

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, September 15, 1953.

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

FRUIT FLY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

His Excellency the 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 Fruit Fly Act Amendment Bill.

ASSENT TO ACTS.

His Excellency the Governor intimated, by message, his assent to the Public Purposes Loan Act and the Pastoral Act Amendment Act.

QUESTIONS.**WHEAT MARKETING AND PRICES.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—In view of the uncertainty which exists as a result of press reports that the conference of Ministers of Agriculture at Canberra last week failed to reach agreement on the price for wheat for local consumption and apparently on the question of marketing generally, can the Minister of Agriculture inform the House of the present position and what steps, if any, are proposed to be taken to organize the marketing of the next wheat harvest in this State?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The conference duly took place last week in Canberra and lasted from 10.30 a.m. until 6.30 p.m. As a result a compromise plan was suggested, which Ministers undertook to place before their respective Governments. That action has been taken. The only information that I have in regard to the attitude adopted by the Governments of Victoria and Queensland is the statement which appeared in this morning's paper. They were the minority States in the previous plan; both objected to the 15s. home consumption over-all price. The compromise plan provided for a 14s. (13s. 10s., plus 2d. for export to Tasmania) flat rate home consumption price. That plan was not accepted by the Victorian Government and we are back where we were. In other words, there is the greatest likelihood of the stabilization plan going, and we must move quickly if we are to have a reserve plan which would enable the Wheat Board to continue with wheat marketing for the coming harvest. I also noticed in the press that the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture is calling wheat-growers' organizations together on Friday next

and I will await the result of that conference with great interest. Time is running short and it is my intention to recommend to the State Government that unless there is a very speedy settlement of the question we should introduce legislation to establish a compulsory State pool in South Australia. That, however, is a matter which still has to be discussed and I do not know what the attitude of the Government will be.

Mr. HEASLIP—Is it not a fact that five years ago the Wheat Stabilization Plan was implemented after a ballot of wheatgrowers had been taken and were they not promised the right to decide by ballot whether it should continue for a further five years?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The plan which has been in operation during the last five years apparently is not now acceptable to the wheatgrowers, because the various associations have indicated that they are not satisfied to accept the cost of production price for home consumption sales. That is the rock on which the Ministers of Agriculture split. Some thought it better to have an over-all price of 15s. for all home consumption sales, but the minority did not think so, and as the wheatgrowers would be owners of the wheat that is to be acquired under the proposed plan, we felt that their wishes must be considered in regard to the price of the article they grow on behalf of the taxpayers of this country and the consumers of other countries. There is a very grave danger that the International Wheat Agreement will not be implemented in Australia, and if that happens flour sales now made under the agreement to Indonesia and Ceylon will cease almost entirely because those countries are under contract to buy their stocks from countries bound by the International Wheat Agreement. Therefore, if Australia does not ratify the agreement those sales will go by the board and the milling trade will be in a much worse position than it is in now.

BASIC WAGE DECISION.

Mr. DUNKS—Can the Premier inform the House if the recent decision of the Federal Arbitration Court on the basic wage will affect industries in this State under the jurisdiction of the State Industrial Court? How will the living wage now be fixed in South Australia? Can marginal differences be fixed by the wages boards or by the Industrial Court, and can appeals be heard from employers and employees against awards of wages boards?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—For several years now the basic wage determined by the Commonwealth Arbitration Court has been automatically accepted as the living wage for State awards, but there has never been anything to prevent local wages boards from sitting to consider margins. They have considered margins as a matter of everyday occurrence, and during this session I have tabled many of their determinations. They have never been tied down and consequently are completely unaffected as regards margins by the decision of the court. What does arise from it, however, is whether the State living wage should now be tied to the basic wage, and the further question of what method the Arbitration Court will use in future to vary the basic wage. These are matters of the greatest importance that have not yet been mentioned because the reasons for the judgment have not been given. A third very important point also arises. The court's decision affects a number of unions, but there are, I should say, at least one and a quarter million workers not actually involved in those proceedings and they have not been cited. Whether the court intends that the "C" series index should operate in respect of some employees and not others I do not know, but I cannot imagine that it would.

Mr. Lawn—It will unless the employers ask for variations.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The court in due course will give its reasons and in doing so will, I believe, automatically outline the steps it will take for a review of the wage conditions. Under these circumstances I have a very strong feeling that no action should be taken by this State until the court publishes the reasons for its judgment and until we see what further action it proposes to take to make its findings general.

Mr. LAWN—In view of the fact that the present wage, now to be pegged, was fixed as at June 30 last, what action does the Government propose to take to extend price control?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—When the system of wage variation is no longer flexible it becomes necessary to adopt fairly stern measures to prevent rapid changes of value in order not to inflict relative hardships on various sections of the community. We cannot have fixed wages on the one side and on the other rapidly changing values either upwards or downwards, because it cuts both ways. If values fall rapidly whilst wages are fixed at a high rate the employers in this State will quickly find they are unable to sell their goods.

Mr. Lawn—They will go back to the Arbitration Court.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—In its reasons the Arbitration Court may say that it proposes in future to review the matter every so many months, or on application. Although in the first instance the honourable member may be correct when he says that if wages are pegged we must see that commodity prices are controlled so that people can be maintained on those wages, on the other hand if prices overseas fall rapidly the primary industries will be in an intolerable position. They will become faced immediately with high costs of production which will not be borne by competitors overseas. The honourable member will see that anything of that nature will be detrimental to the Australian economy. The Government will consider this matter. I have already had some reports on the judgment. I cannot take the question further today because we have not received a copy of the Arbitration Court's considered opinion, and, perhaps what is equally important, an indication of how the court proposes to deal with the problem.

Mr. LAWN—When considering the effect of the Full Arbitration Court's decision upon the State living wage, will the Government consult the Trades and Labor Council before taking action?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government usually desires to make up its own mind on the fairness of any issues without discussing it with interested parties. If I were to answer the honourable member in the affirmative I would have a request from the employers to discuss it with them as well. The Government takes the view that it is best to prepare legislation, provided it has the necessary information available, without specifically getting advice from either side on what may be a controversial question. I propose this afternoon to introduce and explain a Bill without having consulted outside authorities about it, because they would be at variance in their opinions on it, and any consultation with them would probably confuse rather than simplify the issue. I promise the honourable member that, before any action is taken in connection with the other matter, the greatest consideration will be given to it, because it is one of the most important problems confronting Australia today. Most likely, if the Government has to take action it will necessitate the introduction of a Bill, which will enable members to give some attention to it.

CONTROL OF PASTURE INSECT PESTS.

Mr. PEARSON—According to a paragraph in this morning's *Advertiser* under the heading "Control of pasture insect pests," the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization's entomology division has announced that successful results have accrued from the inclusion of a small percentage of DDT in superphosphate to control redlegged earth mites, web worm and other pasture pests. Has the Minister of Agriculture seen the paragraph and are his departmental officers aware of it? If so, will he take steps to bring the matter before the notice of farmers and give them advice as to how and when to apply the DDT?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I have seen the paragraph and I am asking the Director of Agriculture for a full report which I will bring down, but it must not be overlooked that superphosphate at present is at a very high price, and the question arises of how much will be added to the cost by the inclusion of 2 per cent of DDT.

Mr. QUIRKE—The September issue of the *Rural Research in C.S.I.R.O.* says in relation to the pasture cockchafer beetle:—

Subterranean-clover-dominant swards are most susceptible to attack, especially if the soils are light, friable, and well-drained.

It is well-known that subterranean clover has a high tolerance of soil acidity. It is one plant that will grow in highly acid soils. The grasses will not grow with it, because of the high acidity; therefore, the soil is clover-dominated. Will the Minister of Agriculture have an investigation made towards the control of the cockchafer beetle being embodied in the application of an alkaline substance, such as calcium carbonate, to reduce acidity in the soil, and to prove, if it is provable, that by reducing the acidity it is possible to eliminate the inroads made upon pasture by the cockchafer beetle?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I will bring the honourable member's question under the notice of the Director of Agriculture. I am sure that his officers are thoroughly informed in respect of the various publications that come in, particularly the one from which the honourable member has quoted.

AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The member for Flinders asked a question relating to the use of DDT in superphosphate. That matter has been fully dealt with in the September issue of the *C.S.I.R.O.* journal. Apart from that

organization there are various scientific bodies in this State which are continually ascertaining facts of great importance to the man on the land, but frequently there is a lag of not months but years before that valuable information is received by the person in a position to use it. Recently the Commonwealth Government made a substantial grant to this Government for what are known as extension purposes, so that scientific information can be transmitted to the man on the land. Is it a fact that this Government received this money, and, if so, what use has been made or is proposed to be made of it? What allocation has been or is to be made for horticulture and similar forms of agriculture and for broad acres farming?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The Commonwealth Government made certain grants to the various State Departments of Agriculture to assist in research work, and South Australia has profited to the extent of the grant made last year, which is being used in a number of ways in the development of our agricultural research work. One way is that to which I referred in replying to the member for Burra, and we are also carrying out many irrigation tests near Milang in the Lakes district and on the Lower Murray to ascertain the effects of various types of irrigation on the various soils in that area. I will obtain a further report from the Director of Agriculture on the possibility of a wider spread of this State's experiments. The Department of Agriculture is fully alive to the possibilities of the use of this grant and is using it to the best advantage of agriculture generally.

EIGHT MILE CREEK AREA.

Mr. FLETCHER—Last week I was one of a party privileged to inspect the Eight Mile Creek area. In the party were also members of the Returned Soldiers' League interested in land settlement, members of the local regional committee and departmental officers. Is it the Minister's intention to ask for a report, or consider the views of other than departmental officers who made the inspection, to see if it is possible to alleviate the trouble caused by surplus water and re-growth on the area?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—About three weeks ago, previous to the inspection referred to, a member of the Legislative Council visited Eight Mile Creek and I received a report on that visit. Having considered it I thought a further inspection advisable and

arranged that the Director of Lands, who is chairman of the Lands Development Executive, and its chief executive officer and other officers, the honourable member himself, the member from the Legislative Council, representatives of the regional committees and the chairman of the local soldier settlement committee at Port MacDonnell should make a visit so that they could see first-hand the condition of Eight Mile Creek. Three weeks ago it was very wet, and during the intervening period there was a further three inches of rain. The Milstead No. 1 drain was blocked to some extent and this had caused a flooding three weeks previously. That drain was cleared and despite the additional rain I think the honourable member will agree that there was a considerable improvement as to the wetness of the locality. I have asked departmental officers for a report, which I will have tomorrow, and will make it available to the honourable member or any other honourable member. I will be prepared to receive and consider a report from any other committee which was present on the last visit.

PARLIAMENTARY VISIT TO WOOMERA.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—As South Australia has played such an important part in the development of Woomera, will the Premier ask the Prime Minister that private members of this Parliament be invited if any Parliamentary inspection is made of Woomera?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Woomera is a defence establishment and is directly under the control of the Commonwealth Government. It is true that this State has assisted the Commonwealth Government on a number of occasions in connection with the undertaking, but it has always been upon the basis that the Commonwealth paid the cost of the work. I have always felt that it was a good thing not to go to Woomera, although I have been there on one or two occasions; but more recently on all occasions when I have been invited to Woomera I have declined with thanks, because what you do not know you cannot communicate to anyone else, even unwittingly. When highly classified information is going forward there is a very good reason to keep clear of this undertaking if possible. In those circumstances I have never asked for an invitation to Woomera.

Mr. Riches—What about a visit to the village apart from the remainder of the project?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The village is outside the area and is the same as any other

village. In this case it is purely a contractor's camp and there is very little to see. As far as I know most people go into the village as a matter of course without any security. I do not desire an invitation either to see the atomic tests or the installations. Firstly, Woomera is not within our jurisdiction and secondly, if there are disclosures of information the fewer people knowing that information the easier it is to trace the source of disclosures.

POTATO SUPPLIES.

Mr. TAPPING—In view of numerous complaints concerning inferior Western Australian potatoes, can the Minister outline the method of inspecting potatoes received *ex steamer* at Port Adelaide?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The Chief Horticulturist reports:—

Potatoes entering South Australia from Western Australia carry a certificate based on inspection by officers of the Western Australian Department of Agriculture. During the discharge of such potatoes at Port Adelaide, an inspector of the South Australian Department of Agriculture is in attendance, and by means of examination of broached bags and of others opened and shot for such specific purpose, satisfies himself that the produce is free from pests, and conforms to grading regulations of this State. Any bags showing damage or decay incurred during transport are ordered segregation for sorting and reconditioning. Western Australia has no serious potato pests or diseases which do not occur here, and fumigation is unnecessary. However, a watch is kept for pests and fumigation or other treatment would be ordered if any dangerous pests were detected.

FLUKE DISEASE IN SHEEP.

Mr. HAWKER—During last Sunday's broadcast of the Countryman's Session reference was made to the sheep disease "fluke" and its prevalence in the Murray waters. Can the Minister say whether there is any danger of spreading fluke through the pastoral areas by the use of water from the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—A certain amount of fluke is apparent in the Lakes district of the Lower Murray and the Department of Agriculture is carrying out experiments for its eradication. This morning I approved of certain work being done there. I think it is far-fetched to imagine that stock in the north may contract fluke from water from the River Murray at Morgan. However, I will obtain a full report and let the honourable member have the information.

BULK HANDLING OF WHEAT.

Mr. HEASLIP—The *Advertiser* of September 10 contained the following report under the heading, "No Cost to State for Bulk Handling":—

A complete system of bulk handling of wheat in S.A. could be introduced without a penny voted by the State Parliament, the secretary of the S.A. Wheat and Wool Growers' Association (Mr. Stott, M.P.) said last night. The Public Works Committee had no legal right to hold up their inquiries any longer. More than 80 per cent of S.A. farmers wanted bulk handling.

As that report states that not one penny would need to be voted by this Parliament and as, therefore, South Australian taxpayers would not be involved, can the Premier say whether South Australian wheatgrowers will be given the right to implement bulk handling? Further, seeing that, according to the report, 80 per cent of South Australian farmers want it, can a charter be given to this association to introduce it?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Although on a number of occasions the question of a charter has been raised, as far as I know there is no specific application for a charter before the Government at present. Quite apart from the financing of the elevators and silos, the use of ports, wharves and railway facilities would be involved; therefore, until I received an application and saw a precise statement of the conditions of the proposal, I would not be in a position to venture an opinion whether the Government would be likely to approve of it or not. On a number of occasions one of the South Australian members of the Wheat Board has discussed this matter with me, but that proposal was contingent on the Wheat Board's continued existence. It was a fairly general proposal, and in any case it did not get down to specific purposes. At the moment, the future of the Wheat Board itself appears to be doubtful because of the lack of agreement between the States on the marketing of wheat. On the general question, the Government has always been prepared to consider a request for a special charter and indeed, when a request was made in regard to Ardrossan, the Government not only sponsored it but placed the matter before the Public Works Committee to enable a rapid decision to be made.

MIGRANTS' ELECTRICITY CHARGES.

Mr. JENNINGS—When the Gepps Cross migrants' camp was under Commonwealth control one of the greatest grievances the

migrants had was the excessive electricity charges. At a meeting that the Premier attended, when arrangements were made to hand over the control of the hostel to the Housing Trust, the matter of electricity charges was raised. I understand he promised that arrangements would be made to put these people on the same footing, as regards electricity charges, as other members of the community. However, I understand that, despite this, the average charge for an average family there is about twice the average charge for an average family elsewhere. Would the Premier have the matter investigated to see whether any injustice is being done to these people?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—When I addressed the migrants at Gepps Cross, so that there would be no difficulty in the future and so that we should have a fairly precise proposition to place before them—for they were being asked to vote whether or not they wanted a new system—I gave each migrant a type-written statement of the conditions that would apply. I think I can get today or tomorrow a copy for the honourable member, and he will see the matters dealt with in it. In answer to a question I said I would see if it would be possible to arrange that each house had its own meter, so that everybody would pay for what he used.

Mr. Lawn—That must have been before the State elections

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I made that statement and I never run away from statements that I make. I said I would endeavour to see if it would be possible to get a meter for each house, for I consider that is the only fair method of charging consumers. Until this question was raised in the House I was not aware that there was not a meter for each house.

Mr. Jennings—They have meters, but the Housing Trust send out the accounts, and the occupants have to pay direct to the trust.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am certain the Housing Trust has abided by the conditions set out in the memorandum, but I will inquire into the matter the honourable member has raised and let him have more specific information when I have the report of the inspectors concerned.

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' SALARIES.

Mr. STOTT—The small number of University students taking agronomy and veterinary science courses is disappointing, and professors think it is because of insufficient salary attraction for the students to go on with their

courses. A serious position may arise in a few years as a result of a lack of qualified experts in agronomy, veterinary science, and other subjects. Will the Government consider increasing the salaries of such students so as to attract more to this kind of work?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The question of salaries for persons who are being educated arises frequently, but the provision made in this country is more generous than that in any other country in the world. While abroad recently I made some inquiries into this matter and found, for instance, that in Holland, which has been a foremost agricultural country and where there are a large number of scientists, any advance made for any person being trained was in the nature of a loan and had to be repaid within a certain number of years after he was qualified. When we provide special salaries for persons who are in fact obtaining their education they are getting a big concession from the taxpayer, for after they have completed their courses there is nothing to stop them from migrating to another State. They frequently migrate completely away from Australia. I would not favour making the amount an exorbitant one; indeed, I would favour tightening up the present provision so as to require a person educated at the taxpayers' expense to give a certain number of years of service in respect of that education before being free to wander around in other places and in other spheres getting the benefit of that education. I am much in favour of the granting of bursaries and other assistance to young students, but it should be on the basis that their services will be available to the community after they have been educated.

Mr. STOTT—There may be some support for the Premier's attitude after students have taken the course, but the difficulty is that many of the students are not taking up bursaries and taking these courses in the first place because the salaries are not sufficiently attractive. That is the point I want the Government to consider.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—We have no difficulty at present in getting students at the Adelaide University. I heard the other day that about 75 per cent of the students there receive Government assistance in their education, either through Commonwealth or State Government facilities, so the honourable member is not correct when he says we are short of University students.

Mr. Stott—We are in these courses.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It depends on what the honourable member believes is the required number of persons for these courses. In these matters we have found that while at one moment there may be a preference for medical, or engineering or scientific studies, over a period of years, if there is a shortage of students and if the pay is better in one direction than another, the position adjusts itself. The Adelaide University is doing a remarkably good job and in consequence we as a people are becoming better qualified scientifically.

Mr. Frank Walsh—Is there complete harmony in the administration of the University?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have no knowledge on that. The Government has always taken the stand that the University should control its own affairs. The Government does not seek to control the University. If there are any differences of opinion there I have no doubt that they will be hammered out and wise decisions ultimately made.

DEFECTS IN GOODS SOLD.

Mr. DUNNAGE—A press report of a recent motor vehicle accident stated:—

At an inquest into the death of Dimitrios Sprialis, 19, labourer, of Seventh Avenue, Murray Bridge, Mr. Cleland said that if any one was to be blamed for the accident it was the person who sold Mr. Sprialis a motor cycle knowing that it was defective. Examination of the machine by police officers showed that the motor cycle, purchased by Mr. Sprialis that day, had a throttle cable which tended to jam at certain speeds. The Coroner found that Mr. Sprialis died at the Royal Adelaide Hospital on July 13 from injuries, including a ruptured aorta and a ruptured liver, sustained in an accident which was neither the fault of the truck driver nor himself.

Can the Premier say whether there is any obligation on the seller under the Sale of Goods Act to notify the intending purchaser of a defect in a motor cycle or any other vehicle?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There is, of course, the general provision or maxim—I think it is a common law provision—"Let the buyer beware," which applies to the purchase of any article, and it is the buyer's obligation to see that he gets value for his money. I am not speaking from legal knowledge, but I believe that on a number of occasions the court has held that where a transaction has been entered into with any misrepresentation of fact the purchaser has some redress at law. Unfortunately this man has no redress. On the other hand we do not know the conditions under which he purchased

the motor cycle. Perhaps he was informed that it was in a faulty condition. However, I do not know what the circumstances were and hesitate to make any general statement upon them. The coroner stated that the motor cycle was sold in a bad condition, and the seller was actually to blame, but it may be that the price charged, the conditions under which the sale was made and the statement with which it was sold completely altered that point of view. The coroner has the obligation of investigating these matters and has given his finding.

Mr. RICHES—I understood the Premier to say, in replying to the member for Unley, that he was under the impression that if any misrepresentation were shown a remedy was available to the purchaser in common law. In today's *Advertiser* the judge is reported to have said:—

Although false representation had been proved against the defendants, that had not been shown to have affected the bargain made. No fraud had been disclosed.

Will the Premier call for a report from the Crown Law Department as to whether the law should not be tightened up to permit action at law in cases where misrepresentation had been proved to the satisfaction of the court?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I understood the honourable member to say that the judge said no fraud had been disclosed.

Mr. Riches—Misrepresentation had, though.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—But the judge said it had not affected the bargain and that no fraud had been disclosed. That seems to answer the question. Where misrepresentation and fraud are shown there is a legal remedy, but, according to the judge, there is no such remedy if the deal had been entered into without fraud. However, I will get a report on this specific case to see what issues were involved, and advise the honourable member further.

PLANT NUTRIENT MIXTURES.

Mr. QUIRKE—Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to the question I asked on August 27 relative to plant nutrient mixtures?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The Chief Horticulturist advises:—

Commercial plant nutrient preparations for spray application cannot be regulated under the Fertilizers Act or other existing legislation, but legislation now in the drafting stage would, if passed by Parliament, give power to control these and other similar preparations. At present only advisory action can be taken, whereby recommendations based on experimental work here and elsewhere are passed on to growers. Such recommendations

are sometimes clear-cut as in the case of the application of zinc and other trace elements. In other cases, such as the spray application of nitrogen as urea, insufficient information is available yet to enable firm recommendations. However, departmental trial work is in progress, and advice is given to growers who wish to carry out small scale trials themselves. Such advice is confined to the use of simple single substances and the Department of Agriculture neither carries out trials with, nor gives advice regarding mixed commercial preparations the ingredients of which are frequently undisclosed.

SOUTH-EAST DEEP SEA PORT.

Mr. CORCORAN—My question relates to the decision of the Public Works Committee not to establish an overseas port at Cape Jaffa at present because it is unwarranted. I take it the Government is not compelled to act on that decision. As the Premier and other members of his Party created the impression during the 1947 and 1950 elections that a deep sea port would be established, firstly at Robe and later at Cape Jaffa, will any action be taken contrary to the decision of the Public Works Committee? If not, will the Government consider whether there is any wisdom in the suggestion of establishing coastal shipping in that area?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It has been the policy of the Government for many years to act in accordance with the decisions of the Public Works Committee. The honourable member will realize that if we proceeded to set aside decisions of a committee of the class and character of the Public Works Committee it would take away all advantage of having a committee to inquire into these matters. If the honourable member wants my frank opinion about the report I am quite prepared to give it. I never believed that the port would immediately be profitable. In these matters very frequently we have to provide for the future. I believe that when first established Port Adelaide was unprofitable. The fact still remains that the most heavily watered area of our country is under a very grave disability because it has no sea communication with the world. With all deference to the wisdom of the committee's report I believe that one thing this State wants more than anything else for its development is a South-Eastern port.

Mr. Davis—What about one in the north?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The north has established overseas ports. They may not be completely adequate, but they are serving overseas shipping. However, every ton of goods from or to the South-East has to be dragged 200 to 300 miles by rail.

Mr. Fletcher—Is it possible to use Portland?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That involves a long haulage. Portland is a very poor port and is not a regular overseas port. I still believe an overseas port in the South-East is justified, not from the point of view of immediate financial returns but from the point of view of development of the area. I hold that view strongly although I have not yet had the opportunity of studying the report of the Public Works Committee. Did anyone suggest for a moment that the water reticulation scheme for Eyre Peninsula would be profitable? However, from the point of view of development of the State it was thoroughly justified and it was proceeded with on those grounds. The committee's report on a deep sea port for the South-East is being investigated.

SALE OF DRIED FRUITS TO BRITAIN.

Mr. DUNKS—Has the Minister of Agriculture the report he promised to obtain on August 27 relative to the future of the dried fruits industry?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I sought information in regard to the matter from the Chief Horticulturist, Mr. Strickland, who is also a member of the Dried Fruits Board. He advises that the representatives of the Australian Dried Fruits Association and the Commonwealth Dried Fruits Export Control Board are at present in England for the purpose of negotiating future sales of Australian dried fruits in that market, and comment on the effects of the British Government's decision to decontrol dried fruit imports would be premature and unwise in the light of these negotiations.

GAWLER SEWERAGE.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—On the opening day of this session the Minister of Works promised to let me have a progress report on the proposed sewerage of the town of Gawler. Has he that reply today, or can he bring it down soon?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Country sewerage schemes are being treated in some degree of sequence; many are before the Public Works Standing Committee now and some are being prepared for submission. All present considerable difficulties having regard to the finance available and the return from the schemes, which has been fixed at a maximum rate of 1s. 9d., whereas many schemes in other places are paying double that amount. However, the real problem is that we cannot start one work without stopping another because

all the loan money has been allocated. However I will bring down a report not later than Thursday, if possible.

SEWERAGE OF SOUTH-EASTERN TOWNS.

Mr. CORCORAN—The *Advertiser* of nine or 10 days ago contained a comment by the Mayor of Naracoorte, Mr. Norman Wallace, following on the decision of the Public Works Committee on the proposal for a deep sea port at Cape Jaffa. He expressed the opinion, with which I heartily agree, that the Government might consider spending part of the money that was no doubt earmarked for the establishment of a sea port on sewerage work in Naracoorte and other important towns in the South-East. Will the Premier consider spending part of the money as suggested?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Finance for the establishment of a deep sea port in the South-East would normally have come through the Loan Council and our Loan Estimates. As it would have been a relatively long term proposal I believe it could have been financed inside the programmes we are at present able to accomplish. The Government has already announced its intention to proceed with country sewerage works as soon as men, materials and money are available. They must be considered as separate propositions, and not as competing with the establishment of a port. Ultimately it will be found that the cost of country sewerage undertakings will be many times as great as the cost of a deep sea port.

PROCEDURE WITH BILLS.

Mr. STEPHENS—I should like to ask you a question, Mr. Speaker. When a Bill is introduced in this House it must be passed not only here, but also in the Legislative Council, following which it must receive the assent of the Governor as representative of Her Majesty the Queen. I take it that after that the Bill does not become law until it has received the consent of either Cabinet or Executive Council. I should like to know whether there is any difference between the Executive Council, the Cabinet and the Government?

The SPEAKER—I will have the honourable member's question examined and give him an answer.

ENTERTAINMENT TAX.

Mr. LAWN—Since September 21, 1948, when price control reverted to the States, I understand that this State at least has not controlled prices for live shows, but that cinema

shows were controlled until April 27, 1950. In view of the announcement in the Federal Budget that the amusement tax is to be lifted as from October 1, can the Treasurer assure the House and the public of South Australia that the tax relief will be passed on to the public and that cinemas and theatres will not increase their charges? If he is unable to give me that assurance, will he consider re-imposing price control on entertainments with that object in view?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A large number of concessions were made in the Federal Budget, some of which have already enabled me to make orders reducing the prices of several commodities. I can assure the honourable member that the Prices Branch will keep in close touch with all the items affected by the Federal Budget to see to what extent the benefit is passed on to the public, and if it finds that the public are in any way being exploited appropriate steps will be taken. The Government believes that it is inadvisable to control prices if there is fair competition and the public are getting a fair deal, but if there is not fair competition and there is exploitation of the public the Government will take action to protect them. That has been our policy, and I hope it will remain in operation.

WAIKERIE HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. STOTT—Has the Minister of Works received a reply from the Minister of Education regarding the question I previously asked concerning additional accommodation at the Waikerie High School?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Minister has supplied me with the following report from the Deputy Director of Education:—

Negotiations for a new site for the Waikerie High School have been concluded. The site covers 10 acres of section 150, Waikerie irrigation area. Agreement on price has been reached, but it may be some time before the partial surrender of the Crown lease is completed. A survey may be required to define the exact boundaries of the school site. The department is fully aware of the position at the Waikerie High School, and consideration will be given to the erection of a new high school building when the programme of public works for 1954/1955 is being prepared. It has not been possible to include the provision for this school in the current programme.

WATERSIDE WORK AT WALLAROO.

Mr. McALEES—Some time ago I asked the Premier a question regarding the availability of work for waterside workers at Wallaroo and he promised to get in touch with the Federal Minister for Supply and Shipping. At present a

cargo of approximately 10,000 tons of phosphate rock is being unloaded at Wallaroo and the ship is being worked around the clock, but that does not absorb all the labour available. I made inquiries yesterday as regards barley and wheat shipments, but the agents knew nothing about the matter. Has the Premier received a reply from the Federal Minister?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have not yet been able to contact him on the matter, but will do so as soon as possible. On inquiry I have found that the bulk handling installation at Ardrossan has been drawing wheat from a surprisingly large area, some of which would normally have gone to Wallaroo. I have received information that wheat cargoes have been rather quiet in recent months and sales are not easy to affect, but I believe that in the last few weeks that position has somewhat improved. As I promised the honourable member previously, I will try to arrange as soon as possible for additional shipping for Wallaroo.

UNDESIRABLE PUBLICATIONS.

Mr. LAWN—During the last three years the Premier has been asked questions concerning the censorship or prohibition of certain publications and comic strips, and in reply he has mentioned that many of these publications are imported and are outside the authority of the State Government, being the concern of the Commonwealth. I believe the Minister mentioned that once they had been imported section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution operated as regards free trade between the States. Recently I noticed a press statement to the effect that the Prime Minister is prepared to discuss this matter with the States. Will the Premier take advantage of the Prime Minister's offer and list this matter for discussion with a view to obtaining some uniformity between the Commonwealth and the States in the control of comic strips and other publications?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This matter has already been discussed at a Premiers' Conference and the States have unanimously asked that steps be taken to prevent the introduction of undesirable literature of the type mentioned. Once it gets into Australia it can be circulated through post offices and State Governments have no control. At present there is legislation before our Parliament which will greatly strengthen our power to deal with these publications circulated through bookshops. The State Governments have clearly

signified that they do not want this undesirable literature to come into Australia and the Commonwealth was directly informed of that by a Premiers' Conference. The minutes of that conference are still available to the Commonwealth. I would be prepared to have another conference, but I would not come to any conclusion other than that already reached by all States—that these improper publications should be banned from entry into Australia.

AGGREGATION OF ESTATES.

Mr. RICHES (on notice)—

1. What is the total area of the holdings of the Mutooroo Pastoral Company?

2. What areas, if any, have been acquired by this company in the last five years?

3. Were there any other applicants for any of these areas?

4. Is it the policy of the Government, in allocating land, to assist small landholders to obtain a living area or to allow large estates to become larger still?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The replies are:—

1. Mutooroo Pastoral Company Limited holds:—Pastoral leasehold, 3,030 square miles; perpetual leasehold, 5,215 acres.

2. 223 square miles under pastoral lease.

3. As the 223 square miles were acquired by transfer on February 20, 1950, from the Panaramitee Pastoral Company Limited, the area was not available for general application.

4. Where suitable land is available for leasing, it is the policy of the Government to assist the small landholder to obtain sufficient land to provide a living area. This policy was followed in connection with the allotment of "Teetulpa" and "Homeward Bound" pastoral blocks last year.

STOCK CARRYING ON SALTBUSH COUNTRY.

Mr. RICHES (on notice)—

1. Have experiments on stock carrying capacity of saltbush country been carried out at Yudnapinna Station by the Waite Research Institute?

2. Have experiments been carried out on the basis of—(a) 24 sheep; (b) 48 sheep; (c) 72 sheep, per square mile?

3. If so, what have the experiments disclosed as to the effect on—(a) existing bush; (b) stock; (c) regeneration of bush?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The replies are:—

1. Yes.

2. Experiments are being carried out in quarter square mile paddocks on the basis of 24, 48 and 72 sheep per square mile.

3. Experiments are still in progress and no firm conclusions can yet be drawn.

LEASE OF LAND—"AMMAROODINNA."

Mr. RICHES (on notice)—

1. Have applications been received for a lease of land adjoining Wintinna West Station and known as "Ammaroodinna"?

2. If so, how many applications have been received?

3. Is this land occupied at present?

4. If not, has it ever been occupied?

5. Is it proposed to accept an application. If not, why not?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—No applications have been invited to lease pastoral block 1037. It is now held under licence, but it is the intention of the Pastoral Board to gazette the area for application.

FLETCHERS DOCK.

Mr. TAPPING (on notice)—In view of the serious shortage of swimming facilities in this State is it the intention of the Minister of Marine to consider making Fletchers Dock, Birkenhead, available for the purpose of teaching swimming and life saving?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Fletchers Dock is to be used for mooring tugs, launches, dredges, etc., and under these circumstances it will not be possible for the dock to be made available for teaching swimming and life saving.

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

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD, having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act, 1942-1952. Read a first time.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time. I thank honourable members opposite for their courtesy in enabling this Bill to be placed on the file, together with the report upon it. It will facilitate later debate. The Act was enacted in 1942 and has since been amended from time to time, and it will be recalled that in 1951 very extensive amendments were made

to it as a result of recommendations made by the committee appointed by the Government to inquire into the operation of the legislation. Its principal purposes are well known, namely, to provide for the control of rents of dwelling-houses and the control of evictions during a period when the supply of dwellinghouses is insufficient to meet the demand. In addition, the Act provides for the control of the rents of caravans, the control of the rents of and eviction from business premises and the regulation of the rents of hotel premises. It also makes special provision for protection of those ex-servicemen who come within the definition of protected persons in the Act. It has been the practice for the legislation to be reviewed annually by Parliament and its operation extended from year to year. The Act now provides that it is to continue in operation until December 31, 1953.

The rate of house building in South Australia is now very satisfactory. During the last financial year 9,007 houses were built in the State, compared with 7,715 during the previous financial year. This rate of building is bringing about a considerable improvement in the housing position but there is still a shortage and the Government considers that it is necessary to continue for the time being the existing controls over rentals and evictions in regard to most dwellinghouses. Clause 18 therefore continues the operation of the Act for a further 12 months until December 31, 1954. However, the Government proposes that there should be a substantial diminution of the control provided by the Act. As has been previously stated, the Act now provides for the control of the rents of and the control of evictions from dwellinghouses and business premises, although in some respects the degree of control now exercised over business premises is somewhat less than that exercised over dwellinghouses.

It is proposed by the Bill to remove all control over business premises, that is, both control over rents and over evictions. The Government is of opinion that the time has arrived when premises of this class can be freed from control. One result of the removal of the building controls formerly provided by the Building Operations Act has been that shops are now being freely built and there is, of course, now no legislative restriction placed upon the construction of any kind of business or other premises. The Bill therefore deletes all reference in the Act to premises other than dwellinghouses and the effect is

that, as regards leases of business premises, the law applicable will be the ordinary law of the land apart from the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act. That Act will, in future, only apply to dwellinghouses and caravans. However, it should be noted that section 4 of the Act defines dwellinghouse to include premises of which a substantial part is used as a dwelling. Thus, premises such as a shop and dwelling are included in the definition of dwellinghouse. It follows that the Act will still apply to this kind of premises but it is provided by clause 6 that, where the rent of the part of the premises not used for residence, such as a shop, is required to be fixed, the rent to be fixed by the Housing Trust or the local court in respect to the shop part of the premises is to be based upon the general level of rents of comparable premises which are the result of agreement, that is, the ordinary current rental value of shops fixed without control. Thus, whilst it is considered that there should be general control of premises such as shops and dwellings, in practice the rent of the shop portion will conform with rent levels established without control.

Part VII. of the Act provides a measure of control over the rents of hotel premises. In conformity with the proposal for the removal of control over business premises generally, it is proposed by the Bill to repeal these provisions. The result is that the Act will cease to apply to hotel premises and, as will be the case with other business premises, the law relating to the leasing of hotel premises will, in future, be the general law only.

Whilst it is considered by the Government that, in general, the existing statutory control over the rents of and evictions from dwellinghouses should be continued, the Government proposes that there should be some important relaxations of these controls. As regards the control both of rents and evictions the following alterations are provided by the Bill. In the first place, it is provided that the Act is not to apply to any lease made after the passing of the Bill of any house the erection of which is completed after the passing of the Bill. Thus, it is proposed that a new dwelling will not be subject either to rent control or eviction control and, if a person builds a new dwelling, he will know that he will not be subject to any of the restrictions now imposed by the Act. In the second place, it is proposed that where a dwellinghouse has not been let at any time between September 1, 1939, and the passing of the Bill, the Act will not apply to any letting of the whole of the house entered

into after the passing of the Bill. The purpose of this provision is to provide that, if a house is not let and has not been let since September 1, 1939, it can be brought by the owner into the letting field without being subject to any of the restrictions imposed by the Act. It will be noted that this exemption only applies to the letting of the whole house. Past experience has shown that rent exploitation of tenants has been more serious where parts of houses have been let than where the whole of houses have been let and therefore the effect is that, where parts of these houses are let, the rents will be subject to rent control. The effect of the existing provisions of sections 54 and 55 of the Act is largely to free lettings of parts of dwellinghouses from the control over evictions provided by the general provisions of the Act. In the third place, it is provided that where the landlord and tenant of a dwelling, after the passing of the Bill, enter into a lease in writing for a term of three years, the Act is not to apply to the lease.

Mr. Dunks—Does that apply to a case where three or four tenants are in occupation?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There would have to be a lease in each case. The effect is that, if the tenant is given the security of a written lease for three years or more, the parties will be left to make their own arrangements and the provisions of the Act, both relating to rents and to evictions, will not apply to that lease. I will digress here to say why three years has been fixed for the term of the lease and to give some indication of what the Government considers should be its future policy. The Government does not believe that landlord and tenant legislation should be permanent features of the statute book. We have always felt that this legislation was brought in to cover the war period and was continued to cover the effects of the war. It has been renewed from year to year.

Mr. O'Halloran—Did you make those remarks to indicate you accept the fact that it may be necessary to continue the legislation after a further three years?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The term was set at three years because I think that next year we shall be able to provide that where a lease is to operate for two years it shall be exempt from the provisions of the Act. By curtailing the period of the lease each year the legislation will automatically cease in less than three years.

Mr. Dunks—And if the legislation is not renewed it will not apply to any lease in the future?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—But it will apply to any lease already entered into. However, if it is not a valid lease the parties will not be exempted from the provisions of the Act.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—Any valid lease would be subject to the law of contracts.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That is the position. Any premises leased for three years under a valid agreement will now be exempt from the landlord and tenant legislation. Unless economic conditions change rapidly, it will be the purpose of the Government next year to reduce the term to two years. This is one method by which we can gradually relinquish controls without dislocation or hardship to any class.

As regards the control of evictions from dwellings, a further number of important relaxations of the existing law are proposed. Section 42 of the Act provides that a notice to quit in respect of premises to which the Act applies may only be given on one or more of the grounds set out in that section. Two additional grounds for giving notice to quit are provided for. It is made a ground to give notice to quit that the premises are reasonably needed for the occupation of a person employed or about to be employed by the lessor. At present, the lessor of a house situated on an agricultural property has the right to give a notice to quit on similar grounds, but it is proposed by the Bill to make this ground available to any lessor who desires to house an employee in a house owned by him. In any subsequent proceedings taken to recover possession of the house, the court would take into account the matters set out in section 49 and which are usually referred to as the hardship provisions. The lessor will still have to prove that hardship is involved.

Mr. Dunks—The new provisions are somewhat in line with those now applying to primary producers?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Not completely, for primary producers do not have to prove hardship. Under these provisions the lessor cannot automatically get possession: he still has to prove hardship. The second new ground for giving notice to quit is that the lessee has, without the consent or approval of the lessor, not personally resided in the premises for a period of at least six months. The legislation was designed to protect tenants

from eviction. However, if an occupier is not living in the house he is renting his grounds for protection surely cease.

Mr. Riches—Will he still be protected if his wife and family are living in the house?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not mean that if a person had to go to hospital for a long period, but his wife and family continued to occupy the house, that he could be evicted, nor is it intended that a man away shearing, for instance, but leaving his wife and family at home, could be evicted. However, if he is no longer a *bona fide* occupier the landlord will be able to bring the matter before the court. It has been reported that some tenants have ceased to reside in the house let to them and have left in occupation persons usually described as caretakers. The lessor has had suspicions that there is really a subletting without his consent, but cannot obtain proof. The new ground is therefore prescribed to meet such a case. It is provided, however, that in any subsequent court proceedings the court is to consider whether the lessee had reasonable grounds to be absent from the premises.

Section 45 of the Act now provides that if a person buys a tenanted house or otherwise becomes the lessor, he cannot give notice to quit on the grounds that he needs the house for his own occupation until after the lapse of 12 months from the time he became the lessor. It is proposed by clause 8 that this period will be six months instead of 12 months. Again, this follows a policy of gradually getting out of this legislation. Last year we made the term one year, and this year we propose to make it six months.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—It is a planned withdrawal from the field.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Exactly.

Mr. Dunks—Will the provision be continued that a landlord cannot exercise this right if he has disposed of premises since September, 1949, that were reasonably available to him for his occupation?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will check that for the honourable member. Subsection (6) of section 49 provides that where a person has owned a house for five years and he complies with certain other conditions set out in the section, he may give the tenant 12 months' notice to quit on the grounds that he requires the house for his own occupation. In these circumstances the court, in eviction proceedings, is not to consider the hardship provisions and, in effect, the tenant must go. It is proposed to alter this provision to two years' ownership and nine months' notice to quit to

the tenant. The period is being shortened with the object of ultimately being able to relinquish this field of legislation altogether.

This provision was first enacted in 1950. Its purpose was to provide that where a person had owned his property for a substantial period he could give notice to quit to the tenant but that notice should be for a period very much in excess of the usual period. No cases of hardship arising out of this provision have been brought forward and it is considered that no real hardship should accrue from the alteration proposed. Under the new amendments the tenant will have to be given nine months' notice and this period should provide sufficient time to enable him to secure other accommodation or, if he is so disposed and is able to do so, to undertake the building of a house for himself. Somewhat similar provision to section 49 (6) is contained in section 49 (7), which deals with the right of a protected person to obtain possession of his house and section 55 which contains provision for the recovery of possession of a house for occupation by an employee of the lessor. Amendments similar to that made to section 49 (6) are made to section 49 (7) and section 55.

To sum up, the Bill provides that business premises, other than premises used partly as dwellings, are to be entirely freed from control and placed outside the provisions of the Act. As regards dwellings, there will be a substantial relaxation of controls. New dwellings will be freed from control and the Act will not apply to the lease of the whole of a dwellinghouse which has not been let at any time since September 1, 1939. In addition, a three-year lease agreed to by a landlord and tenant of any dwelling will be outside the Act. The relaxation of control in all these instances applies to all the provisions of the Act relating to rent control and restrictions upon obtaining possession of premises. In addition, the provisions of the Act restricting the right of a landlord to give notice to quit to his tenant and to secure possession of the premises are substantially modified. The various amendments to give effect to these proposals and to make consequential amendments of the Act are contained in clauses 2 to 8 and 10 to 14 of the Bill. The other clauses deal with a number of minor matters.

Section 46 of the Act provides that in proceedings to recover possession of premises, the lessor may rely on a ground other than that stated in the notice to quit. Section 47 provides that a notice to quit given in

accordance with the Act terminates the tenancy but it has been pointed out that, in the circumstances provided for in section 46, there has not been such a notice to quit. Clause 9 therefore provides that, if a court makes an order for possession in accordance with section 46, that order is to terminate the tenancy.

Section 100 of the Act prohibits the payment of a premium or key money on the grant or assignment of a lease. Clause 15 provides that this is not to apply to the sale of goods comprising stock in trade. It is common practice when a tenant goes out of a business carried on, say, in a shop and dwelling, to sell the stock to the incoming tenant and obviously, the section was not designed to prevent such as this being done.

Section 105 of the Act authorizes an inspector of the Housing Trust to require a lessor or lessee of any premises to which the Act applies to give information as to such matters as the rent of the premises. Clause 16 extends this provision to former lessors and lessees. When a complaint is made to the trust that an unlawful rent is being charged it is often necessary to obtain information from the former lessor or lessee to ascertain whether or not an offence has been committed.

Clause 17 is ancillary to clause 4 under which certain leases of dwellings are placed outside the ambit of the Act. It provides that, if in any legal proceedings evidence is given that premises are let for the purpose of residence, the premises shall be presumed to be premises to which the Act applies unless sufficient evidence to the contrary is given. Whether or not a house comes within the exemptions provided by clause 4 will frequently be only within the knowledge of the lessor. For example, clause 4 proposes to exempt from control a future lease of a house which has not been let at any time between September 1, 1939, and the passing of the Bill. If it were considered that an unlawful rent was being charged for any house, it would obviously be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for any person other than the lessor to establish whether or not the house had been let at any time during the period in question. Consequently, the clause provides that, if evidence is given that the house is let at the time of the alleged offence, the onus will be on the lessor to show that it comes within the exemption given by clause 4. The policy of clause 17 is, of course, in accordance with the general rule laid down by section 56 of the Justices Act which provides that a complainant is not required to prove an exception, but that such

a matter may be proved by the defendant. Members will see that the Bill before the House—

Mr. Lawn—Is vicious on the person trying to rear a family. It is all right for the Liberal Party.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No doubt the honourable member will make a speech during the second reading stage and I shall have great pleasure in listening to it. This Bill carries on the Act, with modifications, for another year in respect of dwellings. Business premises are to be exempted from the operations of the Act, and the Bill generally is in keeping with the Government's policy to withdraw gradually from this type of control.

Mr. Lawn—But the time is not opportune.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I agree. I would not be introducing the measure if I thought the time were opportune to relax this legislation, and I hope that I will have the honourable member's concurrence on the Bill in due course. Indeed, I am certain I will because if the measure is not re-enacted there will be nothing, so although the honourable member shakes his head he will realize that this Bill gives very great protection to a large number of persons in dwellinghouses and that without it their protection would cease.

Mr. Dunks—The honourable member for Adelaide will find out that it is not only Liberals who own houses.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I agree with him that if we abolished all control of rent and of evictions at a time when housing is still short some persons—not a majority—would take advantage of the situation. I always feel that landlords are much the same as other members of the community. It is only one per cent of the people who impel us to maintain a police force; 99 per cent are prepared to do the decent thing and if we had to deal only with those this type of legislation could be forgotten. I have found within recent times that there has been exploitation—and not by the owner; the worst type of exploitation is taking place in the sub-leasing of rooms by the original tenant.

A Member—That is among New Australians chiefly.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This measure is not directed against any particular section. I believe it is still necessary to deal with cases that will arise while housing remains in short supply. However, it is time that Parliament got down to a policy which will gradually remove this legislation from the Statute Book, and that is what is proposed in this Bill.

Mr. O'Halloran—Is the Premier completely satisfied that the relaxation of control of business premises will not lead to hardship?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The original Act dealt only with rents of dwellings and the control of business premises was a subsequent introduction. After the war we found that in many instances an order for eviction meant not only an order to release the premises but that the incoming person would take over the business because the tenant could not get other premises in which to carry on his occupation. Already there has been a complete abolition of the control of building materials for business premises.

Mr. O'Halloran—That does not make material available.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—If we take the number of houses built as the criterion, the 9,007 constructed last year is overwhelmingly an all time record—a fantastic figure compared with—

Mr. Quirke—With 4,000 in 1926.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That was the peak figure, but between 1928 and 1933 house building ceased altogether. I think that during those five years only 10 advances were made under the State Bank Act.

Mr. O'Halloran—That is when this great problem took root.

Mr. Lawn—Through the maladministration of the Butler and Playford regimes before the war.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not propose to enter into a long discussion as to when the problem arose. My Government took office almost concurrently with the outbreak of war so I do not have to worry much about what happened before. However, if the honourable member wants a few facts about housing, the peak following the first war was reached in 1926, when 4,000 houses were built. The number then fell substantially until in 1930-31 only one house was financed by the State Bank. However, from 1933-1938 there was a slow but steady improvement in the building rate.

Mr. Lawn—An improvement on 1926 or on the depression years of 1930-31?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—On the 1926 figures. It was only when the State took over the control of building materials in the last three or four years that we again reached 4,000. In the first year after my Government organized housing about 1,726 houses were built. In the next year there were between 3,000 and 4,000, and in the following year about 5,000. Last year there was the high figure of about 9,000, which was very satisfactory.

Mr. Davis—How did you arrive at the view that there are more shopping places available now?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I did not say there were more available. I said that the restriction on business premises was applied at the same time as the other restrictions, because the tenant had to be protected. The restriction on business premises has not applied now for about six months, and prior to that time we were freely giving permits in relation to them. The tenant of business premises has been protected for a long time.

Mr. Riches—Have you considered the matter of finance not being available?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Each time a semi-governmental body wants to borrow money it must obtain the consent of the Loan Council, of which I am a member. For the purpose of identifying various submissions for approval, Treasury officials have adopted the practice of numbering them serially. This year 372 semi-governmental loans have been approved by the Loan Council. Does that sound as though money is not available? A few weeks ago the Electricity Trust floated a loan which was over-subscribed in two days.

Mr. Dunks—By many small investors.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. This morning I had a communication from the Premier of another State who wants permission to retain the large amount of money over-subscribed to a loan raised in his State. I would not recommend a relaxation in regard to business premises if I felt it would cause difficulty. This legislation has never been regarded as permanent; it has no characteristics of that nature. If we were to come between landlord and tenant on every occasion we would need an Act quite different from the one we have to deal with an emergency. I ask members opposite to give the Bill the support it merits.

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

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (MINISTERS).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 1. Page 587.)

Mr. QUIRKE (Stanley)—I want to quote some remarks by Sir (then Mr.) Winston Churchill in order to indicate to members my attitude towards this Bill. In December, 1941, when the *Prince of Wales* and the *Repulse* were destroyed by Japanese air action it sent a tremor through the British Commonwealth of

Nations. That tremor was reflected in the House of Commons where there was a disturbed atmosphere, and a considerable undercurrent of criticism against the Churchill Administration. Sir Winston went to America hurriedly and on his return he realized that he had to stand up to criticism in the House. He said:—

From time to time in the life of any Government there come occasions which must be clarified.

He made that statement not because people were criticizing him, but because they were not coming out in the open with their criticism, only making passing references. The old war horse used these words:—

It is because things have gone badly and worse is to come that I demand a vote of confidence. This will be placed on the Paper today, to be moved at a later stage. I do not see why this should hamper anyone. If a member has helpful criticisms to make, or even severe corrections to administer, that may be perfectly consistent with thinking that in respect of the administration, such as it is, he might go farther and fare worse. But if an honourable gentleman dislikes the Government very much and feels it in the public interest that it should be broken up, he ought to have the manhood to testify his convictions in the lobby. There is no need to be mealy-mouthed in debate. There is no objection to anything being said, plain, or even plainer, and the Government will do their utmost to conform to any standard which may be set in the course of the debate. But no-one need be mealy-mouthed in debate, and no-one should be chicken-hearted in voting. I have voted against Governments I have been elected to support, and, looking back, I have sometimes felt very glad that I did so. Everyone in these rough times must do what he thinks is his duty.

Shortly, that epitomizes my attitude towards this Bill. I do not intend to be mealy-mouthed in debate, neither do I intend to be chicken-hearted when it comes to voting. The Bill provides for an alteration of the Constitution to allow two extra Ministers and to make provision for paying them. All attempts in the past to increase the size of the Ministry have had a rather stormy passage. Except in one instance, in the days of the Peake Government, every attempt has been by Labor administrations, but they have been frustrated in another place. There is not the slightest doubt that this Bill will pass. We will have two extra Ministers because it has been pre-ordained that it shall be so. Today Parliament no longer makes or unmakes Governments, but Governments in the form of Cabinets direct Parliament, and because of that Parliament has lost its old function. The Bill will pass and we will have two extra

Ministers. As far as I am concerned, in the light of existing conditions they will not add one atom of good or make the slightest difference to South Australia. The Premier, in his second reading speech, said that it was not possible to put the clock back to the good old days when it was regarded as the function of Parliament to make laws, the duty of the Government merely to administer them, and of the judiciary to interpret them. In his priceless little book *Mother of Parliaments*, Sir Herbert Dunnico, sometime Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons, said:—

Freedom to think as we will, and to speak as we think, are indispensable to the discovery and spread of political truth, but these are meaningless if we have to vote as we are told. Then there is a second danger he mentioned, and it applies with great force in South Australia where we have the dominating personality of one man, a completely subservient Cabinet, Government and Government Party, which do precisely as they are told, and precisely as is done in the Mother of Parliaments, according to Sir Herbert Dunnico. He said:—

The second danger is the growing power of the executive—that is the Cabinet. The function of government belongs to the Government of the day and not to Parliament.

Is that not the position here? He further wrote:—

But the function of Parliament is to create Governments, criticize Governments, censure Governments and, if need be, end Governments. The Parliament and people of South Australia have not that power. It has been decreed by Cabinet that there are to be two extra Ministers. The Bill will be passed because the Cabinet, which today dictates the policy of Parliament, has said it will pass. As Sir Herbert Dunnico said, and it applies equally to South Australia:—

The House of Commons is the watchdog of the nation, its function is to protect the people from the tyranny of bureaucracy. For some years now the Commons has not lived up to this high standard. Instead of Parliament giving instructions to governments, the situation is reversed. The majority in Parliament now take their instructions from the Executive. The House of Commons is under the control of governments, that is, of any government in power, Conservative, Coalition, National or Labor. This is a great danger to parliamentary democratic government.

He also wrote:—

The two-party system of government was probably nearer the ideal system when parties were more elastic and did not impose upon their followers a rigid discipline, but now that discipline is so rigid, so severe and often so cruel, I have no longer faith in it.

Touching upon the point mentioned by the Premier in his speech when he said, "It is not possible to put the clock back," there are some times when we wish we could, because in moving forward the position is worsened and not made better. Sir Herbert Dunnico also wrote in his book:—

Mr. Winston Churchill in March, 1939, voiced this view (referring to the two-party system of government) when he said, "What is the use of sending members to the House of Commons to say just the popular things of the moment, and merely endeavour to give satisfaction to the Government Whips by walking through the lobbies, oblivious to the criticisms they hear? People talk about our Parliamentary institutions and Parliament's democracy, but if these are to survive, it will not be because the constituencies return tame, docile, subservient members and try to stamp out every form of independent judgment."

I read this to emphasize the conditions which apply here, particularly when the Premier says, "It is not possible to put the clock back." If Churchill were speaking to the Government benches in South Australia his remarks would apply with equal force. In his second reading speech the Premier said:—

I am not criticizing either the present Highways Commissioner or his predecessor, both of whom are admirable and sincere men who met many difficulties in carrying out their duties. At present the department is trying to build 1953 roads with 1939 money.

to which the member for Chaffey interjected "I have been telling you that for a long time." We can still tell it to the Government. A pertinent question to ask is "Will another Minister in charge of roads give us 1953 money?" Of course he will not, and we will not get one more road under the existing system of road building in South Australia. At £23,000 a mile, the cost of one section of road I could name, the salary to be paid to the Minister might construct a couple of chains of good road somewhere in the country, and that at least would provide some good for the expenditure. In a triangle of country, partly in the district of Burra and partly in my district, between Hilltown, Booborowie, Leighton and Burra there are not 10 chains of good road in the whole area. The only things which go by the name of roads are long sections of country bounded by two fences which prevent you from getting off the track. When I vote on this measure I want to know whether, by the appointment of another Minister, we will alter the conditions from 1939 money to 1953 money.

In his speech the Premier said we must rely upon the three forms of transport. I

presume he had in mind rail, road and air. Assuming that is correct, at least one of those forms will be completely unreliable unless we provide proper facilities. On the Main North Road between Gawler and Adelaide on any morning one can see thousands of tons of stuff being transported hour by hour. Road transport has come to stay, and if this quantity of merchandise carried over our roads were placed upon the railways they would be immobilized within two days. It would be physically impossible for them to handle it. Why does not the Electricity Trust which has more vehicles on the road than any other Government department, or any commercial concern, use the railways? It is because the railways could never serve their interests efficiently, and it is time we recognized it. The Leader of the Opposition complained about road transport smashing our highways to pieces. Rightly we have allowed road transport to come into its own, but have failed to provide the right type of road. The main South-East road between Keith and Bordertown, within a short time of its being built, was broken to pieces by heavy transport, and it deserved to be because it was never put down properly. It was only a skin of bitumen upon built-up sand. If one wants to see the very opposite, one should visit the main North Road constructed in the old days with anything from 8in. down to 2½in. metal. It has stood the hammering of the last 20 odd years, during which we had a war, and was not broken up because it was made properly. It does not matter what it costs to put down a road—if it is the right type of road it must be built. The Duke's Highway is now being rebuilt, despite its heavy original cost. If it is necessary to lay 4in. spalls under a road in order to accommodate traffic, then it must be done. Do not let us attempt to put bitumen skins on the top of sand and then blame transport for breaking roads up. The main North road which runs through Clare has not been broken up because it was a proper road when first put down.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. Dunks)—I think the honourable member is getting a little away from the Bill.

Mr. QUIRKE—With very great deference, I claim I am answering what the Premier said in relation to roads. He said we had to co-ordinate the three forms of transport. I am showing that if we are to use road transport we must provide proper roads, but the mere appointment of a Minister for Roads will not result in the making of one chain of additional

road if we attempt to build 1953 roads with 1939 money. I claim that unless we get that money we cannot build the type of roads to carry heavy transport, particularly the heavy vehicles used by Government and semi-Governmental organizations, the greatest of which is the Electricity Trust.

Mr. O'Halloran—They are the worst offenders.

Mr. QUIRKE—I do not say they are offenders, because the railways could not serve their wide-flung ramifications. If the trust were to attempt to use the railways exclusively the railways could not meet the position. They cannot even handle the cement traffic from the cement works. The railways will load trucks of cement only when they can get a full load. I took advantage of the Premier's kind offer when the South Australian Government released cement to supply urgent needs to private builders and had seven tons made available to build a house but the contractor was told he could have it if he came to the works and picked it up as the company could not put it on the railways for three weeks because there were not sufficient accumulated orders to make up a truckload on that particular line. In actual fact orders were received and the cement was forwarded. When the contractor placed the order it was not possible for the cement to be sent by rail. He was told he could get it and transport it by road if he used his own vehicle, but if he sent anybody else he would be breaking the law. How intolerably stupid we are! I was told to apply for a permit for another carrier and I have no doubt that permit would have been granted. They are the conditions under which we are trying to operate, and we are asked to appoint additional Ministers. Our attitude on road transport is not of 1939 vintage but much older. The Premier also said:—

If members believe in democracy they will agree that there must be sufficient Ministers to control the functions of government in this State, otherwise we shall have authorities that are completely autonomous and autocratic, and Parliament will lose control over them.

Parliament has no control over them now and they exist in spite of the existing Ministry. There are already authorities which are almost autonomous and certainly autocratic. The Transport Control Board is one and the Veterinary Control Board another, so what the Premier suggests he is trying to avoid is already in existence. At present there are 12,000,000 sheep in this State but a drought next year would bring about the greatest catastrophe in our history, compared with

which 1914 would be nothing. At least 5,000,000 sheep would die. Although we have a Minister of Agriculture—and I am not being personal—we have few agricultural advisers. Questions asked by the members for Alexandra and Chaffey evidence the lack of up to the minute facilities for providing information to farmers. We urgently require more trained agricultural advisers to keep in touch with the growers. An agricultural adviser should know every acre of the area to which he is appointed, but how can he when for instance, there is an adviser at Balaklava and the next adviser is at Jamestown? It is a hopeless position.

I mention the Veterinary Control Board to illustrate that there can be completely autonomous and autocratic authorities notwithstanding the appointment of Ministers to control them. The Veterinary Control Board is comprised of intolerant bureaucrats. I say that deliberately and will prove it. A New Australian, a doctor of veterinary surgery with the diploma of the University of Vienna, was granted a permit to practise in Clare but was restricted to a radius of 15 miles therefrom. The nearest qualified veterinary surgeon was at Gawler and there was no other between Gawler and Port Darwin. There are a few permit holders scattered around the country but some of them are so old that they are unable to continue and do not wish to operate. If members desire to know the ability of this man they need only ask the people in Clare who have availed themselves of his services. He has no peer in South Australia. His one fault so far as I can ascertain is that his knowledge is greater than those who dictated what he should do. He was starved out and was charged in the Gawler court with calling himself a veterinary surgeon and fined £7 although he had his diplomas from the University of Vienna. Now we have lost his services in this State. He had gained his doctorate at the University of Vienna with a thesis on parasitology, and he has been appointed by the Commonwealth Government as a parasitologist in New Guinea. The Commonwealth has recognized his qualifications and permitted him the use of his titles, and is paying him a high salary.

We should carefully analyse the Premier's statements about the necessity for additional Ministers. Is it worth while taking any notice of this Bill? What will be achieved? About a fortnight ago an honourable member in another place pleaded for the soldier settlers at Eight Mile Creek who were literally bogged down. What administrative incompetence was responsible for that? Did

the fact that there is a Minister of Lands prevent it? An ex-servicemen's association had to bring the matter to the notice of the Government in an effort to obtain better conditions for the settlers. There was a stir and a hurry, and contingents visited the area. The member for Mount Gambier had asked repeated questions concerning the conditions there but it was not until there was outside action that something was done. We have been told that certain drains were blocked, but why were they blocked? The drains are not deep enough and never have been. It is all peat country and as it contacts the air and oxidizes the ground subsides. Eventually, the ground being cultivated will be lower than the channels carrying the water.

What evidence have we that two new Ministers will stop this rot? The mere appointments will achieve nothing. The plain facts are that it is useless to graft scions of a vigorous type on to a tottering stock. As everyone knows, both here and outside this House, the dominating personality in the Government is the Premier and I give him full marks. I only criticize him because he does all the work and is therefore a bad executive. If his officers under him cannot do their work and he has to do it all he should sack them, and I suggest he does so. We have had tangible evidence on numerous occasions of what happens when he is not at the helm. God forbid that anything should cause his absence from this House for a lengthy period. We all know what sort of a shambles there would be; but his ability and strength, though earning universal regard and admiration, are the main cause of the dry rot, which cannot be cured by grafting. The only reason I can advance for supporting this measure is that the Premier now recognizes that the strain must be eased because he cannot carry it any longer. I suggest he grub out the old tree and plant a new one. He has talent in his ranks and I could pick out a new Ministry for him whenever he wanted me to. The men I have in mind would need only the responsibility and the Premier's direction to awaken their talent. I will not vote for the Bill until I have been assured that something will be done to make the creaking machinery function, and at present I can see nothing which will make it function. I want to know what legislative measures are proposed to prevent the new hands from contracting the palsy of ineptitude that is apparent today. The days of the present Government are numbered, for

it will be out of office after the next election. I say that as a completely independent observer, and the reason for its defeat will, more than anything else, be the fact that it is a one-man Government. When a deputation asks a member to introduce it to a Minister do they necessarily go to the Minister in charge of the department? No, they want to see the Premier, for they know nobody else. If a member asks a Minister, other than the Premier, a certain question, he says, in effect, "I don't know about this. I will have to ask Tom." What good will two extra Ministers do in such an organization? None at all, and because I cannot see what earthly use their appointment will be, I oppose the Bill. I am not quibbling about the amount to be paid to them, for I consider the amount paid to a Cabinet Minister in this State paltry. Many executives in small businesses receive as much money as do Cabinet Ministers. I do not object to payment for value, and any Minister, in order to maintain his standing in the community today, should receive at least £3,000 a year. I know what it costs a private member, and no country private member can remain in Parliament today unless he has means other than his Parliamentary salary.

Mr. Davis—What about those who have not?

Mr. QUIRKE—I do not know how they do it. I do not intend to support the Bill unless the Premier can tell me how he will get 1953 money to pay for 1953 roads. Having analysed his speech I cannot see how the position will be improved by appointing two extra Ministers. Their appointment may ease the personal strain on the Premier, and to that end, at least, I will be sympathetic.

Mr. TAPPING (Semaphore)—I support the measure, for it is a step on the part of the Government to boost the Ministry. I am not so concerned with the present as was the member for Stanley, who condemned the existing Ministry, but I look forward to 1956 when the Labor Party will occupy the Treasury benches. For many years I have considered six Ministers to be insufficient; in fact, I favour 10 to carry out the onerous work and assist members and all other South Australians. It would be fitting at this stage to analyse the duties of the various Cabinet Ministers so as to understand their important work. The Premier is also Treasurer, Minister of Industry and Employment, and Minister in charge of housing, but no living human could carry out all those onerous duties satisfactorily. The Premier is bound to entrust some of those responsibilities to secretaries and

other officers, for he cannot do a satisfactory job on his own unless he is aware of every happening concerning the people of South Australia. The weakness today is that Ministers in general cannot be aware of all the anomalies that need correction. The office of Premier is enough for one human being to carry out properly. In the Federal sphere there is both a Prime Minister and a Treasurer, and, although it may be argued that the Federal Cabinet is bigger than ours, it would be fitting here for another Minister to be responsible for the heavy duties involved in the Treasury portfolio. The Premier also occupies the position of Minister in charge of housing. What a heavy job that would be if it were done properly!

Mr. McAlees—It is not done properly.

Mr. TAPPING—No, for it is humanly impossible to carry out satisfactorily the duties involved in the administration of the housing programme, which is most dear to the hearts of members who are approached daily by constituents living under shocking conditions. Although I have often commended the Housing Trust for what it has done and is doing to assist South Australians, this department needs the strict surveillance of a Minister to speed up its important work. The Chief Secretary, a member of another place, is also Minister of Health and Minister of Mines, and although the Chief Secretaryship is a big portfolio in itself, I consider the health portfolio to be the biggest he holds, and it should be a full-time portfolio in order to maintain at the highest level the health of all South Australians. As Minister of Mines, the Chief Secretary is responsible on all matters relating to uranium and mining generally, and I suggest that he is holding too many portfolios to carry out his job efficiently.

The Attorney-General is also Minister of Education, and I was pleased to hear the Premier say that it is proposed, on the passing of the Bill, that the Minister of Education should devote practically all his time to that important work. That proposal has my full support. Members on this side have frequently brought to the notice of the Government anomalies and deficiencies in our education system. Because of the increase in our population, caused partly by the flow of migrants from overseas, increased educational facilities are necessary. Migrants must receive special consideration with regard to their education, and a Minister of Education should be able to give close scrutiny to the important matters involved in this portfolio. The Minister of

Agriculture is also Minister of Forests, and, although I have heard innuendoes cast on the present Minister of Agriculture, I say, with some knowledge of the department's work, that I have no complaint to find with it.

The Minister of Lands is also Minister of Repatriation and Minister of Irrigation, and, although members have at times condemned him for alleged inefficiencies, I consider that he, as a man who has been closely allied with the land, has been at least sincere in his efforts to settle our returned men. I have in mind the year 1956 when Labor will assume office and when, I hope, we shall not be accused of doing too little for the men who have served this country. The Minister of Works is also Minister of Railways, Minister of Marine and Minister of Local Government. From dealings with the Minister in his latter capacity I consider he has satisfactorily conducted the affairs of that department, but because of the huge responsibilities placed on his shoulders he must of necessity pass some on to his officers. Whenever I make overtures by letter to the Minister of Local Government, he gives the matter personal attention and signs the reply I receive, but to be asked to carry four such important portfolios is too much for any person. I suppose no Government department is more condemned by members than the Railways Department, but I sympathize with it for during the war no progress was made in the provision of rolling stock. Consequently, it faced the post-war period knowing that in many cases its rolling stock was inadequate and that it would take years to catch up the backlog. Although the member for Stanley said that he would oppose the Bill, he made an important point in favour of it when he condemned the condition of South Australian roads. Surely, if he has any complaint on that score, he should take it to the Minister responsible for the Highways Department. In that regard Mr. Quirke's arguments were most contradictory.

Because of the onerous duties imposed on the present six Ministers, they must delegate some of their duties to their officers. South Australian public servants have given yeoman service. However, it is not wise to delegate powers to these officers, for Ministers should know first hand what is going on. I wrote to the Minister of Education on a vital matter regarding education. I saw him four weeks later, and though I had not received a reply, I asked for his personal opinion. I was amazed that he did not know what I was talking about. Apparently his secretary, or some

other officer, had received the correspondence but had not apprised the Minister of the circumstances. This sort of thing comes about because we are placing a too-severe burden on the Ministry. By increasing the number of Ministers we would relieve that burden by distributing it amongst eight. If I had the power I would increase the number of Ministers to 10 so that the people would know that Ministers could give first-hand consideration to matters placed before them. I support the Bill and trust it will be supported by most members so that it can be passed, for I look forward to 1956 when Labor Party Ministers will adorn the Treasury benches. I should not like to see the Ministers of my Party over-worked.

Mr. JOHN CLARK (Gawler)—I agree with the Premier's statement that this is one of the most important Bills to be introduced this session. It is important for two reasons: firstly, because obviously more Ministers are required, and Opposition members have been saying so for many years; secondly, the most able members are needed for Ministerial positions. I trust that the Government will appoint the best members from the limited material it has available, but I am afraid the Premier will find himself in a quandary when looking for the talent he sorely needs in his Cabinet. It is interesting to recall that in 1924 the Gunn Government introduced a Bill to increase the number of Ministers, but it was rejected by the Legislative Council. In 1926 the Hill Government, another Labor Government, introduced a Bill for this purpose, but it was also negatived in the Council. The Hill Government of 1930 made another attempt, and again the Bill was defeated in the Council. I hope that the measure before us will be passed, but I wondered why the Premier spoke at considerable length for, as the member for Stanley suggested and as the member for Chaffey implied by interjection, it seemed that it was all cut and dried. I wondered if he imagined that there might be opposition to the Bill in the Council, but I do not think there will be. I concluded that the Premier's speech was lengthy for the benefit of the press and indirectly for the benefit of the public who, of course, get most of their information from the press. The Premier suggested that one of the two new Ministers would be a member of the House of Assembly and the other of the Legislative Council. I first thought that both should be members of this Chamber, but I agree with the Premier that it is sometimes awkward to have only two Ministers in the Council, for

when one is sick it places an undue strain on the other, and one must remember that some of the Council members are not altogether young men.

I was delighted to notice that clause 4 provided that all Ministers should be members of Parliament, for I have always been opposed to the idea of having Ministers who are not members of an elected Parliament. The Premier suggested that he sometimes wondered whether members ever looked at the second page of the weekly *Hansard* cover. However, Opposition members have for some time realized that that would be a waste of time because of the system that is preventing them from aspiring to Ministerial positions. They realize that under our present system it would be only wishful thinking to let their eyes linger on that page of *Hansard*. Perhaps some Government supporters have been reading it during the last few months with considerable interest, but I do not think those who have a critical mind—and I could name some of them, however few they may be—would imagine that they were likely to be promoted to the Cabinet. There are a few members opposite, even though some of my colleagues may find it hard to believe, who at least like to make a show of thinking for themselves. They may not even be as prepared to listen with bated breath to their master's voice as the members on this side of the House think.

Mr. Macgillivray—Perhaps not, but that does not influence the way they vote.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—I was interested to hear the Premier's admissions about the state of our roads. Most members are interested in the roads in their districts and, indeed, throughout the State. The Premier acknowledged certain things that the responsible Minister has never been prepared to admit in this House. For example, he said:—

I believe our road system needs very much more attention than is being given to it now. Some of our back roads are in a deplorable condition.

I agree, but not only the back roads are in a deplorable condition. The reason is the shilly-shallying over roads that we constantly have in this Chamber. I am particularly interested in the Gawler-Adelaide road which, as the member for Stanley mentioned, carries much traffic. Last year in reply to a question about the eventual construction of a dual highway the Minister stated that land had been secured on both sides for that purpose. I admit I was not told when the dual highway would be constructed, but when I took the news to some

of my constituents in the Gawler district they were highly delighted, for they have long realized the great danger on the road, not only on trotting and racing days, but as a general rule. As I had heard no more about a dual highway I asked another question this year, but the Minister replied:—

Loan funds are spent, except in one or two minor instances, at the Highways Commissioner's discretion. He was deliberately given that power by Parliament to remove the question from outside control or political pressure. From what he went on to say it seems that there is now no hope of ever getting a dual highway, though he gave some hope for the widening of the road, which would be by no means satisfactory. The great amount of traffic cannot be adequately catered for even by a widening. From other remarks made by the Minister and the Premier I gathered it was proposed to plant trees along the Gawler Road. I am a great lover of trees, but I cannot agree to their being planted along the Gawler Road if the land that should be used for constructing a dual highway will be devoted to trees. Let us hope that the Minister appointed to administer our roads will have a positive policy so that the people will know where they stand and not be hearing one thing one year and another thing the next. I do not think that any Minister appointed to take charge of roads can do very much to drag our roads policy out of the mire unless he has an opportunity to co-ordinate road transport with every other form of transport. I suggest we have little hope of that for two reasons; firstly, it is much too sensible, and secondly it is too Socialistic and therefore under the "Blackfellows' Act." I was delighted to see a reference to the likelihood of the Ministry of Education becoming the particular work of one Minister. I have always maintained that it is more than enough for one man; indeed, at present it will need a superman to cope with some of the problems that have arisen due to the Government's policy of so-called decentralization. I have always thought that decentralization meant getting people from the city into the country, and not *vice versa*. The Government's present policy is a great deal more like disintegration. Whoever is fortunate—or unfortunate—enough to receive the portfolio of Education will have many problems to contend with, the problem of the enormously increased numbers of school-children concentrated in the relatively small area of the city, the problem of teacher recruitment and of preventing schools from growing to gargantuan proportions so that they are

much too large for one headmaster to cope with, and other problems too numerous to mention in a short speech. Whoever gets this portfolio has my best wishes, for I realize that he will have to fight against the negative policy adopted in this State, particularly with regard to teacher recruitment.

I hope that the new Minister will be a member of this House. In reply to an interjection by the Leader of the Opposition the Premier said that he would be quite happy for the Minister of Education to be a member of the Assembly and that it was his firm belief that, as a matter of policy, he would be better placed here. I submit that this is the only place for him. I have noticed on many occasions that it is unfair to the Minister of Works to expect him to answer detailed questions in regard to education. Of course he will get the answers from his colleague, but it is unfair to expect him to give detailed answers on the spur of the moment. Indeed, I think the effect of this has been that many questions with regard to education have not been asked and grievances have not been aired, and that the State has suffered because of it. Looking through *Hansard* one observes that the percentage of questions on education is very low. Possibly I am biased on the subject of education, but surely it should be considered as one of our most important Ministerial portfolios. I am delighted to hear the suggestion that we are likely to have the Minister in this House, and I say that with no intention of reflecting upon the present Minister.

In conclusion, I believe that Ministers in this Government have done their work under difficulties. I have received from most of them every courtesy and attention to my requests, unless they conflict with Government policy, which means unless they do not conform with the ideas of the Premier. Although I am supporting this measure, I do so with the reservation that it will be quite hopeless to have two additional Ministers if the present policy—which to a great extent negatives the ability of the present Ministers—is continued; if the Ministers are still expected to be what might be colloquially described as "Yes men." On the other hand, we will find that the best men, and the men who have a right to be elevated to Ministerial positions, will be kept out of the Ministry. We certainly need two new Ministers. I would go so far as to say that more than two are necessary. They have a mighty job to do, particularly in view of the condition of several departments due to the negative attitude inspired in Ministers—I

believe against their own wishes. I trust that the new Ministers will have a free hand to run their departments, and with that reservation I am pleased to support the Bill.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY (Chaffey)—I would like to comment on the somewhat significant signs coming from the Government benches. I do not know whether it is because members opposite are not quite sure how the cat is going to jump or how they may view this opportunity of filling two portfolios, but I know that it is somewhat unusual for a major Bill dealing with the Constitution of the State of South Australia to have proceeded as far as this Bill has gone without more comment from members supporting the Government. I join with Mr. Quirke in pointing out that it is absurd to suggest that this is not a popular measure. I would go so far as to say that never in the 15 years I have been in Parliament has there been a Bill more sincerely embraced by both major sections of political thought. Indeed, it is as popular as the promotion of an army Colonel to the rank of Brigadier General because it means that when the Colonel is promoted the Major has to fill his place and the Captain the Major's place and so on, right down to the supernumerary-acting-unpaid-lance-corporal, who in turn is promoted, leaving a vacancy for the private. Human nature being what it is—and I take no exception to it—I take it that every Government supporter sees an opportunity of being promoted to fill one of the portfolios. Her Majesty's official Opposition have high hopes of attaining the Government benches after the next elections, and they look forward to seeing two of their members promoted to these additional positions.

I want to make it clear that I am not opposing the measure on the score of expense. The \$5,000 involved is a mere flea bite, but what does matter very much indeed is that this type of legislation is merely a red herring drawn across the trail. We could appoint a dozen new Ministers, but unless they had the finance to work their departments properly they would be entirely useless. Incidentally, it is a reflection on present Ministers when it is suggested that because we are to have two more something will be done that is at present left undone. Adding to the number of ministers will not solve one problem. What the Premier did in his somewhat involved and rambling speech was simply to show that this is a measure that rightly belongs to the Labor Party, for it is entirely foreign to

anything the Liberals have ever stood for. The Premier said that the Gunn Government in 1924 introduced a Bill to increase the number of Ministers and the Hill Government did likewise in 1926 and again in 1930, but on each occasion although the measure was carried in this House, because we then had an Upper House that was imbued with the decencies of democracy and the necessity of conserving the taxpayer's money, it was thrown out there for the same reason as I am opposing it today. Evidently they were convinced that the appointment of extra ministers would solve none of the problems of State. The leader of this so-called Liberal Government, which the Leader of the Opposition, almost with tears in his eyes, accused of sponsoring all of Labor's policy, in his advocacy of this Bill had to depend on statements made by previous Labor Governments. The Premier also quoted the following statement by Mr. Crawford Vaughan, a former Premier:—

His office had become congested with work and important matters were held up. As an outcome of the war and the increasing operations between the various States there was a very great amount of work which meant that the Premier was compelled to give more time to the details of the Premier's office than was formerly necessary. It was also impossible for the Premier to bear the joint portfolios of Premier, Treasurer and Minister of Education, but equally impossible for him to saddle any one of those important portfolios on any of the overworked members of the Ministry. They were all fully engaged devoting day and night to public services.

He said that Ministers had not time to sleep because they worked 24 hours a day in the public interest. That is obviously absurd, and it was equally absurd for the Premier to support it. Although the Premier's Department was created it was disbanded within a year because a separate portfolio was found to be unnecessary. We know that prior to the last State elections some Government supporters were anxious to see a change in the Ministry. It was said in the lobbies that the time had come when some of the older members of the Party had to give way to the rising talent entering Parliament and so give new life to the Government. However, the elections had a moderating effect, because some of the most active in support of a change in the Ministry were glad to sneak back to this House under any conditions, and they forgot all about a change in the Ministry. But the Premier had made a public statement on the matter before the elections, and now, because of it, it is said

that the change must be accepted by Parliament. What the Premier says in his policy speech is the responsibility of his Party, and not of Parliament. We should not pay too much attention to what the Premier said in his policy speech, because in Party politics 95 per cent of the supporters of a Party vote for it, irrespective of what is mentioned in the Party policy speech. I do not think one Liberal supporter has sufficient knowledge to know whether there should be more members in the Ministry. The Premier also said in his second reading speech:—

It is not possible, nor desirable to put the clock back to the good old days when it was regarded as the function of Parliament to make laws, the duty of the Government merely to administer them and of the judiciary to interpret them.

That sounds amusing, but when analysed it means very little. I understand it is the duty of Parliament to make laws, of Government to see that laws are carried out, and for the judiciary to safeguard the interests of the people.

Mr. Quirke—Cabinet is above Parliament.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—That may be, but it goes further than that, because it is expected that the Government will interfere with the economic system of the State. A Bill was introduced this afternoon to lift certain restrictions from people who have invested money in houses and business premises. Once it was usual for people to invest their money in this way, but in recent years in this welfare State we have reached the point where anyone investing money in a house is regarded as something close to a criminal. If these restrictions on houses and business premises are to be lifted, why is there a need to appoint more Ministers? Speaking by and large, the old Ministers have done a good job, but they are subject to criticism, and that is why we have a Parliament. We should not be mealy-mouthed in our criticism, or frightened to vote. If we fall down as critics, there is little left in being a private member. The Premier did not give one good reason why the Bill should be supported. By special pleading, and bringing in more or less irrelevant argument, he hoped to sidetrack the issue. He also said:—

Whether we like it or not there has grown up in the community a demand—which, in any democratic society must be met—that the Government shall do more than those things, and therefore we are faced with the alternative of establishing various semi-governmental activities under their own self-constituted

boards not answerable directly to Parliament, or creating a larger Ministry to ensure adequate supervision and direct responsibility to Parliament.

Where is there a demand for more Ministers? The Premier has imagined that there is one. Mr. Quirke gave chapter and verse this afternoon, and I challenge supporters of the Bill to answer what he said. It cannot be answered. Boards are subject to Ministerial control. It would seem that one board, the Transport Control Board, is even above Parliament. It is as bureaucratic, autocratic and dogmatic as anything set up in Fascist Germany or Communist Russia. I have no personal feelings against the members of the board, but it seems to have a mandate which has cost the State many hundreds of thousands of pounds. Government members are frightened to make a statement one way or another in case they do themselves out of a job. Perhaps I am a little too enthusiastic in quoting what Mr. Quirke said, but he made some wonderful statements this afternoon. He proved conclusively that although Ministers have control of boards very great abuses creep in, and if they cannot be prevented by the present Ministers how can the appointment of two new Ministers improve the position? Let any member of our so-called free democracy try to have goods carted from the city to the country by road and he will soon learn what the Transport Control Board has to say about it. Mr. Quirke referred to a veterinary surgeon whose qualifications are second to none in the Commonwealth, yet he is regarded as a bush practitioner. If these things go on when boards are under the control of the present Ministers, how can they be prevented by the appointment of more Ministers? The Premier mentioned what has been done by Labor Premiers.

Mr. O'Halloran—He could not have taken a better example.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I think there was something nostalgic about the whole thing.

[*Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.*]

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Before the tea adjournment I was dealing with certain remarks of the Premier and his somewhat nostalgic ideas, which I consider similar to those of the late lamented Gandhi in his desire to get back to a condition which was impossible. The Premier is reported as saying:—

Indeed, when I think of the activities of Ministers of nearly 100 years ago I begin to believe that they did not have such a bad time after all.

I interjected, "But they didn't have telephones or motor cars." The Premier replied, "Lack of telephones meant that they were able to go to sleep at a reasonable hour and remain asleep, unlike present Ministers who are liable to be disturbed at any time of the night." There is the inference that Ministers of the Crown are not only compelled to use daylight hours in serving the community, but likely to be up all night answering telephone calls. Undoubtedly Ministers, like ordinary honourable members, do get telephone calls at all hours of the night, but I believe the Premier's statement was greatly exaggerated. For Ministers to be rung up at all hours of the night would be the exception and not the rule. This type of argument, which runs through the Premier's speech, is special pleading. The question arises whether we are justified in paying two additional Ministers to do the work that has been done up to the present reasonably effectively by six Ministers. The Premier, in continuing his policy of special pleading, said:—

How many requests does a Minister get from members to visit their districts in order to examine matters which they regard as important?—and I do not deprecate the reasons for it.

During the 15 years I have been a member I have never asked any Minister to come to my district, because I have found that when they do visit they use it as an opportunity to boost Party politics. They are more interested in the welfare of their Party than in the State of South Australia. The last time a Minister came to my district was during the recent election campaign. I put on record during the Address in Reply debate what happened on that occasion, and I feel that the visit did not add to his dignity. The Premier suggested that the work of Ministers of the Crown had been increasing rapidly; and there is no doubt about that because this Government has interfered more with private enterprise and the rights of the individual than any other Government in the history of South Australia. Someone suggested that there should be an orderly withdrawal from this interference. If that is done why should we worry to appoint more Ministers? The Premier said that he had to deal with such topics as prices and housing. We were assured recently that the Government intended to withdraw from price control in many directions because production had caught up with consumption, and also from the control of building, but despite

that the Treasurer has advanced these as reasons why there should be additions to the Ministry.

At that stage of his address the Premier asked members to examine *Hansard* to see the portfolios held by the Ministers. We find that Mr. Playford is not only Premier, but also Treasurer, Minister of Immigration and Minister of Industry and Employment, and one could well add Minister of Mines, Minister of Repatriation, Minister of Railways and probably a few other Ministries. As the member for Stanley pointed out earlier this afternoon the Premier, with all his great ability, has not the ability to pass on responsibility to the other Ministers. According to the *Hansard* list the Chief Secretary is also Minister of Mines, but does one ever hear his name associated directly or indirectly with the only Government mining undertakings in South Australia, namely, the Leigh Creek coalfield and uranium production at Radium Hill? The fact is that the Premier has taken those activities under his own wing. If the Chief Secretary is mentioned in connection with any development associated with uranium it is entirely incidental. I agree with my friend, Mr. Quirke, that it does not matter if we increase the Ministry by two or by a dozen, there will still be one master's voice—king of kings, and lord of lords, the Premier of the State who controls, administers and manages every phase of activity undertaken here.

The next Minister on the list is Attorney-General and Minister of Education. Perhaps the less we say about education the better. The Premier asks us to believe that this Minister was burdened with such things as area schools and bus services. I think he did a little less than justice to one of his henchmen—one his most ardent supporters. I refer to the member for Onkaparinga. If my memory serves me aright, when Mr. Shannon returned to this Chamber following on a visit to Tasmania he introduced the question of area schools in South Australia, and I think the honour for the innovation of this system here is rightly his. We are told that we have not only area schools, high schools, technical schools, primary schools and kindergartens, but also bus services. One would imagine that the Minister of Education has to sit down and decide all the points associated with these services. If he did, I suggest he is a very bad Minister. My idea of an efficient Minister is one who administers policy. He has officers to decide on the work, and if they are not

capable in administration the Minister should take steps to get rid of them. The Premier said that expenditure on education in South Australia had advanced from £1,000,000, which it was considered at the time would probably be the high water mark, to £6,500,000. The implication was that the work associated with education had increased six and a half times, but that line of argument is entirely fallacious, because we have to allow for inflation in Australia, which probably exceeds that in any other part of the British Empire in recent years. We can safely divide the £6,500,000 by four to get a fairly comparable expenditure on education, so in fact the Minister is not faced with such a tremendous increase of work as the figures quoted by the Premier would lead one to believe.

The next Minister in the *Hansard* list is Minister of Lands, Minister of Repatriation and Minister of Irrigation. I have referred to this Minister on numerous occasions and do not think anything I have said—

The Hon. C. S. Hincks—The honourable member does not get all the things he requires.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I can endorse that remark. As a matter of fact I get much less than I require.

Mr. O'Halloran—Do you think you get all you deserve?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I am sure I do not. The next Minister is Minister of Works, Minister of Railways, Minister of Marine and Minister of Local Government. Here we have a very high-sounding galaxy of portfolios. Although we have one Minister with four important Government departments to administer, this is entirely paper talk and means nothing, or very little because in practice he has not control over the administration of the most important spending department in South Australia, namely, the Railways Department. I am sure the Minister would make a much better job of the railways if he had the responsibility, but at the present time he is simply a figurehead. The next is the Minister of Local Government who, again, is a figurehead; the title does not mean a thing. The great responsibility of the Local Government Department and the Highways Department is to see that the roads of South Australia are in a condition to carry the transport of the State and the nominal head of the department which spends a tremendous amount of money has no say in the way it is spent, except in a very vague and general way.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—It is not vague; it may be general.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I am not sure what the difference is, but I accept the Minister's correction. The Premier now asks this Chamber to agree to the appointment of another two Ministers on the grounds that one will be in charge of highways, but I ask those who support this Bill why we do not put the present Minister in charge of highways. Until now lack of Ministerial control has been looked upon as a virtue by Government supporters, for they have said, "We do not want a Minister of the Crown in charge of roads because he will be subject to political pressure," which is obviously a writing down of the Minister because it assumes that the Minister is not prepared to do justice to the State generally; that he will give roads to the part of the State in which he may be interested either as a politician or a private individual, or that part of the State that would bring the most pressure on him, which I believe to be quite false reasoning. Now they say we must have one Minister in charge of roads. I agree. We should have a minister in charge of both the highways and the railways and we should vest the present Minister with the requisite authority; we do not need additional ministers for this purpose.

The Premier, in introducing the Bill, said, "I believe that our road system needs very much more attention than is being given to it now." I interjected here "and more money." That is the important factor in this debate, although so far it has not been mentioned much. The Premier went on to say—

Yes, and I will deal with that on another occasion. The Highways Department is largely outside Ministerial control and its policy is to a large extent determined by the Highways Commissioner. I am not criticizing either the present Highways Commissioner or his predecessor, both of whom are admirable and sincere men. The main difficulty in carrying out their duties at present is trying to build 1953 roads with 1939 money.

I interjected here, "I have been telling you that for a long time." The Highways Commissioner has been in charge of the roads of this State for many years and suddenly the Premier finds the whole system is wrong. Having made due apologies for abolishing the Highways Commissioner he now says it is essential to have a Minister of the Crown in charge of roads. If that is so, one might ask as Mr. Quirke did earlier, how much more money the department will have to spend for road construction when under Ministerial control? We can answer with absolute assurance that if the present system continues there

will be not one penny more available to the department. The Premier's argument throughout was simply specious pleading to build up his desire to expand his Cabinet. I would like to give some figures which came to hand only this week about construction of roads, for I have always felt that the States get much less than they are entitled to from the Commonwealth Government. The following was published recently by the Metropolitan and Country Press Service of the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries:—

In the Commonwealth there are about 1,750,000 road vehicles depending on a worn-out National highway system of only 146,309 miles of "improved roads." Of this total only 88,974 miles are "classified roads" while only 36,063 miles are hard-topped.

So now we find that in the whole of the Commonwealth we have only 36,000 miles of bituminous roads. The article goes on:—

In spite of any "improvements," the rest are dirt roads only fit for casual or emergency use. Australia's road communication system is so bad that our military leaders have been forced to admit it would be impossible under present conditions to move an armoured division by road from Adelaide to Brisbane. So much for depending on our road system for defence. The condition of many of our "classified roads" is also bad, in fact they might all be classified as sub-standard. For this sorry state of affairs many authorities must share the responsibility, but it must be borne principally by the Federal Government which is the taxing authority and the distributor of revenue for road purposes. During the last 20 years the Federal Government has collected £242,328,622 in petrol taxes while the States have collected £174,851,590 from motor vehicle users in diverse forms of taxation.

I take it that this total includes not only the petrol tax, but import duties and sales tax as well. The Commonwealth gets this tremendous sum from those who use motor cars, motor trucks or motor cycles. All these people pay proportionately into this huge fund that the Commonwealth Government extracts from them and does not pass on in the way it should. The article goes on:—

Total revenue then from road users during this period is £403,247,583. Of Commonwealth collections, however, only 39 per cent—£94,517,613—has been allocated to the States for road purposes.

We have been told from time to time that the purpose of the petrol duties and various other forms of taxation inflicted on the motoring public was to provide better highways and bridges for road users. That, in my opinion, is the real crux of this argument, and I repeat it does not matter if we have a dozen new Ministers; unless the State can get more of

this money that belongs to it for this specific purpose the appointment of new Ministers is so much waste of time.

I now come to the Department of Agriculture and here we have a Minister with only one portfolio. The Premier suggests that if we could get Ministers to deal with only one portfolio we could solve all our problems. Mr. Quirke this afternoon showed that it makes no difference whether a Minister is in charge of one department or more; unless more adequate funds are available it does not matter very much who is in charge. I believe that the Horticultural Branch of the department is starved for money; it is run on a shoe string. There is only one regular agricultural advisor in charge of all the big irrigation areas from Cooltong down to Renmark and on to Berri, with its associated settlements of Monash, Winkie and Glossop, and down to Barmera which includes Loveday and Cobdogla. It is true that he is occasionally helped by an ex-grower who has no specific scientific knowledge, but apart from this help this one man has to do all the work of advising the settlers in those areas, and I say without hesitation that it cannot be done. It is useless to blame the department because it cannot afford more money for additional advisers. The position is no better on the south side of the river, for again there is only one man for Loxton, Moorook, Kingston and Waikerie. Several approaches have been made to the Minister to appoint more cadets. I approached him myself, but, whatever the reason, no cadets were appointed and so the whole question of agriculture is rapidly going into the discard.

We are fortunate in having at the head of the Horticultural Branch one of the leading horticultural scientists in the Commonwealth. This man has done much good work but the Government cannot afford to pay him adequately and so has given him a few odd jobs. It has put him in charge of the Potato Board and made him a member of the Dried Fruits Board. Without writing down his ability in either of those undertakings it is a waste of a good horticultural scientist. Hundreds of men could possibly do those jobs equally well but to the best of my knowledge there is no other man who could do the scientific work better than the present head of the horticultural section. Because of lack of money he is being given other jobs to increase his salary. Is that what we, as an agricultural State, expect from the Department of Agriculture? In recent years the humble onion

and the plebian potato have disappeared from our tables. They used to be taken for granted but their disappearance is not altogether due to prices. Potatoes are not being grown in South Australia today and one of the reasons is because seed cannot be obtained. The available seed is rotten with virus diseases and the reason the department has not a supply of disease-free seed is that it has not the money with which to purchase it. One of the Agricultural Department's displays at the Royal Adelaide Show was bags of supposedly seed potatoes. Actually, seed potatoes are so valuable that officers of the department were afraid somebody might steal them, so the bags were filled with coal. The seed potatoes had been obtained from Victoria and I asked the attendant whether we had any disease-free seed in South Australia, but his reply was "No." After spending money for growing disease-free seed the department sold them as eating potatoes, which was a waste of public money. That was obviously an accident, but indicates what can happen when there is a Minister controlling only one department.

My arguments can be summed up in a few words. We do not want more Ministers, but better Ministers with more power and responsibility. Many years ago I asked a former Minister of the Crown how busy he was kept with several portfolios and suggested that he must have had an enormous amount of work. He told me that he had an arrangement whereby the heads of the departments under his control reported to him daily at certain times and that he could undertake all his Ministerial responsibility in two hours. It is difficult to reconcile that statement with the Premier's speech. He made a special plea for promotion of two members of his own Party. If the present Ministers cannot do their work effectively how do they undertake their duties during the session when they are in the House for a large part of their time? Members should object to the Bill, not because of cost, as that does not matter. If we pass this Bill believing that by appointing more Ministers we will solve our problems we will be a disappointed and deluded State. I had hoped that some Government supporters might have spoken to this measure. Before I rose I asked the Government Whip whether any Government members would be speaking, but was assured that none would. In view of the opposition of the member for Stanley and myself it would be fitting if some did speak.

Mr. Shannon—Were you absent when some of us spoke?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The Premier, the member for Onkaparinga and the member for Alexandra spoke, but I have been told that no other Government supporter will.

Mr. William Jenkins—Perhaps they are holding their fire.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I do not think they have much to hold. I hope the opposition of Mr. Quirke and myself will inspire some Government supporters to say something in defence of the Government's hopeless position. I oppose the Bill.

Mr. WHITE (Murray)—I support the Bill and propose to reply to the allegation made by the member for Chaffey that Government supporters have nothing to say on this matter. The Bill alters the Constitution to enable the appointment of two more expert Ministers to the Cabinet. There is a need for extending the Cabinet because every Government activity in South Australia is gradually expanding. The population is increasing, idle lands are being brought into profitable production and mineral resources, such as coal and uranium, are being developed. This has created additional work for the Government and there is a limit to what Cabinet can do. The appointment of two additional Ministers will have the effect of spreading the work and enabling Ministers to apply themselves more particularly to specific matters.

The Premier indicated that the two new portfolios would be for roads and education. These are two important matters which are becoming more prominent in the affairs of this State and it is necessary to have Ministers who can apply themselves more particularly to them. We must realize that road transport is here to stay and that vehicles are now bigger and faster and it is necessary to build roads to accommodate them, but that is not a reflection on what our road builders have done in the past. Twenty years ago we never visualized that transport would be carrying loads up to 40 tons. It is also necessary to strengthen bridges across our waterways because of this altered type of transport. In the post-war period a tremendous amount of land development has taken place and roads must be built in the new areas so that settlers can transport their produce to the rail heads and have easy ingress to and egress from their properties. This again creates a tremendous amount of work and someone should be appointed to apply himself to it. The creation of a Minister to control roads will bring those

problems closer to Parliament and give private members a better opportunity to have their grievances properly ironed out.

Much can be said for the handling of the Education portfolio alone by one Minister. Education is important in a democratic State, and South Australia is a democratic State despite all that we hear from Opposition members. It is important that our children be trained not only so that they can do well for themselves in life but also so that they can take their places as citizens. The number of children in South Australia is gradually increasing. At present education is being provided for about 150,000 and, from conversations with responsible officers of the Education Department, I understand that in the near future provision will have to be made for a greater number. In addition to the number attending primary schools, a growing number are demanding technical education and extra provision must be made for high school education. I well remember the time when the Premier went out on the hustings as a raw recruit in politics. He came to my centre of Monarto South and told the people that the Government was spending £1,000,000 on education. We all thought that was a tremendous sum, but today we are spending £6,500,000 on education and it is imperative to have a Minister to control such colossal expenditure. As we alter our system of education by cutting out the smaller schools and taking the children by bus to area schools, new problems are created. In my electorate many children receive their education at area schools and some are compelled to travel up to 40 miles a day to school and back to their homes. Some vehicles used for this work are not as good as we would wish, and the contractors are not paid as much as they should be. Many of the roads which are recognized school bus routes are not as good as they should be, and it seems to me that there should be co-ordination between those in charge of the allotting of contracts for the transport of school children and those in charge of road construction and maintenance. That is one of the big problems which must be faced in country areas and it seems that the administration of roads and education by Ministers having no other portfolios will help iron out the anomalies.

This Bill is a step in the right direction for it will enable the work to be spread over more Ministers, who will be able to apply themselves more specifically to their problems and take advantage of the better opportunities

afforded to get out among the people, which will be greatly appreciated by South Australians. Despite what Opposition members have said, the present Cabinet is efficient, and I do not subscribe to the opinion expressed so often by members opposite that the present Government is a one-man Government. I would like the members for Chaffey and Stanley to know that I have been associated with public life for the last 15 years and during that time I have had the pleasure of leading numerous deputations to various Ministers. I have always received good treatment at their hands, and the way our problems have been dealt with has indicated that each member of Cabinet is capable and is handling his part of Cabinet work ably. The best proof of the efficiency of Cabinet is the fact that South Australia is the most solid of all States, a fact that is proved in many ways. The creation of these two new Ministers must add to the efficiency which is in evidence in the administration of this State's affairs. I support the Bill.

Mr. PEARSON (Flinders)—I rise to speak on the Bill because I consider that, when a certain matter has been raised in the course of a debate, it may require some reply. The member for Chaffey said he hoped that some of his remarks might inspire Government supporters to speak in this debate. I feel that it is no use in this place talking merely for the sake of talking, but that it is the function of Government members to reply when matters have been raised in opposition to Government proposals. The member for Chaffey and other members raised certain matters and therefore there is some justification for Government members to make some contribution to the debate. There is probably another reason for lack of spontaneity on the part of some Government members in this case: some may be possible candidates for the positions created by this Bill. Although members opposite may laugh, I see nothing wrong or humorous in that situation, for after all, some members possess as a trait of character a becoming degree of modesty. Some Government members may be in the direct line of succession for these positions and therefore reticent about rising to speak in this debate, but being neither modest nor in the line of succession I feel I may speak.

The growth and development of this State have made the proposed Cabinet changes a necessity. No member, except Mr.

Macgillivray has tried to take any opposite view, and I feel that he based his case on premises which were established by himself only for purposes of argument. I believe he does not deny there is a real case for this legislation. After all, although the value of money has considerably depreciated and the Minister may authorize a work today which years ago would have involved possibly only half the money, it cannot be gainsaid that the activities of the Government—rightly or wrongly—have increased manifold in recent years. Whether we agree with the policy of Government development in industrial fields is beside the point. The fact is that the community generally demands from its Government today a far greater range of activities, both social and otherwise, than was the case in bygone years, and any Government which attempts to sidestep that responsibility which the community has imposed on it does not long reign on the Treasury benches. The total amount of our budget has increased enormously. When the vote for education first reached £1,000,000 it was considered by the taxpayers to be a record which this State could not justify, but today with the Budget total at over £40,000,000 our education vote is up to £6,500,000.

The growth in governmental activities has occurred not because Governments may of their own volition desire to engage in these activities but merely because the people have demanded them, and the Government is, or should be, the servant of the people and implement its demands. The member for Chaffey said that the appointment of the additional Ministers would not solve any of the State's problems, but he might as well have said that to apply half a remedy was to attempt no remedy at all. I agree with him that if we had more money we could do much more in the way of developmental works and social services. I am pleased that the honourable member appears to favour increasing the State's revenue for developmental purposes, for obviously in future that will be necessary. He also condemned this Bill because, he said, it was inherently Labor legislation, and he instanced the fact that previous Labor Administrations in this State had tried to increase the size of the Ministry. That, of course, is a fact of history. I do not know whether the honourable member was sincere in his condemnation of this Bill merely because its proposals may have been sponsored in the past by Labor Governments. I wonder whether he

was speaking with his tongue in his cheek, whether he is as much opposed to Labor Party policy as he tries to make out, and on what side he would have come down in this Parliament had the necessity arisen for him to state his position. That necessity did not arise because the Government won enough seats to govern, but it might have arisen had the Government won two or three seats less. Then the member for Chaffey, as an Independent, would almost certainly have been obliged to show where he stood.

Mr. Quirke—He would not have left you in any doubt.

Mr. PEARSON—I was wondering on which side he would have come down, for this evening he spent much time opposing a Bill similar to measures sponsored in the past by Labor Governments. Much play has been made, not only recently, but over many years before I came into Parliament, on the one-man band we are supposed to have in South Australia. Cartoonists, journalists, and correspondents to the press—

Mr. O'Halloran—And Liberal and Country League propaganda.

Mr. PEARSON—Many contributions from all walks of life have been made to this fantasy that it is a one-man band that governs this State, but is it peculiar that the Premier of South Australia should receive prominence? In every Ministry it is the leader of the Government whose name is most frequently mentioned. For instance, what do we know of the people who govern Victoria, a sister State? When I read about the politics of that State I invariably come across the name of John Cain.

Mr. Dunstan—And Galvin, Barry, and others are mentioned too.

Mr. PEARSON—I am not so familiar with those names.

Mr. Dunstan—You don't know much about Victoria, then.

Mr. PEARSON—I am not the fountain of wisdom that the honourable member sometimes makes himself out to be, but I do not hear much about the members of the Victorian Cabinet, apart from Mr. Cain.

Mr. Teusner—You only hear of Gair in Queensland.

Mr. PEARSON—Exactly, and of Mr. Hanlon when he was Premier there.

Mr. Quirke—And only of Mr. Playford in South Australia.

Mr. PEARSON—I do not object to that, for it is not unique. The leader of the Government, because of his position, must of necessity be the Minister most frequently mentioned.

Mr. O'Halloran—But you do not hear of the Government of Queensland being called the Gair Government, or the Government of Victoria being called the Cain Government.

Mr. PEARSON—We have heard of Mr. Cosgrove's name for almost as long as we have heard of Mr. Playford's. However, it must be accepted that because the Premier is the leader of the State he invites prominence. He is the person sought after in the news. He is the ambassador of the State and the Government when he visits other States or goes abroad, so it is unavoidable that his name should be more frequently on the lips and in the minds of the people than that of any other member of the Cabinet or Parliament. Further, it is the custom in this State, and in many others, for the Premier to also be the Treasurer. Whether we like it or not, someone wrote many years ago that finance was the Government, and the Government was finance. Therefore, it is inevitable that he who holds the purse strings shall be to a large extent the conditioner of the work done by other members of his Cabinet. The Treasurer finds the money and, as the member for Chaffey rightly said, a Minister, in developing or pursuing his policy, must expend money, and the Treasurer controls the funds. Much of the criticism levelled at the present Ministry is entirely hollow. It has been deliberately built up over the years by people for the purpose of erecting an Aunt Sally at which they can hurl ammunition. This state of affairs is fostered in this House by members opposite invariably addressing a wide variety of questions to the Premier at question time. They put questions to him that could often be addressed to other Ministers, and I sometimes wonder why. I think they do it for the purpose of fostering the fantasy that the Premier is the only one that can give an answer.

I think the member for Stanley used the phrase that Sir Winston Churchill coined—"Let us not be mealy-mouthed in debate." It is a good phrase, and typical of that great personality, but he did not use it to seek to justify some harsh criticism that he himself might level at another; he used it when someone was making an attack upon him. He invited the attacker to spare no language in making his criticism. That is a different

attitude from that of some members opposite when they are directing criticism at the Government. They use the words of Churchill to justify their method of attack. If they had been inviting criticism of themselves, as Churchill was, I could feel that they framed their attack with greater justification than they did. I have often heard criticism of Ministers in this House which I believed was almost entirely based on spleen or personalities and was contrary both to fact and to fair play. I was agreeably surprised to hear the member for Chaffey say that he thought the work of the present Ministry had been reasonably effective. That is great praise indeed from the honourable member, particularly in view of many things I have heard him say. The Chief Secretary, who is the Deputy Premier, has increased in stature immeasurably in recent years. Some months ago he was entrusted with the heavy duty of going to the Loan Council and obtaining this State's share of the Loan funds for this year. The press, the public, Parliament—all sections—agreed that he did a mighty fine job.

Mr. O'Halloran—I think that the formula adopted by the Loan Council had much to do with the distribution of Loan funds.

Mr. PEARSON—It would be easy work for the Treasurer if the formula was always applied, but Loan Council meetings are frequently a bear garden when Premiers of other States, notably New South Wales and Victoria, adopt all sorts of measures to get more than their share. That is why the Treasurer of one of the lesser States is faced with a difficult task.

Mr. O'Halloran—You have no basis for that assertion. You cannot give one instance.

Mr. PEARSON—I think that even the honourable member admitted that the Chief Secretary had done a good job at the Loan Council meeting. That proved that this State could function when Mr. Playford was not at home, in spite of what some members said. The Chief Secretary's administration of his various departments is particularly sound. The increase in his duties as Minister of Health in the past few years has been considerable.

Mr. O'Halloran—I think the reference to the Chief Secretary was in regard to his nominal position as Minister of Mines while the Premier did the work.

Mr. PEARSON—Much has been said about that, but the development of some of our mining undertakings has been contingent more

upon money being made available than upon actual administration. Many members have mentioned the portfolio of Education, and here is a proper case for a division of Ministerial duties. The Education Department is one upon which more money is spent than on practically any other. No-one regrets that, for I agree with members who spoke on the Address in Reply, notably the member for Gawler, who said that we could well spend every penny that we can devise on education. That does not mean we should squander money or spend it merely for the sake of spending, and then pat ourselves on the back and think we have done a good job for the children. It does not mean, either, that we should establish elaborate amenities in our schools or that we should even do everything the teachers sometimes ask for because they, like other people, are ambitious about their own calling and may over-estimate its importance. However, I am not decriing the importance of education, for I believe it is one of the finest and longest-lasting investments any State or parent can make for the children.

The Minister of Lands has one of the most difficult departments to administer. Those who know something of the history of soldier settlement after World War I. will recall the problems that arose. They were inherent in the undertaking. I thank the member for Semaphore for saying that it would not matter who the Minister of Lands happened to be, or what Government happened to be in power when a soldier settlement scheme was being administered, those problems would have arisen. They arise because of the nature of the undertaking. There is a wide variety of types of people to be considered and of land to be developed, and the consideration of the future which might to a large extent determine the success or failure of the whole enterprise. There is the worry about future markets, the angle to be developed most prominently, and the scope there is for development in this or that direction. We are perhaps in one of the difficult stages of land settlement, but no-one can deny that the patience, courtesy, honesty and sincerity of the Minister of Lands, as well as his practical knowledge of the job, must surely recommend him as being the best man for the portfolio. In spite of all that may have been said—and some hard words have been said—I say that deliberately and advisedly, because I believe the Minister is sincere and honest in his approach to the matter. People in other States are willing

to admit that the Government and the Minister in this State have done a mighty fine job so far in connection with soldier settlement.

I suppose the Minister of Works is the one Minister whose departments have increased in number in recent years. Because of various Acts of Parliament he has had to farm out a number of duties to other people. In the past Parliament has created certain commissionerships and boards which have become in themselves almost autonomous and, to some degree, bureaucratic, but they were set up to avoid the pitfalls of political roads, political railways and political harbours, which in some instances in the past have turned out to be nothing less than white elephants. The need to protect the spending of State money has to a large extent disappeared because the Public Works Committee has to a degree taken over the role of protector of State expenditure, and the scrutineer of the various projects proposed from time to time before Parliament can spend any money on them. The time is ripe for an adjustment of these matters, to bring them more directly within the purview of Parliament, to make the Ministers more directly responsible, and to enable them to take a greater interest in the detail work of some of the very great undertakings. At present the Minister of Works is facing a job which is impossible for any one man to do. I have seven matters now before him awaiting a reply and I believe that is the experience of a number of other country members, who have so many matters constantly coming up in their electorates requiring the attention of this Minister. I think he and members generally would welcome some lightening of his burden.

No-one will deny that the Minister of Agriculture has rendered a vast and honest degree of service to the State and to its agricultural development. I think that the real criticism in regard to the Minister of Agriculture is not that he is too long in the tooth but too long in the head for some of his opponents. He is still rendering a complete service to his department, Parliament and the State. The alternative, as I see it, to the passage of the Bill is to create and enlarge the bureaucratic systems of control of the activities of the State. If a Minister has more than he can cope with he must of necessity farm out some of his duties to subordinates. I am not anxious to see any increase of that sort of thing. It is recognized that a good bureaucrat is efficient and probably gets things done,

as a dictator does, but there are not many good bureaucrats. The Premier said:—

If members believe in democracy they will agree that there must be sufficient Ministers to control the functions of government in this State, otherwise we shall have authorities that are completely autonomous and autocratic, and Parliament will lose control over them.

There is no doubt that the body which we sometimes create grows in strength and influence until eventually it eats its own master. This Bill cannot be construed in any sense as a criticism of the present Ministry, either collectively or individually. I believe it to be a proof of the growth of the importance of the State, of the upsurge of progress, and evidence of the fact that we have reached the stage of maturity, agriculturally, industrially and socially, and that we are no longer compelled to be satisfied with Heath Robinson ideas or T-model progress. Credit for this most enviable state of affairs must be given freely and wholeheartedly to the Ministry of six men who have nurtured the State through the growing stages. That present activities have now outgrown them is a fact of history which no criticism can possibly destroy. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill and I believe its passage will mark a further step in the progress and development of this State.

Mr. CORCORAN (Victoria)—Despite my limited knowledge of the functions of Parliament, I feel that it is necessary to bring about a greater state of efficiency by appointing two additional Ministers; therefore I support the Bill. When I think over the development which has taken place in South Australia in the past 10 years, the increase in population and the demand upon our various departments, there is no doubt in my mind that it is essential to have more Ministers, and I commend the Government for the proposal. The Premier also acts as Treasurer, Minister of Immigration, Minister of Industry, Minister of Employment, and Minister in charge of housing. We all know what has taken place in connection with immigration in recent years, and the responsibilities associated with our housing programme. Sometimes I wonder how Ministers surmount the various problems that confront them. I am not looking for bouquets but I appreciate the assistance I have always received from the various Ministers. I have worried them to some great degree, particularly the Ministers of Works, Lands and Education, but on every occasion I have received courtesy

and all the assistance I could reasonably expect. The same goes for those people who control the departments. I pay a tribute to our public servants. No-one has a deeper sense of appreciation than I have of the part these people play in assisting members of Parliament to shoulder their responsibilities. If it were not for the wholehearted support we get from them we could fail miserably in our work here.

The Chief Secretary is also Minister of Health and Minister of Mines. His responsibilities have increased recently, especially in connection with the development of our uranium deposits. We do not want any of our Ministers to be overtaxed to the extent that he must neglect his responsibilities, because that is not in the best interests of the State. The proposal to appoint two Ministers has the objective of greater efficiency. Some members here are critical of the work done by members, but if we are critical we have the responsibility of showing how to get out of the problems. If I had the responsibility of reaching a certain objective and I had nothing but pessimists around me who gave me no solution to the problem I would feel like dealing with them severely. I am in this House to represent the district of Victoria, but I am also here to lend my little bit of wisdom in the best interests of the State. I am prepared to pool my small amount of energy to help the people trying to do the best for the State. That is an obligation which rests on every member. The Attorney-General is also Minister of Education. The work of the Education Department has expanded greatly in recent years. Its activities can be seen in all parts of the State. Mistakes have been made, but I have learned that the man who has not made a mistake in his life has done very little. To expect that those at the head of the various departments could handle all the problems confronting them without making a mistake is beyond reason. I consider the job of the Minister of Education big enough to warrant the full-time attention of one man. In stressing the appointment of the two additional Ministers, I consider that the men with the highest qualifications should be selected. I extend sincere support to the Minister of Lands. One has to consider the tremendous amount of work involved in soldier settlement since the cessation of the war. There have been mistakes, and if we can offer anything constructive to help overcome them it is our responsibility to do so. There is great scope for land settlement, and I have often

brought under the notice of the Government propositions awaiting development in my area. Such work is the sacred responsibility of any Government. I feel that something may be achieved in this regard if we agree to the appointment of the additional Ministers.

I understand that one Minister is to be appointed whose sole responsibility will be the administration of transport. Our roads started to deteriorate during World War II. when much of our manpower was engaged in fighting for the country's existence. We can thank God that we have no shell holes in them. With the shortage of manpower we had to expect that roads would deteriorate. The shortage of labour and money did not help to improve matters. If we have a special Minister whose sole responsibility will be to deal with road and rail transport we can reasonably expect something to be achieved. I have no judgment to pass on those who have been in charge of the roads during these recent years. My sympathy goes out to the councils which have been faced with that responsibility because I know the disadvantages under which they have worked. No matter how long I talk about these shortcomings it will not help us to put wrongs right. There is no wisdom in deliberating about the past, but I stress that we should pool our resources and make things right for the future. Our railways are improving, and I can see being achieved something I have looked forward to most of my life, namely, the broadening of the railway gauge in the South-East. I hope the appointment of the new Ministers will result in greater efficiency in our departments, and that the men most qualified for the jobs will be selected, and then we will all be happy. We need not be pessimistic about the future. This State holds great possibilities. We have been faced with greater problems than those confronting us now, including the greatest danger of all—invasion of our country—and we surmounted that. Surely we need not be demoralized by the little problems ahead. We will tackle them with the same spirit as that of the men who fought and bled for this country. I am sure that if we all adopt that spirit, with fixed determination to help, we will solve all problems, and then we will have no regrets. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS (Stirling)—The two additional Ministers proposed under the Bill are absolutely essential. As every member, with the exclusion of two Independents, is in

favour of it, it must have some merit. All members are imbued with a spirit of honesty and integrity in regard to the development of the State. I heard the member for Chaffey pay a back-handed compliment to the members of the Government when he referred to them as being supernumerary acting lance-corporals. I take that as a compliment, because some of our most eminent soldiers have referred to the N.C.O.'s as being the backbone of any army. Almost every speaker has supported the Bill, with the exception of two Independents. It appears to be their policy to oppose every Bill introduced by the Government. I compliment the member for Semaphore on his excellent speech and his reference to the work of the various Ministers. He mentioned the many duties undertaken by the Premier, especially in connection with housing. I did not agree with him when he said that our housing project had not been carried out well, because I consider that our State can be proud of the way it has provided houses for the people. The member for Stanley referred to the one-man show on this side of the House and said that on almost every occasion when a deputation waited on a Minister it was referred to the Premier because the Minister concerned would not say yea or nay to the request. I have been concerned with local government and other public works for many years and have been on deputations to various Ministers but have never been referred to the Premier. The Ministers concerned have always accommodated me and I definitely refute Mr. Quirke's statement. The Ministers are in close touch with their departments and have an overall knowledge of the affairs under their control. I have taken ex-servicemen to the Minister of Lands and he has always been most considerate. On the journey to Mount Gambier for the opening of the broad gauge I met three ex-servicemen from my district who had been settled less than three years and they were extremely happy and doing well. Last week I met a returned man from the Korean war who had interviewed the Minister and was purchasing furniture for his home in the South-East where he was to be taught farming methods prior to being settled on a block. That is indicative of the treatment meted out by the Minister of Lands who is always sympathetic and seems to have the right answer for the ex-servicemen and I commend his attitude. Mr. White mentioned the expansion of the State and the additional work it entailed and referred particularly to

the problems of education and transport. The member for Gawler referred to education and with other members drew attention to the fact that expenditure on education in recent years has increased from £1,000,000 to £6,500,000 per annum. I have frequently approached the Minister of Education about schools in my district. He controls a gigantic organization which could well be controlled by one Minister with no other portfolio.

The member for Stanley said that were the Premier to be absent for any period there would be chaos in this Government but I recall what the member for Flinders said in referring to the excellent work performed by

the Hon. A. L. McEwin during the Premier's absence at the Coronation. He attended the Loan Council and was in charge at the opening of Parliament. As well as managing his own portfolios he performed the other duties in a splendid manner. That was the opinion throughout the State. The appointment of two additional Ministers will benefit the State generally and I support the Bill.

Mr. HUTCHENS secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.15 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, September 16, at 2 p.m.