HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, October 6, 1954.

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

PETITION: MOONTA MINES ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

Mr. McALEES presented a petition signed by 96 residents of Moonta Mines and district asking the House to direct the Electricity Trust to extend the supply of electricity to Moonta Mines without further delay.

Received and read.

QUESTIONS.

METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLIES.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—As reservoir supplies have not been greatly increased by recent rains people are concerned about water supplies for the coming summer, particularly as I understand there is some delay in the delivery of pumps for the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline. Can the Minister of Works say what steps are being taken by the Government to meet this position?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Although the pumps were ordered four years ago on the understanding that the date of their delivery would coincide with the completion of the pipeline to a stage where they would operate, up to the present no pumps have been received, and the earliest delivery we can expect is within the next 10 days for some of the first consignment, which will be followed by others. The installation of the pumps appears unlikely before the middle of November, and that would give only 19,000,000 or 20,000,000 gallons a day compared with the original intention of 53,000,000 gallons when all the pumps were operating. The Government realizes that the full use should be made of the pipeline, and despite the delay in the delivery of the pumps, the Engineer-in-Chief and the Chief Storekeeper have been ordered to inquire throughout Australia and overseas in an effort to get other pumps which might be used pending the installation of the permanent pumps. No expense or effort will be spared towards this end to ensure an adequate supply during the coming summer. In return I ask the public to be sparing and conserve the water as far as possible. Because seasonal conditions have been very adverse and the rainfall in some parts of our catchment area is 10in. below the average for this time of the year, and for September one-third of the average, the quantity of water at present stored is something over 8,000,000,000 gallons. In the meantime supplies will be supplemented by bores, and with care taken by the public and this supplementation we hope that the extra effort and expenditure in getting the new pumping equipment will ensure adequate supplies during the coming summer. I may have further information within the next day or two as a result of inquiries, but at present, notwithstanding the great draw on the reservoirs to meet the requirements of the additional 100,000 people, the existing storage is such that we are able, from the existing reservoirs, to care for an increase in population equal to the populations of Geelong and Ballarat combined.

IRRIGATION WATER RATES.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—From time to time I have drawn the attention of the Minister of Irrigation to the fact that the incomes of settlers in the irrigation areas have been seriously reduced. The price of dried fruit has been considerably reduced, the return from wine grapes in Australia seriously affected, and the return from citrus fruits also seriously reduced. Because of this the time is ripe for the Minister to reconsider the water charges on settlers. The committee that recommended the original increase said that the rate should be reduced in the event of a reduction in the returns to settlers. Will the Minister promise to take this matter to Cabinet and inform me of Cabinet's decision?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—It is true that the honourable member has raised this matter several times and that Cabinet has considered the request; but I remind him that increases or decreases of water rates are considered in April each year. Because of that and more recent reports of improved dried fruit sales there may be a better opportunity later of considering the market position, when it will be possible to consider the prices of dried fruits, wine grapes and other fruits. However, I am prepared early in the new year to refer the matter to Cabinet again before a decision is made on rates for the following year.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Will the Minister of Irrigation tell the House on whose authority he said that the income of the settlers in the irrigation areas had improved? Is it not a fact that the prices of dried fruits on the London market have dropped? Has not the price of prunes dropped 6d. a pound on the Australian market? If, as he suggests, the price of wine grapes has improved, is this

because the Government is prepared to provide more facilities for the disposal of wine? Does he say that the position in the citrus industry has improved? Is not his answer to my question an evasion of the responsibility to give effect to the committee's recommendation that the whole matter should be reviewed? It came to the conclusion that at the time the settlers could pay, but since then there has been a drop in their income. Will the Minister have the recommendation of the committee investigated now?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I thought that the honourable member made a reasonable request and that I had given a reasonable reply. I referred to recent reports of increased sales that were beneficial to the growers in his district.

Mr. Macgillivray—Sales at reduced prices.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I would say increased sales of dried fruits at favourable prices.

Mr. Macgillivray—That is not so.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The rates for this year have been fixed and most of them have been accepted and paid by the growers. When the position is reviewed early next year I am prepared to take the matter to Cabinet before the new rates are fixed.

AUSTRALIAN PERFORMING RIGHTS ASSOCIATION.

Mr. WHITE—Some time ago I addressed a question to the Premier regarding charges being made to committees associated with institutes and other public halls by the Australian Performing Rights Association. He said he believed at least some of the charges were exorbitant and that he would take up the matter with the association. Has he any further information on the matter?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The complaints made by two or three members were investigated and it was found that in some instances the Performing Rights Association had increased charges by several thousand per cent. I think in one case the increase was 6,000 per cent. I have discussed the matter with the Federal Attorney-General and given him details of the increased charges, and the Prices Commissioner has written direct to the association on the matter. The information I had two days ago was to the effect that the association desired to send an officer to South Australia to discuss the matter with the Prices Commissioner. I have not yet had a reply from the Federal Attorney-General, under whose department this matter comes normally.

INDUSTRIAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. O'HALLORAN, having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Industrial Code 1920-1951. Read a first time.

LONG SERVICE LEAVE BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 29. Page 815.)

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I did not have the opportunity to hear Mr. O'Halloran's remarks on this Bill but I have since read them. It was an excellent speech as far as it went. I have not read a shorter explanation on a far-reaching measure, or an explanation that dealt so little with the subject matter of the Bill. In fact, some of his statements clouded the issue. He said that New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland had already granted the privilege of long service leave and that the Treasurer could not claim that if it were granted here the Commonwealth grant would be affected, or words to that effect. Long service leave provisions have applied to Government employees for many years, so the provisions of this Bill will have no bearing on any Government-financed services. The Grants Commission does not make money available to private industry: it merely considers the finances of the States and it is obvious that nothing in this proposal would have any effect on the Grants Commission's recommendations. There are one or two provisions to which members should pay particular attention. Clause 4 states:—

For the purposes of this Act employment (whether before or after the commencement of this Act) shall be deemed to be continuous notwithstanding—

(*a*) the taking of any annual leave or long service leave;

(*b*) any absence from work of not more than fourteen days in any year on account of illness or injury;

(*c*) any interruption or ending of the employment by the employer if such interruption or ending is made with the intention of avoiding obligations in respect of long service leave or annual leave;

(*d*) any interruption arising directly or indirectly from an industrial dispute;

(*e*) the dismissal of a worker if he is re-employed within a period not exceeding two months from the date of such dismissal;

(*f*) the standing down of a worker on account of slackness of trade;

(*g*) any other absence of the worker by leave of the employer, or on account of injury arising out of or in the course of his employment.

The clause has some rather novel features. The long service leave granted by the Government is not mandatory. It may be granted to any person in respect of a specified period of employment. Cabinet invariably grants long service leave to Government employees but only in respect of unbroken service, not if a man leaves the service and returns to it. If he leaves for one day his service is broken unless he has been granted leave of absence for that day. The granting of long service leave is contingent upon continuous service and the satisfactory performance of duty.

Mr. O'Halloran—That is provided for in this Bill.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No. The clause provides that service shall be deemed to be continuous notwithstanding any interruption arising directly or indirectly from an industrial dispute. In other words, a man could leave the service of his employer, go on strike and remain away for three months and still get long service leave, not only in respect of the period for which he does work but for the period he is on strike.

Mr. O'Halloran—That is not in the Bill.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have just quoted paragraph (*d*) of clause 4 and if that does not mean that a person on strike is still eligible to receive long service leave I cannot understand the provision. If the Leader has included qualifications in regard to that matter in the Bill, they are skilfully hidden and have not come under my notice. The long service leave proposed by the Leader is not in accordance with the long service leave provisions of the Public Service where, incidentally, such leave is only granted when approved by His Excellency in Executive Council. Under this Bill long service leave is not tied up with satisfactory service nor with continuous service. An employer, because of financial difficulty, bad trade or conditions over which he has no control, may have to stand down some men, but under this Bill he is still liable to provide long service leave for persons he cannot gainfully employ in the ordinary course of his business.

It is sometimes necessary for legislation to have a retrospective application. Yesterday I introduced a measure which provided for an increase in police pensions and some of the payments were to be made to persons who had never paid increased contributions and who are pensioners at the moment. It is always necessary to examine closely any provisions that are to apply retrospectively when someone else has to face the liability. When the Government brings down legislation which places a liability on it and is to operate retrospectively it feels justified in doing so because it can meet the commitments. We should not bring down such legislation if we knew we could not meet our commitments, but under this Bill private employers will have to meet heavy obligations whether or not they have the means to do so. For instance, a business that has been established for some years but is only struggling could not meet its commitments in respect of long service leave. It is easy to hand over obligations to other people, but whether it is possible for them to meet their obligations is another thing.

Mr. O'Halloran—For how long would you postpone the operation of the Bill?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—When I explain a Bill I say why it has been introduced. This afternoon I have the opportunity to examine critically legislation brought down by the Leader of the Opposition, and I am in what I regard as the box seat, for I do not have to put forward any alternatives—though I may later—but merely deal with a measure which the Leader of the Opposition, after mature consideration, has introduced. Apparently he is pleased with it because it is headed, "Prepared by Mr. M. R. O'Halloran, M.P."

Mr. Fred Walsh—He has every reason to be proud of it.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think he is reasonably proud of it, but I do not share his enthusiasm for it because it is one of the worst examples of class legislation that we have seen in this House for some time. It makes no pretence of being unbiassed. It puts all the obligations on the employer and none on the employee, yet the Leader of the Opposition said he was sure that many employers would favour the Bill. I do not know where he got that information because I have a sheaf of letters here from employers who are not in favour of it. The explanation given by the honourable member was a masterly understatement of the effects of the Bill. The Commonwealth Arbitration Court, which deals with the working conditions of all people employed under Commonwealth awards, has the power to grant annual leave and long service leave. At present there is litigation upon this matter, but I believe that this House has no

jurisdiction to pass any provisions dealing with industrial matters concerning persons who are registered in the Commonwealth Arbitration Court.

Mr. Lawn—That is your opinion.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, but in substantiation of that opinion I may say that the Arbitration Court frequently imposes industrial conditions on the State Government itself. When this was challenged in the High Court it upheld the right of the Arbitration Court to do it. If the State Government is bound by Arbitration Court awards I believe that when the matter of long service leave comes before the High Court again it will say that this is a matter entirely outside the jurisdiction of the South Australian legislature. The Leader of the Opposition said that long service leave provisions had been passed in the eastern States, and I say that their legislation applies to persons who are not bound by Commonwealth Arbitration Court awards.

Mr. O'Halloran—When was the Victorian Act challenged in the High Court?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The whole matter is before the High Court at present. The member for Thebarton knows that, and he is an authority on these matters. If the High Court judgment on the Arbitration Court's awards being applicable to State Government employees ever went before the Privy Council I believe that the Privy Council would not uphold the High Court's decision. I do not support the view expressed by the High Court. If the Arbitration Court has the power to give instructions with regard to servants of this State we cease to be a Federation. If this Government were given an opportunity to take the matter to the Privy Council it would do so. There can be no question in my mind of the competence of the Arbitration Court to deal with industrial disputes between parties registered in that court. That principle was not questioned until recently when decisions on industrial matters were made by politicians in the eastern States. By that most meddlesome innovation politicians in Parliament have adjudicated, and in this case propose to adjudicate, in industrial matters, thereby taking those matters out of the hands of the court and bringing them within the realm of politics. At present there is no outcry from the workers against the decisions of the politicians because they have decided in a manner partial to employees. It is, however, a most dangerous precedent because, if Parliament can hand out privileges under such legislation as this, it naturally follows that it can take privileges away from the workers.

Mr. O'Halloran—It is most dangerous when this Government is in power.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—South Australian industrial workers have enjoyed greater privileges under this Government than under any Labor Government. It seems to me that this Bill originated in the Opposition's desire to show that the Government Party is not the only one that can confer benefits on the worker, and I suggest that when the Opposition introduces an amendment to the Workmen's Compensation Act that legislation, too, will be displayed as an example of its desire to disparage the real efforts of the Government to improve workers' conditions. The Bill before the House has much political background associated with it, and it would be the worst possible occurrence for the industrial worker to have his conditions fixed by persons having political considerations uppermost in their minds. That is wrong in principle and would prove disadvantageous to the worker. The Bill is not in keeping with the legislation governing the long service leave of Government workers; its approach to the problem is entirely different. Its application is made retrospective in a way that could cause hardship.

Mr. O'Halloran—It is made prospective in its application.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is retrospective to August 1 because anybody dismissed before this Bill becomes law would still be entitled to long service leave under it.

Mr. O'Halloran—Yes, subject to certain conditions.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Undoubtedly the Bill is retrospective in its effect and will cause hardship in many instances. Further, it cannot be given general effect to because it is unconstitutional. I believe those objections are valid, and, although members may please themselves, I oppose the Bill.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—I support the Bill. Before members, including Cabinet Ministers, speak on legislation, they should make themselves familiar with it so that their statements will be accurate. The Premier, however, has not read the Bill; he did not hear Mr. O'Halloran's explanation of it; he has not, I think, read that explanation; and some of his remarks were most inaccurate. He said a person with 20 years' service could strike and still receive the benefits provided by this Bill. He could

be on strike or doing something else. Subclause (2), par (c), of clause 7 states:—

In the case of a worker who has completed at least 10 but less than 20 years of continuous employment with his employer and those provided by this legislation.

(i) by the employer for any cause other than serious and wilful misconduct; or. . .

The previous paragraph in subclause (2) deals with 20 years' service. It is realized in the industrial world that an employer can terminate the service of an employee for directly participating in a strike.

The Hon. T. Playford—Have you heard of victimization?

Mr. LAWN—Yes, and I have been victimized as a worker in a factory by someone who is upheld by the Premier as being a worthy person. The Premier said that the politicians are meddling with this matter of long service leave. Let me remind him that he has meddled with it. Later I shall refer to statutes that relate to long service leave. In the past politicians have meddled with the matter but they have not given the employees what the Bill proposes. If the eastern States are meddling with the matter let us be honest and say that South Australia has meddled with it. I would like the Premier to come out on a public platform with me and say that it is right for the public servants to have long service leave but wrong for employees of private industry to have it. The Premier today set himself up as the champion of employers who condemn the Bill. He put forward objections proposed by them. He could not possibly have been wider of the mark. He has no idea of the objections to be raised by the employers. When Mr. Cain became Premier of Victoria, after saying that if returned he would introduce a Bill giving long service leave to all employees, Government or private, the employers went to him with certain matters to be included in the legislation. With one or two exceptions they were accepted. The Bill we are discussing is a replica of the Victorian measure. The Victorian employers' objections would be the same as the objections raised by employers here. The Honourable A. M. Fraser, M.L.C., Minister of Labor in Victoria, in giving the second reading explanation of the Bill, said:—

I have with me the employers' suggestions. Save for one or two instances they were all embodied in the Bill and in at least one or two cases we have given the employers more than they asked for. I propose to refer to those suggestions. They asked for a provision for exemption where the court is of opinion that an employer's scheme already in operation, or to be instituted, gives in the instance where it already operates or will give in the projected scheme benefits at least equal to those provided by this legislation.

Our Bill contains a similar provision. The Victorian Minister continued:—

The suggestion has been met. . . . Furthermore, the employers asked that a minimum of 15 years' service with the same employer should be a requirement before an employee becomes entitled to the long service benefits. I cannot agree to that suggestion; the Bill makes the period 10 years. In Queensland the minimum is 15 years and in New South Wales 10 years. I do not see why Victoria should lag behind New South Wales where the same condition has applied in respect of workers' compensation or in certain forms of industry. Under our Bill an employee must have had 20 years' continuous service, although in certain circumstances a minimum of 10 years is provided. Why should South Australia be worse off than the eastern States? When there is a war we speak and act as one nation. Mothers' sons are taken as cannon fodder, irrespective of the State in which they live, but in peace the mothers are forgotten in many instances and so are the ex-servicemen who go back into private industry.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—Did not the Trades Hall in Victoria say that the State Government was unworthy of its support?

Mr. LAWN—Not in the way the honourable member suggests.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—There were no reservations whatsoever.

Mr. LAWN—I suggest that the honourable member make his own contribution to this debate and not refer to points made by employers and typed for him by some city office. The Victorian Minister continued:—

A further proposal was that payment should be made for leave at the relevant award rate, being the rate of pay for ordinary hours of work, not including any overtime or penalty rates. We have included in this measure the precise definition that is found in the annual leave Act, against which there has been no complaint and which is substantially the definition requested.

That is in our Bill, and it was included in the Victorian measure at the request of the employers. The Victorian Minister refused to make any reference to strikes. He said that a man could be employed for 19 years and 10 months and that if a strike occurred which made it impossible for him to attend work for three days his continuity of service would end and for the purposes of long service leave he would have to start all over again.

That is what is wanted by employers in this State. I shall watch to see how many Government members support the remarks made by the Premier this afternoon, and I will make it known at the next State elections. There is no onus on an employer to take a man back after he has been on strike. That has been laid down by some Arbitration tribunals. If an employer takes an employee back his service is regarded as unbroken. The employers, however, are not only concerned about strikes, but have contended that when a man is called up for compulsory service training by the Commonwealth Government he should not receive annual leave for that period.

Mr. William Jenkins—That was never mentioned.

Mr. LAWN—It was mentioned by employers in Victoria.

Mr. William Jenkins—It was not mentioned here.

Mr. LAWN—We have not heard the employers' proposals here. We have heard the Premier, but he has not put up the employer's proposals. I am suggesting more of their proposals than the Premier did. The Premier did not speak on behalf of the employers of this State, although he more or less claimed to. I have had a long association with the Arbitration Court, and in relation to annual leave employers have asked that service under the national service training scheme should be taken into consideration when an employee receives annual leave. That also applies to jury service. On behalf of one of the greatest unions, numerically speaking, I had the honour to fight those proposals, but I fought without avail, for the Court granted the employers' request. Why should an employee who has been compulsorily called up to serve on a jury or to give three months' services in the armed forces lose portion of his annual leave when other employees not bound by those laws are not subject to any loss? The actual request made by the Victorian employers was:—

No accrual of entitlement to leave whilst not actually employed should be allowed.

That suggestion would cover national service training, strikes, lock-out, and jury service. The Victorian Minister of Labour did not accept that, nor do I, and that suggestion has not been included in this Bill in respect of jury service and national service training. As regards strikes, the position is that an employer can legally terminate the services of his employee for misconduct. This afternoon the Premier gave us the benefit of his legal knowledge. I have frequently heard legal members of this House give different opinions and my opinion differs from the Premier's. So far as Federal employees are concerned, I understand it has been laid down that the Commonwealth Court can deal with disputes before it. I have known of instances where unions which have been before the court, but because the matter in dispute was not included in the log filed on the employers, the court said it could not deal with it. There are many Federal unions which have not made a claim for long service leave and the High Court must be inconsistent if it is going to rule in those instances that long service leave is a matter for the Commonwealth Court in all cases where there is a Federal award operating. I would not have dealt with the legal part of this matter had it not been raised by the Premier. If a union cannot ask a court to adjudicate during the currency of its award on a matter which was not included in its previous log, I fail to see how the High Court can determine that in all cases where a Federal award operates long service leave comes within the jurisdiction of the Federal Court.

Early in his discourse the Premier promised to put some suggestions before the House, but I did not hear any. If Government members have an open mind and are prepared to be convinced on this matter the Opposition has the arguments to convince them. There are three results which will accrue from legislation of this nature. Firstly, it will save a huge waste of labour turnover, secondly it will reward long and faithful service, and thirdly, it will enable an employee during his working life to recover spent energies and return to work renewed, refreshed and re-invigorated. The State as a whole will reap the benefit of the introduction of legislation providing for long service leave. During my lifetime there have been many reforms provided by legislation or Arbitration Court tribunals, which have been beneficial to employees in industry and also to the community. There have been moves which shortened the working week. There was no annual leave at one time, but in latter years employees have had the benefit of annual leave in their awards. There was once no sick leave or payment for public holidays, but there is today. Those reforms have enabled employees to bring about greater production because they have not been burnt out as quickly as they were in years gone by. Workers are able to give greater output throughout their working life, which is extending. Dr. Marcelino Pascua, who is Health Statistics

Director at the World Health Organization at Geneva, said that man's life expectancy was steadily approaching 70 years in many of the more scientifically advanced countries. Others have made similar claims and in recent months there has been a press controversy throughout the Commonwealth regarding an extension of the retiring age. The latest statement I noticed in this regard was from Mr. Wetherall, a Minister of the New South Wales Cabinet. Speaking at a farewell presentation to a railways engineer who was retiring after 49 years' service, Mr. Wetherall said:—

A man at 65 is only a little over his zenith physically and is at the peak of his intellectual power. The intervention of modern science means that a man is going to live longer in future than he does now. He lives longer now than he did 20 years ago.

I suggest that man is living longer now because he is not being burnt out so quickly in industry. He now enjoys a 40-hour week, 10 holidays a year, recreation leave—sometimes two weeks, sometimes three—and sick leave. He also enjoys social service benefits. A doctor recently mentioned to me certain complaints which the medical profession are curing more effectively now than in years gone by. He said, "A patient today, when we ask him to lay up, can lay up and carry out the directions prescribed because he receives certain social service benefits." In the old days the doctor said, "Mr. Lawn, they would only struggle on at their work until they could struggle no longer." Therefore, social service benefits have increased the span of man's life, and industry and the community have benefited. If after 20 years of continuous employment a man is given a respite of three months it will help him to recuperate his energies and go on for another 20 years, thus creating greater production than ever dreamt of.

Mr. Fletcher—Do you imply that friendly societies have helped to bring about greater production?

Mr. LAWN—Of course, payments from friendly societies and employees' superannuation and sick benefits schemes have helped, but they were not enough. Today their payments are augmented by social service benefits, resulting in lower doctors' bills, and for this we have to thank chiefly the Chifley Labor Government.

Mr. Macgillivray—Doesn't the honourable member envisage a time when employees should be allowed to retire and enjoy their last years in comfort?

Mr. LAWN—I hope the House does not think that I advocate that employees should work until 70. The compulsory retiring age should not be lifted.

Mr. Quirke—Sixty-five is only middle age now.

Mr. LAWN—Yes, but employees should not have to work until they are 70 before getting the age pension.

Mr. Brookman—Would you allow them to work after they are 65?

Mr. LAWN—We will meet that when it arises. If the Liberal Party wants to make the retiring age 70 and postpone the age pension until 70 I shall oppose it. The granting of long service leave would encourage employees to make their work a career instead of shifting from one employer to another. That would benefit the employer and increase production. Unfortunately, we find many bad employers and during the war, and for some years after, there was a high turnover of labour. Employers now realize that if they can keep their trained employees production will be higher.

Mr. Macgillivray—If your argument is right wouldn't a good employer have to grant long service leave to retain his employees?

Mr. LAWN—Unfortunately, many employers make many promises that they do not keep. Suppose an employer engaged a group of men and promised them long service leave after 20 years, if he later refused them leave they would walk out and go to another employer, but they would have lost that 20 years' service. We have to pass traffic laws to compel drivers to observe the rules of the road: for the same reason we have to compel employers to observe certain conditions. The principle of the Bill is not novel. Long service leave was granted to New South Wales Government employees as long ago as 1884, in Victoria in 1883, in South Australia in 1874, and for Commonwealth employees in 1910. The South Australian Statute of 1874 was introduced by "meddlesome politicians," to quote the Premier. Section 29 stated:—

The responsible Minister of any department may at such times as he may deem convenient, grant to any officer leave of absence for recreation, not exceeding in the whole three weeks in each year; and in cases of illness or other pressing necessity, such extended leave not exceeding three months, and on such terms as he may think fit.

That shows that State employees had three weeks' annual recreation leave, yet we have not been able to get that in industry, and until recently employees of private employers

had only a few days' leave at Christmas. Annual recreation leave for workers in industry was obtained only after a long fight in the Arbitration Court. Why can't private employees get the same leave benefits as Government employees? They pay taxes. Section 30 of the 1874 Act stated:—

The Governor may grant to any officer in the civil service, of at least 10 years' continuous service, not exceeding 12 months leave of absence on half salary, or, at his option, six month's leave of absence on full salary, or if of 20 years' continuous service 12 months' leave of absence on full salary; and in cases of illness or other pressing necessity, such extended leave, on such terms as he may think fit: Provided that nothing herein contained shall prevent the Governor, in case of pressing necessity, from granting leave of absence to any officer of lesser period of service for any time not exceeding six months.

An employee was therefore entitled to long service leave after 10 years' service. He could take 12 months on half pay or six months on full pay, yet the Bill does not allow an employee long service leave until after 20 years' continuous service, except pro rata leave. In 1874 employees of the Government were entitled to 12 months' long service leave on full pay after 20 years. The Governor could grant longer leave if he thought fit.

Mr. Riches—Did all Government employees get that?

Mr. LAWN—Yes. The Act said "any officer." Now, in 1954, we are arguing whether employees of private enterprise should be entitled to long service leave. The Premier said that under no circumstances should we grant this concession. I challenge him to address factory meetings and tell the employees that they should not have long service leave. They pay taxes in order to allow long service leave to State employees. Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria recognize that employees of private enterprise should be granted long service leave. Many applications for this leave have been granted by the Commonwealth Arbitration Court. In the main, this has been done by agreement, but such provisions are contained in Commonwealth awards and they are legally binding. Long service leave for employees generally has largely become an accomplished fact throughout Australia. When speaking at Benalla on August 5, 1953, the Leader of the Country Party in Victoria said that his Party favoured long service leave, and before the second reading speech on this matter was given on September 22, 1953, the Victorian press said that the principle underlying the measure was sound. Therefore, long service leave is not the bad thing the Premier said it was when he remarked this afternoon, "This is the worst legislation to be placed before the House for years." Because Mr. Playford is safely entrenched in office as the result of the gerrymander he is able to condemn this progressive legislation as the worst that has been introduced for years; but if he had to face the people under a just electoral system as Mr. Cain and the leaders of the Country and Liberal Parties in Victoria did, he and his Party would soon be out of office.

The Hon. T. Playford—We would soon be brought back, though.

Mr. LAWN—That is only wishful thinking. In 1945 the Victorian State Electricity Commission, employing many thousands, consented to workers enjoying six months' long service leave after 20 years' service; yet we are only asking for three months after 20 years. Many Victorian wages boards had for many years prescribed long service leave for workers before the Victorian Parliament passed the legislation. Many Victorian councils have adopted the long service leave provision. Long service leave for Commonwealth Government workers was introduced in 1910, and today Commonwealth public servants are entitled to 4½ months after 15 years' service and 1½ months for each additional five years. Long service leave in industry should have been introduced in South Australia years ago. I am eagerly awaiting the day when the Premier will accept my challenge to come down to the factories of private employers and discuss long service leave with the workers. Even temporary Federal Government workers are entitled to the same long service leave. The Liberal Party always speaks in the highest terms about the judiciary and it is interesting to note the attitude of the New South Wales Industrial Commission, which comprises judges and not conciliation commissioners who were formerly trade union officials or solicitors. That Commission has stated that "long service leave is properly regarded as a reward for long service with one employer," In the Commonwealth court Mr. Conciliation Commissioner Morrison, formerly a barrister working in the Arbitration Court, said:—

My principal reason for introducing long service leave is to take care of employees who have given their lives to the industry.

That was a humane comment by a man who could not be described as a meddlesome politician or a trade union agitator. Long service leave is usually described as a period of rest for the employee to enable him to

recoup his vigour. A member of the Liberal Party, an ex-Premier of Victoria, speaking on the Victorian legislation, said:—

The measure embodies the principle that after a period of continuous service in which he has played the game the employee should become entitled to rest for three or six months or whatever period may be determined, without sacrifice to himself.

Would the Premier describe that member of the Liberal Party as a meddlesome politician? Some members may say that industry cannot afford the expense of long service leave and that therefore the time is not opportune for its introduction; but whenever reform has been advocated employers and members of the Conservative and Liberal Parties have always said the time was not opportune. That argument was used when the 44-hour week, the 40-hour week, and annual leave for workers were advocated. In 1815, when Robert Owen introduced legislation prohibiting children under 10 years of age from working in textile factories and children under 18 from working more than 10 hours a day, the Bill was defeated because it was contended that the time was not opportune; yet that Bill was designed to prohibit child slavery. In 1880 when a Queensland judge adjudicated on a subsistence wage it was contended that the time was not opportune. In 1907 the same argument was used when Mr. Justice Higgins dealt with the Harvester Case in the Commonwealth Arbitration Court. It was then stated:—

Industry is not in a position to pay the wage you wish to award.

His Honour retorted:—

If an industry is not in a position to pay a bare subsistence or basic wage it is better that the industry should go out of existence.

The Premier asked whether this matter should be handled by meddlesome politicians or by the Arbitration Court and gave a discourse on the powers of the High Court and the Privy Council to declare legislation invalid; but I direct members' attention to the following statement by Mr. Justice Ferguson of the New South Wales Industrial Commission:—

Just as the legislature dealt with annual holidays as a matter of general provision, when you come to industry generally and consider sick leave—in that case special conditions of employment, if present, are considered. In long service leave you have no special conditions and it is the duty of the legislature, if something should be done, to lay down a general standard or not, as it wishes. To leave it to this commission—well, we cannot find any principle to mould what is really legislation on our part.

The judge said this was a matter for the legislature, but according to the Premier that means it is a matter for meddlesome politicians. Parliament is subservient to no court, and if this House desired to provide for conditions for workers, it would not have to ask for permission from any court. It is well to remember that neither the Premier nor any other member would be in Parliament were it not for the efforts of the workers. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. O'Halloran) said the Premier had referred many times to the peace, harmony and efficiency in South Australian industry; but by opposing this Bill Mr. Playford would penalize the very workers who have built up that reputation for peace and efficiency and deny them the benefits enjoyed by workers in the eastern States where conditions are not so harmonious. If our peaceful and efficient workers are to be rewarded they should get the same privilege as employees in those States. Conditions of work of our employees do not compare favourably with the working conditions of employees in the other States, nor is the position favourable in regard to electoral rights. Mr. O'Halloran said that if an employer went out of business and his employees were retained by the incoming employer there would be continuity of service. That is not an innovation. In Commonwealth awards there is such a provision in relation to annual and sick leave. The changeover does not adversely affect the employee. He has only a new employer. The Bill is not unjust. If it is wrong, and is "the worst measure introduced in this House for years," things must be pretty bad in the eastern States. Three of them have adopted the principle and the Commonwealth Arbitration Court has provided long service leave for certain employees. I intended to read several Commonwealth Arbitration Court judgments, but I shall read only one. Mr. Conciliation Commissioner Morrison pointed out his reasons, given on April 1, 1949, for an award in the flour milling industry:—

In almost every mill without exception I was told of the wonderful services given to the industry by the older men, their steadying effect on the younger men and the value of their services to the industry at all times. Some mill owners have recognised the value of the services of these men by establishing superannuation benefits for the men by contributing to a scheme two thirds of the money equivalent, to the one third contributed by each employee. Other mill owners, too, have introduced some scheme of benefits by mutual arrangement with the employees. Others again have done nothing to care for the future of

their employees who have given their life to the industry. As I have said previously in this decision, the industry is a very prosperous one. The capital invested in it is very substantial. The production costs per man-hour are practically negligible, so why should not something be done to care for the men in this industry who have given such long and loyal service. More than half the mills in this industry are established in the country where there is but little hope of employment of any kind for the old men when they leave the industry by reason of old age or sickness. The association claims that all employees after a service of 10 years should be entitled to one weeks' leave for each 12 months as long leave in addition to their ordinary holidays, and should an employee be discharged through no fault of his own, then a pro rata allowance should be made.

Mr. Morrison has provided another answer to the Premier. He emphasised the wonderful service given by men in industry, and that the older men had a steadying effect on the younger men. He pointed out that they could teach the youger men, and that some employers had granted their employees long service leave, whereas others had not. One could go on for hours in support of the principle of long service leave, but I rest on what I have said and trust that before the debate is finished there may be more enlightened Government members, including the Premier who may want to withdraw his suggestion that long service leave has been established only by meddlesome politicians. He may yet realize that for his Government to survive, despite the gerrymander, it will be necessary for him to treat employees in private industry in the same way as State employees.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—The Bill provides for universal long service leave for employees in industry. It gives certain employees who have no access to the Arbitration Court some of the privileges the court has granted to employees coming under its jurisdiction. This is a short Bill and not difficult to understand. Its sole object is to supply employees with three months long service leave after 20 years' continuous service with one employer. With much vehemence the Premier objected to the measure. In industry there are men, materials and money. Members on this side regard men as the greatest of the three, but Government members have indicated that the interests of the human element must always fit in with the requirements of the economic structure. Of men and materials they regard men as the least important. We say that the economic system should be altered to have more regard for the human element in industry. In this case it has been shown that it can be done. It has been done in other States and it should be done here. The Premier opposed the Bill on two grounds. He said that objections had been put forward by the employers, but he did not say what they were. He put forward one or two of his own objections. He said that the proposal was retrospective and that it was class legislation and unconstitutional. He promised to give an alternative, but it was not forthcoming. We can only conclude that he did not have one.

Long service leave has long been regarded as a right by the upper strata of society. It has been long included in Arbitration Court awards, and has been granted to Government servants. It has been accepted by some employers in agreements with unions. Today most people enjoy long service leave, but a substantial section of the working community does not enjoy it. The Bill seeks to bring them into line with the others. Not in one single instance where long service leave has been granted has there been an agitation for its removal. Members should consider the lot of the young man in private industry. Today he knows that for the whole of his working life he will not have the opportunity to travel, except the distance that can be travelled in his two weeks' annual leave. Travel broadens the mind. There should be the opportunity for the working man to visit other places and see how industry is carried on there. It would be a tremendous advantage to him and it is an opportunity that the State can afford to provide. The Premier has repeatedly boasted that South Australia has the highest productivity of any State, that it is the most prosperous, and that our Savings Bank deposits are the highest, so are we asking too much when we ask that the State catch up with the three eastern States and provide long service leave for workers in private industry?

The Premier objected to this measure on the grounds that it was evidence of politicians meddling with industry and suggested that it should be left entirely to the Arbitration Court. I point out that he has been a party to refusing a great many people access to the Arbitration Court and as a result Parliament is the only place where their claims can be considered. Many Bills have been introduced during the years seeking to provide people with access to the Court, but the Government apparently does not believe in arbitration except when it suits it. Parliament is the only authority which can provide those people with long service leave. It is sheer

humbug for the Premier to suggest that this is not a matter for Parliament. There is an analogy between this measure and legislation Parliament has agreed to providing for workmen's compensation. That is a right Parliament takes unto itself. Long service leave provisions should rightly be decided by Parliament in the same way. When this becomes law—and whether this Bill is passed or not it will ultimately become law—it may be desirable to establish some form of insurance so that employers can meet their liabilities as they do in relation to workmen's compensation. I do not think the extreme cases of hardship, about which the Premier is so concerned, should enter into serious consideration. In any event, it is relative hardship. Employees in some industries know that throughout their working life they will never have an opportunity to travel and will never enjoy more than 14 days' leave at any one time. That is a hardship.

There is no need to traverse the ground covered by the Leader of the Opposition and so adequately supported by Mr. Lawn in demonstrating the desirability of this legislation. I think the House is aware that it is being asked for by employees in various parts of the State. It is a long standing requirement. Men working in some of the largest industries in the district I represent are concerned that, while during their working life they will not be able to travel or leave their employment for more than 14 days at a time, employees in another industry a few miles distant are entitled to three weeks' annual leave and long service leave after faithful service. They consider they are entitled to the same privileges and know that the industries they work in can afford it as easily as other industries which provide it. This is not class legislation in the sense the Premier suggested, but merely seeks to level up conditions operating in this State. It will afford the privilege of long service leave to employees who are denied access to the Arbitration Court and who do not enjoy it under existing legislation or awards. It is a privilege we believe humanity demands in a State which boasts of its prosperity and productivity, but which lags so far behind the other States in its social services. The Premier said that this legislation was retrospective, but it is only retrospective in part. It will not take effect until the end of 1955 and that will allow ample time for employers to provide by way of insurance for any calls which may be made upon them after 1955.

Mr. Fred Walsh—It would be valueless without its retrospectivity.

Mr. RICHES—Unless it covers men now in industry who have had some service it will be valueless. The fears expressed by the Premier have not been experienced in Queensland, New South Wales or Victoria and there is no reason to believe that there would be any major upset in industry if this measure were adopted. There is nothing extreme, illogical, unreasonable or impracticable about it because it is in operation in other States. The Premier used some expressions this afternoon that we are not accustomed to hearing. He said that this was the worst piece of legislation that has ever emanated in this House or that it has been asked to consider. He referred to the introduction of it in other States as "meddlesome" and said that the provisions passed by other Governments were examples of politicians meddling in industrial affairs. That is the first time I have heard him refer to Houses of Parliament in such terms. I was disappointed because soon after my entry to this House I was advised by one with many years' service, and who at that time I was pleased to support as my leader, that it was bad politics and bad psychology to decry the organization of which one is a member.

The Premier's statements this afternoon tended to lower the prestige of Parliament. I have not heard him in that strain before and was disappointed in him. I hope other members will not adopt that strain but will recognize that this Bill is an attempt to place responsibility where it rightly belongs and is not in any way an attempt to meddle in affairs that do not concern us. The well-being of the community and men in industry is a matter of vital concern to us and when we have provided that persons cannot go to the Arbitration Court then the responsibility is rightly on us. Our forebears recognized that in 1874 in the provision to which Mr. Lawn referred. The responsibility is with us in regard to agricultural workers and people denied access to the court and all employees not otherwise covered in this matter, the same as it is ours on all questions of workmen's compensation. The Bill is just, reasonable and practical in its application and I support it and hope it will be carried.

Mr. DAVIS (Port Pirie)—I am rather surprised at the silence of members opposite. This Bill will affect them as employers and I would like to hear some employers express

their opinions on it. I support the Bill because it provides something to which workers are entitled. Throughout the years there have been many fights to improve the conditions of workers. I can remember when they did not enjoy the benefit of paid holidays. For many years I worked in industry and was docked a day's pay for every public holiday. The Unions took the matter up and as a result employees now enjoy the benefit of a full pay envelope each pay day. After a long fight employees were successful in getting a week's holiday annually. That has since been extended to a fortnight and in some instances, to three weeks. Those benefits have not been handed to them on a plate by employers but have been fought for. The Premier said that meddlesome politicians should not interfere with industrial matters but the Opposition has been sent here to protect workers and to fight for their rights; they have no one else to look to. It is true that there is an industrial court but it has fallen down on its job more than once. The Premier said nothing when the Arbitration Court recently reduced the wages of workers throughout the Commonwealth. He was not prepared then to say that the workers of Australia were the best treated in the world. It is time the legislature of this country took action to see that the Arbitration Court carried out its duties. Recently the court decided that there would be no more quarterly wage adjustments. It said that if wages were pegged we would have a fall in the cost of living, but what happened? Employers are now making profits greater than ever because the cost of living has increased since wages were pegged. Surely a worker is entitled to some recognition after working for 20 years. Thousands of men have worked with the same firm for 40 years, but they have not had one day of long service leave.

Mr. Jennings—If the provision does not operate retrospectively no-one will benefit for 20 years.

Mr. DAVIS—Yes, and many men will go out of industry and not get any long service leave. Recently work stopped in one firm in my district over a dispute on long service leave. There was no legislation on this question, and that is why the men had to stop work. It the Government had granted long service leave to workers generally that stoppage would not have taken place. If the Premier thinks we should not pass legislation dealing with any industrial matters he should hold that we should not pass provisions dealing with workmen's compensation. However, I am pleased that members on this side of the House have fought for many years for workmen's compensation legislation. Years ago the compensation was only £1 a week, but through the efforts of unions and the assistance given by members on this side many improvements have been made to the Act, though it is not satisfactory even now.

Mr. O'Halloran—This State followed the lead of other States on workmen's compensation, and that is what we are doing under this Bill.

Mr. DAVIS—That is so. The Premier often talks about the prosperity of this State, but what has he done to make the worker prosper? It is only the grace of God that has made this State prosper. For years we have had good seasons but members opposite have been greatly concerned about the low rainfall this year. They know that Australia will not be so prosperous if we do not have good rains in the near future. The Premier will probably then realize that the State's prosperity is not entirely due to his efforts. I have waited for a long time for members opposite to say what they have done to improve the lot of the worker. They have not told us that many employers urge their employees to produce more. They may talk about the friendly relations between employers and employees and that some employers hand out bonuses and incentive payments. In my early days we called the incentive payments "blood money." Young men were prepared to put their all into their work, and the employers expected others to follow their lead. Of course, the pacemakers did not last long, for when they slowed up they were of no further use to the employer. Some employers would like to see a return to those days. At dinners and other functions we sometimes hear employees say what a wonderful employer they have, but let them weaken in their work and then we see the good relationship vanish and the employees looking for another job. Probably the hard work that they have done has resulted in their slowing up.

Many workers, particularly in the rural industries, do not enjoy the same privileges as those working in the towns. Many farm labourers do not get one paid holiday. They do not even enjoy award rates, for the Government has refused to amend the Industrial Code to cover rural workers. The Government says it favours arbitration, but it will not extend the operations of the code to cover all employees. The industrial movement knows

that the powers of the court are limited, but men holding the same political opinions as I have urged for years that the court be given greater powers. However, the court has failed, and I hope the "meddlesome politicians" will shortly do the right thing and bring down legislation to force the court to do its duty. Wages should rise in accordance with the cost of living. The judges sitting on the Arbitration Court bench do the work that should be done by the legislature. They should not be able to decide that cost of living adjustments will be no longer made. If they have that power we have a perfect right as members of Parliament to consider Bills such as we are discussing now. The Labor Party is prepared to give workers something to which they are entitled after years of service in industry. I support the Bill.

Mr. HUTCHENS secured the adjournment of the debate.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued form September 29. Page 816.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—It is not my intention to delay the House long in reply because the bulk of the discussion on the Bill has been in its favour. Indeed, I have extreme difficulty in finding any valid opposition to the proposals even from those members who profess to be opposed to it, and I have come to the conclusion that their opposition is not based on any sound principle, or any valid argument, but simply on their firm conviction that the political bridge that brought them into this Chamber in such numbers is good enough to be maintained in order that the *status quo* in this Parliament shall be retained. The Premier made his contribution to the debate on September 8, and as his remarks were very similar to those of the other members who spoke against the Bill I think I can reply to their assertions—not arguments—by replying to those of the Premier. I remind members that the Premier himself admitted in his opening remarks that he was not particularly well qualified to make even assertions. He had this to say, "I have looked at the measure and given some consideration to his [my] observations." He then proceeded to show, as I will prove conclusively, that he had not considered the Bill very fully and had certainly not given much consideration to the observations I made on the occasion of my second reading speech. Again I quote him as saying, "Previously the legislation referred to proportional representation and had as its main principle one vote one value. This Bill does not refer to either." I have introduced a number of Bills in an effort to reform the method by which this Parliament is elected and in none of them have I sought to establish precisely the principle of one vote one value, for I realize, as every student of electoral law and every protagonist of electoral reform has realized since the beginning of time, that it is mathematically impossible to have the exact principle of one vote one value. What we seek to do, and what this Bill is designed to do, is to establish the broad general principle, with the necessary latitude required to make any electoral law work. Proportional representation is not in the Constitution, as I pointed out on the second reading, but it may be wise to remind members and some of our friends who are responsible for articles in the press of what the position is. In South Australia the election of Parliament is governed by two sections of our law. The first is our Constitution, which fixes the electoral boundaries, and the second is the Electoral Act, which determines the method of election. Consequently if it is desired to introduce proportional representation the Constitution must first be amended to provide for a different method of determining electoral boundaries in order to pave the way for the amendment of the Electoral Act required to bring in the system of proportional representation, which is what I stated quite clearly was my intention. However, we find the Premier using this as one of the things that he was pleased to call a point of his argument when he said, "Our friends opposite are prepared to learn if information on the right lines is supplied to them often enough," as if the changes which he alleged have been made in this Bill as compared with previous Bills had been the result of arguments advanced by members on the Government side of the House.

As I have previously explained, I departed from the previous Bills to the extent of providing for two zones—one to cover that sparsely populated area in the north, north-east and western districts of the State—and I remind members that that was one of the main arguments used against the Bill introduced last year; it was then argued that it was desirable that the sparsely populated areas should receive some special consideration when the electoral boundaries were being determined.

Without departing substantially from the principles of the Bill of last year I acceded to their request, believing in my innocence that it would at least satisfy those members opposite who had used that as an argument. Far from satisfying them, however, they now use it as an argument to support the baseless allegation that we have departed from the fundamental principles which we have sought to establish down through the years, and which this Bill seeks to establish namely, the independent delineation of electoral boundaries and the election of a representative Parliament by the adoption of proportional representation.

The Premier went on to say, "I cannot understand why some districts are singled out for additional representation whereas others are not." I think I have shown conclusively that this was the principle that members opposite suggested should be adopted in respect of the sparsely populated areas, but having met them on that basis I find that they are still not prepared to support this Bill which is eminently just in its conception and in the machinery it seeks to establish under the Constitution. The Premier went on, "I believe that it is impossible to separate one country district from another." What precisely did he mean by that? He supports a system which divides the State into 26 country districts, whereas my Bill at least has the merit of amalgamating districts to the extent that, instead of having 39 electorates we would have 15. He then went on to refer to the district of Wallaroo and asked why Port Augusta, a shipping port at the head of Spencers Gulf, should receive what he called special attention, while Wallaroo, another shipping port considerably further down the Gulf, was not to receive special consideration. The point is that all districts will receive the same consideration under my Bill, except those in the northern, eastern and western zones to which I have referred which have been allocated a quota because of the peculiar features associated with them. The Premier shed crocodile tears about the fate of Wallaroo when he spoke of what he called the abounding prosperity of the district of Stuart compared with the decadence that had overtaken Wallaroo. I say deliberately that but for the present electoral set-up we would have had a change in Government many years ago. The then member for Wallaroo, who was Leader of the Opposition at the time, would have become the Premier of this State under that change of Government, but the Government would not have done what the Premier has done to Wallaroo. The Premier accepted the transfer of a most valuable grain distillery to Wallaroo as a war exigency, but fortunately it did not have to be used for the purpose for which it was built. The plant was transferred to South Australia at bargain rates by the Federal Labor Government, led by the late J. B. Chifley, on the understanding that the opportunity would be taken to establish an industry in Wallaroo to take the place of the mining industry that had ceased to exist some years before, and so create employment for the people of the three Peninsula towns formerly engaged in the mining industry. Under these conditions the Commonwealth generously transferred the plant, but what has happened? No industry has been established but the plant and machinery has been taken out of the building and used in various projects of the Premier throughout the State. I have seen parts from the distillery at Leigh Creek, Radium Hill and in the South-East. Everything the Government could lay its hands on has been removed and all that it left is the building. This of course has militated against the introduction of an industry as was intended by the bargain between the Chifley and Playford Governments.

Mr. John Clark—That is not much help to Wallaroo.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—None at all. If it had not been for the present electoral set-up Wallaroo would have received the justice it will never get while the present Party, supported in office by an iniquitous gerrymander, remains the Government of South Australia. The Premier went on to say:—

> I believe that the present zones that have been established over a long period are far preferable. They give substantially more justice to the population and provide for more advancement for the State than the artificial distribution proposed by the Leader of the Opposition.

He was referring to the zones that I mentioned. Let me refer to his statement relative to the advancement of the State. Surely he is not proud of the fact that in the last 21 years of continuous Liberal Government the population of the country has declined and that of the metropolitan area has increased enormously. Is that what he means by the advancement of the State? It was reported in the press recently that the population of the metropolitan area increased by 100,000 between the 1947 and the 1954 census. Is this what the Premier takes pride in; is this

what he calls the advancement of the State?

Mr. John Clark—And it was done deliberately.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes, much of it was done deliberately, because if the money that has been spent on establishing industries and in providing amenities in the metropolitan area had been spent in country towns, it would have resulted in a flow of population the other way. The press published a report of the increase as something to be proud of, and stated that between the two censuses our metropolitan population increased by a greater ratio than that of any other State. This is something to be ashamed rather than proud of, and it is something we will regret, because every addition to the metropolitan population that is detrimental to country districts makes this State more vulnerable in the event of war.

Mr. John Clark—With another 20,000 there will be a further gerrymander.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—As the honourable member reminds me, it is intended to bring 20,000 people to a town that has been appropriately referred to as "Parasite." There is another aspect of this problem that should interest the 26 country members at least, that, as set out by the Bureau of Economics, in the final analysis the people in the country have to feed the people in the metropolitan area, and the more people in the city and the fewer in the country the harder those in the country have to work. Of course, that does not matter; the Premier goes out and says we want to retain the *status quo* for the advancement of the State. That is something I do not like. I would much rather see the balance of the population remain, and the extension and expansion of primary industries go hand in hand with the enormous expansion in secondary industries in recent years.

The Premier then referred to what he was pleased to call the artificial distribution proposed by me. All the Bill proposes to do is to set up a completely impartial and independent body similar to that which determines the electorates for the Commonwealth, which would be instructed to divide the State into 15 electorates, each having three members, on the basis of certain broad general principles set out in the Bill and copied from the Commonwealth Act. That system has worked admirably in the Commonwealth sphere for more than 50 years, and is governed by geographical features and other things. The Bill provides for a tolerance of 20 per cent above or below the quota to provide for shifts of population so that more sparsely populated districts would have a lower ratio of electors to each member than the more densely populated districts. That is what I sought to do, and there is nothing artificial about it; it is a perfectly just proposal and contains the essence of pure democracy.

Mr. Shannon—It does not contain one vote one value.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The honourable member has not been listening, otherwise he would have known that I dealt with that in the earlier portion of my remarks. I do not think he is such a mere tyro that he would believe that I or anyone else would seek to establish the mathematical principle of one vote one value.

Mr. Shannon—I am pleased to hear that.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I have never sought to establish it in any Bill that I have introduced in this House. The departure in this case, if it can be called a departure, is exactly the same as that in the previous Bills that I introduced. In an article in *The Mail* on September 18, headed "Eyes on Boundaries" the following appeared:—

Government plans to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into electoral boundaries are now well advanced, and M.P.'s will soon know the best—or worst—according to their Party leanings.

The article then described what the proposals would be, and continued:—

It is already clear the present ratio between country and metropolitan areas is to be preserved. In the Assembly now there are 26 country members and 13 city members. It is presumed the commission will be empowered to alter boundaries in the country (as in the metropolitan area) provided the number of electorates is not reduced below 26.

The presumption is very well founded, because the article was written by the Premier's chief apologist, no doubt on very reliable information. If giving 39 per cent of the electors residing in the country 26 representatives in this House and 61 per cent of electors only 13 members is electoral reform, then some people have very curious ideas of reform.

Mr. John Clark—That is to assist decentralization!

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Oh, yes! The article continued:—

Although there is some sympathy within the Government ranks for a fairer distribution of votes . . .

Mr. Jennings—Where?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—That is a most appropriate remark; I do not know where the sympathy is, and I have been exploring

for four years in an effort to find it, but I have not stumbled on even some of the outlying fringes of it yet. I have not even stood on it sufficiently hard to make it squeak. The article continued:—

Although there is some sympathy within the Government ranks for a fairer distribution of votes, no L.C.L. member is now likely to support the Opposition legislation because of the promised Government Bill.

How can the writer of the article say that no L.C.L. member is likely to support my Bill? Are all L.C.L. members deaf, dumb and blind to future portents? Have they no regard for democratic principles and the right of the people to change their Government if they desire? After all, that is the fundamental principle that matters. The article continued:—

The Premier, Mr. Playford, has adroitly outmanoeuvred the Opposition. He is now able to suppress any feelings of sympathy from within his own ranks for the Opposition on this vital electoral issue.

I submit, however, that all the Premier has done—if he has succeeded in doing anything—has merely been to maintain the *status quo*, which is a negation of democracy. The article continued:—

The Labor Party had modified earlier demands for what it calls electoral reform by omitting references in its legislation to one vote one value and proportional representation.

I point out, however, that the principle of one vote one value has not been expressed in any Bill introduced by me and cannot be expressed in any Bill except to establish the broad principle on the lines I have already explained. Further, proportional representation cannot be provided for in a Bill to amend the Constitution Act; but after this Bill has been passed I will introduce a Bill, which I have already prepared, to provide for proportional representation. The Bill now before the House provides that the State shall be divided into two zones: a sparsely populated zone comprising two electorates, and the rest of the State comprising 13. Each electorate will return three members elected on the basis of proportional representation, and the Parliament elected under that system will be a truer reflection of public opinion in this State. One honourable member said he opposed the Bill because it provided for an increase in the number of members; but I make no apology for that provision, because this Parliament is today too small to provide for the efficient management of the State, which is the job of Parliament in any democratic State. The present size of this House was introduced in 1938 when the population of the State was little more than half its present population, and an increase in the number of members is warranted.

Mr. Hutchens—Last year the number of Ministers was increased on that principle.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes, because the increased population had caused an increase in Government business. Labor members, who for years had advocated an increase in the size of Cabinet, cheerfully supported that legislation, which I believe has resulted in better administration. Under my Bill the electorates would be determined by an independent body, so that no charge of gerrymander could be levelled against the system. The people would be able to elect the party they wanted to govern the State. The principles I have enunciated would stand any test by any political science student or independent authority. If we do not accept those principles soon, the seeds of decay that have already been sown in our community will germinate and people will lose their respect for and their confidence in Parliamentary institutions and will seek other avenues to obtain redress of their grievances. In these days we hear much lip service to the anti-Communist cause. I have fought Communism all my lifetime, but I have fought it with the weapons of democratic justice which have been used by Britons all over the world in their fight against Communism, and which will ultimately prevail. I ask members to support the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Commencement."

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—As a number of matters require further consideration I suggest that progress be reported.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I ask that progress be reported.

Progress reported; Committed to sit again.

PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 29. Page 821.)

Mr. BROOKMAN (Alexandra)—I support the Bill. The difficulty facing members is to agree on where to draw the line in the administration of the original Act. No member wishes to permit the unrestricted suffering of animals; on the other hand no member

desires the complete abolition of all sport involving suffering of animals. The original Act, which goes back many years, has progressively improved the treatment of animals in this State, and a similar improvement has been apparent in other States and in the United Kingdom. To abolish all sport involving animals suffering would be to go to extremes and would be ridiculous. A *prima facie* case could be made against any sport in which animals are involved, including horse racing, for it could be argued that, because some cruelty took place, legislation should be introduced to prohibit the sport. I submit, however, that a line must be drawn. I believe it is our duty to prohibit the trap shooting of birds, for it is too artificial a sport to be permitted in a civilized community. I do not object to other sports, such as hunting, in which the trap shooting of animals or birds does not occur. Many comparisons may be cited, but if any member has any other sport in mind, it should be dealt with as the necessity arises. This Bill is entirely confined to the shooting of birds in traps and in that respect is a good Bill. The ordinary sport of shooting and hunting is a healthy one and is not done for the love of cruelty.

Mr. Fletcher—You do not say that trap shooting of pigeons is done for the love of cruelty, do you?

Mr. BROOKMAN—Such a statement has been made in this House, but I do not believe that any sportsman has that in view. Whether it is trap shooting or shooting in the open the hunters are not particularly conscious of any cruelty, and certainly take no pleasure in cruelty. Some have compared this sport with the action of a small boy pulling the wings off a fly. His objective is to inflict suffering, but that is not associated with trap shooting. However, I believe it goes a little too far and should not be allowed. Some of the opponents of the legislation have said, "If you are going to stop trap shooting, why not stop all kinds of shooting for sport?" That is not a sound argument and exaggerates the position. One might just as sensibly exaggerate the position in the other way and say, "If you are going to allow some shooting, allow all shooting and have no law relating to cruelty to animals." This would then allow bull baiting and cock fighting and all other such unpleasant past-times which were and still are indulged in in the older countries.

I was struck by the absence of any public protest when the Bill was introduced. I thought arguments would have been submitted in favour of trap shooting and an attempt made by some people to justify it. However, I did not see any argument submitted in the early stages. Some members who have opposed the Bill did not appear to receive any help from people outside. The only mention I saw from outside the House was an idiotic protest against the use of myxomatosis in the destruction of rabbits. This is entirely unrelated to the sport covered by the Bill. We should follow the lines of most other English-speaking countries and prohibit the trap-shooting of birds, without prejudice to any other forms of sport. I support the second reading.

Mr. DUNNAGE (Unley)—I support the Bill and commend Mr. Jennings for having introduced it. I am pleased with the general attitude of most members, nearly all of whom seem to favour the prohibition of trap shooting. The crux of the Bill is in clause 3, which relates to the shooting of birds liberated from captivity. It was said pigeons are bred for this purpose, but I do not know of this being done. On many farms pigeons are allowed the run of a barn or other building, gradually build up in numbers and are eventually sent away for trap shooting. The trap shooting of pigeons is not a cheap sport when it is considered that it costs at least 3s. a bird, that a cartridge costs possibly 1s. and a gun perhaps £100. Some members likened the shooting of birds from traps to the shooting of rabbits on the squat, but about the only time one ever sees a rabbit shot with a .22 rifle is when it is on the squat. They do not shoot them when they are on the run with this type of firearm, but it is easy to shoot them on the run with a gun. I recall that recently a man got 37 rabbits with 35 shots with a gun, but one never sees anything like that with a rifle. Anyone who can hit a rabbit on the run with a .22 rifle must be a very good shot. I have also been duck shooting on many occasions and am convinced it is far more cruel than pigeon shooting.

Mr. Quirke—I think the cruelty is to the shooter!

Mr. DUNNAGE—I agree that it is cruel for the shooter to have to lie out in the open waiting for the ducks to come over. There is far more cruelty in other things than in duck shooting. I am prepared to agree with Mr. Shannon that if we apply the law to pigeon trap shooting, why not bring in other sports as cruel or even more cruel? I have in mind country abattoirs where much cruelty occurs in the killing of animals.

Mr. John Clark—That is not a sport.

Mr. DUNNAGE—It is a business, but it is far crueller than the shooting of pigeons, yet we have all this talk about the shooting of a few thousands of these birds.

The Hon. T. Playford—I thought you were supporting the Bill.

Mr. DUNNAGE—So I am, and I intend to support an amendment which is to be moved. I have received correspondence asking me to support the Bill, but am surprised to have received nothing from gun clubs. I feel they have let themselves down on this occasion, because if they had come forward with evidence in favour of their proposition additional members might have supported them. I was concerned to read in the press the other day that on one station in Western Australia 3,000 kangaroos had been poisoned, but I heard no comment about that in this House or in the press. I have seen much kangaroo shooting and if this is a sport, it must be one of the worst sports I can imagine, because the hunters do not wait for the animal to run but shoot it when it is sitting, and usually it is not very far away. I have seen hundreds of kangaroos shot under those conditions. I know of many men who travel great distances to engage in this sport.

Mr. JENNINGS (Prospect)—I thank members for the way in which they have received the Bill. I said earlier that I was confident it would get the individual attention of all members and be dealt with on its merits. I am satisfied that has happened, although some members are opposed to it—some on wrong principles. I do not want to introduce acrimony into the debate, but wish to say that the statement by Mr. Wm. Jenkins that the Bill has some political flavour behind it is not true. Members opposite should know that when I have something political to say I am not afraid to say it, and the members I admire most on the other side are those who express strongly their political views. Last year I asked the Government to introduce a Bill to deal with the trap shooting of live pigeons. If it had done so it would have got the credit for the move, and the measure would have had my wholehearted support. An Opposition member has now introduced it, and it is supported by some Government members, so there can be no political flavour about it. I am in the fortunate position of having answered all argument against the Bill before it was made. In my second reading explanation I referred to the argument that might be raised to justify this type of sport. The objection raised by members in opposition to the Bill is as I forecast. I was tempted to go through the remarks of those who opposed the Bill but I have resisted the temptation because if I did so I would be engaging in the same type of sport as I am trying to prohibit. I am indebted to the members who support the Bill, particularly Mr. Brookman who opportunely spoke this afternoon. He tried to make clear the confusion which apparently exists in so many minds.

It was said earlier that the birds after being shot are used for food. Since then I have had a communication from Mr. Thomas, manager of the Windsor Poultry Service, saying that rather than use the birds so shot as food he had an almost unlimited demand for pigeons for the table, a demand which cannot be satisfied because the birds are being shot by members of gun clubs. There was a statement that pigeons are a nuisance. To begin with the Premier used that argument but in view of his proposed amendments his opinion has changed. If pigeons are a nuisance anywhere I suggest that they can be destroyed, so long as it is done humanely. I have not seen the caretaker of Parliament House catch pigeons and take them to some other place to be destroyed. I do not know that pigeons are a nuisance in other States where the sport has been banned.

We had a new argument that pigeons are the carriers of some types of diseases, but we get rid of these carriers of disease after they have gone through six to eight pairs of hands instead of their being destroyed immediately. Some members have linked up the sport of shooting live birds with other forms of cruelty, but we must be realistic. I abhor any type of cruelty, the destruction of rabbits with myxomatosis or anything else. We know there are genuine sports that inflict suffering on animals, but the type of sport dealt with by the Bill is a ruthless extinction of life. It contains a measure of cruelty and there is nothing to justify it except that it gives a certain satisfaction to a small number of persons. The Bill is designed to prohibit only the trap shooting of pigeons, because I do not want to get involved at this stage in a wider sphere. If a member thinks that some other sport is cruel he can introduce legislation to deal with it, and it can be discussed on its merits. The contents of the Bill fit in perfectly harmoniously with the rest of the Act, and their inclusion makes the Act better. One member said that the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals had not taken any action or raised its voice in protest at the

sport, but I have received a letter dated September 3, 1954, from the Society reading as follows:—

I wish to convey to you the text of a resolution which was unanimously adopted by the committee of this society at a meeting on August 27, 1954, and which reads as follows:—

Resolved that this society condemns the practice of trap shooting of live pigeons and urges the Government to pass legislation banning such practice.

The resolution was addressed to the Government. Apparently it was sent to me as an afterthought and it should convince members that I am not acting as the tool of the society or anyone else. It also upsets the argument of one member that the society has not concerned itself in this matter. I said there was a perfectly good alternative in the use of clay pigeons. Members have endeavoured to refute that argument by saying that they are not as good as live birds. Mr. White said that in Victoria where live pigeon shooting has not yet been banned clay pigeon shooting was very popular. He said also that in the States where the shooting of live birds has been banned clay pigeon shooting was flourishing. In South Australia trap shooting of pigeons has not been banned. In the *Mail* of September 25 there was the following report:—

Today at Gilles Plains about 50 trap shooters competed in an elimination shoot. In today's elimination shoot each competitor fired at 25 clay "birds." The clays—small hollow discs made of pitch—are released in various directions by means of an automatic firing device. The shooter cannot tell in which direction the clay is to be released and has to shift and fire from a number of positions.

Here in South Australia, where live bird shooting is permitted, we have 50 shooters apparently preferring to engage in clay bird shooting. It seems to me that the shooting of this type of pigeon is a perfectly good alternative. I have not intended in any of my remarks, or in the introduction of the Bill, to make charges against gun club members. I realize they are not being deliberately cruel in engaging in a sport that they apparently like, but as legislators it is our job to ensure that wanton cruelty, whether committed deliberately or unintentionally, is prevented.

Bill read a second time.

Mr. SHANNON moved:—

That it be an instruction to the Committee of the whole House that it have power to consider an amendment providing for the prohibition of shooting for sport, under certain conditions.

Motion carried.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clauses 3 "Prohibition of shooting at captive birds."

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

After "at" in the last line of new section 5a (1) (*a*) to insert "forthwith upon being so liberated."

The new section states:—

(1) Any person who (*a*) promotes, arranges, conducts, assists in, receives money for, or takes part in, any event in the course of which captive birds are liberated from captivity for the purpose of being shot at. . . .

An "event" is defined as meaning "any meeting, competition, exhibition, display, practice, pastime, or other event whatever." Subsection (1) relates to the liberating of birds for the purpose of being shot at, but I am not too sure of what the events and pastimes enumerated in subsection (2) mean. They might apply to persons who have no direct participation in trap shooting. This Bill is apparently a copy of a measure enacted in another State and it would seem to me that the framer of the original measure—and I do not refer to Mr. Jennings because his measure is substantially a copy of a Bill passed elsewhere—was not anxious to define precisely what he desired to stop and he included a definition clause which would enable the stopping of anything he wanted to stop after the Bill was passed. I do not know what the difference between the words "promotes, arranges, conducts, assists in, receives money for, or takes part in" is. I would have thought it sufficient simply to insert words to the effect that "any person who participates in any event." I do not know the reason for defining "event" because it is already described in subsection (1). As the clause reads, birds could be shot at any time subsequent to their liberation and my amendment will make it clear that an offence is committed if the shooting takes place immediately the birds are liberated.

Mr. JENNINGS—I accept the amendment which is intended to be helpful and which will tidy the wording of the Bill.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I do not oppose the amendment but I do not know what it means. I assume that the birds would be shot at immediately they were liberated. Will the Premier make a fuller explanation of his amendment?

Mr. SHANNON—I agree with the Premier's comments about the terminology of the clause. I think the Premier made a good suggestion when he said he thought many of the words

in the clause could be deleted as they meant the same. This clause could well be redrafted. We should not include words which are redundant and mean the same. What, for instance, is the difference between "promotes" and "conducts"?

Mr. Dunstan—The A.B.C. promotes orchestral concerts and Mr. Henry Kripps conducts them.

Mr. SHANNON—We should enlist the aid of the Parliamentary Draftsman in simplifying the wording of the clause.

Mr. FLETCHER—Members have referred to pigeons getting away, but some apparently do not realize that pigeons do get away. When I was a boy I sold many pigeons to gun clubs, but one bird returned to me twice and I did not have the heart to send it back again.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

PRISONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

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

CATTLE COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

INFLAMMABLE OILS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

RENMARK IRRIGATION TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS (Minister of Irrigation)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Sections 115 and 116 of the Renmark Irrigation Trust Act were first enacted in 1948. Section 115 empowers the Renmark Irrigation Trust to construct and maintain drainage works for the prevention or removal of seepage conditions in the district or any part thereof. Section 116 authorizes the trust to impose a drainage rate to meet construction and maintenance costs incurred under section 115. This rate is not to exceed 5s. a half year for every acre of land rated and the rate is to be imposed uniformly on ratable land over the whole district irrespective of whether the land rated derives benefit from the drainage works. The trust has asked that the Act be amended to provide additional powers to levy rates on land which benefits, directly or indirectly, from the drainage works. The trust has pointed out that the annual cost of the drainage works in existence is approximately £12,500 and that the amount recoverable under section 116, that is, at the rate of 5s. an acre a half year, is only £4,500. The balance of the annual cost must therefore be made up from the water rate which, of course, is a general rate imposed generally on ratable land. It is therefore proposed by the Bill that, after completion of any drainage works, the trust is to decide what land benefits, either directly or indirectly, from the drainage works and is to serve notice on the owners accordingly. From this notice there will be an appeal, ultimately, to the local court of full jurisdiction.

It is provided by the Bill that the trust may, for the purpose of maintaining the drainage works, impose a special drainage rate on the land which derives benefit from the drainage works. This rate is not to exceed 10s. an acre a half year and will be in addition to the general drainage rate of 5s. previously mentioned. By this means the land benefiting from the drainage works will bear a greater rating burden than other land in the district. It is estimated that the special drainage rate will return about £3,000 per annum. It is the practice of the trust to submit to meetings of its ratepayers proposals for amendments of the Act and the proposals contained in the Bill were so submitted to and approved by a meeting of ratepayers held in November last. The Bill is a hybrid Bill within the meaning of the Joint Standing Orders on Private Bills and, if read a second time, will under the Joint Standing Orders be referred to a select committee.

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

POLICE PENSIONS BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 5. Page 880.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I have examined the Bill closely and I am prepared to support the second reading.

It proposes all-round increases in police pensions of about 50 per cent, the Government to meet most of the cost, although contributions by members of the force are to be increased. I understand from the Premier's speech that the Bill, as originally drafted, provides for greater increases in contributions. The Bill provides that there shall be a progressive increase in contributions beginning at age 22 of £41 a year for males and £34 for females, rising to a figure at age 37 or over of £80 for males and £80 for females. I understand that the representations of the Police Association on this matter were accepted and that the Government has agreed to limit the annual contributions to the age 27 scale, which provides for a maximum contribution of £52 a year for males and £44 for females. I agree with this move because, as has been pointed out, a number of returned servicemen joined the force, after their discharge from the armed services, at a later age than usual. To insist on a higher rate of contribution would inflict a penalty on these men who served the community so well during the war.

Generally, the Bill provides generous treatment for the police, but that is not undeserved. We can well be proud of our Police Force. Probably, as in all services, there are some who do not measure up fully to the standard required, but the great majority do. They have to police the laws that this Parliament passes. Of course, sometimes I do not agree with measures brought down, and then I have considerable sympathy with the unfortunate members of the police who are compelled to enforce them. I understand from the Premier's speech that the Bill has the approval, in the main, of the Police Association. The Government is to be commended for consulting the association on a vital matter such as this. After all, the association is, in effect, a trade union. I wish the Government would extend this policy and consult, for instance, the United Trades and Labor Council on industrial matters or questions affecting workmen's compensation, though I am not unmindful of the fact that we have a committee that reviews workmen's compensation. The Government is to be commended for consulting with the official representative body, but it should do more of this in the future.

Mr. Dunks—Would you suggest that should be done with the Chamber of Manufactures and the Property Owners' Association?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I have no doubt that this Government consults with the Chamber of Manufactures and is prepared to accept representations from the Property Owners' Association, even though it may not agree to carry into effect all that is asked. This shows that the representatives of the workers, as exemplified by the Police Force on this occasion, are more amenable to reason, easier to negotiate with and make less onerous demands on the Government than the Chamber of Manufactures and the Property Owners' Association, and for that reason the Government finds it easier to meet them in conference and to accede to their just requests. It is to be hoped that these increased benefits will encourage a greater number of suitable men to join and remain in the service. I have been concerned to read in the press from time to time that a large number of members of the Police Force have resigned for some reason or another, and I have noticed that often they are men who have had considerable experience and have achieved some rank and consequently must be regarded as worth-while men to have on the force. This represents a distinct loss to the State because these experienced men who have had long service have had to be replaced by younger men who require a considerable period of training before acquiring the efficiency and experience of the men they replace. I will not attempt to probe the reason for this fairly considerable number of resignations in recent times. Probably the fact that police service is more onerous than employment generally, and that policemen are on duty for seven shifts a week whereas the ordinary worker has only five shifts, might have something to do with it. As this Bill makes the pension scheme a little more generous, it is along the right lines to encourage men to remain in the force. The increase in lump sum payments recognizes the principle that an officer in continually building up entitlement, and this will also assist in the manner I have indicated.

I have one criticism of the Bill, and that is that some regard might have been had to orphan children of policemen. If a policeman dies after a certain period of service and after having attained a certain age, his widow becomes entitled to a lump sum payment for the children in addition to her pension. This Bill provides that the pensions for orphan children are to be much higher than pensions for children whose mother still lives after the death of the father. A pension for children whose mother is still alive is £39 a year, and for orphan children £78, but consideration might be given to the advisability of making

available to orphan children a lump sum payment of the same amount as would have been made available to the mother if she had still lived. If this were done it would assist in providing a better education for the children and in doing so would give them a better start in life. I understand that when circumstances of this nature have arisen it has been the practice of the Police Association to give some assistance by means of voluntary contribution for the education of orphan children. Perhaps this matter might be considered by the Government before this Bill is finally passed, because not a large amount would be involved and it would be a worthwhile gesture to these young people to give them something to which they are entitled to set them on the right road early in life. I agree with the broad principles of the Bill. I think it is justified by the circumstances and by the prevailing conditions of the times, and I support the second reading.

Mr. JENKINS (Stirling)—I support the Bill which provides for a new scale of superannuation payments or pensions and contributions. The lowest minimum contribution provided in the measure is £41, and the highest £52. This will not deter young men entering the Police Force nor will it deter the older men, because it is not a high payment. I am particularly pleased that this will apply to retired police officers who, I understand, have received £6 a week for the first five years, and £3 a week thereafter. These men will now receive £364 a year, which represents a big increase and good security. After several years of hard and exacting work in the Police Force these men are more or less worked out, and this provision will be very pleasing to them. We expect good service from members of the force, who are called upon for duty on holidays, at race meetings, and State functions. Their times are varied and continuous and their medical and educational standard has to be high so that they can carry out their duties of enforcing law and order and taking care of life and public property. This measure will give some security and some measure of reward for long and exacting service, and it will give some encouragement to the enlistment of the best types and help to keep the Police Force at its full strength. It is cheaper to the taxpayer to pay good wages and pensions to members of the force rather than have it under strength and inefficient, because an inefficient force will fill our gaols and therefore we will pay dearly. Many members of the force are ex-servicemen and good types of men who are proud of their service, and the public is proud of them. I consider that our Police Force is most efficient and can be compared favourably with the London Metropolitan Police Force, the greatest police force in the world. I am glad that the Bill provides for a reasonable scale of superannuation of which the Government, I understand, provides about 70 per cent. This proves that the Government is aware of and appreciates the loyalty and efficiency of the force.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—I commend the Government for the action it has taken in agreeing to the suggestion of the Police Association to amend this legislation. The Leader of the Opposition touched on a vital matter that has disturbed us all when he mentioned many young men have left the force to take up jobs in industry. One of the best features of this measure is that it will have the effect of attracting young men into the police service and because of the experience that they will gain, as years go by they will become more valuable members of the force. The longer a man is in the force the better off he will be when he retires. Probably if he has any ability he will be promoted, and with promotion he will gain additional retiring benefits. Policemen should consider this before resigning. It is now the practice of the Police Commissioner to seek the best type of young men for the force, men with perhaps University qualifications, and if they take into account their own futures they will see that it is in their best interests and those of their families to stay in the job that they chose in the first instance. In drawing up the new scale of pensions the Government has at least kept in step with other States and brought police pensions into line with those operating in the Public Service generally. That is a good thing for it means that we recognize the value of the service rendered by police officers. Their lot is not a happy one and they are frequently called upon to tidy up a messy situation. A policeman cannot turn his back on an irregularity for it is his job to see that law and order is maintained and fortunately our Police Force has been capable of controlling any untoward incidents that have occurred. Only last Saturday policemen on duty at the grand final football match on the Adelaide oval quickly took charge of a fracas before it got out of hand. It could have been an ugly incident of which we would have been ashamed,

but the manner in which the officers handled the situation left very little to cavil at. Tempers become frayed on all sorts of occasions and if a policeman is handy he often stops a fist. For these reasons I feel the Government's action in providing increased pensions is a step that will be applauded by every member.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. O'Halloran) advanced a constructive suggestion with which I have every sympathy. He said it might be possible to make a lump sum contribution to the orphan children of a deceased officer. The Treasurer should examine that proposal for I believe it could be implemented at very little cost to the State. Sometimes a police man may spend the whole of his income on educating a young family, and a policeman with four or five children may not save much for a rainy day. In such cases the loss of both parents constitutes a great hardship for those children. I understand that the Police Association agrees with the principles embodied in the Bill, and consequently it merits members' support. The Government makes a liberal contribution to the Police Pension Fund, but it is not too liberal in all the circumstances.

The Bill refers to the retiring age of 60 for policemen, but I consider that, in view of the tremendous shortage of manpower, this retiring age should be examined. The main reason for retiring a police officer at 60 has been that he may not be fit enough physically after 60 to do his arduous job as satisfactorily as he did it earlier; but today with the march of science in the medical sphere we have a longer expectation of life and a greater immunity from those disabling diseases that attack a man in middle and old age. It would be a step in the right direction if the Police Commissioner were given discretion to permit an offier, who was proved by medical examination to be physically fit, to remain in the service until his 65th birthday, if he so elected. If an officer wished to retire before that he might do so, but, when a man retires he often loses interest in life and feels that he is useless. This is bad psychologically and sometimes results in his early demise. Further, the employment of police officers over 60 would help the State in these days. Such men could be employed until 65 or until such time as a medical officer decided their health did not permit them to do the job, whichever was the earlier. This would result in some officers now in the force continuing in a job they like doing and probably lengthen their term of life. With the two minor exceptions I have mentioned and which I trust the Government will consider either in connection with this Bill or some other legislation, I support the Bill.

Mr. WHITE (Murray)—I, too, support the Bill. A number of retired police sergeants have settled at Murray Bridge, presumably because, having served their final term there, they believe it is a good residential district. Some of them have told me that their pension payments have not been adequate, but this Bill will give them additional remuneration. This is a good thing for it will be an inducement to recruits to join and to remain in the force. I know of several policemen who have resigned because they believed there was no future in the Police Force. They left to go into some other form of employment in order to make better provision for their families and for themselves when they retired. Further, the provision of increased pension rates will encourage efficiency, which is a necessary factor in any police force. I commend the force for its splendid work. Occasionally we meet a policeman who tries to be a little over-efficient in his work and who consequently makes himself unpopular, but the country policeman is usually everybody's friend and gives much free advice on many subjects. As mayor of Murray Bridge, I have always found policemen anxious to help in matters concerning the proper running of the town. They have always been pleased to co-operate with the corporation in traffic matters. It proves that the police force generally are out to do their job properly and help in the civil life of the community. The Leader of the Opposition suggested that provision should be made for the orphans of policemen. The police force have many duties to perform and their work is some times dangerous because they have to deal with the tough elements of the community and it is not infrequent for them to be manhandled and suffer injury, and sometimes they meet death. In those circumstances their families should be adequately protected. The Leader of the Opposition has made a very valuable suggestion and I hope it will be accepted by the Premier. The Bill is a step in the right direction and has been accepted by the Police Asociation. If that body is agreeable to the terms of the Bill it must be in the interests of its members. I therefore have pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 to 13 passed.

Clause 14—"Amount of contribution."

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

After "27" in line six of the table to insert "and over" and to delete the remainder of the table.

The amendments will mean that all persons who have joined the force or join in future at ages in excess of 27 years will contribute at the rate appropriate to the age of 27.

Amendments agreed to; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 15 to 28 passed.

Clause 29—"Benefits for widows and children of members and pensioners."

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This would appear to be the appropriate clause on which to raise the question I mentioned in my speech on the second reading in reference to making the same lump sum available to orphan children as to the widow. As I pointed out previously, if the mother dies before the pensioner then all that the orphan children receive is a pension of £78 a year. I suggest that consideration might be given to the payment of the same lump sum allowance, namely, a cash payment to the children of £400, plus £40 for each complete year by which the member's age at the time of his death exceeded 40 years. Very few cases would have to be provided for and therefore the charge on the fund would not be very great. I doubt whether the position warrants my moving an amendment, but the Government should consider introducing one on those lines either here or in the other House.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I rather regret that it has been suggested that the Government has been less than generous.

Mr. O'Halloran—There was no suggestion of that.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Earlier in the year I instructed the Parliamentary Draftsman, who is an extremely fair-minded man, and the Government Actuary, who is chairman of the Police Pensions Fund, to discuss the question of pension payments with officers of the association. I said that the Government was prepared to do the generous thing in altering pensions and I placed no restriction on the nature of the report to be presented to the Government. I allowed the two officers to confer with the association and submit a Bill. I was asked to meet a deputation from the Police Association after they had examined the Bill and it was suggested that certain officers should be exempt from coming into the fund because they felt that those who joined it at an advanced age would have commitments coinciding with the time when they would have families and this might make it difficult for them to undertake the contribution. That was the only request I received and I discussed it freely with the officers of the association and said that I thought it would be wrong for a man to be exempted from pension commitments and that it could only react to their disadvantage later when they retired. They would then regret not being in the fund. Rather than exempt them I said I would recommend to Cabinet that the Government take the full cost of the additional payments to enable officers entering the service at a late age to do so without having to meet additional payments. The Government has not acted niggardly in this matter, and the deputation thanked me for the Government's generosity in meeting their suggestions. As I said before, the Bill fully satisfies the association and I would not be justified in recommending to Cabinet a further extension.

Mr. O'Halloran—Was the matter discussed by the association?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—None of the features of the Bill was discussed. The recommendations came from a competent officer and are satisfactory to the association. I believe the Bill is generous and does justice to all parties. It may not be generally known that about 80 per cent of the payments in connection with the Public Service Superannuation Fund come from taxpayers' money. Only 20 per cent of the money comes from the contributors yet it was originally a 50-50 scheme.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 5. Page 875.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I regret that the Premier has not remained in the Chamber because I would have put to him a suggestion whereby more revenue could be obtained under this legislation, but apparently he is piqued about a suggestion I made in connection with the previous measure. I do not think the penalties under this legislation have been changed for years, despite an alteration in circumstances and the value of money. The increases in the monetary penalties may assist the enforcement of the Act to a greater extent than is the case in some areas at present. The proper administration of the Vermin Act has become more important following on the introduction of myxomatosis.

Every member will agree that it has been effective to some extent in dealing with the rabbit pest, particularly in some parts of the State, but it has not been completely effective everywhere. In some districts climatic condition have prevented it. Therefore, it is still necessary to kill rabbits the hard way. There is a tendency to leave it all to myxomatosis, without the landholders doing their part in the matter, especially in mopping up after myxomatosis has been used. If there were a proper mopping up in the areas where myxomatosis has been used there may be a complete eradication of the rabbits. Suggestions have been made that a new breed of rabbits has arisen that is immune to myxomatosis. I do not know whether much credence can be placed on the suggestions, but in the areas where the disease was most effective when first introduced I have seen some healthy looking rabbits that have survived the disease, or at least their progeny has done so. The penalties under the Act should be effective and ruthlessly employed. In view of the circumstances the increases are justified and I support the second reading.

Mr. BROOKMAN (Alexandra)—I support the measure. Yesterday I read a report from the C.S.I.R.O. urging the importance of eradicating rabbits by means additional to myxomatosis. Unfortunately the disease does not appear to have done the job completely. It had a 99 per cent effect when first introduced, but now there appears to be only about a 90 per cent kill. That means that 100 rabbits are left out of every thousand, which provides a great opportunity for breeding, so it does not appear that there will be a complete eradication of rabbits. Some time ago I discussed the matter with a scientist and he told me that an expert had been assigned to deal with the rabbit population problem. First of all he made an estimate following his observation of the number of rabbits in a warren. He watched the warren for several days and estimated that it contained 35 rabbits. Then he fenced the warren, made a sort of entrance and accurately counted the rabbits. He made it 70. He was an expert, yet he was widely wrong in his estimate. Mr. O'Halloran mentioned the building up of an immunity against myxomatosis. It does appear that a rabbit that has recovered from the disease is immune from further attack, but so far there is no evidence that it can pass immunity on to its progeny. I saw an article by a Mr. Radcliffe which said that theoretically it was possible, but that at the moment it was thought to be impossible in practice. Not much is known about the effects of myxomatosis. It appears at times that there is not much effect, but in some countries there has been an enormous effect. In Australia there have been seasons when we have expected to get results from myxomatosis, but it has not acted vigorously. It looks as though there is not yet a complete answer to the rabbit problem. We must continue to use every effort to keep down the number of rabbits and it will mean continuous and hard work for the landholders. I know of many instances where larvacide, a deadly and effective gas, has been used. Every warren and burrow has been treated and there has been no sign of life but within a few months the area is again teeming with rabbits. Landholders are to be encouraged in their efforts to eradicate rabbits, but one can see that penalties fixed many years ago must be increased.

Mr. FLETCHER (Mount Gambier)—I support the second reading and agree that the proposed increases in penalties are long overdue. I regret that landholders who cause most trouble to district councils and their neighbours are those who have always been in trouble for not destroying vermin on their property. They accepted myxomatosis as a wonderful blessing and thought it would destroy all their rabbits, but every scientist has warned that it will not completely eradicate them and landholders have been asked to carry out mopping up operations. That can only be done by digging them out, trapping them or, as the Leader of the Opposition said, by coming into personal contact with them and killing them. If such operations are not undertaken the rabbit scourge will become as bad as it has ever been. In their attempts to punish landholders who do not comply with the provisions of the Act, councils have only been able to impose light penalties which have not acted as sufficient deterrents. I hope the increased penalties will be responsible for bringing into line those who have not complied with their responsibilities under the Act.

Mr. PEARSON (Flinders)—I am in agreement with the general purpose of the Bill which is to increase penalties for non-compliance with the Act. As penalties are part and parcel of the administration of the Act and are imposed for non-conformity with its provisions it may be fitting to refer to one or two features of the Act. There is no doubt that sterner measures are required to deal with

those incorrigibles who will do nothing about destroying rabbits on their properties and for that reason the Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association at its conference at Wudinna last year requested that the Act be amended to provide sterner penalties. As far as I can ascertain, the present penalties have applied since 1914. The only amendment to the Act that I can find was in 1944 or 1945 in relation to the services of notices on landholders by inspectors under the Act.

It is a simple Act but its administration is not so simple. In common with many of the jobs given to councils—and attention to noxious weeds is one which comes readily to mind—it is not easy for councils to police the Act, which is somewhat severe in some of its provisions. For instance, the onus of proof is placed upon a defendant if it can be established that he had vermin on his property at the time of an inspection either following a period of simultaneous destruction as declared under the Act or after the expiration of the period laid down in the notice served on the landholder by an inspector. There is scarcely a landowner who is not guilty and liable to prosecution under the Act and I speak as a landowner. The Act states that an owner shall destroy all vermin and if one rabbit can be found on a property the owner can be found guilty of an offence.

The SPEAKER—Is the honourable member arguing the Act or the Bill?

Mr. PEARSON—I am arguing the Bill to the extent that if a person is convicted, the penalties we are considering will apply to him. I assume I am within the scope of the Bill in alluding to the matter.

The SPEAKER—I can permit a little latitude but I do not want the honourable member to shift over to the point he was developing.

Mr. PEARSON—The penalties we are discussing are applicable to a person upon whose property it can be proved one rabbit existed after the service of notice upon him or after the period had elapsed for the simultaneous destruction of rabbits. I do not seriously object to that although it is a principle which is not always desirable in legislation. If the Act were applied to its full limit all landowners would probably be guilty of an offence. To assist in the destruction of rabbits on my property I use a 60 h.p. tractor with a bulldozer blade, but it is impossible to eradicate every rabbit. If we provide increased penalties the authority responsible for prosecuting landowners must satisfy itself that the person to be prosecuted has not made a proper effort to comply with the terms of the Act. In respect of persons who will not go to work with a will to do the job required of them we must give those administering the Act some real weapon to employ to bring them into line. In common with many Acts of Parliament the success of this legislation depends largely on the persons administering it. If it is administered with justice I see no reason to object.

The original Act provided that the penalty for a first offence should be not less than £2 nor more than £5. That is now to be increased to not less than £5 nor more than £10. For a second offence the penalty was not less than £5 nor more than £20, but now becomes not less than £15 nor more than £30. For subsequent offences the penalty was not less than £20 nor more than £50 but now becomes not less than £25 nor more than £50. Other provisions which enable the authorities to enter upon land and carry out work at the expense of the landowner are undisturbed. The Eyre Peninsula Loval Government Association is to be commended for drawing attention to this matter. I was present at the conference and heard the discussion and I believe the grounds on which it made an approach to the Government were perfectly just. I agree that every effort should be made to keep the rabbit population within bounds. Much has been done but we will need to continue our efforts, probably for all time, in order to keep them under control. In very rough, rugged country and in dense timber it is not easy to search them out but in arable land, with proper and regular attention, they can be kept under control. I support the measure.

Mr. CORCORAN (Victoria)—I support the Bill which increases the penalties for failure to comply with the Act. I agree that almost every landholder could be charged under the provisions of the Act because if it can be established that only one rabbit is on his property he is liable. As one who witnessed the devastating effect of rabbits in the South-East many years ago, I realize the advisability of doing all we can to eliminate this alien which has so successfully established itself in all parts of the State which are favourable to it. From my observations, I believe that during the last 12 months rabbits have become immune, in some parts, to myxomatosis. When travelling in country areas, especially at night, I have noticed that where I hardly saw a rabbit a year ago they are now much more numerous, so it seems that myxomatosis has had little permanent effect on them.

The Right Hon. R. G. Casey said that rabbits were becoming immune, and it seems that only a combined effort by all concerned will solve the problem. Rabbits multiply quickly, and they know where to establish themselves so that they are hard to get at. They often burrow in high cliffs, and the use of myxomatosis is the only way to deal with them then. Many rabbits have established themselves in the drain banks in the Millicent area, and adjoining landholders have great difficulty in eradicating them. Sometimes when a landholder deals effectively with rabbits his neighbour does not do so. This nullifies his efforts unless he has vermin proof fences, but they are costly. There are always some people who will not do the right thing, and sometimes the inspectors issue summonses against them. The court then imposes penalties, but the rabbits keep multiplying, and the offenders do nothing about it. The penalties fixed by the Act were enacted many years ago, and I agree it is time they were increased. Most farmers realize that they cannot keep rabbits and stock successfully because their carrying capacity is greatly reduced. They try their best to keep rabbits down, and I hope increased penalties will induce all landholders to face up to their responsibility. I support the Bill.

Mr. WHITE (Murray)—The Bill increases the penalties that can be imposed on people who do not destroy vermin on their properties. With improved agricultural methods, pastures and top dressing most of our agricultural districts are growing more grass. Science has proved that all vermin increase in accordance with the amount of feed available. Therefore, we must expect rabbits to increase if proper precautions are not taken. Some speakers have referred to myxomatosis, and I know from experience that rabbits can become immune to it. I have seen rabbits that had scabs on their eyes and nose, yet they became quite healthy again, so we cannot expect myxomatosis alone to rid us of this pest. Generally speaking, landholders try their best to keep rabbits in check. Implements have been devised to destroy warrens, and the use of the rabbit ripper has proved effective in keeping rabbits down. Other speakers have said that if one rabbit is found on a property the landholder is held liable, but my experience of local government has shown that the Act is always administered with discretion.

Mr. Pearson—Not always.

Mr. WHITE—Councils with which I have been associated have administered it with discretion. There are some places where the landholder cannot catch the last rabbit. In my district we have a problem that is not found in others, for in the summer rabbits move into the river when feed is scarce further out. Landholders contiguous to the river then kill rabbits continuously, yet they still have rabbits on their properties. Therefore, councils must use discretion in administering the Act and decide whether the landholder is doing his best. Of course, there are some who will not stand up to their responsibilities and they must be dealt with. The penalties fixed by the Act are probably too low to induce all landholders to keep down the rabbit population. It is quite a commonsense move to increase these penalties. Under the measure a penalty of £50 is provided after a defaulting landholder has had several chances, and although this seems a large amount, if he will not stand up to his obligations then we must make conditions so difficult for him that he will be frightened, if I may use that expression, into doing his part in keeping down the rabbit population.

Mr. Shannon—He costs his neighbours much more than £50 in damage by his neglect.

Mr. WHITE—That is so; one defaulting landholder can nullify the whole of the good work done by all other farmers in a locality. Raising the penalty is a step in the right direction, and I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr. HEASLIP (Rocky River)—I support the Bill as I believe the increased penalties are more than justified. It seems that many people are under a great misconception about what myxomatosis is doing towards the eradication of rabbits and it is unfortunate that members, including myself, have received a circular together with a petition in which it is claimed that this disease is cruel and inhuman slaughter in direct contrast to the laws of Nature. This petition seeks to stop the spread of the disease.

The SPEAKER—The honourable member must not divert the argument on to the myxomatosis question, for or against. This is only a Bill for increased penalties.

Mr. HEASLIP—Very well, Sir. These increased penalties are desirable. We have a wonderful opportunity of almost getting rid of rabbits with the aid of this disease and the increased penalties provided under this Bill will force producers to carry on the good work that it has done and eradicate the few rabbits that still remain. It has already

been proved that myxomatosis will not completely eradicate rabbits but increased penalties will force producers to carry on where it has left off.

Mr. Riches—I thought the honourable member did not believe in control or compulsion.

Mr. HEASLIP—I do not where they are unnnecessary, but unfortunately controls are necessary in some cases. They are necessary in this case because one producer or landholder might do his job without compulsion but his neighbour will not, but the increase in penalties will force people to carry out their obligations. Myxomatosis has enabled Australia to carry 30,000,000 more sheep because of the eradication of vermin, rabbits in particular, and it is up to us to pass legislation to overcome vermin and force people to comply with them. This is a wonderful opportunity to get rid of the few remaining vermin by increasing the penalties. I am not fearful that councils will exert their powers unnecessarily, because if I as a landholder have only one rabbit on my property I am certain I will not be fined the amount prescribed in this Bill. It is only those who do not look after their properties who will be subject to the increased penalties.

Bill read a second time, and taken through Committee without amendment; Committee's report adopted.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 5. Page 877.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Goodwood)—I support the second reading of this Bill. According to the second reading speech, it has been introduced to deal with recent cases decided by the Supreme Court over money raised by loan to carry out certain road works in the Campbelltown area. It is advisable, particularly in new areas, that councils should be able to borrow money to construct roads and footpaths. I believe that the local council should have the right to collect the moiety after the footpaths and roads have been constructed. Some residents in newly developed areas have had to put up with much inconvenience for years. I have in mind particularly Ascot Park and Parkholme in my electorate, and they are typical of many new housing areas throughout the metropolitan area. I am pleased to see that the Government is introducing two Bills to amend the original Act, for those Bills cover different aspects of the legislation. New subsection (9) of section 319 states:—

If any roadway is formed, levelled or paved to a part of its width and is subsequently formed, levelled or paved to a greater width then, if the subsequent forming, levelling or paving, as the case may be, has not been previously carried out, the cost of so doing or of such part thereof as the council thinks fit may be recovered in manner provided by this section.

In view of this provision and the provision increasing the maximum rate from 7s. to 10s., is it intended that councils shall have the right to impose upon landholders a charge of up to 10s. a lineal foot for any widening or reconstruction of an existing road? From time to time when the Minister of Works was Minister of Local Government I tried to get information from the Highways Department on the progress being made on the improvement of roads listed in the main roads schedule, and I understand that the department now advances money to local councils to do such work. Is a council in receipt of such moneys to be permitted to impose a further charge upon landholders for work done on a main road? Recently Sweetmans Road was widened, and I am wondering whether this provision would apply in such a case. Members have frequently complained about the narrowness of the South Road between Sweetmans Road and the Lady McDonald corner, and, if that road is widened by 8ft. as is planned by the Highways Department, the local council doing that work may be entitled to impose a further charge on the owners of land adjoining the road. I consider the legislation is worded too loosely in its present form. In my electorate the Unley Council agreed some years ago to widen Goodwood Road, and it has been provided that in the event of alteration to buildings on that road they shall be set back 7ft. from the present alignment. Will this provision mean that the Unley Council may impose a further charge of up to 10s. a foot on landholders for the widening of that road? My interpretation of the section is that such a charge may be made, and landholders who paid up to 7s. a foot towards the construction of the original road may now find themselves owing up to 10s. a foot more for work on reconstruction and widening of the road.

The maximum rate payable under section 319 is to be increased from 7s. to 10s. a lineal foot. At present a certain Government department may use a grader to form a water table,

leave the work for a period of perhaps years, and then decide to lay metal on the road, charging landholders up to 10s. a foot for the work. If it is decided to give the road a coat of bitumen the charge will be up to 9s. a lineal foot, including the construction of the footpath, which would leave 1s. for kerbing. Obviously kerbing would cost more than that. In effect the ratepayers contribute nine-tenths of the payment for less than 75 per cent of the work which should be done. It should be provided that at least 2s. 6d. is reserved for the purpose, leaving 7s. 6d. for road-making, sealing and footpaths. When footpaths are made, they should be suitably surfaced. I do not know whether money spent on traffic roundabouts would come under any provision in the Bill. The Government should be wary of implementing recommendations by the Traffic Committee on projects which are not in the best interests of ratepayers. It is time the Government governed in the interests of those who have to find the money. I was not satisfied with the Minister's comment of clause 3, which deals with the cost of constructing public streets, and I hope later he will offer a more comprehensive explanation. I support the second reading.

Mr. TEUSNER secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.39 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, October 7, at 2 p.m.