HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, September 23, 1953.

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

QUESTIONS.

FLUKE DISEASE IN SHEEP.

Mr. HAWKER—Has the Minister of Agriculture anything further to report with reference to the question I asked recently about the possibility of the sheep disease, fluke, being spread by pumping water from the Murray?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The Engineer-in-Chief reports:—

The fluke snails only exist where conditions are favourable, *i.e.*, in shallow swamp waters, and while there have been outbreaks around the shores of the lakes and to a lesser extent in the swamp areas at the lower end of the river, there has never been an outbreak further up the river. Under these circumstances, I feel it is unlikely that fluke snails will spread to areas as remote from the lakes as Morgan.

I also have a much fuller report from my Veterinary Branch which I will make available to the honourable member.

IMPORTATION OF POULTRY.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Last week I asked the Minister of Agriculture a question about the possibility of importing fertile eggs from Great Britain. Has he received a report on this matter?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I indicated that the difficulty was one of quarantine. I have received the following report from the Chief Poultry Adviser:—

The importation of poultry or eggs for hatching is prohibited, under the Commonwealth Quarantine Act, 1908-1950, from any country other than New Zealand. The prohibition is on account of the prevalence of fowl pest or Newcastle disease.

WHEAT MARKETING AND PRICES.

Mr. DUNKS—The following report appears in today's *Advertiser*:—

The three-State plan with a home consumption price for wheat of 14s. a bushel in South Australia and 12s. 6d. in Victoria was workable and should be supported by the flour millers, the general secretary of the South Australian Wheat and Woolgrowers' Association (Mr. Stott, M.P.) said in Adelaide yesterday. The fact that there was a different price in South Australia and Victoria would not present any difficulties. South Australian bakers purchased all their flour from South Australian mills and would not purchase from Victoria even with a lower price.

Can the Minister of Agriculture say that South Australian bakers will continue to use South Australian flour, even though the price may be higher than the Victorian price?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The Flour Millers' Association and other interests here have made representations to the Government on this matter. They are very perturbed at the possibility of wheat being 18d. a bushel cheaper in Victoria than in this State. Their representations indicated that it would create considerable difficulties in South Australia. The question of the ultimate plan that will be approved of is still under consideration, and I am awaiting information from the Federal Minister for Commerce and Agriculture about it.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—There is a growing fear among sections of the wheat industry that with all the haggling going on about the internal price, the overseas marketing set-up, together with the Australian Wheat Board, might completely collapse and go out of existence. Thereby the wheat industry would lose the most valuable part of any wheat scheme in operation at present. The point arises, which is the best thing to preserve in this set-up. Should it be our overseas marketing organization, which I claim is rendering a very great service to the wheat industry in Australia, and which if it went out of existence would undoubtedly result in chaos in the overseas marketing situation? Is it not better for the wheat industry to retain that and give way a little on the internal price set-up, which is not quite so valuable to us? In other words, should we retain half a loaf at least and have something, or lose the whole loaf? Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether in any further discussions on the question consideration will be given to this point, namely, that the overseas marketing set-up is of greater value to the wheat industry of Australia than the internal price, even under the Victorian and Queensland proposal?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I assure the honourable member that the external or overseas marketing position has not been lost sight of by the Agricultural Council, or by the Commonwealth Minister for Agriculture and Commerce, who has always stressed fully the importance of maintenance of the overseas selling organization. Regarding the question at issue at present—the internal price—it has to be borne in mind that six States are involved, that four of the six came to an agreement and that two would not come into

line. It is not a question of one State giving way—of South Australia saying to Victoria, "We will accept your plan for 12s. 6d. a bushel"—because other major wheatgrowing States are involved in production, and we would still be in disagreement, which is most unfortunate. I assure the honourable member that all State Ministers of Agriculture are fully aware of the difficulties and are anxious to maintain the overseas selling organization, even if it gets to the stage where we must have compulsory State wheat pools. With them it is quite possible that the Australian Wheat Board as a selling organization for wheat overseas could still be maintained.

WATERSIDE WORK AT WALLAROO.

Mr. McALEES—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked a few weeks ago about shipping at Wallaroo? I have noticed that calcines are accumulating at the fertilizer company works at that town. There are thousands of tons there, and they are still waiting for ships to take it away. Can the Premier do something to provide shipping at Wallaroo? It was reported to me last week—I do not know whether it is correct—that a cargo of about 10,000 tons of phosphate rock was at the port, that when all but about 200 tons had been discharged the vessel left for Port Lincoln to load wheat, and that she raced there to get a berth before another ship could get it. Will the Premier make inquiries about that?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—As I promised the honourable member, I communicated with the Commonwealth Minister for Shipping on this matter. I have not yet received his reply, but I have to go to Canberra tomorrow and will, during my short stay there, again interview the Minister and let the honourable member have the information I obtain as soon as possible.

BREAM FISHING.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—(1) Can the Minister of Agriculture tell me whether it is true there is a close season declared on bream fishing in the Hindmarsh and Inman Rivers and, if so, the reason? (2) Does he not consider that if the size of fish taken conforms to the standard of 10½in. that would be sufficient to ensure propagation of this species of fish? (3) Is he aware that during the season for bream fishing which this close season covers many fishing parties, plus our own local anglers, hold competitions at week-ends, and if a close season is declared it would deny this sport and be a definite loss to the town of Victor Harbour? (4) Has he considered, as an alternative to a close season, the organized destruction of some of the tens of thousands of shags and cormorants frequenting our rivers and the Coorong and devouring tons of young fish daily?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The Chief Inspector of Fisheries and Game advises me as follows:—

(1) At page 768 of the *Government Gazette* of 17th September appears the recent bream fishing proclamation. The only restrictions over bream fishing in the Hindmarsh and Inman Rivers are (1) a bag limit of 12 bream per person per day, and (2) all fish taken must be of legal weight, namely of or over 10½in. in length. There is no close season for bream in the Hindmarsh and Inman Rivers.

(2) Not entirely. In some easily accessible but very restricted areas such as is found in the Deep Hole—that part of the Onkaparinga River upstream for about one mile from the Noarlunga Bridge further restrictions are thought to be necessary. That is why a close season for the three months November, December, January, when bream are said to be breeding was imposed over that mile of the Onkaparinga.

(3) Yes, but there is no close season. However, the restrictions that have been imposed on bream fishing were declared at the request of the Piscatorial Council.

The matter of shags and other birds eating fish has been discussed on frequent occasions, and it has been suggested that the birds should be brought under the Vermin Act, but when that sort of thing is done it usually upsets the balance of nature in some other way. There are always two sides to a question of that kind and I will have to give serious consideration to them when dealing with the matter.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES FOR MOCULTA.

Mr. TEUSNER—The residents of Moculta are desirous of being supplied with electricity by the Electricity Trust, whose mains serving Angaston and Truro are, I believe, five or six miles from Moculta. Can the Premier say if it is intended to supply Moculta with electricity in the near future, and, if not, will he arrange for the trust to send an officer to Moculta to see what can be done to serve the town and district with electricity?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have not all the information the honourable member desires, but I will discuss the matter with the chairman of the Electricity Trust and let him have the information in due course. If necessary I shall see that an officer goes to Moculta to examine the position.

EARLY CLOSING ACT.

Mr. PATTINSON—Recently I introduced to the Premier a deputation consisting of the president, secretary, and other members of the Retail Confectionery and Mixed Businesses Association, which requested the Government to introduce legislation to relax certain provisions of the Early Closing Act. I will not go into details because the Premier is aware of them. I said that my concern was not so much for the proprietors of the businesses as for the general public. The Premier expressed some sympathy towards certain of the requests and promised to refer them to Cabinet. Can he say if the Government has arrived at a decision on the matter, and, if so, what it is?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—As promised the deputation, the matter was referred to Cabinet, which came to the general conclusion that the requests contained considerable merit as regards certain articles requested to be placed in the exempt schedule. Amendments to the legislation will be brought down in due course for the consideration of Parliament. I am not sure whether the Government is prepared to legislate for all the articles the deputation suggested should be exempted, but I think the amendments will at least include butter. At present bread and cooked meat are exempt articles. A party who desires to get refreshments at certain hours can get bread and cooked meat, but not the necessary butter to make a sandwich. Also included will be cheese, cigarettes and tobacco. At present, although these small businesses are not allowed to sell tobacco or cigarettes outside the stipulated times, it is well-known that those articles are freely available in many hotels. As Minister of Industry I am asked fairly regularly to approve of a long list of prosecutions of persons who have sold or have not locked up a packet of cigarettes. That matter will in due course be placed before Parliament. I realize this is a highly controversial matter, but I believe that, if Parliament applies a spirit of compromise to the question of a fair balance, we can probably arrive at some useful conclusions on it. I regret that I have not yet answered the honourable member's request, but the matter went before Cabinet only last Monday.

FISHING CONTROL: HONORARY WARDENS.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether he is proceeding to appoint honorary wardens as suggested to him by a deputation which I introduced from the Piscatorial Council some time ago?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—The Chief Inspector of Fisheries and Game is investigating the position with a view to making recommendations.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: WHEAT MARKETING.

Mr. STOTT—Following on the question asked by the honourable member for Mitcham, I desire to make a personal explanation regarding the marketing of wheat which was mentioned in the House yesterday. The statement in the *Advertiser* was not a full report of my remarks. I said that if we agreed to the proposal from Victoria of 12s. 6d. a bushel it would mean the end of the International Wheat Agreement because New South Wales and Western Australia would not agree to the proposal; and that would be detrimental to the interests of the flour milling industry in Australia. The flour millers would lose the valuable overseas trade with Indonesia and Ceylon, which would go to the United States of America and Canada. I said that this was an occasion when the South Australian flour milling industry and the Wheatgrowers' Association could co-operate in their mutual interest to save the International Wheat Agreement. In regard to the difference in price, the statement I made was that it would not make a great deal of difference in the long run because if flour came over the border from Victoria at a lower price the Prices Commissioner in South Australia would be forced to lower the price of bread; therefore the flour millers would be no better off.

BUILDING CONTROL BILL.

Mr. FRANK WALSH, having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to provide for the regulation of the use of certain building materials, to control the demolition of dwelling-houses, and for other purposes. Read a first time.

ESTABLISHMENT OF STEEL WORKS NEAR WHYALLA.

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr. Riches:—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the desirability of establishing a steel works in the vicinity of Whyalla and to report to Parliament on steps to be taken to implement recommendations made by the Director of Mines on such an undertaking.

(Continued from September 16. Page 670.)

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—Addressing myself to the motion I speak under the difficulty that I did not

hear the honourable member address the House. I have read most of what he said, but, unfortunately, that is not quite the same as hearing the speech delivered. My first query is whether the Director of Mines, in his report, categorically set out a number of recommendations. The Government has given this officer every latitude in expressing his views, for we consider it is no good having an officer of his type unless he is allowed to express his views fully. As I read the report, he has expressed the view that it is desirable to establish in South Australia an integrated steel mill costing about £100,000,000, and that the Commonwealth and State Governments and the Broken Hill Proprietary Company should combine in setting up such an undertaking. That is the basis of the honourable member's request for a Select Committee to consider the means whereby this condominium will work the steel mill and provide the necessary capital for its establishment.

Mr. Riches—The Director recommends the formation of a new company.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It would have to have a corporate existence, but I understood from the honourable member's speech that its substance would be provided by the Commonwealth and South Australian Governments and the B.H.P.

Mr. Riches—There would be private shareholders.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member said that funds would have to be made available from public sources, so he is really suggesting the appointment of a Select Committee to work out plans for the participation by the Commonwealth and South Australian Governments and the B.H.P. in the establishment of a steel works. I think that fairly sets out his proposal.

Mr. Riches—Not quite. The director submitted recommendations to Parliament, and all that is asked is for a Select Committee to inquire into those recommendations.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Some of the director's recommendations are of a general nature which do not get down to any specific grounds. Let me deal with the proposal, which is, in the main, as I have set out. The money necessary for this company would have to be found from public sources. I think the main suggestion was that it could be found overseas, but it would be a joint enterprise, and would have to be given a name indicating Commonwealth and State Government and B.H.P. interests. My Government always has been and still is most anxious to develop the steel industry in this State. If I desired to go in for the type of self-praise we sometimes hear in other Parliaments, particularly over the air, I could say that my Government was responsible for the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline and for the establishment of the shipbuilding industry at Whyalla.

Mr. Riches—The pipeline was financed in the same way that I propose for the steel works.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No, the pipeline was financed by the State Government.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Entirely.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. My Government has never been backward in any enterprise to help the development of Whyalla. When money was sorely needed and materials very scarce because of war requirements, my Government laid the pipeline to Whyalla, which was one of the greatest engineering feats ever accomplished in this State, for the express purpose of establishing the ship building industry, which is so valuable to Whyalla today. We concluded an agreement with the B.H.P. for the establishment of a tinplate industry there, but unfortunately the proposal was dropped as a result of the war and a succession of tariff inquiries. However, it was decided to go forward with a cold strip mill, which has now cost about £20,000,000 but is still not in operation, and has taken up all the resources of the company. I still believe that the original project of a tinplate plant would have paid for itself by now. We have discussed the establishment of steel mills at Whyalla on many occasions, but there are one or two fundamental difficulties that no Select Committee could overcome. Firstly, the Commonwealth Government will not be a partner to the proposal the honourable member has set out.

Mr. O'Halloran—What is the reason?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This matter was first discussed on a Commonwealth basis during the war when Mr. Curtin was Prime Minister. The State Premiers attended a meeting to discuss with the Commonwealth Government the decentralization of industries, particularly of the steel industry, because it was held that the concentration of all our steel-making plant and auxiliaries on the Pacific coast constituted a national weakness, they being too open to attack. However, when it came to any suggestion that the Commonwealth Government, even then, should take any action to make it possible for steel mills to be established away from those places, it went cold on the proposal. For many years the steel industry has been established at Newcastle and Port Kembla.

Mr. Riches—Those Commonwealth-State discussions were held during the war when we had neither money nor manpower available.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I shall deal with that point later. The steel works were originally established in Newcastle and Port Kembla because at that time blast furnaces required a ton and a quarter of coal to a ton of iron ore. It is true that blast furnaces have become more efficient, and I think now they require slightly less than one ton of coal to ore, but the fact remains that the industry has been established at those places, where all the ancillaries are around them, and the difficulty is to get a break away. The matter was discussed again when the B.H.P. announced its intention of installing a cold strip mill or a hot strip mill at Port Kembla. The question of whether this vital and important plant should be placed on the seaboard open to attack, was raised with the Commonwealth Government, but after some consideration it said it had no objection to it.

Mr. Riches—Did it have any right to interfere?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It has enormous powers on defence grounds. I believe that under its powers it could say that certain equipment necessary for the defence of this country should not be placed in a vulnerable position. In peace or in war the defence authorities can say that there must be no more extensions of important industries if situated in vulnerable spots. If the defence power extends to the Snowy River project, which is as remote from the defences of Australia as Adelaide is from the North Pole, I should say that it would extend to any industries in Australia in reasonably safe spots.

Mr. O'Halloran—Don't you agree that the provision of power is associated with defence projects?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes.

Mr. O'Halloran—Is that not the link-up with the Snowy River project?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—As I understand it, that project will be only a peak load station. I think the quantity of water would not be sufficient for a base load station, which is necessary for manufacturing purposes. Be that as it may, I do not think the Commonwealth Government would be interested in the project before us. If the honourable member wants them I will be happy to get the views of the Prime Minister on the proposal. If the State were concerned in this proposed expenditure of £100,000,000 on a partnership basis, it would be liable for about £33,000,000.

Mr. Dunks—What would we use for money?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Exactly.

Mr. Riches—I could quote the Premier of South Australia on that point.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Over the years I have made many profound statements and I have no doubt that I can be quoted on this matter. Whatever preconceived ideas I may have had—

Mr. Riches—You made a statement three weeks ago.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That may be. As I am now preparing the Budget I am up-to-date in regard to financial matters, and if we had to find the money for a steelworks proposal we would have to close down all our other activities.

Mr. Riches—Do you remember saying that the Chancellor of the Exchequer in Great Britain said that money could be found?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, and I won't forget it. If the honourable member looks back on some of the speeches he made years ago on various subjects he will find that, because of his greater experience, things look different now from what they did then.

Mr. Riches—It usually takes longer than three weeks.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will deal with that directly, and I hope to the honourable member's satisfaction. It would not be possible for the South Australian Government to finance the project. During the war our amenities suffered greatly. It was not possible to build such things as hospitals, but only because the Commonwealth Government thought such building should be discontinued because of lack of resources. At present we have a large social programme, but we have been unable to start some works. We also have a large developmental programme which we are carrying out to the best of our ability. If the State had to find about £33,000,000 the first job for any Select Committee would be to learn what could be used for money, because in the South Australian public till there is not as much money as that, and I do not know how we could raise it. In the last few days we have seen some remarkable movements towards raising revenue. For instance, we have seen a proposal for the major industry in Tasmania to migrate to Victoria, and some States have entered the entertainment field for taxation purposes, but all these things fade into insignificance when we think of £33,000,000. The industry which is going to Victoria from Tasmania will be good

for only about £1,500,000 a year. That assumes that the inventor would continue to have sufficient faith in it to invest. Having some knowledge of this State's finance, I can say that this Government has not within its control anything like the sum which would enable it to make even a moderate contribution to the project proposed by the honourable member. I am certain that the company, which is the third partner in the proposed partnership, is not able today to furnish the suggested finance for this project. At present it is financing the establishment of hot strip mills, the original estimated cost of which, based on pre-war costs, does not now stand, for costs have risen enormously and today the company is in no position to make any major contribution towards this project.

Mr. Riches—You made a certain statement three weeks ago.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not think "three weeks" is quite correct but we will not argue about the date. At a conference in England the Chancellor of the Exchequer explained to those present the programme being carried out by the British Government and some of the decisions made at the Economic Conference. One decision was that Australia should investigate its steel resources to see whether its production could be stepped up. Indeed a trust was set up under the charge of a number of business men, and a fairly substantial sum, although nothing like £100,000,000, was placed with it for development of the type of project proposed by the honourable member. This is not a new topic, and I took with me to London the papers on the subject and placed the matter before the Chancellor of the Exchequer, asking him whether some arrangement could be arrived at whereby the British Government could finance such a project, for it came clearly within the terms of the trust that had been set up. A few days ago I received an indirect reply from the Chancellor of the Exchequer through the office of the High Commissioner of the United Kingdom. That reply states:—

I have now received from London an expression of the views of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the papers which Mr. Playford left with Mr. Butler in London recently on the prospects for the development of steel production in South Australia. The Chancellor regards the possibilities envisaged by Mr. Dickinson as indeed impressive, but imagines that the ideas put forward will need to be examined further in a good deal more detail particularly in relation to markets and costs of production before Mr. Playford is able to reach any final conclusions.

So the British Government makes it quite clear that it will not reach any final conclusions but that, if any are to be reached, they will be reached in this State. The document continues:—

The Chancellor notes that the possible participation of the United Kingdom steel industry and of Her Majesty's Government is contemplated and has asked me to let Mr. Playford have this brief review on his reactions to this.

I advanced the view, quite fairly, that we wanted the assistance of the British Government and the British steel industry. The document continues:—

In the first place, even if further and fuller examination of costs and markets shows that the scheme will be very attractive economically, it does not seem as if it will be very easy to raise money from steel interests in the United Kingdom, since, as Mr. Playford will know, a certain amount of their resources will be required to give effect to the denationalization of the industry. In addition they will have to find a considerable sum if they are to implement their second steel development plan. This note of warning is merely to let Mr. Playford know that irrespective of the merits of the South Australian scheme the United Kingdom industry will be fairly heavily preoccupied with its own problems. Secondly, the scheme envisages the possibility of some exports to the United Kingdom.

In fact, the Australian industry is already involved in exporting not only to the United Kingdom but also to the United States of America. The document continues:—

On this, Mr. Playford ought perhaps to be told that, as at present planned, the British steel industries' own development proposals involve a progressive reduction in imports of crude steel and pig iron, and it is expected that by 1958 only marginal imports of finished steel should be necessary. The Chancellor hopes he is not sounding too pessimistic; he certainly does not intend to do so. But he feels that Mr. Playford might like to know of the United Kingdom position before going on to work out the further details of the scheme. If the scheme as eventually worked out were to give satisfactory answers to the problem of costs and markets, it could, he feels, be a very useful addition to Australia's resources. The Chancellor has asked me, in conclusion, to convey his personal good wishes to Mr. Playford.

That letter clearly indicates that people in Great Britain are not able at present to give assistance in this matter, that they are engaged developing their own plants, and that that is utilising all their resources. They also indicate that they do not desire to import steel regularly but plan to make themselves self-sufficient. By 1958 the British steel market will be practically closed to Australia, for Britain will only require "marginal imports of finished

steel.'' The document makes it quite clear that the Chancellor of the Exchequor and the British steel industries have no financial assistance to give.

Mr. Riches—That document would be based on Mr. Dickinson's earlier report. Perhaps the latest report has not been furnished.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It was based on a much lengthier report than the one supplied to Parliament. No information contained in Mr. Dickinson's latest report was omitted in the one I took to England. The letter I read does not question the attractiveness of Mr. Dickinson's report; indeed, it says it is a very impressive one. None of his statements has been disputed, but the letter states that Great Britain is not prepared to assist us because it has its own hands full. Further, it has a second programme of development that is utilizing all available funds. We have no ground or right to question the statements in that letter. If the steel industry is to be establishel in South Australia, and I hope it will be, it cannot be established on the basis of Mr. Dickinson's report. By Act of Parliament the leases of the iron ore deposits near Whyalla have been made available to the B.H.P., under certain conditions, for a certain number of years.

Mr. Christian—For all time.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No, but for a long period.

Mr. Christian—I can cite the relevant sections.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The fact remains that the deposits are not the property of the South Australian Government, but of the B.H.P. Mr. Riches has completely overlooked that. He said we should ask the B.H.P. to make iron ore available.

Mr. Riches—No, to supply the ore to a mill.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, but that request having been made and been refused, that is the end of it.

Mr. Christian—A very unsure foundation on which to establish a steel industry.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The position would be hopeless. If I started negotiations with any company to set up the production of steel in this State I would be asked, ''Can you guarantee a supply of the raw material?'' Parliament has already dealt with that matter.

Mr. Riches—Have you any reason to believe that the B.H.P. would not supply iron ore to a South Australian mill?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have no reason to believe it would or would not, but no company going into competition with the B.H.P. would place itself in the position of having to rely on that concern for supplies. I will not go into many matters that are associated with the motion, because this is private members' day and I do not wish to take up the time of the House at the expense of other members, but I will point out that the Government has no knowledge of the production of steel and its intricacies. Further, it has no association with any of the subsidiary industries that are the chief users of steel. For instance, steel is fabricated into galvanized iron, wire netting, and a hundred and one other articles. Many of those subsidiary industries have been attracted to Australia, and in many instances assisted, by the B.H.P. itself. I admit it has been disappointing that the company's plans for the development of Whyalla have been delayed so long. Whereas a hot strip mill was to be founded at Port Kembla and installed in a fairly short time and comparatively cheaply, it is not yet in operation, but it has already cost more than twice as much as was expected, and the company is involved in finding much more money before it will be in operation. I think the company is trying to get part of it operating in order to earn revenue to help it out financially. The capital resources of the company are fully extended.

Mr. Riches—Why would it strenuously oppose the proposal if the Government assisted financially?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have said that the Government has not got the necessary money. Recently Parliament considered the Loan Estimates, and members generally thought we were borrowing too much money, but individually they had many proposals which would have involved increased expenditure. South Australia got a good allocation from the Loan Council, and we have no reason to complain about that, but the money was sufficient only for the proposals set out. There was little for anything else. For instance, there was very little for country sewerage schemes. It would be impossible for the establishment of steel works to be financed from State funds, which at present are being fully utilized. For one important undertaking we had to go overseas for money. I hope the motion will not be carried, but not because I do not think it is desirable to establish steelworks here. I think they are essential for a number of reasons. A country can best defend itself by having its major industries, particularly heavy industries, decentralized to a great extent. There is no doubt about the

desirability of having additional steelworks but I have much to say against the appointment of a Select Committee. Any inquiry would be abortive, because a Select committee would be limited in its powers of inquiry. It could not get to the kernel of things. It could not examine the matter from the defence angle, and it could not negotiate with the Federal authority. It would have a limited power in the matter of taking evidence in South Australia, and little power to get evidence from outside the State. I think it would be an expenditure of money from which the taxpayers would get no return. In fact, I think the position would be retarded rather than improved.

Mr. Riches—Have you read the statement by the Director of Mines that Australia is paying a premium on imported steel?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—At present Australia is importing as well as exporting steel. It is exporting steel fabrications which are in excess of requirements, and also bulk steel and pig iron. It is importing galvanized iron because the local fabricators cannot at present meet requirements. If the honourable member bases his argument on this I point out that towards the end of next year enough galvanized iron will be produced to meet the Australian demand. Then galvanized iron will be in the same position as water piping, and we shall be able to export it. We are in great difficulties with steel plates, because they are in short supply. A hot strip mill is to operate to make up the shortage, and its establishment will cover a period of five years. It would take from eight to 10 years to establish an integrated steelworks of the type mentioned by the honourable member.

Mr. Riches—Mr. Essington Lewis thinks it is a reasonable proposal.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—He favours the establishment of steelworks at Whyalla, and so does the company.

Mr. Riches—Then why argue against it?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am not arguing against the desirability of having additional steelworks, but pointing out that financially the company is fully extended, and that until it completes its present programme it cannot make other plans. Mr. Lewis does not say that the establishment of a hot strip mill at Port Kembla is the end of its planning, but the company has pointed out that all its staff and technical equipment are being utilized in the present programme.

Mr. Riches—It has secured leases in Western Australia where it is to establish an industry.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The company acquainted me with its proposals before it entered into negotiations with the Western Australian Government. It did not go behind my back. The directors told me what they proposed to do and why it was to be done. Steelworks are not to be established in Western Australia. That State has substantial iron ore deposits and the Government desired them to be worked by the company, much in the same way as we asked the company to work our deposits near Whyalla. To the company the Western Australian ore is more costly than the South Australian ore. It is high grade ore, but it is not so rich in certain properties as some of our ore. The company wanted to conserve this better South Australian ore, and that is why the Western Australian ore is to be used. The Western Australian Government also wanted the establishment of a secondary industry and an agreement was made with the company to roll in Western Australia the steel sections which the State wants. That is why a rolling mill is to be established there.

Mr. Christian—There will be no smelting of ore?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There was never any suggestion of smelting. I understand the cost of the Western Australian works will be about £500,000. It will be purely and simply a mill to supply the local rolling requirements of certain sections in Western Australia and will not involve an integrated steel industry with coke ovens, the cost of which would run into at least tens of millions of pounds. The Western Australian project will result in an economic advantage to Western Australia in two ways: firstly, the employment of a number of local workers, and secondly, income by way of royalties from all reserves now being worked by the Broken Hill Proprietary. However, it will not mean cheaper on increased steel production. It is a limited undertaking and a part of a price for a proposal which indirectly will be of considerable advantage to South Australia, for it will enable us to preserve some of our higher grade ores over a longer period and make it more feasible for our steel works to be established. A Select Committee could spend much money on inquiries but could not achieve any worthwhile results. It certainly could not further the matter under discussion. I do not disagree with the honourable member in the objectives he seeks, only as to the value of a Select Committee. Indeed, its operations might have the opposite effect to what is hoped for if it could not establish any grounds for establishing steel

works, and I think it would become bogged down, leaving us worse off than if no inquiry had been held. When established, this industry will be established as the result of precise negotiations between a Government and a company, which negotiations will be ultimately ratified by Parliament. A Select Committee would not take the matter one inch further but would probably have quite the opposite effect.

Mr. CHRISTIAN (Eyre)—The Premier has perhaps dispelled many fond illusions that members have had regarding the establishment of a steel industry in this State. I say that, not with the object of backing up everything he has said and discrediting the remarks of the member for Stuart in support of his motion, but because I realize that the Premier has at hand a source of information from which he has gathered a profound knowledge of the facts involved in the ramifications of the steel industry, and particularly of the operations of the B.H.P. in Australia. I do not know that we could achieve very much by investigation of this subject. In saying that I do not want to discredit the reputation of the Director of Mines, for whom I have a sincere admiration as a public servant. In fact, I think he has rendered South Australia valuable and remarkable service not only during the war but subsequently. He has brought a tremendous amount of knowledge and energy to bear on the many problems facing him, in the prospecting and investigation into our ore resources, and in the development of so many new projects in this atomic age. It is due to Mr. Dickinson to say this, but with regard to the establishment of the proposed steel works, as the Premier pointed out, there are many serious difficulties. What we want is not so much an inquiry into the establishment of a new works but rather into the use that is being made of the existing capacity for the production of steel and into the distribution of steel and steel products in Australia.

Mr. Riches—We want the industry in this State.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—It does not matter greatly where it is situated so long as it meets our requirements. I am rather of the opinion that, if we have the capacity to produce the whole of Australia's requirements, we can do it more cheaply by centralized production. It has often been proved that where you can concentrate all the processes in one huge undertaking production costs are lower. Since the war steel works both at Newcastle and Port Kembla have often been producing only a part of their full capacity because they could not get coal or labour. Sometimes the workers would not work overtime. There have been other factors which have kept the production far below Australian requirements, and we have had to import quantities of steel products at double and treble the Australian price. That was a serious situation which is at the bottom of the trouble we are experiencing in not being able to get badly needed products.

I would support any worthwhile investigation into the use of our steel resources and the distribution of our steel products, for it might serve some good purpose. We hear so many conflicting stories about the production of steel commodities, their sale overseas and of supplies being held up at eastern state shipping ports. We, in South Australia, are starving for steel products while, allegedly, they are piling up in eastern states ports awaiting interstate shipping. Quantities are being loaded into waiting overseas vessels, because interstate vessels are held up by labor and shipping troubles. On the other hand we have been told by the managing director of Lysaght's that his company was able to meet the whole of Australia's requirements in galvanized iron. Mr. Pollnitz, one of our public servants, on being sent to New South Wales by the Premier to investigate the hold-up, found that steel commodities were being exported and that South Australia's allocation had piled up to the extent of more than 100,000 tons. The member for Rocky River recently in this House read a letter from his supplier, a reputable Adelaide firm, which stated that, when it had offered to send its own vehicles to Newcastle or Port Kembla to collect its allocations of galvanized iron and other steel products, it was told that it would be useless to send those vehicles because galvanized iron and other commodities could not be supplied. What is the truth? These statements are conflicting and merit some investigation so that we will know where we stand and where the fault lies in regard to the shortage of these commodities.

The position is very serious. I do not know whether people in the metropolitan area realize the extent to which production in country districts is hindered by such shortages and how vexatious this can be. In my district many newly built houses, wool and shearing sheds stand stark naked because galvanized iron cannot be obtained for their roofing. Constituents have told me that they have placed orders for galvanized iron six and 12 months

ago, but they cannot get delivery, although their walls have been up for some time. There seems to be no prospect of galvanized iron supplies being forthcoming. I have placed orders for galvanized iron and cement and been told there is no hope of getting supplies within 12 months. Whether a Select Committee or any other type of inquiry could ascertain the facts responsible for this kind of thing I do not know, but someone with some authority to ascertain the facts and report to this House should investigate the matter. Then Parliament could determine what action should be taken. The honourable member wants a new steel works established in this State, but while excess capacity exists in Australian steel works we do not need a new steel works here. At present it appears we are not producing up to full capacity and I think we should do so, for it is uneconomic to have unused surplus capacity. Australia's resources of iron ore are limited. If further new works are established they would be in competition with existing concerns. When the Australian market is satisfied the new production will have to be exported. We would be exporting not only some of our iron ore, but also processed commodities. We cannot afford to dissipate our limited iron ore resources. They have a life of 50 or 60 years at the most, according to experts' advice. What shall we do when they are finished?

Mr. Hawker—There is a continual search for new deposits.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—The honourable member should realize that the B.H.P., which owns all the iron ore resources known in the Commonwealth, has prospected for deposits all over the country. If there are any other resources I am sure it will have obtained leases over them. I do not know of any substantial deposits, except those at Iron Knob and Yampi Sound. I do not blame the company for taking leases over all known deposits, but our Governments should retain control over the destination of steel products because we cannot afford to dissipate them. We cannot even afford to export them, because the time is coming, in the foreseeable future, when we shall have no deposits left. The Commonwealth Government should exercise its powers and regulate the export of steel commodities and iron ore, because they should be preserved for our own use. Further, there should be an investigation into the internal usage and distribution of these commodities. As a State we have certain rights in this regard, for we furnish most of the raw materials out of which steel is made for Australia's requirements. Our own needs should be met by the B.H.P. and its associated companies and, if they are not, there should be some Government action to ensure that we are not starved. The Premier referred to the fact that the whole of our own iron ore resources are owned and controlled by the B.H.P. Any new works would be dependent on that company for raw materials. Like the Premier, I cannot see the possibility of materials being supplied to any competitor in the trade. I remind the member for Stuart that by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company's Indenture Act, 1937, we gave away for all time our rights in our iron ore resources. Need I remind the honourable member that there were only three members who opposed it. That may be the main cause of our present difficulties. Had we reserved some of our rights there might have been a greater inducement for either the B.H.P. or a competitor to come into the field and meet the requirements of South Australian industry. By the Act the B.H.P. has complete rights over all its leases for 50 years, on the basis of the conditions existing in 1937 when the indenture was entered into, and in the indenture itself there is a covering clause regarding renewal. Clause 4 states:—

> Upon the expiration of the term of this indenture the company shall have a right to the renewal of the said leases from time to time for periods of 21 years and the renewal shall be on the terms and conditions prescribed in that behalf by the laws of the State in force at the commencement of this indenture, subject to payment of the same royalty as it provided for in sub-clause (2) of clause 6 of this Indenture.

That means that at the expiration of 50 years the company has the right of renewal for a further 21 years on the conditions prevailing in 1937, and with the payment of royalties at 6d. a ton. At the end of that 21 years the company will have the same right to a further renewal and, if the resources are not exhausted then, it can get another renewal of 21 years, and so on. Therefore, the company was given the right for all time over our iron ore deposits. That was a grave mistake, and I incurred the strong displeasure of the Government of the day in being one of three members to oppose this complete sell-out to the B.H.P. I remind the member for Stuart of the difficulties associated with his motion.

Mr. Riches—Have you read Mr. Dickinson's report on taconite?

Mr. Christian—No.

Mr. Riches—That is very pertinent. He claims there are tremendous deposits of it. It is a raw material, and I know the B.H.P. is very interested in that part of his report.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—The company may have already secured itself in that regard.

Mr. Riches—It has not.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I do not know, but if it is a competitor with iron ore, Mr. Dickinson's statements on it may be pertinent.

Mr. Riches—He mentioned a method of treating low-grade ore.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—That is another matter. Have we any low-grade ore deposits at Iron Knob leased to the B.H.P.?

Mr. Riches—According to the Director of Mines there are five billion tons above the surface.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—If that is so there may be some hope of partly retrieving what we lost when we gave the company complete rights over our iron ore deposits. Perhaps a new industry could be established. However, I am dealing with the situation as I know it. I see great difficulty in achieving anything by passing the motion, but I completely favour any investigation that could establish the cause of the maldistribution of steel products, with particular reference to shortages in South Australia's requirements.

Mr. HUTCHENS secured the adjournment of the debate.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (ELECTORAL).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 16. Page 680.)

Mr. DUNKS (Mitcham)—When I asked leave to continue my remarks last Wednesday, I was saying that we on this side of the House were free to vote as we liked on anything that came before the House that did not interfere with the platform of our Party. To substantiate that statement I have here the Constitution and platform of the Liberal and Country League. One of the principles is the maintenance of:—

Responsible Parliamentary Government, the Legislative Council and the present franchise, and the present ratio of representation between country and city.

I take it that all political Parties have a constitution and platform. The great Australian Labor Party's includes the nationalization of the means of production, distribution and exchange. Although I believe Labor members are compelled to vote according to the wishes of Caucus, that is one plank of their platform from which they cannot depart. The difference between the Liberal Party and the Australian Labor Party is that the Labor members are committed, but we are not, apart from questions that concern the platform and principles of our Party.

Mr. Davis—Who said we were committed? You will see which way we vote.

Mr. DUNKS—We on this side are free to vote as we like. If the honourable member reads *Hansard* he will find that on numerous occasions I have voted against measures brought down by the Government that I thought were not in the best interests of the people. If members on this side can convince the electors that the policy we advocate is in the best interests of the people naturally we are returned to power.

Mr. Davis—Surely you do not claim you were returned to power at the last elections?

Mr. DUNKS—Yes. We were returned, much to the disappointment of the honourable member and his colleagues.

Mr. Davis—You are a minority Government.

Mr. DUNKS—I wonder whether the Bill was introduced because the Labor Party was defeated at the last elections and because it came to the conclusion that another system must be adopted if it was to be made easier for it to be returned to power. I think it is only natural that the Labor Party should be smarting under its wounds, and think that if it can get multiple electorates with proportional representation it might win the next elections. I am surprised that a Party which has always supported the party system is now prepared to break it up and have proportional representation, and have in Parliament a mixture of Liberals, Labor men and Independents. I do not like multiple electorates. At the 1933 elections, when we had multiple electorates, 29 Liberals were returned, six Australian Labor Party members, four Parliamentary Labor Party members, three Lang Labor men, and four Independents.

Mr. John Clark—Was that under proportional representation?

Mr. DUNKS—No, under multiple electorates, which I have never liked, and if the honourable member ever serves in a multiple electorate he will be disappointed. We have heard of all sorts of proportional representation systems. For a while everybody said the Hare system was the right one. During this debate we have been told that France has not got proper proportional representation, and that Tasmania has not got true proportional representation. What does the Leader of the Opposition intend to call the system he has set out in the Bill? Is it to be the O'Halloran system or the Gawler-Frome system, or perhaps

the name of the member for Port Pirie might be incorporated? Let us look at the election results under what we are told was a gerrymander of electorates. At those elections 15 Liberals were returned, 15 Independents, and nine Labor members. At that time the Independents could have ruled the House with the support of the Labor Party, but, as usual, in their wisdom the Independents decided that the Liberals had the better brains and had more opportunity to run the affairs of State, so they supported the Liberal Government. Members opposite say that it is impossible at present for the Labor Party to be returned to power in South Australia. After the elections I have just mentioned the Labor Party could have been in power if it could have got the support of the Independents. Such a thing has happened in Victoria on numerous occasions. If the Labor Party policy had been in the interests of the State at least some the Independents would have supported it, but they were wise and they decided that Liberalism was good enough for them.

Their decision has been proved wise because since 1938 the State has gone from greatness to greatness. At the time the preferential voting system was used and if the Labor Party had been returned to power after the 1953 elections, and they very nearly were, it would have not looked for another system. It would have been good enough for the Labor Party and no alteration would have been sought. A week ago I said that I am a Party man, and all members opposite are Party men, but I cannot understand why they want a change of system. They got an awful hiding at the last elections. If the Labor Party has a policy which appeals to the people it will no doubt be returned to power one day. In the 1944 elections 20 Liberals were returned, 16 Labor men, and three Independents. With the Speaker taken out of the Liberal ranks there were only 19 to 19, and with the Chairman of Committees out there were only 18 to 19, so the Labor Party with the Independents could have defeated the Government in Committee, but it did not do so because the Independents were satisfied with the Liberal administration. I suggest that if the day had arrived when the Independents thought the Liberal Government was not legislating in the best interests of the State and of the districts they represented, they would have voted against the Government. Then the Labor Party would have told the Governor that it could form a Government and the Liberals would have been out of office.

Mr. O'Halloran—There was a no-confidence motion, but it was defeated.

Mr. DUNKS—Yes, proving again that the Government had the confidence of the House.

Mr. O'Halloran—You said the Labor Party could have defeated the Government if it wanted to.

Mr. DUNKS—Yes, but that would not have been possible without the help of the Independents, and they did not support the Labor Party because they had more confidence in the Liberal Party. Do my figures prove that under the present system South Australia must always be governed by Liberals? I challenge any member to prove that my facts and figures show that it is impossible for the Labor Party to sit on the Treasury benches. In the 1953 elections 21 Liberals were returned, 14 Labor men, and four Independents.

Mr. John Clark—Can you give the total number of votes cast for the two Parties?

Mr. DUNKS—If the honourable member wants to prove his point he must take a vote of all the electors in the State. That is the only possible yard-stick. It is useless to say that more votes were cast for Labor than for Liberal, because many seats were uncontested. Whenever I try to enlighten members by putting to them the position as I see it I am subjected to interruptions from the other side of the House, and an attempt is made to put me off the track. I now want to traverse the present position. Today in this House there are 21 Liberal, 14 Labor and four Independent members. Unfortunately for the Government, at the last election it lost the seats of Prospect, Victoria and Norwood, and today it has 21 members as against 18 of other Parties. In Committee where the Speaker and Chairman of Committees have no effective vote, the Government has only one member to spare. That is a close call which does not substantiate what has been said by Opposition members that they have no possible hope of occupying the Treasury benches. The numbers are too close to be comfortable. On the evening of election day I listened in the early part of the evening to the results over the radio and felt very sad, and I can only imagine the feelings of the members for Glenelg, Murray and Unley that evening. Had the Government lost those seats it would have held 18, Labor 17, and Independents four, and it would have had 18 members as against 21 of other Parties. Indeed, it could have been voted out of office at any time by the majority of three. Under such a set-up, with the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees

out of voting action, the Government would have enjoyed only 16 effective votes in Committee as against 17 Labor and four Independent votes, so how can members opposite say that under the present system Labor can never be returned to power? I was one of those who advocated the substitution of single for multiple electorates and the reduction in the number of seats from 46 to 39. At the first election under the new system, in 1938, the Government lost the seats of Flinders, Yorke Peninsula, Murray, Unley, Gouger and Stirling and, in view of the fact that the loss of these seats was possible in 1938, can it be said that it is impossible today?

Mr. Corcoran—It is not very probable.

Mr. DUNKS—I am not arguing on the possibilities or probabilities, but, I say that if the Government had lost those seats at this year's election it would have held 15 as against 24 held by other Parties. If the policy of the Labor Party is right it will win the elections, but if it is wrong it will be defeated.

Mr. John Clark—Does the Labor Party have to have a handicap of 40,000 votes?

Mr. DUNKS—It needs no handicap and in fact has no handicap.

Mr. Travers—Except its policy.

Mr. DUNKS—Yes. On the other hand, if the Liberal Party's policy is right it will be returned as it has been since 1933.

Mr. John Clark—By a minority.

Mr. DUNKS—With a majority in this House. However, if its policy is wrong it will be defeated; indeed, it came close to defeat at the last election. I do not like a system of multiple electorates. Under such a system, each electorate returning four members, it would be possible for a Liberal, an Independent, a Parliamentary Labor Party, and an Australian Labor Party candidate to be returned by the one electorate. If only one of those were to attend any sort of function such as a picnic or meeting being held in the electorate, what would be the reaction of the electors? Surely they would say of the members who did not attend, "These fellows are not looking after their jobs." If the four members were of the one political complexion one could attend and apologize for the others, saying that they were busy on Parliamentary duties.

Mr. Jennings—Under the present electoral system you are able to stay from all such meetings with impunity.

Mr. DUNKS—The honourable member should check my record with regard to the attention I give my constituents, and he will find that my regular return to this House will answer his imputation. Often I have foregone social appointments made in advance so that I would be able to do something for my electors. Prior to my entry to this House a Labor Government had instituted the Thousand Homes scheme, and I commend it for that scheme. I came into this House with another new member, Mr. Hogben, and a member of 17 years' standing. Mr. Hogben and I had little knowledge of what could be done for any of our constituents who were having trouble with the housing authority, and we were satisfied when some officer told us that nothing could be done in certain cases. Our fellow member, being a man of greater experience, was able to go higher in the department and get some redress for electors in difficulties. Was it not natural for those electors to say, "We are able to do no good at all through Mr. Dunks but we did all right through somebody else"? Under a multiple electorate system everybody's job is nobody's job, whereas under a single electorate system a job devolves on one member.

I have never liked proportional representation and I believe it would be almost impossible for any member to explain the system used in electing the Federal Senate, for it is one of the most complicated systems I know of. It looks something like a cross between the Hare Spence and some other system. Earlier in this debate the member for Gawler, speaking of proportional representation, said:—

> Proportional representation is not too hard to understand; at least, it is not hard to get an idea of how it works. Even if some find it hard to understand, I ask who fully understood the old preferential system of voting? It is not necessary to understand electoral voting systems, because trained electoral officers implement the systems. A man may travel in a plane just as fast and as comfortably without knowing how the engine works. He may tell the time without knowing just how many cogs and wheels are in his watch, or how it works. Even though he does not know these things, the watch will keep just as good time. No man stops eating because he is not quite certain how his digestive organs work, and the food tastes just as good without any such knowledge. There are always experts to fix our engines and watches, and there are experts to whom to run when our stomachs ache.

I have found the expert to be an ordinary fellow, but a long way from home and the further he gets from home the more expert he becomes. I am not prepared to say that the electors should rush to someone who is an expert to tell them how the voting system works. The system should be made

simple and easy to understand. I like the present system. The preferential system of voting is not nearly as difficult to understand as proportional representation. As a Party man I do not like proportional representation and multiple electorates. If the Bill were passed it would not be in the best interests of the people. However, I think there should be a slight increase in the number of electorates, but I would not depart from the single electorate system. The member for Glenelg represents over 28,000 people, whereas the Leader of the Opposition represents a little over 4,000. The day has arrived to look at the system and see whether it is not time to again have 45 or 46 districts and remove any anomalies between city and country representation. I do not say there should be a great many more districts in the city, for we must take cognizance of the meaning of territory in this far-flung State. Perhaps there should be more districts both in the metropolitan area and in the country and a more equitable drafting of boundaries. I would listen to such a proposal and, without making any definite promises, I believe that should be brought forward instead of a Bill such as this, to which I am entirely opposed. I cannot understand why it is satisfactory to the Labor Party. It would be far better to bring in a more acceptable proposal than to say, "Here is the Bill; carry the second reading and you can amend it in Committee to bring it into line with your ideas." I oppose the Bill.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood)—It is difficult for members on this side of the House to moderate their righteous rage at the injustice being done to the electors of South Australia under the present electoral system. It is indeed difficult for us not to speak on this matter with choler. We are angered, and most justly so, as are the people of this State. I had not long been a member of Parliament before I, with the member for Prospect, was chided by a member opposite for cynicism about the Government Party. I must confess I am cynical, the reason being that I was taught cynicism by the Party occupying the Treasury benches. On one occasion the member for Stirling, in answer to an interjection on electoral reform, said that if we were on that side of the House we would do the same thing. I was brought up in the Party to which members opposite belong, but I left it because I, unlike them, had a conscience. I enjoin members opposite, if they have any conscience at all, to approach this question of electoral reform without sticking cynically to their own advantage, as apparently they have done in the past, but in an effort to give to the people the right that every citizen of a democratic country should have. Those members opposite who have spoken on the Bill have approached it in a somewhat peregrinating manner. They qualified for a school in peripatetics. They went all around the subject, but hardly dared to trespass upon it, and when they did, it was to their own considerable disadvantage.

Let me first refer to the provisions in the Bill dealing with the Legislative Council. They do three things. Firstly they establish three districts, substantially equal in population, with tolerances to allow for geographical considerations. That is a simple basis. Secondly, the age qualification to become a member of the Legislative Council is reduced from 30 to 21. There is no reason why a member of Parliament should be 30 or more, because people under 30 sometimes have an idea of what's what as well as ancient gentlemen have. Thirdly, and this is the most important provision, a more effective deadlock provision is proposed. It provides that where there is a deadlock between the popularly elected House and the property elected House there shall be an opportunity for the people's will to prevail. The present deadlock provisions are so fantastic that they have never been utilized and no-one knows what would happen if they were. There would be an infernal mess, but Bill after Bill sent forward from this House has been rejected by the other. A Bill to amend the Constitution to provide for additional Ministers is now before Parliament. Similar Bills have several times been passed by the Assembly but thrown out by the Upper House. At present the Upper House has full power to veto the people's will. That is not democracy. The position should be, as in the Mother of Parliaments, that if there is to be a House of review it should be a House to provide for second thoughts. If there were a popular outcry about something and a Party swept into power on it, through the overlap of members of the Upper House, where only half of them retire at a time, there might be an opposite view there to frustrate the will of the people and of the Lower House; but if the popular House were still determined on the matter it should ultimately have the right to put its will into effect. The people should rule, not a minority.

I thought it wise to get an independent and generally accepted view of the basis of a democratic constitution, and went to considerable

trouble to find it. I wanted to get the view of someone who was not a Party man or who had not an axe to grind. I hit upon Dr. Herman Finer, whose book *The Theory and Practice of Modern Government* is the most widely used text book on political science in the universities of the British Commonwealth and of America. He says:—

What is to be adopted as a fair electoral system? It is the division of the country into constituencies sized according to convenience and equity. Convenience implies that the constituency should not be too large for the maintenance of personal contact between candidates and voters.

We agree with that. He continues:—

Equity implies that the constituencies shall be as nearly equal in population as possible. When this principle is applied, not once and for all, but continuously as the distribution of population changes in times of mobility—when it is applied simply and without management—then it can be taken that in the long run there will be no undue advantage to any Party and no disadvantage to any by reason of this cause alone.

Dr. Finer went on to talk about the gerrymander which negates his views. The United States, perhaps more than any other country, has familiarized us with the practice of gerrymandering. To gerrymander is to so arrange the size of constituencies that one's own Party's majorities, however small, are spread over the largest possible number of constituencies, and one's opponent's majorities are as large as possible but restricted to as few constituencies as possible.

Mr. Quirke—That means South Australia.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Exactly. No better example of gerrymandering could be found than here.

Mr. Quirke—Finer wrote that some time ago, and evidently it has been acted upon.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Yes. His book was first published in 1936, a most significant date. Let us see what members opposite have said about the provisions of the Bill relating to the House of Assembly. They increase the number of members in this House to 45. That should not be a contentious matter; even the member for Mitcham suggested there might perhaps be more members, and surely with the increased population there is good reason to have more to serve the people. Clause 15 states that there shall be five-member districts and the approval of Parliament has to be given to the electorates. Clause 16 enacts that a commission shall fix the electoral boundaries. This will be an independent commission operating continuously, so that when the electorates get outside the tolerance of the quota a recommendation may be made to Parliament, and if Parliament approves, it may proclaim the new boundries and so give adequate representation to all the people. The Premier said the principle enunciated by the Leader of the Opposition that basically there should be one vote one value was a principle that was not accepted anywhere in the world. That is a most extraordinary statement. Later I shall prove it is incorrect. In order to prove his point the Premier went for a tour. He dealt with Western Australia, and his remarks in that regard have been replied to by Mr. Jennings. The electoral position in that State was enacted by a Liberal Government and opposed by the Labor Party. Now the Labor Party is in office despite the move of the Liberal Party.

The Premier spoke about the United Nations, which was an extraordinary thing to do because it is not a sovereign legislature, only a consultative international body. It is a place where the representatives of nations can come together to talk over their differences, and they can walk out if they want to, which is different from what we have here. Under our Constitution the people have to take what is dictated to them by members opposite. The Premier then referred to the Queensland system, which I think is wrong, but not nearly as wrong as the South Australian system. In Queensland the Labor Party got an overwhelming majority vote at the State elections, which entitled it to govern, but I do not believe it was entitled to the majority it had in the House. It seems to me to be extraordinary for a member to say, in effect, "If I am accused of murder I can say to the court, 'It is all right because the man across the road committed a traffic offence.'" That is what members opposite are saying. They say that it is all right to have the worst example of gerrymandering in the world because there is another State in Australia that has not a just electoral system, but it is not nearly so unjust as the South Australian system. They say that the Queensland system is not quite right, but it is all right for them to do a major wrong. They would not get away with that in any court of law, and they are not getting away with it with the South Australian electors.

Then the Premier referred to the House of Representatives. Section 24 of the Commonwealth Constitution provides for a quota system for electorates. This has meant that a substantial number of Australian electorates have a quota of 40,000

votes. There are few significant departures from that mean and in no case does it give one class of people the right to dictate to the remainder. The Federal electorate provisions are based substantially on electoral justice, whereas the provisions in this State are not so based. The Premier then mentioned the Northern Territory Legislative Council. I was surprised that he did not mention municipal bodies, a distant Crown Colony, or even the Parliament of Tonga, in order to bring in some remote example to bolster up his argument. The Northern Territory Legislative Council is an advisory body and gives Europeans in the Territory some right to representation. There are also nominated members to protect aborigines in the Territory who cannot elect representatives. It was never suggested that it should be a Parliament. It is merely an advisory body and the Premier knew that when he made his statement. It is significant that he did not mention the Mother of Parliaments in Great Britain, but I shall do so by quoting what Sir Winston Churchill said in 1948 when the Representation of the People Bill was before the House of Commons. That Bill was passed by both Parties agreeing to certain things in a Speaker's Committee. Sir Winston Churchill said:—

In regard to the representation of the House of Commons, there are two principles which have come into general acceptance. The first is: "One man, one vote." And the second is: "One vote, one value." The first has been almost entirely achieved. . . . Of course, in regard to "One vote, one value" there can only be an approximation. . . . Redistribution is particularly necessary now because of the present over-representation of the Socialist Party. Only 30,000 votes are needed to return a member who is willing to upset and sweep away all that we have been able to build up across the centuries. Forty-five thousand votes are required to return a Conservative and 185,000 to return a Liberal. Making all allowances for the advantage which often goes to the winning side at a general election, this is an evil and a disproportion which has become a great abuse and cannot be neglected by any supporter of democracy. Therefore, we may say that there is a broad general acceptance of the principle of "One man, one vote" and also of making a steady approximation to "One vote, one value." . . .

In England the quota system is used and, although there have been departures from it, in no case can it be said that a minority has the right to dictate to the majority. In addition, it is interesting to note that the Premier did not refer to the South Australian position. He forgot about this State during the major portion of his speech. When we had our first Parliament in 1857 the Adelaide electorate had six members. It was a small electorate, in order to level up the representation of the city with the country representation. The quota for Adelaide was 566 votes. Mount Barker had two members, and 506 was the quota. Barossa had two members with a quota of 512. Burra and Clare had three members with a quota of 486. There was no mention of three times the vote value of city electors being given to the country electors. People in those days were intent on having a lower House of fair representation. Again, the only significant departures from the normal were where it was impossible for it to be otherwise, but again the minority did not get the right to dictate to the majority. Then the Premier referred to the 1938 elections. They have been mentioned by other members, but the position was not quite as set out. There were 11 Labor members, including two Independent Labor men, who agreed basically with Labor's economic policy. There were 15 Liberals and 13 so-called Independents. Of the latter, three subsequently sat as members of the Government Party. They were Mr. Dunn of Stirling, Mr. McLeay of Unley, and Mr. Robinson of Gouger.

Mr. Dunks—They saw the light.

Mr. DUNSTAN—They came here as Independent L.C.L. members. They were really Liberals who could not get the Party endorsement. Mr. McLeay is now a member of the Commonwealth Liberal Party. Of the others, only three could be said to differ with the Government's economic policy. They were the members for Ridley and Chaffey, and the then member for Flinders, Mr. Craigie. As a result of those elections there were 11 Labor men and three members not exactly of Liberal persuasion, and the Government could rely on the remainder.

Mr. Christian—Why?

Mr. DUNSTAN—Because they agreed basically on policy. There was only a difference in name.

Mr. O'Halloran—They proved that by their votes.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Yes. As a result of the elections there were 11 Labor members, and three Independents, making 14 anti-Government members, and 25 Government supporters. The name used by the Independents in that election was used to obscure the result, as Government members desired. I agree with Mr. Dunks and Mr. Geoffrey Clarke that it is not impossible for the Labor Party to win an election in this State, but it is an extraordinary

argument to say that although the Labor Party got 60 per cent of the votes it should not govern. It is fantastic that that should be advanced in this House, for it is an insult to members' intelligence.

The member for Burnside referred to the wonderful history of the Liberal Party in Great Britain and told how it had widened the franchise so as to give to people greater voting benefits. That is of some interest, for it bears on the Constitution of South Australia. The first South Australian Legislature was given to us by the Reform Parliament of 1848, but the Reform Parliament was not a democratic Parliament. It was reformed to allow the upper middle classes to vote, because if they had not been given that right they might have joined with the lower middle and labouring classes to bring about a violent revolution in Great Britain. I advise the honourable member to read the speeches of Lord Macaulay, a leading advocate of the 1832 Reform Bill where this is clearly set forth. As a matter of expediency it was decided to enfranchise the upper middle classes so as to divide them from the rest of the community and deprive potential revolutionaries of the financial assistance they might otherwise have received from such people. That Parliament represented the propertied interests, the landed and the manufacturing interests, but none of the rest of the community. The vast majority of Englishmen were disfranchised, yet that Parliament decided on our first Legislature in this State, under the Act for the Better Government of the Colonies, in 1848. That provision gave us a Legislature of 24 members, eight nominated by the Governor and 16 elected. The 16 had to have substantial property qualifications, and to vote at the elections a man had to have a very substantial property qualification. In fact, at the subsequent election held under that Act less than one-third of the adult male population of the State were entitled to vote. They were the propertied class of South Australia who elected the Legislative Council, which brought forth our present Constitution.

Two attempts were made at the framing of the Constitution. The first was in 1853 and provided for a nominative Upper House and a property franchise for the Lower House. Further, section 40 provided that, within a limited period the property-elected House, if it did not like what the nominated Upper House was doing for the protection of the rest of the community, could change the Constitution of the Upper House without the consent of the Upper House, so the power would then be in the hands of property in South Australia and the general people would have no real protection. The property-elected House, which was then the Lower House, was to have ultimately the over-riding power, but that Bill was disallowed by the Crown. Some say it was disallowed because of an outcry about the nominated Upper House, but in reality it was because the Bill happened to trespass on the normal prerogatives of the Crown.

Under the 1856 legislation, which was the basis of our present Constitution, there was to be a popularly elected Lower House—a sop for the populace—and a property-elected Upper House, but this time the Lower House was not to have the power contained in section 40 of the first Bill by which it could change the Constitution of the Upper House. This time the property-elected House was to have an absolute power of veto so that property remained in control in this State as intended by one of its founders, Edward Gibbon Wakefield. Wakefield said in his *Letter from Sydney* that in New South Wales there was no opportunity for a man to live the life of a leisured gentleman, for people could buy land there too easily; therefore he wanted to keep the price of land in South Australia at a level which would make its purchase prohibitive to the lower classes. His purpose was to keep the masses as a labouring class so that the propertied people would be able to maintain their privileged position. If the member for Burnside reads *Letter from Sydney* he will find that it was said there that the people of New South Wales would have more chance, more certainty, of growing up opposed to the Mother Country than had the American colonists, because, it was said, "they would be more ignorant, wild and democratical." That pamphlet may, as an interjector states, be a fictitious work, but Edward Gibbon Wakefield used it to express his theory of which I am now speaking.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—The Labor Party has not given democracy a chance in the New South Wales Legislative Council.

Mr. DUNSTAN—It was the original intention of the Labor Party to get rid of the Legislative Council in New South Wales, but the Liberal Party introduced a provision into the Constitution so that it would be impossible to get rid of it except by referendum, and referendums to change Constitutions are notoriously difficult to get through. Therefore the New South Wales Legislative Council

remains despite the fact that it is the policy of the Labor Party to abolish it. The member for Mitcham said that the voting at the last election could not be said to indicate a win for the Labor Party, so apparently he does not agree with the Premier, who did not try to make out that he had won the last election on votes but merely said that votes did not matter. Apparently Mr. Dunks considers that the votes do matter, but that, nevertheless, it cannot be said that the Labor Party gained a majority vote. On the seats contested Labor gained an overall majority of over 47,000 votes. Of the uncontested seats five were won by Liberal and four by Labor candidates. Let us suppose that each Party should be credited with all the votes in each of those electorates. That would be more than fair to the member for Mitcham, because the Labor seats were those in which the Labor Party had previously gained enormous majorities, much larger than those of the Liberal candidates who had contested the blue ribbon Liberal seats. The total voting strength in the uncontested seats returning Liberal candidates was 43,841, and the total in those returning Labor 51,480—a majority to Labor of 7,639, which must be added to the overall majority already mentioned. Members opposite have said that the fact that some seats won by Liberal candidates were not contested by Labor and that some won by Labor were not contested by Liberal candidates confuses the issue, but seven seats were won by each Party without opposition from the other major Party, so that fact makes no difference to the result. Therefore, nothing can detract from the conclusion, which must be arrived at by anybody examining the position, that the Labor Party got an overall majority of votes and that about 60 per cent of all South Australian electors do not want the Playford Government.

The member for Light said—and I was astonished to hear him say it—"Well, what does it matter, so long as the people are well off under this system?" Who is he to judge? South Australians are the judges, for they produce our wealth, defend the State, feed us, and pay our wages. They must be the judges of whether they are well off. I would like the member for Light to come out into my district where I could show him some people who do not think the State is well off. He could meet families who have had applications for rental homes with the Housing Trust for years, but who are still living in one salt-damp room, while people with money are being allotted Housing Trust purchase homes within three months of application. Those people do not merely dislike or detest this Government—they execrate it, and with just cause.

Mr. Pearson—Are they Communists?

Mr. DUNSTAN—No, they are people who believe in democracy in which members opposite obviously do not believe. I am astonished to come into this House and hear a member say, "The people of South Australia are not the judges of whether they are well off. They have no right to decide. We decide for them and tell them whether they are well off. We are the people who decide what shall and what shall not be done and we will tell them what they want."

Mr. Quirke—That is the Communist line.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Yes, and it is the line espoused by members opposite and advanced by the member for Light in this debate. There can be no defence whatever of this system and Government members have made a very sorry showing in this debate in trying to defend it. Their efforts do not do them justice. The member for Mitcham said that he thinks there should be some examination of the present electoral set-up and perhaps some redistribution. If Government members are sincere in such sentiments they can move to amend the Bill so as to implement the policy advocated by Sir Winston Churchill and all other true Democrats—one vote one value—the only principle on which democracy can be based anywhere in the world.

Mr. TRAVERS (Torrens)—I originally intended not to speak on this Bill because I felt, as one who had lived in Australia all his life, knew something of Australian conditions and had seen conditions in other parts of the world, that no comment was necessary to condemn the Bill as an absurd piece of work. However, so many statements have been made, good, bad and indifferent, that perhaps the public are entitled to have some of the facts put before them, and when I say facts I mean facts. Probably there is no man in this House more keen and anxious to participate in all that is just and fair than I am, and if a just and fair provision were brought forward, no matter by which side, there would be no-one more eager than myself to give it every support. However, it is one thing to talk in an airy, nonsensical way about what the people are entitled to, and another to get down to basic principles and what all right-thinking people have thought in the past. Perhaps the first thing we should look at is the peculiar geographical position of South

Australia. Suppose that in England there was one vote one value. Let us compare that position with the South Australian situation and then the absurdity of the argument is immediately revealed. England is not much bigger than the electorate of Newcastle.

Mr. Macgillivray—There are many more people in it.

Mr. TRAVERS—Yes, and travel wherever you will in England you will find the country dotted with large cities and towns containing big populations. Draw a line wherever you will in mapping out electorates, and you could not miss the inclusion of large cities and towns. It is all very well to talk about what happens there and about equalizing the number of voters. By comparison, apart from Port Pirie, South Australia has no large towns. The question therefore arises, "Is it any use comparing what happens in the Old Country with what happens here, and is such a comparison of the slightest use in regard to a country which is being developed and where really only the surface has been scratched?" Such a comparison is absurd. The member for Norwood referred to the early days of South Australia when the numbers in electorates were substantially equal, and the people were not in appreciable aggregations in any particular area. Apparently, this question of one vote one value is a brand new idea thought up by the present Opposition for the purpose of endeavouring to re-establish in public esteem a Party which is thoroughly and justly discredited in the eyes of the public. I suggest that we can usefully take the view that when anyone brings forward an idea that has escaped the attention of sensible people in the past centuries of Parliamentary government, one is entitled to look askance at it and say to himself, "Why have none of the giants of the past thought of this idea and expounded it?"

I propose to show that the scheme proposed in the Bill is not the British system and bears no resemblance to it. Also, it is not the Australian Commonwealth system and bears no resemblance to it and never, even during the regime of Labor Governments in South Australia, has it been the system here, nor did the Labor Party ever advocate it until it lost favour with the public. This system is not put forward by any other Labor Government in Australia. One might therefore pause and say, "It is extremely odd if this is such an attractive system." It is extremely odd that even the last Labor Government in this State did not hit upon this astonishing idea and put it forward. The reason is that it is fundamentally unsound and inappropriate for a country like Australia. In considering its applicability to South Australia is is perhaps worth a look at one or two of the electoral districts. Consider, for instance, the districts of Newcastle and Adelaide, and then we will see how the system is so absurd. The district of Newcastle is approximately 750 miles long and 400 miles wide, or a total of 300,000 square miles, and has only one Parliamentary vote in this House; whereas the district of Adelaide is approximately one mile square. Therefore, we have an area of roughly 300,000 times the size of Adelaide having only the same vote as Adelaide. It is all very well to say, "Let us have a look at this bright new idea and let us have a count of heads—whether there is anything in those heads or not—and let us have votes accordingly." That reduces the thing to an absurdity. Let us say that there are six times as many people in the Adelaide electorate as in the Newcastle electorate. If we are to carry this theory to its logical conclusion we must divide the Adelaide electorate into six areas each approximately one quarter of a mile square, or enlarge the 300,000 square miles of the Newcastle electorate by doubling or trebling it. Then we would have something like an equality of heads—Newcastle with its 5,000 or 6,000 people and Mr. Lawn and five other members representing six districts within the Adelaide electorate, all of whom could stand in the middle of their districts and address all their electors simultaneously. What a bright idea and a grand result, but that is the logical conclusion of the suggestion. When we talk of a country like England with its closely populated areas, we could make theoretical divisions, and in practice they would perhaps turn out reasonably well, but in dealing with a country like Australia the utter nonsense of such a proposition is revealed.

Let us consider the districts of Newcastle and Adelaide again. In small areas one-sixth the size of Adelaide and only a quarter of a mile square the people would perhaps have a common interest and one could say fairly that nearly all would be labouring people, with more or less common interests, who are adding to the potential wealth of this country nothing more than their wages produce and contribute. Is there any reason why these people should have the same voting power as those who live in the Newcastle area of 300,000 square miles and who are producing many thousands of pounds' worth of wool and beef and who are engaged in mining and a variety of other activities

which enable our State to prosper? I suggest that these ideas are not merely my own, but are at the back of the minds of every Labor Government in Australia.

Mr. Frank Walsh—Sheep count for more than the people in your argument.

Mr. TRAVERS—Perhaps one might think that a sheep counts more with the electors of a particular district. When we consider the position we can see why the Labor Governments of the various States have never hit upon this idea before; but in South Australia, after the Labor Party lost its prestige and the confidence of the people and its seats in seven of the single electorates it previously held, and then won back two of them, it simply had to hit upon something; and lo and behold! it has hit upon something, and one only has to inquire why it has not appealed to the community. We were told something about what Sir Winston Churchill said. I am not aware of what it was, but I am well aware of what the Mother of Parliaments did. In 1949 it passed an Act dealing with this very subject, and I am still referring to the country which is not much bigger than the electorate of Newcastle, the country where large towns and cities are dotted everywhere and where you would include large numbers of people wherever you drew your electoral boundaries. We find that certain criteria were laid down in the 1949 Act. They were these—firstly, the size of the electorate; secondly, the shape of the electorate; thirdly, the accessibility of the electorate—and here again we might envisage Mr. Lawn standing in the middle of his 400 yard square addressing all his constituents simultaneously while Sir George Jenkins is covering his 300,000 square miles area. The Mother of Parliaments was not blind to accessibility. Fourthly, production of the electorate and fifthly, population. If these five criteria were good enough for the people of the Mother country—a country which is closely settled and closely populated—they are good enough for us while we are in the process of settling thoroughly inaccessible far-flung areas and of producing wheat, barley, minerals and other commodities and performing work that must be done out in the country.

Let us examine the community of interests. In Adelaide there is a complete community of interests, whereas in Newcastle the problems relating to wheatgrowing, coal production, mining and wool production represent a complete disparity of interests but one member must represent them. So much for the real theory of the matter. We must not disparage the parallel that was drawn about the United Nations. One member said we might as well refer to municipal councils and that is precisely what I propose to do, because justice and fair play, wherever they may be, are the same and people, whether in the League of Nations, municipal corporations, Houses of Parliament or anywhere else, all have the same basic, deep-seated ideas of justice and fair play. Let us examine a few illustrations to see what actually occurs. There are various metropolitan districts comprising the Football League but no-one counts the number of heads. Each district has a delegate to the League, but no-one says "There are 40,000 people in your district so you will have less representation—"

Mr. Jennings—There is much dissatisfaction in the league.

Mr. Travers—The delegate for North Adelaide might feel some dissatisfaction. The same thing applies in district councils and municipal corporations—each representative has one vote. No-one counts the heads or goes into that sort of nonsense. Such a proposal has never operated in the various Parliaments. I shall quote figures because so much has been said which is just arrant nonsense designed to appeal to the general public for support of a shibboleth—"One vote, one value." The public has the right to be told about certain figures which they have no real opportunity of checking. I shall deal, as briefly as possible, with each of the States and the Commonwealth. Let us start with the Senate and see how this "one vote, one value" works out. Ten senators represent each State. On a population basis New South Wales with 3,420,000 people has a senator representing 342,000 people or, in other words, each group of 342,000 people has no more voting power in the Senate than one senator can give it. In Victoria, by the same token, each senator represents 235,000 people, in Queensland 124,000, South Australia 75,000, Western Australia 61,000, and Tasmania 31,000. The admirable principle of "one vote, one value" works out in precisely this way—one senator in New South Wales has the voting power for 342,000 people, whereas one senator in Tasmania has exactly the same voting power for 31,000.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—Who introduced that system?

Mr. TRAVERS—I am not accustomed to rubbing salt into wounds but I believe in dealing with facts. Each senator from Western

Australia represents on the average an area of 97,000 square miles, whereas each senator from Tasmania represents only 2,000 square miles. As I see it there must be special provisions in Australia, and there are. They were worked out and proved satisfactory and successful. The South Australian Labor Party found them so as figures for the last election it won in this State will prove. It was not until it found itself in the doldrums, for reasons I will mention, that it started this fancy theory. Let us refer to the House of Representatives. In the district of Grey, in South Australia, there are 38,000 people who have one representative but in the district of Kingston there are 50,000 with the same representation. That is not one vote, one value, but one vote, 76 per cent of the value. In Western Australia, there are 34,000 people in the electorate of Moore, but 41,000 in Swan. It is not one vote, one value but one vote, 70 per cent of the value. In Queensland, there are 66,000 people in the electorate of Maranoa, but only 28,000 in Kennedy. That is one vote, 40 per cent of the value. In Tasmania there are 29,000 in Denison, but 33,000 in Franklin. That is one vote, 80 per cent of the value. In New South Wales it is still not one vote, one value. There are 46,000 people in the electorate of Banks, but only 33,000 in Darling. Again it is not one vote, one value but one vote, 70 per cent of the value. In Victoria there are 47,000 in Deakin but 35,000 in Wimmera—one vote, 70 per cent of the value. Let us examine the net result. From 28,000 electors having one vote in Kennedy in Queensland to 47,000 having one vote in Deakin in Victoria and 50,000 having one vote in Kingston in South Australia there is a variaton of as much as 56 per cent. One vote one value? No! One vote 56 per cent of the value.

Throughout the period of Labor's regime whoever heard that a one vote one value theory should operate? Let us again refer to Victoria to see what has happened there. Prior to the recent revision, throughout the period when Labor either wholly or half controlled the State, the electorates have varied from 28,911 persons to 12,470, a variation of 225 per cent. The average number in the metropolitan electorates is 27,000 and in country electorates 15,000. Why isn't it one vote one value? What has Labor been doing in Victoria? Has it been letting its side down or is it that this is a brand new bright idea that the boys have discovered to try to operate on public sentiment? There is that disparity between metropolitan and country districts in Victoria, and heaven alone knows Victoria is closely settled compared with South Australia. Victoria found it necessary and desirable, and carried into effect a system of different ratios for the country and city. Let us examine the position in Queensland. I was surprised to hear Mr. Dunstan say that he disagreed with the Queensland system. What are we to understand? Is he saying that the Labor Government has gerrymandered? Is he suggesting it has done some wicked wrong? If so, they will be interested to hear it. What I suggest has happened in Queensland is that it has been fully alive to the need, in a large State, for different values for country districts. Maybe Queensland has turned it to its own advantage but in principle it has always been alive to the fact that the vote for the outer area must have a different value. We cannot have a practical system of government without that in the far-flung areas of South Australia, Queensland and kindred countries. The areas in Queensland vary. Why compare this country with England. In Queensland the area of the electorates varies from 1¾ square miles in the electorate of Brisbane to 54,250 square miles in the electorate of Booth. It seems to me that members opposite have to face the horrible alternative, and although they may not answer the question as candidly as Mr. Dunstan did, they must nevertheless say whether or not Queensland has been guilty of some wicked fraud on the people in gerrymandering and wangling its seats so that people cannot have the representation they want. Is that the position, or is it rather that Queensland has been carrying out this system that every person in Australia, be he Liberal or Labor, knows must apply, which does apply, and which it was never suggested should not apply until gentlemen opposite found themselves in such dis-esteem. In Queensland there are 75 seats in the one remaining House; Labor holds 50 and all others 25, of which 23 are held by the Liberal Party. In the Senate figures from that State Liberal voters numberd 322,214 and Labor 299,268, leaving a margin in favour of Liberal interests of 22,946—nearly an 8 per cent margin—and yet that Party holds only 33 per cent of the seats in the State House. Members opposite can have it whichever way they like; either that state of affairs proves that to make a State House of Parliament workable regard must be had to the five criteria relied on in England and give a different value to the votes for outlying areas, or if they do not want

to have it that way, let them choose their own words to describe this result by which one Party has a net favourable balance of 8 per cent of the total votes and yet is able to hold only 33 per cent of the seats.

In Tasmania the electoral division of Monmouth contains about 1,200 electors, and the division of Westmorland 4,586, yet each district has one member and one representative. Until 1949 New South Wales had three zones with different values, and that throughout the many years when Labor was from time to time in control. It has been altered there—perhaps not insignificantly—to two different values and two zones, the same as we have in South Australia. Clearly that has been done because they realize that in a country like Australia there must be none of this theory of one vote one value, but all the various things to which I have referred must be taken into account; and the number of electors in the districts ranges from 14,000 to 28,000. At the recent elections in Western Australia, Gascoyne had 1,657 voters and Canning 13,514.

Let us now see what the Labor Party of this State did about its excellent theory of one vote one value during the last time it held office. One would imagine that if the neglect of the principle of one vote one value was such an injustice the Labor Government, when in office, would have been clamouring for amendment to see that country votes had the same value as those of the city. The electoral divisions varied considerably then, but nothing was done to change them. There were two members for Wallaroo—Messrs. Richards and Pedler—and this district had only 4,697 on the roll. This means that each 2,300 people in that district had one vote in Parliament. They happened to be Labor votes, but these co-incidences will happen! In the same Parliament Sturt was a three-member district with 52,705 electors on the roll, so that in that district each 17,500 people had a Parliamentary vote. Compare the position in this district with that of Wallaroo. Perhaps the Government of the day was so frightfully busy that it overlooked this injustice! However, the explanation is much easier to find than that. Mention has been made of the United Nations and there was an attempt to belittle the point made by the Premier. I will quote some interesting figures relating to that organization. As I have mentioned before, justice is justice wherever you find it, and it does not matter two hoots whether this body is called a sovereign body or anything else; it is an Assembly of Nations constituted to do a very important job in a way the members nations regard as effective. Costa Rica, with a population of only 877,000, has precisely the same voting power as the United States of America with 150,000,000 and Russia with 157,000,000; one vote, one value! Did Dr. Evatt think of that theory when he presided there? No, it is something quite new, bright and attractive; a catch-cry introduced to capture the fancy of people who, I suggest, have lost interest in the Party putting it forward, not because of anything which has been done on this side of the House, but because of what members opposite have done. I suggest that the reason why this side of the House has succeeded in relieving 12 of the 15 Independents of the seats they once held and in keeping Labor out of five of seven seats it formerly held, is twofold; firstly, because of the grand performance of this Government in encouraging enterprise, initiative and stability and, secondly, because the people of this country do not like the Socialistic objective of the Labor Party and therefore do not like the Party that pledges itself to Socialism. South Australians are not unmindful of what occurred at the Brisbane Triennial Conference of the Labor Party on October 12, 1921, when militant industrialists and the I.W.W., singing the Red Flag, substituted a new objective for that already existing. The old objective was "Cultivation of an Australian sentiment, the maintenance of a White Australia, and the development in Australia of an enlightened and self-reliant community." The new, not an added objective, was "Socialization of the means of production, distribution, and exchange." That still stands and it is not liked by citizens of this State. The late Mr. Theodore, who was present at that conference, foresaw the reaction of the people, for he said, "If the conference carries a Socialistic objective it is going to be the end of the Labor movement. It will no longer be the Labor movement of Australia. Why not call it the Communist Party? Is there any difference in the objective and the policy of the Communists?"

The people of this State have no misgivings about the existing electoral system, and no ill feeling about the Government. On the contrary they know perfectly well that they will not accept a Party prepared to pledge itself to an objective of that kind. They want the Playford Liberal Government to continue in office.

Mr. CORCORAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

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

PRISONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

AUCTIONEERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

POLICE OFFENCES BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

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

In Committee.

(Continued from September 22. Page 745.)

Clause 10—"Consideration by Court"—which Mr. O'Halloran had moved to amend by deleting "two" in the third line of subclause (*c*) and inserting "four."

Mr. O'HALLORAN—My amendment is for the purpose of gradually easing the control over the right of the lessor to gain vacant possession of his house. The Bill goes too far and may cause an injustice to many worthy people, other than lessees. Many tenanted houses have been sold since 1950, when it was enacted that an owner had to wait five years after purchasing a house before giving the tenant notice to quit. Obviously the house would not fetch a price as high as it would with vacant possession. Everyone who sold tenanted premises suffered as a result. Since 1950 the provsions of this legislation have been the subject of an exhaustive inquiry by a committee. Paragraph 101 of its report puts my own thoughts in to good and concise form. It states:—

We are in agreement with the policy that an owner of a dwellinghouse who needs it for his own occupation should have an absolute right to possession after a specified time and have given much thought to the question whether the qualifying period of five years' ownership should be reduced. There is much to be said, and much has been said to us, in favour of such a person who complies with the conditions set out above being allowed to exercise his ordinary rights of ownership without being obliged to wait for a period of six years to pass. The provision above referred to was enacted as recently as 1950, and in order to avail himself of it an owner must give 12 months' notice to quit after the passing of the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act Amendment Act, 1950, which was assented to on December 7, 1950. Notices to quit so given will not expire for a period of 12 months after the date upon which they were given. It is safe to assume that many notices to quit were given fairly soon after the passing of the amending Act, so that they will be due to expire at the end of 1951 and the beginning of 1952. Where a notice is not complied with, no doubt proceedings will be proceeded with fairly promptly. At the present time it is quite impossible for us to anticipate what will be the effect upon the housing situation of the dispossession of tenants in such premises. It is reasonably certain that in the great majority of cases where the owner proves his case an order in his favour will almost automatically follow. We have not any information of the number of such notices that have been given but we consider it is most probable that there have been and will be very many.

Paragraphs 103 and 104 state:—

The knowledge that there will inevitably be fairly extensive displacement of tenants as a result of the operation of the South Australian amendment made last year deters the majority of us from recommending, at this stage, any reduction in the five years' qualifying period of ownership. It is best, we think, to wait until the effect can be ascertained. Not only will there be many orders made early in 1952, but, as owners qualify from time to time by the expiration of five years' ownership, so will notices to quit be given, and orders made progressively by the court. Lest there be any misunderstanding on the matter, we point out that every lessor of a dwellinghouse who has owned it for 12 months or more (see section 26q) has the right to give notice to quit and apply to the court for an order for possession on the ground that he reasonably needs the dwellinghouse for his own occupation. If he has owned it for less than five years, he has not an absolute right to an order. His application is, under those circumstances, considered by the court in the light of the matters that apply generally to such applications, which include the relative hardships of the lessor and the lessee. It is not until he has owned the premises for five years that his absolute right to possession, upon giving 12 months' notice and complying with section 26u (5), matures. This matter is one that, in our opinion, should be reviewed when it becomes possible to exercise judgment upon statistics of actual happenings, rather than upon the insecure basis of opinion and conjecture as to future events.

We should have regard to the committee's view that we should judge the provisions of the section not upon statements made from time to time but on reliable statistics which indicate the trend of future events. No reliable evidence has been submitted in support of the proposal in the clause. The committee's report was not unanimous. Paragraph 105 said:—

The majority of us recommend, therefore, that the period be not reduced. Mr. Mackay differs from the views of the other members of the committee on this matter. He is of opinion that where premises are needed by the

owner for his own use as a dwelling, the owner should have the right to obtain possession upon compliance with the conditions of section 26u (5) except that of five years' ownership which, he considers, is too onerous. In his opinion the period of ownership should not be taken into account.

With one dissentient the committee said that the provision should stand as inserted in 1950 until statistical evidence was brought forward to support an amendment. No such statistical evidence is before us. My amendment represents an orderly withdrawal from this particular sphere of the legislation. We should agree to a reduction of 12 months now, and then next year consider if a further reduction is necessary.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—The committee said that the period of five years, with 12 months' notice, should be continued. At the time we tried to give the owner some right to enjoy the possession of his property, and members opposite expressed some concern at the number of evictions which might follow. The committee recommended that the legislation be continued for another year, and that it should be regarded as piecemeal legislation to be reviewed from year to year. It is wrong to ask this Committee to accept now a recommendation made two years ago. Since that time about 17,000 houses have been built. Last year 9,000 were built, which was a record for South Australia, and the highest figure for any State in the Commonwealth. If the committee considered the matter today I doubt whether the same recommendation would be made. We must consider present day facts. It is easier to build houses now, and I base that on the knowledge I have of Government contracts. The Leader of the Opposition has no answer to the case I put—of a school teacher occupying a departmental house and buying a house in which to live on his retirement. The house bought had a freehold title but the owner could not get possession. I make no apology for introducing this landlord and tenant legislation. It was introduced before the Commonwealth Government brought in national emergency regulations. As a wartime measure it was necessary, but in peacetime it is fundamentally wrong and the sooner we get away from it the better. Two years ago a term of five years, with 12 months' notice was agreed to. It was not altered last year and after consideration of the circumstances it is now proposed to make the overall period two years and nine months, but the Leader of the Opposition thinks it should be five years. For two years we have had a term of six years, but now we should make a greater reduction than Mr. O'Halloran proposes, because conditions are much better. Some members think the Bill does not go far enough and others think it goes too far, so on balance it seems that the Bill approximately meets requirements.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I support the amendment, for the Treasurer's explanation is unsatisfactory. There is no guarantee that the Housing Trust would be able to house a tenant within nine months of his receiving notice to quit from a private landlord. We have heard in this debate of the case of an invalid who experienced great difficulty with regard to housing accommodation for his family and himself.

Mr. Travers—We heard it twice last night.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—And members will hear it for the third time, for such people are of more concern to me than the sheep in the Newcastle district.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—What about the goats in the Goodwood district?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I have taken a good look around the Goodwood district, but have been unable to find any goats there.

Mr. Travers—Apparently the majority of people in Goodwood were.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I ask the member for Torrens not to refer to the electors of Goodwood as goats, which he did.

Mr. Travers—I did not.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—So their elected representative must come within the category of goats. Is that it? Does the member for Torrens wish to imply that I am the elected goat for the district of Goodwood? On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, is the honourable member reflecting on the elected representative of the electors of Goodwood?

The CHAIRMAN—That is not a point of order.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I ask the member for Torrens to indicate whether he was reflecting on the elected representative for Goodwood by using the term "goat"?

The CHAIRMAN—I cannot take that as a point of order.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—As the member for Torrens sits there without saying anything, I take that to mean that he denies me an answer, so I must question him in another way. He implied that I, the elected representative, am to be considered as a goat.

Mr. Shannon—I did not hear him say that.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I did. If, Mr. Chairman, the member for Torrens is permitted under your jurisdiction to remain seated, thereby reflecting on the elected representative for Goodwood, then the elected representative for Goodwood will take other opportunities of reflecting.

The CHAIRMAN—Does the member for Goodwood say that the member for Torrens called him a goat?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—He referred to me, the elected representative for Goodwood, as a goat.

The CHAIRMAN—You say the member for Torrens said that?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Yes.

The CHAIRMAN—Then the honourable member will resume his seat. Did the honourable member for Torrens say that the honourable member for Goodwood was a goat?

Mr. TRAVERS—No, and I said nothing of the sort. I made some mention of sheep, not of goats.

Mr. O'Halloran—Yes, you did.

Mr. Riches.—I don't think the honourable member should get away with a lie.

Mr. McAlees—You can do it up at the court but not here.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—By your manner of putting the question, Mr. Chairman, you have left a scapegoat so that the member for Torrens might get out of it, and I say—

The CHAIRMAN—Order! I ask the honourable member not to reflect on the Chair.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—The way in which the question was put, Mr. Chairman, left a scapegoat by permitting the member for Torrens to deny a certain explanation of the truth, and I am fortified in that opinion by my colleagues, who agree that the term was a reflection on the elected representative for Goodwood.

Mr. O'Halloran—I think it was a reflection on the electors. The member for Torrens believes not in the rights of humanity but in the rights of property.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—There will be other opportunities. I remind the member for Torrens that I have been accustomed, ever since my election, to courteous treatment from other members. Never before have I been subjected to such an interjection as that made this evening, and I do not think it is very creditable to the member for Torrens. It does not befit the high honour recently conferred on him.

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member will resume the debate.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Can the Premier guarantee that persons given notice to quit under this clause will be housed in Housing Trust homes within nine months of such notice? While people who have no homes remain to be accommodated, the trust will not consider applications from people at present occupying homes. Will the policy of the trust be reviewed so that tenants who are evicted under this clause may be housed in a trust home? Such tenants would not be given the right to purchase the home in which they are at present living, for they would be required for other families, or possibly even for the sons and daughters of the owners. The term of occupancy under this provision should be four years and not two years as in the Bill.

Mr. SHANNON—In my opinion this provision has always inflicted a tremendous hardship upon a person who has property rights but who, because of his employment or war-time service, has had to leave his home for an indefinite period. If I were a legal man I think I would rest my case on the statement of the Leader of the Opposition, who said in effect that a reduction of the period of ownership from five to two years would be an injustice to the lessors who, since the amendment of 1950—

Mr. O'Halloran—I said no such thing.

Mr. SHANNON—Normally the court would give possession to the owner only if he wanted to reside in it himself. If he died, the property would have to be realized on to enable distribution of assets amongst beneficiaries. The honourable member said that during the period the existing law had been in operation certain people had to realize upon their assets; and that if the period of ownership is reduced from five years to two we shall give some advantage to the property owner.

Mr. O'Halloran—I said it would result in an advantage to the purchaser.

Mr. SHANNON—What the honourable member said was that, because it would be a shorter period before actual possession could be secured by the purchaser, he would be prepared to give a little more than if he had to wait five years, and that is logical.

Mr. O'Halloran—That is not what I said.

Mr. SHANNON—Following the inclusion of the five-year term in the 1950 legislation some people qualified to give the requisite notice of 12 months' notice to their tenants as they had owned the property since 1945, and some

actually did give notice. To the best of my knowledge there had been very few cases of hardship as a result of the operation of this section, or of people being evicted without a chance of getting another home. It is the duty of members opposite to give concrete examples of hardships which have operated as a result of the 1950 legislation. I could give several examples where it had operated as an injustice to property owners, similar to the one mentioned by the Premier. I was pleased to hear him say that this type of legislation is not justified in peace-time.

Mr. STEPHENS—Under the Act a landlord has the right, after he has owned a property for five years, to give notice to a tenant to leave. Mr. Shannon would give no consideration whatever to old people who have done so much for the State, many of whom have been living in rented premises for 20 years or more. There are many such people in my district who will be thrown out in the street if the Leader of the Opposition's amendment is not carried. In effect, the clause as drafted is putting the boots into the workers and the old age pensioners. Mr. Shannon would sacrifice these people for the sake of the go-getters who buy a house intending to demand a higher rent. I have in mind people who have been renting a house for 20 years or more but have never been in a position to purchase a home. They are just as good and honest as any honourable member here. They are the people who raised sons and daughters who have fought for their country. The clause provides that where a person has owned a house for two years he must now give nine months' notice, whereas previously provision was made for 12 months where the house had been owned for five years. If the Bill is passed by both Houses and comes into operation in three weeks, what will be the position of a man who bought a house two years ago and gave notice so that he would be in plenty of time under the five-year proposal? In that case he could put the tenant out as soon as the Bill became law.

Mr. Shannon—He would have to wait nine months.

Mr. STEPHENS—Will the Minister indicate whether my contentions are correct? If not, will a legal member state the position? Yesterday I mentioned a case where a woman was to be evicted from the premises in which she was living with an invalid child. I took the matter up with the bailiffs of Adelaide and Port Adelaide, with a solicitor from Port Adelaide and with the Housing Trust and ultimately a vacant temporary home was found for her. Is it intended that as soon as this Bill is passed some landlords may evict their tenants? Some people are not fit to be tenants or landlords. Foreigners with money can purchase houses and in two years have old age pensioner tenants evicted from homes in which they may have lived for 20 years. Should we tolerate actions of that nature? Members who vote against the amendment will be responsible for the eviction of worthy tenants—in many cases old age pensioners. It has been suggested that not only should houseowners and their families obtain possession of homes but that the employees of houseowners might also obtain possession from the owners' tenants. This amendment has been introduced in order to protect tenants and to give them adequate opportunity to prepare for the time when they will receive notice to quit. How many of those who will be evicted as a result of this legislation have lost sons and daughters at the war? Because they have not sufficient money to purchase a home they will be kicked out in the street.

Mr. Shannon—No-one has been put into the street in the last two years.

Mr. STEPHENS—The member has never been to Port Adelaide and is not interested in the working class. I have seen them put into stables. I represent working people and not the moneyed class or property owners and I will not cause the poor suffering in order to enable others to get richer. If this Bill passes and persons are evicted within two years will the Government guarantee to find homes for them?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Debates of this nature lend themselves to emotional speeches in which adjectives like "unscrupulous" and "callous" can be used. It can always be suggested that the unscrupulous and callous people belong to the opposite Party, that the only persons who lost sons and daughters at the war are tenants and that the house owners' sons and daughters did not go to war. The ex-serviceman can also represent a help to an emotional speech. Such suggestions only cloud the issue. I told the Government two years ago, and the Premier now frankly admits that I was right, that this type of legislation is bad. It might be necessary during war-time but it should have been abolished years ago. Hardship will be done to certain tenants, but nobody is worrying about the hardship

suffered by those who invested money in houses for themselves and who seek possession of them.

Mr. Riches—Why did they purchase houses already occupied?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Because they hoped against hope that this legislation would be repealed and that they would be able to get possession. If a man purchases a cow, horse or motor car he hopes to get possession of it. That is a condition of the terms of sale. Houses are the one exception. While an owner is waiting to obtain possession of his house it is deteriorating. We have shirked our responsibilities too often and have got away from first principles and agreed on expediencies. Because some things are expedient we do them. I remember the old saying that was frequently used years ago:—

"Oh what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practise to deceive."

I suggest we substitute the word "compromise" for "deceive." One particular line of political thought strongly objects to any person owning property. It even suggests that a man should not have a woman to wife. If he wants to live with one woman as his wife he is termed a member of the *bourgeoisie*. It believes that all wives and families should belong to the State. Too often this type of legislation is thrust on Parliament by the belief in the minds of those who support it that while it is somewhat difficult to put an Act through Parliament denying the right of property it will support legislation that will stultify the right of the individual. Of course, the property owner is always pictured as—

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member must confine his remarks to the amendment.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I am trying to portray the background because that is the philosophy we have been listening to this evening and which actuates so many sections of public life in South Australia. The owner is looked upon as a rich man—somebody to be brought down. It is the easiest thing in the world to bring the richest man down, and you can bring the middle classes down to the gutter, but when that has been done who is left to help anybody? There are certain first principles that Parliament ignores, but they are the very basis of democracy—and the right to own property is the main basis. Who own most of the houses? Working people who, by initiative and thrift and very often sacrifice on the part of the wife, have saved some of the money that is brought into the home in order to invest it in property as a safeguard against old age, often with the laudable ambition that they will not be called on to accept public charity. We still have a few old people who like to stand on their own feet and who glory in the fact that they do not have to accept help from the Government or any other organization, although this type of legislation is fast stifling and killing them.

Mr. Corcoran—How would you overcome the housing problem under war conditions without this type of legislation?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I have already said that war is the defeat of democracy and that therefore for the time being we have to adopt totalitarian methods. That is why such methods are always more successful than democratic methods for the purpose of fighting a war, but surely the time is long past when those methods should be adopted. Consider the people who own the majority of the houses under discussion in this measure—the working man who saves his money and invests it in property. In practice that property is part of his wages; the part he has not spent in feeding, clothing, and amusing himself and his family. Had he, like many, squandered his money he would have the sympathy of the Labor Party. Because this man has been thrifty he is to be denied the right to use his property in the way he sees fit—in this case for the use of his own family. Is that asking too much?

Mr. Corcoran—In normal times we support those things.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Are these not normal times? Always we have this argument put up by the Labor Party, which has swung over to Socialism—something entirely foreign to the founders of the Party. Today it is not a Labor Party but a Socialist Party, something entirely different.

Mr. John Clark—We are not ashamed of it.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The honourable member is entitled to his own opinion, but I am against socialism because it is opposed to democracy, as it is totalitarian. This type of legislation is opposed to the interests of people with initiative—those whom our friends of the Labor Party call the *bourgeoisie*. They are not afraid of the poor man because they can always incite him to envy. All they have to do is to bring down the rich man and everything will be all right. The one they cannot handle is the middle class man who stands for democracy. The middle class are the essence of any system, religious, economical, or political. Break down the middle class and all things go by the board.

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member is making a second reading speech.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—A lot of second reading speeches were made before I started and I am simply replying.

The CHAIRMAN—The member for Port Adelaide confined himself to the effect of striking out "two," but I am afraid the honourable member is wandering away to the first principles of the Bill.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The Labor Party's amendment cannot be voted on intelligently unless we know the mainspring behind it, and I have tried to show why I think this support is given to this attack on those who own houses. We have heard the hard luck stories of the people who are to be thrown out in the cold, cold world. In actual fact I doubt whether anyone will be thrown out, and even if they were I have no doubt that the Government would find some accommodation for them, because the honourable member himself gave a concrete example. He had us almost in tears and then concluded by saying that nothing happened except that this woman benefited by the attempt to throw her out of the house. I do not think that the social spirit of the people of Adelaide would tolerate a thing like that, for an example was mentioned recently in the press where a man with a large number of children could not get a house. He went to the Premier and he had such a hard luck story that the Premier solved his problem immediately. All these hard luck stories are figments of the imagination and, in any case, if we are to consider hard luck my support goes to the man who owns the house.

Mr. Corcoran—We have the greatest respect for him.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Then you have not shown it. Every vote and every act of the Labor Party is against him. Will the honourable member help me to preserve the right of property for the man and his family?

Mr. Corcoran—Taking circumstances into consideration.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The honourable member would hedge it round with so many restrictions that he would probably die before getting possession. The only good thing I have heard in this debate is that the Premier has at last admitted that this type of legislation is not good. I consider it objectionable and if somebody has to be hurt I think the owner should be the one to get protection.

Mr. PEARSON—Quite obviously this is the battle ground of this Bill. The question is not two years or five, but whether this legislation is to be repealed or carried on in perpetuity. I can sympathize with the members for Port Adelaide and Goodwood who made impassioned appeals on behalf of people who may get notices to quit if the Bill becomes operative at an earlier period than they would under the amendment. I think we all know what hardship can be inflicted on people who are not in fortunate circumstances, but I do not think members opposite have any monopoly of sympathy or the milk of human kindness; we are all anxious to see that no hardship is done to anybody who is in dire need. We have debated for a considerable period who is to be the sufferer under this legislation. We have heard a good deal about the rights and wrongs of certain people, but what I want to know is who provided the houses which people are now occupying, and who has kept them in repair?

Mr. Riches—But other people have bought those homes.

Mr. PEARSON—And they paid good money for them.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—They stand in the place of the people who originally built them.

Mr. PEARSON—Yes. The thrifty people have been those that have been subjected to higher rates of taxation all along the road. Now, because they happen to be the owners of homes, we continue to penalize them. The same arguments advanced tonight might be brought forward by members opposite if this provision were placed before us again next year. I deplore the fact that so much of our legislation becomes an attack on thrifty people, who are becoming a diminishing race for reasons quite apparent in laws such as landlord and tenant legislation. I agree that we must watch the interests of those in dire need, but courts of justice can do that. It is now eight years since the war ended, so we are justified in repealing this legislation.

Mr. RICHES—The amendment seeks to provide a safeguard during the housing shortage. I differ with members opposite in their contention that this shortage has been overcome. If the Bill is passed in its present form it will encourage a practice I do not like of people purchasing houses over others' heads. Mr. Macgillivray said that working people buy houses over the heads of others, but that has not been my experience. Many people are coming into this State, and they are the people

most likely to take advantage of this legislation. I do not know how they do it, but they are able to pay high prices for houses. Further, the Premier's intention to allow lessors to give notice to quit after two years brings to mind the period before which a migrant can apply for naturalization. Surely justice decrees that people who have been good tenants have some right to the house they occupy. The Premier said more builders were tendering for Government projects, but I can understand that because the average citizen cannot afford to build a home. People are finding it increasingly difficult to get sufficient finance from the banks to build. Members on this side realize that if there were sufficient alternative accommodation for tenants likely to be evicted the Premier's proposal would be justified. To prove my contention that the housing shortage is still with us I inform the Committee that the member for Port Adelaide and I have had relatives of members opposite waiting on us about housing.

The Committee divided on the amendment:—

Ayes (11).—Messrs. John Clark, Corcoran, Davis, Hutchens, Jennings, McAlees, O'Halloran (teller), Riches, Stephens, Tapping, and Frank Walsh.

Noes (19).—Messrs. Brookman, Christian, Geoffrey Clarke, Fletcher, Goldney, Hawker, Heaslip, Hincks, Sir George Jenkins, Messrs. William Jenkins, Macgillivray, McIntosh, Pattinson, Pearson, Playford (teller), Quirke, Shannon, Teusner, and White.

Pairs.—Ayes—Fred Walsh, Lawn, and Dunstan. Noes—Dunnage, Michael, and Travers.

Majority of 8 for the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. BROOKMAN—I move to insert after paragraph (*c*) the following new paragraph:—

(*c*1) by striking out the word "him" in the eleventh and seventeenth lines of subsection (6) and inserting in lieu thereof in each case the words "the lessor, or as the case may be, the son or daughter of the lessor."

This is a consequential amendment.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not oppose the amendment, but I think another consequential amendment may be necessary.

Amendment carried.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I move:—

That paragraphs (*d*) and (*e*) be deleted.

If they remain the period of notice will be reduced from 12 to nine months. If the amendment is accepted the tenants will have a little more notice. The old protection was for six years, but if the amendment is carried the protection period will be three years. The occupier will know that he must find another home, and in view of present-day conditions a period of 12 months is short enough. My argument in regard to a previous proposal applies in this instance. The housing position is not as good as some members would have us believe. They may be genuine in their remarks, but apparently they do not live in areas where there are housing difficulties. On inquiring into these difficult cases I find that another member has unsuccessfully tried to do something and that, in the belief that the Leader of the Opposition may be able to work miracles, I have been asked to act, but I find almost invariably that my failure is just as complete as that of the other member, so the housing difficulties of those people continue. My amendment will mitigate those difficulties to some extent and I ask that it be accepted.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The legislation passed last year would have normally run until December 31, thus requiring one year's notice. By coming into operation earlier, this legislation does, to a certain extent, prejudice the position of tenants, and therefore I have much sympathy for the amendment, which should be valuable to the tenant, because the period of notice will enable the reality of his position to be brought before him. I do not oppose the amendment.

Amendment carried.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—It appears to me that the amendment inserted at the instance of the member for Alexandra affects a major principle of the existing law, which provides a penalty, if the person wrongly secures possession of a house by stating false premises to the court and then does not live in the premises which have been thus secured. The amendment of the member for Alexandra considerably widens the scope of section 49 (6). Formerly, rightful possession was confined to a married son or daughter or a person living with and dependent on the owner, but under the amendment of the member for Alexandra possession of a house can be secured for any son or daughter. Further, I am not quite sure what the penalty clause will provide in the new circumstances. We may have to recommit this clause so that the question may be considered. We may have to restrict the application of the amendment to a married son or daughter, or an amendment may have to be carried later to ensure that possession secured under this provision will carry the penalty if the conditions under which possession is secured are not carried out.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is suggested that certain amendments could not operate unless a further consequential amendment enabling notice to be given is made to section 49. I do not believe there is any difficulty about the penalty provisions, and the Government will see there is no ambiguity with regard to penalties. The Committee has already decided to extend the scope of section 49 (6) to cover a son or daughter, which I think is necessary, for, although the term "married son or daughter" sounds all right, a son or daughter with a family may be a widower or a widow and therefore precluded, under the present law, from getting possession of a house for such a person would not legally be a married person and could take no effective action to secure tenancy, therefore "married" will have to come out in section 49 to give effect to the Committee's previous decisions. Two other questions will be further considered later and this matter will be considered then.

Clause as amended passed.

Clause 11 passed.

Clause 12—"Premises not to be sold, etc., in certain cases."

Mr. O'HALLORAN—In view of the Premier's assurance that the legal position will be taken care of, I do not intend to proceed with the amendment I contemplated to this clause at this juncture.

Clause passed.

Clauses 13 to 17 passed.

Clause 18—"Duration of Act."

Mr. BROOKMAN—The effect of this clause is to extend the operation of the Act until December 31, 1954. What does the Premier expect will be the future of this legislation? I feel it should not be extended beyond the end of next year. If it is not to be extended, perhaps notice should be given to the public to that effect.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—When explaining the Bill I pointed out that the Government considered that the legislation was designed as a temporary measure, and that steps would be taken to remove it from the Statute Book as soon as it was practicable without involving undue hardship upon any section. I outlined the steps by which I considered it would be possible to introduce amendments to gradually get rid of it. Those steps were to progressively shorten the period of protection. I also stated that it would be possible next time this legislation came under consideration to again considerably shorten the period during which a house was subject to control. It is not possible for anyone to know precisely what the housing position will be in 12 months. For instance, if the Commonwealth Government steps up its migration programme there will be a totally different position from what is expected at the moment in view of the large housing programme predicted. I believe the housing position will progressively improve except for one condition, which must give concern to all honourable members. The cost of houses is getting so high that they are becoming beyond the means of many people. By limiting the Bill to one year it must again come under review next year, and Parliament as a matter of necessity will deal with it then. It is impossible to say how much longer the legislation will be required. With the large building programme in operation I believe it will be possible to dispose of this legislation sooner than some honourable members now think possible. For a man on the basic wage the price of a moderate cottage is excessive; and in the other States, where costs are much higher than here, it has become totally impossible for such people to provide their own accommodation.

Clause passed.

New clause 7a—"Period of notice to quit."

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

7a. Section 43 of the principal Act is amended by striking out the passage "or (*f*)" in the fifth line of subsection (2) thereof and by inserting in lieu thereof the passage "(*f*) or (*l*)."

Under the Act the owner of premises on primary producing property must give 30 days' notice to quit to the tenant. In conformity with the suggestions frequently expressed during this debate that this legislation is fundamentally wrong, I believe that that period should be considerably shortened, and I propose that it should be 14 days. Houses are erected by producers for the sole purpose of accommodating employees and they are as much a tool of trade as a plough or harvester. Frequently country courts sit once in two months and it sometimes happens that the court has concluded a sitting just prior to the expiration of a notice and it is impossible for the producer to get rid of his tenant for almost three months. That has sometimes happened during harvesting or shearing or when flies are bad and has seriously affected production. Under my proposal a tenant would seldom be expected to vacate the premises within a fortnight

because after a notice has been issued a court order must be obtained. Actually a tenant would not be obliged to vacate the premises for a month. I feel this is a case where the present provision should be relaxed to permit a producer to accommodate a new employee in the shortest possible time.

Mr. SHANNON—We are to consider three clauses which amend sections of the principal Act not dealt with in the Bill. There are three new clauses—new clause 7*a*, in the name of the Leader of the Opposition, new clause 7*a* in the name of the member for Burra and new clause 16*a*, in the name of the member for Torrens, which introduce entirely new matter. I have no recollection of any instruction being given by the House to the Committee to consider new matter and I ask for your ruling, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN—I have examined the postion and I think the new clauses relate to matters in the Bill and are not new matter. I consider them to be within the scope of the Bill.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The question to be considered in this new clause is what is a fair notice to give to a tenant to vacate the house he is occupying? Under the Act a primary producer has had the right for a long time to give notice to a tenant because of the necessity of maintaining primary production. In the main, these houses have been erected for that purpose but there is another aspect. A house need not necessarily have been built by a primary producer nor is it necessarily upon the farm in question. It could be a house on land contiguous to the farm and which has been bought and tenanted overnight. Those circumstances lead me to believe that this amendment is too sudden. A person may be living in amicable conditions with his landlord in a house on the outskirts of some country town but under this amendment the house could be sold over his head without his knowledge and he could receive notice to vacate within 14 days. That could lead to harsh conditions. During the whole period of operation of this legislation I have received numerous complaints from both landlords and tenants but I have never had one letter suggesting that the present provision relating to the notice to quit for houses required by primary producers has operated detrimentally. I have not received any communication upon this clause except two or three applications from ejected persons asking if I could find them accommodation. Therefore, under the circumstances merely to say that because we have shortened the period under other clauses we should shorten it under this one is fallacious. Only a few moments ago the Committee accepted the Leader of the Opposition's amendment not to shorten that period below 12 months. A fortnight's notice under present conditions is too short, particularly as it not only deals with a house which may be erected on a farm for the purposes of housing the employee, but a house contiguous to a farm. There is no limitation on how long it must be in the possession of the primary producer before he gives notice. It could change hands from a person who is not a primary producer to one who is overnight, and if the amendment were accepted the tenant who had been quite satisfactory and who had no idea that he had to make other arrangements would be confronted with a fortnight's notice of ejection. I do not believe there are sufficient grounds for acceptance of this amendment under present conditions.

Mr. O'Halloran—I agree entirely.

Mr. HAWKER—The Premier has brought up one point which I had not considered, namely, that it was possible for a primary producer to buy a tenanted house contiguous to his land and order the tenant to get out of it. I have no desire to insert a provision which would act harshly in a case like that. However, there are other cases where a man has built a house for the special purpose of housing an employee for the purposes of primary production—and it is production that I want to safeguard. Cases where such a man has proved unsatisfactory have come under my notice. They have refused to shift and have taken the maximum time allowed, namely, one month's notice and then nearly the two months before the court comes around to issue an eviction order. In the meantime the farmer was unable to put another employee in the house, and in one case, because it was at a time of bad fly strikes, it caused him considerable loss. Such a case was brought to me about two years ago by the Stockowners' Association and I thought it had been brought before the Premier. I understand also that before this Act was amended in 1951 representations were made to the Government for some easing of this provision so that a man genuinely wanting a house to put an employee in for the purposes of carrying on essential production could get the house, and so that it could not be occupied by a person living in it and taking a job elsewhere. Whether it would be possible to exclude the type which the Premier points out would be very hard

hit I have not had time to consider, but I should think such cases would be extremely few.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I hope that the Committee will not accept Mr. Hawker's amendment even if he succeeds in altering it to give it a more restricted application than it would have if passed in the present form. I represent a large area of the State where there is a considerable volume of primary production and where a large number of employees live in houses either situated on the properties where they are employed or owned by those for whom they are working. During the whole of the period this legislation has been in operation I have received no complaints from an owner or employer of difficulty in securing possession of a house after an employee has been dismissed from his employment or has left it. I have, however, heard of more than one case during the very acute shortages of houses in the north, where people had gone to live in unused houses on various properties and were ultimately evicted by the owner at rather short notice, without having much opportunity of securing alternative accommodation. Mr. Hawker mentioned one case. Although it may be a difficult case I suggest it does not warrant amending the law to make it more difficult for this type of tenant. After all, these people have to obtain alternative accommodation, and whether the Local Court sits monthly, bi-monthly, or at some other interval of time has no bearing on the question, because one month's notice might just as easily suit the convenience of the owner of the property as the proposed fortnight's notice.

Mr. Travers—A rule cannot be imposed on everyone merely because a court only goes to one area.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Exactly, and there would be many areas where the court sits regularly and there would be no hardship at all. If the amendment is carried it may be possible to get a man out in about three weeks. That would not give him much opportunity to secure other accommodation for his wife and family.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The previous provision was:—

That the premises being a dwellinghouse (which was owned by the lessor at the time of the passing of the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act, 1951) situated in or contiguous to any grazing area. . . .

That provision relating to primary producers has been widened to apply to any house owned by any employer.

Mr. O'Halloran—The employer could have purchased it only last week.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. Secondly, the period during which an employee may have to get out from a house has been specifically dealt with in section 43, which states:—

(1) The period for which notice to quit shall be given shall be not less than a period of seven days, together with an additional seven days for each completed period of six months of occupation.

(2) Nothing in subsection (1) shall—

(*a*) require the giving of notice to quit for—

(i.) a period exceeding 14 days if the notice is given on any ground specified in paragraphs (*a*), (*c*), (*d*), (*e*) (*f*) of subsection (6) of section 42 and not on any other ground;

(ii.) a period exceeding 30 days if the notice is given on any other ground.

New tenants would probably have much less than the 30 days mentioned by the member for Burra to get out. He said the Stockowners' Association had raised this matter, but I am sure few employers have been affected. We have widened the legislation to provide that any house required by the owner for an employee comes under the operation of the Act. I hope the Committee will not shorten the present notice to an employee to quit. People threatened with being thrown into the street are in a pitiable condition. The period of notice gives them a breathing space to find other accommodation, and it should not be shortened.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I oppose the amendment, but this is not a question of landlord and tenant relationships. It deals with the question of employment. On fruit blocks the owner usually makes available a house for his employee as part of his remuneration. If we are prepared to take a man into the country, often at considerable expense to him in shifting his furniture and taking his family there, he should have a reasonable time before having to get out.

Mr. HAWKER—I discussed this point with one of the Parliamentary Draftsmen, but I may have misunderstood him. I was under the impression that the owner had to give a tenant 30 days to vacate premises on a primary producer's property. According to the Premier the provision for not less than seven days, together with an additional seven days for each completed period of six months,

applies in this case. That means that if a man was on for a month he could be given a week's notice to get out, but if the other interpretation were correct an unsuitable man could stay on for a month before having to get out. I ask leave to amend my amendment for the inclusion of "(*k*)" instead of "(*l*)."

Leave granted.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think the inclusion of "(*k*)" would make the position much wider than the honourable member intended, because it would get away from primary production.

Mr. O'Halloran—It would apply to secondary industry.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, it would apply to all houses occupied by employees. Anyone leaving his employment would automatically have to leave his house within a fortnight. At this moment I am not prepared to accept the amendment in its present form, because it would be unnecessarily harsh in its application. If the honourable member withdraws his amendment I will give the matter consideration and advise him in due course as to the action to be taken.

Mr. HAWKER—In view of the Premier's remarks I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Leave granted.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 10.21 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, September 24, at 2 p.m.