevent it, but I regret the necessity for the trust to go to the public for money, because housing is one of the functions of government and credit should be made available from the central bank. Recently the Premier was reported to have said:—

Lack of money was hampering every Government in Australia today. It was closing down Government works and in every State except South Australia was causing Governments to sack thousands of men.

He said he did not know to what extent central bank credit should be used and that probably it would be necessary to be cautious. He added:—

I am certain, however, that the use of central bank credit is justified in every way provided it is directly associated with works that are immediately productive.

I do not know whether the Premier regards housing as productive, but if there is an adequate return from the money expended it can be so regarded. I regret that the Commonwealth Government is not agreeable to such a policy, so South Australia is forced to go on to the loan market to get money for its semi-governmental undertakings. If the Housing Trust is assured that a reasonable rate of interest will be paid for the money borrowed, it must be safe for the Commonwealth Treasurer to advance the necessary money. If there is risk attached to it, the public should not be asked to advance money by way of loan. This a proposition where the interest return is secure, and the interest can be paid as safely on money raised by credit as by way of loan. However, the decision does not rest with this Parliament: we have to live and work according to the Canberra economic policy. On the assurance of the Treasurer that the trust needs the £500,000 there can be no objection to the Bill.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE (Burnside)—In this State the field for the investment of trust funds is strictly limited to Commonwealth stock, to loans on first mortgage, and to debentures of the Electricity Trust and South Australian Gas Company. Can the Treasurer tell us whether the debentures to be issued by the Housing Trust will comply with the provisions of the Trustee Act so far as the investment of trust moneys is concerned? I think that would be the position, as these debentures are guaranteed by the Government.

Mr. STOTT (Ridley)—This Bill is a departure to some extent from the accepted principles of finance as I have known them in this Parliament. It is an unusual Bill to introduce in the dying hours of the session. The Premier said that the Loan Council had approved the trust going on the market for money, but there has been no statement about the rate of interest approved by the council. The Commonwealth Government and the council must take full responsibility for not stabilizing interest rates at a level which would give the public confidence to invest money in public loans. When it became known that the rate of interest was likely to rise above that paid on money invested in previous Commonwealth loans, the loans falling due in 1960 fell in value from the par rate of £100 to £86 10s. The effect of it has been that insufficient money has been made available for public works. There has been insufficient confidence for the public to invest in Commonwealth loans, and now semi-governmental undertakings are being given the right to borrow money by way of debentures. If the Commonwealth bond rate is 4½ per cent people who invest money in semi-governmental loans will want the same rate. This will result in competition in connection with interest rates, and I fear the effect. If rates had been pegged there would have been no need for my criticism. As they have not been pegged an interest rate as high as 4½ per cent must be paid. That will cause a stampede and it will soon result in our heading for days of depression. In the last depression there was too big a drag on the economy of the nation and people had to seek credit. This type of legislation points the way to that happening again, unless the Loan Council exercises common-sense and pegs interest rates. If the rate had been pegged at 3⅜ per cent money would have been invested in Commonwealth loans, and it would not have been necessary for this type of legislation to be introduced to enable semi-governmental undertakings to raise money and cause competition in relation to interest rates. There is a need to build more houses and the Premier is in a dilemma because he must get money for the purpose. What rate of interest is proposed?

Mr. QUIRKE (Stanley)—I suppose it is necessary for the Housing Trust to raise money to build houses, but this legislation will certainly add to the cost of a home, and trust homes are already too dear. In many cases houses can be purchased in England without making a deposit. The purchaser merely pays from week to week the amount required to cover principal and interest. Here a person must now find a deposit of at least £600 before he can purchase a trust home, but after this legislation has been in operation he will need more. I do not know whether the Bill will have the effect that the Treasurer expects. It may not have much effect on rental homes, but the average worker cannot find the deposit required to purchase a home. I support the Bill only because we are still living in the realms of financial insanity. While we support orthodox finance and remain in that condition we must get along as best we can.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—One member asked whether Housing Trust loans would be a trustee security. I refer him to section 5 of the Trustee Act, which states:—

A trustee may, unless expressly forbidden by the instrument (if any) creating the trust, invest any trust funds in his hands whether—at the time in a state of investment or not—

(*a*) in South Australian Government securities;

(*b*) on real securities in the State;

(*c*) in any securities guaranteed by the Government or Parliament of the State.

The Housing Trust's loan will be guaranteed by the State Government, so it will automatically become a trustee security. The member for Ridley asked what rate of interest would be offered, but no loan has yet been negotiated and consequently no rate of interest has either been canvassed or considered. At the beginning of the year semi-governmental loans are approved up to certain amounts by the Loan Council. The obligation is on the authority concerned to fix a rate of interest satisfactory to the Loan Council. Until an underwriting offer has been obtained for the loan at a rate acceptable to the members of the Loan Council the loan cannot proceed. I share members' concern at the great competition in semi-governmental loans and at the fact that this competition has progressively forced interest rates up. South Australia is the only State that has continuously opposed these increases, although Queensland opposed them in many instances. As this State has not been on the semi-governmental loan market this year we have not raised any money. That is a necessary corollary to the fact that we have not been prepared to chase rising interest rates. The trust is in a fairly difficult position and it will be necessary for it to raise a loan this year of at least £500,000. This matter will be discussed with the Loan Council in due course.

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

EXCHANGE OF LAND: TOWN OF LOXTON.

The Legislative Council intimated that it had agreed to the House of Assembly's resolution.

MAINTENANCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

TRAVELLING STOCK RESERVE: HUNDRED OF RIDLEY.

The Legislative Council intimated that it had agreed to the House of Assembly's resolution.

TRAVELLING STOCK RESERVE: HUNDREDS OF HAY AND SKURRAY.

The Legislative Council intimated that it had agreed to the House of Assembly's resolution.

BUILDING OPERATIONS BILL.

Consideration in Committee of the following amendments recommended by the Lieutenant-Governor:—

Clause 20—At the end of the clause add the following subclause:—

(3) Where, under this section or section 10a of the Building Materials Act, 1945-1949, or section 24 of the Building Materials Act, 1949-1951, a licensing court has extended the time fixed pursuant to section 39 of the Licensing Act, 1932-1949, for the erection or completion of premises for which the licensing court has decided to grant a licence under the Licensing Act, 1932-1949, when erected or completed, the right to the grant of that licence shall not be taken away by any resolution which is carried under Part VIII. of the Licensing Act, 1932-1949, before the expiration of the time extended as aforesaid.

Clause 25, subclause (2), insert "20" after "2" in line 2, and also in line 3.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—Clause 20 of the Bill (which is similar to section 24 of the existing Act) provides for the case where a person has obtained an order from a court under another Act giving rights to a licence with respect to premises to be built but a permit under the Building Operations Act for those premises is applied for but refused. The court in these circumstances is given power to extend the time during which the premises are to be built. This provision particularly applies to licences under the Licensing Act where the rule in the case of new licences, as laid down by that Act, is for an applicant for a licence to submit plans of his proposed building. The court in a proper case intimates that it will grant a licence upon the completion of the building within a time specified by the court. It has occurred that, as a result of a local option poll in one area, an increase of licences in the area was approved at the poll and the court has approved the grant of a licence in respect of premises to be built. However, a permit has not been granted for the erection of the new premises. If, however, another local option poll was held and the decision at the poll was for no increase or for a decrease in licences, the previous approval of the court would be nullified. This would result from the fact that a new licence has not yet been granted but that, in effect, the court has promised to grant a licence when the premises in question are built.

As the reason for the non-erection of the premises and the consequent grant of the licence has been the statutory restrictions on building, it is considered that the rights of such an applicant should be preserved. Accordingly, the suggested amendment to clause 20 preserves these rights if the decision at a local option poll is as previously mentioned. Clause 25 of the Building Operations Bill provides that the legislation is to come to an end on December 31, 1953, except section 22 (which deals with the powers of the Treasurer to provide temporary housing accommodation). The suggested amendment to clause 25 provides that clause 20, also, is to continue in force until Parliament otherwise determines. If the suggested amendment is made to clause 20 it necessarily follows that, to give it full effect, clause 20 should continue in operation beyond December 31, 1953, the day upon which the legislation ceases to have effect.

Amendments agreed to.

STEAM BOILERS AND ENGINEDRIVERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 13. Page 1333.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—The Minister's explanation of the Bill exemplifies the truth of the old saying about a sledgehammer being used to crush a mosquito, for I understand this Bill has been introduced for the purpose of enabling a licence to be issued to a worthy individual who is debarred from holding a licence because of that provision in the Act which requires that, before a licence can be issued to a person, he must be a British subject, and this person who wishes to obtain a licence has not been in Australia long enough to qualify for naturalization and is not a British subject. Although I favour giving migrants the best possible treatment consistently with their not being given an unfair advantage over Australians, generally speaking Parliament should see that they are British subjects before becoming entitled to any advantages and privileges provided; but in this case the reverse applies and we are asked to pass legislation to ensure that a specific case of hardship may be met, and I offer no objection to the Bill.

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

STIRLING NORTH TO BRACHINA RAILWAY (LAND AND MATERIALS) BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill enables the State Government to grant to the Commonwealth free of charge any Crown lands and any stone, soil and gravel upon Crown lands which are required by the Commonwealth for the construction, maintenance or working of the railway between Stirling North and Brachina. The Bill has been introduced pursuant to an obligation accepted by the State in the agreement relating to the construction of the railway between Brachina and Leigh Creek North Coalfield. By clause 6 of this agreement, which is set out in the Act No. 49 of 1950, it is provided that as soon as possible after notification in writing of the route recommended by the Royal Commission for the railway from Stirling North to Brachina, the State would authorize the Commonwealth to do all that was necessary to enable the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth Railways Commissioner to construct, operate and maintain the railway on the route recommended. Among the obligations imposed by this clause was that of granting lands, stone, soil and gravel certified by the Commonwealth Railways Commissioner to be required by the Commonwealth in connection with the construction, maintenance or working of the railway. This Bill carries out the State's obligation in this matter. It provides that the lands required by the Commonwealth may be granted by the Governor, and that stone, soil and gravel may be granted by the Minister of Lands. Where Crown lands required by the Commonwealth are subject to a lease, the Commonwealth must acquire the interests of the lessee before the grant will be made. It may be mentioned that similar rights have already been granted in respect of the northern half of the railway from Stirling North to Leigh Creek Coalfield, *i.e.*, that part of the railway which is north of Brachina. This measure is in accordance with the agreement ratified by this Parliament prior to the appointment of the Royal Commission on the Stirling North to Brachina railway line, and there is an obligation on the State in regard to its provisions.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—The provisions of the Bill have been made known to the public as it was introduced earlier in another place, and members have no reason to doubt that the position is as stated by the Premier. The

State is obligated in the matter of handling stone and other materials free of charge, whatever it may think of it, and as this Bill merely honours an agreement, no objection can be taken to it and therefore I support it.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Power to grant land."

Mr. RICHES—After the railway has been constructed and in operation for several years, is the Commonwealth to get any additional land it wants for, say, stockyards, or will the power apply for only a limited period?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—There is no limit. If the Commonwealth finds that it needs additional land for any purpose it can certify that the land is required and it will be made available. If the land is held on lease the Commonwealth would have to pay the lessee for his interest. Any land concerned in this matter would be of relatively low value.

Mr. Riches—What about Stirling North?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—If land were required by the Commonwealth for railway purposes only it would have to be provided. There is no time limit.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

PROHIBITED AREAS (APPLICATION OF STATE LAWS) BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It deals with the application of State laws in areas, such as the Woomera Rocket Range, to which the entry of the general public is restricted. There has been considerable discussion between the State and Commonwealth authorities on the questions whether, and to what extent, State laws apply in Woomera. Some persons have suggested that State laws do not apply there because of the large measure of Commonwealth control which is exercised. But it is now generally agreed that since Woomera is South Australian territory the general laws of South Australia do apply in Woomera, except where they are over-ridden by valid Commonwealth Statutes, or where the language of a South Australian Act does not cover any particular act or matter arising in Woomera.

A difficulty of the latter kind arises in connection with the application in Woomera of the Road Traffic Act, the Police Act and the Lottery and Gaming Act. Many provisions of these Acts regulate conduct in public streets, public reserves and other places to which the public are admitted either gratuitously or on payment of money. But in view of the stringent restrictions on the right of entry to Woomera it may seriously be doubted whether any roads, streets or places there are public, and if they are not the Road Traffic Act and the other Acts I mentioned do not apply, with the consequence that it may be difficult to enforce public order, and the civil liabilities of persons in Woomera will be uncertain. An appeal has been made to the Supreme Court with the object of obtaining an authoritative ruling on some of these questions, but it has not yet come on for hearing. In the meantime the position remains doubtful and if the court decides that certain State Acts do not apply the result will be serious unless Parliament settles the matter. Furthermore, any decision which the court may give will be limited to the facts of the particular case and may not indicate a general solution of the problem.

For these reasons it is desirable to settle the matter by statute and this Bill has accordingly been introduced. It applies to any prohibited areas of the Commonwealth, that is to say, Woomera and any other prohibited areas which may be created, and also to any prohibited areas which may be created under the Uranium Mining Act. Clause 3 declares that notwithstanding the restriction on the entry of the public into prohibited areas the persons in a prohibited area shall, for the purpose of the application of State laws, be regarded as members of the public and any acts, places, matters or things in a prohibited area, which are of such a nature that if the area were not a prohibited area they would have been public, shall be deemed to be public within the meaning of State Acts and laws.

Clause 4 deals with some specific instances of the general principles laid down in clause 3, and has been inserted with the object of assisting the police and justices in their duties. It declares that roads, streets, terraces, and thoroughfares in a prohibited area, which are commonly used by such members of the public as are within the area, shall be roads within the meaning of the Road Traffic Act. Secondly, it declares that places in a prohibited area to which access is granted to such members of the public as are within the area will be public places within the meaning of the Police Act, and a provision on the same lines is inserted

declaring that certain places in prohibited areas will be public places within the meaning of the Lottery and Gaming Act.

There is nothing in the Bill about the application of the licensing laws in prohibited areas as there are no difficulties in that regard at present. In Woomera the supply of liquor is to be controlled by the Commonwealth pursuant to Commonwealth regulations and the Solicitor-General of the Commonwealth has expressed the view that the Commonwealth has power to make such regulations. If a prohibited area should be declared at Radium Hill the supply of liquor in that area can be dealt with under the provisions recently passed by Parliament in the Uranium Mining Act. For this reason the Bill makes no mention of the licensing laws. It is, however, desirable that the legal position with respect to the other Acts mentioned should be settled without delay. This is an administrative Bill and does not present any difficulties in regard to principle. Its terms have been settled amicably with the Commonwealth authorities, which have always requested that members of the State police force be made available to maintain law and order at Woomera. The Bill provides the necessary authority.

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

LOANS FOR FENCING AND WATER PIPING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Section 16 of the Loans for Fencing and Water Piping Act provides that, if a loan under the Act is made in respect of land comprised in a Crown lease or Crown agreement, and the lease or agreement is subsequently cancelled, then, if the land is subsequently re-allotted under Crown lease or agreement, the liability to pay the loan is revived and becomes a charge on the land comprised in the new lease or agreement. The purpose of this section was as follows. Without some such enactment as that provided by section 16 the effect of the cancellation of the lease or agreement would be to wipe out the charge on the land in respect of the loan as the Crown would, on cancellation, be both the owner of the land and the body entitled to the charge on the land to secure the loan and the lesser interest would merge in the greater. Thus, in order that the land, on being again allotted on lease or agreement, should be again subject to the charge securing the loan, it was necessary to enact section 16.

The State Bank, by which the Act is administered, has suggested that this provision is unwieldy to administer. There are no provisions similar to section 16 in the Advances to Settlers Act and the Vermin Act, and, if similar circumstances arise in respect of advances made under those Acts, the advances are written off when the land reverts to the Crown, and if the land is re-allotted the Lands Department, after taking into consideration the assets created on the land by the expenditure of the advances, makes proper provision to recover the outstanding amounts when considering the rent or other charges to be payable under the new lease or agreement. This procedure has resulted in considerable reduction in administrative work. It is therefore proposed that a similar procedure be followed under the Loans for Fencing and Water Piping Act, and clause 2 provides that, in the future, when a Crown lease or agreement subject to a loan under the Act reverts to the Crown the charge provided as security for the loan will not be revived when the land is again allotted under lease or agreement. If the land is again allotted, it will be for the Lands Department to fix the rent or other charges payable under the new Crown lease or agreement so that the unrepaid amount of the loan will be recouped to the general revenue. This is another administrative Bill to permit the adoption of a practice which has been found satisfactory in other directions.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I accept the assurances of the Premier and offer no objection to the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—"Provision where Crown lease or agreement is cancelled."

Mr. CHRISTIAN—Is it intended by this clause that charges which hitherto have been carried over on a cancelled lease will not apply in the future?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Under the old procedure when the land was re-allotted the charges on it remained and were applied to the new lessee. That was a cumbersome way of administration and under the proposed new procedure when land reverts to the Crown the charges will be wiped off and the Land Board in fixing the future rent, will take into account the asset which has been created.

Clause passed.

Title passed. Bill read a third time and passed.

PHARMACY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 13. Page 1345).

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—It may seem strange that this Bill has been introduced in the dying hours of the session and that the debate is to continue at this late hour when members are tired. However, it has been the subject of much discussion in another place. It provides for the registration of New Australians who have pharmaceutical qualifications. An applicant for registration must satisfy the board, after lodging a statutory declaration, that he has reached a certain standard and after submitting to an examination he must prove his qualifications and then serve under a registered chemist for a period prescribed by the board. There are sufficient safeguards for the public and the 435 registered pharmacists in this State, and I support the measure because it will make available the services of highly trained New Australians who for some time have been compelled to work in unsuitable callings.

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

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

Consideration in Committee of Legislative Council's amendments.

(Continued from November 13. Page 1345).

Amendment No. 3.—

Page 4, line 5, (clause 12)—before "whether" insert "not being a lease and".

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—The Committee has already agreed to the Legislative Council's amendments Nos. 1 and 2. Amendment No. 3 is a drafting amendment only. Clause 12 is intended to bring within the scope of the Act licences and other arrangements which provide for the occupancy of premises for the purpose of residence. By an amendment made in the House of Assembly a proviso was added to the effect that, as regards these arrangements made before September 17, 1952, only the rent control provisions of the Act are to apply to the premises in question. As drafted, the proviso would possibly be construed to apply to leases of premises. This, of course, was not intended and the purpose of the amendment is therefore to make it plain that the clause does not apply to leases which are defined by section 4 of the Act. I move that the amendment be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

NARACOORTE TOWN SQUARE (PRIVATE) BILL.

Second reading.

Mr. McLACHLAN (Victoria)—I move:—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

About 80 years ago a resident of Naracoorte donated to the town an area of land, but stipulated that no building of any description should be erected on it. It is now the desire of the people of the town, as borne out by the evidence taken at Naracoorte recently by a Select Committee, to erect a bandstand on one portion. They consider that the donor simply did not want any houses or shops erected on the square. The Bill was introduced primarily for the purpose of enabling a bandstand to be erected. This Bill has been before another place and the Select Committee that was appointed recommended that it be accepted.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—This Bill has been inquired into by a Select Committe appointed by another place. The Committee took evidence at Naracoorte and recommended the acceptance of the measure. I trust that the House will pass it.

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

MARGARINE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

I desire to refer briefly to the history of the legislation controlling the manufacture of margarine in South Australia. In 1939 an Act was passed which fixed the quota at 312 tons a year, but during the war an interstate agreement was reached reducing the weekly quota by half a ton. After the war the quota was restored to its original quantity. The question of the control of the manufacture of margarine, by quota, is not peculiar to South Australia. It has operated in other States for years and recently, because of a number of circumstances not unassociated with the scarcity and high price of butter at certain periods, there has been a strong demand for an increase in the quota permitted to be manufactured in other States. According to my advice, the Governments in other States have met the demand by considerably increasing the quota. In Queensland the former quota was increased by more than 200 per cent and in New South Wales it was recently increased from 1,248 to 2,500 tons a year. That meant it was

practically doubled. In Tasmania it was increased from 208 to 416 tons. Here again the quota was doubled. In Western Australia it was increased from 360 to 800 tons; more than doubled.

Political conditions in Victoria have been so fluid in recent months that legislation to increase the quota has not been passed. The other four States have increased their quotas during the year by the quantities mentioned, which is one of the strong reasons why the House is asked to agree to the Bill. The Western Australian legislation was passed as the result of a very representative vote by both political parties. The vote in the Legislative Assembly was 35 to 5 and in the Legislative Council 19 to 9. The legislation was passed by a Liberal Government. It has been suggested that the passing of this Bill will be inimical to the dairying industry. Members will appreciate that I have had some association with country industries and possess a knowledge of their position. I assure members that if the Bill is passed it will not damage the dairy industry in any way; rather is it more likely to assist it because the comparatively small increase in the quota of 156 tons a year provided under the Bill will not make any appreciable difference to the demand for butter. It will, however, satisfy an increasing public demand, not only in the metropolitan area, but particularly in certain parts of our far-flung regions known as the "back blocks." If that demand can be satisfied by local manufacturers there will not be any particular clamour for an increase in the quota in future, but if it cannot there will be an insistent demand for an increase in the quota, which this Parliament has the power to control and which I am asking it to grant.

Another aspect is that with the very substantial increase in interstate quotas it is likely that those States will have an export surplus and nothing that this Parliament can do will stop it from being sold here. If manufacturers in other States can say that they have a market, whether in their State or South Australia, I can foresee Governments in those States, anxious to promote employment in industry, allowing the South Australian market to be exploited to the fullest extent.

[Midnight.]

I notice from information I have received that in the other States four of the Ministers of Agriculture who were responsible for supporting this type of legislation in their Parliaments were associated with land industries, and I believe two of them were dairymen. Apparently they had no fears of the consequences of increased quantities of margarine in their States.

The second argument in favour of increasing the quota is that since the original quota was fixed in 1939 the population of South Australia has increased by about 130,000; so, if the annual quota of 312 tons was reasonable in 1939, the quota proposed in the Bill of 468 tons is also reasonable. The third point in favour of this legislation is that it has already been passed by the Legislative Council, and according to *Hansard* its merits were freely canvassed there. Nearly all members took part in the second reading debate and there was also considerable debate in Committee. Therefore, this Chamber can be assured that the Bill has received the fullest consideration there. The recently expressed views of certain members on the status of the Legislative Council are a very strong additional reason why they should agree to this Bill.

The Margarine Act, 1939, among other things, provides that no person shall manufacture any margarine unless he is licensed by the Minister, and section 12 provided that the owner of a factory which was registered under the Margarine Act, 1934, at the time the 1939 Act came into force was to be entitled to a licence. Section 20 deals with quotas of table margarine which may be manufactured in South Australia. The section provides that the Minister may by notice in the *Gazette* fix, in respect of any period, the maximum amount of table margarine which any person may manufacture during that period. In point of fact, the declaration made by the Minister under this section is made in respect of a period of a calendar year. By an amendment passed in 1948, it was provided that the aggregate amount of table margarine which may be included in quotas declared under section 20 is not to exceed 312 tons for any calendar year.

Thus, the present law is that the Minister can fix annual quotas of table margarine which may be manufactured by licensees in the State. The total quotas to be so allotted must not exceed 312 tons per year and, subject to this overall limitation, the Minister has discretionary power as to how the individual quotas may be allotted. In fact, the aggregate quotas for some time past have been allotted between two companies and, under a declaration made in Octobder, 1951, and fixing the quotas for 1952, the Minister allotted to each of those companies a quota for 1952 of 156

tons. What is proposed by the Bill is as follows. The aggregate quota of 312 tons per calendar year, which was fixed by the amending Act of 1948, is increased to 468 tons, an increase of 50 per cent. As has been previously mentioned, the Minister has already declared the individual quotas for 1952 and it is thus necessary to provide power to alter this declaration. This is accordingly done by paragraph (*b*) of clause 2 of the Bill which empowers the Minister to vary the notice given in October, 1951, so that the aggregate amount which may be allotted for 1952 will be on the basis of 468 tons instead of 312 tons.

Thus, the effect of the Bill is to increase the aggregate quota of table margarine to be manufactured in any calendar year from 312 to 468 tons. In the allotment of this aggregate between individual manufacturers the Bill enables the Minister to do what is necessary to enable the 1952 quotas to be altered, having regard to the increase from 312 to 468 tons in the aggregate quota. As regards future years, the Act now gives the Minister a discretion as to the apportionment of the aggregate quota and the Bill does not affect this discretion. Thus, both as regards the increase in the 1952 quotas and in respect of quotas for future years, the Minister will have full discretion in the matter.

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS (Minister of Agriculture)—As indicated by members of the Government in the Legislative Council, the Government accepts the Bill in its present form, and does so because it is a little more realistic than when first introduced. The additional quota can be justified because there has been a considerable increase in the population since the original Act, and because a considerable number of these people are New Australians who are accustomed to margarine, and consequently are looking for it.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—This Bill is not a matter of no consequence, but is of some importance to certain people, on whose behalf I feel it my duty to say a few words. It has been said that the increased population of the State warrants the margarine quota being increased, and with that I have little quarrel. That is the obvious answer to those who would have no increase at all. I am now speaking on behalf of a certain section which would not have any increase if it had its way. I admit that the organized section of dairy farmers would prefer no increase in table margarine, but perhaps that goes a little too far. I appreciate that, with rising costs, we should pay some attention to the housewife's weekly bills, and this is one factor which has some bearing on them. However, this is not quite so simple a thing as some members think. The Leader of the Opposition said that Victoria had granted no increase, which is true. Victoria is a very strong dairying State.

Mr. O'Halloran—Not as strong as Queensland, *pro rata*.

Mr. SHANNON—Queensland may have the greatest potential in the Commonwealth, but Victoria has been the premier dairying State for many years, and it has not seen fit to increase its 1939 quota of table margarine. That should be some guide to a State like South Australia where dairying is not as profitable an undertaking as it is in the ideal conditions prevailing in the sister State. Apart from one or two small pockets of good dairying country, generally speaking milk and not butter producing areas, the main parts of the State which produce our butter are the mixed farming areas, which are by no means ideal for dairying; indeed, they would be considered most unsuitable in most parts of the world. Bearing that in mind we must realize that South Australia has perhaps even more reason than Victoria for safeguarding the interests of those who earn a little from this sideline. Queensland has practically opened the door and allowed table margarine to be manufactured *ad libitum*, but the latest information I have received is that the organized dairymen are bringing great pressure to bear on the Queensland Government to review its attitude. I think there are 26,000 or 27,000 organized dairymen and I believe that the Government is not unmindful of the need to listen to them. Queensland's dairying potential is so great that I think we will see a change of front on the part of the Government in regard to its policy on table margarine.

Mr. Whittle—Has the quantity mentioned been manufactured in Queensland?

Mr. SHANNON—Not yet. That is only the amount for which licences have been given. The following appeared in the London *Times* of November 10, 1952:—

Montreal,
November 9, 1952.

The Quebec Government is to enforce rigidly the ban on the sale of margarine in the province. The Premier of Quebec, Mr. Duplessis, said at a press conference in Quebec at this week-end, that the Government will amend the anti-margarine legislation passed two years ago. The amendments will provide for the confiscation of vehicles carrying margarine, the vehicles to become the property of the

Crown. Mr. Duplessis said that the new moves should curtail any further sale of margarine in the province and should provide more protection for the Quebec dairy industry.

It has been said that Denmark sells all its butter abroad and imports margarine and profits thereby, but apparently the very prosperous state of Quebec, where dairying is a big industry, has banned table margarine and gone to the extreme limit of not permitting the carrying of it at the risk of confiscation of the vehicle. I cannot imagine anything more repressive and confess I was amazed when I read it, but it is an indication that in other parts of the world margarine is regarded as a very real menace to the dairy industry if its manufacture is allowed to get out of hand.

I do not intend to fight the Bill, for I think there is some justification for it in the light of our increasing population, but in the Committee stage I propose to submit certain amendments which I think are reasonable. It is a wise man who can distinguish butter from margarine once it is spread. The President of the Legislative Council informed me that he brought some table margarine into this place and had it put on the tables of Parliament House, and that not one member detected it. That is concrete evidence of the effective competition that could take place. In Committee I hope to bring about certain things which will be satisfactory from the point of view of manufacturers, consumers and those who fear competition from margarine.

Mr. FLETCHER (Mount Gambier)—I agree with the honourable member for Onkaparinga that at times it is impossible to tell the difference between butter and margarine, for the production of margarine has been perfected to such an extent that there is now little difference between the two products. A test was conducted at a dairy conference, and it was found that some people could not tell the difference by tasting. I realize that some increase in the production of margarine is called for, but it is a competitor of butter and we must be very careful that its production does not eventually lead to the downfall of the dairy industry. Its sale has had an effect on that industry and on the sale of butter for as long as I can remember.

Mr. O'Halloran—What would you do about interstate margarine?

Mr. FLETCHER—I do not know, but I strongly suspect that some is being imported at present. The dairy industry is a big industry in this State, and we should not cripple it. Margarine consumption could prove a menace to the dairy industry, but I support the measure, for the production of margarine will be controlled. Many new Australians prefer it to butter, partly because it is cheaper.

Mr. DUNKS (Mitcham)—I fancy I was one of the first to ask a question in this House regarding an increase in the quota of table margarine, and I support the Bill for many reasons, one of which is that the price of butter today is so high that it must be difficult for many families to provide the amount required. In some poorer homes, particularly those with large families, difficulty must be experienced. In my own home many years ago we had to eat dripping and lard with our bread because we could not afford butter. Although prices were not as high in those days, conditions with regard to the basic wage were much different. Today a cheaper spread is needed for our daily bread, and New Australians who have been used to a cheaper spread are creating a big demand for margarine. I am not at all afraid that the sale of margarine will make big inroads into our dairying industry, for the amount of margarine consumed per head of population in Australia each year is under half a pound, whereas over 11 lb. of butter is consumed, so that the increased consumption of another half a pound per head will result in only a reduction of half a pound in the quantity of butter consumed. We need not be concerned about that. For every pound of table margarine consumed in South Australia today, 50 lb. of commercial margarine would be used, firstly because in the hot weather it is easier to use and secondly because it is cheaper. It it were not for the use of commercial margarine the price of pastries would be much higher, for butter at 4s. 0½d. a pound would have to be used.

Mr. Shannon—The use of commercial margarine is not restricted.

Mr. DUNKS—No. Its price has recently risen to 1s. 4½d. a lb., and if cake manufacturers could not use any commercial margarine the butter industry would not be able to supply their requirements. Why should there have been imposed a prohibition on the table margarine coming in from other States?

Mr. O'Halloran—Under what Act is that done?

Mr. DUNKS—Under this Act it must be manufactured in South Australia.

Mr. Shannon—The raw product must be inspected before manufacture.

Mr. DUNKS—It must be inspected in South Australia before manufacture, and if it must be sent from New South Wales for examination here it will not be sent back for manufacture. The Australian table margarine is a little bony and does not spread easily, being made from a coconut oil product. In the other States that oil is deodorised and all the flavour taken out until it becomes a neutral flavour, but the New South Wales manufacturers process the fat that comes to South Australia for the manufacture of table margarine. Further, they are the people who handle much of the peanut oil in New South Wales, and they also de-odorise that. We have not been told on this occasion that we are employing black labour, but I remember being told previously that black labour was used in the production of raw material for this product. That is still correct, but the territory from which the coconut oil comes is a mandated territory, partly if not solely controlled by the Commonwealth Government. Surely we have to look after the people in these territories. I wish it had been possible to get some New South Wales margarine for exhibition here, but I understand the New South Wales people are not allowed to manufacture there and sell here. As far as I can gather there is none on the South Australian market. We are told that it is here, but that is wrong because I have made inquiries and find that table margarine from the other States is not procurable. If the Bill is passed I hope there will be no prohibition on goods coming from the other States, particularly if they are as good as we can manufacture here. We want to sell to the other States, so we should purchase from them.

I wonder why people in the eastern States have not sent table margarine to South Australia and said that under section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution it can be done. I believe that restrictions in some of the other States prohibit New South Wales manufacturers from sending table margarine to those States, but it has been sent and there has been no objection to it. If it were sent to South Australia and it were challenged I think they would win out. If more table margarine were produced it would provide the public with something cheaper than butter. I will not say that the flavour is the same because it is not. Cake manufactured with pure butter has a different flavour from cake made with pure margarine. With table margarine it is difficult to make a decision. I was interested to hear what Mr. Shannon had to say on this matter. I have never been game enough to say that I can tell the difference between table margarine and factory butter. I can tell the difference between table margarine and dairy butter, because dairy butter has a flavour all its own, but it goes off quickly. Factory butter is a little tasteless, whereas dairy butter has a different flavour. It is something like the difference between matured cheese and cheese that has not been kept very long. Factory butter will keep three times as long as dairy and it can be produced more economically. I support the Bill in the hope that it will not apply to only two manufacturers in South Australia, whom I believe belong to one group. If the margarine quota is to be increased we should have the opportunity to make a selection and get the best available for use as the daily spread.

Bill read a second time.

Mr. SHANNON moved—

That it be an instruction to the Committee of the whole House that it has power to consider a new clause relating to the colour of margarine.

Motion carried.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

New clause 3—''Enactment of section 24a of the principal Act.''

Mr. SHANNON—I move to insert the following new clause—

3. The following section is enacted and inserted in the principal Act after section 24 thereof—

24a. (1) No person shall sell any table margarine unless the table margarine is of saffron colour.

(2) In this section ''saffron colour'' means that colour as defined by the British Colour Council Dictionary of Colour Standards and therein designated as B.C.C. 54.

It is obvious that margarine can masquerade as butter. When the 1939 legislation was introduced the interests I represent were unwisely talked into accepting a protection which was to be provided by having printed notices in places where margarine was served. They were advised that that would be ample protection against any unfair competition, but it has been clearly demonstrated that in snack bars and eating houses table margarine has been used as butter and there has been no attempt to comply with the Act. It has been placed on the tables and used in sandwiches and rolls and the persons purchasing foodstuffs have been unaware that they were eating margarine and not butter. The proprietor who gets away with that deception is making an unfair margin

of profit. The suggested colouring for margarine is saffron, which approximates the colour of what may be called farm butter made in the spring of the year. Any person buying or eating it would know that he was eating margarine and not butter. The colour would not affect the housewife who desired to use margarine in the home. It is recognised throughout the world and is adopted from the British Colour Council Dictionary. It will protect the unwitting buyer from being duped. The dairy industry has no complaint about the manufacurers of margarine, who have played the game fairly.

Mr. Stephens—Does saffron contain any foreign matter?

Mr. SHANNON—No, it has been commonly used for ages and is the colouring matter used in butter during the dry feed season. The final colour depends upon the amount of saffron used. It is neither deleterious nor beneficial.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I see no necessity for the amendment. The member for Onkaparinga said he desires to protect the dairy industry because margarine is being sold in large quantities in lieu of butter and people are being misled into believing they are eating butter. If this Bill is carried it will only increase the amount of margarine manufactured to 468 tons and that will lead to no great substitution of table margarine for butter and cannot have any appreciable effect upon the butter market. If the amendment is carried it will place the local manufacturers of margarine at the mercy of their rivals in other States because those rivals will not have to colour their table margarine, and despite assertions to the contrary, margarine made in another State cannot be kept out of South Australia. If members want to kill the industry in South Australia they should carry the amendment, but I do not think they want to do that. The member for Onkaparinga is probably actuated by the best of motives, but he should reconsider his amendment before he presses it any further.

The Committee divided on the new clause:—

Ayes (22).—Messrs. Brookman, Dunnage, Fletcher, Goldney, Hawker, Heaslip, Hincks, and Jeffries, Sir George Jenkins, Messrs. William Jenkins, Macgillivray, McIntosh, McLachlan, Michael, Moir, Pattinson, Pearson, Playford, Shannon (teller), Stott, Teusner, and Whittle.

Noes (12).—Messrs. Christian, John Clark, Geoffrey Clarke, Hutchens, McAlees, O'Halloran (teller), Quirke, Riches, Stephens, Tapping, Frank Walsh, and Fred Walsh.

Majority of 10 for the Ayes.

New clause 3 inserted.

Title passed.

Bill reported with an amendment; Committee's report adopted.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 1 a.m. on Thursday, November 20, the House adjourned until 2 p.m. the same day.