

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.**

Wednesday, October 14, 1953.

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

**QUESTIONS.****FREEDOM OF DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT.**

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Attorney-General has received the following letter from Mr. Johnston, the Special Magistrate constituting the Midland licensing district, referring to a matter raised in Parliament:—

I invite your attention to references in the newspapers regarding comment made yesterday, October 8, in the House of Assembly regarding some witnesses who at that time were in attendance at the licensing court. The hearing of the application before the court was completed in the afternoon before my attention was drawn to the comments. This was unexpected, as earlier it was considered that the hearing would last several days. May I respectfully point out that comments such as those made are most improper whilst the case is still before the court. Such comments had I known of them before I gave my decision would not have altered any view I may have taken of the witnesses, but the public and the parties may believe, quite wrongly, that comments in the House have some effect upon the courts' decision. It is unnecessary, I know, for me to refer to the dangers inherent in political comments being made on cases which are at that moment before the courts, and of the importance, in our system, of the courts being independent and impartial. However, I invite your attention to the matter as apparently the dangers are either not shared or not appreciated by all members.

Is there anything in our Standing Orders, Mr. Speaker, that prohibits comments on matters which are before the court for decision, and, if there is not, will you consider whether a Standing Order for that purpose should be made?

The SPEAKER—Under the Standing Orders Parliament has the widest opportunity for free discussion and debate and, although it is not the practice for members to discuss in this House matters which are *sub judice*, no Standing Order particularly precludes a member from doing so. Following on what has been said, I will call a meeting of the Standing Orders Committee to discuss the advisability or otherwise of providing some restriction on such debates.

**SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE.**

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Can the Treasurer indicate when this session is likely to finish and on what evenings the House is expected to sit for the rest of the session?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government has a considerable amount of important legislation which has not yet been introduced and of which notice has not been given. On present indications Parliament is not likely to terminate its sittings for a considerable time, and the Government would be obliged if members would be prepared to sit on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings for the remainder of the session to enable business to be expedited.

**WINKIE TOWNSHIP WATER SUPPLY.**

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—While on the river at the week-end I found much consternation at the rumour that the Minister did not intend to proceed with the provision of a water supply for the proposed new Winkie township. As I do not know whether there is any substance in that rumour, can the Minister of Irrigation make an explanatory statement?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I am unaware that there is any consternation with regard to the Winkie proposition. I was going, and still intend, to confer this afternoon with the honourable member on the alarming fact that, although about 20 persons indicated they would apply for land in the new area, on applications being called for only one was received before applications closed.

**ANTI-CANCER FUND.**

Mr. FLETCHER—This morning I heard a news broadcast to the effect that Senator Mattner made a suggestion in the Federal Parliament with reference to further research into the prevention or cure of the dread disease, cancer. Can the Premier say what has been done with the large fund—I believe £100,000—which was subscribed in South Australia a few years ago for this purpose?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The fund mentioned totalled £120,000, which was raised by the Anti-Cancer Committee and consisted mainly of donations from private individuals towards this work, although it included a donation from the Government. The purpose of raising the money was to continue the valuable work of the committee, undertaken mainly, I understand, at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. One of the reasons for the appeal was the purchase of special equipment to enable deep ray treatment of cancer to be given. Recently the committee made a further approach to the Government for supplementary assistance in its work, and as the honourable member was asking his question I was looking at the Estimates to see if another amount had been

approved for carrying on the anti-cancer campaign. The special equipment is very expensive, costing, I think, about £80,000, and in addition, there was the securing of the necessary personnel to run and maintain it. It will be of very valuable assistance in dealing with cancer in this State. We have had no offers of assistance from the Commonwealth, but I can assure the honourable member that, as in connection with tuberculosis, where the Commonwealth was prepared to assist, the State will be prepared to co-operate in any anti-cancer campaign the Commonwealth Government undertakes. I am sure some arrangement along these lines could be worked out. The funds of the committee were used largely for the purchase of special equipment. There will be a need for additional money, if none is already provided in the Estimates, to enable the work to be carried out.

#### BASIC WAGE QUARTERLY ADJUSTMENTS.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Can the Premier say whether the Acting Railways Commissioner has the full approval of the Government in applying to vary all Federal awards covering employees in the South Australian Railways so as to abolish automatic quarterly adjustments of the basic wage? Secondly, in view of the fact that the court has not yet given the reasons for its decision in respect to the suspension of the automatic adjustment of the basic wage, will the Government consider requesting the Acting Railways Commissioner to withdraw his application to vary the awards referred to until at least such time as the reasons are made public?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Acting Railways Commissioner does not require the permission of the Government to make an application to the court in connection with industrial matters, but this matter was brought under my notice this morning and I concurred in the action he took, because it would lead to endless industrial disputes and hopeless confusion if there were one set of workers getting quarterly adjustments and another set not getting them. The two things existing together would be inherently wrong. They could not work side by side. Either we should have quarterly adjustments for everybody or another system for everybody.

Mr. FRED WALSH—I could not grasp the answer to my second question, namely, will the Government consider requesting the

Acting Railways Commissioner to withdraw his application pending the court's reasons being known?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is immaterial what are the court's reasons for its decision on quarterly adjustments. It is the law and it applies to a large section of our workers.

Mr. Lawn—Not yet.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—In connection with all the Commonwealth awards involved in the dispute a decision has been given and a large section of the workers are already covered. Irrespective of the reasons, or whether we agree or disagree with them, it is apparent to everyone, including the honourable member who has a wide knowledge of industrial matters, that the court proposes to set up a different system because of the change in the value of money. It will be done either by having more frequent hearings, or in some other way, but whatever the method it is obvious that another method will be adopted.

Mr. Lawn—Have you inside information?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No. I read in the press the court's decision, and if the honourable member had read the press reports he would be conversant with it. I have not got the reasons for the decision and I do not think the honourable member has seen them. It is obvious that we cannot have two sets of conditions operating side by side and remain free from industrial dispute.

Mr. Jennings—The Queensland court is continuing with quarterly adjustments.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That court can do as it likes. I do not have to answer for things done in Queensland. The Government did not direct the Acting Railways Commissioner to make the application, but it concurred in the action he took.

#### FRUIT FLY CAMPAIGN.

Mr. LAWN—Has the Minister of Agriculture any further information to give following on the question I asked on October 6 regarding the use of fruit fly traps?

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

The department has limited supplies of specially manufactured glass traps or lures and some 400 to 500 of these are used for checking in areas which have been or are subject to fruit fly eradication methods. Fruit flies, and particularly the Queensland fly, do not enter these traps readily, and for this reason they would be useless as a direct control measure.

# COUNTRY ELECTRICITY EXTENSIONS.

Mr. WHITE—Some weeks ago I asked a question in the House regarding a fund that was created to help the Electricity Trust to extend supplies into sparsely populated areas. I asked whether any money was still left in the fund and, if so, what would be the correct approach to get assistance from it. The Premier was not present on that occasion and the Minister of Lands replied on his behalf and asked that I submit a specific case to enable an appropriate answer to be given. A letter from the Electricity Trust to Mr. E. C. Brown, Callington, states:—

We have made an investigation into the possibility of extending our mains to approximately 126 residents in the Bletchley, Hartley, Woodchester, Callington, and Kanmantoo area. As the revenue at normal tariffs to be received from the consumption of electricity for purposes indicated by the group would be insufficient to meet the costs, it would be necessary to apply a high surcharge to these tariffs. Although you may be prepared to consider this surcharge, which would be equivalent to a tariff considerably above normal for the district, we cannot, with our very heavy existing commitments in rural areas and the limited quantity of money and materials available for this class of work, undertake the expenditure at this juncture. However, we will keep your application before us and review it when circumstances permit and your order of application will be maintained.

The letter is a courteous one and says, in effect, that eventually the request of these people will receive better consideration, but it seems that these people will not get electricity for a long time. I ask the Premier whether this application is one that could be given assistance from the fund established and, if so, will he take the matter up with a view to getting assistance for the people concerned?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Two matters are involved. One is the physical question of establishing the power lines and poles and connections to take electricity into the district. The trust lists applications in the order of their being received and deals with them in rotation on that basis. I do not think there is any fairer way of dealing with this problem, and this led the officer of the trust to say it might be some time before the undertaking will be in a position to carry out the work. There are a limited number of trained linesmen and limited materials and finance available to the trust. There are two types of subsidy that can be considered. We have had no difficulty with one, namely, where the Electricity Trust is not the undertaking that supplies the power. For instance, the authority at Bordertown

desired to extend electricity to Keith, and a lump sum payment was made for that purpose. Similarly, power was taken from Thevenard to Ceduna. That kind of application presents no difficulty because it does not involve us in any payment to one of our own Government instrumentalities, and the Grants Commission does not object to that. Those schemes are easy to work out and put into operation, but the other type of subsidy is one by the State to the Electricity Trust to carry out extensions, and that is the type involved in the honourable member's question. This presents a much greater problem because we have to be sure that we do not in any way subsidize the trust in excess of the cost of the concession given to the public, otherwise the Grants Commission would immediately object. The formula for this type of concession has not yet been completely worked out to my satisfaction, but it is receiving the Government's consideration so that we can get a formula satisfactory and fair to all parties concerned. Both Mr. Teusner and Mr. Michael are interested in extensions of this nature, which are being examined and as soon as the formula has been worked out to see that it will not put us at variance with the Grants Commission I will advise members of its terms.

## MYPONGA RESERVOIR.

Mr. BROOKMAN—About two months ago I asked the Minister of Works what progress had been made on the proposed Myponga reservoir and he replied that when the financial statement was ready the plans would go before the Public Works Committee. He expected that to take about one month. Has he any further information to give the House on the progress made?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Since the honourable member's previous question the department, as opportunity presented itself, pushed ahead with completing details, but when I say the plan envisaged a total expenditure of about £3,000,000 he will understand that a great deal of checking and re-checking, not only of the cost of the work but of the prospective revenue therefrom, was necessary and took a considerable time. The work is progressing and at the earliest possible date, when the Government receives the Engineer-in-Chief's report, it will be submitted to Cabinet with a view to having it submitted to the Public Works Committee. A £3,000,000 project cannot be taken just in our stride, but a further report should be to hand not later than a month from now.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL  
(ELECTORAL).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 7. Page 933.)

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—Last Wednesday, when speaking on this Bill introduced by the Leader of the Opposition who, unfortunately, is absent through illness today, I was explaining the method under which the South Australian Parliament has been constituted since the adoption of the present electoral system. For the past six Parliaments the districts of Albert, Angas, Burra, Eyre, Gumeracha, Newcastle, Onkaparinga, Rocky River, Young, Burnside and Mitcham have been represented in this House by Liberal members, and Frome, Gawler, Port Pirie, Stuart, Semaphore, Port Adelaide, Hindmarsh and Wallaroo by Labor. For five of those Parliaments the districts of Alexandra, Flinders, Light, Yorke Peninsula and Stirling have been represented by Liberal members, and Goodwood by Labor. For four of the past six Parliaments Gouger has been represented by Liberal members, and Adelaide and Thebarton by Labor members. Therefore, 17 seats are well-assured Liberal and Country League seats and 11 well-assured Labor seats, leaving 11 swinging seats. It has been claimed in this debate that, had the Labor Party in the elections this year secured all the seats that they had held at some time previously they would have been able to form a Government, but that is not so, for some of those seats which were held for only a short time by Labor members are a moral certainty for the Liberal Party. Prospect has been represented for four of the past six Parliaments by a Liberal member and only twice by a Labor, Norwood three times by a Liberal and three times by Labor, Torrens three times by a Liberal and once by Labor, Unley five times by a Liberal member and once by an Independent, Glenelg five times by a Liberal and once by an Independent, Murray once by a Liberal, three times by Labor, and once by an Independent, Victoria for 2½ Parliaments by a Liberal, 2½ by Labor and once by an Independent, Stanley once by a Liberal member, three times by Labor and twice by an Independent. Chaffey, Ridley and Mount Gambier have all been represented for the past six Parliaments by Independent members. During the course of those six Parliaments the Liberal Party has had 369 man-years of representation, the Labor Party 225 man-years, and the Independents 108 man-years. Of these 11 swinging seats Labor must win eight to

form a Government, but five of those seats have never been held by Labor and the four seats at present held by Independent members have little chance of going to either Party during the active life of those members.

The odds are 300 to 1 in favour of the Liberal Government retaining office against the will of the people. To say the least it is extremely difficult for the Labor or any Party other than the Liberal Party to gain office, but despite the extreme difficulty under the present set-up I am not prepared to admit that the Labor Party will not be successful at the 1956 elections. However, the position in the Legislative Council is even worse than in this House, for there eight metropolitan members represent 105,043 electors and 12 country members represent 63,715, which seems to be well out of proportion and contrary to democratic principles. Legislative Council districts Central No. 1 and Central No. 2 comprise more than 50,000 electors each, and any two country districts together cannot equal either of those. The contest is very uneven and figures show that the present electoral system is unfair, unjust and undemocratic.

I will deal briefly with the provisions of the Bill. It provides an alternative to the present system, and the members not entirely in accord with its provisions should adopt the practice followed by members on this side and suggest amendments. The Bill sets up an unbiased tribunal to divide the State into nine Assembly five-member districts and three Council six-member districts, with as nearly as possible an equal number of electors, provides for proportional representation, and deletes the requirement that an elector must be 30 years of age before contesting a council election.

In supporting the democratic principles of the measure I shall examine some of the statements made by members who oppose it. I thank the Premier for the compliment he paid me last week when he spent so much time referring to remarks I had made. In opening his remarks he said that he had given the matter only a courtesy glance. We on this side are not accustomed to receiving courtesy from the Premier. We would rather he had examined the Bill democratically. If he had done that there might have been more worthy statements from the man who holds such a high position in this State. He referred to the United Nations, the Senate and the Northern Territory, all of which are unrelated to the Bill. Apparently he was stripped of all cover and had to hide behind something when he debated the Bill. He spoke about the systems

in Western Australia, Queensland, and the United States of America, and said they were undemocratic. He highly condemned them but not having a decent argument he had to do as he did, and he did not weigh matters justly. So warped are some of the views held by members opposite on this matter that they are already dividing up the State into districts, but we propose to have that done by an unbiased committee. The Leader of the Opposition did not make any suggestions along this line, preferring to leave the matter to the committee. One member said that under the Bill the Council districts would be very large in area, but the Council Northern District is a large one, and includes the Assembly districts of Burra, Eyre, Flinders, Frome, Newcastle, Port Pirie and Stuart, about three-quarters of the State. Does the honourable member suggest that the members representing the Council district are not doing their work properly? He would not be game to make such a statement at the next election, because there would be no justification for the claim.

Mr. Brookman—Legislative Council districts include a number of Assembly districts.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Yes, and that is the position under the Bill, so I do not know why some members beat the air about it. Mr. Dunks opposed the Bill mainly because it provides for multiple electorates and proportional representation. The argument he used should be used against single electorates, because under such a system a member can exploit his position and be undesirable. It would be possible for him to serve his private business for 10 hours a day and devote only a few hours each day to his electorate. With multiple electorates there would be someone to assist him in the work, and if he did not do his fair share he would soon be found out. Under such a system we would not have the often-made statement that a member is not doing his job.

I do not intend to say much about proportional representation because Mr. John Clark effectively referred to its advantages. I propose to read an extract from a letter he received from a person in Melbourne. **Unknown** to him I obtained a copy, but I told him about it. He asked me not to read it, but I intend to do so. It says:—

I have just finished reading your outstanding address on proportional representation on pages 521-527 of the South Australian *Hansard* of August 26, 1953. The content was excellent and extremely well analyzed and ably presented. I only wish I had been in Adelaide to hear it personally. Although I have read widely on the literature on P.R. and have written an

M.A. thesis on P.R. in American city elections, I gained several new ideas from your address. While I have read many expositions on P.R. from academic sources, it was most heartening to read such a clear, forceful, cogent statement from a prominent person in public life.

That letter is signed by George Howatt, a Fulbright scholar from the University of Pennsylvania, attached to the University of Melbourne. Such a letter was a great compliment to the honourable member and is sufficient to prove that the arguments he put forward were clear. I do not wish to compete with such a clear analysis of this important subject, but I submit that proportional representation has much to offer. If there were an election in Hindmarsh undoubtedly the Labor Party would receive an overwhelming majority, irrespective of whether or not I contested the election. I do not take any personal credit for that because it is a district that is solidly pro-Labor, but there is a section of Liberal Party supporters there who have no voice in this House. That is wrong in a democratic country, and I am prepared to support a policy to give them a voice in what should be a democratic Parliament. I could go on at length correcting remarks made in opposition to the Bill, but I will content myself with referring to the remarks of the member for Torrens, whose speech has been criticized by other members. I have heard unfavourable remarks about him, but I ask the House to discard his speech in making any analysis of his character and mental capacity, because I know his family background. His family is one of the highest integrity and has been well respected. The honourable member is without question a man of much ability and intelligence, but his ability has been seized upon by the Liberal and Country Party and exploited. Unfortunately, this noble character has given way to Liberalism and tried to argue a weak case. His life story compares in many respects with the Biblical story told in the 37th Chapter of Genesis, but his speech made on the Bill now under discussion likened the honourable member to the majority rather than to the minority as recorded in the 19th and following few verses. He said in opening:—

Perhaps the public are entitled to have some of the facts put before them, and when I say facts I mean facts.

Actually, his speech contained not facts but wild and inaccurate statements. He also said:—

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 discredited in the eyes of the public. Why have none of the giants of the past thought of this idea and expounded it?

The present Opposition is that led by Mr. O'Halloran since March, 1953, but to show the inaccuracy of Mr. Travers' statement I shall quote the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition in March, 1950. He said:—

Labor's policy is to place people before broad acres. We believe in one person—one vote, and the only way to achieve this and secure a true expression of the people's views is to adopt proportional representation. For this purpose we would divide the State into nine districts, each having approximately the same number of electors, and each returning five members. This would give a House of Assembly of 45 members—six more than there are at present.

That shows that proportional representation is no new idea. The Labor Party has been speaking about one vote one value for many years. If one takes the trouble to read *Hansard* reports of the debates that took place

when the present system was introduced he will find that some Liberal Party members advocated, in part, one vote one value, because they suggested the metropolitan area be subdivided to give one vote one value and that the country districts also be divided in that manner.

Mr. Brookman—How will the principle of one vote one value operate in solving deadlocks between the two Houses?

Mr. HUTCHENS—I will come to that later. In placing value on human rights the Labor Party gave the people the opportunity of electing the Government that the majority wanted. It divided up the Federal electorates with the purpose of giving as nearly as possible one vote one value. This matter was referred to a committee, and a re-subdivision was effected in 1949. The following table shows the enrolments for the various South Australian districts in the House of Representatives:—

Division.	Enrolment, 1949.	Enrolment, 1953.	Increase.
Adelaide .. .. .	42,435	37,757	— 4,678
Angas .. .. .	41,596	42,764	1,168
Barker .. .. .	42,103	44,894	2,791
Boothby .. .. .	42,951	41,128	— 1,823
Grey .. .. .	40,085	40,717	632
Hindmarsh .. .. .	44,362	44,402	40
Kingston .. .. .	48,430	56,242	7,812
Port Adelaide .. .. .	47,491	56,999	9,508
Sturt .. .. .	44,258	48,306	4,048
Wakefield .. .. .	40,609	40,287	— 322

That table shows that, although there has been some fluctuation in the figures since the introduction of the system, effect has been given to the principle of one vote one value. Nor does this principle apply to South Australian districts alone. I have a table showing the total

and average enrolments for each of the States in the House of Representatives, and I ask leave for it to be incorporated in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Enrolment for House of Representatives, 1949.

State.	Seats.	Total Enrolment.	Highest.	Lowest.	Average.
New South Wales ..	47	1,916,746	46,098	35,452	40,780
Victoria .. .. .	33	1,369,821	45,280	36,024	41,500
Queensland .. .. .	18	697,029	44,642	33,774	38,720
South Australia .. ..	10	434,320	48,430	40,085	43,430
Western Australia ..	8	315,771	46,789	31,619	39,470
Tasmania .. .. .	5	161,540	33,288	30,774	32,310
	121	4,895,227	—	—	40,450

Mr. HUTCHENS—It has been claimed that the Commonwealth system bears no resemblance to the proposal contained in the Bill, but my analysis proves that claim to be wrong. The member for Torrens claimed that the principle of one vote one value was a new idea, but it has been used in the Commonwealth sphere

to give the electors the chance to elect the Government they want, and that is the purpose behind this Bill. The Premier drew attention to the size of the districts of Flinders, Eyre and Stuart, and the member for Torrens, not to be outdone in arguing a weak case, made the amazing statement that the district of

Newcastle was about 750 miles long and 400 miles wide, covering an area of 300,000 square miles.

Mr. John Clark—Surely that would be more than the area of the whole State.

Mr. HUTCHENS—It is about three-quarters the size of the State, for, according to the *Commonwealth Year Book*, the area of the State is about 380,000 square miles, yet it is claimed that the Minister of Agriculture, now in his seventies and with all his Ministerial responsibilities, can serve the people of the area well and should continue to serve them throughout an area which is three-quarters of the size of the State. Members opposite should see that their arguments are consistent, for Labor members would like to answer a united argument. I am amazed that the member for Torrens, a man with a highly skilled brain which has received great training, should make such a blind statement regarding the district of Newcastle, in order to bolster up a weak argument. He also said that an area one-sixth the size of Adelaide was only a quarter of a mile square, but any school child knows that an area a quarter of a mile square in one-sixteenth of a square mile. While talking about Adelaide he said:—

The people have perhaps 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?

Why should not these people have the same voting power? Why should they not be treated as human beings, irrespective of their financial status? In 1937 the Hon. R. L. (now Sir Richard) Butler, speaking in this House, said:—

I am pleased to say that irrespective of whether a person lives in the country or in the city he is convinced the future of the country depends on the expansion of secondary industry.

Rural industry cannot prosper unless it is aided by secondary industry, and the man working for eight hours in an industrial concern making a milking machine or a harvester, or any other requirement of rural areas is just as important to the community as any rural worker, and he should be treated with equal rights in the election of the Government. This Bill seeks to give the electors those rights. It has been said that there should be business men in this House, but I submit we need in Parliament

men and women whose hearts and minds can be moved by suffering and who have a burning desire to correct injustice. Above all, we need men and women whose ears are so attuned that they can distinguish, even above the roar of commerce and industry, the cry for mercy from the under-privileged. We require an electoral system which will return such men to this Parliament so that they may see that justice is done. We ask only for equality of opportunity. During the past half century more than 93,000 of our youth have been killed and over 500,000 casualties suffered in defending the ideals of democracy. This country has spent the colossal sum of £3,888,000,000 on fighting two world wars in order to protect our democratic rights. Those sacrifices should not be in vain, and we should not let down those men who fought for worthy ideals. At the Gettysburg National Cemetery in November, 1863, Abraham Lincoln said:—

The world will little note nor long remember what we say here. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honoured dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion, that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth.

I trust members will remember these words when considering the Bill, which I support.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY (Chaffey)—In the 15 years I have been here I have had the opportunity of hearing debated a number of Bills dealing with electoral reform, but I have never heard such extravagant statements, many of which have nothing to do with the Bill, as have been made on this occasion. I was in the House when that master of proportional representation, Mr. E. J. Craigie, was a member. When he introduced Bills they dealt with facts, and when Mr. Craigie was no longer here I introduced measures dealing with the subject. In this debate I have heard many things said that have nothing to do with constitutional or electoral matters. If we are to debate proportional representation we should not do it along the line of whether or not it will return Liberal or Labor candidates. It has nothing to do with political Parties. It enables the electors to cast their votes in such a way that the persons they want as their representatives will be returned to Parliament. This is entirely foreign to the debate that has taken place on the Bill. Occasionally members may have come back to the broad principles of

proportional representation, but the general tenor of the debate has been that at the last elections the Labor Party was defeated because of the present electoral system, and that under proportional representation it would have been returned. I am not concerned about that matter. Mr. Jennings referred to substandard country members. I think he should have left out "country" and left it as substandard members. I suggest there are probably more substandard members from the metropolitan area than the country.

Labor members went to much trouble to draw attention to the small number of electors at present in country electorates. I have no quarrel about that, but some country members, even if returned by only a small number of electors, do represent the people. They were not sent here by movements which should be entirely separate from politics. How many of the Labor members would be here if they had not first been pre-selected by the trade union movement? Very few of them, I suggest. When the Labor Party is looking for the reason why it cannot win an election it should remember what I have said. Until it gets men with a first-hand knowledge of the needs of country areas there is little chance of its winning an election. The trades union movement is getting out of its depth when it tries to control the political situation, and the people should be protected against it. The most interesting part of the debate so far has been the reference to proportional representation, which has been debated at length, but is not mentioned in the Bill. No method of election is mentioned. The Bills introduced by Mr. Craigie and myself were to amend the Constitution and Electoral Acts, but this Bill only amends the Constitution Act. I think the Premier laid a trail which kept the Labor Party members chasing a red herring. If Labor members had kept to the Bill when debating it they might have got somewhere, because Government supporters would then have had great difficulty in opposing it.

The short title reads, "This Act may be cited as the Constitution Act Amendment Act, 1953." There is no mention of amending the Electoral Act. Clause 4 deals with the number of members in the Legislative Council, and reduces the number from 20 to 18. Clause 6 refers to the term of service of Council members, and clause 7 deals with their retirement. Clause 10 refers to the Council districts. This is a matter which could be debated at length, and if it were done we

might get somewhere because there is a general feeling that there is something wrong with the State of Denmark. Members were so busy talking about proportional representation that they forgot about the important matter mentioned in clause 10. Clause 11 deals with the continuance in office of the President after retirement, and clause 12 relates to the quorum of the Council. Clause 13 says the number of members of the Assembly shall be increased from 39 to 45. This is a subject which could be debated with a great deal of profit, because there is a difference of opinion on whether the number of members should be increased. Clause 15 deals with Assembly districts, and this is another matter which could be discussed at length, but very little attention has been given to it. It seems that the Bill is no longer of any importance. Members seem to be set on discussing whether or not proportional representation is good or bad.

Mr. Shannon—Of course, the sponsors of the Bill accepted the challenge and debated that aspect.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The honourable member knows that what moves which follow any legislation are not the subject for debate, but can be referred to in passing. The Leader of the Opposition made a passing reference to this aspect, but he is not responsible for the trend that the debate has taken.

Mr. Shannon—I think some of his colleagues might accept the responsibility.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I think the member entirely responsible is the Premier, for he set the trail and got them all galloping. That may be good tactics on the Premier's part, but I am discussing the Bill as one in favour of it. I intend to support it, despite all the weak arguments advanced in favour of it by members of the Labor Party. We should have a review of the present electoral districts, and I think the people desire it.

The Hon. T. Playford—But you don't believe in the arguments put forward by the Opposition?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I do not, but I do not want to let my personal views interfere with my judgment. I wish to judge the Bill on its merits.

Mr. John Clark—Do you agree with the arguments of Government supporters?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—No. The Premier is a good tactician and it might be as well for him to get rid of the Bill, for its passing would mean the setting up of a committee of reputable persons devoid of political allegiance, but what would be wrong with that? If South



Australians were asked whether they favoured such a proposition I believe they would vote for it. According to press reports even some Liberal Party committees think there is something wrong with the present setup. Probably the Premier would have the greatest difficulty in replying to a concrete proposition for the appointment of a committee to examine electoral boundaries. As he has been able to side-track the whole issue he is likely to have little difficulty with this Bill.

The Hon. T. Playford—You agree I did not bring any personalities into the question?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Yes. All kinds of extravagant statements have been made during the debate and claims were made that could not be substantiated. I do not think the member for Victoria was in Parliament in 1942 and 1943 when we passed a Bill dealing with the development of the Leigh Creek coalfield, so I think he made one incorrect statement unwittingly. He said that the Labor Party supported the Premier's measure to establish the field.

Mr. Corcoran—I referred to it as a socialistic undertaking.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The honourable member was not correct in his statement, for the Labor Party vigorously opposed the Premier, as did many of the Premier's own supporters. It was a peculiar measure, and I hope never again will a Bill be introduced under similar conditions. It was brought down when this country was at war and when the Japanese army and navy were rapidly descending upon us, and when our industries in Newcastle were being shelled and coal ships were being sunk in Australian waters. The Labor Party moved an amendment that the Bill be referred to the Public Works Committee for inquiry and report, but the Premier said there were many documents available from dozens of committees that had investigated every aspect of the coalfield. He said the time was past for further investigation and that action was needed. I am sorry that a number of the Premier's own Party, including one of our present Ministers who was then chairman of the Public Works Committee, gave more than sympathetic hearing to the Labor Party's amendment.

The Hon. T. Playford—Was a division taken on the question?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I think so. I do not wish to take any credit from the Premier for establishing the coalfield, but had it not been for the fact that the three Independent members supported him there would be no Leigh Creek coalfield today.

Mr. John Clark—Do you think a report by the Public Works Committee would have been against the proposal?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—It would have delayed the establishment of the field and probably it would have been against the proposal, because a committee has to obtain firm statements, and it cannot get figures on something that has not been developed. The then member for Gawler, Mr. Duncan, twitted the Premier on the fact that even his own Party would not support him. Mr. Duncan was speaking in support of the Labor Party's amendment to have the matter examined by the Public Works Committee. He stated:—

Then we have other recognized supporters of the Government showing a certain amount of caution and expressing doubt over the situation, and we have reached the peculiar situation when the Premier's strongest supporters of this measure are the Independents. They are prepared to make every sacrifice to go into the possibilities of the scheme, not regarding it as a war measure purely and simply.

The Premier knew that the Labor Party's amendment to refer the matter to the Public Works Committee would mean the deathknell of the scheme, so if credit is due to anyone for its establishment it goes first to the Premier and then to the Independent members of this House. The member for Thebarton made an entirely gratuitous attack on Independent members. It was entirely unnecessary and had nothing to do with any aspect of the Bill. It could only be construed as a violent, vindictive, and vicious attack which could only emanate from a mind as poisonous as a cesspool. He said:—

Following the 1944 elections, after the appointment of the Speaker, the Liberal Party had to depend on the support of the Independents, and on every occasion when a vital vote was taken the Independents rallied to the support of the Government.

After Mr. Dunks interjected, "They knew when they were right," the member for Thebarton continued:—

I can tell you why; it was because they were all appointed to committees and were under some obligation to the Government.

That was an unworthy and disgraceful reflection on the Premier.

Mr. Lawn—Do you say the Premier would not do that?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I know he would not, for I have been on a certain committee for longer than the honourable member has been in this House.

Mr. FRED WALSH—I question the honourable member's right to wear an Australian returned soldier's badge.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The honourable member would not be here now if it were not for the fact that a better man was called to his long home.

Mr. Fred Walsh—I know where you would be if I had my way.

The SPEAKER—Order! Members must refrain from interrupting the honourable member.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I am speaking of democracy. The honourable member for Thebarton is angry with me because the members of his union come to me to rectify his sins of omission and I look after the unionists in my district. It was suggested that the Premier uses bribery and corruption.

The SPEAKER—Order! I ask the honourable member not to continue on that line, for I did not interpret the remarks in that way.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—It was suggested that Independent members forgot their responsibilities to their constituents merely because the Premier had placed them on a committee. Mr. McKenzie, who until recently was the member for Murray, was an Independent, yet he kept the Government from winning the district of Murray for 15 years; but now that he no longer chooses to defend it the Government has won it. The member for Ridley was also attacked, but I point out that he is not on any Parliamentary committee and therefore cannot be attacked on those grounds.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Did I mention any names?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The honourable member mentioned all Independent members, saying that they had rushed to the support of the Government; yet I could think of no occasion on which the Government had depended on the support of Independent members. The only Bill of any importance passed in the session mentioned by the honourable member was the Electricity Trust of South Australia Bill, and it was with Labor and not Independent support that it was passed. That could be accepted as a vote of no confidence on the part of the Independents in the Government of the day. The member for Stanley was appointed to the Land Settlement Committee on behalf of the Labor Party, but he found that the price of letting his conscience function was to get kicked off it. That was one of the worst things the Premier has done, for Mr. Quirke is a returned soldier who has been on the land for years and had practical experience of soldier settlement. At one time it was suggested that the Land Settlement Committee should comprise only returned soldier

members, but its constitution has gradually drifted away from that principle. In the course of this debate the member for Stanley said:—

One time I was a member of a Parliamentary committee, but when I ceased to be a Party man I did not remain on it very long. My place was taken by an estimable gentleman, and I have nothing against him, but with his limited knowledge of land matters I think he would have difficulty in distinguishing between a cauliflower and a sunflower, yet he became a member of the Land Settlement Committee with the full approval of both Parties.

When an Independent member gets something which is considered a Parliamentary perquisite both Parties gang up on him. The member for Stanley said that his successor was an estimable gentleman.

Mr. Frank Walsh—Don't you think we are getting a bit low in the debate when we have to go to the grave for an argument?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I was about to suggest the same thing. Speaking of Mr. Quirke's statement on his replacement on the Land Settlement Committee, Mr. Hutchens said:—

He said that on his retirement from a political Party he was not permitted to remain long on the Land Settlement Committee and that his place was taken by one who would have difficulty in telling the difference between a cauliflower and a sunflower, but I remind members that the person who filled that vacancy and who is not here to defend himself today gave honourable service to his country and was a man of high intelligence—the late Mr. Les. Duncan. No credit is due to a man who attacks a dead man who has no opportunity of defending himself, and I was sorely disappointed with the member for Stanley in that regard.

As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said, it is getting pretty low when a man has to go to the grave for an argument. The attack on Mr. Quirke was a reprehensible and disgraceful statement from a member who is becoming notorious for extravagant statements. If Mr. Les. Duncan had one friend in this House to whom he could turn for help it was the member for Stanley.

Mr. Pattinson—Every member was his friend.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Yes. It is true that the member for Mount Gambier has been appointed by the Government to a Parliamentary committee, but surely Parliament should not be denied the experience of a man merely because he is an Independent. Possibly no other member has a greater knowledge of country areas than the member for Mount

Gambier, who has opened up undeveloped country, successfully conducted a dairy farm, and supervised quarrying operations.

Mr. John Clark—And we have the highest regard for him.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Possibly, but the suggestion was that he should not be on the Public Works Committee because he must owe something to the Premier for his appointment. The member who made that charge is also a member of that committee and should know Mr. Fletcher's capabilities. The reason why the Labor Party has lost at the State elections has nothing to do with electoral reform, for, as has been rightly pointed out by Government members, if Labor cannot win such seats as Glenelg, Torrens and Unley something is wrong with it.

Mr. John Clark—Why should they be Labor seats?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Because they are inhabited mainly by the working classes, although that is an obnoxious distinction, because all Australians work.

Mr. John Clark—You don't believe that only the so-called working class people vote the Labor ticket?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—No, nor do I believe that all working men do, but there are districts which could be looked upon logically as Labor districts. Labor has not won those seats because something is wrong with its set-up. As long as the Labor movement is governed and controlled by the trades union movement, no matter how worthy that movement may be, it is never likely to win an election, for it must have a wider basis of representation. In Great Britain all classes of people, including professors and at least one minister of religion, give the Party a wider basis of representation. I support the second reading, for I believe the subject matter of the Bill is good and that Government members should take a sympathetic view of it.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—I support the Bill because I believe in the principles embodied in it. Some of the machinery clauses may be improved and I shall refer to them later. Before going further I feel it is incumbent on me to reply to some of the statements made by Mr. Macgillivray in what I feel was one of the most heated and ill-considered speeches he has made since I have been associated with him here. The first to be answered is the extraordinary statement, and I have heard it made previously, that the Leigh Creek coalfield would not have been developed if the four

Independent members had not supported the legislation. I can also remember Independent members claiming credit for the introduction of child endowment and national insurance schemes. I was a member when the Leigh Creek legislation was introduced. *Hansard* shows that I supported it, as did all other members of the Opposition. The only question at issue was whether it should be passed as introduced or whether some aspects of it should be investigated by the Public Works Committee. The latter view was supported by some members of the Government Party, including the member in whose district the field is situated. At the time he was the chairman of the Public Works Committee, and is now Minister of Agriculture. He said that it conferred a greater power on the Government than did any other legislation in his experience. He expressed doubts about the water supply and about the field being a success after the war when there would be competition from coal from eastern States. The Leader of the Opposition at the time suggested an inquiry by the Public Works Committee because of adverse reports submitted by Government officials, but said that the committee should present its report within six weeks. That was the only point at issue, and with the Independent vote the amendment was defeated. I have always asked for the field to be developed, and all legislation dealing with its development has had my support.

This Bill introduces electoral reform and a greater equality of voting strength. It gives the people the right to have a Government in accordance with the wishes of the majority, and it overcomes the possibility of a Party occupying the Treasury benches when it has obtained a minority of the votes. Mr. Travers and Mr. Macgillivray said that there must be something lacking in Labor policy and leadership, and that it could win an election only when its policy was acceptable to the people. I remind them that at the last State elections electors endorsed the Labor Party policy, and it was only because of the method of dividing the districts that effect was not given to the will of the people. Our peculiar electoral system prevented it. We are told that Russia is a horrible example of minority Government, and much of what can be said about the Russian system can be said about the system here. Members opposite have tried to excuse our system by saying that something of the sort obtains in Queensland, but in that State the majority governs, not the minority.

Mr. Teusner—That is not the rule.

Mr. RICHES—It has obtained for many years. At the last elections the Queensland Labor Government was returned with an increased majority, but in this State the Government received fewer votes. All that was said by Mr. Travers about the Labor Party applies to the Liberal Party. He said that the Labor Party introduced the Bill because it had been discredited in the eyes of the public, and that it wanted to redeem itself by trying to amend the electoral system. If any Party was discredited in the eyes of the public it was the Liberal Party, which was rejected by the electors. Mr. Travers also said that a brain-wave caused the Labor Party to evolve a system to overcome the defeat he claimed it experienced at the last elections. In saying that he showed an appalling ignorance of the position. He asked why, if proportional representation was such a good thing, it had not been introduced when the Labor Party was in office. When it occupied the Treasury benches the Party moved for its introduction, but the legislation was rejected by the Council. Even since that time the Party has introduced measures providing for proportional representation. Parliament should be composed of representatives according to the voting strength of the electors. If 60 per cent of the electors vote Liberal and 40 per cent Labor, then 60 per cent of the members should be Liberal and 40 per cent Labor. That is only reasonable and fair.

In the Commonwealth sphere the Labor Party introduced proportional representation for Senate elections. It is to the discredit of the Liberals that when they had a monopoly in the Senate, which was out of all proportion to the voting strength, they did nothing. Action was taken only when all Senate seats, with the exception of three in Queensland not contested, were won by Labor. The legislation was introduced so that Liberals should have representation. At the last Senate elections under proportional representation the Menzies Government gained a majority. If the old electoral system had applied Labor would have won all except the Queensland seats. Proportional representation works to the benefit of the electors. I think that is good and democratic. It does not always work out to the advantage of one particular Party. The principle of proportional representation is embodied in this Bill, and the machinery clauses of it were explained at considerable length by the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Gawler. Historical reviews have been given also by

other members, and I do not propose to traverse the ground they covered. I think that the general feeling throughout South Australia is that, whether or not this Bill is carried, the time for a re-arrangement of electoral boundaries, or some other means of altering the present electoral system, is long overdue. The House could well consider the size of the electorates proposed in the Bill, although I would prefer smaller areas and three-member districts instead of the larger areas with five members. However, something could be considered on these lines in Committee, and I urge that the second reading be carried in order that suggestions offered during the course of this debate might be considered.

The electoral provisions of the State ought to be considered in an atmosphere completely divested of Party politics, if that is possible, and as far as human limitations permit I have tried to approach the Bill in that way. I am not convinced that it would work out to the advantage of the Labor Party, but I think it would give better representation and a Parliament more closely representative of the voting strength of the people than can possibly be obtained today. Some members seem to think that our complaint is that we cannot get a Government under the present system, but I do not agree with some of my colleagues who have made that statement. I believe we could but it would be difficult. We would have to get such a terrific proportion of votes—a majority far greater than should be expected of any Party. It is, I think, possible for a Party to become so popular that it could secure 60 to 70 per cent of the votes, and I do not think that is beyond the possibilities of the Labor Party. There are seats we could still win, but it is a tremendous handicap upon any democratic organization when the electoral system is so heavily loaded against it.

The member for Torrens went to great lengths to compare the districts of Newcastle and Adelaide, and here again he displayed some of the extraordinary reasoning which apparently has led him to believe that the Liberal Party really won the last elections. He stated that the district of Newcastle, with 300,000 square miles, was 300,000 times the size of the district of Adelaide and that Adelaide had about six times the number of electors and, therefore, in order to give effect to the principle of one vote one value Adelaide should be divided into six. I hasten to remind the House that Newcastle is not nearly as big as the district of Stuart. He went on to say that such a division of Adelaide would

mean a representative for every portion a quarter-mile square, and he repeated that several times. I quote from *Hansard*, at page 776:—

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.

I always understood that there were 16 areas of a quarter-mile square in a square mile, but the member for Torrens can count only six. That is a sample of the reckoning of the member for Torrens all the way through his speech, and on that he probably would be able to produce figures to show that the Liberal and Country League Party really won the last elections, whereas by my reckoning Labor won it but did not win the Government.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—You count every vote for you as a Labor vote.

Mr. RICHES—There were some Communists and some Liberal supporters who voted against me.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Someone said the lesser of two evils.

Mr. RICHES—I quite agree that there are Liberals who would prefer a Communist to a Labor member. That is not news.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—No credit was given for the Liberal votes that might have been cast in, say, Mitcham.

Mr. RICHES—They had all been taken into consideration, the same as Labor votes that would have been cast in Thebarton; they all cancel out, but it is unquestionable that the people voted Labor.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—In the Senate vote there was a difference of about 20,000 only and in every district Liberal members got more votes in the State electorates, so I say that on Federal figures we would have won.

Mr. RICHES—I know there are people who vote one way at State elections and another at Federal elections, but the figures are available for anyone to examine, and I believe the people voted overwhelmingly in support of Labor. The member for Norwood gave a most eloquent historical review of our electoral legislation and quoted principles laid down by the British Prime Minister when he was an ordinary member of Parliament, but which apparently were not well received by members on the other side of the House. There was a time when Sir Winston Churchill believed in the principle of one vote one value.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—He believed in proportional representation which does not amount to the same thing, because the number that elects a member for the Senate in Tasmania is far lower than the corresponding New South Wales figure. It is not one vote one value.

Mr. RICHES—The member for Norwood gave us most interesting and thought-provoking quotations from the present Prime Minister of Great Britain in his summary of what he believes to be a just electoral system. As a counter the member for Torrens quoted some principles laid down as a preamble to a Bill introduced in the British Parliament in 1949, and I want to refer to them. I quote from *Hansard*, page 777:—

Five 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 . . . Fourthly, production of the electorate and fifthly, population.

I suggest that all these criteria are related and could be considered under the Bill before us. It provides that, as far as can be devised, the electorates shall be of similar size.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—That gets away from your policy of one vote one value.

Mr. RICHES—The Bill sets out that the State should be divided into nine districts, as far as possible of similar size and shape; that they should be equally accessible and that the population should be equally divided. If we have regard to those principles I suggest that the present system cannot be held to comply with the criteria set out in the British Act. Compare the population and the size of the electorate of Stuart with those on other side of it.

Mr. Quirke—Is Stuart of greater area than Frome?

Mr. RICHES—It is much bigger than any other district.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—The British authorities said electorates should be divided having regard to size and population. You are now arguing in a manner foreign to those principles.

Mr. RICHES—The 1949 British pronouncements stated that all these points should be considered together. Stuart is the largest electorate in size, and one of the largest country electorates in population. The Minister should look at the shape of it on the map. It has more curves than any Hollywood bathing beauty, more corners than we turned in the depression, and more angles than the Liberal and Country League. If Quorn were taken out of Stuart and put in Newcastle the political complexion

of Newcastle would be changed. If Whyalla were put in the district of Eyre, again there would be a change of political complexion.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—And if you took Peterborough out Frome would disappear.

Mr. RICHES—Frome is the least populous electorate in the State, and there can be no justification for that. The Opposition knows that is wrong in principle.

Mr. Hutchens—And the member for Stuart is the first to admit it.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—I should hate to see the Leader of the Opposition out of Parliament.

Mr. RICHES—He would not be out; he would be the Premier of South Australia.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Why did the Labor Party in New South Wales abolish proportional representation?

Mr. Stephens—Another smokescreen.

The SPEAKER—Order! Honourable members must not interrupt. This is not question time.

Mr. RICHES—I am not sure what system was operating in New South Wales, but there are a number of systems glibly called proportional representation. I admit I have never studied the system that operated in New South Wales, but it was repealed. Some experts on this subject say that the Tasmanian system is one of proportional representation, others say it is not. Some people say the Senate system is the ideal, others disown it. The Minister of Works and the Premier have frequently told us that France has proportional representation and that as a result it has had unstable Government.

Mr. Quirke—France has never had it.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Labor has often been in power in New South Wales, but it abolished proportional representation and does not intend to restore it.

Mr. RICHES—The Minister may claim to be an authority on what the Labor Party intends to do in New South Wales, but I do not know what its intentions are. Labor has always been hesitant about altering electoral systems, for it believes that it is not a subject to be dealt with lightly. I do not know the reason for the change in New South Wales, but I am not interested in it, nor in the various systems. There is nothing in this Bill aimed at bringing political advantage to the Labor Party. If there was, or if it were a Bill purely to give one Party an advantage, I would hesitate to support it, but it merely aims at giving just representation to the people,

and allowing them to express their opinion in Parliament. I am not prepared to say that the Bill, in its machinery clauses, is the last word in perfection, for it could probably be improved, but I support the second reading. If it passes this stage it can be discussed dispassionately in Committee, and members can then make suggestions regarding the machinery clauses. Perhaps it could be improved by having smaller three-member districts instead of the large five-member districts. I am most concerned that members of Parliament be elected in direct proportion to the voting strength of the people. Parliament must function as the people want it to. No system can stifle democracy more than one that allows a Party representing a minority of the people to govern, but that is what we have in South Australia. At the last elections the people endorsed the policy of the Labor Party. They rejected the Liberal Party's policy, yet that Party is in office. The member for Torrens said the Labor Party was the discredited Party at the last election, but it was the Liberal Party that was discredited.

Mr. TAPPING (Semaphore)—I support the measure. Thirteen members on this side have spoken in support of it and until this afternoon the debate was on a high standard. I was disappointed and disgusted by the oration delivered by the member for Chaffey. I believe members on both sides have endeavoured to keep the debate on a high plane, but the member for Chaffey indulged in a discourse that had no relation to the Bill. He was responsible for unpleasant feelings that could have been avoided. His speech reminded me of the proceedings at Canberra. The debates there have been reduced to a low level because they are broadcast. Because we do not broadcast our proceedings the member for Chaffey would be ill-advised to continue in the way he did. He took up the cudgels on behalf of the member for Stanley in referring to a statement by the member for Hindmarsh about a deceased friend and former member, Mr. Duncan. When the member for Stanley spoke last week he referred to the person that succeeded him on the Land Settlement Committee, but I do not know whether he believed that his successor was the member for Port Pirie. It was actually Mr. Duncan. Mr. Hutchens merely tried to champion the cause of a man who has departed but who had an excellent character and who was held in high esteem.

Mr. Quirke—I called him an estimable gentleman.

Mr. TAPPING—I think the honourable member later said the person who succeeded him would not know the difference between a cauliflower and a sunflower. That was most unjust, and a reflection on a person who could not defend himself. I commend the member for Hindmarsh for defending a worthy former member.

Mr. Quirke—No defence was needed, because there was nothing to defend.

Mr. TAPPING—There was, for the honourable member cast unwarranted reflection on Mr. Duncan. The member for Chaffey again tried to pit country against city, and I repeat my strong objection to this attitude. It is the duty of members of Parliament, whether in the Federal or the State sphere, to work together for the common interests of the people. If we adopt a pin-pricking attitude by pitting country against city we shall uproot the Parliamentary institution. During his remarks Mr. Macgillivray referred to the pre-selection of candidates by the Labor Party for Parliamentary election, but I believe he has no conception of the procedure adopted by my Party. He said it was dominated by the trade union element, but when I was selected in 1946 by my Party I was not a member of a trade union, though a member of a local committee. I was opposed by five members of trade unions for pre-selection. That gives the lie direct to Mr. Macgillivray's assertion that Labor candidates must have the backing of the trade union movement to get into Parliament. The political wing of the Australian Labor Party comprises trade unionists and sub-branch members as well.

Mr. Hutchens—The members for Gawler, Prospect, Victoria, and Norwood are not trade unionists.

Mr. TAPPING—Mr. Macgillivray made no reference to the pre-selection of candidates by the Liberal Party. I do not know how the Liberal Party selects candidates, but I think it proceeds on much the same lines as does the Labor Party. He said that the Bill was not of much value because it made no mention of an amendment of the Electoral Act. I can assure members, if they have any doubt, that unless the Bill is passed there is no hope of amending that Act. I think the member for Chaffey knew that, but pretended ignorance. I support the measure because I believe it is equitable and fair to the people of the State. The system my Party enunciates has always been part of the Labor Party's policy, because it stands for electoral justice, and it is not,

as suggested by some honourable members opposite, a newly conceived idea. It has been part of our policy for 20 to 25 years. We believe the people should go to the polls on a system based on equality. Members on this side have made it clear that under the present set-up there has been nothing fair or equitable under the present system since 1938. It is rather remarkable, but true, that though the first election held to elect members of the Assembly was in 1857, the Labor Party has never actually governed this State. It is true that we have had Labor Governments, but they have never actually governed in the true sense of the word because of a hostile Legislative Council.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—I do not think any worth-while proposal has been rejected by the Legislative Council, and I am speaking from long experience.

Mr. TAPPING—I respect the Minister's opinion, but if we had a Labor Government and it sent to the Legislative Council a Bill amending the Workmen's Compensation Act I believe it would be rejected. I appeal to members opposite to give the Bill their serious consideration. I was impressed with the remarks of some members opposite who implied that there was a weakness in the existing set-up. I have in mind the members for Light, Mitcham and Rocky River. They said they would not support the measure, but thought that the existing boundaries needed some revision. In 1950 the Premier took up the cudgels on behalf of the Government benches, and on the same occasion a number of Government supporters took part in the debate. I suggest that because of the interest on this occasion and the sentiments expressed by the three members referred to, the Constitution should be amended to overcome the weakness they mentioned. I ask those honourable members and others to support the second reading and allow the Bill to get in Committee, and then they would have a chance to amend it. If their amendments provided for improvements my Party would be prepared to support them. Some members have said that the Labor Party introduced the Bill so that it would be returned as the Government at the next election. That is not so. It was introduced because it is fair. If it became law it would mean that the people of South Australia could decide which was the better Government for the Treasury benches—one represented by the Labor Party or one represented by the Liberal and Country Party. Under that set-up we

would get the best Government. Election after election the Labor Party is returned to this House as the Opposition. It has been mentioned by other speakers on this side that election returns prove beyond doubt that at the last State election the Labor Party polled over 47,000 votes more than the Liberal Party. The election proved beyond doubt that the people of South Australia want a change of Government.

We have already said that it was the Labor Party which introduced proportional representation for Senate elections. I can recall the time many years ago when there was only one South Australian Labor representative in the Senate, the remaining South Australian representatives being Liberals. When we have that kind of Parliament progress is lacking. The present State Government has been in power too long. If the Bill became law and the Liberal Party enunciated a policy acceptable to the people of South Australia it would be returned to the Treasury benches. During his policy speeches in 1950 and 1953 the Leader of the Opposition made it clear to the people that if his Party were returned as the Government he would immediately proceed to have the electoral laws and the Constitution amended. Therefore, the people were never misled, but told most clearly what would happen if Labor were returned. Clause 16 of the Bill provides that for the purpose of the distribution of the State into electoral districts the Governor may appoint three Commissioners, one of whom shall be the Chief Electoral Officer for the State and one the Surveyor-General, to go into the whole matter thoroughly. That makes it clear that the proposal is divorced from politics. My Party has no desire to arrange the boundaries. That would be the duty of the commissioners.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—Was not a similar commission appointed last time?

Mr. TAPPING—It was somewhat different, because it was given a mandate.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—Would not a commission have a mandate under this proposal?

Mr. TAPPING—The only mandate would be that it should do something that was fair and equitable and divide the State into nine districts with five members each.

Mr. Pattinson—That is a pretty definite instruction.

Mr. TAPPING—At least it savours of democracy and equality. In 1936 there was great disparity between the country and city

electorates, so no comparison could be made between those conditions and the plan now submitted by the Labor Party. When the Premier was speaking on another measure last week he tried to ridicule the Labor Party by referring to what he termed the "Tasmanian debacle." In the near future there will be another election in that State; no doubt the Premier introduced this matter because he realizes that Tasmania works under proportional representation. He tried to suggest that that system showed up in its true light the unsavoury set-up of the Labor suggestion that the Constitution should be amended. I make no apology for the Tasmanian system. I made it clear a little while ago that when we have a Parliament with each Party represented by almost equal numbers we get the best Government. If the position arose in South Australia where the Government had a majority of one in this House the people would derive the best legislation. I do not deery the Tasmanian set-up, but commend it, because it has brought about keen competition in that State's Parliamentary system. The Labor Party's desire is to have an electoral system which could be classed as democratic. We believe that the present set-up for the Legislative Council is most unfair. Is it fair that for a number of years there has been 16 members of the Liberal Party in that Chamber, but only four Labor members? That is the result of the unfair and restricted franchise for that house. Members on this side have already stressed the obvious that our women have been penalized because of their disfranchisement. I have no desire to be dramatic on the matter, but whenever a war occurs, or some other serious position arises, our women always play a noble part, and I think it is our duty to provide the same privileges of voting for them as for men. Because of the present system 75 per cent of the women are disfranchised from voting for the Legislative Council. The Labor Party believes they should have equal rights with the men to vote for that Chamber, that everyone over 21 should be compulsorily enrolled, that voting should be compulsory and that there be only one roll. The Victorian people realized that the position existing in their State was most unfair, and because of the force of public opinion we now find that elections for the Legislative Council in that State are based on democratic principles.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—Why are the people not given a vote for the Legislative Council in New South Wales?



Mr. TAPPING—It is rather obvious that during the debate most of the speakers on the other side have taken us to another State or to other parts of the world.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—You took us to Victoria.

Mr. TAPPING—I was referring to how the voting system applied in that State. I pointed out that the people there realized that the system previously in operation was most unfair. Some Liberal members, when speaking on this Bill, took us to Ireland and other countries, but this Bill centres around South Australia. Women, who play a most important part in our community, and a substantial proportion of males are denied a vote in the Legislative Council. I hope that the people, as a result of their agitation, will eventually impress on the Government that it is necessary to change the present pernicious system of electing the Legislative Council. I was pleased to read in the press that the recent State Liberal Convention agenda contained items concerning electoral boundaries, and, although no decision was reached on those questions, I believe they will be brought up for further consideration at next year's convention. Government members have expressed or implied that Labor has a case in the matter of electoral boundaries, and I therefore make a definite appeal to all members to support the second reading to that the Bill may be further considered in Committee. I support the second reading.

Mr. FLETCHER (Mount Gambier)—This debate has taken my memory back 15 years to the day on which I entered this House as a new member. I recall the abuse which was hurled and the personalities introduced in debate on that day, and I remember vividly my first impressions of this place when there was a majority of Independents and so-called Independents here. On that first afternoon and evening it was a battle of wits to see for which party the Independents would vote. At the 1938 election the people voted solidly against the Party set-up in this House, but, with the passage of time, the Parties, running true to form, have stuck more or less together and only the true Independents have retained their seats. The member for Chaffey and myself have been in this place 15 years, and the member for Ridley for about 20. Both Parties have always put everything they had against the Independents. I regret that personalities have been dragged into this debate. It has been said that Independents have accepted appointments to committees in return for their promise to vote for the Government,

but that is not true and I give the lie direct to any member who says that my vote has ever been bought. I took it as a compliment to my district when I was appointed a member of the Public Works Standing Committee.

I am not in favour of the proposal to set up five-men districts, for the single-electorate system has been a success. Long before becoming a member I had much to do with the members representing Victoria and Albert, and I found that under the multiple electorate system members usually passed the buck. I would approach one member with a problem, and the next time I saw him he would tell me that he had told another member to see to it, but nothing had been done. Single electorates have been successful because the whole of the responsibility for a district rests on one member who must attend to all the affairs in connection with it. In this debate the member for Prospect said that the country was represented by sub-standard members, but I remind members that in 1938 Labor policy was a 30-member House and, in view of the suggested plan for 45 members, it would seem that any low standard in Parliamentary representation must be from the Labor Party's point of view rather than with regard to country members. In pre-election campaigns both Parties have always said that it would be impossible to govern if Independents had the balance of power, but that has been proved wrong, or else the Premier has been a superman, for he carried on in 1944 when he had to depend for support on three Independents.

Mr. Davis—They were always with him.

Mr. FLETCHER—In that Parliament the Labor Party got more of its legislation through with the assistance of Independents than had ever been the case previously. Neither Party can say that the Independent member is of no use, because it has been proved he is useful not only to the Liberal Government, but also to the Labor Opposition. Most Independents started as workers and should know what the worker requires.

Mr. Davis—How often did the Independents vote with the Labor Party when they thought such a vote might defeat the Government?

Mr. FLETCHER—The Independent Party voted for the Labor Party when its proposals were worth supporting.

Mr. Stephens—Is there an Independent Party?

Mr. FLETCHER—We have a Caucus meeting every three years and the electors are the judges. I strongly deprecate the slurs cast on Independents; they are quite uncalled for.

No member can point to anything underhanded that I have done and of which I should feel ashamed. If the electors had not been satisfied with me I would not have been returned. The Labor Party could win an election under the present set-up if it had the type of candidate the electors wanted. I have always supported proportional representation and I will support the second reading. The South Australian Parliament is the equal of any Parliament in Australia in conduct and the way in which legislation is dealt with.

Mr. John Clark—In the way in which it is elected?

Mr. FLETCHER—I cannot see why Labor cannot win an election under the present set-up. If a member, whether Liberal, Labor, or Independent, serves his district properly he will be returned. If I had not done so I would not be here. I support the second reading.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### BUDGET DEBATE.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from October 13. Page 1007.)

Legislative Council, £8,747.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Goodwood)—It is proposed to increase motor taxation, but we should have been told exactly what is proposed, particularly the extent of the increase in relation to registration and drivers' licence fees. Earlier money was appropriated for the Highways Fund, but apparently something has misfired because the money so appropriated could not have been spent in the remaining portion of the year. Why should users of motor vehicles be taxed to a greater extent? At present primary producers receive concessions when registering their vehicles. Under the Treasurer's proposal will those concessions be removed in any way? Will he tell members now or must we wait for the Bill to be introduced? Users of motor vehicles generally are paying now more than their fair share. In the Commonwealth sphere when more revenue is needed excise duties are increased. Recently the Commonwealth Government abolished entertainment tax. I do not know whether the State Government intends to levy such a tax, but it would be one way of getting more revenue.

In this morning's *Advertiser* there is a report that David Murray Limited, Adelaide credit retailers, is considering a further issue of ordinary capital to finance continued rapid expansion of its time payment business. The statement that it is rapidly expanding shows

that the matter should be carefully considered by Parliament. People who acquire goods under this system should be protected, particularly when they pay no deposit. When Commonwealth National Security regulations existed there was a safeguard against high interest rates. Now they have gone the State Government should provide a similar protection, and it should see that when goods are purchased under the time payment system a deposit of at least 10 per cent is paid. I understand that the interest rate charged on this business is from 7½ per cent upwards.

In another debate I said that the Housing Trust had arranged 881 sales of houses where first and second mortgages were necessary. It is not the end of everything to say that the interest payable on the mortgages is about 5½ per cent, because on a loan of about £2,000 the amount to be paid periodically in interest and principal is very large. If the purchasers can keep going for 35 years or so without missing any payments they have an asset, but what do they think when they see that under the time payment system goods can be purchased without any deposit? In these days it is fashionable to have visitors to new homes, and to make a good impression the owners like to have venetian blinds, wall to wall carpets, a motor car in the shed, and many other things, so what must be the temptation to them when they see what can be done under the time payment system? They take advantage of it, whilst being committed to large payments in principal and interest. The prices of some of our primary products are falling and I wonder whether that will affect the economy of the State. We know that world affairs can change from day to day. I think it is essential that the Government should give serious favourable consideration to this matter and that legislation should be introduced to provide that at least 10 per cent of the cost be paid by the purchaser as a deposit. Credit organizations have been set up to finance people in their purchases and although the banks entered into the business in the past it was not looked upon very favourably. However, I think that the banks could take a hand in affairs today in the interests of the people; not that I have very much faith in them in view of certain unfortunate happenings some years ago. I fear that unless something is done by the Government to assist people in this direction we may expect a repetition of those happenings. However, I will leave it at that for the time in the expectation that the Government will give it favourable consideration.

I now wish to deal with a matter in which the University is concerned. On September 22 and 29 I asked questions on notice concerning the filling of a position in the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science and I was rather surprised at the reply I received.

The Hon. T. Playford—The Institute is not run by the University.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—No, but I was on the University Council as the representative of the Labor Party when the present Vice-Chancellor, Mr. Rowe, was appointed.

The Hon. T. Playford—But the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science is not under the University.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—No, but this applicant was doing certain work for the University and in its employ. The reply to my question indicated that he was not appointed because he did not possess the Intermediate Certificate, but it also indicated that he had outstanding qualifications to take that very important position, which would have given him an increase in salary and improved status. However, the former Deputy Chief of Police of India received the appointment. However, even the present Vice-Chancellor did not possess academic qualifications when he was appointed. At that time I did not hold it against him and, on reports submitted, I thought that probably he had qualifications for carrying on the administration of the University. Today, however, I am doubtful whether that was the case and I am wondering whether a further six months' term for this gentleman would be more appropriate. It might be desirable that he should obtain the necessary academic qualifications before continuing in the position of Vice-Chancellor.

Mr. Travers—What qualifications does the honourable member suggest one must have for that position?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—The present Vice-Chancellor does not possess the same academic qualifications as his predecessor. I do not hold it against him, but when he goes out of his way to prevent someone else who is without those qualifications—

The Hon. T. Playford—But he could not prevent an appointment by the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science, which is entirely a different organization.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—If the records were examined possibly the state of affairs revealed would not be very savoury.

Mr. Travers—But why do you suggest that the Vice-Chancellor requires any academic qualifications?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I am judging by his predecessor.

The Hon. T. Playford—But the Vice-Chancellor would have nothing to do with an appointment by the Council of the Institute.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Did the Vice-Chancellor agree to release him?

The Hon. T. Playford—He would not have to agree. The man could give notice. There is no compulsion to stay in a job you do not want.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—But apparently it was reversed in this particular case. I am making a comparison with the academic qualifications of his predecessor.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—That was a part-time appointment; he had academic duties which the present Vice-Chancellor has not.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I still say some unsavoury things were done.

Mr. Travers—What were they?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—No assistance was offered by the Vice-Chancellor to help the rejected applicant over his particular hurdle, and because he did not have this educational qualification he was not appointed.

The Hon. T. Playford—Frequently applicants apply for positions and do not notify their employers that they have applied. Probably he did not even notify the Vice-Chancellor that he was applying.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I do not have to answer that. I did not make that statement and I leave it where it is.

Mr. Travers—Don't you think that you should withdraw that false accusation?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—It is not a question of a false accusation. The honourable member is using those words, not I, but I remind him that it is not long since I was embroiled in some queries over a certain debate I took part in here, and if the honourable member wants to cast aspersions today let us thoroughly understand what we are talking about.

Mr. Travers—That is what I would like to know.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—If the honourable member wants to make something out of this let us be clear on the matter.

The Hon. T. Playford—What does the honourable member mean by "something unsavoury?"

Mr. FRANK WALSH—The lack of a certain standard of education appears to be the excuse for not releasing this applicant for appointment to that position. Whether there was anything else which took place between any department and the Government and the Vice-Chancellor I am not in the position to know, but I have a suspicion that some conversation took place.

The Hon. T. Playford—I do not understand how the department and the Government come into it.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—If the Treasurer does not understand I am not here to convince him because I know how difficult it can be if the Treasurer does not desire to be convinced.

Mr. Travers—But if you made the false assertion that the Vice-Chancellor holds a position that he is not academically qualified to hold why not withdraw it?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I have not said what the honourable member is trying to suggest I did say. Does he want to go on with it, because he is not going to put words into my mouth that I have not used. I will refer to what *Hansard* believed the honourable member said on another occasion. If *Hansard* can report speeches I am entitled to refer to it.

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member will not be in order in quoting, in Committee, *Hansard* reports of proceedings that took place in the House. We are in Committee now.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—And debating what?

The CHAIRMAN—The Estimates.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—You will not permit me to quote anything from *Hansard*?

The CHAIRMAN—Not on any Bill that is not under discussion now.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I am not speaking of a Bill.

The CHAIRMAN—What does the honourable member intend to quote?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Some remarks made by the member for Mitcham when speaking on the Address in Reply.

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member would not be in order, for we are in Committee, and the Address in Reply debate was in the House.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Then I would be out of order in quoting, "Since the last session we have had a general election for this Parliament?"

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member may only quote from *Hansard* speeches made on the matter referred to the Committee.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Do you mean to say that I am not permitted to refer to any speeches so as to strengthen my argument?

The CHAIRMAN—I did not say that. The honourable member may only refer to a debate that has taken place on the subject before the Committee. Then he may quote from *Hansard*. Standing Order No. 143 states:—

No member shall allude to any debate of the same session, upon a question or Bill not being then under discussion, except by the indulgence of the House for personal explanations.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I have no personal explanation to offer, so I must now refer to the *Financial Statement*. I wish to speak about the Electoral Department, but I am not permitted to say what the member for Mitcham said on another occasion.

The CHAIRMAN—The honourable member can say what the member for Mitcham said, but he must not quote from *Hansard*.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I think the member for Mitcham said that he believed the Australian Labor Party had great confidence in him because it permitted him to be returned unopposed at the last election. He went on to say that he could be excused for a little vanity for having occupied the Speaker's Chair for some time, but I had hoped the member for Mitcham would not allow his vanity to carry him away. I can assure the honourable member that the Australian Labor Party did not have the greatest confidence in him. He was not opposed for two reasons. Firstly, the Labor Party considered electoral reform was one of its chief concerns, and that it would be waste of money to oppose the member for Mitcham at the last election. Secondly, and I hope the honourable member will not take this as a personal reflection on him, it believed that if he were returned unopposed his vanity would be satisfied and that he would be able to achieve the ambition of retiring from public life at the end of his term undefeated. It must be remembered that the member for Mitcham had a serious illness not long before the election, and after three years he could consider retiring in his own interests.

Mr. Brookman—Wouldn't it be fairer to attack the member for Mitcham when he is in a position to reply?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I am not making any attack on the member for Mitcham. I ask the Chairman whether he agrees that I have not made any attack?

The CHAIRMAN—I will call the honourable member to order when he is out of order.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Thank you, sir. That shows there was no need for Mr. Brookman's interjection. This is the first opportunity I have had since the Address in Reply debate to

refer to the Electoral Act. The amount of £25 is paid annually to each returning officer. There are 39 such officers for the House of Assembly electorates, and five for the Legislative Council divisions. I believe these officers work under particular hardship. Those for the electorates of Unley and Murray had to conduct a recount of votes. They must have received a large number of postal and absent votes, and they were responsible for checking them with the electoral rolls. They were also responsible for the safe custody of the ballot papers. This is a serious matter. I suggest it would be more appropriate to safeguard their interests, particularly in the metropolitan area, by having late votes held in custody at the Electoral Department. Only 70 votes separated the successful from the unsuccessful candidate in the Unley election. The votes had to be checked and rechecked and the fact that the recount gave the same result as the original showed how conscientious our returning officers are.

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

Mr. FRANK WALSH—In introducing the question of payment to returning officers I had in mind whether, in the metropolitan area where they had to deal with large numbers of both postal and absent votes, some assistance could be provided for them. Many of our suburban police officers have to do so much work away from their stations that often their wives are called upon to perform certain of their duties. I was wondering whether the Government and the Commissioner of Police had considered the question of creating larger zones with larger police stations so that officers could be available continuously with the assistance of modern transport equipment. With the use of motor transport and the radio a number of the smaller stations could be closed and the larger stations manned 24 hours a day. That would appear to be a practicable system to overcome disabilities now apparent.

From the question asked by the Treasurer of the Speaker this afternoon concerning an amendment of Standing Orders, are we to understand that the police and the courts are to take precedence over Parliament in regard to certain discussions? That certainly would not be desirable. Would not this be interfering with the freedom of expression in Parliament? Why should a member be prevented by any Standing Order from such freedom of speech? The Director of Tuberculosis in

this State, not long after his appointment and without having full knowledge of what was being done here to treat this disease, was selected to go overseas to gain further knowledge. One would have thought that one of the senior Hospital Department officers would have been selected. The present secretary of the department has done yeoman service, and it would have been to the department's advantage if a man of his type had been selected to go overseas to gain knowledge of hospital administration. Since I have been a member of this House I cannot recall such an officer making a world tour for this purpose.

The most important topic of discussion at the moment is uranium production. The value of this substance to the State is probably best known to the Premier. One recalls the gold rushes of the earlier days in this State and other parts of the Commonwealth, and visualizes the numerous large diggings with their attendant mounds from which gold and other metals have been extracted. Are we to have a repetition of such conditions associated with uranium production? Assuming that the Premier's forecast is correct that uranium will be used before many years for industrial purposes, I should like to know whether this method of providing power will result in increased costs not only to industrial users but to domestic users. Will this power be readily available to plants now operating? I hope the Premier will be able to give the House further information on this most important phase.

The member for Glenelg has asked the Treasurer questions regarding the erection of the South-Western Districts Hospital, and I would like the Treasurer to indicate the future policy of the Housing Trust, not only with regard to the area reserved for that hospital, but also with regard to other areas purchased but not being used by it. I have in mind particularly an area purchased from the Pethick family, which they use for the growing of table fruits. I understand that that land was formerly held on a lease of four years which has expired and that it is now being held on a lease of 12 months which will expire next June. If the Government does not intend to commence the construction of the hospital, for, say, five years, surely the Pethick family could be offered a lease for five years rather than a short term lease of 12 months.

Mr. Pattinson—Surely you don't think it will be five years before the hospital is built. That is a defeatist attitude.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I am prepared to forecast that the Government will not erect the hospital before June, 1955.

Mr. Pattinson—Then we will have to see what the members for Goodwood and Glenelg can do.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I am prepared, as I have always been, to join the member for Glenelg in approaches to Cabinet Ministers on matters of vital importance to constituents in our districts. I remind members that it was an approach by Mr. Pattinson, two medical practitioners and myself that resulted in the formulation of plans for the construction of the Ashford Community Hospital. It is a long time since land was acquired for the purpose of building the proposed South-Western Districts Hospital, and the land need not have been left unused for all that time. There are 26,470 electors on the roll in my district, and I understand that the number of electors in the Glenelg district would be about the same, so there is an urgent need for the hospital. Much building is proceeding in adjacent suburbs and areas on the western side of the South Road about six miles from Adelaide are being set aside for industrial and residential purposes. The occupation of those areas will further emphasize the necessity for the early construction of the hospital. After making early representations with the member for Glenelg to the appropriate Minister on this matter, I trust the Government will extend the courtesy of inviting me to take part in the final discussions and that cold water will not be thrown in my face as was the case with regard to the Ashford Community Hospital, when apparently it was thought advantageous that I be kept out at the behest of certain Cabinet Ministers.

The Treasurer's recent reply to Mr. Pattinson's question indicates that it is not intended to proceed with the construction of the South-Western Districts Hospital next June when Pethick's lease expires, and I would appreciate an indication as to when it will be commenced, so that the term of the lease can be increased and the land effectively worked as a fruit block rather than left to go to rack and ruin as has been the case with so many similar blocks. However, although I am not optimistic on this point, I would prefer that after June next year an immediate commencement be made on the construction of the hospital.

It is time that the system of averaging Housing Trust rentals was abolished. The Government cannot go on importing thousands of prefabricated homes which it is impossible to let at an economic rental. The price of £2,750 at

which some of these homes have been sold is too high even though buyers have been helped by the trust's requiring only a low deposit and offering a second mortgage. Some of these homes have been let at a rental of over £3 a week, but that is far too high. The erection of such homes in semi-detached units would have made possible lower economic rents. Why should their cost be taken into account in averaging the rentals of all trust homes, some of which were built in 1938 and rented at 12s. 6d. a week to tenants on the basic wage?

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—Those homes were rented at 12s. 6d. a week and not sold.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I am referring to the amortization period. I want to know whether the imported timber-framed houses are to be amortized in 30, 35 or 40 years. If the period is 35 years and the rent was 12s. 6d. a week when they were first occupied, why is the averaging taking place now that the rent is 27s. a week? Legislation was introduced earlier to increase rents because of the additional sales tax which had to be paid on building material, but not in our wildest dreams did we expect the rents to be increased to such an extent. If a rent of 27s. a week is to be considered, the amortization period will be only about 20 years. The Premier proposes to provide homes for aged people at a rental of about £1 a week, but would it not have been better to renovate the early rental homes when they become vacant and re-let them to aged pensioners at 12s. 6d. a week? How far can the trust go in purchasing land at high prices? In some cases it has paid £1,000 an acre for land on which to build timber-frame houses for letting at £2 or £2 5s. a week, or to build homes for sale at about £3,000, with both first and second mortgages being necessary. These are matters which need further investigation but my proposal in the first days of this session was not accepted. The best administration can always stand a little investigation. The Government should recognize some of its responsibilities to the people who live in trust homes. Perhaps as this debate progresses and the various lines are considered I shall be able to get further information on the points I have raised.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—Wherever the British Parliamentary system operates, irrespective of Party, members value their Parliamentary privileges. They are not subject to rebuke by a court.

Mr. Shannon—In other words, members should enjoy immunity.

Mr. LAWN—Parliamentary members should be free to carry out fearlessly their duties to the people they represent, and not subject to pressure groups or outside influences. I hope each member will see that he continues to enjoy his Parliamentary privileges and that he carries out his duties properly without being subject to rebuke by a magistrate or the judiciary.

Mr. Shannon—That is going a long way.

Mr. LAWN—I think it is impertinent for a magistrate to rebuke a member of Parliament for something he said in this place. The subject has been discussed on many occasions, and the following is to be found on page 50 of the Fourteenth Edition of May's *Parliamentary Practice*:—

Case of Sir John Eliot and others—The last occasion on which the privilege of freedom of speech was directly impeached was in the celebrated case of Sir John Eliot, Denzil Hollis and Benjamin Valentine, against whom a judgment was obtained in the King's Bench, in the 5th Charles I, for their conduct in Parliament. On the 8th July, 1641, the House of Commons declared all the proceedings in the King's Bench to be against the law and privilege of Parliament. The judgment had been given against the privilege of Parliament, upon the false assumption that the Act of the 4th Henry 8 had been simply a private statute for the relief of Strode, and had no general operation. To condemn this construction of the plain words of the Statute, the Commons resolved, 12th and 13th November, 1667, "That the Act of Parliament in the 4th Henry 8, commonly intituled 'An Act concerning Richard Strode' is a general law," extending to all members of both Houses of Parliament; "and is a declaratory law of the ancient and necessary rights and privileges of Parliament," and "That the judgment given, 5 Car., against Sir John Eliot, Denzil Hollis and Benjamin Valentine, in the King's Bench, was an illegal judgment, and against the freedom and privilege of Parliament." The Lords, at a conference agreed to the resolutions of the Commons; and, upon a writ of error, the judgment of the Court of King's Bench was reversed by the House of Lords on 15th April, 1668. "One cause of error stated was that words spoken in Parliament could only be judged in Parliament and not in the King's Bench; another was that two offences were dealt with by the judgment of the King's Bench, the assault on the Speaker, and the utterance of seditious words in Parliament; and it was alleged that even if the assault was proper to be dealt with by the Court of King's Bench, the words spoken in Parliament could not be dealt with out of Parliament."

From that it is clear that words spoken in Parliament cannot be dealt with by any outside person or tribunal.

Mr. Shannon—With such protection we should be very careful.

Mr. LAWN—I do not want to play Party politics in this matter. We should carry out our duties with decorum, and have regard to the matter under discussion, the feelings of others, and what might result from statements we make.

The Hon. T. Playford—You will agree that it is not our duty to pass judgment on a matter before a court?

Mr. LAWN—In reply to a question I asked about the action of a court the Premier said that the Government would wait until it had seen the judgment and the reasons for the judgment. I have often heard it said, "Wait until we hear the facts." The magistrate concerned in this case did not wait until he knew the facts. He said he wrote a letter to the Attorney-General on a press reference. When the member raised the matter in this House he said, "I am not concerned about whether the hotel should be built there or not." In raising the question here he was not concerned with the question that was before the magistrate.

The Hon. T. Playford—The member said that the persons appearing before the court were committing perjury.

Mr. LAWN—He did not say that.

The Hon. T. Playford—That is what *Hansard* reports him as saying—that they were being induced to commit perjury; that the witnesses were not telling the truth.

Mr. Travers—Will the honourable member say that someone told him that, and when and where.

Mr. LAWN—The honourable member said that he was not concerned with the proceedings before the court, but that on the advice of their solicitors the agents had offered the women concerned free taxi fares and attractive meals as an enticement to appear before the court to commit perjury.

The Hon. T. Playford—Exactly.

Mr. Shannon—That is a serious charge.

Mr. LAWN—One could go into the statements issued by the solicitor and the agents' advertisements. They admit that they offered taxis and meals and reimbursement, but they claim that that is in accordance with law. The honourable member did not mention the merits of the case to be dealt with by the magistrate, but he rightly brought the possibility of perjury to the notice of the Premier, and the Premier did the right thing by saying

it was a grave matter and that he would have it investigated by the Criminal Investigation Branch.

The Hon. T. Playford—The honourable member would surely agree that that is a direct accusation of perjury (which is a criminal offence) and a very serious statement for any member to make.

Mr. LAWN—I agree.

The Hon. T. Playford—And it has a very serious bearing on the decision of the court if it comes under the notice of the court.

Mr. LAWN—If the magistrate did not know that the people were committing perjury he would give his judgment on the facts known to him and he could not be blamed for the fact that the people gave perjured evidence. It was not an attack on the magistrate, but an attempt to see that justice was done, and we have not yet received the report of the C.I.B. to know whether the member was right or wrong.

The Hon. T. Playford—That will come in due course.

Mr. LAWN—At least the magistrate should have waited to ascertain whether perjured evidence was given before him, but in any case had he the right to take the action he did? Again I quote from May's *Parliamentary Practice*, 14th Edition, page 123:—

Reflections upon Members.—Analogous to molestation of members on account of their behaviour in Parliament are speeches and writings reflecting upon their conduct as members. On 26th February, 1701, the House of Commons resolved that to print or publish any libels reflecting upon any member of the House for or relating to his service therein, was a high violation of the rights and privileges of the House. Written imputation, as affecting a member of Parliament, may amount to breach of privilege, without, perhaps, being libels at common law (t) but to constitute a breach of privilege a libel upon a member must concern the character or conduct of a member in that capacity, and the conduct or language on which the libel is based must be actions performed or words uttered in the actual transaction of the business of the House.

The Hon. T. Playford—The honourable member will see that anyone who libels a member of Parliament can be charged in the court because he has not the protection of the House, but anyone outside who may suffer an injustice through statements made in the House has no redress in the courts.

Mr. LAWN—I understand that the Government is carrying out some investigations into the member's statement, which was made in all good faith upon information given him, and I know that on the subsequent day at least one other person got in touch with him and said it was true and that he could use his name.

Mr. Travers—Was he prepared to give the names, and when and where he met someone who suborned the witnesses?

Mr. LAWN—In view of that last quotation from May there is no doubt that the magistrate committed contempt of Parliament, for it makes it clear that no writings or speeches shall be made attacking a member in his capacity as a member of the House. The magistrate was going beyond his rights in saying that the member was improper in mentioning the matter. Then he said:—

It is unnecessary, I know, for me to refer to the dangers inherent in political comments being made on cases which are at that moment before the courts, and of the importance, in our system, of the courts being independent and impartial. However, I invite your attention to the matter as apparently the dangers are either not shared or not appreciated by all members.

I suggest that the magistrate does not appreciate the privileges of the House and that the member did not transgress any of its privileges, and that he can be dealt with only by this House. I conclude on this subject by saying that if such things as the statements of that magistrate continue this will become a Police State. In the British Commonwealth of Nations, although we have our differences of opinion regarding politics, at least we claim that we are a free Parliament, and that members have the right to freely express their views on behalf of the people they represent, and it would be a contradiction of the British Parliamentary system if any of the rights and privileges of the House were interfered with.

Now I come to this the 15th consecutive Budget that the Treasurer has introduced, and the 20th consecutive Budget introduced by a Liberal Party Government. They have had 20 years of unfettered control of the State, because they have had control of the Legislative Council as well as this House.

The Hon. T. Playford—I hadn't noticed it.

Mr. LAWN—I would be surprised to learn that the Liberal Party did not control the Legislative Council, and that is likely to continue while it has the electoral system by the throat as it has today. Let us see what they have done for the State in that 20 years—and I claim that it is a blot upon the political history of South Australia, although only what we would expect from a Liberal Party Government. In 1933, when the Liberal Government came into office, the Premier then being Sir Richard Butler, the public debt was—

The Hon. T. Playford—Was that just after we had had the Premier's plan?



Mr. Shannon—Mr. Hill's plan.

Mr. LAWN—The public debt was then £103,707,332.

The Hon. T. Playford—Was not that the time when Mr. Niemeyer came out to advise us?

Mr. LAWN—The Treasurer would know more about him than I would. The annual interest Bill was £4,243,908 and the debt per capita was £178 10s. 3d.

The Hon. T. Playford—And we had the lowest standard of living in Australia.

Mr. LAWN—In 1953 the public debt was £194,853,088. The annual interest on that was £5,991,433 and the per capita debt £260. We see, therefore, that the public debt increased in those 20 years by over £91,000,000, and the per capita debt by £81 10s.

The Hon. T. Playford—And bank deposits went up by £100 a head.

Mr. LAWN—Now let us examine the surpluses and deficits.

Mr. Shannon—Surely the honourable member has not finished on the financial side. Tell us what assets we have for this extra debt.

Mr. LAWN—Their record hurts them, doesn't it? They don't like to hear it. Over the past 20 years surpluses amounted to £1,989,098 and deficits to £2,333,882, so the excess of deficits over surpluses was £344,784. In that period there were seven surpluses, eight deficits and five balanced Budgets, and I want to say something more about them. In the years 1944-45 and 1945-46 income and expenditure balanced. In the last three years of the Playford administration we find that in 1950-51 there was a surplus of £229,529 but that was carried forward into next year's revenue, so that we did not have an actual surplus for that year. At the end of the next year, 1951-52, although we started off with that credit of £229,529 we finished with a surplus of only £89,382, so had the previous year's surplus been applied in accordance with the Public Finance Act there would have been another deficit in 1951-52. In the year 1952-53 we brought forward £89,382 and finished the year with a surplus of only £24,949, so again we would have had a deficit had the surplus of 1951-52 been accounted for in accordance with the Public Finance Act. That last surplus of £24,949 has again been carried forward into the present Budget. During the last three years we have only just balanced our accounts; we have shown neither a surplus nor a deficit. However, if the Treasurer was to submit to the people a balance sheet of the Liberal

Party's misdeeds over the past 20 years it would show the public debt has increased by over £91,000,000, that the debt per capita increased by £81 10s., and in the interest bill by £1,747,525, together with total Budget deficits of £344,784, yet we find the daily newspapers, particularly the *Advertiser*, boosting the Playford Budgets. The Government Statist recently supplied members with the Pocket Year Book for 1953 setting out interesting figures. The four main items under per capita expenditure are railways £17 18s. 10d., interest and exchange £6 19s. 3d., education £6 1s. 7d., and public health £4 5s. 8d. Interest and exchange is the second highest per capita payment.

Mr. Jennings—What do we get for it?

Mr. LAWN—I would like to know. I am not continually asking for expenditure on my district, but many other members are. Sometimes the Government says, "We have the money but not the manpower and materials," and in 12 months it says, "We have the manpower and materials but no money." I do not know where the money went, because no money that I know of goes out of the country. Many men, of all political beliefs, have toured the world in recent years. I have asked some of them about their travels and they told me that in the countries that were supposed to have been devastated during the war, particularly in Japan (which was alleged to have been blown up by an atomic bomb), cities and towns have been practically rebuilt. Australia suffered no real war damage, yet we cannot find money to carry out developmental works. The Snowy River scheme has had to be curtailed and millions of pounds worth of machinery is lying idle because the financial system of the Liberal Party cannot find the money, manpower or materials. The Curtin Government did not put forward such an excuse, but got on with the job of winning the war. Many of the factories it erected for war purposes are today being used by private industry.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—They were erected by the Menzies Government in the early stages of the war.

Mr. LAWN—No. I was secretary of an organization at that time and together with the managements of big industries in South Australia we approached Mr. Menzies to get some work for this State, for our factories were idle and many people were unemployed. Soon after the Liberal Party sacked Mr. Menzies, Mr. Curtin became Prime Minister. He put Mr. Norman Makin in charge of the department concerned, and many factories were

erected and put into production: The people will have to call on his services again next year by electing him Federal member for Sturt. Section 30 of the Public Finance Act states:—

Any surplus disclosed in the revenue accounts of the Treasurer in any financial year, subsequent to the financial year ended on the 30th day of June, 1936, may be applied, without any further authority than this Act, to the reduction of such debits in the Loan accounts of the Treasurer as the Treasurer thinks fit.

I realize that the Act says "may be applied," but it was intended by the legislature that the money should be so applied.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—When was that Act passed?

Mr. LAWN—In 1936.

The Hon. T. Playford—That provision was inserted by a Liberal Government.

Mr. LAWN—Yes, and the member for Burnside did not know that, or he would not have asked his question. In 1936 we were coming out of the depression years, when considerable deficits were incurred. The Liberal Government thought that any surpluses should be used in writing off accumulated deficits, but it was left to the discretion of the Government to apply surpluses in that way. The Treasurer is in the habit of carrying forward surpluses into the next year's accounts, so we are not finishing with surpluses and no money is left to reduce the debts we have built up. There has been much criticism recently in the Federal Parliament about the Commonwealth Government's financial methods. That Parliament has a special committee to review departmental activities, but we have not. I am not criticizing any departmental expenditure now, but the Government has failed the people in not using surpluses achieved in times of prosperity to write off some of our public debts and thereby reduce our interest commitments. This would be a great help if we had to face adverse years. In his financial statement the Treasurer said:—

Under the provisions of the Financial Agreement contributions are made annually by the Commonwealth and State Governments to the National Debt Sinking Fund. These contributions are used for the purchase and redemption of Commonwealth Stock, Bonds, and Debentures. The moneys paid to and earned by the commission on behalf of this State during 1952-53 amounted to £1,836,000, made up as follows:—

Contributions by Commonwealth	£ 376,000
Contributions by State . . . .	1,451,000
Interest earned by the fund . .	9,000

On June 30, 1952, the commission held on behalf of this State £312,000 which, added to the income, made a total of £2,148,000 available to the commission for use on behalf of the

State pursuant to the National Debt Commission Act. During the year, the commission purchased and redeemed securities with a face value of £1,548,000 at a cost of £1,428,000, leaving a balance of moneys in the hands of the commission at June 30, 1953, of £720,000.

The Treasurer claims that the commission has saved this State £120,000, but that means some small investors have lost that amount. The market prices of stocks and bonds have been juggled at the gambling dens in the various States. Some people are from time to time forced to sell their stock, and they usually incur losses. However, the banks are never caught in this way. The commission buys when people are forced to sell at a loss, but this does not reflect credit on any Government, whether Liberal or Labor. The market prices of Government stocks and bonds should be stabilized. If they are not the National Debt Sinking Fund should be used for the purpose of protecting small investors from losses on realization of their stocks. Government bonds should remain at face value, for the investors rallied to the call of the nation when the country needed funds. The Eighteenth Security Loan is now open for subscription, and we are appealing to the people to lend their money. Many small investors will have to sell their stocks before they mature as a result of the capitalistic system. It is wrong to fleece these people and give them less than they lent the nation when it needed it. On page 3 of the Treasurer's famous document he says:—

The moderate percentage increase in estimating expenditure for 1953-54, compared with the other figures, after allowing for some small expansion of Government services, indicates that the dangerous inflationary spiral has been substantially checked and that the price structure is becoming much more stable.

Neither the State nor the Federal Government, or both combined, can claim credit for having stopped the inflationary spiral, but once again the worker has to make the contribution to stabilize our economy. We have an arbitration system which the workers have always claimed has operated one way. About two years ago Chief Judge Sir Raymond Kelly, who should have known better, wrote to employer interests and several of the bigger unions, suggesting that there should be a conference between them to consider a 14-point programme he had prepared, the object of which was to stabilize economy and stop inflation. He signed that letter "W. R. Kelly." Included in those points was the suggestion that the workers should work so many hours overtime at ordinary rates of pay, and also that there should be an abolition of the quarterly adjustment of the basic

wage. Naturally that conference proved abortive, because the employees were not prepared to give up the 40-hour week, or the quarterly wage adjustments, which are always three months behind in any case. No-one could agree to anything. The employers made some very caustic remarks and the conference broke down. The unions predicted that the employers would file application to the court, and that is what has happened. Mr. Justice Wright, who was not requested by the Chief Justice to sit upon the bench, had been most outspoken against the abolition of quarterly adjustments, and therefore Chief Judge Kelly did not want him to sit on this case. The court has forced the workers to make a contribution towards the elimination of the inflationary spiral by stopping any further increases in wages, although a quarter's increase is almost due to them. No-one, other than the Commonwealth Statistician or the Commonwealth Arbitration Court, knows what the increase would have been in November. Under normal conditions this figure would have been released some time this month. I shall submit figures showing what the workers have lost over the years because of the three-month lag in quarterly adjustments. During the four quarters of 1940 they lost for this reason £1,260,000; in 1941, £1,429,000; in 1942, £2,782,000; in 1943, £1,368,000; in 1946, £742,000; in 1947, £1,695,000; in 1948, £4,430,000; and in 1949, £4,564,000. Then we come to the years of the Liberal Government administration, which was to put value back into the pound and stop inflation. It seemed the longer the Menzies Government remained in office the worse the position became. In 1950 the workers lost £6,359,000; in 1951, £19,760,000; and in 1952, £13,610,000. The total losses over the period from 1940 to 1952 amounted to £57,999,000.

Mr. Fred Walsh—The people represented by those sitting opposite benefited at least to that extent.

Mr. LAWN—That is so, and then they complain about the security of tenure for investors, the 40-hour week and many other things. Everything is stacked their way. So, this Government cannot claim any credit for any halting of the inflationary spiral. I have not noticed it, and neither have my wife and children. If we believe the press and the Treasurer we must believe that prosperity is still with us, that inflation has ceased and everything will be rosy in the garden henceforth. I am always optimistic, but on this occasion I am afraid we shall have to wait and see. If the forecast of the Treasurer eventuates because of any drop

in world prices, I do not know whether his Government will once again claim credit. Any halt in the inflationary spiral will be only as a result of the wage pegging by the Commonwealth Arbitration Court. One has not noticed any anxiety by the Government to ensure that prices are pegged at the June figures, as with the basic wage. There have been considerable price increases since then, but no attempt by the Government to safeguard the workers' pound.

As I have criticized the administration of the State over the past 20 years, I shall now offer what I suggest should be the policy adopted by the Government in the interests of the people, and not of the section it represents—big business. Firstly, I suggest that the Government should embark upon a policy of progressive taxation of unimproved land values, and secondly that there should be an amendment of the Federal financial agreement to secure an equitable adjustment of Federal and State finances, the elimination of public borrowing and the utilization of national credit. This policy has been enunciated on behalf of the Opposition by Mr. O'Halloran on more than one occasion during the past three years.

Mr. MICHAEL (Light)—I congratulate the Treasurer on his fifteenth consecutive Budget. Over a period of difficult times the Government has done a good job in bringing down Budgets which generally serve the purpose as well as it is possible in these days of high costs. In most cases it has been possible for the Treasurer to supply departments with a little more money than they had the previous year, and thus enable them to provide services similar to those of recent years. The subject of water reticulation gives me great concern. Mr. O'Halloran said the Government, by supplying water in certain areas, was making valuable land more valuable and that the people who were really benefiting were those whose land was appreciating in value because of such services. In my district there are a number of comparatively small farms to which farmers are unable to get water reticulated because of the huge cost. That is a serious matter and I know of cases where men have sold their holdings to big landholders because they were unable to get a water supply. Members representing older settled districts know of places where, say, a dozen farms have been left out of earlier reticulation schemes and now it is impossible for water to be supplied to them except at an excessive cost. Every effort should be made to find some cheaper method of

reticulation. Settlers have asked me whether, if they did the work, that would help, but I believe it would only help slightly for the main factors involved in the cost of reticulation are the materials and the fact that the work has to be done by skilled people. In one case in my district I was able to arrange for the settlers to do the work and they did it to the great satisfaction of the department. That sort of thing should be encouraged. The member for Flinders suggested the use of galvanized iron rather than cast iron pipes, and I think that suggestion should be considered with a view to giving every possible assistance to landholders. It is most essential that people who are prepared to carry on mixed farming on small holdings should be given great consideration with regard to their water supplies.

I am pleased to see that the Estimates contains a line for £20,000 to be spent on the reticulation of electricity to country areas. That is in addition to the line for expenditure to assist councils supplying electricity within their areas. Throughout the older settled areas there are small townships with a group of people but no large industry, and I am satisfied that it is not possible, in view of present costs, to give those people electricity supplies without some financial assistance. One of the main reasons for this Government taking over the supply of electricity was to enable reticulation to the more scattered parts, and I am pleased to know that the Government is moving in that direction. I am looking forward to assistance being given to these people who, because of their isolation, are unable to meet the full costs of electricity connections. Such assistance will be the means of giving them the amenities which they deserve at a cost not much greater than that charged people in larger towns. I hope it will be possible to extend such services and give assistance to a wider section of people than would be possible with the £20,000 to be made available this year.

I am concerned about the high cost of education. I believe in giving everyone the opportunity to be educated, and provided they are qualified to take up certain avenues of education our young people should not be denied that opportunity merely because their parents are not able to provide it. Last night the member for Gawler took to task the member for Flinders for some of his remarks, but I understood the member for Flinders to say, not that we are spending too much money on education, but rather that we were providing too much education. We are spending 12½ per cent

of our Budget total on education and we should be careful because, if our national income falls, we will find it extremely difficult to find the money. I feel that the member for Gawler misinterpreted the remarks of the member for Flinders, and, although I recognize that the member for Gawler has a sound knowledge of our educational system and I am always prepared to listen to him when he speaks on education, I feel that perhaps on this occasion he may not have been able to see the wood for the trees and that his outlook has not allowed him to put education in its right perspective.

The member for Flinders suggested that councils should not do work for the Highways Department. I do not know the conditions applying to councils in his district, but in my district they are able to buy expensive plant with money provided by the Highways Department, which enables them to do their own work much more cheaply and quickly and to employ larger gangs. They have not enough work to keep their employees fully occupied all the year, so for the Highways Department they work on roads in their own district and provide continuous work for their employees. It is good when councils work in this way.

Mr. Pearson—I said that they should not neglect their own work.

Mr. MICHAEL—In the last few years in my district the work has not been neglected. The councils have done work for the Highways Department, acquired modern plant and kept their employees continuously at work.

Mr. Corcoran—The Highways Department contributes a substantial portion of the cost of plant.

Mr. MICHAEL—Yes, on much better terms than the councils themselves could get it. Last night Mr. Hawker referred to cattle coming down from the northern parts of Australia and quoted a report by a Mr. Beattie. I commend him for bringing this matter forward again. If we can get cattle to come down from the north it will assist our railways and the cattle will be brought to a nearer market and a more suitable place for the processing of meat. I have made a number of trips into the interior of Australia. If any member wants to get away from the winter in the south for several weeks I suggest that he go north and enjoy delightful weather, and in addition he will get an outlook on life that we know little about down here. Railways in that area are most important. Mr. Hawker referred to the railways advocated by the Australian Meat

Board and Mr. Beattie. Earlier in the Address in Reply debate Mr. Travers referred to the matter. In the interests of the cattle industry and South Australia the north-south line should be completed as soon as possible, and there should be a line from Marree to Goyder's Lagoon. If there were a line from Dajarra to the Barkley Tablelands and from Dajarra to Boulia cattle could be brought to wonderful fattening country, and then to South Australia by means of the line from Marree to Goyder's Lagoon. Beattie has said that the Wallaroo district is a place suitable for meat processing. I trust that the Government and the cattle interests will do all possible to proceed with this necessary development because it will pay dividends.

I was interested in the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition about soil conservation. He referred to what is done in the United States of America, which country I think led the way in modern soil conservation methods. We have had a period of good seasons and high prices for our primary products and because of that people are not so concerned about conserving soil, but we may again run into bad seasons and to meet circumstances then we should do all possible to conserve the soil. Mr. Herriot has done much good work in this matter, but he cannot do all that should be done. We must continue to instil into the minds of the people the advantages of soil conservation. The Leader of the Opposition attributed many virtues to the Chifley Government and said that many ills have resulted from the actions of the present Commonwealth Government. I do not mind his holding those views if he thinks they are right, but such statements should not be accepted lightly. The inflation we have had in recent years is a matter of great concern and it was brought about by many things, but Mr. Chifley's failure to bring the Australian pound into line with the English pound when the opportunity came in 1949 caused a 25 per cent inflation. After the Menzies Government came into power, the need for defence was brought forward at a conference of the British Commonwealth of Nations and the Prime Minister came back and told his Cabinet just how things stood. It was then decided to embark upon a large-scale plan of defence. I do not think anyone would say that we did not pull our weight. The fact that we had a very large defence programme was in itself inflationary, and this came about unexpectedly; nobody had forecast the need for defence at that time.

At this time another remarkable thing happened which the people who are supposed to know these things had no indication would occur, that is, the very steep rise in wool prices in 1951. That was the greatest inflationary factor that has ever occurred in Australia. But for the large amount of money which has come into this country for wool in recent years it would not have been possible for us to have had so many of the amenities which the Arbitration Court has awarded, because the court, in its wisdom, said that the economy of this country could stand these things, although it must be realized that it could do so only because of the enormous amount we were obtaining for our wool overseas. I am only a small woolgrower, but the high prices have given me a financial status I would not otherwise have attained, and I point out that this huge influx of money has benefited not only the woolgrowers but people in almost every walk of life. It is only right that people in other industries should benefit, and everyone in Australia has benefited because of the money we have received from the sale of our wool. I am concerned, as the Treasurer was concerned in his Budget statement, to see where we are going. In a recent edition of the publication called *Trends*, published by the Rural Bank of New South Wales, there appeared a very interesting article entitled "Where is the Profit-line on Wool?" The whole economy of Australia has been changed because of the high prices received for our wool, and the Rural Bank of New South Wales, which has extensive investments throughout that State, sent 15 of its valuers to make thorough investigations into the cost of wool production in various parts of that State. Those 15 men each examined five typical holdings, none of them very large. They took into consideration everything possible that could come into the cost of wool production and this is the conclusion they reached:—

From the published schedule it will be seen that over the whole of the State, and including a wage allowance of £750 a year for the owner and a return of 5 per cent on the total capital investment, the average costs of production of wool could be said to have varied in 1952-53 between 42d. and 62d. per pound, according to the size and type of property. Without the 5 per cent interest on the total capital investment, the figure varied between 17d. and 41d. For some, but not for others, these latter might be said to represent the "profit-making limit,"—a fairly flexible "limit," it will be seen. Moreover, significant and sustained changes in wool prices invariably are accompanied by changes in certain costs so the line is even more flexible than these conclusions indicate.

I have not been able to get comparable figures for South Australia. I think we can assume they will not be much different. I quote this to show how high the cost of wool production has become, and from that I would argue that it is not possible to look for so much benefit from the wool industry for the rest of the community in the future as we have had in the past five years. Costs have caught up, at least with the man who has to buy a property now, with the result that if there is a drop in the price of wool—which I think quite feasible—the economy of the country will be seriously affected. Last year the average price of wool in S.A. was 64.53d., which is a little higher than the profit line on some of the properties investigated. In 1951, the year of high prices, it was 129.16d., and I emphasize the fact that the flow of all this money into Australia is something that was not foreseen by any Government or economist, for they base their estimates on past events. They were not expected to make forecasts, but unforeseen circumstances had a great influence on the inflationary period through which we have passed. In 1939 the average price of wool produced in South Australia was 11.94d. a lb. Some wool growers even made a profit then, but the price increased to an average of 64.53d. last year. Costs in New South Wales varied between 42d. and 62d. last year, so on some holdings the cost was almost as high as the price received in South Australia. I do not know what the solution is, but we shall be in a desperate position if the price of wool drops. A move has been made in the dairying and wheat industries to make us less dependent on wool exports. They are two of our main primary industries, but they are operating on fine profit margins. World markets are uncertain, and if prices drop there will be no margin left for producers. The same applies to our dried fruit and most other primary industries. Costs have increased greatly. Arbitration court awards and the system under which we live have forced costs up, in fact to the same extent as incomes received by primary producers. Conditions in the near future will cause grave concern and require careful handling.

Mr. Pearson—The price of barley fell.

Mr. MICHAEL—Yes. I believe we can look to the future optimistically. Some say that if we are in financial difficulties others will be too. Probably the good management of this State will help us, and we may not be in such a bad position as other people, but future trends will have to be watched closely.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood)—The Treasurer said he found it possible to budget for only small increases in total expenditure because prices and wages appeared to be practically stable. Apparently the Treasurer took it for granted that the Australian economy will be fairly stable during this financial year. In determining whether that is an accurate forecast we must see what was done in the Federal Budget, for that will largely determine whether we can expect stability in this fiscal year and, further, whether we can expect stability in the period immediately following this financial year. In order to achieve a moderate degree of equilibrium three things had to be observed in drafting the Federal Budget. It was necessary to balance the Budget or budget for a small surplus, to increase expenditure on public works in order to increase our productivity through developmental projects, and to redistribute income through social services. It would appear from the Federal Treasurer's speech that he was budgeting for a surplus of £215,000, but that was completely illusory. The Budget actually discloses a deficit of £102,000,000, though on the face of it it seemed that the Budget would be balanced. There will be remissions of taxation to the extent of £82,000,000, not £118,000,000, because the full effect of taxation remissions will not be felt until after June 30 next. After all, the Budget is not introduced until towards the end of the first quarter of the year, and although income tax remissions are retrospective to July 1 they do not become deductible at source until November 1, so this year the remissions amount to £82,000,000. The Commonwealth unexpectedly received an extra £106,000,000 in taxation through an increase in farm incomes that had not been looked for. About £30,000,000 of that sum was used in meeting the concessions allowed in the previous year's Budget. That made the £82,000,000 concession possible. Further, up to £95,000,000 had to be found for State public works. That money had to be found somewhere, and bank credit was used. Adding a further £7,000,000 necessary to balance the previous year's nominal surplus, the Budget appears to show a deficit of £102,000,000. A deficit of such a sum at this stage of the nation's economy is undeniably inflationary so we must, in consequence, expect further inflation. Of course, it will become worse after June 30, 1954, when the Commonwealth will have to face the full taxation remissions and refunds, which will amount to at least another £20,000,000. This will lead to a serious situation, but that will

be after the next Federal elections. If the Liberal and Country Party Government is returned it will have three years to clear up the mess, but if a Labor Government is elected, as is expected, it will be left with the baby.

Let us look at what happened with social services and redistribution of the nation's income. Our social services position can hardly be said to be satisfactory. We are spending a disgustingly small amount upon these services, and what they got under the Budget is a smack in the face to aged and infirm pensioners and the underprivileged. It is something which will affect the Commonwealth Government at the next election and the present member for Sturt will have to retire to the fastnesses of his home unheralded, unhonoured, and unsung. In fact, he is already ringing his death knell in his unfortunate joy at the 2s. 6d. a week increase to pensioners, a joy which is not echoed in the hearts of the pensioners themselves. Let us make a comparison with other countries as to the expenditure on social services. The International Labor Organization took a survey of 24 countries to see what they were spending on these services. It is interesting to notice that in that survey, which is expressed in terms of the American dollar, Australia was spending 47 dollars per head on social services, New Zealand 114, the United Kingdom 87, Canada 62, Sweden 88, the U.S.A. 71, and France 65. Honourable members opposite will be overjoyed that they are able to say that Australia is spending more on social services than Greece, Iceland and Turkey. Only six out of the 24 countries are spending less on social services than Australia is. Consider, for instance, our expenditure on these services compared with 1911 and take that year as the base year and the base figure as 1,000. On that basis the present index figure for aged and infirm pensioners would be 1,125. The basic wage during that period has increased to 1,438 and that does not take into account the very substantial liberalization of working conditions, so that a man on the basic wage is much better off now in comparison with the pensioner. In 1938-39 Australia was spending 2.4 per cent of its gross personal income on social services, but in 1952-53 it was spending only 1.7 per cent, and that is echoed in the present Commonwealth Budget, so the Budget certainly falls down from the point of view of redistribution through the social services.

On the third point of an increase in public works, it is noticeable that here again we are spending only 10 per cent of our gross national income. We find that in 1951-52 a figure of

11.4 per cent applied, and we have never regained that percentage, regardless of the fact that to increase productivity satisfactorily and retain our position in the world markets we must have a great deal of expenditure on public works and developmental projects. So it would appear to be a very bad Budget, and certainly does not give any room for our being complacent about the inflationary position in Australia. We can expect a measure of inflation fairly shortly, and a very large measure of inflation after June 30 next.

Turning to the purposes of taxation, I think there are three things which can be done. We have to provide for administrative expenditure, for redistribution within our economy, because if we are to keep our economy going we have to redistribute, and, thirdly, we have to provide for a budgetary control of purchasing power. Bad as is this Commonwealth Budget, one can see in effect that attention has been paid to some of these things, but in others it has been deliberately ignored. For instance, on this occasion the very necessary control of purchasing power by taxation and the redistribution of income were ignored by the Commonwealth Treasurer. I imagine he hoped it would be of some electoral use to him, but I believe he is already sadly disillusioned on that point. It is vitally necessary for the continuance of Australia's economy that there should be one central taxing power, which can decide all these things, and which would have regard to them or not if it chooses deliberately to make the mistake as in this particular case. What would happen if we had six separate State taxing authorities in addition to the Commonwealth, and they all had to have regard in their own small way to these things or not, as the case may be? Inevitably, under the present set-up of the States, they are more concerned with administration than with over-all economic policy. That is inevitable. What would happen if, in fact, uniform taxation was ended and the States got back their taxing powers and we were faced with the onslaught of a depression and the States had to face the fact that there was a declining yield in taxation? Would they increase their taxation to maintain their administration? I think it inevitable that they would, and yet if they did it would be absolutely disastrous to Australia's economy. That is why there must be one central power, which, in times of stress, can give the Australian economy the necessary budgetary control. If we do away with that we commit

economic suicide. That is why my Party believes that there is only one system of taxation suitable in this country, and that is the maintenance of uniform taxation. I do not deny that, very rightly, people are upset that there are squabbles in the Loan Council and upsets before the Grants Commission. It is unfortunate that South Australia, in order to maintain its administration and public works expenditure, must go cap in hand to the Commonwealth to ask for money, and then come back here and say it looks as if education will have to remain on a shoestring, that our public works are going along at a slow rate, that there will be no sewers in Gawler or Norwood and that our infirmaries and mental hospitals are to remain little better than bedlams, Bridewells, and houses of correction. That is what we have to face. What is the answer? Members opposite say that we must end uniform taxation, but that would mean economic disaster. The only successful answer to the whole problem is that Australia shall have one enlarged sovereign Parliament with a central administration in some things and a decentralized administration through a county system subject to that Parliament. Then local government would be far closer to the people. There would be none of the present hiatus in governing powers existing between the Commonwealth and the States.

The Hon. T. Playford—Is the honourable member stating his personal or his Party's view?

Mr. DUNSTAN—My Party's view.

The Hon. T. Playford—You say your Party believes in complete unification?

Mr. DUNSTAN—Yes.

Mr. Christian—National suicide!

Mr. DUNSTAN—National safety! We believe there must be one Government which will be able to answer the will of the people as no Government in Australia is able to do today. Then it will let the people rule instead of a small coterie of financial barons who hold the purse strings of Australia today, not for public interest, but for their own private pelf. For that reason we believe that the only answer to this problem of finance between the Commonwealth and the States is unification and a decentralized administration through a county system subject to a sovereign Parliament which can at last give to the people the voice in the Government they desire.

Mr. Teusner—Totalitarianism!

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

#### BARLEY MARKETING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.54 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, October 15, at 2 p.m.