HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, November 25, 1953.

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

QUESTIONS.

SEPTIC TANK SYSTEM, BLACKWOOD.

Mr. DUNKS—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my question of October 27 regarding the septic tank system in the Blackwood area—whether, instead of having two forms of control, one by the local board of health, the other by the Central Board of Health it would be possible to have the whole control in the hands of the local board of health?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—It is not an easy question to resolve, otherwise it would never have arisen. There must be some final authority rather than two adjoining authorities having two different viewpoints. The present indication is that the final control should be with the Central Board of Health. As to the suitability of the country, the Mines Departmen might have an advisory capacity in that direction. It has not been resolved by Cabinet what legislation should be introduced to give effect to the proposal.

SCHOOL YARD SEATING.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Following on a recent meeting of the executive of the South Australian Public School Committees' Association, the secretary informed the Minister of Education that the following resolution had been passed thereat:—

That the Honourable the Minister of Education be approached with the request that yard seating should be standard equipment provided by the Education Department in all schools.

In a letter dated November 3, the Director of Education replied for the Minister, stating *inter alia*:—

That the policy of this department in this matter is that seats for the use of children in school yards are provided on a subsidy basis only.

What the reply did not say was that such seats, when installed, become the property of the department, but the school committees are held responsible for repairs and painting. Members of school committees are getting fed up with continual demands to provide half the cost of capital works. Seeing that they are already finding half the cost of film projectors, amplifying systems, library books, sports equipment, rest rooms, partitions, bicycle sheds, shelter sheds, floor coverings and curtains, and all costs of maintaining established ovals, and numerous other items, many are asking how long it will be before they are asked to meet half the cost of light, water and other service installations? Will the Minister of Works request the Minister of Education to reconsider the request of the association that the Education Department provide yard seating as standard equipment in all schools in order that school committees, which during the year ended December 31, 1952, raised £123,000 for school purposes, may be retained and function without imposition on their generosity?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will take up the matter with my colleague and bring down a considered reply.

CEILING HEIGHT OF HOMES.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—Will the Premier ask the Building Advisory Committee to report on the suggestion that a ceiling height of 8ft. for houses should be permitted?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I would be on rather difficult ground in asking for such a report, because, in fact, that committee has already recommended either 8ft. or 8ft. 6in., but the Government has not taken any action to implement the recommendation. Under the circumstances, if the honourable member should ask me to refer the matter to some other authority, I would be pleased to oblige.

HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION FOR AGED PERSONS.

Mr. LAWN—In reply to a question by me yesterday the Premier gave certain information concerning the provision of accommodation for aged and senile patients at mental institutions, and among other things he said:—

The Goverment has taken action to provide accommodation for aged and senile patients through increased admissions to Northfield wards following decrease in the incidence of poliomyelitis and further by accommodation released through the erection of new wards to cater for infectious cases.

Is the increased accommodation at Northfield of the infirmary type or at the Northfield Mental Hospital, and will it still be necessary for these people to be declared insane in order to get admission?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No doubt the honourable member is aware that the Government took over from the Metropolitan County Board control of the Northfield Hospital, which had been known as the Northfield Infectious Diseases Hospital and had been erected at the exepense of the Government but carried on largely at the expense of metropolitan councils.

They had found costs very high because of the limited number of patients, and the Government took it over and it became a branch of the Royal Adelaide Hospital. With the development of modern drugs and preventive medicines the accommodation required for infectious diseases is almost negligible, and the Government has gradually been using the accommodation for additional patients, particularly of the type the honourable member has mentioned—aged who require some assistance and in some instances nursing, but not intense nursing, and are not able to look after themselves. Recently the Government completed two additional wards there. They will be used primarily for infectious cases, but their completion means that more room in the original hospital will be available for aged patients. We are gradually taking more and more of those cases into institutions other than the Parkside Hospital, where we have 26 uncertified patients who are purely voluntary boarders because they have no other accommodation. They could leave tomorrow if they desired, but they stay there because we are providing accommodation, food, and care for them. If the honourable member will examine my replies to his questions of yesterday, particularly that with regard to action being taken he will see that action is being taken over a wide range in an endeavour to provide better accommodation for mental cases and additional accommodation for aged persons.

Mr. LAWN—At page 5 of his report for the year ended June 30, 1952, the Superintendent of Mental Institutions states:—

Again, South Australia has the highest incidence of admissions of elderly patients, that is, those who ages range from 65 years to over 90 years.

He goes on to say that such cases could be better catered for in an infirmary type of hospital. In view of that report I asked the Premier yesterday how many of the present number of inmates in South Australian mental institutions, in the expert opinion of the Superintendent of Mental Institutions, came within the category of mentally and physically infirm consequent upon advancing years, to which the Premier replied, "Perhaps 500." I take it that the Premier obtained that information from Dr. Birch, Superintendent of Mental Institutions. When those people die, their death certificates will state that they died in a mental institution. Any of their relatives who apply to join medical societies and insurance schemes must state on their application form whether any of their family have suffered any mental affliction, and this may cause applicants serious embarrassment. Can the Premier say whether his Government will consider, until proper accommodation is provided for such patients, amending the Mental Defectives Act so as to make it unnecessary for these people to be certified insane simply to gain admittance to a mental institution through old age?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—If the honourable member will analyse my replies to his questions of yesterday he will see that, included in the number of persons accommodated at mental hospitals, were 26 voluntary boarders. Those persons have not been certified as insane nor do I believe they would be even after examination by a doctor. In its desire to look after aged people and to use all available accommodation, the Government has gone to the extent of accepting voluntary lodgers who have not been certified as insane so as to enable them to be looked after in their advancing years. It would be wrong for the Government to have power to place any person in a mental asylum without proper certification by a medical officer.

Mr. Lawn—We have that today.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No. These people have gone voluntarily and if they so desire they can leave tomorrow.

Mr. Lawn—What about the 500?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—They have been certified by medical officers as being mentally defective. If the honourable member saw the age groups taken out when the matter was examined he would see that some of the people are old.

Mr. Lawn—From 65 to 90 years of age.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, and the mental incapacity arises mainly through the great age. Before the Government can keep them in an asylum there must be certification by medical officers. The Government would not be justified in introducing a Bill to enable an authority to place a person in an asylum without certification.

Mr. Lawn—It allows them to go there now.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A number of people have taken advantage of that. They have gone there of their own free will and could leave tomorrow if they wished. They are getting the very best attention and evidently they are satisfied because they are staying.

Mr. Riches—They have nowhere else to go.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Probably that is correct. We are gradually getting additional

accommodation, and, as I said previously, we have opened up wards at the Northfield section of the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

PORT PIRIE RAIL SERVICE.

Mr. DAVIS—From a notification of an alteration in the railway timetable I understand that, commencing December 1, the train which at present leaves Adelaide for Port Pirie at 7.50 a.m. will be cut out and the morning train will arrive at Port Pirie at 2.15 p.m. instead of about 12.30 as at present. I believe this arrangement has been made for the convenience of interstate travellers and that no consideration has been given to the convenience of those people living in our northern areas. I do not know at what times, under the new timetable, people will arrive at places north of Port Augusta. Further, I notice that one of the dates on which the train will leave Adelaide later is December 24, Christmas Eve. Does the Minister of Railways believe that country people who are inconvenienced in this way are receiving the consideration they deserve, and will he take up with the Commissioner of Railways the matter of the re-instatement of the 7.50 a.m. train from Adelaide?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—No-one desires more than I to give country people service, but it is not in my power to dictate what the public may require. It may be that many people do not agree with the honourable member that the new schedule will cause inconvenience. However, I will take up this matter with the Commissioner of Railways, for by Act of Parliament it comes within his province and not ours.

Mr. RICHES—This matter affects not only Port Pirie, but Port Augusta, Whyalla, Kimba and places beyond. It seems that they are the last people to be considered when timetables are drawn up. I view with concern the decision to cut out the train on Christmas Eve and merely link a train with a special East-West express to cater for people who will be travelling to those centres. Since we all know of the serious overcrowding of trains at Christmas, I ask the Minister whether if the railways cannot run an ordinary train at 8 a.m. on December 24, he will consider licensing a bus service to run right through from Adelaide?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have nothing to add to my previous reply, but I will take up the question with the Railways Commissioner and bring down his reply. It is a matter for him, not for the Government.

DISTRICT OFFICER, EIGHT MILE CREEK.

Mr. FLETCHER—Can the Minister of Lands say who has been appointed in charge of the Eight Mile Creek settlement scheme in place of the officer who I understand has resigned, and what steps have been taken in regard to a soil survey in that area? Is it expected that a geological survey will also be made of the area to ascertain the cause of the variations in the types of soil and the production of the various crops?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Before the planting of pastures extensive surveys were made, as a result of which certain pastures were planted. If at any time it can be shown that there is any deterioration in pastures further surveys will be made. Only last week a letter was received from a settler there, pointing out that his pasture was getting away from him and asking permission to purchase beef cattle to cope with the feed. The matter of the appointment of a successor to Mr. Wesley-Smith is now before the Public Service Commissioner.

TRAMWAYS APPEAL BOARD.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier a reply to my recent question regarding the establishment of a Tramways Appeal Board?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I took up this matter with the chairman of the trust who not only furnished a written report but also verbally informed me of the position. It appears that the request for the Appeal Board is based, not on the question of promotions but on the question of discipline, and, if it were set up as proposed, it would in fact take away the control of discipline from the trust itself. The General Manager's report states:—

The trust has thoroughly investigated the question of establishing a Tramways Appeal Board and has come to the conclusion that such a board is unnecessary and not in the best interests of the trust.

BERNCO PRODUCTS PTY. LTD.

Mr. QUIRKE—Has the Premier a reply to my recent question regarding the activities of a Victorian company trading under the name of Berneo Products Pty. Ltd.?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member will appreciate the difficulty of investigating this company because it is a Victorian company not domiciled in this State. Two or three days ago I asked the Crown Solicitor for a statement on how far he had gone with the investigation and he reports:—

I do not think that the Government can do anything to assist those people who made contracts with Bernco Products Pty. Ltd., but I have written to the Victorian Crown Solicitor

and asked him to supply me with a copy of the report of the Hon. the Attorney-General for Victoria who made a recent investigation into the affairs of the company. When that report comes to hand it will be forwarded to you for the information of the Hon. the Premier, who should then be able to reply to Mr. Quirke's question regarding the financial position of the company and its ability to fulfil the contracts.

As soon as that report is to hand, if the Victorian Government is prepared to make it available, I shall see that the honourable member is advised and a copy forwarded to him.

BULK HANDLING AND UNEMPLOYMENT.

Mr. STOTT—Has the attention of the Premier been drawn to the concern expressed by Port Pirie residents as to the possibility of unemployment in the town if bulk handling of wheat is established in the area? Can the Premier indicate the proposals of the Government regarding ore from Radium Hill, the treatment of which would no doubt give a great lift to employment in Port Pirie, and probably offset the anxiety that the Port Pirie people feel because the rest of the State wants bulk handling?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A number of estimates have been made of the amount of labour which would be employed by the Government at Port Pirie at its chemical treatment plant, and also in connection with the railing of the ore to Port Pirie and the handling of the product after treatment. They are necessarily not very accurate at present. It is hard to predict how large the uranium industry in South Australia will eventually be. There is no argument that it will be a substantial industry as far as Port Pirie is concerned. The initial cost of the chemical plant will exceed £1,500,000. It will have associated with it, of course, many activities because it will be a large user of materials, quite apart from the ore itself. It will be a large user of salt and other chemicals which will have to be railed to Port Pirie. It will be a major activity. Probably the view of Port Pirie residents is that they want the chemical industry and the labour at present absorbed in handling wheat, and do not regard the chemical plant as being an offset to bulk handling.

Mr. McALEES—If bulk handling of wheat is to be embarked upon, has the Government considered finding employment for the great number of men who will be thrown out of work? Port Pirie is concerned because it is said a large quantity of wheat will be drawn from that area to Wallaroo. When machinery takes the place of men there it should be the duty of the Wheat Board to find work for the men displaced.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Some time ago the Government referred to the Public Works Committee the general question of the advisability of introducing bulk handling of wheat in this State, and also one or two supplementary questions associated with the matter. Up to the present the Government has had no report from the committee; therefore the matter is still only in the investigation stage. The Government knows the committee has taken a good deal of evidence on the matter. Only this week I had a communication from one country centre asking that further evidence be taken. Even if it were anxious to do so, the Government could not go ahead in any way whatsoever with bulk handling because it could not spend any money until the committee furnished a report.

Mr. Riches—Has a charter been given to a private company?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It cannot be done without the approval of Parliament. The Government would not under any circumstances give a charter to anyone except after full consideration by Parliament.

Mr. Riches—Have you had an application for a charter?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Wheatgrowers of this State have asked whether it would be possible for a charter to be given provided that they found the money themselves, but they did not put forward any concrete scheme and there are at least a dozen additional matters that would have to be considered in connection with it. I think that that would inevitably involve the State in still requiring a report from the Public Works Committee, because I could not imagine any bulk handling scheme that would not involve any additional cost to the railways in rolling stock, sidings or some other accommodation. That may be proved to be wrong, but I assure members that before the Government enters into any commitment involving the State in anything whatsoever it will be placed before Parliament, which will have a full opportunity of considering any proposals that mature. The Government could not properly enter into an agreement to give any party a charter without that charter being approved in general terms by the Parliament, so all statements concerning bulk handling are purely supposititious.

Mr. STOTT—I ask this question to relieve the unnecessary anxiety of waterside workers at Port Pirie. Does the Premier know that an inquiry would reveal that at Geelong, Five Dock and Fremantle, where wheat is handled in bulk, waterside workers have not been thrown out of work but that on the contrary many men are required to use the bulk handling machinery, and that the men would not return to the arduous task of handling wheat in bags because their present work is so much lighter and more pleasant, and many receive more pay because of the margin for skill?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am not aware of any of those facts.

SMOKE FROM OSBORNE POWER HOUSE.

Mr. TAPPING—Has the Minister of Marine anything further to report following on the question I asked yesterday about the smoke nuisance at Osborne?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—As promised, I have been in touch with the Harbors Board and the Electricity Trust. Officers of the Harbors Board and the Electricity Trust have conferred many times on this problem, and the trust is now actively engaged in searching for a solution of the smoke haze nuisance. It is preparing to make tests with the aid of models of the air currents passing over the powerhouse, and all the information possible has been gathered and recorded as to the meteorological conditions prevailing at the times when the smoke haze is prevalent. From this it may be possible to adduce the cause and perhaps find a means of combating it, but it does not appear at this stage that the problem is going to be easy of solution. This sort of thing is happening in all parts of the world, and only to a minor degree here. It is the inevitable result of industrialization. In the meantime the Harbors Board is proceeding to improve the navigation aids and provide additional aids where possible on the river side. We are providing every possible aid. The honourable member can be assured that the Harbors Board and the Electricity Trust are not minimizing the inconvenience caused and are doing their utmost to overcome it.

HOSPITAL BENEFITS SCHEME.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Premier a report in reply to my recent question about medical hospital benefits from unregistered organizations?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member let me have a letter he received about this matter, and I have a report from Mr Bowden, Public Actuary, which states:—

Since neither the Ajax Hospital and Medical Benefit Company nor the Community Hospital and Medical Association Limited are registered as friendly societies under the Friendly Societies Act, the Public Actuary has no supervision over them, nor has he power to investigate their financial position. On instructions from the hon. the Premier, investigations had been made prior to this session of Parliament in order to prepare a Bill to supervise the activities of organizations who insured the people of South Australia for medical, funeral, sickness, accident or hospital benefits, and who had not voluntarily registered under the Friendly Societies Act. The Commonwealth Government then suggested that a uniform Commonwealth law to supervise such organizations was desirable, the necessary supervision to be effected by State registrars of friendly societies on a State basis. It is proposed, if all the States agree, to call a conference of Commonwealth authorities with State registrars and actuaries to determine the nature of the supervision. To this course of action one State has not as yet consented. If the outstanding State consents, such a conference will probably be called early next year. If action on a Commonwealth uniform basis cannot be made, I recommend that necessary legislation for this purpose be introduced next session.

I think the State that has not yet consented is Queensland. I assure members that if the Commonwealth legislation proposed is not ultimately agreed upon South Australia will take action to deal with the matter in this State.

ROYAL TOUR: CHILDREN'S TRANSPORT.

Mr. DAVIS—In answer to my question last week about rail fares for children wishing to come to Adelaide during the visit of Her Majesty, the Premier said he would take up the matter again with Cabinet. Has he done so?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have not had an opportunity of discussing the question with the Minister of Education, because, unfortunately, he is ill and in hospital, but a note has been made of the question, and in due course I will get a reply for the honourable member.

SWAN REACH WATER SUPPLY AND ROADS.

Mr. STOTT—Can the Minister of Works say what progress has been made on the Swan Reach town water scheme and whether representations to bituminize the street through the the town area have been considered?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The amount of funds we have available has to be allocated to those areas requiring it most. The honourable member knows, and I know, that there is

hardly a town in South Australia as well served with private water supplies as Swan Reach, which has a series of windmills close to the river. Obviously, with increased costs we have to first assist places that want water most, and certain areas have been selected in the honourable member's own district for priority. However, it is hoped to be able to proceed with the Swan Reach scheme in the not distant future. With regard to bituminizing roads, it is my view that the roads through the various country districts should be bituminized and I will take up the question about Swan Reach with the Highways Commissioner. I hope he will be able to give effect to the policy I have just stated.

HOSPITAL CHARGES TO PENSIONERS.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Has the Premier any information to give in reply to the question I asked recently about country hospital charges to pensioner patients?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received the following report from the Director-General of Medical Services:—

On May 6, 1952, in H.D., 266/52, herewith, the South Australian Hospitals Association addressed a letter to the Honourable the Chief Secretary, concerning, among other matters, the treatment of pensioner patients in Government subsidized hospitals. The letter included the following question:—

> "Can the boards of management require relatives of pensioners to pay for treatment under the provisions of section 47 of the Hospitals Act?"

A reply was forwarded on June 30, 1952, *vide* copy in H.D., 266/52, which included the following two paragraphs:—

> "At the present time negotiations are proceeding between the Commonwealth and State Governments in connection with an amended agreement respecting public hospitals. It is anticipated that the amended agreement will dispense with the necessity for government subsidized hospitals to provide 'public' beds free, as at present, and all patients may then be required to pay fees in accordance with their financial ability to do so.
>
> "Having regard to all the circumstances, it would appear that a Government subsidized hospital would be justified in requesting a reasonable payment of portion of fees from patients, notwithstanding the fact that they are pensioners, if it is known that these patients are in a position to make some such payment without hardship."

From time to time individual hospitals have sought advice from this department in regard to the matter, and in each instance they have been advised in terms of the second of the abovementioned paragraphs. A discussion in regard to charging fees to, or on behalf of, pensioner patients, arose at the annual conference of the Country Hospitals Association. Some delegates were of opinion that the provision in regard to the charging of fees should be put on a uniform basis and for that purpose a motion was moved that "pensioner patients be charged fees at the rate of £2 10s. per week." The secretary of the Hospitals Department was asked whether, in view of the agreement with the Commonwealth Government in regard to payment of hospital benefits, such resolution was in order, to which he replied that it was. The secretary of the Hospitals Department did not express any view beyond replying to that question, as a decision in regard to it was solely a matter for conference. The motion was carried.

The conditions with respect to payment of subsidies to Government subsidized hospitals require that the hospitals must receive and treat, without charge, all destitute persons and State children as are recommended for admission to the hospital. It is generally advised by the department that fees should not be charged any patient to the extent that the payment of such fees would cause undue hardship.

PASSENGERS ON PRIVATE TRUCKS.

Mr. QUIRKE—I have been informed that the owner of a truck in travelling from a country town to Adelaide is permitted to carry his wife and members of the family, but that this does not apply to the family of an employee. It is desirable that the correct position should be widely known because at present there is considerable uncertainty. Can the Minister of Works explain the position?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The matter was taken up many years ago by Parliament to overcome what was becoming a practice by these people in running is opposition to the railways and those who had a franchise on the road. As a concession, members of the family of a truck owner were not to be regarded as passengers. The same concession does not apply to the family of an employee. The position is set out in the Road and Railway Transport Act.

COUNTRY ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.

Mr. MICHAEL—Has the Premier a reply to my recent question regarding a subsidy for electricity extensions to country areas?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Electricity Trust has submitted a proposal, which has been approved by Cabinet. I submit the following report from the general manager of the trust:—

Pursuant to clause 3 of the Electricity Supplies (Country Areas) Act, 1950, the Electricity Trust submits for your approval a scheme whereby the Government may grant subsidies towards electricity supply in rural areas upon such terms and conditions are agreed upon between the Treasurer and the trust. Attached

is a report submitted to, and approved by the trust, which sets out in detail the manner in which the subsidy scheme shall be operated. The proposed scheme is one in which payments will be made annually to the trust and will be used to defray portion of the annual expenses of the particular rural extensions. This system has the advantage over a subsidy towards the capital cost of extensions in that an increase in the use of electricity by the consumer in any year will mean a decrease in the subsidy in that year. It is the trust's experience that consumption of electricity by any consumer is liable to increase (and often increase rapidly) over the years, and it is expected that many extensions which begin with a subsidy will eventually become self-supporting. It is proposed that the subsidy scheme shall be incorporated as part of the trust's present scheme for imposing a surcharge on normal tariffs to cover the additional costs involved in any extension. Whereas now the consumer is asked to pay whatever surcharge is necessitated by the cost of the supply, under the subsidy scheme the consumer's surcharge will be kept to a reasonable amount by the use of the subsidy.

The amount of the subsidy will be limited in any particular case to half the cost of electricity at the normal tariffs for the district. At the same time, no subsidy will be paid if the normal surcharge on tariffs is less than 60 per cent, and with this limitation the maximum subsidy payable will be 28 per cent of the consumer's bill. Based on applications received by the trust over the last year or so the number of consumers subsidized in the first 12 months of the scheme will be about 500. The average subsidy will be about £3 10s. per consumer and the cost to the Government about £1,750 for the year. In subsequent years additional consumers would be subsidized and the annual subsidy would continue to increase. At the same time, some consumers who had been subsidized earlier would use more electricity, their subsidy would reduce and eventually disappear. It is difficult to estimate the effect of this, but it is likely that after ten years or so the subsidy might reach £20,000 per annum but it should not increase much beyond this figure. The trust will submit to the Government each year a claim for subsidy payment, based on the actual number of consumers to be subsidized and the consumption of electricity by each. In this way any decreases in subsidy brought about by increased use of electricity will be taken into account annually, and the scheme as a whole will assist in the expansion of electricity to more sparsely settled areas with the minimum reasonable expenditure on subsidies. The trust recommends, *vide* recommendation No. 5, that no quotation for supply be given if the total tariff surcharge, including subsidy, exceeds 100% of the normal tariff applicable to the area. The trust would be unable to deal with the expected number of applications for electricity supply if the full subsidy scheme, as set out in the report, were to be implemented immediately, and for this reason it must be limited. This limitation will apply for some considerable time, so as to enable the trust to carry out efficiently the increased volume of work resulting from the introduction of the subsidy scheme. There are a number of existing consumers who now pay surcharges higher than would be required under the recommended scheme. In addition, there are some applicants who have already been quoted for a supply but who have not yet been connected. The trust considers that the benefits of the scheme should be available to both classes.

Accompanying the report is a memorandum from the general manager of the trust showing how the surcharge will work out in various districts. As I believe this would be of great interest to members I ask leave to incorporate it in *Hansard* without the necessity of my reading it.

Leave granted.

Rural Extension Surcharges and Subsidies.

By the Electricity Supplies (Country Areas) Act, 1950, £1,000,000 was authorized for the purpose of making grants to the Electricity Trust of South Australia. Every such grant—"(*a*) shall be made upon terms and conditions agreed upon between the Treasurer and the Electricity Trust: (*b*) shall be used by the Electricity Trust to defray expenditure incurred by the Trust in generating electricity for supply to consumers in sparsely settled areas, and in transmitting and distributing electricity to such consumers."

No application has yet been made to the Honourable the Treasurer for any grant under this Act. This report sets out a complete scheme for subsidising rural extensions from our main transmission system and recommends that this scheme be adopted only in part for the time being, to conform with the rate at which special extensions can be conveniently made at present. The proposed subsidy scheme is based on our existing method of adding surcharges to tariffs where this is warranted by the cost of the extension. This report further recommends that, whether or not a subsidy scheme is introduced, a modification be made to our existing method of determining surcharges.

Existing Surcharge Scheme.—This scheme operates as follows:—An estimate is made of the capital cost of the extension to the consumer or group of consumers, and the annual cost of this extension is taken as 7% of the capital cost. This annual cost is then to be recovered in addition to the ordinary tariffs, but for every £1 of revenue received from ordinary tariffs a rebate of 4s. on the additional cost is allowed. For the first year of operation of an extension, an estimate of revenue is made and thus an estimate of the rebate determined. The remaining annual cost to be recovered is then expressed as a percentage of the ordinary tariffs, and the consumer is charged this percentage on his actual tariff for the twelve months period. For the following twelve months, the amount of rebate, and therefore the percentage increase on tariffs, is determined by the actual revenue received during the first twelve months. The general experience is that consumers' consumption increases as time goes on, and the percentage surcharge on tariffs thereby decreases. When the revenue is such that the allowable rebate

entirely covers the additional annual costs, no surcharge is made, and if this condition persists for three years, the account is no longer checked each year and the consumer is treated as a normal consumer.

Proposed Alteration in Annual Charge on Capital.—The present annual charge on capital of 7% was fixed in 1947 and included interest at 3.5%. In view of the present rate of interest, the Tariff Committee considers that the charge on capital should be increased to 8% per annum for new extensions. Although the annual charge on capital is used in calculating the percentage surcharge, the consumer receives only a table showing the various percentage surcharges for different amounts of revenue and he has no direct indication of the actual rate in operation.

Recommendation 1: It is recommended that, in calculating tariff surcharges on new extensions, the annual charge on capital be 8%.

Introduction of a Subsidy Scheme.—Recommendation 1 applies to the existing surcharge scheme and is not dependent upon the introduction of subsidies. In order to take care of future conditions, a complete subsidy scheme has been devised, but it is recommended that it should only partially be introduced at present. Recommendations 2 to 4 following are for the complete subsidy scheme, but recommendation 5 is an over-riding one which will reduce the extent of the scheme at the present time.

Starting Point for Subsidy.—The Tariff Committee considers that a reasonable point for the subsidy to start would be when the surcharge required was equivalent to 60% on column 8 tariffs. The starting point for subsidy should be progressively higher in the lower tariff columns to allow for the progressively lower tariff rates.

Recommendation 2: It is recommended that the following percentage surcharges on tariffs be the starting points for subsidy:—

Tariff Column	8	7	6	5
Percentage surcharge at which subsidy commences	60%	65%	70%	75%
Tariff Column	4	3	2	1
Percentage surcharge at which subsidy commences	80%	85%	90%	95%

Rate of Increase of Subsidy.—The surcharge applicable to a particular extension increases as the capital cost of the extention increases. The Tariff Commitee considers that the subsidy should not provide the whole of the additional costs associated with a more costly extension, but that subsidized consumers should contribute some proportion of the increased costs. It is considered that a contribution of 25% by the consumer and 75% by the subsidy would be reasonable.

Recommendation 3: It is recommended that the surcharge actually paid by a subsidized consumer include 25% of the annual costs associated with the additional capital expenditure in respect of which the subsidy is made.

Upper Limit of Subsidy.—Recommendations 2 and 3 establish the starting points and the rate of increase of subsidy. It remains to set an upper limit beyond which no extension should be subsidized or connected. A suitable limit would be when the subsidized consumer himself paid the following surcharges on normal tariffs:—

Tariff Column	8	7	6	5
Maximum surcharge paid by consumers	77%	82%	87%	92%
Tariff Column	4	3	2	1
Maximum surcharge paid by consumers	97%	102%	107%	112%

In each of these limiting cases, the subsidy would be 50% of the revenue from the normal tariffs of the area. For surcharges paid by consumers less than these, down to the starting points for subsidy, the subsidy would be progressively less than 50% of the revenue from normal tariffs. A 77% surcharge on column 8 tariffs means 25.7d. per kilowatt-hour for lighting and 6.8d. and 8.7d. per kilowatt-hour for the first steps of residential and commercial power respectively. These charges are comparable with those made by reasonably small diesel electricity undertakings, and charges in excess of these are probably more than many consumers would be prepared to pay and are approaching the point where alternative sources of supply would be cheaper.

Recommendation 4: It is recommended that no extension be subsidized or connected if the surcharges payable by subsidized consumers in the various tariff areas exceed the following percentages:—

Tariff Column	8	7	6	5
Surcharges paid by consumers	77%	82%	87%	92%
Tariff Column	4	3	2	1
Surcharges paid by consumers	97%	102%	107%	112%

The total surcharge required to recover annual costs in the limiting cases set out in recommendation 4 is the maximum surcharge paid by the consumer plus the maximum subsidy of 50% of normal tariff revenue. Hence, the total surcharge involved in the limiting cases ranges from 127% in column 8 tariff areas to 162% in column 1 tariff areas. These percentages, being related to tariff revenue, do not give a clear indication of the physical degree of extension involved. Actually, the limits recommended mean that, for equal consumptions of electricity, the trust would be prepared to spend 10% to 15% more capital in column 8 tariff areas than in column 1 tariff areas.

Determination of Subsidy.—The administration of the subsidy scheme proposed would be comparatively simple. The total surcharge required to cover costs would be calculated as at present, and a table based on the above recommendations would then show what proportion should be contributed by the consumer and what proportion recovered from the subsidy. One complication arises from the fact that we render accounts in the field and make no retrospective adjustments. In order to do this, the percentage surcharge for the

first year's accounts is based on the estimate of revenue to be received, and this precentage is used in each account rendered during that year. In the second year, the percentage is based on the actual revenue received during the first year. Furthermore, the calculation is based on the estimated capital cost of the extension as prepared when the final quotation is given. To ascertain the charges to the consumer, it is desirable that these methods be continued. But the amount of subsidy to be claimed from the Treasurer should be based on the actual capital cost of the extension and the actual revenue received from the consumer. This can readily be done provided the Treasurer agrees that the charges made to the consumer and which have been based on estimates, as mentioned, are reasonable. The claim for subsidies would be made at the end of a common twelve month period and would be the difference between the actual annual costs of the extensions and the total revenues received from them. The annual cost of an extension would be taken to be the revenue received from ordinary tariffs, less four shillings in each pound, plus 8% of the capital cost of the extension.

Limitation of Scheme at Present Time.—The effect of the recommended increase in the annual charge on capital from 7% to 8% will be to reduce the number of quotations given for extension considerably below the number of extensions which can now be coped with, unless the present surcharge limit of 70% is raised. On the other hand, with the full subsidy scheme in operation, the number of new extensions quotable would exceed by 50% to 60% the number that can conveniently be connected at present. This would rapidly increase the present backlag of eligible extensions awaiting connection, which is equivalent to at least two years' work. Also, the introduction of a subsidy scheme would undoubtedly bring about an initial rush of applications, particularly from consumers previously declined. It is therefore desirable to limit the application of the full subsidy scheme for the time being. If no quotation for extension is given where the total surcharge required is greater than 100%, it is considered that the number of new quotations given can be matched by the number of extensions that can conveniently be connected at present.

Recommendation 5: It is recommended that, for the time being, no quotation be given if the total surcharge, including subsidy exceeds 100%.

Starting of Subsidy Scheme.—It seems reasonable to include in the subsidy scheme those applicants for supply who have already been quoted for supply but not connected. Moreover, it is desirable that no existing consumer should continue to pay a higher surcharge than would be required from him under the subsidy scheme, and this position could be avoided if the subsidy scheme were also made applicable to existing consumers. If this were done, about 40 existing consumers would be affected and the total amount of subsidy involved would be about £140 per annum in the first year, and increasingly less thereafter. All of these consumers are at present paying a surcharge of at least 70%, which is the general limit at present used to determine whether an extension shall be quoted.

Recommendation 6.—It is recommended that, if the subsidy scheme is introduced, it be available to all eligible new and existing extensions.

Effect of Subsidy Scheme.—On the basis of past experience, it is expected that at least 90% of the extensions eligible for subsidy would be in column 5, or higher, tariff areas. The following table indicates the effects of the full subsidy scheme and the restricted scheme in comparison with the present scheme without subsidy, on the basis of recent applications investigated over a year. A charge of 8% on capital, as recommended above, has been assumed in conjunction with the subsidy scheme.

	Present scheme.			
	7% charge (70% limit).	8% charge (70% limit).	Full subsidy scheme.	Restricted subsidy scheme (100% limit).
No. of Investigations—				
Applications	250	250	250	250
Consumers	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
No. Quoted—				
Applications	100	45	160	115
Consumers	700	335	1,100	810
No. Declined—				
Applications	150	205	90	135
Consumers	800	1,165	400	690
No. Subsidized—				
Applications	—	—	95	50
Consumers	—	—	600	430
Approx. average annual subsidy per consumer	—	—	£6	£3.5

On the basis of recent trends in applications for supply, about 430 new consumers per annum would be subsidized under the restricted subsidy scheme, and the amount of the subsidy required would be about £1,500 per annum, increasing by this amount each year while the restricted scheme was in operation. Eventually, with the full subsidy scheme in operation, the amount of the total subsidy required would tend to stabilize at about £20,000 per

annum, but it would be several years after subsidies were first introduced before this figure could be reached.

Mr. TEUSNER—I express my gratitude at the announcement by the Premier of a scheme which will make it possible to take electricity supplies to sparsely populated areas under better conditions than in the past. I am interested in getting extensions to outlying parts of my district. I have been asked recently what will be the position, if the normal tariff rate is reduced, of persons at present connected with electricity supplies under the surcharge scheme, and the position of persons likely to be connected under the scheme in the future. If there is a reduction in the tariff rate at any time will there be a corresponding reduction in the surcharge?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—For purposes of the tariff schedule there are a number of zones. The price has been based on the cost of taking electricity to particular areas. In the memorandum I have submitted there are different prices for the various zones. In some instances the difference is small, but in others great, according to the cost of reticulating the electricity. Unfortunately, up to the present we have not been able to have many decreases in the prices. Rising costs have, in the main, compelled them to be increased. If there should be a decrease at any time it would apply on a fair basis to all the zone prices. The surcharge is based on those prices, and there would be adjustments accordingly.

BRIDGE AT BLANCHETOWN.

Mr. STOTT—Is the Premier in a position to refer now to the Public Works Committee the matter of having a bridge constructed across the River Murray at Blanchetown, or will it be done early in the New Year?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That would be a major project. A tremendous amount of work would have to be undertaken before it could be submitted to the committee, which would want to know the type of structure proposed and the estimated cost. Until that information is available it would be futile to refer the matter to the committee, which would have to wait until the information was supplied before it could make any further inquiry. I cannot say that the matter will be referred to the committee. We must wait until there is information justifying the reference, or the seeking of an alternative proposition. I have previously told the honourable member that the Highways Commissioner has been given information on the subject and has been asked to prepare plans regarding bridge types and estimated costs. When the information is available the Government can consider what further action should be taken.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS.

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

That it be an order of this House that all papers and other documents ordered by the House during the session, and not returned prior to the prorogation, and such other official reports and returns as are customarily laid before Parliament and printed, be forwarded to the Speaker in print as soon as completed, and if received within two months after such prorogation, that the Clerk of the House cause such papers and documents to be distributed amongst members and bound with the Votes and proceedings; and as regards those not received within such time, that they be laid upon the table on the first day of next session.

Motion carried.

EARLY CLOSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD, having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Early Closing Act, 1926-1952. Read a first time.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 19. Page 1568).

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—As the Premier, as Minister of Industry, explained, the Bill was based on recommendations submitted to the Government by a committee appointed to investigate the many problems associated with workmen's compensation legislation. I understand the committee consisted of a person nominated by employers, one nominated by the employees, and the Parliamentary Draftsman, who was chairman, so it can be fairly said to represent both views, with an independent chairman. Apparently the Government accepted the committee's recommendations and adopted them as Government policy. To the extent that the Bill provides improvements in certain aspects of workmen's compensation, we should be thankful to the committee for its work and to the Government for accepting its recommendations in their entirety. The Premier quoted its report in full, so members have had the opportunity

of studying it. In explaining the Government's attitude, the Premier said:—

Workmen's compensation legislation should not be amended haphazardly because, with changing values of money, unless it is under constant review by a competent, reasonable and impartial committee, our rates can become seriously out of line with those in other States or not meet the circumstances for which it was designed. For that reason I announced that the Government would appoint a permanent advisory committee. Having made a report, it will not go out of existence. It could make another report tomorrow if any of the members believed that a certain aspect should receive the attention of Parliament.

Apparently, the committee has made what we might call an interim report. I do not object to this procedure because it is a permanent committee. I have realized for years that the problems of workmen's compensation legislation and the provision of a just system were of greater complexity, but we shall attain a greater degree of satisfaction in this type of legislation as a result of the continued existence of this committee. The Labor Party has a committee representative of various sections of the movement and it meets frequently to study various compensation problems and make decisions, which are submitted to this House if most members of the Parliamentary Labor Party consider the decisions to be of sufficient importance. Usually, they are submitted to Parliament, though sometimes they are not fully considered because of the limitations on private members' business. The Premier said that the committee's report and this Bill were not the last word on the subject and indicated that all the problems had not been settled. I endorse that statement because few of the problems associated with workmen's compensation have been settled by the committee's report or the Bill. However, I am not casting any aspersions on the committee, for it approached its task with a will and a desire to do the right thing. Whilst there was a difference of opinion in certain matters, as explained by Mr. O'Connor (the employees' representative), eventually unanimity was reached on the recommendations made to the Government.

At present there is an earnings limit which precludes any person in receipt of more than a certain salary or wage from obtaining the benefits of workmens' compensation. This is something I have never been able to understand. I can only assume it is a relic of the old days when there was a sharp line of demarcation between the manual worker and the clerical worker. The manual worker received low wages and was considered not to have any opportunity of making adequate provision for himself or family for injuries received at his employment, whereas the clerical worker was considered to be in a better position and thus able to make some, if not adequate, provision. Times have changed and today we find that many clerical workers because of the introduction of machinery into industry and different industry practices, run comparatively much greater risks than they did in the past. The position is improved by the Bill by increasing the earnings limit from £24 to £33 a week. This is one point that might receive the committee's attention in future investigations, to see whether it is necessary to have any earnings limit. At present the compensation on death for a man with dependants is four years' earnings, with a maximum of £1,500, and £50 for each dependent child. The minimum is £500 for the widow and £50 for each child. The committee should urgently consider the minimum, which was established in 1947 when the value of money and rates of wages were much lower than they are today. If a minimum of £500 was warranted then obviously it should be substantially increased. The Bill proposes that the maximum shall be four years' earnings, with a total maximum of £2,000, plus £75 for each dependent child, but the minimum remains at £500, with £75 for each child.

It is proposed that the amount for medical expenses, etc., shall be increased from £75 to £100, and for funeral expenses from £30 to £40, but it has been suggested to me that £40 is not adequate today, so the committee should look at that aspect in the future. For total incapacity the maximum aggregate of weekly payments is now £1,750, and it is proposed to increase that to £2,250. Weekly payments for persons with dependants are now three-quarters of the weekly earnings, plus £1 10s. for the wife and 10s. for each child, with a maximum of £11. The Bill proposes three-quarters of the weekly earnings, as before, plus £2 for the wife and 15s. for each child, with a maximum of £12. That provision is somewhat deceptive because many people think three-quarters of the wages should entitle them to considerably more than they get. This is because the maximum they can receive is limited to £12 a week under the Bill. If members will cast their minds back a couple of years they will realize that at that time this House agreed to establishing that maximum, but another place reduced the amount to £10. Eventually, a compromise of £11 a week was reached.

The provision for single persons without dependants is now three-quarters of the weekly earnings, with a maximum of £8. This Bill increases that sum to £8 15s. Provision has been made for repairs to hearing aids and spectacles which was not included in the old Act. It is something which this side of the House has been advocating for a long time and we are pleased it has been recommended. All that the committee has proposed is to remove the disabilities which have accrued to workmen as a result of the change in the value of money since the legislation was last before us.

There are many other principles associated with workmen's compensation which my Party believes should have been incorporated. We have the Premier's assurance that it is a permanent committee whose investigations will be continued, and that if further amendments are considered necessary an amending Bill will be introduced to deal with them. I think I am justified in mentioning a few of the points which should be considered by the committee during the recess. Some tardy provision is made in the Bill for compensation for injuries received when a workman is going to or from his place of employment. I have often pointed out in this House how urgently necessary it has become that we should provide for such an eventuality. With the growth of our industrial areas and the spread of our residential areas many workmen now have long and arduous journeys to their employment, and we believe that injuries associated with those journeys should be the subject of compensation in the same way as injuries received on the job. The Bill proposes that a workman is covered when injured while travelling by transport provided by his employer or arranged for by him, but the scope is limited. The great majority of workers who travel by various forms of transport will still not be covered and this will result in invidious distinctions.

A very important aspect of workmen's compensation and one which results in serious injustices relates to the reduction of lump sum payments provided for permanent incapacity, or death which may supervene after a long illness, by the amount of weekly payments received by an employee during the period of incapacity as the result of an accident. I have previously cited cases where men who suffered serious and permanent disabilities have ultimately found that the compensation which was supposed to be provided for their disabilities had been absorbed by weekly payments received during the period they were being treated in order to bring about their recovery. If the husband has a long and costly illness as a result of an accident and death then supervenes the amount of compensation, instead of being £2,000, plus £75 for each child, can be reduced to £500, plus £75 for each child. That point should be considered by the committee with a view to its making appropriate recommendations for amendment. The question of weekly payments should also be considered. There is no justification for providing a scale of weekly payments which are less than the workman was earning at the time of his accident or incapacity. A man should not be worse off as the result of incapacity due to his employment than if he had not suffered that incapacity, and there should be an increase in the weekly payments provided under the Act. A permanent board, similar to the Workmen's Compensation Board in Victoria, should be established to settle the many little problems associated with workmen's compensation. Some of these matters become subject to litigation and are costly both to the employer and the employee. With such a board these problems could be settled without cost to either party, and this would result in the smoother working of the legislation.

Then there is the question of compensation for incapacity resulting from a recurrence of an old injury. Occasionally a man meets with an accident which results in his incapacity for a period and then he is certified as being fit to return to his avocation but subsequently something associated with the original injury develops and the man again becomes incapacitated. I had one case brought to my notice by the assistant secretary of the Vehicle Builders Union of a member having had recurrences over a period of a little more than two years of an injury sustained in the course of his employment. One of the difficulties under the present law, due to the rapid change in the value of money, is that this man's living costs had increased since he first met with the accident, but he is entitled only to the compensation operating at the time of the injuiry; so, instead of getting £12 a week, as provided under this Bill, he would still be receiving only the £8 provided under the previous legislation. That position has been overcome to a certain extent in the Bill passed in 1951, and is to be maintained under this measure. When the schedule in the Bill comes into operation a man will get the benefit of the increased weekly payments, but not the benefit of increased lump sum payments. I think he is

entitled to both. A man who suffers from a recurrence of an old injury is entitled to benefit from the higher rate provided in this legislation. These are matters I am submitting to the House in the hope that they will receive the full consideration of the committee, and that next session we may find recommendations and a Bill submitted which will result in these anomalies being removed. I support the Bill and trust it will have a speedy passage because of the benefits which will be conferred upon certain types of workers.

Mr. FRED WALSH (Thebarton)—I am in accord with the views of the committee that amendments of the Act should be made this year. Other amendments were considered by the committee as not being urgent and are to be reported on later. That restricts my views to an extent, but I am prepared to wait until the committee submits a further report. As the Premier said, we shall receive reports from the committee from time to time. Members will be able to discuss those matters when amending Bills are before the House. It is regrettable that the Premier became impatient at interjections during his second reading explanation, for many interjections were made to put him right on certain points. For instance, he suggested that the Labor Party had recommended Mr. O'Connor as a member of the committee, but that was incorrect, for it was the Trades and Labour Council that recommended his appointment.

Mr. Pattinson—You don't disown Mr. O'Connor?

Mr. FRED WALSH—No, we are proud to have such a man as a member of the Party and as a representative of the Council on this committee, for we know his worth and experience as secretary of such a large organization as the Australian Workers Union. The Premier sometimes becomes intolerant of sincere criticism, and, when he made the implied threat that, if Labor members opposed the Bill, it would not become law, I did not think his attitude did him justice. It may be that his job as Premier is a trying one and that his nerves were a little frayed, but, if he withdrew the Bill merely because of criticism that would reflect, not only on him and his Government but also on the members of the committee.

Mr. John Clark—It would reflect on the work of that committee.

Mr. Pattinson—The Premier did not reflect on the Advisory Committee.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Possibly not, but if he had withdrawn the Bill merely because of the interjections of Labor members, that would be a reflection on the committee. Members must consider the contents of the Bill in the light of the committee's report. Mr. O'Connor tried to have the amount of compensation increased, and, although he was unsuccessful in his efforts, he was not prepared to submit a minority report, for he felt that any advance was better than none at all. Members on this side agree with his attitude and accept the proposals in the Bill. A recent sub-leader in the Adelaide *News* stated:—

> The State Government's Bill to increase payments under the Workmen's Compensation Act is an enlightened piece of legislation.

All legislation of this nature is enlightened, but it must be compared with similar legislation in other States. The sub-leader continued:—

> The only question which can fairly be asked is whether, even now, some of the proposed scales of payment for injured or incapacitated employees and their dependants are sufficiently high.

Mr. Lawn—The answer is "No."

Mr. FRED WALSH—Labor members on this side question whether they are sufficiently high, and the *News* sub-leader proves that we are not one-eyed on this subject and that we are concerned only with doing justice to those workers who may from time to time be unfortunate enough to need benefit of this legislation. Clause 7 increases the compensation for incapacity from £1,750 to £2,250 and weekly payments from £11 to £12, the allowance for a wife from £1 10s. to £2 and for a child from 10s. to 15s. Mr. O'Connor suggested £12 8s. a week as the maximum amount for incapacity so as to conform with the Victorian legislation. Although it may be claimed that £12 is higher than the basic wage, it must be borne in mind that few workers are on the basic wage, for most unskilled workers enjoy a margin of 6s. or more, and skilled workers much more; therefore under the Bill the worker is not compensated adequately in the event of injury sustained at his employment, and in this regard Mr. O'Connor only sought justice.

The committee recommended that the maximum weekly payment for a worker without dependants should be increased from £8 to £8 15s. Three years ago, when speaking on similar legislation, the then member for Prospect suggested that a certain rate should be provided as a maximum, but, when pressure was applied later, he obeyed his master's voice and recorded his vote as a Government member,

irrespective of personal views expressed in the second reading debate. Under this legislation members should ensure that a worker does not suffer any monetary loss as a result of an injury received in the course of or arising out of his employment, for the worker is at his place of employment, not merely for the pleasure of working there but because economic circumstances force him to earn his living. There should be no maximum to the compensation payable, for if a worker is unfortunate enough to suffer an accident during the course of his employment he should be compensated to the full extent of his weekly earnings.

Mr. O'Connor desired uniformity with the Victorian legislation in respect of the maximum compensation payable. At the time the committee was considering this matter the New South Wales Parliament had before it a proposal to increase the maximum to £2,500, and I believe that that provision has now become law in that State. At present legislation is before the Western Australian Parliament which will increase the maximum amout payable in case of total incapacity rrom £1,750 to £2,800. Some people do not believe in uniformity except when circumstances favour their adoption of principle, but I believe that, wherever uniformity is practicable and there is no serious objection to it, the provisions in the various States should be as nearly uniform as possible. Although the increase of £500 must be consiuered substantial, it is only roughly proportionate to basic wage increases since £1,750 was provided. The committee recommended that the maximum compensation on death should be increased from £1,500 to £2,000 and that the £50 child allowance should be raised to £75. This provision approximates that obtaining in most of the other States, although in New South Wales there is a graduated scale providing for amounts based on the earnings of the worker during the four years prior to his death with a maximum of £2,000. Mr. O'Connor desired that the maximum in this state should be increased to £2,240. Western Australia provides £2,000. Although the increase to £33 may be sufficient to cover all manual workers, it is felt on this side that there should be no limit. Irrespective of the wage or salary an employee should be fully covered. Unfortunately, it is the practice throughout Australia to fix a maximum. If a worker suffers an injury in the course of his employment he should be fully compensated. I do not know whether a member of Parliament is regarded as a worker, but in my income tax returns I always say that my employer is the House of Assembly. If I were to fall down the stairs and receive injuries resulting in death there would be no cover and the salary would cease immediately. I think members of Parliament should be covered like any other workers. There is need to abolish the fixation of a maximum earning. Argument can be put forward against the amount paid to a worker as compensation for injuries received at or arising from his employment, but we on this side will keep hammering away until there is a complete coverage for a worker going to and from his home to his place of employment. We appreciate the recommendation of the committee on this matter. It said that it could not in principle subscribe to what we advocate because the employer should not be responsible for injury occurring whilst the worker is going to and from his place of work, yet it accepts the principle to some extent because it said that compensation should be payable for injuries on journeys—

(*a*) Taken by workmen to and from work by transport provided by the employer or provided under arrangement made by the employer solely or mainly for the benefit of his employee;

(*b*) Taken by apprentices during ordinary working hours between the apprentice's place of employment and any trade school which he is obliged by law or required by his employer to attend.

This agrees to some extent with what we have advocated for some time. We hope that when the committee again considers the matter it will not forget remarks made by members on this side. I have often referred to cases where workers have been injured close to their places of employment, but I do not think I can do better than quote an opinion obtained from a workmen's compensation lawyer in South Australia, well-known and favourably regarded in the profession. The Labor movement was concerned about a case at Port Adelaide in September last year. We asked for an opinion because we were in doubt as to the rights under the Workmen's Compensation Act, and the following is the opinion we obtained:—

I have been asked to advise the above union on the following facts:—"————' deceased, was employed by the company at Port Adelaide on September 2, 1952, and had been employed by that firm for many years as a motorman. On September 2, 1952, he (hereinafter called the workman) was riding his motor cycle east along Rann Street, Birkenhead, when he collided with a truck. The collision took place shortly before 7.30 a.m., approximately 7.25 a.m. The deceased was due to commence work at 7.30 a.m. at his employer's premises, which are situated about 200yds. from the

place where the collision occurred. As a result of the injuries sustained in the collision the deceased subsequently died.''

I have no doubt whatever that the deceased did not die as the result of an accident arising out of and in the course of his employment. Under our Act the general rule is that a man's employment does not begin until he has reached the place where he has to work or the ambit, scope or scene of his duty, and it does not continue after he has left it, and the periods of going and returning are generally excluded. For example, where a workman was injured whilst on his way to work at a place three-quarters of a mile from the site of his labours on a footpath over the land of his employers which the workman was not permitted but was not obliged to use as a short cut to his place of work, the injury did not arise out of or in the course of his employment. There are certain exceptions to the general rule, but unfortunately the case does not come within any of these exceptions. The first exception is if the period of employment will include the time taken by the workman in getting to and from his work by means of transport provided by his employer, if he is using that transport in discharge of some contract or duty owed to his employer. The second is that there must in all cases be an interval of time and space in going to and returning from the scene of his labours during and in which the employment of the workman lasts, but once he has left the scene of his labours (or has not reached that scene) and is on a public highway or a roadway on private property used by the public then he ceases to be acting in the course of his employment. The third exception is that the course of his employment may be taken to have commenced although the hour for actual work has not struck. That is to say, if the workman's arrival at the premises is not unreasonably early then he would be entitled to compensation for an accident that happened even before his actual work commenced, but he must be at the premises in these circumstances.

The employee could arrive at work five or 10 minutes before the starting time, as many do, and if an accident occurred in that period compensation would be paid in most cases. That shows the need for it to be embodied in legislation. The opinion continues:—

The fourth exception is in the case of a workman who has to return to his employer's premises for some legitimate purpose justified by the terms of his employment. In those circumstances he is acting in the course of his employment while he is doing that and that could happen in the street.

If the workman had left his place of employment and remembered that he had forgotten to turn off a light and went back to turn it off, it would be recognized as in the course of his employment. The opinion continues:—

In New South Wales a workman's compensation legislation extends the right to compensation to a man going to and returning from his work. The Northern Territory legislation sedulously followed the South Australian legislation on workmen's compensation for many years. In that time it had no legislation granting compensation to a man injured going to or returning from work, but in 1950 the Northern Territory legislation was re-drafted and then included a provision similar to the New South Wales legislation. For your information I quote the section which is in the Northern Territory Act and which is not in the South Australian Act. It reads as follows:—

> 8. (1) Where personal injury by accident is caused to a workman while he is travelling to and from—
>
> (*a*) his place of employment (including any school in relation to which subsection (2) of the last preceding section applies); or to
>
> (*b*) any place which it is necessary for him to attend to obtain a medical certificate or to receive medical, surgical or hospital treatment or compensation in respect of a previous injury,
>
> his employer shall, subject to this Ordinance, be liable to pay compensation in accordance with this Ordinance as if the accident were an accident arising out of or in the course of his employment.
>
> (2) In this section ''Travelling'' means travelling by the shortest convenient route for the journey but does not include travelling during or after any substantial interruption of the journey or any substantial deviation, from the route made for a reason unconnected with the workman's employment, attendance at the school or obtaining the certificate, treatment or compensation as the case may be, unless, in the circumstances of any particular case, the nature, extent, degree, and content of the risk of accident was not materially changed or increased by reason only of any such interruption or deviation.

Had that section been in the South Australian legislation compensation would have been payable to the dependants. As it is not in the South Australian legislation no compensation is payable to his dependants.

The opinion was dated October 7, 1953. We feel that an injustice was done to the employee, and it has been done to thousands of others. If the provisions quoted were included in our legislation it would to some degree provide compensation. The allowance for medical expenses will be raised to £100. That is a laudable improvement, but it will not meet the cost of medical expenses for a serious injury. The allowance should be raised to at least the £150 provided by the New South Wales legislation. Doctors' fees have increased, and so have costs of hospital services and medicines. Generally, the increases recommended by the committee only conform to increases in the basic wage or the reduction in value of money. I appeal to the committee to investigate this legislation

from time to time and bring down further recommendations to the Government. I hope it will consider the points raised by the Leader of the Opposition and myself, especially the question of compensation to persons injured in going to or returning from their employment. I will not move any amendments because the Bill is at least an advance on existing legislation, and we on this side will be glad to see it passed so that workers can get higher compensation.

Mr. DAVIS (Port Pirie)—I support the Bill, though it is not all that I desire. The Government has at last recognized, in part at least, that a workman should receive compensation for injury received in going to and from his work. This question has been raised by the Opposition before because it is the employer's responsibility to cover his employees until they reach home. I know of several men that have left work but met with a serious accident before getting home. At present, immediately the employee leaves his work on the knock-off whistle the employer is no longer responsible, but the employee may not have even left the premises. This matter should be considered by the committee. It is strange that the committee has adopted the legislation of other States in some instances but not in others. It stated that a higher compensation for death was justified, yet it was not prepared to recommend an adequate increase. The present figure of £1,500 will be increased to £2,000, but the compensation for disablement has been increased proportionately more. The existing margin should have been retained. No amount can adequately compensate a woman who loses her husband. She may be left with three or four children, and have a great struggle to rear them properly.

I have frequently referred to the deduction of the amounts a person has received while incapacitated through injury from the amount eventually paid to him. The sums received while incapacitated are only in lieu of wages lost, so they should not be deducted from the payment for the loss of a limb, for instance. Many persons must use up all their weekly payments in this way. I could quote two cases where that has happened in Port Pirie. In one, a man returned to work but the wound did not heal properly and it was necessary to take his leg off, yet he had been paid all the money entitled to him under the Act. That is the most unjust aspect of workmen's compensation legislation. Perhaps the committee overlooked this point. If it had considered this aspect I am sure it would have seen the injustice and made recommendations accordingly. The Premier said that the Bill would cover those receiving weekly compensation payments now, but I understood him to say that if they died subsequently the compensation would be in accordance with existing provisions. That is not right: the compensation at death should be in accordance with the provisions of the Bill. I hope the Premier will make the position clear.

I agree with the member for Thebarton that the increase in the allowance for medical expenses is not enough. Every time the doctor calls it costs £1 1s., so if he calls 100 times the maximum of £100 will be exhausted. The increase in the allowance for funeral expenses is too small. Today a funeral costs about £50, and the committee should further consider this aspect. Members on this side support the Bill because it improves existing provisions. We know it would be useless to move amendments because the Premier has said if we do not want the Bill we can defeat it. We do not want to do that, but I hope that when the House is in recess the committee will again meet and consider our suggestions. It has been said that employees had a representative on the committee, but although his voice was heard the other members paid little heed to him.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—The committee said that weekly payments for incapacity were £12 8s. in Victoria, and recommended £12 for South Australia, but it did not say that the £12 8s. paid in Victoria is not deducted from the lump sum payment. I have known several employees who have used all the amount payable during the period of their incapacity. Some have lost an arm, fingers, or a hand, yet at the conclusion of their incapacity they went back to work without receiving another penny from the insurance company, and still owing money to doctors and hospitals. The Bill provides that where a workman is entitled to compensation the employer shall be liable to pay to him a sum not exceeding £100 in respect of expenses incurred as the result of his injury, including £5 for his transport to a hospital or any other place for medical examination or treatment and any fees or other charges not exceeding £40 for medical expenses. In fact, the £100 could be absorbed by medical expenses. Another provision is that fees payable to any registered nurse shall not exceed £5. One could easily be confronted with an expense for this service of £10 or £20. It is also provided that fees payable to any hospital shall not exceed £50. These provisions

should be deleted because they are misleading. Any person not knowing the true position may believe that he could receive not more than £5 toward the cost of transportation to or from a hospital following an injury, or more than £5 for payment to a nurse. This matter should be considered by the Workmen's Compensation Committee during the recess with a view to improvements being suggested.

An amount of more than £100 might easily be absorbed in meeting the various expenses. Because of the so-called health scheme introduced by the Liberal Commonwealth Government, if a person desires to get any assistance from hospital and medical benefit schemes he must subscribe to an insurance company or friendly society. Many of the workers covered by the Act under discussion are paying to such organizations in order to be covered should they be detained in a hospital. If they met with an accident at work they would come within the ambit of the Workmen's Compensation Act. The Commonwealth health scheme provides that in those circumstances they would not receive one penny from their insurance company or friendly society, and consequently their payments to such organizations would be a dead loss. It is therefore encumbent upon the State Government to ensure that all medical expenses incurred by a workman as a result of an injury at work should be covered by this legislation. The Workmen's Compensation Act is often referred to by the legal profession and many other people and bodies, such as insurance companies, employers, employees and trades unions, and I suggest that it be consolidated as soon as possible to make it easier to understand and obviate the necessity of these people to continually refer to the various amendments.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages without amendment.

DA COSTA SAMARITAN FUND (INCORPORATION OF TRUSTEES) BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

LOTTERY AND GAMING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 24. Page 1609.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—The Bill deals entirely with additional trotting days to be allowed in country districts. Country people interested in this sport are entitled to the same consideration as those living in the metropolitan area. I therefore see no objection to the passing of the Bill. I do not think we can be charged with any dereliction of duty if we give the same privileges to certain country areas that are already enjoyed by other country centres. The present law provides for a total of 85 trotting meetings annually. Eyre Peninsula is treated as a separate zone, 20 meetings being permitted annually. A total of 60 meetings is permitted in the remaining country districts, in addition to five country charity meetings. I understand that only two of these five meetings are being availed of, one at Port Pirie and the other at Mount Gambier. The law provides that a trotting club can have 11 meetings a year, but the over-all maximum of 60 ordinary meetings a year prevents the existing country trotting clubs from having the maximum number of meetings to which they are entitled. As pointed out by the Treasurer in his second reading speech, the present position is that Gawler has 10 meetings, Strathalbyn 8, Victor Harbour 8, Mount Gambier 5, Barmera 4, Port Pirie 9, Clare 4, Kapunda 4, Kadina 7, and Snowtown 1, a total of 60, so all the meetings permitted under the Act are already allotted by the Trotting League. There is therefore, under present legislation no possibility of establishing further country trotting clubs in this State. The Premier said that proposals have been mooted for new clubs at Renmark, Loxton, Penola, Peterborough and Wilmington, and other proposals may be mooted in the future. The Bill creates two new zones, and the Eyre Peninsula zone will have 20 meetings, the South-Eastern 20, the Murray 20, and all other country districts 60 meetings a year, and there will still be five charity meetings; therefore the net result will be an increase in the number of country trotting meetings from 85 to 125. The question arises whether, in view of the increased number of meetings, some slight increase in the number of charity meetings should not be permitted, but it must be pointed out that, although five a year are permitted at present, only two are held.

I see nothing wrong in either horse racing or trotting, and I am prepared to allow this Bill to pass so that some country districts which are at present prevented by law from establishing trotting clubs may be enabled to do so. I understand difficulties may arise over the control of trotting in this State. At present the South Australian Trotting League, which exercises an overall control of trotting, comprises delegates from each South Australian club with the result that the strong clubs such

as the South Australian Trotting Club, which races at Wayville and which provides most of the money and organization that keeps the sport going, have only the same say in its control as some of the small country clubs. As the result of this legislation, the number of country clubs may be increased by five or six, which will mean that each of those clubs will supply a delegate to meetings of the Trotting League. Steps should be taken, not by this Parliament but by the people interested in the sport, to provide a better system of control. The zoning system, which was first accepted in the case of Eyre Peninsula and which is being extended by this Bill, will offer an opportunity to improve the method of control. I see no reason why local trotting leagues could not be established to control trotting in the various zones. Eyre Peninsula, the South-East, and the Murray area would each be controlled by a league, and another league would control trotting in all other country districts. The parent body, the South Australian Trotting League, could be constituted by representatives of these zone leagues rather than by representatives of clubs as at present. When the new zones are established and the sport is on a proper footing in those areas, those responsible should get together and devise a new scheme of control, for the time is not far distant when an improved scheme will be necessary.

The Bill reduces the number of mid-week trotting meetings. A number of meetings allocated to Eyre Peninsula, South-Eastern and Murray zones must be held on Saturdays and public holidays, and 10 of the 60 meetings in the remaining country areas must be held on Saturdays and public holidays. In the main the Bill will make for the improvement of the sport and will help country people by enabling the provision of necessary amenities in their district. On many occasions members, particularly on this side, have advocated the decentralization of our population, and if more people are to be retained in and attracted to country areas the important amenity of sport must be considered.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS (Stirling)—I support the Bill, for it will assist trotting clubs. I have heard it said that no further days should be allocated for trotting meetings and that no new clubs formed, but I do not agree with that and believe that the South Australian Trotting League would not be justified in refusing to register or license new trotting clubs. We should give every encouragement to sport, particularly trotting and racing, because country people who are provided with the amenities of sport will be prepared to stay in their towns. This would only be carrying out the policy of decentralization advocated and practised by the Playford Government.

Mr. Frank Walsh—Oh, yeah!

Mr. Lawn—Are trotting meetings all the decentralization this Government has to offer?

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—Mr. O'Halloran said that, although five charity meetings were permitted, only two were held, but the reason why the full number is not availed of is that country trotting clubs are battling in an effort to pay their way and meet their commitments, therefore they cannot afford charity meetings. That is the case with the Victor Harbour Trotting Club. The West Coast zone, established in 1950 by the Government, has an allocation of 20 dates. Kimba and Whyalla have trotting tracks and I understand that one is being put down at Port Augusta, which will be included in the Eyre Peninsula zone and will share in the 20 meetings allocated. The only track operating in the Murray zone is at Barmera, which has at present four meetings a year. These two zones, together with the South-Eastern zone, will form the outer circle. Mount Gambier at present holds five trotting meetings a year. The inner circle comprises Clare, Kadina, Snowtown, Gawler, Victor Harbour, Strathalbyn, and Kapunda. I am pleased that no more dates are to be allocated for mid-week meetings, for we can ill afford to spare any more week days. The additional dates to be allocated will be either Saturdays or public holidays. It is gratifying to see that the new dates are being allocated, for the South Australian Trotting League has found it difficult to allocate dates to new clubs because of the limited number at its disposal. Any date allocated to a new club has had to be taken away from an existing club and there is a minimum number of meetings on which clubs can successfully operate. Several clubs have been in existence for only a few years, and one is the Victor Harbour Club. Their method of financing operations was to issue £10 debentures over a period of years. They had a big expense in providing a track and proper running rails, and the building of totalizors, grandstands, booths, eating places and bookmakers' stands. A greater allocation of dates will give the existing clubs a better opportunity to pay their way and do a good job. The main object of most clubs is to operate to the benefit of the local district. Already some of them have given large amounts to local hospitals and other activities. The

outer circle is too far from the metropolitan area to enable the owners and trainers in it to bring their horses to the metropolitan area. The zoning and allocation of extra dates will enable more meetings to be held in the outer circle. The proposal in the Bill will encourage the visit of interstate horses to our far flung areas, which will be all to the good. I understand the Bill is completely acceptable to the South Australian Trotting League. I have received a letter from the secretary, Mr. G. J. B. Pridham, of which the following is an extract:—

It is not considered desirable to deprive other country clubs of racing dates to allot them to the new untried areas situated far distant from the metropolitan area. Another point in favour of such zones being created is that horses from Victoria come over the border to take part at meetings conducted at clubs in the areas referred to, and the additional racing dates would be a great benefit to the districts. It is not the wish of the League to increase mid-week racing in country districts within say 100 miles from Adelaide by the use of more racing dates, but it desires to provide the more remote areas with greater facilities without interference to the closer country districts. The fact that Parliament saw fit to grant a special series of racing dates to Eyre Peninsula appears to justify granting same concessions to other parts of the State similarly situated, as residents in the areas referred to can seldom avail themselves of the opportunity of witnessing trotting meetings conducted at clubs within closer distance of the metropolitan areas.

Mr. Goldney said that in his district the trotting club wishes to hold mid-week meetings. As no more mid-week dates are to be allocated I suggest that representations be made by that club to the clubs that have all mid-week dates or to the S.A. Trotting League. A change may result which would enable the trotting club mentioned by Mr. Goldney to use the oval for trotting during the week instead of wanting it on Saturday when it is occupied for other purposes. I support the Bill as it will be of a benefit to trotting as a whole.

Mr. STEPHENS (Port Adelaide)—It is several years now since I first moved a motion in this House to provide for better trotting facilities. At the time no one believed what I said about the possible growth of trotting. Now we have both day and night meetings. The South Australian Trotting Club has done good work and has paid out hundreds of thousands of pounds for charitable purposes. It has also paid much taxation to the Government. The Bill increases the number of trotting meetings in certain country areas to which I am not opposed. Some members think that this Bill does not affect the present legislation, but it does. The South Australian Trotting League is the controlling body for trotting. If the Bill is passed as framed there will be no guarantee that the clubs named will be able to hold trotting meetings. The League will have the say, because the present Act contains the following provision:—

No trotting race meeting at which a totalizator is used shall be held unless a permit in writing authorizing it to be held has been issued by the South Australian Trotting League Incorporated.

Mr. Teusner—Does the league support the Bill?

Mr. STEPHENS—I do not know.

Mr. William Jenkins—It does. I have a letter from the League.

Mr. STEPHENS—As a league I do not think it has decided the matter. There is a little league and a big league. The little league decides everything and its decisions are adopted by the big league. Previously I said that if ever I saw anything in trotting which needed altering I would bring it forward. The time has now come for me to mention several matters.

Mr. Lawn—You want a Royal Commission?

Mr. STEPHENS—I do not know about a Royal Commission but there should be an inquiry into many matters associated with trotting. Ten clubs each send a delegate to the League. As pointed out by the Premier some of the clubs hold only one meeting a year, yet they have as much voice and voting power in the affairs of the League as the South Australian Trotting Club, which during the year holds 35 meetings in addition to two charity meetings. Last week it gave £4,000 to two charitable institutions. The present chairman of the League told me some time ago that he agreed to my proposal. At present the interests of the various clubs are protected by the delegates. The owners and breeders have a body to look after their interests, and so have the bookmakers, but no one looks after the interests of the general public. I suggest that the constitution of the South Australian Trotting League be altered. At present it is too unwieldy in size. There are 10 delegates, and if another five are added there will be 15. I do not see copies of the league balance-sheet, but I know that about £3,000 is paid in fees to delegates each year. Because of complaints some of the expenses have been cut down recently. If several of the country delegates have private business in town they call a meeting of the League and get their expenses paid.

I understand that one delegate received £18 to attend one meeting. He was paid on the basis of 9d. a mile for travelling. In addition, delegates are paid attendance fees and living allowances. If the Bill is passed a committee of 15 will deal with matters which could be better dealt with by five.

Mr. John Clark—Do you favour equal representation for city and country?

Mr. STEPHENS—The league should comprise five members. There should be two from the country, two from the city, with an independent chairman appointed by the Government to represent the general public. Those five men could control the sport and do all the work necessary. Why should there be so many people in charge of this sport? Further, it is not right for a man to be an owner, trainer, driver, member of the committee, and a member of the league as well. Should a competitor be able to appoint his own judge and officials? I think last year we passed an amendment giving power to appoint an appeal board. It was wrong for drivers who had been penalized to be able to sit on their own case. Previously, they could be defendant and judge at the same time. I was honest when I submitted to this House that we should give the trotting authorities the same rights as we had given racing officials, and I am not going back on the promise I made to the House some years ago. Members have a right to know the true position. I want them to realize that by increasing the number of clubs the number on the controlling body will be increased too. Only one meeting a year is held at Snowtown. The representative of that club comes to Adelaide at least 12 times a year at the expense of other clubs to sit on the controlling body. We should alter its constitution. I will not oppose the formation of other clubs because I do not want to oppose their right of holding meetings, but some authority, other than the league, should decide whether meetings should be held at one place or another.

An application was made for a club to be formed in the district represented by the Leader of the Opposition, but it was rejected because it did not have a half-mile course. However, many clubs that opposed the application did not have a half-mile course. There is not a half-mile course in Adelaide, but the interdominion championship will be held at Wayville next year. This is the biggest trotting event in Australia, so why should some clubs reject an application for that reason? The additional trotting meetings will be held on Saturday afternoons or public holidays. When I spoke before members wanted an assurance that my own association would not be entering into competition with the galloping clubs, but what happens today? Sometimes less than £200 is invested on the totalizator at small trotting meetings, but often hundreds of pounds goes through the bookmakers' hands in bets on Melbourne and Adelaide races. It would not pay many small clubs to hold meetings but for the facilities provided for betting on horse racing. Members should know that country trotting meetings often become betting shops. I hope all members will use every endeavour to see that better, more efficient and fairer control of trotting is provided than we have today. I do not think any member would disagree with my suggestion for a controlling board of five persons. The Betting Control Board supervises the activities of bookmakers and the police supervise the totalizator. For the protection of the general public, and particularly those who attend trotting meetings, we should have better control of trotting. I hope the Premier will consider moving an amendment for this purpose.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Goodwood)—I do not object to the holding of additional trotting meetings in the country, but I do not like certain aspects of the sport. Clubs may be established at Renmark, Loxton, Penola, Peterborough and Wilmington. An additional five clubs will mean a further five members on the Trotting League, which is the controlling body. It is extraordinary that because the Snowtown Club holds one meeting a year it is entitled to have a delegate on the central body. It seems that the club that holds meetings at the Wayville Showgrounds meets the losses sustained by other clubs. People attending the showgrounds desire a high standard of entertainment. Thirty-five meetings a year are held there, and many people migrate to Wayville on trotting nights, but from press reports it seems that the attendances are falling off. I do not know whether that is because the Trotting League is endeavouring to do something not entirely in the best interests of the Wayville patrons. Are the patrons getting real entertainment? It seems that sometimes nominations are called for a race for square gaiters, but sometimes, because of the few nominations, the club decides not to hold that race, but to have another one for pacers. Is there too much control over this sport, or is a new system needed in this State? These matters can become a little complicated. I have noticed that the Gawler Trotting Club

desires to give a trial to what is known as a discretionary handicap, but the controlling body refused the request.

The question arises whether control by the Trotting League is too cumbersome. I understand that it has introduced rules on the conduct of trotting in this State. My information leads me to believe that any person who goes before the stewards and is suspended for one month has no right of appeal, even though they may have made a mistake. On the other hand, any person suspended for more than a month has the right of appeal within 14 days. Parliament never intended that this organization should have such power. Any person disqualified should be entitled to lodge an appeal, whatever the period of his suspension. The League should be reminded that it is not long since an interstate driver was suspended for a period, and later it was ascertained that the person who suffered punishment was innocent, but because of its power under regulation nothing could be done to assist him. That point should be investigated. The Leader of the Opposition has suggested a body consisting of one representative from each zone, one from the city, and an indepdendent chairman. The member for Port Adelaide favours two country representatives, irrespective of the part of the State from which they come, and two city representatives, with an independent chairman. Is it meant that there should be two representatives from the South Australian Trotting Club or should the Owners and Breeders' Association be represented? I will support the second reading, but hope that before the next session the Government will have a complete investigation to decide what is in the best interests of trotting. It should be decided whether the organization is to comprise two representatives from the country and one from the South Australian Trotting Club and one from the Owners and Breeders' Association, with an independent chairman, or as an alternative one representative from each zone, with an indepedent chairman. I believe the Government should notify the Trotting League that Parliament desires it to review the present set-up in dealing with disqualified persons.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Use of totalizator at trotting meeting."

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

To insert "Robe" after "Buckingham" in line 4 of paragraph (2).

This county was inadvertently omitted from the document on which the Bill was based.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Title passed. Bill read a third time and passed.

EARLY CLOSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the Hon. T. Playford and read a first time.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Minister of Industry and Employment)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Early Closing Act, which applies in many districts and which, by petition, can be made to apply in any district, provides that certain shops may not be open except within the hours specified in the Act. The Act further provides for the sale of certain exempt goods outside those hours. In the main exempt goods are those which Parliament has decided are of a perishable nature, such as fruit and vegetables, bread and cooked ham, which may be required by citizens in an emergency or under certain conditions. If a shop remains open after the hours specified in the Act the shopkeeper must lock away all goods other than exempt goods. If an inspector finds non-exempt goods offered for sale or being sold, an offence is deemed to have been committed and a prosecution invariably follows.

The purpose of the Bill is to add to the list of those goods which may be sold outside the specified hours and to give a little more freedom to those storekeepers stocking those goods. At present butter is exempt provided it is not sold in quantities greater than two ounces, but, if a person asked a shopkeeper for two ounces of butter, he would be told that that quantity could not be supplied without a loss being made because of the weighing entailed. The bread and cooked meat for a sandwich may be sold, but not the butter for the same sandwich; therefore the Bill strikes out the limit of two ounces on the sale of butter so that citizens may buy any quantity of butter after closing time.

Mr. Dunks—Does that apply to margarine?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Not as far as I know, for no request has been received in respect of it. The Bill is the result of requests from an association of smaller storekeepers throughout the metropolitan area and is opposed by the Retail Tobacconists' Association.

Mr. Davis—And for good reasons!

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Bill is also opposed by the Retail Storekeepers' Association, which comprises mainly grocers. The request received by the Government from the South Australian branch of the Federated Retail Confectionery, Refreshment and Mixed Business' Association of Australia states:—

We respectfully request that consideration be given to the extension of the undermentioned items, not in the second schedule of the Early Closing Act, 1926-1935:—butter, cheese, eggs and bacon, uncooked rabbit and sausages, tobacco and cigarettes. In making this request we desire to mention that the Act has not been revised to our knowledge since 1935, since when there has been an influx of New Australians, apart from more people living in flats and a large number of whom husband and wife are working. The closing hours of non-exempt shops have been altered, which prevents some employed in industry being unable to purchase their necessities, except during their lunch-hour, and many of these industries are some distance from shopping areas. In Western Australia, N.S.W., and Queensland, cigarettes and tobacco are considered an essential and are exempt. In Victoria this matter is now before Parliament. On the Continent trading hours are exempt and new arrivals here are at a loss to understand why we have these lines in stock and will not provide them at all hours. Quite a number being of the opinion that we are reserving them for Australians and will not supply them because they are foreigners. It was pointed out to you three years ago that bread and cooked meats could be purchased at any hour, yet butter to go with it, could not. Cheese is used for preparation of sandwiches and suppers as much as meats; eggs and bacon are a working man's breakfast, more especially in these times. Cooked rabbits can be sold, yet, like sausages, if uncooked, are non-exempt, they are kept locked away under refrigeration over week-ends if not purchased; they are either a loss to the retailer or sold days after. Tobacco and cigarettes are necessary to the average man, and many females; these are also taken into the cost of living index. Exempt shopkeepers find it most difficult on Saturday afternoons and public holidays for by refusing are politely informed "we can get them at the hotels." Retailers who abide by the law are frequently at a disadvantage, because those who offend and supply, gain that trade, even during regular hours. It takes assistants longer to explain why these lines cannot be sold than to supply, and at the rates of pay today, the proprietor is penalized. On Christmas and Easter holidays when non-exempt shops are closed for days, and over the weekend, these items are necessary for the consumer, especially where they have no refrigeration.

Mr. O'Halloran—No request was received from the consumers?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—As the Minister authorized to initiate prosecutions for offences under the Early Closing Act, I am daily confronted with instances of shopkeepers who have supplied persons with a few cigarettes, a pound of butter or some other non-exempt goods out of specified trading hours, The fact that consumers want this legislation is proved by the number of such prosecutions. This matter has been before the House previously. The Government did not comply entirely with the request of the Federated Retail Confectionery, Refreshment and Mixed Business Association. It mentioned butter, cheese, eggs, bacon, uncooked rabbits, sausages, tobacco and cigarettes, but the Bill deals only with butter, tobacco, cigarettes and cigarette papers. The Government had most difficulty in deciding on the inclusion of tobacco and cigarettes. From my experience abroad I know that these commodities are sold freely at almost any hour. In Western Australia, New South Wales and Queensland, cigarettes and tobacco are considered essential and are exempt goods. When the matter first came before me the Victorian Parliament was considering it also. The action we contemplate has already been taken in at least three States and contemplated in another. If the Bill is passed many people will be convenienced. Although there may be some opposition from people who are not anxious to trade during the later hours, I think that in a very short time the amendment will be considered a good one, and people will find themselves able to live more comfortably within the laws of the State.

Mr. FRED WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

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

SUPREME COURT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 24. Page 1610.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This Bill has become necessary owing to the change in the value of money in the inflationary period through which we are passing. As the result of the circumstances born of that period the pensions of judges of the Supreme Court, like the pensions and emoluments of many other persons in our society, have got out of line with the original proposal. The Bill changes the principle of providing pensions for judges in some important respects. For instance, it introduces the principle of contributions in accordance with a scale devised to

increase progressively according to age at the time of appointment. Those appointed within five years of the compulsory retiring age of 70 will not be eligible for a pension. It also provides for the first time in South Australia that a pension shall be paid to the widows of judges. The provisions of the Bill are reasonable. I see no purpose in debating them at length and I trust they will be agreed to.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee. Committee's report adopted.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CITY OF ENFIELD LOAN) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 19. Page 1571.)

Mr. JENNINGS (Prospect)—As this is a hybrid Bill it must go to a Select Committee for examination; therefore, it is not necessary for me to speak at length. I support the second reading with great pleasure and join with the Minister in congratulating the Enfield council on the courage and imagination it has shown in asking for authority from Parliament to borrow this large sum of money to tackle the tremendous job of draining its district. The topography of the Enfield council area is such that the drainage problem is difficult. Almost the whole of the area slopes down from the highlands on the eastern side of the Main North Road to the lower areas which include Devon Park, Croydon Park and Woodville Gardens. As a resident of a relatively low-lying part of the area I can speak with great sincerity about the need for drainage. The Enfield council area has developed rapidly over the last two years and I believe there have been more homes built there than in any other metropolitan council district. In 1947 the population was 13,700 and there were 3,700 homes. At June 30 last the population was about 50,000 and the number of homes 11,300. This augurs well for the future prosperity of the council, but it also means that the council has to face tremendous problems. It has found it impossible to keep pace with the growth of its area with its normal revenue. It has had to provide immediate services for which it would not be normally recompensed for many years. It is obvious that if the council limits its activities to its revenue raised in the normal way, including some sporadic borrowing, it will not be able to tackle the vast work which needs to be done. The council decided that the only way to give effect to its desires and responsibilities in providing proper drainage was to seek authority to borrow an amount adequate to enable the work to be properly done in the near future. It is believed that the arrangement mentioned by the Minister is satisfactory. He described it as an agreement between a willing lender and a willing borrower. The Savings Bank, in making this money available, is performing one of the most important functions of a State bank. The long period of the loan ensures that the burden of repayments will be evenly and equitably spread over those who in the future will benefit from the work performed. Obviously it would be grossly unfair for a permanent work of this nature to be the full financial responsibility of present ratepayers. Whilst I appreciate the excellent financial arrangements I am somewhat disappointed that the Government did not see its way clear to make a grant towards the total cost of this scheme.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—It was not asked to.

Mr. JENNINGS—I understand the council was hopeful of receiving some direct assistance from the Government, but as this was not forthcoming the council, to its great credit, was prepared to accept full responsibility for the scheme. I hope the Government acknowledges that it is not purely an internal council drainage scheme but is something which will be of advantage to the whole of the northern suburbs. It is largely made necessary because the Enfield Corporation has extended the utmost encouragement and co-operation to all home builders, particularly the Housing Trust. If necessary in future, I hope the Government will be prepared to offer some direct assistance to the council in the repayment of the loan. The drainage scheme is necessary and the proposed plan has been well conceived and has earned the commendation of engineering experts who have examined it. I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time and referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Hon. M. McIntosh, Messrs. G. T. Clarke, C. R. Dunnage, J. J. Jennings, and S. J. Lawn; the committee to have power to send for persons, papers and records and to report on December 3.

EMPLOYEES REGISTRY OFFICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

In Committee.

(Continued from November 19. Page 1572.)

New clause 2a—"Licensed holder to deposit and post up list of fees."

Mr. HAWKER—When this matter was last under consideration I sought leave to amend my proposed new clause 2a with a view to

incorporating an amendment suggested by Mr. Shannon. However, since then I have discussed the matter with the Parliamentary Draftsman and I think the new clause as originally drafted provided all the safeguards required by the Treasurer. I ask leave to withdraw the amendment I moved just prior to progress being reported last Thursday, namely, to add to the clause—

Provided that no payment by an employee shall involve a weekly charge upon earnings.

Leave granted; amendment withdrawn.

Mr. HAWKER—I ask leave to amend new clause 2a by adding at the end of subsection (2):—

The scale shall not provide for recurring payments to be made in respect of the same hiring.

Leave granted.

Mr. HAWKER—I have already explained the purpose of this amendment several times.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I think I have at last gained some understanding of what Mr. Hawker is hoping to achieve. This latest addendum still continues the rather loose method of permitting a proprietor of an employment agency to fix his own fees so long as he furnishes a copy of them to the Minister, displays a copy in a prominent place in his office, and forwards a copy in replying to any inquiries. Provided the schedule of charges does not result in a continuing charge this system will be substituted for the present system which has been in practice for a long time. In supporting this new clause the Premier said that he had had some experience of price-fixing and he was inclined to favour this system rather than that of Parliament's fixing a schedule of fees. I can appreciate the Premier's desire to get away from price-fixing himself by discarding it section by section and as fast as possible. Opposition members also have had experience of price-fixing, especially by the person with something to sell. In the past it has resulted in exploitation and I fear that by enabling agents to fix their own fees it may result in some exploitation in the future. An efficient Commonwealth organization renders this class of service free to the community, but the scope of that organization has been somewhat reduced during the regime of the Menzies Government and if the unlikely happens and that Government is returned for a further three-year period next year the Commonwealth Employment Office may be disbanded altogether and there would be no competition with these private agencies which, under this amendment, will be permitted to charge what they like. I do not know that these private agencies serve any great purpose while there is an adequate and efficient Commonwealth employment agency. However, there may perhaps be some types of employment where specialist inquiries may be necessary. I was prepared to support the Bill as originally introduced, but had I known it was to be changed in the manner proposed, which the Premier apparently favours, I would certainly have voted against the second reading. I oppose the new clause.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Minister of Industry and Employment)—The Government brought in a Bill that provided for a schedule of the charges which were fixed. Mr. Hawker's amendment will enable charges to be made providing the person who makes them advertises what they are in the widest possible way, and also that there is no recurring charge. When the matter was raised by the honourable member previously I had not given very much consideration to it because, as the Leader of the Opposition has mentioned, the South Australian system has been so admirable that it has put everybody out of business except three very small agencies, and they were being squeezed out because their charges were fixed so long ago that it was impossible for them to make a living, particularly as they were competing against the free Commonwealth service, which pays no taxes. This Bill was introduced because of a request by Mr. Hawker, who pointed out that some employers in the country were prepared to pay fees for the equivalent of a city agency to look out for certain types of labour. I do not think there is very much amiss with the amendment because it will enable changing conditions to be met without another Act of Parliament. From memory, it is a system introduced by a Labor Government in Western Australia when there was no Commonwealth service. At any rate there have been Labor Governments in Western Australia for a number of years and they have not sought to alter it. If this type of legislation has worked satisfactorily in other States and has provided for greater freedom and less direct control, it merits a trial. I have informed the honourable member that provided the agencies widely advertised their scale of charges and there was no suggestion of a recurring charge, which is capable of abuse, I would not oppose the amendment.

The Committee divided on new clause 2a as amended—

Ayes (19).—Messrs. Brookman, Christian, Geoffrey Clarke, Goldney, Hawker (teller), Hincks, Sir George Jenkins, Messrs. Wm. Jenkins, Macgillivray, McIntosh, Michael, Pattinson, Pearson, Playford, Quirke, Stott, Teusner, Travers, and White.

Noes (11).—John Clark, Corcoran, Davis, Dunstan, Jennings, McAlees, O'Halloran (teller), Riches, Stephens, Frank Walsh, and Fred Walsh.

Pairs.—Ayes—Messrs. Dunnage, Shannon, and Heaslip. Noes—Messrs. Lawn, Hutchens, and Tapping.

Majority of 8 for the Ayes.

New clause as amended thus inserted.

New clause 2b—"Charges allowed to be received by registry office keepers."

Mr. HAWKER—I move to insert the following new clause 2b:—

Section 14 of the principal Act is amended—

(*a*) by striking out the words "fifth schedule" in the penultimate line of subsection (1) thereof and inserting in their place the words "scale mentioned in section 13 of this Act";

(*b*) by striking out the words "fifth schedule" in the penultimate line of subsection (2) thereof and inserting in their place the words "scale mentioned in section 13 of this Act;

(*c*) by inserting after subsection (2) thereof the following subsection:—

(2a) A licensee shall not, in respect of any hiring, charge the employee a greater sum than he charges the employer.

This is a consequential amendment which makes it an offence for a registry office keeper to charge an employee more than he charges the employer.

New clause inserted.

New clause 2c—"Licensee may demand deposit."

Mr. HAWKER—I move to insert the following new clause 2c:—

The following section is enacted and inserted in the principal Act after section 14 thereof:—

14a. (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, a licensee may demand a deposit from any employee or employer.

(2) On the making of any engagement on behalf of the person by whom a deposit is paid, the deposit shall form part of the fee payable by that person, and may be retained by the licensee.

(3) At any time before the making of such an engagement a licensee shall repay any deposit on demand to the person by whom it is paid.

This permits a registry office keeper to demand a deposit which, however, is repayable on demand.

New clause inserted.

Clause 3—"Repeal and re-enactment of fifth schedule of the principal Act."

Mr. HAWKER—As a consequential amendment I move—

To strike out all the words after "struck out" in line 1 of the clause.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Title passed. Bill read a third time and passed.

STAMP DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its principal purpose is to repeal section 40 of the Stamp Duties Act, 1923-1952, and to validate the incorporation of a company incorporated contrary to the provisions of that section. Under the Act a company intending to carry on an insurance business is required to take out an annual licence authorizing it to do so. Section 40 provides that it shall be unlawful for the Registrar to take any steps towards the incorporation of such a company before payment of the licence fee. Recently the Registrar inadvertently incorporated a company intending to carry on an insurance business before the licence fees were paid. Both the Registrar and those applying for the incorporation of the company overlooked the requirements of section 40. As there was therefore a failure to comply with the section, considerable doubt arises whether the company was duly incorporated and whether the transactions of the company are valid. There seems little doubt in fact that the incorporation of the company is invalid. As the present difficulty of the company was caused in part through the error of an officer of the Government, the Government feels a duty to rectify the position and is accordingly introducing this Bill. The Bill validates the incorporation of the company and at the same time repeals section 40.

Section 40 is difficult to administer, since it requires a company which is not yet incorporated to pay licence fees, and therefore, in effect to take out a licence. How a company which is not even in existence can do either of these things poses something of a problem. The Government believes, on the advice of the Crown Solicitor, that the best solution of this difficulty is to repeal section 40 altogether, since it contributes little to the scheme of the

principal Act. It was originally enacted in 1902 as a means of ensuring that the licence fees were paid. This, however, is adequately secured by section 41 which provides penalties for carrying on such a business without a licence. Section 40, therefore, only amounts to an additional safeguard and is not an integral part of the scheme. Clause 4 repeals section 40 of the principal Act and validates the incorporation of any company incorporated before the passing of the Bill contrary to the provisions of section 40 of the principal Act.

Mr. Riches—Will the incorporation of all companies incorporated since 1902 be invalid?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—One company, through the inadvertence of the Registrar of Companies did not pay a licence fee, so we had to examine the position. It is not possible for a company not in existence to take out a licence.

Mr. Riches—How have they done that since 1902?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—They have paid a fee and it has been accepted, but it seems that section 40 was never capable of being complied with legally. That is the advice that the Government has received from the Crown law officers. This Bill also deals with two other matters which have arisen in connection with the principal Act. The first concerns the payment of *ad valorem* stamp duty on hire purchase transactions. Section 31 of the principal Act provides for the payment of *ad valorem* stamp duty on hire purchase transactions not made in the ordinary course of a persons' trade. The rate of *ad valorem* duty is 10s. when the amount or value of the consideration does not exceed £10 and in other cases £1 for every £100 or fractional part of £100. Under section 31 as originally enacted *ad valorem* stamp duty was payable on contracts for the sale of goods not made in the ordinary course of a person's trade. It was found that this duty was frequently evaded by persons selling the stock-in-trade or plant of businesses or farms. The method of evasion was to effect the transaction by means of a hire purchase agreement, which did not fall within the provisions of section 31. Section 31 was accordingly amended to make stamp duty payable on such transactions also. It will thus be seen that section 31 was never intended to affect the hire purchase transactions entered into in the ordinary course of trade.

Recently one of the trading banks has decided to take up the financing of hire purchase transactions. The procedure will be that the bank will take over the hire purchase agreements and become hirer and the ultimate seller of the goods. The bank has drawn the attention of the Government to the fact that because of the way in which section 31 is at present framed the transactions handled by the bank will be chargeable with *ad valorem* stamp duty and not merely with the duty of one shilling ordinarily payable on agreements. The reason for this is that the law at present exempts a hire purchase agreement from *ad valorem* duty only where the principal business of the hirer-seller is the sale or hire of the goods to which the transaction relates. The bank's principal business will not be the sale or hire of the goods, so that hire purchase agreements entered into by the bank will not be exempted. The Government proposes by this Bill to remove the requirement that the business of the hirer-seller should be his principal business. This amendment will not impair the effectiveness of section 31. At the same time the Bill makes a similar amendment to the provisions of section 31 dealing with the payment of stamp duty on ordinary contracts of sale, which at present only provide for exempting agreements for sale of goods from *ad valorem* duty where the agreements are made by a person whose principal business is the sale of such goods. The Commissioner of Stamps has advised the Government that the proposed amendments will not greatly affect revenue.

Clause 3 amends section 31 to provide that a contract of sale of goods and a hire purchase transaction will be exempt from *ad valorem* stamp duty if they are made in the course of trade by a person whose business is or includes the sale or hire of the goods. The second matter arises in connection with the surrender of Crown leases. A surrender of a lease to the Crown is made to obtain a grant of lease to a party or parties other than the surrenderer, or it may be made so that the surrenderer may change his tenure of the land concerned, or it may be an absolute surrender, made to transfer the land back to the Crown. For many years absolute surrenders of Crown leases have been regarded as exempt from stamp duty. Recently, the question was raised whether they were, in fact, exempt, and the Crown Solicitor has given an opinion that they are not exempt. The Government proposes by this Bill to exempt absolute surrenders of leases to the Crown from stamp duty and thus give legal effect to the previous long-standing practice. The justification for this practice is that when such a surrender takes place the Crown is, in

effect, the transferee of the estate of the lessee. But as the Crown is not liable for stamp duty the duty, if payable at all, would fall upon the surrenderer which would be contrary to the usual rule that buyers and not sellers pay the duty. In considering this question, the payment of duty on the other kinds of surrenders mentioned has been examined.

Stamp duty has been payable for many years on a surrender made to obtain a change of tenure or to obtain a grant to another party. Where a surrender is made to obtain a grant to another party, the surrender is substantially part of the procedure for effecting a transfer to the other party. The essence of the whole transaction is the transfer of a Crown lease or part thereof from one private party to another and, in fact, stamp duty on the surrender is paid in practice by the new lessee and not by the surrenderer. The Government sees no good reason for interfering with the present arrangement and under this Bill duty will be payable as before on such transactions. Where, however, a surrender is made purely for the purpose of giving the surrenderer a different tenure, it would seem just that the surrender should not be chargeable with duty, since in the final result no transfer of any interest in the land takes place. The Government accordingly proposes by this Bill to exempt surrenders of this kind from payment of stamp duty. The alterations of the law which I have explained are carried into effect by clauses 5 and 6.

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

PAYMENT OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 19. Page 1571.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—When speaking on the Estimates early in the session I raised the question of the salaries of members of Parliament, and I am pleased that the Government has decided to introduce this Bill. It is well-known that the salaries paid to members of this Parliament are lower than in any other State except one. The discrepancy is partly due to the fact that in some States provision has been made for an adjustment of members' salaries in accordance with the cost of living adjustments that operated in awards generally until their suspension recently by the Arbitration Court. When the last alteration to members' salaries was before the House I said something on those lines should have been adopted in this State. If my suggestion had been adopted the present Bill would not have been necessary. The result is that during the intervening period of two years, because of the increased cost of living, members of Parliament have lost in comparison with members of other State Parliaments. When salaries were last adjusted in 1951 it was the result of the report by the then President of the State Industrial Court, Sir Edward Morgan. I understand that at that time the salaries were related to the then existing standards and had some relation to the C series index figures. In explaining the Bill the Treasurer indicated that the Government, in considering the proposed increases, had regard to the C series index figures, but had not provided increases to the full extent warranted by the index. So, it follows that if we take the late President's figures as the base, the proposals in this Bill will not completely compensate members for the increased cost of living since 1951. Those members of the public who might be inclined to be critical of the proposal realize, I think, that they have had the benefit of these increases in the cost of living since 1951 and, by introducing the Bill, the Government is only placing members of Parliament on the same level as those outside. Other than their Parliamentary salary many members have no resources on which to live and I am sure that they must be enduring a very difficult struggle to make ends meet, do justice to their constituencies and do their work as members.

In all the years that I have been a member of Parliament I have always had a private income, but there has never been a year when I did not have to draw—sometimes to a small extent, but at other times to a larger extent—on my private income to meet my commitments. I admit that I have a large constituency to represent which involves considerable additional expense. When speaking on the Estimates I said that members who represent large and thickly-populated areas, in addition to having more personal work to do than a member like myself who represents a far-flung electorate, often have to seek the assistance of their wives to adequately discharge their duties to the public. Such a wife is at home most of the time and has to answer telephone calls, make appointments for her husband and assist him to a considerable extent with his Parliamentary duties. A member's emolument should be sufficient to enable him to provide her at least with a decent holiday and

some of the amenities which should be in every home. A member with nothing but his Parliamentary salary is not in a position to do that. The Bill is absolutely justified in every respect, but particularly justified in view of the admirable record of this Parliament down the years. I have been associated with the South Australian Parliament either directly or indirectly for 35 years and in the whole of that period there has never been even a suspicion or a breath of scandal about any member, or any suggestion that because of his financial position any member had solicited assistance from outsiders in order to do certain things. It is a proud record, and if we want to keep it so we should recognize that the men who have done this magnificent job are entitled to an emolument which will place them beyond the susceptibility to anything which might be created by financial difficulties. I think that the House generally will accept the measure.

The method of fixing Ministerial salaries in South Australia is wrong and is a relic of the old colonial days when members of the Ministry were the only members of Parliament to receive any pay, which came from the funds of the Crown. Then we got payment of members of Parliament, but Ministers had to rely only on their Ministerial salaries. There may have been a reason, because the Constitution provided even up to this session that at least one of the members of the Ministry need not necessarily be a member of Parliament. That position was altered by a Constitutional Bill passed earlier this session increasing the number of Ministers by two, and now it is necessary for all the Ministers to be members of Parliament. If Ministers were permitted to have a Parliamentary salary similar to other members the difficulty of adjusting their salaries would not arise to the extent it has today, because they would automatically get the increases proposed in the Bill. However, that is not the case, so it is necessary, if anything is to be done for Ministers, for the Constitution to be amended. Nothing can be done in this Bill to overcome the position and it could not be done by the Opposition because of the Constitutional provision which precludes a private member from introducing a clause relating to money matters.

As there has been no increase in Ministerial salaries since 1951, I suggest on behalf of the Opposition that the Government should introduce a Bill to grant to Ministers a *pro rata* increase to maintain their present level as compared with other members. I am definite on that point, and do not for a moment want it to be accepted as being in the nature of a bargain—that Ministers' salaries should be increased to encourage them to increase members' salaries. I have never approached the question from that angle, and do not do so tonight, but common justice demands that the Bill should be passed and that another should be introduced and passed this session to provide *pro rata* increases for Ministers. I support the second reading.

Mr. DUNKS (Mitcham)—Before analyzing the Bill I want to say that I agree with some of the things said by the Leader of the Opposition in reference to the cost of living figures and members' emoluments being based to some extent on those figures. I hope that on this occasion personalities indulged in during the 1951 debate will be lacking—for instance, reference to my personal life and personal responsibilties, profits that I have made over a number of years, and statements to the effect that I did not need any additional salary. They were quite out of order, and I regret they were said. I indulged in no personalities, but stuck to the clauses of the Bill and gave my opinion as to what I considered was the position, and will proceed to do that tonight.

We must recognize that we are directors of South Australia Unlimited and are here to direct the affairs of the State. We have much responsibility as directors because of the system under which we work. We have a Government in charge of affairs. As I said in 1951, the responsibility does not devolve on us to the same extent as it would if we were independent people in this House as are members of local governing bodies, each member of which has his responsibility and has to make his own decisions and has not a leader to guide him. In this House we have a Ministry, and those members who sit behind it have their policy made for them to a large extent. I suggest, as I did in 1951, that if you care to sit behind the Government and say, "Yes" all the time, your position is a secure one and the amount of money paid for the work is easily earned, but, on the other hand, if you have a sense of responsibility and do not simply follow the Government's lead, the money is not easily earned.

I wish to analyse the qualifications required of a director of South Australia Unlimited. Probably members represent a very good cross-section of the community, but that is as far as I am prepared to go. Does a member need to be a man of very great knowledge?

Does he need to be a man of great education? Does he have to prove, before entering this House, that he has the ability to look after his own business and make money for himself or somebody else? It is not necessary to convince the people of your ability in any of these things. You have to convince your Party that you are a suitable person to represent it and then you have to convince the electors that you have the necessary qualifications.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Somebody has said that you have to convince them that an honest man is the noblest work of God.

Mr. DUNKS—There may be something in that, but I would prefer that the electors looked for people with both honesty and ability. I remind members that there is no examination for prospective members. You can be a very ordinary person, but on coming into this House you are suddenly elevated to the position of member of Parliament.

Mr. O'Halloran—Have you ever been questioned at a political meeting?

Mr. DUNKS—Meetings are so few and far between these days and usually you get only your own supporters there. As Archdeacon O'Donnell of New Zealand once said, "There are two useless things in the world. One is rain at sea and the other is preaching to the converted." My experience in recent pre-election campaigns has been that we are preaching to the converted and it is very seldom that a question is raised at a meeting. During the pre-election campaign four years ago, after there had been an increase in members' salaries, not even one question was asked about what had been done in that regard, which brought home to me the fact that few people are interested in this matter. That makes one wonder whether it is worth while opposing such legislation as this, but my nature is such that all my life I have felt that I wanted to give more in return to my employer than I felt I was actually worth. I felt I had a duty to perform and would sooner work overtime and help the boss out of any difficulty he was in than I would loaf on the job and collect overtime later. I took the same attitude on entering Parliament. I felt the people of my electorate had conferred a great honour on me and I was prepared to make financial sacrifices. I have made those sacrifices, but I will not go into details for they are my own private business. I felt that to become a member of Parliament was a wonderful opportunity to do something for the electors, and, if it was going to cost me money to represent them, I was prepared to lose money as I had during my 16 years in local government work for which I received neither fee nor reward. If honourable members do not think as I think on these matters, I suggest they confine their remarks to the debate and not enter into personalities.

I have been reading what I previously said on this type of legislation. In 1944 I made the point that the basic wage at that time was pegged and that therefore it was bad form for Parliamentarians, who should be setting an example to the rest of the community, to increase their own salaries. I thought that procedure was wrong. I may have been wrong on that occasion, but Parliament followed that by subsequently appointing some sort of tribunal to tell this House what would be a fair and just remuneration for members. In 1948 the Government appointed a special committee to consider this matter, and after much deliberation that committee, comprising Mr. Justice Morgan, Judge Paine and Mr. W. P. Bishop recommended:—

(*a*) Members of Parliament of both Houses shall be paid a salary at the annual rate of £900.

(*b*) In addition to that salary—

(i.) every member, any part of whose electorate is situated outside a radius of fifty (50) miles from Parliament House, shall be paid an annual sum at the rate of £50; and

(ii.) every member, any part of whose electorate is situated outside a radius of two hundred (200) miles from Parliament House, shall be paid an annual sum at the rate of £25 in addition to the above £50.

In 1948 members did not take unto themselves the responsibility or privilege—

Mr. Quirke—As they should have done!

Mr. DUNKS—On that occasion members did not take unto themselves the responsibility or privilege of fixing their own remuneration. I agreed that the appointment of a committee on that occasion was the right procedure. In 1951 this matter was referred to Mr. Justice Morgan of the State Industrial Court for a decision as to what would be a fair and reasonable remuneration for members. We were invited to answer questions put by the learned judge and to tell him what we thought of the actual position, and I had great pleasure in conversing with him and found him a reasonable man. I put my point of view and he asked me a number of questions. The result of his investigation was the recommendation which came before the House in 1951 and which I opposed on the grounds that the

C series index should be considered and that Parliamentary salaries should be fixed in proportion to that index. Further, I considered that our salaries should be increased or decreased in accordance with the rise or fall in the cost of living index. I told members that in the business with which I had the honour to be connected I insisted that any increase in the cost of living index should be reflected in the salaries and wages of all the staff members from the office boy to the manager. I have adhered to that principle for several years and still think it is right. It is the principle which should have been followed in this case, and I said so in 1951.

Action along those lines has been taken in some other States. In Victoria in 1950 an automatic adjustment of salaries in accordance with variations in the cost of living was provided, and I believe that Tasmania has enacted a similar provision. Today I must again object to the time selected for the increase in members' salaries, for only recently quarterly automatic wage adjustments were abolished by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, so that the wages of South Australian workers today are virtually pegged at the rate which was awarded as the result of the last adjustment over three months ago. No increase was given this month in accordance with the quarterly "C" series index figure, therefore this is a most inopportune time for the introduction of this legislation. Can the Treasurer say why, having allowed a committee of inquiry to investigate this matter in 1948 and the learned judge to review the position in 1951, a different principle should have been adopted on this occasion? Surely it would have been better to appoint a Select Committee, comprising people outside this House, to examine the position and submit a recommendation. The provisions in the Bill are probably the result of Cabinet's deliberations and, although I do not wish to say anything derogatory about Mr. O'Halloran, he was probably consulted on the matter before finality was reached. It would have been far better to call for an examination of the type carried out in 1948 and 1951. I would rather that at the last elections we had intimated to the people that if the Government were returned it would review Parliamentary salaries, but I cannot find one mention of the matter in the Treasurer's policy speech. There was no mention of it even in the Governor's Speech, paragraph 24 of which states:—

24. In accordance with the policy of the Government announced before the recent elections you will be asked to consider an amendment of the Constitution Act to increase the number of Ministers of the Crown from six to eight.

It would have been easy to add the words "and to consider a Bill to increase salaries of members of Parliament." I understand the Government had requests from some parts of the House for an increase, and it would have been well worth while mentioning it in the Governor's Speech.

Mr. Christian—We could leave it for inclusion in the Queen's Speech.

Mr. DUNKS—That is an excellent idea. If this Bill contained a proviso that it would not come into operation until after the next elections I would support it, and advocate it on the hustings, but because no announcement on the matter has been made I am not prepared to support it. Paragraph 30 of the Governor's Speech said:—

30. Bills dealing with a number of legislative matters are being prepared by my Ministers. Among them are measures relating to auctioneers, health, justices, building, the Public Works Standing Committee, police offences, road traffic, impounding, the incorporation of associations, benefit associations, mining, maintenance orders, trustees, charities, and other subjects.

Again there is no mention of the salaries of members. Some members opposite have brought forward the matter and we could have had a motion somewhat along these lines:—

That, in the opinion of this House, consideration should be given to an increase in Parliamentary salaries.

This would have caused a general debate and then, if necessary, in the early part of the next session legislation could be introduced. I am distressed to know that a greater increase is not provided for country members, particularly those who live in their own constituencies. I am not concerned about the man who represents a country electorate and lives in Adelaide, because he has not the same expenses. In 1951 I said that a greater salary should be paid to country members and suggested that the additional payment be in the form of an expense allowance, something like the allowance paid to members of Parliamentary committees when they go into the country or to other States.

I represent a metropolitan constituency, which is partly urban and partly suburban. I represent the Blackwood, Eden and Belair districts, which are some of the most active parts of my electorate. Frequently I go there to open halls and hospitals and to attend other functions. It is a growing part and during the

last five or six years it has taken up much of my time. I can drive from one side to the other in half an hour, whereas in some other metropolitan constituencies, even those confined only to the plains, it is easy to walk from one side to the other in 15 minutes. Although this may displease some members, I regard my work as a member of Parliament as a part-time job, even when Parliament is sitting. Many metropolitan members give much of their time to private business. In the mornings they are free, and then they attend the House in the afternoon. When the House is not sitting they have the whole day available. Country members have to be in Adelaide on Tuesdays not later than 1 p.m., which means they must leave home early in the morning. If they come by train to Adelaide they have no opportunity to attend to their private business after the Monday night. They leave Adelaide again on the Thursday night after the sitting for that day has ended, and have the Friday available for their private business. Often they cannot leave Adelaide until the Friday morning. It may be said that there should be no distinction between city and country members, but we must be fair. We must remember not only the time the country member must be in the city, but also that his travelling expenses in his constituency must be colossal compared with the travelling expenses of the metropolitan member. The country member has a rail pass, which is not of great use to him, whereas the metropolitan member has the train pass and a tram pass, which he finds of great value. I hope the Premier will reconsider this matter and amend the measure to provide country members with some increased amount. I heard a new member say that he thought the salaries received by members would be higher than they are. Persons should make some inquiries before nominating for Parliament. If, when elected as representatives of the people, they find the payment is not what they expected they should consider whether it is advisable to remain in Parliament. If I accepted a position that was worth £15 a week and received only £10 I would not remain in that position very long unless there were some honour and glory attached to it and I thought I was doing something for the community generally and for the land that gave me opportunities to serve. I may be sentimental and somewhat foolish in my beliefs but I believe there are other members who think on similar lines.

It has frequently been mentioned that some high-ranking public servants receive salaries twice as high as that received by a member, but the high-ranking public servant must have a good education and be highly qualified and his position is entirely different from that of a member of Parliament. The Public Service will not accept a man unless he has the Leaving Certificate and frequently he is expected to have the Leaving Honours Certificate. That is not expected of a member of Parliament, and I think it is drawing rather the long bow to suggest that we are as valuable as some members of the Public Service.

Mr. O'Halloran—They have more security of tenure.

Mr. DUNKS—I agree but members know when they accept nomination for Parliament that their security of tenure is very frail—it may be for years, it may be for ever, or it may be for only a short while. It all depends on the district he represents and how he performs the duties associated with that district. High-ranking public servants are directors of departments but members might be termed under-directors of the State. Cabinet members are the directors of the State and we are the persons behind them.

The Hon. T. Playford—You are above the directors.

Mr. DUNKS—I think we are usually directed and on many occasions do as directed. A public servant is expected to be on duty all day. If the Minister goes to his department and finds he is absent an explanation is demanded, but a member can walk through the front door of the Chamber and out the back door and be regarded as present and no-one except the Whip wants to know where he is going. That could be a precarious business, but when the Government has a majority of a dozen it does not really matter whether or not a member remains in the House all day. I am not saying this as a criticism but attempting to show the difference between high-grade civil servants and members of Parliament. The public servant must qualify for his position and money is spent on his education, and after he joins a department he must study further to qualify for a higher position. I have been told, on good authority, that only the man who is prepared to study will get anywhere in the Public Service, and that is particularly true of the Education Department and the Treasury Department.

I have gone to some trouble to analyse the financial position over the last few years and the figures I have obtained rather hurriedly may be of interest to members. I consider that the amount of increase provided by the Bill exceeds the increase in the cost of

living in the last few years. In 1939 the basic wage was £203 a year or £3 18s. a week, and a member's salary was £400 a year, or £7 13s. 10d. a week. The member of Parliament had a margin for skill—that is the term commonly used in industry—of £197 above the basic wage. In 1944 the basic wage was £244, or £4 14s. a week, and a member's salary £600 or £11 10s. 9d. a week, the margin for skill being £356.

Mr. Riches—That is not the amount a member received: he had expenses.

Mr. DUNKS—We all have expenses, no matter what our position is. I have heard people contend that they only have a certain amount left after paying taxation but that does not impress me because we live under that system and receive a gross salary and the amount remaining after deductions is what we have to live on. In 1948 the basic wage was £304 per annum or £5 17s. a week, and the salary of members of Parliament £900 per annum, or £17 6s. 1d. a week, so it can be seen that members received £596 per annum over the basic wage worker. In 1951 Parliamentary salaries were adjusted to £1,150, or £22 2s. 3d. per week, and the basic wage was £9 15s. a week; the marginal difference members received then was £12 7s. 3d. per week, or £743 per annum. I suggest that very few artisans with a margin for skill were getting anything like £400 a year over the base rate, yet the members of Parliament received £743. This year the basic wage is £11 11s. a week, and the proposed Parliamentary salary will be £27 8s., so there will be a marginal difference of £15 17s. a week, or £825 per annum; that is far too much.

Mr. O'Halloran—Of course, as the salary increases the amount deducted for taxation purposes also rises substantially.

Mr. DUNKS—I realize that, but the same thing applies to public servants and everybody who receives extra remuneration. I believe that a few years ago in the Botanic Park someone made a statement that I did not intend to take any increased Parliamentary salary because it did not make any difference to me, and that I would receive a benefit from not taking it. I have never been able to follow that, because no matter how high the taxation rate, I have still retained a little of any increase. What the Leader of the Opposition has said is a truism, but it does not apply only to members of Parliament, and as we all know there have been taxation concessions in the last few years. From these figures it can be seen that although in 1939 the base rate was £3 18s. and members were receiving £7 13s. 10d., today with a base rate of £11 11s. we will be receiving under this Bill £27 8s. or £19 15s. more than in 1939. I regret that I am out of step with my colleagues, because over the years with a few exceptions I have got on very well with them. If I am making a mistake in looking at this matter from the point of view that we should expect to make some sacrifice in the interests of the country, then I ask to be forgiven if other members are right and I am wrong. It is not easy, and it never has been, for me to oppose increases in Parliamentary salaries, but I am sure that if members look at the matter logically and compare previous rates with those proposed they will agree that somebody else should have looked at this matter to advise us whether it was advisable or not to refer the matter to a committee of inquiry, as has been done in most other States, instead of just bringing in this Bill. I cannot see my way clear to support the Bill in its present form. If it goes into Committee and alterations are made because of my suggestions, and the amount is brought back to what I think it should be, I will be prepared to support it on the third reading, but if not, I propose to vote against it.

Mr. QUIRKE (Stanley)—I support this measure. Parliament in this State was established a little over a hundred years ago, and since then has consisted of men who have been the chosen representatives of their districts. The condition of the State and its position in the history of the Commonwealth is a vindication of the choice of the people, because members were not always men of academic degrees and qualifications—on the contrary, in the main they lacked what we are now told should be essentials. How many in this House today have such qualifications? Because they lack them, however, how many are unfitted to represent the people who elected them? Over a long period of years, members have been re-elected time and time again, and why? Because the people have had confidence in them in spite af their lack of academic degrees.

One hundred years ago this country was a primitive land, and since then every road, bridge, building, and every acre of cleared land has been an achievement of the people, directed by Parliament. I do not propose to answer the honourable member for Mitcham, except to say that I think I am qualified to represent the people who have elected me for 14 consecutive years. If they did not think so I would not be here, so I am not going to

belittle my services. I think that the people of my district will consider my services are worthy of recognition and they will not begrudge this proposed increase in my Parliamentary salary. On two occasions, through the wisdom or perhaps lack of it on the part of the principals of this Parliament, these increases were made the subject of investigation by officers whose salaries this Parliament fixes. I have never agreed with this, because Parliament is the supreme governing body in this State. We should not subordinate our powers to anyone. If Parliament considers increases necessary, not only in the interests of members themselves but in the interests of the representation of their districts, we are the only authority that should say so. We should not baulk at the issue.

Consider the men that have served the country as members of Parliament. Men such as Joseph Lyons, John Curtin, and Ben Chifley had few academic qualifications, but their names are enshrined on the scrolls of fame as men who have served Australia with distinction. They had the power, knowledge, and experience to serve their country. No-one could justly level criticism at them because they lacked academic qualifications and specialized training as members of Parliament. What are the qualifications of members here? I have represented my district for 14 years, but I cannot remember one matter being brought before this House when none of the 39 members had no knowledge of the subject. We do not gain anything by writing down our own qualifications. Within recent years Parliament has set up tremendous organizations and passed important legislation for the benefit of South Australians generally. In looking at the record of this Parliament the member for Mitcham is confounded. I believe I can serve the people of my district. They have recognized my services and I am sure they will not deny me an adequate salary for the services I render. I support the measure.

The SPEAKER—For the convenience of members I keep a list of those that intend to speak on any matter, but every time I put the question to the House members get up. I suggest that they might consider the Chair if I consider them by keeping a list.

Mr. HAWKER (Burra)—I commend the Leader of the Opposition for his remarks about the high standing that the South Australian Parliaments have maintained over the years. Like the member for Mitcham, I hope that on this occasion there will be no personalities and that we shall be able to discuss the pros and cons of this measure as we think fit. I assure the Leader of the Opposition that on the last occasion when I spoke on a similar Bill I did not take exception to any remarks made by his supporters. They would be the ones, if any, to object to my stand on that occasion. It is always difficult to fix the salaries of members of Parliament because that has to be done by us. Constitutionally, no-one else can do it for us, though we can get the advice of an independent committee. The only yard stick that we have to guide us is that of the payment of members in other States.

I am aware of the expenses and time necessary to carry out the duties of the private member. The calculations in this regard that I made before being elected were near the mark. When speaking on a similar Bill in 1951 I said that I had heard no remarks in my district about it, though it had been before the House for much longer than this Bill has been. However, I have recently heard a number of comments about the present proposal to raise the salaries of members chiefly from men who are good workers and earning good money. My reply has been, "You have received considerable increases since 1951, and if you expect good legislation on the cheap you will be disappointed." However, we are not going about this matter in the way I like.

For a private member being a member of Parliament is not a full-time job. If it was he could not take part in local government affairs, but many do. He could not be a member of a committee of this House, but the members of the Public Works Committee must spend much time in their work. Further, no member would be able to discharge the duties of a Minister. Long before the British Empire was thought of the representatives of the people banded together to make laws and advise the Sovereign. All those people had civil occupations. I still believe that that system should continue. We should not have all professional politicians in Parliament. If a man has some occupation in addition to his Parliamentary duties it helps him to keep his fingers on the pulse of the State. I am fully aware that for many members it is difficult to get a part-time job when they come into this House, and that it is impossible for them to continue the employment they were engaged in before becoming members. Even so, I do not think Parliament should be composed entirely of what we might call professional politicians or a kind of glorified civil

servant, without the security of the recognized civil servant. Because of his insecurity and the expenses a Parliamentarian must meet, which many people outside probably do not fully realize, I believe he should be adequately paid. However, those responsibilities go a little further because, especially since the war, it has been considered necessary by Parliament to restrict certain prices and incomes. We have on the Statute Book landlord and tenant legislation under which rents have been fixed at 22½ per cent above those ruling in 1939, plus any extra payments in respect of repairs, and rates and taxes. The figures given by the Treasurer last week in reply to a question indicate that the total increase of rents over that period is 45 per cent. A large proportion of that had gone directly in expenses for extra repairs and rates and taxes. So a person who had invested his money in a house to make provision for his old age, or a widow whose sole income is from such an investment, has not received an increase commensurate with the living wage or our Parliamentary salary.

I do not blame any honourable member for making a decision different from mine. Recently I received letters from people on this question. One man, who had invested his money for his old age, now finds that he is not able to reap the benents of his labours because of the change in money values and because his rents have been pegged since 1939. In that period the South Australian living wage has increased 196 per cent. It is not fair to take the increase in Parliamentary salaries from that particular date because it was then £400 a year, which amount had been fixed five years before. In 1944 they were increased to £600 and over that period to the present time the salary rise has been 185 per cent, which is fairly parallel, on my calculation, with the increase in the living wage. Parliament still thinks it correct to restrict the incomes of certain people, and that is why I am doubtful about this being an opportune time to increase members' salaries. The Leader of the Opposition mentioned the salaries paid to Ministers. I have never opposed any increases to them. They hold an extraordinarily responsible position and take all the kicks. It is very easy for members to criticize the Government's actions, but it is the Ministers who have to govern the country. If members are to be paid £1,425 a year I think the salary of a Minister should be double that. The member for Mitcham mentioned that there was no talk on the hustings or in the Governor's Speech of increased salaries. Every member would admit that it would be difficult to go on the hustings and advocate such a rise. However, this Parliament could fix the salaries for the next Parliament, so that electors would know before the next election what the salaries for the next Parliament would be. If a member thought the salary was not sufficient for him to meet his expenses he need not stand and doubtless other citizens would contest his seat. What any member may say about this Bill will make not one iota of difference to the results of the next election. If the second reading is passed, I propose to move an amendment that the provisions of the Bill take effect from July 1, 1956. Meanwhile I oppose the Bill.

Mr. HEASLIP secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.53 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, November 26, at 2 p.m.